The ASCA members who attended the November 13 meeting at the Game and Fish Commission Building enjoyed the company and the refreshments, conducted a little business, and wondered, "Where on earth is Bill Shepherd?" Bill was supposed to provide the program, but... he never showed up. Meanwhile, Bill Shepherd had his slide show all ready to go in the visitor center at Pinnacle Mountain State Park, and he was wondering, "Who am I supposed to show this slide program to?" It was the next day before everybody figured out what happened. What this means is that those who didn't attend the November meeting will get a second chance to see the Natural Heritage Commission program entitled "A Decade of Preservation" at our December Christmas potluck meeting. Your Editor has seen it and it's a good show, so come to the potluck and enjoy it.

Speaking of the Christmas potluck, here are the particulars: It will be at our usual place, Camp Aldergate, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, December 11. Bring something to eat, plus your own plates and silverware; ASCA will provide the drinks. Also bring 5-10 of your favorite nature slides to share with everyone. We'll elect new board members, see Bill Shepherd's program, and in general have a good time. This is always our best meeting of the year (well, this and Perk Floyd's June potluck) and we'll miss you if you aren't there! See the Calendar for directions to Aldergate. For information, call Neil Curry at 888-5397 or 888-5806.

The Christmas counts are coming up, and it's not too late to get involved if you have a little birding knowledge and don't mind a little exercise. The Little Rock count is Saturday, December 20, and the Lonoke count is Sunday, December 21. For information about how to participate, call Perk Floyd at 888-4252. Some other counts around the state need help. The White River National Wildlife Refuge count is December 27; Keith Sutton is the leader there, and his number is 562-3722, or he can be reached at the Game and Fish Commission. (Last year we had an excellent count, with 91 species.) The Buffalo National River counts need more participants, too. The Buffalo west count is December 27, and the east count is December 29. For information, call Richard McCamant at the park headquarters in Harrison.

Our Holla Bend trip is an ASCA yearly favorite. It's coming up Saturday, January 10. For details, see the Calendar. We'll be taking buses again, so if you'd like to see thousands of ducks and geese and probably a half-dozen or more eagles, here's an easy way to do it.

There was bad news for eagles, and eagle-lovers, in November, when two bald eagles were found shot to death in Arkansas. One was found near Scott, and the other at Lake Dardanelle. There's less of this kind of thing now than there once was, but killing any bird of prey is inexcusable. Let's hope the killers can be brought to justice.

The new Arkansas bird book is due out any day as we send this Snipe to the printer. It's called Arkansas Birds: Their Distribution and Abundance. It's by Doug James, Professor of Biology at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, and it's been greatly anticipated by birders in Arkansas for quite some time. You can buy a copy for $24 if you order it before the first of the year. Call the University of Arkansas Press, 575-3248; they accept VISA and MasterCard. After New Year's, the price goes up to $30. The book, of nearly 400 pages, includes information on more than 366 species of Arkansas birds, plus maps, color photographs, line drawings, and paintings. There are also chapters on bird finding, prehistoric birds, and the history of ornithology in Arkansas.

ASCWA would like to give copies of the new Arkansas bird book to each of the thirteen libraries in the Central Arkansas Library system. We've already had some substantial contributions, but we need more to meet our goal. ASCWA would like to thank Fred K. Darragh Jr., Earl T. Newton Jr., John T. Williams, and Henry Halberg for their contributions. For information about this very worthwhile project call Henry Halberg at 683-1812.

Need bird seed? Every bird-feeder always needs bird seed. ASCWA and the Arkansas Wildlife Federation are sponsoring a special sale of black-oil sunflower seeds, and you can get in on it right now. The seed will be sold in 30-pound plastic-lined bags, for only $10 each. That's a good deal! Place your order now, by sending a check or money order to Arkansas Wildlife Federation, Bird Seed Sale, 7509 Cantrell Road, Room 226, Little Rock, Arkansas 72207, or call 683-7255. You can pick up your seed beginning the first weekend in January at the Game and Fish Commission Building. Since ASCWA is cosponsoring this sale, we need volunteers to help unload the trucks when the seed arrives, and to sell it on January 3, 4, 10, and 11. To volunteer, call Neil Curry at 888-5806.

Joyce Godfrey of the Museum of Science and History has asked us to tell you that the museum has some bird seed left over from its sale. If you're interested, call 371-3621.

Looking for a great present for a nature-lover? Buy a bluebird box from ASCWA. These lovely custom boxes have been hand-fashioned by the skilled artisans of Pinncacle Mountain, the last survivors of a vanishing breed of craftspeople whose birdhouse-building tradition dates back many weeks. Each one is carefully assembled from the choicest select pieces of expensive soft pine, beautifully matched for grain, texture, and hue. The nails used to construct these houses are among the most expensive money can buy. No bluebird box receives the coveted ASCWA Seal of Approval until it has been inspected by the discriminating team of Curry and Slagle. Each and every bluebird box is absolutely, unconditionally guaranteed to attract a pair of bluebirds the very first season it is put up, or we'll say we're extremely sorry. Many other desirable species of birds find these boxes irresistible, including wrens, chickadees, titmice, and the rare and seldom-seen Big Mamelle Ouzel, which sings like a nightingale and eats its own weight in mosquitoes and roaches every thirty seconds. These genuine ASCWA bluebird boxes will be on sale at wildlife films, the Christmas potluck, and the bird-seed sale. The incredible low price is only $8 for nonmembers, $6 for ASCWA members. Get yours today, or before midnight tomorrow!

Don Simons, the naturalist down at Lake Chicot
State Park, will be putting on another “Celebration of Birds” at the park February 27-March 1. There will be field trips, slide shows, a tour of Mississippi River levees, and Jane Gulley, “Arkansas’s Eagle Lady,” will present a program on birds of prey. For information, call the park: 285-5480.

Attendance at the wildlife films isn’t so great this year, and the odds are that the chapter will lose some money (maybe a significant amount) on the film series. In other words, this may be the last year we sponsor the films. If you have comments about this subject, call Henry Halberg, 663-1812, or Neil Curry, 868-5806, and get your two cents’ worth in. We’ll be making a decision on this before too long.

ASCA’s own Lisa Hlass did an excellent job of presenting the environmentalists’ arguments at the public hearing on Faulkner Lake back in November. Lisa reminded those in attendance of the importance of wetlands, and of the fact that we’re losing this vital habitat at a rate that just can’t be sustained without doing terrible harm to the environment. The swamps and marshes of the Faulkner Lake area are a valuable resource, and could serve as an important example of the wise use of a natural area. Let’s watch future developments in this area closely.

Those who went on the field trip to Wapanocca National Wildlife Refuge November 1 were treated to an interesting slide show and to a guided tour of areas around the refuge. The lake had several hundred ducks already, and we also saw a few hawks and some fall migrants and winter birds. Wapanocca is an interesting place, well worth another visit—maybe a trip in the spring when we could take canoes out into the cypress swamp, combined with a camping trip to Village Creek State Park.

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.

Thursday, January 8, 7 p.m.: Regular meeting of the ASCA board at the Game and Fish Commission Building. All members are welcome at board meetings.

Saturday, January 10, 8 a.m.: Annual field trip to Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge to see eagles, geese, ducks, hawks, and maybe such rarities as Ross’ Goose, Peregrine Falcon, Harris’ Sparrow, or Dark-eyed Junco (aw... just seeing if you were paying attention). ASCA will take a bus to the refuge; the cost will be $8. If you want to go, call Jane Gulley at 225-2072 for reservations. No refund for no-shows. The buses will leave at 8 from the Park Plaza shopping center parking lot. If you go to the refuge on your own, meet at the headquarters at noon for lunch with everyone else.

Saturday, January 24, 7:30 a.m.: Waterfowl identification field trip to Lake Maumelle. Meet at Christ the King Catholic Church. Leader, Andrew Pursley, retired enforcement agent for the Fish and Wildlife Service. Bring a sack lunch.

Thursday, February 12, 7 p.m.: Regular meeting of the ASCA board at the Game and Fish Commission Building. All members are welcome at board meetings.

Saturday, February 28, 7:30 a.m.: Field trip to Harris Brake Lake to see ducks, eagles, cormorants, herons, woodpeckers, and anything else we can dig up. Meet at Christ the King Catholic Church at the corner of Highway 10 and Rodney Parham. Lisa Hlass is the leader; 565-1850 or 371-1191.

Friday, March 13, 7:30 p.m.: ASCA wildlife film, The Redwood Empire, by Albert J. Wool. This film will focus on the varied animals and plants of California’s Redwood Belt, including deer, loons, and foxes. 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 second lot on your right. Dinner with the speaker before the film; call Lisa Hlass at 565-1850 or 371-1191 for information.

CALENDAR

Thursday, December 11, 6 p.m.: ASCA’s annual Christmas potluck dinner and election of new board members at Camp Aldergate. 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 Shackleford but not as far as the interstate; turn left on Aldergate 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.

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