

# Lower Neuse Bird Club

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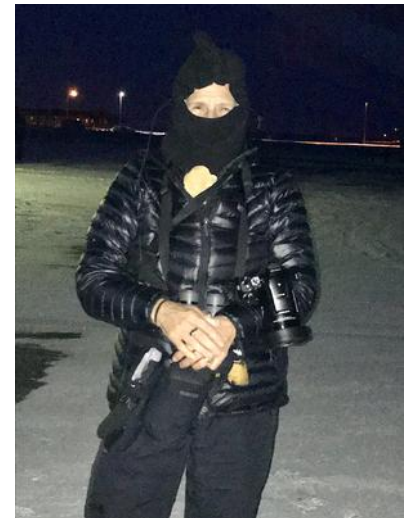
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## Iceland – Birding a Nordic Island Nation

by Christine Stoughton Root

With a landscape of volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, lava fields, and massive glaciers as national parks, Iceland is a 99.8% self-sustaining volcanic island about as big as Kentucky. There really is such a thing as a Pink-footed Goose! After a glimpse of spring weather in Iceland, our winter months of January and February will feel like a blessing. January's talk will be provided by LNBC treasurer Christine, sharing a slideshow presentation of birding and exploring the small island located in the North Atlantic. Looking forward to seeing everyone!



## January Meeting – Tuesday, Jan. 7 “Birding Iceland”

Join LNBC members for our regular monthly meeting, as club treasurer Christine Stoughton Root shares her experiences of birding Iceland during the spring months of 2019. Refreshments for this meeting will be provided by Jenny McDiarmid.

Meetings are held at Garber United Methodist Church on Country Club Drive in New Bern. Program begins at 7 PM. Arrive early for our time of socializing and refreshments, beginning at 6:30 PM. Program begins at 7:00 PM.

## Lower Neuse Bird Club

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### Saturday Field Trips

Mark your calendars with the following dates for this season's bird walks. Most trips end by noon and do not require much walking. Remember to bring your binoculars, scopes, field guides, insect repellent, rain gear, snacks and water.



Unless otherwise announced, all trips depart from the parking lot of the Bridge Pointe Hotel in New Bern at 7 AM sharp. Carpools can be arranged as we meet up. The planned destination may be changed at the last minute if a special sighting or different location gives us a better opportunity for birding. Information will be updated with each newsletter.

- January 4: New Bern ponds (ducks and winter birds)
- February 1: Lake Mattamuskeet
- March 7: Fort Macon SP
- April 4: Croatan National Forest (spring migrants/warblers)
- May 2: Beaufort County (Henslow's Sparrow)
- May 16: Camp Brinson (Black-throated Green/breeding warblers)\*
- June 6: North River Wetlands Preserve (Dickcissel)

\* = *bonus trip*

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### Pamlico County Bird Walk – December 2019

*by Ronnie Hewlette*

The Lower Neuse Bird Club's trip to Pamlico County was held on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. There were two marshalling points, one at the Bridge Pointe Motel in New Bern (7:00 AM) and a second point at Pamlico County High School (7:30 AM) in Bayboro. Five of us departed the Bridge Pointe, driving down Hwy 55, arriving at the High School around 7:25 AM, and parked on the west side of the public library. Not seeing any others, we then called Les, to find out where they were. As we talked, he said he could see us and he was waving. Finally, we realized that the rest of the group had parked on the East side of the building, since that was the first parking area, coming from that direction. The New Bern group moved over to join them, so now we have all 13 birders in one place, ready to convoy over to the Bayboro Water Treatment Ponds.

As we were standing around the vehicles, 3 or 4 House Sparrows flew in towards our feet, and out of nowhere, a Merlin swooped in between two vehicles (at ankle level) chasing these little guys. As a group went across the lawn looking to verify what we had just experienced, the rest of us spotted a hawk/falcon perched on top of a chimney toward the rear of the library building – it turned out to be a Cooper's Hawk (larger than a falcon, long & barred tail, rufous-appearing underside). Of course, it flew away as the Merlin-chasing group returned, but it was a good start to a good day!

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### Mexico's Magical Migrations! – 2021

The Friends of the Maritime Museum in Beaufort, NC, is partnering with EcoQuest Travel to offer a trip to witness two of nature's greatest spectacles – the wintering Monarch Butterflies and Humpback Whales in Mexico. This 10-day natural history and archaeological experience departs **January 10, 2021**. Cost is \$4,260 plus airfare. For more information contact JoAnne Powell, trip leader, at [joannepowell1208@gmail.com](mailto:joannepowell1208@gmail.com).



## Pamlico County Bird Walk

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We packed up and journeyed on over to the Bayboro Water Treatment Ponds on Hwy-304, just outside of town, where we met Christine inside the gate, about mid-way of the two ponds. The waterfowl were not as plentiful or diverse as we've experienced in previous years, but we picked up N. Shovelers, Buffleheads, Ruddys, a few Mallards, a Lesser Yellowlegs, and a lone Muscovy Duck. As we watched, three Blue-winged Teal flew in and landed amid the Buffleheads, a flock of Canada Geese was picked up on the horizon, and they eventually flew in from the Southeast, and thousands of Red-winged Blackbirds streamed overhead.

Next stop, Oriental Water Treatment Ponds, where we would see close to 30 species around the ponds. A single Bonaparte's Gull was swimming in the first pond, along with several Ruddy Ducks and a couple of Scaup. After much discussion and review of Christine's photographs, we concluded that we had two female Scaup – one Greater and one Lesser.

Along the fence, there were a couple of small greenish-backed birds sitting together on a lower limb with their backs to us. A couple of us concluded that what we were viewing were Orange-crowned Warblers. After much discussion and finally a review of Christine's pictures (the next day), we all agreed that we were looking at female Painted Buntings. Either way – nice!

Yellow-rumps kept popping in and out, but we saw plenty of other birds to keep it interesting. Bald Eagle, Woodpeckers, Sparrows, Tree Swallows, Cardinals, a Thrasher and more.

From here we drove NE along Straight Road to the turn off to River Dunes, heading to the River Dunes Fire Station Retention Pond. Here we added a Redhead, Hooded Mergansers, Killdeer, Greater & Lesser Yellowlegs, Ring-necked Ducks and lots more Buffleheads. Winds have picked up and apparently have moved the normal song birds into the brush, out of sight – providing opportunities for yet another day.

With this as the final stop, the group split up, going our various directions. We had a total of 59 species for the morning. A bit cool, in the wind to start with, but a nice day for birding, all in all.

**Postscript:** Later in the afternoon, following our event, Al Gamache visited the River Dunes Fire Station Retention Pond and spotted a Wilson's Phalarope. Wow! Christine returned on Sunday afternoon and reported a Bonaparte's Gull, but no sign of the Wilson's Phalarope. Too bad, that would be a life-bird or at least a state-bird for many of us! You just never know what you will find on any given day – Happy Birding!



## Lower Neuse Bird Club

### First Saturday Bird Walk: Pamlico County Checklist: Dec. 7, 2019

Compiled by Ronnie Hewlette

No.	Species Name	No.	Species Name	No.	Species Name
1	Canada Goose	21	Double-crested Cormorant	41	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
2	Muscovy Duck (Domestic type)	22	Great Blue Heron	42	American Robin
3	Wood Duck	23	Turkey Vulture	43	Northern Mockingbird
4	Blue-winged Teal	24	Cooper's Hawk	44	Tree Swallow
5	Northern Shoveler	25	Bald Eagle	45	European Starling
6	Mallard	26	Red-tailed Hawk	46	Brown Thrasher
7	Redhead	27	Belted Kingfisher	47	Eastern Bluebird
8	Ring-necked Duck	28	Red-bellied Woodpecker	48	House Sparrow
9	Greater Scaup	29	Downy Woodpecker	49	Savannah Sparrow
10	Lesser Scaup	30	Northern Flicker	50	White-throated Sparrow
11	Bufflehead	31	Pileated Woodpecker	51	Song Sparrow
12	Hooded Merganser	32	American Kestrel	52	Red-winged Blackbird
13	Ruddy Duck	33	Merlin	53	Common Grackle
14	Pied-billed Grebe	34	Eastern Phoebe	54	Palm Warbler
15	Mourning Dove	35	Blue Jay	55	Yellow-rumped Warbler
16	Killdeer	36	American Crow	56	Northern Cardinal
17	Greater Yellowlegs	37	Carolina Chickadee	57	Painted Bunting
18	Lesser Yellowlegs	38	Tufted Titmouse	58	Eastern Meadowlark
19	Bonaparte's Gull	39	White-breasted Nuthatch	59	American Goldfinch
20	Ring-billed Gull	40	Carolina Wren		



## Angel birds: It's not just a...

by Olwen Jarvis

**“It's not just a...** do not let me hear birders say that, every bird is special!” said Roger Tory Peterson during a lecture I attended many years ago. We all say it, we shouldn't! We should give more thought to the birds we see and hear. For the November meeting, I took in a frozen Yellow-rumped Warbler and asked people to ponder these questions as we passed the specimen around.

How many miles has this bird flown? Which countries/states has it visited? How many insects “good or bad” has it eaten? Where does it breed? What is the life span? Where does it build its nest? What is the scientific name? What is the purpose of the yellow rump... mate attraction? Do you know the call/song? If the bird had not flown into the window, where else might it have gone... how much further North? For further questions... think of your own!

*Setophaga coronato* (moth eating, crowned) (Butter butt!) is 5” long, wingspan is 7.5” and weight is ¼-ounce! It is the only warbler able to digest wax found on bayberries, myrtles. This allows it to winter further north than any other warbler, even to Newfoundland! Males forage higher in the trees than females. Other foods include caterpillars, leaf borers, aphids, grasshoppers, gnats, spiders, and the serious pest... spruce budworm. It also gleans from seaweed, skims rivers, all wild berries and will visit feeders in winter. It breeds in mature conifer and mixed deciduous forests across the entire USA and into Mexico. On tropical wintering grounds, it breeds in mangrove, thorn scrub and coffee plantations. The male brings nesting material such as rootlets, pine needles and animal hair, and the female builds the nest. The nest is usually 4 to 5 feet off the ground on the limb of a tree. 1 to 6 eggs are laid and incubation takes 10 to 14 days. The nestlings are brooded for about 12 days. The longest known bird lived 10 years. For us in NC, it is usually the first migrant warbler to arrive and the last to leave.

Take this challenge... choose your favorite bird, and enjoy doing some research. Cornell is a great place to start. <https://www.allaboutbirds.org>



Photo by Michael Cheves

Birding Pamlico County



*Photo ©Ronnie Hewlette, December 7, 2019*

