



# the RAVEN'S NEST

ELISHA MITCHELL AUDUBON SOCIETY

PO Box 18711, Asheville, NC 28814

[www.main.nc.us/emas/](http://www.main.nc.us/emas/) ✉ [EMASNC@aol.com](mailto:EMASNC@aol.com)

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER - 2009

### GENERAL MEETING MOVED TO REUTER CENTER!

NOVEMBER 17, EMAS General Meetings will be held in Room 206 of the Reuter Center at UNCA. We think you'll like this new and spacious facility with parking right outside the door.

#### Directions to the Reuter Center:

IF YOU ARE COMING FROM I-19/23/26, take exit 25, the UNCA exit. If you are coming from the north, take a left at the light at the end of the exit ramp, and take another left at the next light onto Campus Drive. If you are coming from the south, take a right at the stop sign at the end of the exit ramp, and take a left at the first light onto Campus Drive.

IF YOU ARE COMING FROM MERRIMON AVENUE, take W.T. Weaver Blvd. west, pass the main UNCA entrance as you go straight through the traffic circle, pass the Botanical Gardens of Asheville on your right and take a right at the light onto Broadway. Go 0.2 mile to the next light and take a right onto Campus Drive.

ONCE YOU ARE ON CAMPUS DRIVE, go 0.5 mile going over 3 or 4 speed bumps to the top of the hill. At the stop sign take a left (there is a small sign pointing left to the Reuter Center), and go less than 100 yards to the driveway on the right, which is the entrance to the Reuter Center parking lot. Drive straight into the **UPPER PARKING LOT**. Enter the Reuter Center through the doors at the large overhang. Room 206 is on your left.

If the upper parking lot should be full, continue through the upper parking lot and drive around to the lower parking lot. Try to enter the building there, and use either the elevator or the very long staircase to get to the second floor. Sometimes they lock the lower doors, in which case you would have to walk around to the upper entrance.

For more info about the Reuter Center, see <http://unca.edu/ncccr/about/directions/directions.htm>  
Let us know how you like this meeting place.

### CALENDARS ARE HERE!

Great Christmas gifts! Audubon calendars can be purchased at the general meeting, or order them from Esther Pardue or any board member (phone numbers/email on the back page).

### WANT TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE?

Sign up for National Audubon advisories and e-alerts at [audubonaction@audubon.org](mailto:audubonaction@audubon.org).

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

See Page 2 for Details

#### NOVEMBER

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 4  | Board Meeting: Botanical Gardens<br>All members welcome!  | 6:00 pm |
| 7  | Beaver Lake Bird Walk<br>Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary   | 9:00 am |
| 14 | Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary Work Day   | 9:00 am |
| 15 | Rain Day Alternative<br>Contact: <a href="mailto:goedsche@mindspring.com">goedsche@mindspring.com</a> | 2:00 pm |
| 17 | General Meeting: <b>Reuter Center</b><br><i>How We Help to Mitigate Global Climate Change</i>         | 7:00 pm |
| 21 | Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary Work Day   | 9:00 am |
| 22 | Rain Day Alternative<br>Contact: <a href="mailto:goedsche@mindspring.com">goedsche@mindspring.com</a> | 2:00 pm |

#### DECEMBER

- |    |   |         |
|----|---|---------|
| 5  | Beaver Lake Bird Walk<br>Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary | 9:00 am |
| 20 | Buncombe County Christmas Bird Count                |         |

#### JANUARY

- |   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 2 | Beaver Lake Bird Walk<br>Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary | 9:00 am |
|---|---|---------|

#### FEBRUARY

- |       |   |         |
|-------|---|---------|
| 3     | Beaver Lake Bird Walk<br>Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary | 9:00 am |
| 12-15 | Great Backyard Bird Count                           |         |

***THERE WILL BE NO GENERAL MEETINGS IN  
DECEMBER, JANUARY, OR FEBRUARY***

**CHANGE IN MEETING PLACE  
IN NOVEMBER—SEE AT LEFT**

(Thank You, John Weakly)

### BEAVER LAKE "BIRD BULLETIN BOARD"

Call in your sightings to any of the people listed below: Sally (645-5369), Eileen (251-1114), or Simon (253-4247), or e-mail them to me at [travel@birdventures.com](mailto:travel@birdventures.com).

The next Beaver Lake walks will be at 9:00 a.m. on 7 November, 5 December, and 2 January. Beaver Lake Bird Walks are scheduled the first Saturday of each month. To beat summer's heat and to catch the birds when they are most active, we begin at 8 a.m. during April-September. In October, we revert to our 9 a.m. starting time. As usual we meet at the gazebo at the sanctuary on Merrimon Avenue. Results of each bird walk will be posted on our web site and tallied for the total number of species seen for the year.

*Simon Thompson, Field Trip Coordinator*

### JACKSON PARK BIRDWALKS, HENDERSONVILLE

Entrance to Park is on Harris Street off Four Seasons Boulevard (Highway 64) or Glover Street off Hwy 176 south. Call 828-692-0385. *Jackson Park bird walks, sponsored by ECO and Henderson County Bird Club, are held 9 a.m.-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of every month. Meet in front of the Henderson County Parks and Administration Building in Jackson Park.*

### LATEST WNC BIRD SIGHTINGS ON EMAS WEB SITE

The EMAS Web site now has a page for news on the latest WNC bird sightings: <http://www.main.nc.us/emas/birdsightings.html> (or click on "Birding" under the banner, then click on "Latest WNC Bird Sightings" under "Bird Bulletin Board"). In the left-hand column you'll see the dates of the postings. Click on one of them, and you'll find photos or a narrative about the sighting. Results of the monthly bird walks at Beaver Lake (first Saturday of the month) are also posted here.

### THE 110TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: CITIZEN SCIENCE IN ACTION

The longest running Citizen Science event in the world, Audubon's annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will take place **December 14 – January 5**. Thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas, families and students, birders and scientists, armed with binoculars, bird guides and checklists go out on an annual mission, often before dawn. For over 100 years, the desire to make a difference and experience the beauty of nature has driven dedicated people to leave the comfort of a warm house during the Holiday season.

Each of the citizen scientists who annually braves snow, wind, or rain to take part in the Christmas Bird Count makes an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action.

This year the Buncombe County Christmas Bird Count will be held on December 20. Contact Marilyn Westphal [mjwestph@unca.edu](mailto:mjwestph@unca.edu). Henderson County CBC will be January 3. Contact Wayne Forsythe [wforsythe@morrisbb.net](mailto:wforsythe@morrisbb.net). Haywood County January 2. Contact Bob Olthoff [olthoff@bellsouth.net](mailto:olthoff@bellsouth.net). Tryon December 19. Contact Simon Thompson [travel@birdventures.com](mailto:travel@birdventures.com)

### NOVEMBER PROGRAM

**Dr. Edward Hauser**

*How We Help to Mitigate Global Climate Change*

**Tuesday, November 17, 7:00 PM**

**Reuter Center, Room 206**

**NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION!**

Ed Hauser is an ecologist and EMAS board member. This PowerPoint presentation will illustrate how Ed and Vickie Hauser built an energy star home and installed solar voltaic panels so as to have a carbon neutral foot print and an annual minus energy bill. The house was first built in 2003 and the solar panels were added in 2007. Building techniques, energy conservation practices, and cost data will be given, along with a brief overview of the latest climate change data.

### VOLUNTEER NOW FOR SANCTUARY WORKDAYS

Volunteers are needed to help fight back invasive plants, pick up trash, and move gravel at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary.

Workdays will be held on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, from 9 a.m. to noon. The rain dates are the following day and run from 2 to 5 p.m.

Here are the dates for the fall, with rain dates in parentheses: 14 (15) and 21 (22) November.

Please come and help out! Bring work gloves and loppers, pruners, snippers, etc., if you have them. We always have a good time and leave the Sanctuary with a real sense of accomplishment. And the Sanctuary looks better, too. For more information contact Charlotte Goedsche:

[goedsche@mindspring.com](mailto:goedsche@mindspring.com) or 828-645-8675

### HOG ISLAND CAMP IS BACK!

After a one-year hiatus, Audubon will again be offering week-long summer programs for adults and teens at the Hog Island Camp in Maine. Registration will begin on November 9, 2009 for programs listed below. Featured instructors will include Steve Kress, Kenn Kauffman, Steve Weisenthal and Audubon staff.

Registration now open for:

- Exploritas program #18493: **Maine Seabird Biology and Conservation'** (May 30 through June 4, 2010)

Learn more and register for the program at <http://www.projectpuffin.org/OrnithCamps.html>. Space is limited so prepare to register early!

Other programs offered in 2010:

- **Field Ornithology I** (June 13-18)
- **Field Ornithology II** (June 20-25)
- **Maine Coast Birding Studies for Teens** (June 20-25)
- **Maine Seabird Biology & Conservation** (Sept 12-17)

Fellow birders:

Have you heard what's being proposed for Stecoah Gap? NC DOT's initiative, Corridor K, outlines a new 4-lane road from Stecoah on NC 28 to Robbinsville via US 129 that includes a 2800-foot-long tunnel under Stecoah Gap.

Many of us make an annual pilgrimage to Stecoah Gap each spring and fall to observe the migration of songbirds. What will the Gap look like if plans move forward with highway construction? Stecoah Gap is listed in the recently published *NC Birding Trails –Mountain Trails Section*. Birders come to view the numerous species of warblers, vireos, scarlet tanagers, thrushes, and other passerines. Of the over 20 species of warblers that can be observed at Stecoah Gap, one-fourth are listed on the Audubon Society's *Watchlist in 2007* as species in serious decline, such as the "Golden-winged Warbler (**Red\*\***), Blue-winged Warbler (occasional) (**Yellow\***),... Cerulean Warbler (**Yellow\***),... Kentucky Warbler (**Yellow\***),... Canada Warbler (**Yellow\***),... Wood Thrush (**Yellow\***). (\*\*RED: species declining rapidly; of global conservation concern. \*YELLOW: species either declining or rare; of national conservation concern.)

Do you know that in the Corridor Draft Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (DSFEIS) there is little mention of bird migration at the Gap? The bird survey done by DOT in the summer of 1998 turned up only one warbler species – an Ovenbird. The DSFEIS does mention that the Cerulean Warbler is listed as a Federal Species of Concern, yet a survey done by USFS did not turn up any of this species.

**THIS NOTE ASKS YOUR HELP.** Take a few minutes to send your concerns, questions, and comments (emails preferred) by December 4, 2009 regarding the birding at Stecoah. Obviously, NC DOT is unaware of the significance of the site. Tell NC DOT about the birding at Stecoah. Ask what they plan to do to prevent further environmental degradation there. Ask why very little about birds is in their DSFEIS at Stecoah Gap. Remind them of the numbers of species in decline that use this as a flyway. Ask what will happen to these passerines during construction? There will be heavy equipment noise, blasting for the tunnel below the gap, etc. The more comments that the birding community sends, the more NC DOT is likely to look into our concerns.

Project Title: US 74 Relocation from US 129 in Robbinsville to NC 28 in Stecoah (Tip No. A-9B&C)  
Send comments to:

Ed Lewis, Human Environment Unit  
1598 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1598  
Email: [elewis@ncdot.gov](mailto:elewis@ncdot.gov)

For more information on the project:  
<http://www.ncdot.gov/projects/US74Relocation/>

Steve Yurkovich  
Cullowhee, NC

## WHAT'S THAT BIRD DOING? EXPLORE BIRD BEHAVIOR WITH NEW ONLINE COURSE

Why does a Red-winged Blackbird flare its colorful wing patches? What does it mean when ducks bob their heads? Is the way a bird arranges its feathers significant?

Answering these questions gets to the heart of bird behavior, which is all about sex and survival. Anyone can explore fascinating patterns of bird behavior in a new 5-week online course from the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#). The goal of "Investigating Behavior: Courtship and Rivalry in Birds" is to help people learn how to observe and interpret some of the ways birds are communicating with their behavior. Some of those behaviors are literally a matter of life and death.

Not your typical text-heavy, lecture-based tutorial, it's packed with multimedia and interactive activities that make this course unlike anything else available, a learning environment that's friendly and accessible to everyone. Course multimedia content comes from the Cornell Lab's [Macaulay Library](#), the largest archive of animal sounds in the world, with a growing video collection.



The course explores a basic principle of bird behavior each week, featuring common and exotic species. From Florida Scrub-Jay families in which siblings help raise new chicks, to the jaw-dropping plumages and bizarre dances of the birds-of-paradise, the

goal is to help students develop new skills in observing birds and be able to apply what they've learned anywhere.

Says course coauthor Kevin McGowan, "If you pay attention, there are a lot of things happening—you can look at small movements, see how movements are put together, and figure out what it all means."

As part of the course, students participate in online discussions with the instructor and classmates. Interactive activities include trying to think like a bird—making behavioral decisions that have a direct impact on survival.

The online course was developed in partnership with [eCornell](#), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cornell University. For more information about the course and to register for the 5-week session **beginning November 11**, visit [www.ecornell.com/birds](http://www.ecornell.com/birds) -- **be sure to watch the video** with more about the course contents. Another session will begin **January 6, 2010**. The cost of the course is \$295 (\$255 for Cornell Lab members) with a \$30 dollar registration fee. To receive the Cornell Lab member discount, sign up by phone at (866) 326-7635.

**Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society is to promote an awareness and appreciation of nature, to preserve and protect wildlife and natural ecosystems, and to encourage responsible environmental stewardship.

**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

An **Introductory \$20.00 Membership** is available. Make your check payable to National Audubon Society, and include complete name, address, and zip code. Mail check and information to:

Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society  
PO Box 18711  
Asheville, NC 28814-0711

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**the RAVEN'S NEST — NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009**

**Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society**

**OFFICERS:** *President*, Charlotte Goedsche (645-8675); *Vice-President*, Gail Lankford; *Secretary*, Marilyn Westphal (891-9896); *Treasurer*, Janene Donovan (253-7395).

**AT-LARGE MEMBERS:** Doug Johnston, Ray Raymond, Betty Anne Schenk, Tom Tribble.

**COMMITTEES:** *Publicity*, Marilyn Kolton (259-9461), Len Pardue (254-7618); *Field Trips*, Simon Thompson (253-4247), Marilyn Kolton (259-9461); *Membership*, Janene Donovan (253-7395); *Conservation, Open; Education*, Gail Lankford; *Newsletter Editor*, Dayna Feist (254-7893); *Wetlands Coordinator*, Ed Hauser (236-1992); *Beaver Lake Sanctuary Coordinator*, Carl Nyberg (273-9898).

**SPECIAL BIRD SEED DELIVERY**

We introduce a special service for EMAS members—supplying bird seed every month to members who feed birds, helping save fuel and a journey to South Asheville.

Every 3rd Tuesday of the month, we will deliver fresh bags of bird seed to the EMAS meeting at the Asheville Botanical Gardens. All you need do is to let us know in advance what seed you want and how many bags of each. You can bring a check, cash (exact change, please) or give us a credit card number. Call us or e-mail us. The following varieties are available in 20-lb bags: Black Oil Sunflower Seed, Sunflower Chips (hearts), Safflower. Blends: Choice, Deluxe, Supreme, Finch Mix, Woodpecker Mix, Southeast No Mess, No Mess, Wildlife Blend.

Thistle: 5 lbs, 10 lbs, 20 lbs—Please order 20-lb bags of thistle 1 week ahead of time

Peanuts (in shell) 5 lbs; Peanuts splits: 5 lbs, 20 lbs

For a full description of the seed blends, visit our website: [www.asheville.wbu.com](http://www.asheville.wbu.com). Prices subject to change—confirm by calling the store on 828.687.9433. Please let us know if you would like any other products brought up to the meeting.

Simon Thompson & Chris Jaquette

**Volunteer Corner**

*Ever notice that the same names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses keep popping up in announcements and articles? STOP the proliferation of these same numbers . . . over and over again ! Add YOURS to the list!*

**SANCTUARY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Want to expand and look after a native wildflower garden, keep invasive weeds and vines from overtaking newly planted shrubs, install and maintain nest boxes for bluebirds and other birds, watch after a Purple Martin condo, and help maintain Asheville's only bird sanctuary?

Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary needs you for any one of those jobs or more. Get in touch with Carl Nyberg, Sanctuary Coordinator (273-9898).



**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:**

The deadline for submitting articles, information, comments, etc., to the newsletter is the 15th of the month. Send to Dayna Feist at the Gatehouse, 265 Charlotte Street, Asheville, NC 28801; fax (828) 254-7894; email [EMASNC@aol.com](mailto:EMASNC@aol.com); or call her at 254 - 7893 (you can leave a message if you wish).