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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Parsons

Although a new member of this Chapter, I have had a chance to work closely with past Presidents Nonie Maines, Thelma Phillips and Carol Goodyear, they're a tough act to follow, but I will do my best. Carole, our immediate past president, must have recognized that my organization skills are sorely pressed because she loaded a CD with every possible plan, budget, brochure and recorded e-mail or conversation from 2009-2010. That with an experienced and enthusiastic Board should keep us on track. Take a look at our Schedule of Events and you will see an outstanding list of programs, birdwalks, field trips and Events for the kids. We have started a new project. At our last board meeting we committed to a significant shorebird monitoring effort which Donald Ware has described elsewhere in this newsletter. Considering the unprecedented threat faced by our marine creatures this is a must do! Please Contact Don for details.

Please come to our first Program on 5 August. It is a great story about a young dedicated wildlife biologist, Kristina Witter, whose mission is to climb Long leaf pines, band two week old Red Cockaded Woodpeckers, then recapture them several months later for relocation to suitable habitat in other areas of the Southeast. She is going to need your help catching the surplus young woodpeckers.

Ok, enough Smiley Face and Hugs. **Warning, Strong Message Follows:** The chapter lacks the human resources to do more than execute the Schedule of Events and Bird Counts. Education, Historian, Membership and Program positions are vacant. If ever there was a time we needed volunteers to step forward, it is now. I am hanging on for the time being as Conservation Chair.

Our budget situation is grim. We can buy essentials (newsletter, mailing, schedule printing, insurance and state fees) leaving only \$1000 in reserve for the 2011-2012 Board. In the past we have had the discretion to train teachers, send deserving members to Audubon Academy and Assembly, buy materials to support youth education and outreach and awards for science fairs and other projects. I urge you to make donations so we can support these and other activities. Sorry about the bad news but these are things your Board can't fix.



Valentine Weekend Retreat

Bird together

at

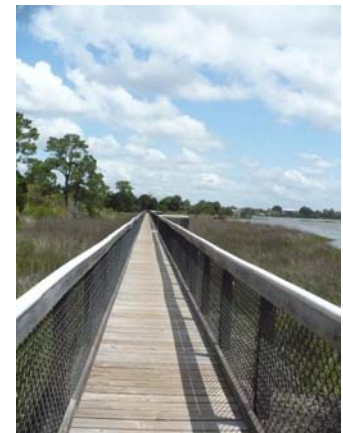
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Schedule of Events:

All programs are free and open to the public on the first Thursday of the month from August to May at the NWF State College, Niceville, (NWFSC) in the Learning Resource Center, **LRC Room 128**. Socializing, refreshments and conservation topics begin at 6:30 PM prior to the featured speaker at 7 PM. Non-members are welcome.

Programs

August 5, 2010: "Red Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) Ecology and Monitoring, Working to Recover an Endangered Species." Ms. Kristina Witter, Wildlife Biologist will tell us about an Eglin project to band RCW chicks then recapture them after they leave the nest and relocated them to suitable habitat in neighboring states. You will have an opportunity to help her!

September 2, 2010: "Red Tide and Other Harmful Algal Blooms." Dr. Allison Beauregard, Chair of the Mattie Kelly Environmental Institute at NWFSC, will report on the occurrence of harmful algal blooms in Florida and on Ride Tide related research she and some of her students are doing in the west end of Choctawhatchee Bay.

October 7, 2010: "Issues Associated with Water Quality in Florida." Ms. Linda Young of the Florida Clean Water Network will tell us what is happening to our domestic water supply, the aquifer, our streams and lakes and our bays and estuaries so we can ask our elected officials to make the right decisions for the people, wildlife and the environment.

November 4, 2010: "Introduction and Photo Tour of the Unique Amphibian and Reptile Communities of Eglin Air Force Base". Mr. Kelly Jones, Wildlife Biologists, will present an overview of our local herpto-fauna with an emphasis on some of the rare species, including Flatwoods Salamanders, on the Eglin AFB reservation.

Bird Walks, Field Trips, & Events

Members and non-members of all levels of experience are invited to all **BW** (bird walks) and **FT** (fieldtrips). You are encouraged to wear long pants, a hat and bring binoculars, a bird book, and bug spray.

8/21: BW Navarre and Opal Beaches with Don Ware. Meet at Uptown Station FWB 7:30 AM (862-6582)

9/18: North American Fall Migration Count. Contact Don Ware to volunteer (862-6582)

10/1: Eventure in Mary Esther 6 PM. RSVP to Nonie Maines (862-9588)

10/2: BW Destin Pass Beach and Bay parks with Lenny Fenimore. Meet at Uptown Station 7:30 AM (863-2039)

10/9: FT Fall bird banding site in Fort Morgan, AL with Gary Parsons. Meet at Uptown Station at 7:30 AM or Navarre Butterfly House at 8 AM (678-1461)

10/23: FT Shoal River Sanctuary with Bob & Chris Larson. Meet at Food World, Niceville at 7:30 AM (651-0392)

11/5: Eventure at Florida Trail - South of Shoal River in Crestview on Hwy 85 5:30 PM. RSVP to Nonie Maines (862-9588)

11/13: BW South Walton Courthouse Annex with Dee Nickerson. Meet at Winn Dixie, BWB 7:30 AM or at Annex at 8 AM (897-2035)

Thank You to Volunteers for May-July Activities

Mattie Kelly Estuary Festival Outreach: Margaret Benner, Kay and Gary Parsons

Refreshments for Thursday Night Program: Gary and Kay Parsons

Emerald Coast Wildlife Refuge Facility Remodeling: Eric, Kay and Gary Parsons

Presentation to Okaloosa County Master Gardeners: Gary Parsons

Kid's Day at FWB Landing: Margaret Benner, Nonie Maines and Gary Parsons

Design and Kickoff of Shorebird Survey: Donald Ware

Red Cockaded Wood Pecker Capture and Banding: Lenny Fenimore and Nonie Maines

Spring Migration Bird Count Coordination: Donald Ware

Okaloosa County Bird June Challenge Coordination: Donald Ware

And a big thank you to all of you that participated in the recent bird counts and the shorebird survey!!!!

June Bird Challenge, Okaloosa County

by Donald Ware

In late April Rex Rowan, Bird Count Coordinator of Alachua County, challenged birders of all other Florida counties to see how many bird species we could find in June. June is normally thought of as a month devoid of migrating species, and many birders stay inside to avoid the heat. So, for several years Rowan used this species count to entice Alachua birders to get outside. In the process they discovered some interesting facts about their bird populations. I accepted the challenge for Okaloosa County

On June 1st I visited my favorite spots north of Ft. Walton Beach and then the West jetty area to see shorebirds. I found 58 species. Among them were several species not known to breed here: Semipalmated Plover; Spotted Sandpiper; Ruddy Turnstone; Sanderling; Semipalmated, Least and White-rumped Sandpiper, Laughing and Herring Gull; Royal, Sandwich and Forster's Tern. Charlie Saleeby (on the 16th) added a young Common Loon. Carole Goodyear added a Double-crested Cormorant (7th) and Buffelhead (1st), Sandra Lefstad added Sharp-shinned Hawk (2nd) eating a Mourning Dove in her yard. Then I found the first Fall migrants in the county STF on the 28th, 13 Lesser and 1 Greater Yellow-legs.

Many other members added to the list, and we ended with **128 species**. This is a dozen more than previously found in Alachua County since 2004. This makes me appreciate more the diversity in our coastal county. This count inspired me to explore far corners of the county where I heard and saw Louisiana Waterthrush and Kentucky Warbler, our rare breeders in wet areas. There were eight species found breeding here during our atlas project 20 years ago that we missed this year. Six other species that we did not find had been seen recently breeding in adjacent counties.



White-rumped Sandpiper



Grey Catbird



Wood Thrush

Chapter By-Laws

Gary Parsons, President

Last year Carole Goodyear and I drafted an updated to the By-Laws. The last time the chapter updated the by-laws was in 2002. We plan to hold a special members meeting on the 2nd of September after our regular program to give the members an opportunity to approve the revisions.

Briefly the changes:

- Reduced classes of members to National and Chapter only, specifies the dues for each and the method of notifying the member when dues have expired.
- Specified that the Board consists of officers and committee chairpersons all of which are eligible to vote.
- Provides a method for e-mail voting for emergencies or quick reaction.
- Addresses dissolution and chapter authorities to be consistent with Audubon National.

Spring Migration Count Results (2010)

Donald M. Ware, Bird Count Coordinator

Thirty field birders and 1 yard only birder participated in our 19th Spring North American Migration Count on May 8th, 16 in Okaloosa County and 14 in Walton County. All 14 of our areas had at least yard birder participants. At 3:28 PM Carol and I did double duty surveying Ft. Walton Beach South and then went back to the Okaloosa STF mud flats to count shorebirds moving through. **There were 9,252 birds of 148 species counted** in both counties, 10 more species than last Spring, **135 species in Okaloosa** and **112 in Walton**. **Forty four of these species are not known to breed here**, 37 in Okaloosa and 24 in Walton.

Party leaders were: Kelly Jones, Lee Blalock, Phyllis Cheney, Gary Parsons, Bob Mckenney, Gene Estes, Istvan Zsok and myself in Okaloosa; and **Bob Reid, Nancy Donaldson, Chester Winegarner, James Hill, Carole Goodyear, and John Walton**, in Walton County. **Dee Nickerson** birded her yard in Choctaw Beach. **I thank you and your recorders and spotters for your contributions.**

The 14 **species found in Walton County, but not in Okaloosa** were: 75 American White Pelicans, 2 Magnificent Frigatebirds, 1 Reddish Egret, 18 Yellow-crowned Night Herons, 42 White Ibis, 12 Wood Ducks, 1 Greater Scaup, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 2 Snowy Plovers, 13 Semipalmated Plovers, 1 Piping Plover, 11 Acadian Flycatchers, 3 Yellow-throated Warblers, and 3 Black-and-white Warblers. In Okaloosa County there were **16 species not found in Walton that were represented by a single bird**: Pied-billed Grebe, Tricolored Heron, Canada Goose, Bald Eagle, Western Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Sandwich Tern, Eastern Screech Owl, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Gray Kingbird, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, American Redstart, Worm-eating Warbler, and Kentucky Warbler

The **most numerous species** this year were **667 Sanderlings, 516 Northern Cardinals, and 500 Morning Doves**. Please mark your calendar now for the fall migration count on **September 18th**.

Conservation Corner: We are BPs Hostages

Gary Parsons, Conservation Chair

As I write this conservation corner we are hostage to the ugliest environmental disaster to strike the Gulf in human history. Seeing that oil belch out of the top of the BOP is enough to make you sick. It will likely take years to assess the full impact. We have no experience with some of the actions being conducted by BP and we continue to find new threats such as the observation that oil quickly gets buried in the surf zone making it almost impossible to recover from under the sand. Nature will do most of the clean-up and it will take a very long time.

Should there be a moratorium on drilling new wells in deep water? Absolutely! We have to find out what went wrong and fix it. We already have heard that BP cut corners on materials and testing to confirm the well bore was cemented. We have also heard that possible reasons for BOP failure were a dead battery and a loss of hydraulic fluid. What other faulty, poorly designed equipment is sitting on the seabed? We may never know the extent of the failures but before drilling resumes, we need to have absolute confidence that BOPs insure very high safety and reliability, on the order of what the Department of Energy achieves with nuclear weapons.

And should we drill in State waters? We already expressed our position on that issue last March. Not just no! Never. The Governor wants a special session to put the issue before the voters. If so, vote No! Otherwise tell your elected officials what to do.

CAS Shorebird Surveys

by Don Ware

The Choctawhatchee Audubon Society has recently established a shorebird survey to monitor bird populations that use our Gulf beach for nesting and feeding. These short weekly surveys are designed to determine the affects of the oil blowout on our shorebird populations over the next year or more. We divided the Walton coast into 9 sections, the Okaloosa coast into 10 sections, and Navarre Beach into three sections. Counts take place quickly during the first two hours after sunrise, before birds disperse widely and before it gets hot in the summer.

Our first survey was Saturday, June 3rd. Ten sections were covered; some by experienced birders, and some by people willing to learn more about the 28 species of interest listed on the initial field form. We counted 867 birds of 20 species. Our surveyors are using a new web site designed for ease in learning to identify birds: www.natureinstruct.org/dendroica. I think anyone interested in bird surveys can sign in to use this site. Please call or e-mail me at **862-6582** or donware@embarqmail.com if you want to see our Shorebird Survey Field Form, Assignments Form, or Spread Sheet.

We have **two beach sections uncovered in Destin and nine in South Walton County**. If you live in these areas and are willing periodically or occasionally visit our beaches to help census our bird populations affected by the oil, we need your help. **We want contact information listed for backup surveyors who can fill in when one who has a section assignment must be elsewhere some Saturday morning.**

If you can not participate and know someone else who might, please help get us together. This is a worthwhile project, in many respects.



OUTINGS REPORTS



CAS Outreach: Estuary Festival & Kid's Day



Margaret Benner, Don Ware, Sylvia Cowen, Gary Parsons, Karen Newhouse, Phyllis Cheney, Shelly Langshaw, Theresa Dennis, Lori Ceier

MEET THE 2010-2011 BOARD

Margaret is a beginner birder, but a longtime wildlife enthusiast. She is a retired elementary science teacher and is now enjoying self-indulgence in her interests. She most likes to be outside observing.

Gary came to Florida in 1958 and as a teenager, worked on charter boats out of Destin. He obtained his Captain's license at age 18 and worked under the mentorship of Captain Cecil Woodward. He graduated from UF in 1965. He loves snakes and hawks and was the 6th person in the state to be licensed as a master falconer. He worked in munitions research for the Air Force for 35 years and on retirement in 2000, he volunteered to serve as Officer or Board member of the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, the Emerald Coast Sailing Association, The Emerald Coast Reef Association and is currently President of the Choctawhatchee Audubon Society. Gary also serves on the Red Snapper and Essential Habitat Advisory Panels for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. Gary is married to the former Kay Smith of Decatur Illinois. Gary and Kay met as teenagers attending Choctawhatchee High School. They have 2 children and 6 grandchildren.

Phyllis Cheney was born in Valparaiso Florida and has lived in Okaloosa County for most of her life. She spends most of her time gardening, birding, and reading literary fiction. She works at home tutoring reading skills and mathematics.

Sylvia Cowen lived in the Panhandle since 1999, new to birding, a member of Choctawhatchee Audubon Society for 2 years, an Okaloosa County Master Gardener since 2006 though my yard doesn't look it, completed the Florida Master Naturalist program in 2009, have my BS degree in Environmental Studies Natural Science from UWF, other hobbies cooking, reading, and relaxing on the beach. I love my indoor cats and dog!

Shelly Langshaw has called the Emerald Coast her home since 2000. New to birding but an avid gardener bringing wildlife into my yard and helping others do the same. A 2003 UF graduate with a Bachelor's in Environmental Horticulture and currently graduated from AMU with a Master's degree in Environmental Science. Owner of Gaia's Garden'n Gallery since 2005. And has a wonderfully supportive husband, David, two beautiful daughters, and 3 (and 1/2—she's due in Sept) precious grandkids!



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Contact Shelly Langshaw if you would like to receive Shorelines in color with links via e-mail.

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- Introductory New Member- \$20.00** **Individual Member Renewal- \$35.00**
- Introductory Student/Senior- \$15.00** **Renewal Student/Senior-\$15.00**

When you join you will be part of national, state, and local Audubon groups and will receive...

- Audubon magazine
- Florida Naturalist Magazine
- Our local Shorelines newsletter
- Inclusion in Audubon of Florida's advocacy network
- Discounts at Audubon Sanctuaries and Nature Centers
- Opportunities for Audubon Ecology Camps and specially priced travel adventures

To join, mail this form and a check, payable to National Audubon Society, to;

Audubon National, PO Box 422250, Palm Coast, FL 32142-2250

CAS ONLY memberships are available and include SHORELINES NEWSLETTER ONLY.

To join CAS ONLY mail this form and a check payable to CAS to; *P.O. Box 1014 Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549.*

- New Member Newsletter Only- \$10.00** **Renewal Member Newsletter Only- \$10.00**

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