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LOWER NEUSE BIRD CLUB

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LNBC Upcoming Events Schedule

Monthly Meeting Programs:

- ♦ May 2, 6:30 PM 6 Easy Shorebirds to start your ID Foundation (Les Coble)

Meet & Greet 6:30 - 7:00 PM & Meeting Agenda begins at 7:00 PM

Location: Garber Methodist Church (Room 123)
4202 Country Club Drive, Trent Woods

First Saturday Bird Walks

- **May 6 Beaufort County VOA** (See details on Page-5)
- June 3 North River Wetlands Preserve

ANHINGA SIGHTINGS



Anhinga
Pair at New Bern Battlefield Park
© Michael Cheves



Anhinga
Male at New Bern Battlefield Park
© Ronnie Hewlette

Anhinga have returned to the New Bern Civil War Park, near the entrance to the Taberna Subdivision. A pair attempted nesting here last year but were unsuccessful. An Anhinga nest is a bulky platform of sticks, somewhat more compact than heron nests. It is often lined with fresh leaves, green twigs, willow leaves, and catkins. Typically, they lay 2-5 eggs and the incubation period requires 26-30 days, followed by a nestling period of 14-21 days. We should see some young chicks at this location any time now!

LNBC MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 4, 2023

Wade Fuller opened the meeting at Garber Methodist Church. 23 participants were in attendance.

Recent sightings of bird species shared included Great Horned Owl chicks at Fairfield Harbour, a Kittiwake (a pelagic bird that was easy to see from shore at Oceanna Pier), and a Frigatebird flyover.

- Upcoming walks/events - Emails with additional details will be provided in advance of walks:
- Tuesday May 2nd – regular monthly meeting – Les Coble will present a program on Easy Shorebird Identification
- Saturday May 6th – VOA site in Beaufort County – possible Grasshopper and Henslow’s Sparrows
- May TBA (after hunting season) – Camp Brinson – warbler breeding territory
- Saturday June 3rd – North River Farms – hosted by John Fussell

Program: Jura Hill introduced Clay Barber, Program Director of Sound Rivers, Inc. Clay provided an information-packed discussion about Sound Rivers and Riverkeepers. The following just scratches the surface!

- ✓ Mission: Protection, Education, and Restoration of the health of our NC rivers.
- ✓ Riverkeepers: Watchdogs and political advocates for the health of North Carolina Neuse and Tar-Pamlico rivers. To ensure contractors and landowners follow safe river practices.
- ✓ Pollution: The worst issues are nitrogen, phosphorous, and – surprisingly - sediment.
- ✓ Public Access: The organization’s most significant effort besides Pollution: Tar-Pamlico River Trail – want to replicate on the Neuse River
- ✓ Restoration: Include innovative stormwater projects at some NC schools. Both helps the rivers and educates kids.
- ✓ Swim Guide program: Best known program. Water in public recreational sites is sampled weekly. Run by staff member who trains interns, who then trains an army of volunteers.
- ✓ Buyout program: for hog farms in the flood plain.

Contact <https://soundrivers.org> or write to clay@soundrivers.org for any of the following.

- ✓ Become a member
- ✓ Volunteer for water quality monitoring or other programs
- ✓ Have a team member speak at an event
- ✓ Report a problem (take a photo!)
- ✓ Donate to the organization – there is matching grant program for April

Wade expressed our gratitude to Bev Young for the refreshments provided for the meeting..

Submitted by Jenni Ford
LNBC Secretary



Saturday morning, April 1st, the LNBC Bird Walk had scheduled a Bird Walk for Carteret County, planning to visit Patsy Pond Nature Trail, Cedar Point Tideland Trail, and Haywood Landing. However, the weather did not cooperate with our plans (this was no joke, although it was April Fools' Day) and the forecasted winds of 22-24 with gusts to 40 mph caused us to cancel Saturday's trip and reschedule it for the following Monday.

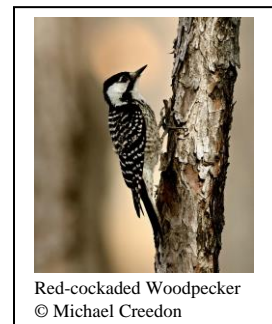
Twelve birders showed up at the parking area for Patsy Pond at 7:30 AM and we stepped off into a blacked, burned-off park. Just a few weeks ago this area and surrounding areas had been intentionally burned, to eliminate ground litter, release Longleaf Pine seedling and control the brush. A Prescribed burn is a good management tool to prevent wildfire and promote habitat that is advantageous to the Red-cockaded Woodpeckers and Bachman's Sparrows who thrive in a savannah type environment. The blackness of the burn was everywhere, (some on our pants legs) but the green of new growth was also seen. Give it a few more weeks and the green will overpower the black.



Brown-headed Nuthatch © Ronnie Hewlette

As we got started, the sounds from the traffic on Highway-24 made hearing birds extremely difficult. We worked our way along the Blue Trail, putting the road noise farther behind us. A couple of Canada Geese flew over and a single Red-breasted Merganser (male) was spotted by those that happened to be looking up at the time. A few birds were noted as we progressed. These included nesting Carolina Chickadees, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Red- Bellied Woodpeckers, and Pine Warblers. With no litter on the forest floor to compromise our view, it was easy to spot the yellow head, breast, and throat, contrasted with the olive upperparts of the Pine Warblers on the ground, as we heard them singing overhead. Brown-headed Nuthatches and Carolina Chickadees were nesting in cavities in the standing residual of small dead trees.

Red-cockaded Woodpeckers were spotted in several locations during our walk. At least four or five were counted for our eBird Lists. As we turned back toward the parking area, we could see the pond off to our right. The water level was a bit low, providing a lot of clean edge for waders. Several Killdeer flew in, calling in flight. A single Yellowlegs joined them. Based on the yellow-colored legs we felt sure it was either a Greater or Lesser Yellowlegs. Based on the size comparison with the Killdeer, we agreed that it was a Lesser Yellowlegs. A Greater Yellowlegs would be closer to the size of a Willet. From here, we drove over to Cedar Point Tideland Trail. This was "THE HOTSPOT" for Osprey! They were nesting in several locations, as we heard their cries and saw them fly overhead with freshly caught fish. In the distance we spotted an immature Bald Eagle chasing an Osprey, attempting to take away the fish it carried in its talons. It was an erratic aerial show for a moment but as they moved away, hidden behind the treetops, we are at a loss for how that encounter ended....



Red-cockaded Woodpecker © Michael Creedon

Lots of Tit Mice, Carolina Chickadees and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen here, along with a couple of Ruby-crowned Kinglets. This is an easy walk over tidal salt marsh boardwalks and through a hardwood and pine forest, along the marsh edge. We played the calls of a Marsh Wren and had one appear briefly in the same general area as in previous years. Working our way around the marsh, we stopped and played the calls of a Clapper Rail, but nothing responded. Played it again and nothing happened. On the third try, we had two Clappers sound off, right in front of us. It's surprising that they got that close, and we never saw any sign of them. Wow, that's exciting!



Hermit Thrush © Michael Creedon

Back on the trail through the maritime forest, consisting of pine, cedar, juniper and a mixture of hardwoods, a Hermit Thrush was spotted ahead of us on the trail. As we got closer, it moved up into the lower branches of a cedar, not far off the trail and we all got an opportunity to watch it. We were not totally convinced that it was a Hermit Thrush at this point, so we started listing the field marks that we could see to prove or disprove the identification. Other options included Ovenbird, Swainson’s Thrush, Wood Thrush, or possibly, a Gray-cheeked Thrush. The prominent white eyeing, dark spots on the white breast, bi-colored bill, and a rufous tail (opinions varied) seemed to point to the Hermit Thrush as our bird of discussion. Fortunately, this bird continued to sit on a limb as we all tramped around, trying to get a better angle to view it. – most cooperatively!

By the time we got back to the vehicles, it was 11:30 AM, not leaving a lot of time to cover Haywood Landing but we hoped to add several species to our list for the day. It was almost noon when our caravan turned into the Haywood Landing access road. We pulled over just as we turned down Loopy Road and stopped to look and listen for birds. An Ovenbird responded to our calls, but we felt like we would hear more as we continued down the road. Northern Parulas, Yellow-throated Warblers, Chickadees, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Red-bellied, Downy and Pileated Woodpeckers were added to the list. A White-breasted Nuthatch was heard in the distance and it seemed that a Tit Mouse was in every tree! Making a couple more stops along the drive to the Landing, we found (mostly by ear) numerous White-throated Sparrows, Eastern Towhees, Pine Warblers, and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

By now, it is after 1:00 PM and several in the group needed to call it a day, so we called it quits. On the way back to Hwy-58, as we drove out Long-point Road, a Wild Turkey hen was seen just off the road. (NC Turkey Season runs from April 1st through May 6th) We had a great day of birding and look forward to our next Bird-Walk on May 6th. Hope to see you then!

-Ronnie Hewlette

Patsy Pond/Tideland Trail/Haywood Bird Walk

April 3, 2023

Species List

No.	Species	No.	Species	No.	Species
1	Canada Goose	20	Red-bellied Woodpecker	39	Brown Thrasher
2	Mallard	21	Downy Woodpecker	40	Northern Mockingbird
3	Red-breasted Merganser	22	Red-cockaded Woodpecker	41	Eastern Bluebird
4	Mourning Dove	23	Hairy Woodpecker	42	Hermit Thrush
5	Clapper Rail	24	Pileated Woodpecker	43	American Robin
6	Killdeer	25	Northern Flicker	44	Chipping Sparrow
7	Willet	26	Blue Jay	45	White-throated Sparrow
8	Lesser Yellowlegs	27	American Crow	46	Eastern Towhee
9	Laughing Gull	28	Fish Crow	47	Red-winged Blackbird
10	Forster's Tern	29	Carolina Chickadee	48	Brown-headed Cowbird
11	Double-crested Cormorant	30	Tufted Titmouse	49	Common Yellowthroat
12	Brown Pelican	31	Purple Martin	50	Ovenbird
13	Great Blue Heron	32	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	51	Northern Parula
14	Great Egret	33	White-breasted Nuthatch	52	Pine Warbler
15	White Ibis	34	Brown-headed Nuthatch	53	Yellow-rumped Warbler
16	Turkey Vulture	35	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	54	Yellow-throated Warbler
17	Osprey	36	Marsh Wren	55	Northern Cardinal
18	Bald Eagle	37	Carolina Wren	56	
19	Red-headed Woodpecker	38	American Goldfinch	57	

May 6th Bird Walk **Bear Grass VOA in Beaufort county**

We will meet Saturday, May 6th at 7:00 AM in the parking lot of the Chocowinity Rest Area on Highway 17 North, and carpool from there to the VOA site, located north of Washington, NC. We will be looking for Henslow's Sparrows and Grasshopper Sparrows.

(New Bern Car-poolers should meet at Lawson Creek Park to depart no later than 6:15 AM)



Be forewarned / be prepared – hiking surfaces are paved and there is no shade during this walk; be sure you have water, sunscreen and a wide-brimmed hat.

Upcoming Bird Walk (Date to be announced / Early May) **Camp Brinson, Craven County (just outside of Havelock)**

We will plan to meet at 7:00 AM in the parking lot of the Atlantic Baptist Association Church on Miller Blvd. in Havelock, so we can car-pool from there. We hope to find Redstart, Black & White Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, Chat, Acadian Flycatcher, Pewee, Black-throated Green, Swainson's Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Parula, Prothonotary, Hooded Warbler, Summer Tanager and more.

Photo Gallery / Recent Sightings




Purple Gallinule © Christine Stoughton Root
photographed at the Oriental Water Treatment Ponds on April 17, 2023. First reported by Sheryl McNair and later seen the same day by several LNBC Members.
(Rarely found in North Carolina!)
Congratulations to all that saw this one!




California Condor © Ronnie Hewlette
California Condor #V3 photographed at the Navajo Bridge over the Colorado River in Utah, on April 12, 2023.
Flock: AZ/UT
V3: Hatched: May 10, 2017, Age: 5 yrs 11 mos
TOTAL WORLD POPULATION = 561 (National Park Service - 2022)
Note: 17 deaths by Avian Flu YTD 2023

Club Business:



Annual Membership
Program Year (Sept – May)
Submit payment to our treasurer
Christine Stoughton Root
458 Country Club Drive West
Arapahoe, NC 28510

Dues are \$15 per person. Checks should be made out to Lower Neuse Bird Club.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

1. Tom and Sue Harrington (Stores CT)
2. Tammie Brettschneider (New Bern, NC)
3. Laurie Kosmiski (Aurora, NC)

NESTING SITES OF INTEREST IN OUR AREA



Anhinga on nest (New Bern Battlefield Park) © Ronnie Hewlette



Great Horned Owl fledglings in an Osprey nest (Fairfield Harbour) © Olwen Jarvis