Monthly Meeting

Warbling Wood Warblers

If, like many folks here in North Carolina, you eagerly await the arrival of the warblers every spring, this is the program for you. Join Simon Thompson for an enjoyable, yet informative exploration of the world of New World Warblers. We will concentrate on and just "do" warblers, learning their songs and enjoying their bright colors. Most of our local warblers should be back on their breeding grounds by now, so on any trip into the Carolina foothills and/or mountains you should be able to hear and learn many of their songs. A few late migrants, such as the Blackpoll Warbler, might still be passing through, and a visit to any of the local migration hotspots over the next week or so may produce a few as they move to their breeding grounds to the north of us. From Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats to Blackburnian and Canada Warblers, warblers captivate us and we eagerly await their arrival every spring and enjoy the spectacle of their autumn migration every fall.

So migrate over to the Fellowship Hall of the Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church at 7:30 PM on Thursday, May 4th to learn a few new songs and warbler identification tips.

International Migratory Bird Day

May 13, 2006

International Migratory Bird Day celebrates the incredible journeys of migratory birds between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central, and South America. The event, which takes place on the second Saturday in May each year, encourages bird conservation and increases awareness of birds through hikes, bird watching, information about birds and migration, public events, and a variety of other education programs.

Join Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and Mecklenburg Audubon Society in celebrating the return of neotropical migratory birds from their wintering grounds in the tropics to their North American nesting habitats. We have planned an assortment of birding walks, fun activities, and programs that we hope will appeal to the entire family.

All programs and hikes are free! Call McDowell Nature Center at 704-588-5224 to register. Or register on-line at www.parkandrec.com and click on Nature Centers. Don't miss out!

Preschool Naturalist Series: Bountiful Birds - McDowell Nature Center

It’s never too early to start bird watching! Here’s a program designed just for pre-school aged children that will introduce them to the fascinating world of birds. Through fun activities and crafts, participants will learn about feathers, nests, songs, and more. 10-11 a.m., & 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., Ages 3 - 5

Eco-Trekkers: Birding Bonanza McDowell Nature Center

Join the Eco-Trekkers as we investigate what makes a bird so special. We will discover how different beaks and claws determine what a bird eats and where it lives. We will go on a nature hike to uncover some special tricks it takes to be

Continued on page 3
**Field Trips and Events**

Please remember to contact the trip leaders several days before the trip. If you don’t, you may not receive information about last minute changes or cancellations. Also, if we don’t know you are coming we might leave without you!!

**Thursday, May 4th**

McDowell Nature Preserve

In conjunction with Mecklenburg Park and Recreation, we will be offering a walk at the preserve along one of their nature trails. Spring migration is a great time to enjoy this beautiful preserve. Contact Karen Resmer at McDowell Nature Center (704-588-5224) to sign up. Participation limited to 15 people. Dave Lovett is leading.

**Saturday, May 6th**

Latta Park- Dilworth

A small neighborhood park, Latta Park in Dilworth, is known among local birders as THE place to be to find birds during spring migration. Our own MAS member-at-large, Andrea Owens, will don her “birder-at-large” cap and lead us around the park on this spring morning in search of migrant travelers drawn to the magnificent tulip popular trees which will be in full bloom. Meet in the parking lot on Park Dr. at 7:30 AM. If you are coming, contact Andrea Owens at 704-651-2232 or insectogirl@yahoo.com.

**Tuesday, May 9th**

Lower McAlpine Grnwy

Spring birding along lower McAlpine Creek in Southern Mecklenburg County can be wonderful as waves of spring migrants begin to reach their peak. Join fellow MAS member and veteran birder John Buckman, as he leads us on an exploration of the greenway trail along the creek as it flows southward to its convergence with McMullen Creek.

Meet at the Greenway entrance on Shandon Circle at 8:30 AM. This is on street parking. Hwy 51 to Carmel Rd.; turn south onto Carmel Rd. Continue on Carmel past the Johnston Rd. intersection; turn left on Harrowfield Rd. (first left after Johnson Rd.) to the end; finally turn right on Shandon Circle to Cul-de-sac and greenway entrance. If going, contact John at 704-541-7433 or linbuckman@aol.com.

**Monday, May 15th**

Wing Haven Gardens

What a way to jump start a Spring week - Monday morning at Wing Haven Gardens during the height of migration! Come join us at this delightful migrant trap in the heart of Myers Park, as staff member Cindy Willis leads us on a morning stroll along garden paths. In addition to knowing the secret nooks and crannies of the gardens, Cindy is an avid and excellent birder.

Meet in the Garden parking lot at 248 Ridgewood Ave. at 8:30 AM. More info on the gardens can be found at www.winghavengardens.com. If going contact Cindy at cindywillis@carolina.rr.com or Dave Lovett at 704-622-2770 or birdsa-lot@webtv.net.

**Saturday, May 20th**

Huntingtowne Farms Park

Part of Little Sugar Creek Greenway, Huntingtowne Farms Park is a favorite birthing local for fellow MAS members Dean and Vivian Sprehe. Come join them for spring migration along the greenway path that follows the creek. With excellent varied habitat, this walk should yield some great birds.

Meet at 8 AM in the parking lot located at the very end of Huntingtowne Farm Park Lane off Park Rd. between Archdale and Sharon Rd. If you want to participate, call them at 704-552-1864 or Email at vsprehe@carolina.rr.com.

**Sunday, May 21st**

Mc Alpine Park Nature Trail

Over the years, the Nature Trail at Mc Alpine Park has rated a “thumbs up” for yielding a good variety of migrant birds during the Spring period. Who better to sort out these birds for us than Taylor Piephoff, fellow MAS member and the “Grand Master” of Charlotte birding with a keen birding ear and years of Charlotte migrant experience under his belt, Taylor will lead us on this wonderful morning of birding.

Take advantage of his expertise, and meet us at 8:00 AM in the Sardis Rd. parking lot, located at Sardis Rd. and Old Bell Rd. If you plan on going, email Taylor at PiehoffT@aol.com or call 704-532-6336.

**Thursday, May 25th**

Huntingtowne Farms Park

Return to this portion of Little Sugar Creek Greenway on a quieter weekday morning for another outing with Dean and Vivian Sprehe. We will revisit the best finds from Saturday and search for any new arrivals or birds we missed on the weekend.

Meet at 8:30 AM in the parking lot located at the very end of Huntingtowne Farm Park Lane off Park Rd. between Archdale and Sharon Rd. Contact Vivian and Dean at vsprehe@carolina.rr.com or call them at 704-552-1864 if you are coming.

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**Tulip Poplar**

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Audubon News

IMBD Field Trips Con't.

a successful birder. We will also make special treats for our fine feathered friends! 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Ages 6 - 8

Birding for Beginners
Latta Plantation Nature Center
They’re short, they’re tall, they’re big and small. They are birds! Come out and join us as we learn how to identify our fine feathered friends. We will finish our morning by testing out our new skills in the nature preserve as we try to identify our local resident birds. 8:00 - 10:00 a.m., Ages 10+

Birds of the Greenway
Torrence Creek Greenway
One of Mecklenburg County’s most tranquil greenways, Torrence Creek Greenway provides a great place to look for hawks, herons, Belted Kingfishers and other birds of the greenway. 8:00 - 10:00 a.m., Ages 10+

Birds of the Grassland
McDowell Nature Preserve
What started as a 30-acre Piedmont Prairie restoration site for rare plants has recently been expanded into a 140-acre grassland benefiting not only the endangered Schweinitz’s sunflower, but a number of grassland birds and other wildlife. Participants will explore McDowell Prairie searching for Grasshopper Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Kingbird, Indigo Bunting, and other grassland species. 8:00 - 10:00 a.m., Ages 7+

Birds of the Forest
Reedy Creek Nature Center
Participants on this hike will search for birds that are often more difficult to find outside of large, intact forests. With over 727 forested acres, Reedy Creek Nature Preserve is a great place to search for Acadian Flycatcher, Louisiana Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Northern Parula, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager, and other woodland birds. 8-10:00 a.m., Ages 7+

Take Action Now!
Conserve Water

Since we are already 6 inches behind in rainfall this year and folks are predicting a drought this summer, we should think about how we can conserve water now before it’s too late. Here are some suggestions from National Audubon:

- WATER PRUDENTLY - only when absolutely necessary and in the morning, when temperatures are cooler, to minimize evaporation. Instead of watering your entire lawn/garden water problem areas individually.
- MULCH around plants for water retention, weed prevention, and to prevent soil erosion. Organic mulches such as compost, wood chips, straw, and cocoa and buckwheat hulls, also replenish the soil as they decay.
- ADD ORGANIC MATTER such as compost or peat moss to your soil to improve its ability to retain water.
- SWEEP, rather than hose down, sidewalks, driveways, and other impervious surfaces.
- INSTALL a drip irrigation system or soaker hoses for trees, shrubs, and flowers. Watering at the roots is more efficient than overhead watering such as with a sprinkler or hose. If you do use sprinklers, direct them so that water reaches only your lawn and garden, not the driveway or sidewalk. Shut off the timer of your sprinkler system.
- ASSESS your plant collection. Remove and discard exotic plants that demand heavy watering, then transplant remaining plants into groups with similar water needs.
- PLANT native species, which have evolved under local conditions and they usually require less water than exotic plants from foreign climates. Choose plants that are drought-tolerant and plant them in the appropriate soil and light conditions. Explore ways to incorporate native plants into your landscape. Start by replacing one or two exotic water guzzlers with native species.
- MINIMIZE lawn area. Lawns account for a large percentage of outdoor water use. Shrink the size of the lawn by planting native shrubs, trees, and groundcovers. Initiate the effort by expanding a garden border.
- MOW HIGHER - longer grass holds soil moisture better than a shorter lawn. Resist the urge to mow at your usual length and wait until it reaches a height of at least three inches.
- USE RAINWATER to your advantage. Capture it in rain barrels or rain gardens and/or direct runoff toward plantings that thrive in wet soil. Place a container under your gutter to begin the process. If mosquitoes are a problem, be sure to cover the container with fine-mesh screening.
What is the Boreal Forest?
The Boreal Forest is immense, spanning the globe 6.5 million square miles across northern regions of Russia, Scandinavia, Canada and Alaska.

In North America, the Boreal stretches 1.5 billion acres from interior Alaska across Canada to the Atlantic Ocean. It is large enough to hold 14 Californias, and it accounts for 25% of the world’s remaining intact forests. In fact, there is more intact forest in the Canadian Boreal than in the Brazilian Amazon.

Ecological Values
The Boreal Forest ecosystem is an extraordinary mosaic of interrelated habitats made up of forests, lakes, wetlands, rivers and tundra at its northern edge. The Boreal Forest region is dominated by spruce, aspen, birch, poplar and larch or tamaracks. Thirty percent of North America’s Boreal is covered by wetlands, consisting of bogs, fens, marshes, an estimated 1.5 million lakes, and some of the country’s largest river systems.

The Boreal floor is covered by a dense layer of organic matter made up of peat and moss that is more than 10 feet thick in some areas. This cover is created when fallen trees, pine needles, leaves, and other plant remains fall to the ground and are prevented from decomposing by the cold boreal temperatures. This groundcover is particularly effective in storing carbon, and the boreal forests of Canada and Russia together store more carbon than any other terrestrial ecosystem on the planet.

Because its icy temperatures, the Boreal acts as a global refrigerator, they are able to keep plant remains from decomposing, thus preventing the release of carbon into the air. The sheer size of the forests may help to regulate the earth’s temperature, as it represents an area large enough to help buffer the dangerous effects of climate change. Their existence to the forest for hundreds of years, using the trees for heat, the plants for healing, and the animals for both food and clothing.

Wildlife and Birds
The variety of animals that coexist with humans is impressive, with mammals as enormous as a moose and as tiny as a pygmy shrew! The forest is home to the continent’s largest population of wolves, lynx, black and grizzly bears, and even the threatened woodland caribou. Over 80 species of butterfly and 40 species of dragonfly live in the Boreal, which also provides over half of the remaining habitat for Mink and Wood Frogs as well as Canada Toads. The lakes of the boreal are teeming with some of the world’s largest trout, bass, perch and whitefish.

The best known of the boreal’s creatures, however, are the birds. According to Bird Studies Canada, billions of birds breed in the Boreal Forest each spring. Over 300 species regularly occur in the boreal forest, most of them nesting and breeding in the vast forest and its wetlands. The Boreal is so important to birds that for at least 96 species, half of their entire breeding populations occur within the region.

The Boreal Forest Region of North America, which stretches across 3,500 miles from Alaska to the Atlantic Ocean, is the birthplace of billions of birds each year. It is critical to the survival of nearly half of all North American species, which return each year to the forest to breed. Most Boreal nesting birds spend at least some of the year in the United States, and at least 20 percent of birds at North American birdfeeders in winter have returned after a summer in the Boreal.

The diversity of birds using the Boreal is impressive. The list includes: loons, grebes, swans, ducks, geese, hawks, owls, sandpipers, vireos, flycatchers, warblers and sparrows

Different Birds, Different Uses
Many birds visit the boreal region at some point during the year, but they use it in a variety of ways. Most birds nest and breed there, returning to the States or different countries throughout the western hemisphere to spend the winter. A few species spend the entire winter in the Boreal. Some rely more on Boreal wetlands for feeding and resting during migration than for breeding. Overall, at least 47 families of birds regularly use the Boreal Forest, accounting for 67 percent of all bird families that regularly occur in the U.S. and Canada.
The Nursery

What the Boreal primarily provides is a place for billions of birds to nest and breed. Of the 400 species that occur within the boreal, 303 are there to breed in its forests, thickets and wetlands. The numbers of birds breeding there can be broken down by bird group:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bird Group</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Breeding Birds</th>
<th>% of Total Birds in US &amp; Canada</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landbirds</td>
<td>1,600,000,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterfowl</td>
<td>26,000,000</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterbirds</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
<td>??</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorebirds</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Species Specifics

Nearly 400 species are known to occur within some portion of the Boreal Forest, including loons, grebes, swans, ducks, hawks, sandpipers, gulls, owls, warblers, and sparrows. Perhaps the best known residents of the area are the tiny songbirds so popular with backyard birders. According to the National Wildlife Foundation, up to a billion sparrows and two billion warblers hatch in the trees of the Boreal Forest each year.

Several birds commonly associated with the Boreal include the Whooping Crane, perhaps the most carefully monitored of all boreal birds, the Rusty Blackbird, and the American Black Duck.

Well-known backyard birds that regularly occur in the Boreal are the American Goldfinch, Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Bluebird, Mourning Dove, and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Sentimental favorites that frequent the Boreal include the Mallard and the Bald Eagle. Even birds with such American sounding names as the Tennessee Warbler and the Philadelphia Vireo are born and bred in the Canadian Boreal Forest!

Different species have varying levels of reliance on the Boreal. Some species, such as the Palm Warbler and the Northern Shrike, have as much as 98 percent of their breeding adults using the Boreal Forest as a nursery.

Breeding Grounds Under Siege

Billions of birds rely on the North American Boreal, the largest unspoiled forest remaining in the world. At this point, much of the Boreal is untouched by development, but one-third of the region has already been set aside for industrial use. The decisions made in the next few years will largely determine the fate of this unspoiled wilderness. Many of the birds we see in our yards and enjoy in our parks and refuges use the boreal to hatch and raise their young, and they depend on our conservation efforts today to protect their nursery for tomorrow.

Opportunity for Conservation

The Boreal offers us a chance to conserve one of the Earth’s most important wilderness treasures. Although only 8 percent of the boreal is protected, it is still largely intact, with 80% of its land still undeveloped. Unfortunately, one third of the remaining land has already been allocated for industrial use, and the decisions we make in the next few years will play a large part in determining the fate of this vast, biologically rich and largely unspoiled ecosystem.

A coalition of industry, environmental, and First Nation groups has been formed in an effort to combine conservation with sustainable economic development and protect at least half of the boreal from future development. The Boreal Forest Region Conservation Framework is a bold vision to protect 50 percent in a network of large interconnected areas and encourage sustainable, world leading development standards on the remaining landscape.

Why is the Boreal in Trouble?

Although most of the Boreal Forest is still intact, less than 8 percent of it is protected, and plans for its future development are well under way. Threats to the Boreal include:

• timber companies clear-cut forest areas the size of Connecticut each day
• logging is currently being done at the rate of five acres per minute
• most of the southern Boreal is devoted to logging
• Canada is the largest supplier of fossil fuels for the U.S.
• the U.S. buys more of its oil from Canada than from any other source
• 90% of total U.S. natural gas imports come from Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Species</th>
<th>% of Population Breeding in the Boreal</th>
<th>Sample Species</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>25-49%</td>
<td>Northern Pintail, Osprey, Sandhill Crane, Belted Kingfisher, Black-capped Chickadee, American Robin, American Redstart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
<td>50-79%</td>
<td>Trumpeter Swan, American Black Duck, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Common Loon, Magnolia Warbler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>80% or more</td>
<td>Whooping Crane, Solitary Sandpiper, Great Grey Owl, Blackpoll Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, Philadelphia Vireo, White-throated Sparrow, Black-backed Woodpecker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 150 species have a quarter or more of their estimated breeding population within the Boreal Forest Region (data provided by Bird Studies Canada and the Boreal Songbird Initiative).
Boreal Forest Con’t.

• agricultural expansion leads to small, isolated patches of forests where trees are more vulnerable and many bird/animal species cannot survive
• forests converted to agricultural land are not renewed or replanted as forests, as they are with logging

Where does all the wood from the Boreal go?
Almost two-thirds of the wood cut in the Boreal Forest is used to make paper, including catalogs, junk mail, magazines, and newspapers. Surprising facts about what happens to the wood from the Boreal -

* Boreal trees provide more than a third of all newsprint used in the U.S.
* 80% of all forest products go directly to the U.S.
* The U.S., which represents only 7 percent of the world population, uses 50% of its tissue paper products – 50 pounds per person per year!
* The majority of mailed catalogs are printed on Boreal forest products - average U.S. citizen receives 59 catalogs per year
* Victoria’s Secret alone mails out 395 million catalogs per year, only 10 percent of which use recycled materials
* According to the Boreal Songbird Initiative, more than 100 million trees’ worth of bulk mail arrive in American mailboxes each year, and catalog production increased by one billion last year alone!

What happen’s if the forest is cut down?
The continued destruction of the Boreal Forest will have tragic consequences:

Climate Change
The process is cyclical: current high levels of greenhouse gases increase the number of fires, insect outbreaks, and storms in the area, which destroy Boreal trees. The destruction of trees releases tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, which in turn raises the global temperature even further. Instead of acting as a sink that locks down carbon, Boreal Forests may become a source, intensifying the effects of climate change.

Loss of Habitat
Logging and conversion to agriculture result in habitat destruction, particularly in older forests and forests that are difficult to renew. Habitat loss, including the destruction, degradation, and fragmentation of habitats, is the leading cause of biodiversity loss.

Reduction of Species
One study by the University of Alberta found that in the years after forest harvest and fragmentation, the decline in some migratory bird populations is as high as 50 percent. Another study found that 72 percent of 300 species of vertebrate wildlife would suffer through loss of habitat and loss of prey.

How can you help?

√ Buy only Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood or use recycled wood
√ Use the highest post-consumer recycled fiber products you can find for all your paper needs, including printing paper, paper towels, toilet paper, etc. A list of ecologically preferable products can be found at: http://www.nrdc.org/land/forests/gtissue.asp, or at www.coservatree.com/PaperGuide/Tissue/consumerbath.shtml
√ Reduce the number of catalogs that you receive by registering with the catalog trade’s mail preference system. Send a postcard including your name, address and email to: Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, PO Box 643, Carmel, NY 15012-0643
√ Follow and support the progress of the Canadian Boreal Initiative, a group of industry leaders, native people, and others that is seeking new and innovative solutions for conservation and sustainable development in the Boreal Forest region.

For More information:

Canadian Geographic: http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/magazine/jf04/indepth/
Boreal Songbird Initiative: http://www.borealbirds.org/
Canadian Boreal Initiative: http://www.borealcanada.ca/index_e.cfm
Audubon Boreal Campaign: http://www.audubon.org/campaign/boreal.html
Boreal Forest Network: http://www.borealnet.org/main.html

This article was adapted from Partners In Flight fact sheets found at the International Migratory Bird Day website: http://www.fws.gov/birds/imbd/
Is it Time for You to Renew????

To guarantee you receive your September newsletter make sure your local membership is current. Check with Lucy Quintilliano [lucyq@carolina.rr.com] if you are not sure when your membership runs out. If it’s June 06 you need to renew your membership now.

Mecklenburg Audubon Society
Join now and your membership will be effective until June 2007.

Because National Audubon has reduced the chapter share of the national membership, Mecklenburg Audubon now must offer a Local Membership to cover the cost of the newsletter, web site and cost of meetings.

Name ___________________________________________________________________________ Phone ___________________________________________________________________________

Address [Street, City, ST, and Zip] ___________________________________________________________________________ E-mail ___________________________________________________________________________

☐ Please, save trees and send me[us] the newsletter electronically.
☐ Please, add me to Meckbirds, the local electronic discussion list about birds and the environment.
☐ I[we] would be willing to lead a field trip.
☐ I[we] would be interested in participating in a work day at one of the local preserves.
☐ I[we] would be willing to do a program.

Return to: Lucy Quintilliano, Treasurer, Mecklenburg Audubon Society, P. O. Box 221093, Charlotte, NC 28222
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Mecklenburg Audubon is a chapter of National Audubon. It is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s biological diversity through education and activism.

Meetings are held at Sharon Seventh Day Adventist Church, 920 N. Sharon Amity Rd. on the first Thursday of each month, September through May at 7:30 PM.

Audubon News is published monthly from September through May. Local members receive the newsletter via postal mail and/or electronic mail. It is also posted on the Mecklenburg Audubon web site - meckbirds.org.

Who’s New?
Karen Clapperton
Cheree & Fred Culpepper
Susan Hopkins
Jim & Barbara Plonk
Ailsa Singley

The Bird is the Word
Add, subtract or change a letter of each word to find the bird. Answers available at meckbirds.org
regret  sniped  martini
steal   gully   robbing
Aswan  stern   startling
scooter Dover   bitter
beagle  howl   carrier
trail  craven   leery
scoot  crown   thrust
stilts  clark   finch

Activities Calendar
4/29  Anne Springs Close Greenway [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/4   Wandering Warblers [Monthly Meeting]
5/4   McDowell Nature Preserve [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/5-7  Audubon NC Annual Mtg. [Wilmington, NC]
5/6   Latta Park [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/9   Lower McAlpine Greenway [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/13  International Migratory Bird Day [1/2 day Field Trips]
5/15  Wing Haven Gardens [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/17  Latta Park [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/20  Huntingtowne Farms Greenway [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/21  McAlpine Greenway [1/2 day Field Trip]
5/25  Huntingtowne Farms Greenway [1/2 day Field Trip]