

THE SNIPE

The Newsletter of the
Audubon Society of Central Arkansas



Charles Mills

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www.ascabird.org

December 2014 – February 2015

ASCA's Annual Potluck & Silent Auction Little Rock Audubon Center

Join us on Thursday, December 11, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m., at the Little Rock Audubon Center for our annual holiday potluck and silent auction.

This fun-filled event is a great opportunity to enjoy wonderful food, spread some holiday cheer, and exchange stories with fellow birders.

If you are bringing an item for the auction please be there by 6:00 p.m. in order to get the item(s) labeled and in place. We'll begin accepting bids at 6:15 and sit down for dinner at 6:30. Items can be purchased or handmade.

ASCA will provide the drinks. Plates, cups, and eating utensils will be furnished by Audubon Arkansas.

In addition to all the fun, we'll conduct one important point of business – elect officers and board members for the upcoming year. So exercise your right to vote!

The spacious and “green” Little Rock Audubon Center is located on the southeast side of Little Rock at 4500 Springer Blvd., just minutes from downtown.

Take I-440 to exit 1, Springer Blvd. Go south (left) on Springer Blvd. Cross the railroad tracks, then look for the center and Audubon Arkansas sign on the right.



photo by Dan Scheiman

Bring your favorite dish and join us on December 11 for a fun-filled evening and a chance to visit with fellow birders from around the state.

Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts

Dan Scheiman

ASCA Christmas Bird Count Compiler

Now in its 115th year, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a citizen science program and the nation's longest running bird survey. Have no doubts that your participation is meaningful – thousands of scientific studies have used CBC data, including National Audubon's latest Birds & Climate Change Report (Audubon.org/climate).

On count day participants count all birds they encounter within their assigned section of a 15-mile diameter circle. Birders of any skill level are welcome. It's a great opportunity to learn from experienced birders. You can bird for as long as you like.

I organize two counts: Lonoke is Sunday, December 14, and Little Rock is Saturday, December 20. Contact me at birddan@comcast.net or 501-366-0840, and specify the count. There are many other counts across the state. Contact State Compiler Leif Anderson at Leanderson@fs.fed.us or 479-284-3150 ext. 3151 for more information. Participation is free.

Make your birding count for the birds!

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President's Column

Audubon's Birds and Climate Change

Opportunity, trepidation, commitment, anxiety, and concern are all words that describe how I feel and probably how we all feel when we think about Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report.

This is my last *Snipe* article because my time serving as your President of the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas will be over in December. I was planning to write this article about how much I have enjoyed serving as your President and thanking special people who have made my four years in office very easy, but Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report was officially launched on September 9, 2014, and I was fortunate enough to have had a sneak preview a few weeks before then.

I decided to use this opportunity to tell you how impressed I was with their presentation. As most of you know I am a non-science person. I taught English and American History and yet the information National Audubon provided was easy to understand. Not only did National Audubon present the

information that is cause for concern, trepidation, and anxiety, they gave steps that an average person could understand and implement to give each of us an opportunity to commit to make a difference to influence the future.

This is an exciting time to be involved with the Audubon program, and instead of looking back I want each of us to look to the future and what our commitment and dedication can mean for the environment and the birds we enjoy. Our own yards can be havens, and thanks to Audubon our knowledge and understanding of climate change can be shared to help our friends with their questions.

Come to our ASCA meetings and give yourself the opportunity to learn about climate change and the easy, applicable, and practical tools to help you make wise life style decisions. We can add new words like hope, action, and understanding to our climate change vocabulary!

Thank you again for letting me serve you as your ASCA President these past four years.

Jane Gulley
ASCA President

ASCA Membership Renewal

Just a reminder, ASCA membership renewals are due January 1, 2015 and can be paid on-line via PayPal through the Membership page of www.ascabird.org.

Checks can be mailed to Jim Dixon, Treasurer, 11805 Birchwood Drive, Little Rock, AR 72211.

Membership Level

Regular Membership – \$15.00

Students/Seniors – \$10.00

Family – \$25.00

Supporting – \$35.00

Patron – \$50.00

Welcome

ASCA would like to welcome the following new member:
Ann Baker

Great Backyard Bird Count

Mark your calendars now for the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) to be held February 13-16, 2015. The GBBC is a joint effort of National Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. For more information visit: gbbc.birdcount.org/

Wild Birds Unlimited – Little Rock Offers discount for ASCA members

Mention you're an ASCA member and receive a **10% discount** on all purchases at the Wild Birds Unlimited store located in The Heights at 1818 N. Taylor Street, Little Rock, AR 72207. Call 501-666-4210 or visit their website at: wbulittlerock@live.com.

If you are not a member of ASCA, now is the perfect time to join.

Audubon's Field Guide to the Future: Nearly Half of North America's Birds at Risk from Global Warming

Dan Scheiman

Nearly half of the bird species in the continental U.S. and Canada are threatened by global warming. Some of these species could go extinct before the end of the century without decisive action to protect their habitats and reduce the severity of global warming. That's the startling conclusion reached by National Audubon scientists in a new study.

Of 588 bird species examined in the study, 314 are at risk of severe declines by 2080, with numerous extinctions possible if global warming is allowed to change the climate conditions that favor birds today. Of the 314 species at risk, 152 regularly occur in Arkansas including the Common Loon, Eastern Whip-poor-will, and White-breasted Nuthatch. The Eastern Whip-poor-will, for example, is predicted to lose 78 percent of its breeding range by 2080, and disappear from Arkansas altogether. The bird's numbers are currently in decline, largely due to the loss of the open-understory forests they depend on, and its fate may be tied to how climate change affects its already disappearing habitat. If we do nothing to change the course, one of the voices of the southern woods may be silenced.

To understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them, Audubon

ornithologists analyzed 30 years of historical North American climate data and tens of thousands of historical bird records collected by citizen scientists participating in the Christmas Bird Count and Breeding Bird Survey. Understanding those links then allowed Audubon to map where birds are likely to be able to survive – and not survive – in the future. The result is a field guide to potential future bird ranges under a warming climate.

Audubon's new science sends a clear message about the serious dangers birds face in a warming world. Protecting them will require both redoubling conservation efforts to safeguard critical habitat and curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Solutions include personal choices to conserve energy and create backyard bird habitat, local action to create bird-friendly communities, state-based work to increase rooftop solar and energy efficiency, and continuing work in Important Bird Areas and other efforts to protect and expand bird habitats.

Visit Audubon.org/Climate to understand the links between birds and global warming through animated maps of the 314 species at risk, a technical report, and in-depth stories.

California Birding

*Don Simons, Park Interpreter
Mount Magazine State Park*

In September, after a lot of research and planning, we “Three Birding Gringos” (Don Simons, Jay Schneider, and Shea Lewis) flew to California for some serious life-list birding.

We took two pelagic boat trips on the Pacific Ocean and racked up a lot of birds we would not have otherwise seen. Our first trip was out of Half Moon Bay with Alvaro's Adventures. Seas were calm by their standards, but a bit rough for us landlubbers. Interesting lifers for me included: two albatrosses, Horned Puffin, storm-petrels, shearwaters, a skua, and Rhinoceros Auklet.

I enjoyed watching albatrosses gliding so gracefully just inches above the water, occasionally a wingtip would skim the surface. They are large birds with long narrow wings spanning over six feet. Upon takeoff they have to really work to get off the water.

Our second boat trip was with Debi Shearwater, accurately portrayed in “The Big Year,” out of Monterey. We saw many of the same birds but had an excellent encounter with a pod of orcas, uncommon for those waters. One dorsal fin appeared to be six feet high. At one point our pilot stopped well out in front of them. I could see their bold black and white patterns as they passed just underneath our hull and surfaced just a few feet away.

Other mammals on these boat trips included: sea lions, a humpback whale, fur seals, sea otters, porpoises, and a huge pod of dolphins. Also, we observed some ocean sunfish, aka mola mola, the heaviest bony fish with average adults at 2,200 pounds. They feed on jellyfish and surface to allow gulls to peck parasites off their skin.

I've come to the conclusion that pelagic boat trips are not my favorite kind of birding. Most of the birds are black, white, and gray with very little color. You have to figure out body shapes and flight patterns while trying to keep your balance on a constantly pitching deck for eight hours. The first half of both trips was exciting as we approached huge rafts of seabirds on the way out. Return trips were rather boring, seeing fewer of the same species.

Each trip included some professional birders who could quickly identify seabirds at great distances. To lure birds in close behind the boat they chummed with popcorn, squid, and sardines. At least one of our fellow birders donated his own chum from his stomach. He was miserable for most of the first voyage. I snacked on pretzels all day and did just fine.

For land birds, we visited some iconic sites such as the Presidio, Muir Woods, Point Reyes, Pinnacles National Park, Big Sur, and Pacific Grove. Our body clocks were

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115th Christmas Bird Count

Each year, over 2,000 Audubon Christmas Bird Counts are conducted throughout North America from December 14 through January 5.

What's involved: Each 15-mile diameter count circle has a compiler. The circle is broken into sections with a group of volunteers for each. Each group then tries to find all the birds in their area, within a calendar day. You count the birds you actually see and hear, not the birds that should be there. All counts could use more volunteers. However some are in need of help. Please consider participating in more than one,

especially counts that may involve a drive or have less than 10 volunteers.

Skill and time levels: Birders of any skill level are welcome. The amount of time you spend is flexible. Some watch their bird feeder for an hour, while others go for 15+ hours out in the field.

For more information contact: Leif Anderson at 479-284-3150 ext. 3151 or email LeifAnderson@fs.fed.us; or a CBC compiler listed below for details.

<u>Count</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Compiler</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Fayetteville	Sun 14	Joe Neal and Mike Mlodinow	joeneal@uark.edu	479-521-1858
Jonesboro	Sun 14	Virginie Rolland	vrolland@astate.edu	
Lonoke	Sun 14	Dan Scheiman	birddan@comcast.net	501-366-0840
Hot Springs Village	Mon 15	Chris Cash	c52cash@sbcglobal.net	
Mountain Home	Mon 15	Alice Snyder	alice.m.snyder@gmail.com	
Mississippi River State Pk	Thur 18	Tara Gillanders	tara.gillanders@arkansas.gov	
Arkadelphia	Sat 20	Evelyn & Glen Good	theoldcrow@sbcglobal.net	
Crooked Creek Valley	Sat 20	Alan Gregory	quattro@windstream.net	
Fort Smith	Sat 20	Bill Beall	billtoka@mynewroads.com	
Little Rock	Sat 20	Dan Scheiman	birddan@comcast.net	501-366-0840
Village Creek State Park	Sat 20	Heather Runyan	heather.runyan@arkansas.gov	
Conway	Sun 21	Allan Mueller	akcmueller@gmail.com	
Wapanocca NWR	Sat 27	Dick Preston	dickpreston@bigriver.net	
Pine Bluff	Mon 29	Rob Doster	calcarius@comcast.net	
Lake Dardanelle	Thurs-Jan 1	Kenny Nichols	kingbird@ymail.com	
Lake Georgia Pacific/Felsen	Fri-Jan 2	Leif Anderson	LeifAnderson@fs.fed.us	
Mount Magazine	Sat-Jan 3	Don Simons	don.simons@arkansas.gov	
Holla Bend NWR	Mon-Jan 5	Leif Anderson	LeifAnderson@fs.fed.us	

Several counts have yet to be set. Contact Leif Anderson for details or subscribe to ARBIRD-L for regular updates.

California Birding cont.

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two hours earlier than California time. So it was early to bed and early to rise. This made it easy to beat that crazy traffic each day.

Muir Woods National Monument protects an uncut stand of redwood forest. Though small in acreage, those thousand-year-old coastal icons are awesome to behold. I could just imagine John Muir being inspired during a solo stroll through such majestic giants. It was a Sunday so there were lots of tourists. We still managed to add a Pacific Wren to our list. We overheard one guy complain about having "to pay to see nature."

On the way to Pinnacles National Park we saw our first Yellow-billed Magpies. An irrigated vineyard provided some activity with Lawrence's Goldfinch, Oak Titmouse, and a few others. In the park, massive monoliths and sheer-walled canyons made for an impressive landscape. However, drought-dried vegetation did not confirm the beauty and diversity of wildflowers described in their brochure.

A state park near Big Sur offered a variety of habitats from a riparian area, through live oak thickets, through a

tall cedar grove, and down to sea shore. We targeted and added a Pacific-slope Flycatcher to our lists.

At Pacific Grove we spent some time watching gulls and terns gather in a roosting area. We were there for a while before we noticed a plaque indicating that was the site where John Denver died in a plane crash October 12, 1997.

Our last day of birding was in Crystal Basin National Recreation Area just northeast of Pollock Pines. I was impressed with huge ponderosa pines where we found a White-headed Woodpecker. On a short stretch of side road we found over a dozen piles of fresh bear scat. They had been eating a lot of berries.

It was a great trip with great companions, lots of humorous moments, and good memories. We missed a few target species but that's okay. Jay was the big winner on this trip with 54 lifers. Shea did very well with over 30. I reached my goal that first morning with Laysan Albatross as my 600th species in the lower 48 states. I picked up a total of 17 lifers, which is fantastic for me. EPIC!

Where are we going next? Stay tuned.

Upcoming Programs

ASCA meets at 7:00 PM the second Thursday of each month at the John Gould Fletcher Library (except where noted), located at 823 Buchanan Street, on the corner of Buchanan and H Streets, just off North University Ave. The programs are free and open to the public.

December 11, 2014 – Potluck and Silent Auction

Location: Little Rock Audubon Center

Come join us on Thursday, December 11, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. at the Little Rock Audubon Center for our Annual Potluck and Silent Auction. This fun-filled event is a great opportunity to enjoy some wonderful food, spread holiday cheer, and exchange stories with fellow birders.

If you are bringing an item for the auction please be there by 6:00 p.m. to get the item labeled and in place. We'll begin accepting bids at 6:15. Items can be purchased or handmade.

Bring your favorite dish and join us for a fun-filled evening at the Little Rock Audubon Center, 4500 Springer Blvd., Little Rock. For more information and directions to the Center see page 1 of this issue.

January 8, 2015 – Annual Business Meeting

ASCA can exist only with active participation by its members, so here is your opportunity to provide input into activities for 2015 and help start the New Year off right for our organization!

All members are urged to attend our annual business meeting at 7:00 p.m. at our regular meeting location.

Due to the number of topics that need to be covered, there will not be a program or guest speaker at this meeting.

February 12, 2015 – The Beautiful Baltimore Checkerspot

Speaker: Stephen Robertson, UALR

The black-and-orange Baltimore Checkerspot is a rare beauty found in several northern Arkansas counties, where its caterpillars specialize on False Foxglove. Come learn about this striking species' interesting life history traits that help it survive.

While growing up in the Air Force, Stephen Robertson resided in four states, but spent the first years of his life in Aviano, Italy. He grew up with a fascination for insects. This led to studying entomology in college. He is currently a M.S. student at UALR, and intends to get a Ph.D. in Ecology with the aim of becoming a professor. Research is his great passion, and he hopes to continue doing so for as long as his body will allow.

Election of Officers and Board Members

The election of Officers for 2015-2016 and Board Members for 2015, will take place on Thursday, December 11, at the Little Rock Audubon Center.

The nominating committee consisted of Dottie Boyles, Chair, DeLynn Hearn, and Doris Boyles. During the November 13 business meeting, the slate of nominees was presented as follows:

Two-year term as Officers:

President: Cindy Franklin
Vice President: Dan Scheiman
Secretary: **vacant**
Treasurer: Jim Dixon
Editor: Dottie Boyles

One-year term as Board Members:

1. Robert Bays
2. Samantha Dixon
3. Jane Gulley
4. DeLynn Hearn
5. Bill Shepherd
6. Darrel Meyerdirk

Other Responsibilities

Christmas Bird Counts: Dan Scheiman
Conservation Chair: Barry Haas
Field Trip Coordinator: Karen Holliday
Hospitality: Doris Boyles and
Karen Holliday
Rare Bird Alert: DeLynn Hearn
Webmaster: Jim Dixon

The nominating committee is working to fill the position of Secretary. This important role has been vacant for the past few years and is presently being filled by volunteers. If you are willing to serve please contact a member of the nominating committee.

Any ASCA member is welcome to make a nomination from the floor at the December meeting before the election is held.

ASCA Members Take Flight

Sadly, ASCA has had to say good-bye to three of its members in the past few months. Craig and Dale Provost, who moved to Salt Lake City, Utah in July; and Rob Weiss who accepted a new pastoral position in Wisconsin in October.

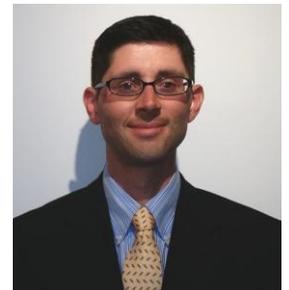


Craig and Dale Provost

Craig and Dale moved to be closer to their family. Craig is a former ASCA Board member and many of Dale's photos and paintings have been featured in *The Snipe*. They are presently busy demolishing and remodeling their new home.

Rob is a former Past President and served as a Board member for several years. Formerly from Wisconsin, Rob is busy exploring the countryside on his bicycle and renewing old friendships. His parents are thrilled to have him closer to home.

While we wish you all the best on your new adventures, just know ASCA members here in Arkansas will miss you very much.



Rob Weiss

Lake Sweep

Dan Scheiman

Saturday, November 1, was the 6th Annual Lake Sweep around Lake Maumelle. ASCA members were among the 65 participants who collected 335 cubic yards of trash from the lake's public use areas and roadsides. ASCA has helped Central Arkansas Water pick up litter since the event's inception. While it is frustrating that there are still thoughtless people who litter, I'm thankful for thoughtful folks who give their time to pick up other people's messes. Indeed, CAW reports a significant decrease over the years in the amount of trash around the lake, meaning we're keeping Little Rock's drinking water supply clean. Cheers!

Townsend's Solitaire Returns



Mitchell Pruitt

Park Interpreter Don Simons reported seeing two Townsend's Solitaires at Mount Magazine State Park on November 14.

First Northern Saw-whet Owl Netted in Arkansas

On Nov. 20, Mitchell Pruitt, Dr. Kimberly Smith, and Alyssa DeRubeis ventured to the Ozark Natural Science Center in rural Madison County. Their property boasts the perfect combination of pine, deciduous, and cedar understory...perfect for saw-whet owls, that is. They set up four nets. After checking the nets several times during the night they finally spotted a female Northern Saw-whet Owl shortly after 11:30 p.m. After weighing, measuring and banding, the bird was released.



Mitchell Pruitt

This is the first time saw-whet owls have ever been banded in Arkansas. Mitchell stated he was so excited he was still shaking hours later.



ASCA Field Trip Schedule

ASCA sponsors numerous field trips throughout the year. The trips are open to all and carpooling is available for trips outside of Little Rock. This is a great opportunity for novice birders to meet and learn more about birds from experienced birders, or perhaps a chance to see a life bird for those who list. For more information visit www.ascabird.org or contact Karen Holliday, ASCA Field Trip Coordinator, at ladyhawke1@att.net or 501-920-3246. Always bring plenty of water with you.

December 2014

Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts

The Lonoke Count will be Sunday, December 14 and the Little Rock Count will be Saturday, December 20. To participate in one or both counts, contact Dan Scheiman at birddan@comcast.net or 501-366-0840.

January 24, 2015

Delaware Park-Lake Dardanelle and Holla Bend NWR

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Mayflower commuter lot off I-40 West at Exit 135. We'll carpool to Delaware Park, located on the southwest side of Lake Dardanelle. We should arrive at the boat ramp around 8:15 a.m. if you prefer to meet us there. We'll scan the lake for gulls, waterfowl, and eagles. A rare gull or duck is always a possibility.

Next, we'll caravan to the Holla Bend NWR headquarters' parking lot. There is a \$4.00 entrance fee per vehicle. A duck stamp or a National Parks pass will get a vehicle in for free. Our target birds will be raptors, including nesting Bald Eagles, swans, ducks, geese, and sparrows.

We'll return to Little Rock late afternoon. The lake can be very cold and windy. Dress in layers, including gloves and hats. At Holla Bend, there will be some walking in tall grass, so boots are recommended. Bring snacks, lunch, and plenty of water.

Directions from the town of Dardanelle to Delaware Park: At the junction of Hwy. 7 and Hwy. 22, go west on Hwy 22 approximately 10 miles. Turn right onto Hwy. 393, which is the first road on your right after you cross the long causeway at the west end of the lake. Hwy. 393 dead ends at Delaware Park. GPS coordinates: 35.295749, -93.271458.

For more information about the refuge go to www.fws.gov/hollabend. The headquarters is at 10448 Holla Bend Road, Dardanelle, AR 72834. Coordinates: 35.163222, -93.093477.

February 14, 2015

Lake Maumelle and Two Rivers Park

February 13-16 is the Great Backyard Bird Count. Participate in this annual event by helping count the birds. Meet at the Jolly Rogers Marina on Lake Maumelle at 8:00 a.m. Loons, mergansers, ducks, and grebes are easily found on the lake this time of year.

We'll then caravan to Two Rivers Park and walk the big field and horse trail. This area has a diverse population of sparrows and provides a great opportunity to work on identifying those "little brown birds". Knee-high rubber boots are recommended because of the copious sand burrs in the field. Bring water, snacks, and your scope if you have one. We should finish around noon.

Directions to Jolly Rogers Marina—the marina is approximately 10 miles west of Little Rock on Hwy. 10. Turn right at the white and black Jolly Rogers Marina entrance sign and drive down to the boat launch area. The marina address is 11800 Maumelle Harbour Rd., Roland, AR.



Field Trip Reports

Karen Holliday, Field Trip Coordinator

Bell Slough Wildlife Management Area

September 13, 2014

Cold and slow sums up the field trip to Bell Slough WMA. We arrived at the main entrance at 7:30 a.m., where 36 birders gathered in hopes of seeing those confusing fall warblers. We had birders from all over central Arkansas, plus a birder from Norway, and a new young birder and his mom. With the temp hovering at 57 degrees and a stiff wind, birds were non-existent. We couldn't even rustle up a Blue Jay until much later in the morning. We dodged the dove hunters and birded along the edge of the waterfowl resting area. This is the first time in years that area has been mowed and plowed, which meant bare fields containing several Killdeer, a couple of Lesser Yellowlegs, and three Great Egrets. In the trees and grass around the edge of the fields, we had a Yellow Warbler, American Goldfinches, Indigo Buntings, and a pair of Gray Catbirds.

We walked the WMA trails hoping the morning would warm up and the birds would start moving. It didn't warm up, and the birds still weren't moving. Finally, after most people had left, we found two small mixed feeding flocks, which included a probable Canada Warbler, a Blue-winged Warbler, a Warbling Vireo, a Wilson's Warbler, American Redstarts, a Common Yellowthroat, a couple of Black-and-white Warblers, and a Yellow-throated Vireo.



photo by Dottie Boyles

Birders gather in the parking lot at Bell Slough WMA

I still hadn't found Rob Weiss a confirmed life bird. I've managed to produce at least one for him on every field trip he's gone on these last seven years. I couldn't let him move back to Wisconsin without finding one last bird. So we headed to the spillway entrance into Bell Slough. Rob needed a Prothonotary Warbler for a life bird and that area has been pretty reliable in the past. Fingers crossed, we walked into the back area. At the sluice gate, a bird flew into the top of the tallest tree that had dead branches sticking up at the very top. Bingo! Olive-sided Flycatcher and life bird for Rob! We then walked a little further in. Bingo! Prothonotary Warbler! Happy life bird dance! A Wilson's Warbler also popped up, giving Justin Brand his first really good look at a Wilson's. By then it was 2:30 p.m., so we called it a day.

Back at the cars, high-fives all around and lots of goodbye hugs and well wishes to Rob for his new life in Wisconsin. We ended the day with approximately 50 species.

--Karen Holliday

Frog Bayou Wildlife Management Area

October 4, 2014

At our 6:30 a.m. start time, it was still dark and the temperature was 41 degrees. That didn't stop the central Arkansas birders from making the two hour drive to Frog Bayou. At the truck stop at Dyer, we picked up more birders for a total of 16. The dirt roads had dried nicely from the rain Thursday night and were passable. First stop was a check of the backwater of the Arkansas River. Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Double-crested Cormorants, Pied-billed Grebes, American Coots, and a lone tern were the first birds of the trip.

On to the grassy moist soil units for a long walk checking the levees, the small ponds and their cattail clumps, and the grassy areas inside the levees. On the walk in, we met the manager of Frog Bayou WMA and David Kremetz with the Arkansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, and founder of the Arkansas Woodcock Association. They were doing a survey of Frog with an emphasis on Soras. They showed us the Soras they had collected that morning and explained they were working on improving methods to determine the age of each Sora. The WMA manager also explained the extensive physical and floral changes they are making to the WMA and why they are doing it. We learned so much! Both are extremely nice, very dedicated gentlemen. Plus, they were pleased to see birders using the refuge.

We made a determined effort to flush Soras, wrens, and sparrows. Our wading through tall grass, skirting the edges of ponds, detouring around snakes, and peering into cattail clumps paid off. We found a Sora, American Coots, Sedge Wrens, a House Wren, Common Yellowthroats, and LeConte's, Swamp, Lincoln's and Savannah Sparrows. Also on our trek, we had flyovers of a Merlin, Northern Harrier, Osprey, juvenile Bald Eagle, two American Kestrels, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, plus Tree and Barn Swallows.

At the back of Unit 6, which overlooks the river and a large sandbar, we found American Avocets, American White Pelicans, Northern Shovelers, Blue-winged Teal, and a lot of Double-crested Cormorants. On the walk back to the cars, we spotted first-year Little Blue Herons, Cattle Egrets, and a huge kettle of Ring-billed Gulls, with a Laughing Gull mixed in.

We made a quick trip to the Alma Sewer ponds and the King's Ranch hoping for Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks. No luck at either place.

It was a gorgeous day with lots of nice birds and wonderful people. We finished the day with a total of 47 species.

--Karen Holliday

Audubon Society of Central Arkansas

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Sherwood, AR 72124

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Trumpeter Swans have once again returned
to Magness Lake in Heber Springs
photo by Bob Harden

Audubon Society of Central Arkansas

Chapter Only Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____

ASCA Dues Proration for New Members

	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec*
Membership Level	100%	75%	50%	100%
__Student/Senior	\$10	\$ 7.50	\$ 5.00	\$10
__Regular	\$15	\$11.25	\$ 7.50	\$15
__Family	\$25	\$18.75	\$12.50	\$25
__Supporting	\$35			
__Patron	\$50			

*New Memberships paid in the last quarter (Oct-Dec), will include full membership for the following calendar year.

All Membership renewals are due January 1 of each calendar year and can be paid online via credit card at www.asca.org or mail a check to the address below.

Make check payable to ASCA and mail to: Jim Dixon, Treasurer, 11805 Birchwood Drive, Little Rock, AR 72211. Please note that "Chapter Only Members" will not receive *Audubon* magazine. To receive *Audubon* magazine, you will need to join the National Audubon Society (NAS).

Address changes should be sent to the following: If Chapter Only Member, notify both Leon Brockinton, c/o Brockinton Company, LLC at P.O. Box 6213, Sherwood, AR 72124, and Jim Dixon, Treasurer, 11805 Birchwood Dr., Little Rock, AR 72211. If NAS member, notify both Brockinton Company and NAS at P.O. Box 51001, Boulder, CO 80322-1001.

The Snipe is published quarterly by the Audubon Society of Central Arkansas. Our mission is to encourage programs and activities supporting all things natural, wild, and free, especially birds, bird habitat stability and improvement, as well as to promote fellowship among members, educate and inspire the public, and champion the highest standards of ethical outdoor conduct.

Reporting a Banded Bird

To report a bird with a Federal Band or Color Marker you can visit the U.S. Geological Survey website at: www.reportband.gov/.

Find an Injured Bird?

For a listing of an Arkansas Game and Fish Commission authorized Migratory Bird Rehabilitator in your area, you can visit their website at:

http://www.agfc.com/species/Documents/migratorybird_rehablist.pdf

The Snipe is sponsored in part by Little Rock's Wild Birds Unlimited.