We have new leaders. The December meeting was the occasion for the election of officers and directors. You'll find a complete list of them in this *Snipe*, and you'll see some new names among them. New ASCA president Tom Wittenberg and the other officers will need our help to meet the conservation challenges we'll be facing in the next two years. If there's anything you can do to help—from mailing the newsletter to building bluebird houses to writing letters—call Tom; he'll find something for you to do. Come to board meetings to find out more.

Call ASCA's new phone service for rare bird reports and other information. The service, which is run by Dorothy Metcalf, can be reached by calling 758-8496. You can listen for the latest reports of rare birds in the area, and when the message is over you can leave your own reports of unusual sightings. And remember, please leave your name when you call, for whatever reason.

Our Holla Bend field trip is an ASCA favorite, and it's coming up soon. For details, see the Calendar. This is an easy way to get a guided tour through a national wildlife refuge that's home to thousands of ducks and geese, plus good numbers of hawks and bald eagles. Note that the bus is leaving from a new place this year.

We had a good crowd and great food, as usual, for the Christmas potluck. You missed some great hospitality if you weren't there. Dotty Metcalf has some flatware and two wicker paper plate holders that were left at Aldersgate. Call 758-0130 if they're yours.

A note from the EPA: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has sent the *Snipe* a letter thanking ASCA, and specifically Dr. Charles R. Preston and local member volunteers, for conducting a three-month survey at Faulkner Lake and surrounding wetlands areas to record bird species. The EPA will use this data in an advanced identification study of those wetlands, which Norm Thomas of the EPA calls "of special concern to our agency." Thomas says the EPA hopes to discuss the study results with the public this summer.

Although the grassroots proxy effort to elect National Audubon board members fell short, there's no doubt that National felt some heat from the attempt. They changed the way members are elected, putting nine candidate-nominated directors on the board, and, as NAS president Peter Berle says, "a constructive dialogue ensued . . . which will ensure that concerned Auduboners have greater and more direct input into board decision-making." That "dialogue," some of which was hot enough to scorch your ears, will ensure no such thing unless those who care about Audubon's traditional grassroots character keep the pressure on National. NAS has added a Chapter Services Office in New York, and a Chapter Services Hotline so that local officers can keep in touch with National. They've made some accommodations and backed off from their first reorganization plans; now it's up to local chapters to make our concerns known, and to make Audubon all it should be.

We had pretty crummy weather for the Little Rock Christmas bird count December 19; the species total was 79. The weather was better the next day for the Lonoke count, where the total was 94. Max and Helen Parker saw the first ever barn swallow on the Lonoke count. For comparison, LR counts have ranged from 71 to 79 over the past nine years; Lonoke has ranged from 86 to 97.

Some bird sightings of note: The Parkers and Charles Mills found a western grebe and a grove-billed ani at Lake Millwood October 10-11 in a weekend during which they saw more than 100 species of birds. The same weekend, Dottie Metcalf, Wendy Margolis, and Lynn Christie found rose-breasted grosbeaks at the site of the proposed bird sanctuary below the Lake Maumelle dam. Mel White found an orange-crowned warbler at Maumelle Park October 25. A field trip at the fall AAS meeting turned up a surf scoter. Florence Mallard and Dotty Metcalf saw a Mississippi kite on October 31. Joyce Shaddell saw a red crossbill November 16. Chuck Preston saw a tundra swan and an immature golden eagle November 23; Don Simons found a vermillion flycatcher at Lake Chicot the same day. House finches are moving in: Dorothy Metcalf and Roberta Crabtree have seen them in North Little Rock and Don Simons has had them at Lake Chicot. As this *Snipe* is going to press, a black-chinned hummingbird is being seen in North Little Rock and an as-yet-unidentified hummer is in western Little Rock.

The Arkansas bird checklist published by the Arkansas Audubon Society is an excellent way to keep track of field trip sightings, and is a quick reference on species' migration dates and distribution. All Arkansas birders ought to have a supply of the lists; keep a few in your field guide, backpack, and glove compartment. Order three of the lists, send 25 cents and a long, stamped, self-addressed envelope to Max Parker, 2426 S. Main, Malvern, Arkansas 72104. Larger quantities are available on request.

The Natural Heritage Commission has burned 160 acres of prairie in southern Franklin County. Bill Shepherd says this will make the area attractive for McCown's longspur, a species that has not been seen in Arkansas but that winters not far west of here. It will also be a good place for burrowing owl. The area is south of Highway 60, a quarter-mile west of the intersection with Highway 217. Birders are invited to visit the prairie and report any sightings to the commission in Little Rock at 371-1706.

The federal Fish and Wildlife Service has been issuing permits to fish farmers to kill birds that are allegedly causing damage to their operations, including grebes, cormorants, herons, and egrets. It has been difficult to control or enforce the use of these permits and our chapter is recommending that these permits not be renewed and that no more be issued. Our investigation is continuing. Please be prepared to help us on this issue when the time comes. No conservation problem is easy and this involves a major source of income for some Arkansans. How can you put a dollar figure on birds that belong to everyone?
Help promote wise use of the Ouachita National Forest! The long-term plan for the forest is now being revised, and the public’s input is sought by forest administrators. Write to Gary Pierson, Team Leader, USDA, P. O. Box 255, Mount Ida, AR 71957 with your thoughts. We’d hope that those thoughts might include a great reduction in road-building in the forest; greater consideration given to wildlife needs, including those of the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and mountain lion; and more emphasis given to selective cutting and less to even-age management (clear-cutting).

Lee Creek is still seriously threatened by plans to dam it for a water supply for Fort Smith. Conservationists have set up a legal defense fund to attempt to cover what are almost sure to be large legal fees in the fight to save this free-flowing stream. If you’d care to contribute, please make your check out to the Arkansas Audubon Society and send it to Dorothy Metcalf, AAS Treasurer, 3712 Lakeview, North Little Rock, AR 72116; note “Lee Creek Fund” on the check.

A Garland County man was arrested in October for trying to sell more than a thousand salamanders. He was the first person charged under a new Arkansas law protecting nongame wildlife from commercial profiteering. The new law was passed in response to reports that large numbers of frogs, snakes, turtles, and other animals were being collected and sold commercially to pet dealers, scientific supply houses, and medical firms.

Two items of good news on the conservation front: Eleven miles of the scenic Cossatot River in southwest Arkansas will be protected under a new agreement worked out among the Weyerhaeuser Company, the Nature Conservancy, the Natural Heritage Commission, and state Parks Department. The Cossatot is a pristine stream with great canoeing and fishing, and there are several special plant and animal species in the area. And it looks like Oklahoma may get a Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, thanks in large part to the hard work of Ron Klatacke of National Audubon, our regional vice president. Proposed legislation could protect as much as 100,000 acres of prairie.

**Calendar**

**Thursday, January 14, 7 p.m.:** ASCA board meeting at the Game and Fish Commission Building. All members are welcome at board meetings. Information: Tom Wittenberg, 603-0123 or 666-7218.

**Saturday, January 16, 8 a.m.:** Field trip to Holla Bend National Wildlife Refuge to see bald eagles, geese, ducks, hawks, etc. Sometimes we see such rarities as peregrine falcon, Harris’s sparrow, long-eared owl, or Ross’s goose. ASCA will take a bus (or two) to the refuge; the cost will be $9 per person. No refunds for no-shows, as we must pay for the bus anyway. Make check out to ASCA and mail as soon as possible to Barry Haas, 3900 Doral Drive, LR 72212. Call him at 225-5096 for more information. Bring a sack lunch and dress warmly. If you want to go to the refuge on your own (it’s along the Arkansas River just downstream from Dardanelle), meet at the refuge headquarters for lunch with everyone else at noon. The bus (or busses) will depart at 8 a.m. sharp from Park Plaza shopping center at Markham and University. Park behind the Markham Street Exxon station at the southwest corner of the center. Look for the Houston-Bigelow bus. We should be back by mid to late afternoon. Please be on time, as we don’t want anybody to miss the bus! And reserve early.

**Thursday, February 11, 7 p.m.:** Regular meeting of the ASCA board at the Game and Fish Commission Building. All members are welcome at board meetings. Information: Tom Wittenberg, 663-0123 or 666-7218.

Coming up soon: Our annual “crash course” for beginning birders. Look for details in the next *Snipe*.

**OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS, AND DIRECTORS**

**OFFICERS:**
President: Tom Wittenberg, 311 Crystal Court, LR 72205, 666-0123, 666-7218
Vice-president: Gary Cook, P.O. Box 2574, LR 72205, 562-3181, 682-8033
Secretary: Chris Granger, 3 Holly Springs, LR 72211, 227-6268
Treasurer: Henry Halberg, 5809 N. Country Club, LR 72207, 663-1812
Editor: Mel White, 311 S. Cedar, LR 72205, 375-3980, 664-8786

**DIRECTORS:**
Michael Saex, 103 Broadmoor Drive, LR 72204, 663-4923, 376-6671
Robert Lasky, 1625 Green Mountain, LR 72211, 257-4569
Rusty Baldwin, 618 S. Pine, LR 72205, 661-2218, 661-1179
Bill Shepherd, 2800 Linden, Apt. 3, LR 72205, 371-1708, 375-3918
Bill Halley, 1363 S. Ridge Rd., LR 72212, 225-2454, 225-6300
Helene Rush, 1619 N. University, LR 72207, 375-0547, 224-4400

**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS:**
Field Trips: Barry Haas, 3900 Doral Drive, LR 72212, 225-5096
Education and Youth Activities: Debbie Jackson, 1111 N. Jackson, LR 72205, 663-4960, 666-2406
Conservation: Mary Ellen Stockdale, 1101 N. Coolidge, LR 72207, 663-5801
Membership: Henry Halberg, 5809 N. Country Club, LR 72207, 663-1812
Hospitality and Telephone: Dorothy Metcalf, 3712 Lakeview Rd., NLR 72216, 758-0130
Christmas Count: E. F. Floyd, 16 Lakeside, Hensley 72065, 888-4252
Publicity: Wendy Margolis, 781 N. Taylor, LR 72205, 664-8477, 376-4654

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