



Carolina Bird Club  
www.carolinabirdclub.org

# CBC Newsletter

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*For members of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.,  
Ornithological Society of the Carolinas*

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## **CBC 2021 Virtual Spring Meeting and Birding Weekend & eBird Checklist Submission Contest Winners**

This past weekend, April 29 – May 1, 2021 wasn't exactly what we had all been hoping for but, after cancelling the past three seasonal meetings and not having CBC members joining together to go birding for almost 16 months, many of us were excited to finally have a CBC sponsored birding event! For the first time ever, we had members birding for a seasonal meeting at numerous locations all across the states of both North and South Carolina.

Our keynote speaker for Saturday night's Zoom meeting was Lindsay Addison from Audubon NC, who provided an entertaining presentation on American Oystercatchers. Lindsay also showed us how a grant provided by the CBC has helped fund the acquisition of tracking equipment that is being used to provide previously unavailable information about how these wonderful birds travel within their breeding areas as well as during migration. As always happens at the conclusion of a seasonal meeting, Kent Fiala performed the countdown of bird species that were sighted during our birding weekend: 187 species.

Over the course of the weekend, we had 30 individuals submit 129 qualifying eBird checklists to the Carolina Bird Club eBird account. The winners of our checklist submission contests for the weekend were: Gretchen Locy, from Fort Mill, SC, who submitted both the "most checklists for the weekend" and also submitted the "most photographs of correctly-identified birds" with her checklists. Carl Miller, from Charleston, SC, submitted the "highest number of sound recordings of correctly-identified species" on his submitted checklists.

As Steve Tracy, our President, said, this was our first ever CBC Virtual Seasonal Meeting, and hopefully our last.

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# The North Carolina Bird Atlas Project Needs Your Help

By Steve Dowlan

If you are an enthusiastic birder who lives by the maxim “People Count. Birds Count,” you are ideally suited to contribute to the North Carolina Bird Atlas Project. In fact, “**People Count. Birds Count**” is the motto of the project, which was kicked off in March of 2021. By contributing regular reports that include such details as breeding codes to eBird, you have already practiced atlas procedures and protocols. With a quick change to your eBird settings so that your portal is “**North Carolina Bird Atlas**”, what you are already doing for the greater eBird effort also becomes a contribution to the North Carolina Bird Atlas project.



The observations and reports from the five-year atlas project will empower researchers with a comprehensive summary of bird populations across North Carolina. The results will provide wildlife officials, land managers and conservation organizations with a critical tool to assist with making decisions and formulating important conservation decisions about the state’s avian population.

Your participation can be initiated by visiting <https://ebird.org/atlasnc/about/>, where you will discover: why the atlas project is important; who is on the Atlas Team that is directing the effort; how to get started with atlas contributions; a description of breeding codes; and, an outline of birding ethics, guidelines and safety protocols.

The NC Bird Atlas divides the state into 5,453 “atlas blocks” which are based on 7.5’ USGS Topographic Quads that are broken up into six smaller blocks. Each block is named for the topographic quad followed by the position of the block within the quad. Of these, 937 have been identified as “Priority Blocks” from which data is preferred, although data from all blocks is valuable and will be accepted. As a volunteer observer, you will work with regional coordinators over the course of the project to travel roads, trails, and private lands (with owner permission) within each block to record every bird that you see and hear. Surveying blocks is a balance between the time we have to spend in a block and the kind and diversity of habitats it contains.

As a participant and contributor to Oregon’s Breeding Bird Atlas Project in the late 1990s, I can promise you that it will take you to some places you had not considered birding before, and will inevitably result in some surprises and new discoveries. Unlike Oregon’s effort, North Carolina’s atlas project is not limited to breeding birds, so it creates another reason to contribute year-round for the next five years. So please... consider working under another birding maxim; **atlas early – atlas often!**

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*Opportunities for Young Birders*



**Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club. Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.**

**For more information, visit [www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)**

*CBC Fall Birding Weekend – Havelock, NC*  
**Home of Marine Corps Air Station – Cherry Point**  
**Thursday, Friday & Saturday, September 23-25, 2021**

**HAVELOCK:** The CBC Board announces the first Birding Weekend since the Covid-19 pandemic became a major threat in March 2020. We will convene for a Covid Conscious Social, Banquet and presentation by our keynote speaker, Simon Thompson, at the Days Inn and Suites in Havelock, NC. Havelock is 25 minutes from Morehead City on the coast and 25 minutes from New Bern along the Neuse River. Both towns are tourist centers, waterfront communities with an extensive history. New Bern was once the Capital of North Carolina and Morehead City always a major shipping center. Morehead grew along with its 300+ year old neighbor, Beaufort, a whaling center of ole, and owes its prominence as the terminus of the Atlantic and NC Railroads. This web link will enlighten you to many names you will see or hear during your birding trips. <https://www.morehead.com/history-of-morehead-city.html> New Bern says, “We have been preparing for your visit for over 300 years.” This link of fun facts may give you a sense of the days you could spend exploring its sights. <https://visitnewbern.com/fun-facts> The history in this area is enthralling and will tear at your plans to see many new life birds and familiar favorites. From famous Ft. Macon on the coast to the Tryon Palace and Firemen’s Museum you really should plan a few days prior to our gathering in Havelock.

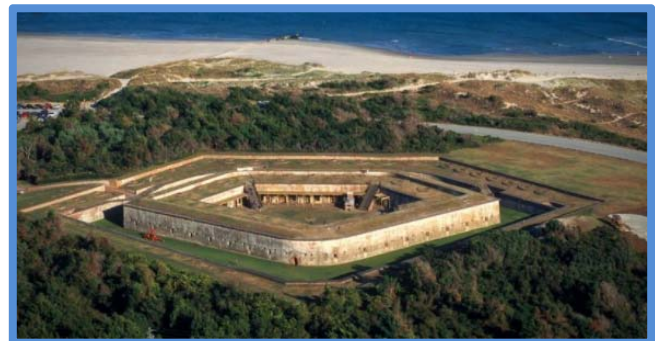


*Dickcissel, Steve Creek, Flickr Creative Commons*

**WHERE WE WILL BIRD:** We plan to provide opportunities to see by boat either the Rachael Carson Reserve or the bird-rich Shackleford Banks. A trip to Cape Lookout will be the third option in the all-day category requiring water craft. ½ day water excursions in the inland islands behind Bear Island and a trip to Bear Island are on the itinerary. These 5 tours require a cost per attendee for the boat. Many land trips will go into habitats of the Croatan Forest, home of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, to North River Preserve, over 8000 acres of farmland being returned to wetland habitats, and eBird Hotspots in New Bern and nearby salt-water marsh sites. A walk on Bogue Inlet with a monitor from Emerald Isle of the



*Tryon Palace architecture is memorably appreciated on a tour.*



*Ft. Macon’s commanding position truly meets the definition of strategic.*

site’s breeding birds will be an interesting chance to also scan the beach for migrants. A trip is on the schedule to Cedar Island NWR, 14,000 acres with marsh and both maritime and upland forests. The restricted site of Cool Springs Preserve for wet and upland forest birds is on the schedule, to be followed by a visit to the Voice of America property for lingering breeding birds of fields such as Henslow’s, Grasshopper and Field Sparrows. Loggerhead Shrikes are often seen. Havelock is surrounded by the

Croatan National Forest where many trips will focus for Hooded, Swainson's, Worm-Eating Warblers and the sought-after Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Bachman's Sparrow.

**THE SOCIAL:** A Social Hour is planned each evening. On Saturday evening we will hold our only full evening of activity to celebrate the long-awaited resumption of the CBC Birding Weekends. A banquet will follow the social and we will then hear from our Keynote Speaker, Simon Thompson. He plans a jovial look at birding. The evening ends with our count of the birds located the past two days. This will also help us plan optional trips Sunday morning as many of us prepare to travel homeward. Don't forget the local history by planning some time in the area.

**VENUE:** Days Inn & Suites, 400 US 70 W, Havelock, NC 28532. Cost for the hotel has been arranged at \$95 + taxes. Cots are not available, but children in the room, a maximum of 2, are free.

**REGISTRATION:** Details will be in the August Newsletter. Early registration will be important to secure your room.



*North Carolina Coastal Federation's North River Wetlands Preserve (photo – nccoast.org/)*

## **CBC Outer Banks Trip, December 4 - 5, 2021**

Widely considered at the top of the list for early winter birding sites in North Carolina, the Outer Banks of Dare County are home to thousands of wintering swans, ducks, geese, shorebirds, waders, gulls, and more. Join members of the Carolina Bird Club as we explore the Bodie Island lighthouse area, Oregon Inlet, Pea Island NWR, the ocean beaches of Hatteras and Bodie Islands and other "hotspots".

The trip will focus on waterfowl and shorebird identification as well as building a broad trip list including everything from grebes to sparrows. The trip starts Saturday, December 4, at 7:30 a.m. in the Bodie Island Lighthouse parking lot. Saturday will be devoted to birding along the immediate coast. Sunday will include a stop at Alligator River NWR and potentially Mattamuskeet NWR.

Detailed information including directions, lodging choices, dining opportunities and more will be provided to registrants. Birds that you can expect to see include loons, numbers of Tundra Swans and Snow Geese, most of the dabbling ducks that winter in eastern North Carolina, chances to see sea ducks including all three American scoters, gulls, wintering passerines, and winter shorebirds including American Avocet and possibly Purple Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher and Piping Plover. Alligator River NWR may provide an opportunity to see Black Bear, raptors, shorebirds (if water levels are right) and numbers of Tundra Swan and waterfowl.

**Logistics:** The fee for this field trip is \$45 and advance registration is required. Participation is limited to 12. Participants are responsible for lodging and meals. A number of motels, hotels, and other lodging are available in Nags Head north through Kitty Hawk. We will attempt to carpool in order to reduce the number of vehicles caravanning to the birding sites. Spotting scopes are useful if you have one. Dress for the weather and in layers. If we are enjoying a warm early winter, mosquito repellent may be useful. Lunch on Saturday will likely either be at a seafood restaurant or Subway. If you prefer, bring a bag lunch. A variety of restaurants are open for Saturday dinner.

To register for this field trip contact Steve Shultz sshultz at nc.rr.com or (919) 629-7226. Upon confirmation of your slot on the trip you will be sent a registration form/waiver that can be submitted with your trip fee. Note that there is a modest fee to walk out on Jennette's Pier.



## *Welcome New CBC Members!*

### **NEW LIFE MEMBERS - Peggy Schachte & Hal Currey, Sullivans Island, SC**

Laura Zulueta  
Apex, NC

Sandi Denkers  
Spartanburg, SC

Dee Omer  
Raleigh, NC

Wendy Hardy  
Garner, NC

Beth & Billy Harwell  
 Mooresville, NC

Karen Rudio  
Pawley's Island, SC

Deborah Lawrence  
Durham, NC

Mary Storms  
Lumberton, NC

Shannon & Brandon  
Robinson  
Durham, NC

Martha & Mitchell Fisher  
Durham, NC

Chelsea, Shannon & Tommy  
Harmon  
Ladson, SC

Suzanne Meredith  
Endicott, NY

*CBC Research, educational and conservation grants are available through the Carolina Bird Club. For additional information visit [www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org).*

# How I got into birding

By Steve Dowlan

Everyone who searches for birds with binoculars, scopes, and cameras has a story about how they discovered “birdwatching” and eventually identified themselves as a “birder.” These stories range from little kids who had parents and grandparents who introduced them to the national pastime at their feeders to those who came to birding as a retirement activity. My own story begins at age 13 with a father who liked to search for bargains in pawn shops and second hand stores, a local high school French teacher who fed birds on his back porch, a retired professor of world history who was the subject of a newspaper article about hand-feeding birds, and a local trash hauler who operated a bird banding station close to my home.

My father provided me with my first binoculars to be used for looking at birds close-up. My neighbor Bill Kehew invited me onto his porch to better see the birds I was watching from the woods behind his house. Professor Emeritus Charles W. Robbe taught me to hand-feed Black-capped Chickadees. Walter Fye handed a Yellow-breasted Chat to me, fresh out of the net... how could anyone not get hooked after that experience?

My dad had a special passion for guns and binoculars. I did not inherit or adopt his passion for either of these items. I wholesale rejected any interest in guns, and I have never had much interest in the technical aspects of birding optics. Although I inherited several pairs of binoculars from him over the years, I have always maintained a very utilitarian attitude toward binoculars, scopes and cameras... If it gets the job done, I’m happy!

Behind our home in northwest Pennsylvania, just three hours south of Roger Tory Peterson’s home town, was a large tract of State Game Land managed mostly for hunting. This area was riddled with trails and pathways which for most of the year were empty of hunters or any kind of visitors. It became my personal birding area. I remember the Ovenbird that ran across my shoes while I leaned against a tree. I remember seeing Blue-winged Warblers, Golden-winged Warblers, and both hybrids practically in my back yard. I remember where I saw and heard my first Pileated Woodpecker, much less common there in the early 1970s than now. I remember when Bill Kehew took me to see my very first American Kestrel in a field about two miles away. Bill also played in a bluegrass band, and I have to give credit to him for my own interest in that as well.

No other kids from my school or neighborhood shared any interest in birds... Because I was always an introvert, happy to follow my pursuits alone, this did not bother me at all. Birds were like mysteries to be solved. Every walk in the back woods was like a revelation to me. In addition to birds, I was reveling in discoveries about trees, wildflowers, mushrooms, salamanders, snakes... I could not get enough, and still can’t, 45 years later.

In hindsight, I feel fortunate to have acquired a keen interest in birds at such an early age. I often wish I had also acquired a passion for recordkeeping at that age, but back then I was much more focused on the wonder and less on the documentation. I have to give credit to the very active county-listing scene in Oregon, my home for 28 years for instilling in me the importance of recordkeeping. I feel fortunate to have landed in North Carolina and region with a very active birding community. The enthusiasm of other birders just feeds the passion!





## A CBC BONUS TRIP THROUGH EPIC TOURS



Paul and Amanda Laurent, owners and trip leaders of Epic Nature Tours are excited to announce a 15 day Costa Rica Trip for the CBC from January 18 - February 1, 2022. This Epic Costa Rican birding tour will take guests off the beaten path to explore two of the most incredible and remote parts of Costa Rica - the marshes of Cano Negro and the primary rainforest of the Osa Peninsula.

We begin by traveling north through the highlands to Cano Negro, which is considered to be one of the most important wetlands on earth and home to over 350 species of birds, including Jabirus and Agami Herons! Next we journey south to the Tarcoles River and Carara National Park. Situated on the border of tropical wet and dry rainforests, Carara is home to an incredible variety of birds from both habitats. We will also take a boat tour on the Tarcoles River to see giant crocodiles and to look for rare birds found only deep in the mangroves.

From here we continue south to the Osa Peninsula, which is called, *The most biologically intense place on Earth*. Osa has the highest biodiversity on the planet! First we explore the eastern side of Osa, then we travel by boat to Drake Bay on the Pacific side. This tour will let you experience some of the most amazing places in Costa Rica, and you will have the potential to see 500+ different species of birds.



**Group Size:** 8 Participants  
**Price per person (double occupancy):** \$3950.00  
**Single Supplement:** \$680.00  
*Single supplement applies to anyone staying by themselves and not sharing a room.*

**CONTACT EPIC TOURS AT:  
INFO@EPICNATURETOURS.COM**

***There are only 4 spots left on the upcoming CBC Bonus Trip to Costa Rica. To reserve your spot on this trip, contact Paul & Amanda Laurent at [info@EpicNatureTours.com](mailto:info@EpicNatureTours.com) or by phone at (931) 452-9254. \*Completed COVID 19 Vaccination required for all participants.\****



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and additional mailing offices

### Upcoming CBC Meetings

Fall 2021- Fall Birding Weekend – Havelock, NC - September 23-25  
Winter 2022 - Outer Banks, NC - January 13 - 16, 2022  
Spring 2022 - Black Mountain, NC - May 5 - 8, 2022

#### CBC Board Members

##### **President**

Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC  
stevepath1@aol.com

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**CBC Newsletter Editor:** Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC,  
newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org

**Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of  
December, February, April, June, August, and October.**  
**[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)**

The *CBC Newsletter* is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Founded in 1937, the membership is open to anyone interested in birds, natural history, and conservation. Current dues are: Individual & non-profit, \$30; Family and Business, \$35; Student, \$15; Patron, \$50 and up; Life, \$500; Associate Life (in household with Life Member), \$100 (both Life memberships can be paid in four annual installments). Membership dues include access to publications: the *CBC Newsletter* and *The Chat*, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

Cost for CBC bird checklists, including postage: 10@\$5.45,  
25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

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