

Lower Neuse Bird Club

Editor: Carol Oldham, LowerNeuseBirdClub@gmail.com

Minutes from May 2017

By Mike Brooks

President Bob Gould greeted 22 members to the last meeting of the birding year. He summarized the plans for the Camp Brinson trip on May 13th and the trip to the North River Preserve on June 3rd.

Bob announced that Chris Root recently became the president of the Carolina Bird Club. Also, Les Coble became an Eastern NC Member-at-Large in the Carolina Bird Club. Congratulations to both of them.

In Show and Tell, Chris Root brought in a nest from a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Another nest, most likely from a wren, was circulated among the members in addition to a deceased Hermit Thrush and a feather from a Bald Eagle. We learned that the Cool Springs Environmental Education Center is not totally closed. To bird there, you need to make an appointment by completing an online application.

Spring migration has started which means that members will see warblers in their personal ventures and during the Camp Brinson and North River Preserve trips. Thus, Al Gamache and Chris Root presented us with photos, fun facts, and birdsongs of the warblers most likely to be seen in the upcoming weeks. Al certainly entertained us with his renditions of learning to identify warblers (Common Yellowthroat, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, American Redstart) back in 1969 in Wisconsin. The stories, pictures, and birdsongs made for an entertaining meeting.

The LNBC 2016-17 Program Year has ended.

The 2017-18 Program Year will begin in September. Watch for news and information coming your way in the latter part of August.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 5, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Club Officers

President

Bob Gould
288-4615

Vice President

Who will it be?

Secretary

Mike Brooks
649-1200

Treasurer

Christine Root
745-4488

Field Trips

Al Gamache
675-8376

Newsletter Editor

Carol Oldham
876-1620

Refreshments

Captain

Susan McCrocklin
288-5043

Lower Neuse Bird Club

The Mountain Bird Trip: Warbler Road May 6-8, 2017

By Al Gamache



Photo by Bill Jarvis

Here's the very unofficial, official tally of our Mountain Trip, from the BridgePointe Hotel to "Warbler Road" in the Appalachian Mts. of Virginia, May 6th thru 8th, 2017, that gave us 89 species. The highlight bird was the estimated dozen **Cerulean Warblers** (granted a hardwood specialist) that we got while slowly moving up along 'Warbler Road,' when normally on these mountain trips we feel quite lucky to even get one Cerulean. Although, at these lower elevations, we certainly did not lean into some of the more boreal aspects of the Appalachians. And, I must admit I sorely missed Valle Crucis.



Photo by Bill Jarvis

A common bird of second growth and scrubby forests, the **Chestnut-sided Warbler** is distinctive in appearance. No other warbler combines a greenish-yellow cap, a white breast, and reddish streaks down the sides.

Text from allaboutbirds.org



A small bird of the deciduous forest treetops, the sky-blue **Cerulean Warbler** is hard to see. It nests and forages higher in the canopy than most other warblers.

Image & text from allaboutbirds.org

The Mountain Bird Trip Bird List

Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Mallard
Wild Turkey
D.C. Cormorant

Gt. Blue Heron
Gt. Egret
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey

Bald Eagle
Red-shouldered Hawk
Broad-winged Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Laughing Gull

Least Tern
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Barred Owl

Red-bellied woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker

Pileated Woodpecker

E. Wood Pewee
E. Phoebe
Gt. Crested Flycatcher
E. Kingbird
Blue-headed Vireo

Warbling Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Purple Martin

Tree Swallow
No. Rough-winged Swallow
Barn Swallow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse

Red-breasted Nuthatch
White-breasted Nuthatch
Carolina Wren
Blue Gray Gnatcatcher
E. Bluebird

Veery
Wood Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
No. Mockingbird

Brown thrasher
Euro. Starling
Cedar Waxwing

Ovenbird
Worm-eating Warbler
Louisiana Waterthrush
Black-and-white Warbler
Common Yellowthroat

Hooded Warbler
American Redstart
Cape May Warbler
Cerulean Warbler
Northern Parula

Chestnut-sided Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Pine Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler

Prairie Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Canada Warbler
E. Towhee
Chipping Sparrow

Field sparrow
Song Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Scarlet Tanager
Northern Cardinal

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark
Common Grackle

Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole

House Finch
American Goldfinch
Eng. House Sparrow

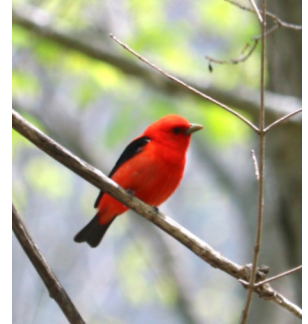


Photo by Bill Jarvis

Male **Scarlet Tanagers** are among the most blindingly gorgeous birds in an eastern forest in summer, with blood-red bodies set off by jet-black wings and tail. They're also one of the most frustratingly hard to find as they stay high in the forest canopy singing rich, burry songs. The yellowish-green, dark-winged females can be even harder to spot until you key in on this bird's *chick-burr* call note. In fall, males trade red feathers for yellow-green and the birds take off for northern South America.

Text from allaboutbirds.org

Lower Neuse Bird Club

The Black-throated Green Warbler: Endangered

By Al Gamache



One of the many breeding species of warblers occurring in North Carolina is the Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*), but the bird that we have in our area, breeding in coastal NC and SC is the sub-species (*Setophaga virens waynei*), the Wayne's Black-throated Green Warbler.

When I first moved here in January of 2002, that spring I was really amped up to find all the new warblers. Some were nearly impossible, like the Kentucky Warbler. Others were a bit here and a bit there, but really scarce, like the Chat, the Worm-eating Warbler, and the Black-throated Green Warbler. But in a few years I had found a small number of sites where I could reliably find BTGW *waynei*. And given what most species exhibit, a certain degree of 'site fidelity,' many even nesting in the very same tree as the year before, I could anticipate where to find them.



An abundant breeder of the northeastern coniferous forests, the **Black-throated Green Warbler** is easy to recognize by sight and sound. Its dark black bib and bright yellow face are unique amongst Eastern birds, and its persistent song of "zoo-zee, zoo-zoo-zee" is easy to remember.

Image & text from
allaboutbirds.org

That situation held for a few years and then it began to fall apart. In fact, for the first year, this year 2017, I was unable to locate this bird at any of my favorite spots. The habitat was there, but the bird was absent.

In April I read that the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission was to hold a series of public meetings around the state (for example, on April 25th at Orringer Auditorium on the Craven Community College Campus) to announce any changes to the N.C. State List of endangered, threatened, and of special concern species (fish, snakes, frogs, toads, birds, etc., etc.) and saw that the commission was to move the Black-throated Green Warbler from unlisted to endangered. Typically, when the population of a species is in a downhill spiral it is first listed as *of special concern*; if this downhill continues it is moved to *threatened*, and with further depletion moved to *endangered*. Here in one fell swoop the BTGW *waynei* was moved into the endangered list.

A couple of other birds have been added to the N.C. State Endangered Species List: the Henslow's Sparrow and the Common Tern.

Spring Migration and Birding at Camp Brinson: May 20, 2017

By Al Gamache

With Spring comes Spring Migration: the influx of the neo-tropical birds. I love to cruise in and around the Croatan National Forest, checking out the sequence of our arrivals, which for me this year was as follows:

March 10	Yellow-throated Warbler *	April 19	Hooded Warbler *
17	Louisiana Waterthrush	19	Yellow-throated Vireo
24	No. Rough-winged Swallow	20	Chimney Swift *
26	Whip-poor-will	21	Summer Tanager *
29	Purple Martin	21	Wood Thrush *
29	Ovenbird *	21	Eastern Wood Pewee *
29	White-eyed Vireo *	21	Orchard Oriole
29	Blue Gray Gnatcatcher *	26	Yellow-billed Cuckoo *
29	Northern Parula *	26	Acadian Flycatcher *
31	Black-and-white Warbler *	26	Indigo Bunting *
		26	Blue Grosbeak *
April 10	Bachman's Sparrow	27	Chuck-wills-widow
10	Great Crested Flycatcher *	30	Yellow-breasted Chat *
10	Prothonotary Warbler *		
10	Prairie Warbler *	May 6,7, & 8	LNBC Mountain Trip
11	Least Tern		
11	Barn Swallow	12	Kentucky Warbler
14	Cliff Swallow	16	Green Heron
17	Ruby-throated Hummer *	19	Mississippi Kite
18	Swainson's Warbler *	20	American Redstart *
18	Red-eyed Vireo *	20	Blk-throated Green Warbler *
18	Eastern Kingbird *	20	Anhinga *
18	Worm-eating Warbler *		



On this Saturday, May 20, on that short, shady and narrow road that leads immediately to Long Lake, we had a surprisingly good number of **Black-throated Green Warblers *waynei*** zipping here, then there, singing and lispings to the ode of the joy of life. One could only conclude this tiny population to be in the peak of health and vitality.

The Wayne's Black-throated Green Warbler has become a SPECIALITY BIRD OF CAMP BRINSON.

The Camp Brinson Bird Walk this year produced a total of 47 species, including many of our year-round species, which I did not list. Birds with an asterisk by their name are just some of the birds seen on this bird walk. We thank Wade very much for touring us through this very special place.

Lower Neuse Bird Club

Birding the North River Wetlands Preserve

June 3, 2017

By Al Gamache



Our June Bird Walk was at the North River Preserves, an extensive wildlife area owned by the North Carolina Coastal Commission. Interestingly enough, my field checklist showed me we had forty-seven species on this trip, the same number as the Brinson Trip. But here I'm going to cut to the chase. Our target bird on this trip was the Dickcissel and we had several of them. Although not as many as the year before, and far fewer than the year before that (2015, was a bountiful year).

And then we happened upon the bird that just blew us out of the water. This birding excursion was pretty much over, and we were on our way to exit these preserves. A kingbird was spotted, but this bird could have very easily been taken for a Northern Mockingbird except, surprise of surprise, it seemed to have *yellowish under parts*. Well! a possible kingbird, a bird from out of the west. At first it was one of those "*if you hear hoof beats, don't think zebra*" and in all probability, it would have to be a Western Kingbird. A dammed good bird, by the way! Clearly, it would be the bird of the day.



An extremely common and widespread bird of the American tropics, the **Tropical Kingbird** barely reaches the United States in south Texas and southern Arizona.

Image & text from
allaboutbirds.org

However, curiously, while getting binoculars on the bird, its bill appeared a bit too long for a Western. And when the bird flew and lighted on a branch, facing away from us, the topside of the tail was about the same tone of color as the bird's back. Pretty soon every field guide of this assembled group was now open and scattered out over the hoods of our cars, and being very carefully studied. Clearly, the bird's tail when perched had a distinct notch. It soon became a toss up between Couch's Kingbird & Tropical Kingbird. Both excitement and bewilderment was now spreading throughout the group, the few cameras we had focusing on the bird and clicking away. Smart phones now began appearing. A playback of the Tropical's song was exactly matching what this bird was singing. My god, could it be? A **Tropical Kingbird**.

John Fussell's face had already begun to show excitement. John Fussell began to dance around as much as I've ever seen John Fussell dance at all. He was beginning to celebrate **The Tropical Kingbird**, the bird that blew everybody out of the water!

The next day, on Sunday, I checked the Carolina Bird Club records and found that this species had been previously seen in the state only three times. This is a South American bird that peeks its nose just across the boarder of S.E. Arizona.