

# THE Snipe



## AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS

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A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

October 20, 1986

As you can see, this *Snipe* is different from the ones you've been used to. We've known for quite some time that our newsletter needed to appear with greater frequency, to keep ASCA members up-to-date on field trips and conservation news. With the size of our membership list and the expense of printing, though, the only way to do this at reasonable cost (in both time and money) was to change to a less-expensive format. It's not as fancy, but it will reach you more often, and we hope it will be a reminder to you to participate in more of the activities of your Audubon chapter.

**Please note:** The Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency will hold a public hearing at 7 p.m., November 6, at the Northeast High School Auditorium in North Little Rock, that will go a long way toward determining the future of the Faulkner Lake area. This environmentally important area has been under constant pressure from developers for many years, as plans have been advanced for dredging, draining, and filling. Apparently this hearing is part of a new process to develop a long-range plan for the whole area of streams, lakes, marshes, and swamps. Please attend this hearing to show your support for an environmentally sound policy in regard to the Faulkner Lake area, where Purple Gallinules and Least Bitterns are only the most noted of the many breeding species. For more information, call Florence Mallard, 663-8803.

**Also watch for notice** of a possible public hearing on the future of Rosenbaum Lake, the scenic area of old cypresses northwest of the I-430 bridge. A Little Rock developer has plans to turn this area into a complex of condominiums, a restaurant, a marina, and other commercial uses. If the Corps announces a public hearing, please attend to show opposition to this development.

**Speaking of possible environmental disasters**, here are three more to worry about. The North Fork of the Illinois Bayou north of Russellville and Lee Creek near Fort Smith are both threatened by dam plans, and the Arkansas Pollution Permission Commission has okayed a landfill near the Buffalo National River. Don't just get mad about these things; watch for public hearings and attend, or write letters in opposition.

**And here's one more reason** to sit down at the typewriter. The Fish and Wildlife Service is trying to remove private houseboats from the White River National Wildlife Refuge. These houseboats were allowed to remain when the refuge was established in 1935, and now are a major pollution problem, as well as an aesthetic one, completely incompatible with the purpose of the wildlife refuge. Only a fortunate few people who had houseboats fifty years ago have this privilege. This seems like an obviously worthy goal, but local opposition is very high, and the privileged houseboat owners and their friends have pledged to fight the removal to the end. This refuge belongs to everyone, and a lucky few people should not be allowed to have private hunting and fishing houses on public land. Your letter is important. Please write to Rep. Bill Alexander (House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515) and Senators Dale Bumpers and David Pryor (U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510) and state that you support the removal of private houseboats from the White River National Wildlife Refuge. Please do it!

**On a happier note**, Little Rock was visited by thousands of Broad-winged Hawks and hundred of White Pelicans in early October on their fall migration. The most hawks were seen October 5 and 6. The pelicans made both newspapers and the evening news, and one flock of 300 that soared low over downtown on October 9 caused a lot of talk in offices. "You mean we really have *pelicans* in Arkansas?" must have been asked as many times as there were birds.

**Former Little Rock resident Gary Graves**, who is now an ornithologist with the Smithsonian Institution, was elected a member of the American Ornithologists' Union recently. Only thirty-seven people received this honor. Gary has been doing research in Brazil recently.

**The Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts** are on successive days, December 20 and 21. Note a planning meeting for CBC participants at Perk Floyd's house November 30 at 2 p.m. If you're interested, or need directions to his house, call Perk at 888-4252.

**Sort of funny, but not really:** A man who was playing a Barred Owl tape near a nest at Everglades National Park was attacked by an owl. He then sued the park for allowing a dangerous animal near the park boardwalk. As a result, the park has banned the use of all audio and mechanical devices for attracting wildlife anywhere in the park.

**ASCA would like** to give a copy of the new book on Arkansas birds to each of the thirteen libraries in in Central Arkansas library system. Donations are welcomed. For information call Henry Halberg, 663-1812.

**Cathy Mitchell and Roy Stout** were birding at Bona Dea near Russellville in September and saw a Red-headed Woodpecker chasing a Pileated from tree to tree. They also saw some migrant warblers. Henry and Edith Halberg saw a kinglet in their yard on October 9.

**If you run out of birdseed** later in the season, watch for a sale January 2, 3, 4, 10, and 11, sponsored by ASCA and the Arkansas Wildlife Federation. A place has not been decided on yet, but there will be publicity about it, and we'll have good bargains on the seed.

**Two good meetings** are coming up: The November 13 general meeting at the Game and Fish Commission Building will feature ASCA's Bill Shepherd as speaker. The annual potluck dinner at Aldersgate will be December 11. This is a chance to sample lots of good food and share 5-10 of your favorite nature slides with other members. See the calendar.

## Calendar

**Saturday, November 1, 6:30 a.m.:** Field trip to Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge north of West Memphis. Meet at Christ the King Catholic Church at Rodney Parham and Highway 10. Park at the south end of the church parking lot away from the sanctuary. We'll get a tour of the refuge, and stop at Village Creek State Park on the way home. Be sure to bring a sack lunch. Call Jane Gulley at 225-2072 for more information.

**Thursday, November 6, 7 p.m.:** Public hearing on the future of Faulkner Lake, Northeast High School, North Little Rock. For information, call Florence Mallard, 663-8803.

**Thursday, November 13, 7 p.m.:** Regular meeting of ASCA for all members at the Game and Fish Commission Building (turn north on Natural Resources Drive off West Markham). Bill Shepherd of the state Natural Heritage Commission will speak on "A Decade of Preservation" and present a new slide show on Arkansas natural areas.

**Friday, November 14, 7:30 p.m.:** ASCA wildlife film, *Odyssey of a Naturalist*, by Fran Hall. This film will focus on the varied adaptations of animals to life in the natural world. The film will be at the UA Med Center auditorium. To park, go south on Hooper Drive from Markham to the stop sign, turn right, then right again, and enter the lot on your right. Dinner with the speaker before the film; call Lisa Hlass at 565-1850 or 371-1191 for information.

**Sunday, November 30, 2 p.m.:** Planning meeting at Perk Floyd's house for the Little Rock and Lonoke Christmas Bird Counts. If you're interested in participating or need directions to Perk's house at the Lakeside Country Club, call him at 888-4252.

**Friday, December 5, 7:30 p.m.:** ASCA wildlife film, *New Zealand, Wilderness and Sea*, by Grant Foster. A film detailing the lives of shorebirds and seabirds, including albatrosses. Shown at UA Med Center; see directions above.

**Thursday, December 11, 6 p.m.:** ASCA's annual Christmas potluck dinner and election of new board members at Camp Aldersgate. Bring 5-10 slides of nature subjects to share, and bring something to eat to share, too. Bring your own plates and silverware; ASCA will provide the drinks. Go west on Kanis Road (12th Street) past Shackelford but not as far as the interstate; turn left on Aldersgate Road and watch for the camp on your right about a half-mile down the road. If you can't get there right at 6, come out when you can. For information, call Neil at 868-5297 or 868-5806.

**Saturday, December 20, dawn:** Little Rock Christmas Bird Count. For information, call Perk Floyd, 888-4252.

**Sunday, December 21, dawn:** Lonoke Christmas Bird Count. For information, call Perk Floyd, 888-4252.

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