



# CBC Newsletter

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

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## Banner Elk Spring Meeting April 27 - April 30, 2023 By Paul Laurent

The North Carolina High Country is a remarkable place for birding in springtime. The woods and meadows are filled with migrating warblers and much more. The rugged mountains capped with spruce and fir trees bear a striking resemblance to lands much further north - and many species of birds that normally just pass through the Carolinas on their way to northern breeding grounds have resident breeding populations in these mountains.

Many thousands of years ago advancing glaciers pushed plants and animals out of the far north and into what is today the Carolinas. When the ice ages ended and the glaciers retreated, those northern species of plants and animals followed the glaciers back north and recolonized their traditional ranges - except here in the High Country! Our tall mountains and abundant rainfall meant that the climate here has much more in common with Nova Scotia than New Bern, and many species of plants and animals that are normally associated with far northern climates can be found thriving in these southern mountains.

We can expect to see Common Ravens, Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, Brown Creepers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, as well as Canada Warblers, Black-throated Blue Warblers, Black-throated Green Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, Hooded Warblers, and many others breeding in the dense forests and wildflower meadows of the High Country. Countless more birds pass through these mountains on their way further north each spring.

We will have outings to many of the best birding hot spots in the High Country, including the world-famous Grandfather Mountain, spots along the Blue Ridge Parkway, and some fantastic

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local parks including Valle Crucis (which is the single best birding hotspot in the area), Brookshire Park, and the Greenway in Boone. Trout, Bass and Price Lakes are always magnets for warblers in the spring. Trips north to Elk Knob and Rich Mountain Game Lands have the chance for Golden-winged Warblers and more.

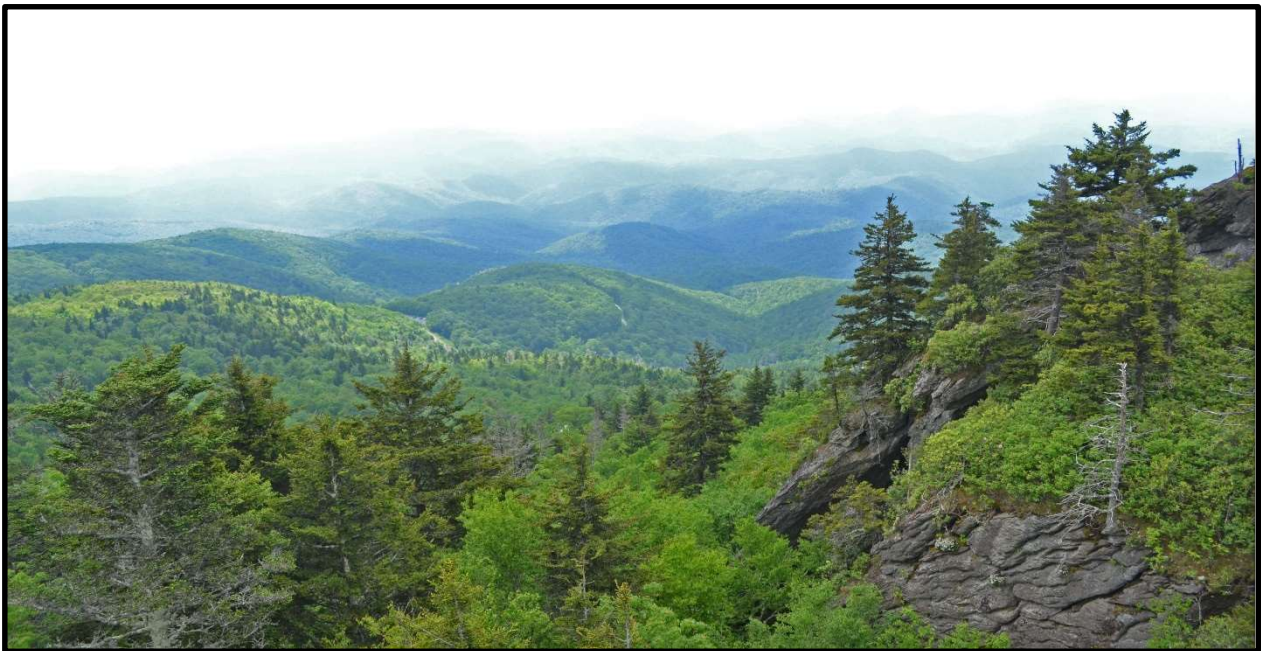
The Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation has offered to host us for the Saturday Banquet at their brand-new conference room and museum. This gives us all a chance to see their new, state-of-the-art educational facility and learn more about what makes Grandfather Mountain such an incredible spot for birds. There will also be opportunities to look and listen for Northern Saw Whet Owls on Grandfather Mountain at night!

Be prepared for cool weather, and potentially cold weather at higher elevations. If there has been rain before the meeting trails could be wet and muddy, so waterproof hiking boots are a good idea for most outings. Weather can change quickly in the mountains so make sure to bring extra layers just in case!

We will be based at the Best Western Mountain Lodge in Banner Elk, North Carolina. We have a block of rooms set aside for \$127.50 per night. You can reserve your room at this link:

[https://www.bestwestern.com/en\\_US/book/hotel-rooms.34151.html?groupId=I14XY8K4](https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.34151.html?groupId=I14XY8K4)

The Best Western is located at 1615 Tynecastle Hwy, Banner Elk, NC 28604



*The view from the south slope of Grandfather Mountain in the North Carolina High Country. Photo by S. Dowlan*

# Call for Volunteers to Serve on the CBC Executive Committee

By Cathy Miller

The Executive Committee needs to fill a few key positions and we are looking for volunteers to serve in the following capacity:

- Eastern NC Member-at-large (two 2-year terms) - this position is currently open
- SC Vice-President - (a 3-year term) - this position will be open in March
- President - (2 consecutive 1-year terms) – election to be held at the Spring Meeting – open to previous board members.

From personal experience, I can say that the best way to understand an organization and its mission is to serve on its board. Anyone can serve. We are looking for people who are enthusiastic and willing to help move the Carolina Bird Club forward in its mission, which is copied and pasted below from our website:

*The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization that represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is*

- *To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.*
- *To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.*
- *To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.*
- *To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.*
- *To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.*
- *To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.*

If you are interested in learning how the club supports ornithological research and conservation of bird habitat in the Carolinas and you want to support educational issues, to help others to enjoy birds, and maybe also help to organize our seasonal birding weekends (meetings), the Executive Committee welcomes your nomination. And yes, please self-nominate if you would like to be involved. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to any current member. You can contact me at [mmemiller.cathy@gmail.com](mailto:mmemiller.cathy@gmail.com) through February. Every executive committee member's contact information is listed at [https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/main/exec\\_comm.html](https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/main/exec_comm.html).

## Hiding in Plain Sight - the "Old Northeastern" Red Crossbill

A recent article by Ryan F. Mandelbaum on the Finch Research Network describes "A previously-unidentified red crossbill call type has inhabited one of North America's most populated regions, the northeast, all along." Until now, scientists have identified eleven call types in North America, one of which, the Cassia Crossbill, has been elevated to its own species. The Northeastern red crossbill is the twelfth.

To read the full article, visit <https://finchnetwork.org/type-12-the-old-northeastern-red-crossbill>

## Have you heard...?



### North Carolina has a new bird observatory!

The Cape Fear Bird Observatory (CFBO), founded in 2020, is a 501(c) (3) that focuses on the biology, ecology and conservation of birds. The CFBO's mission is to strive to promote conservation of birds and their habitats in North Carolina through research, education, outreach, and community involvement. Founded by a group of passionate women who have many years of experience in the avian ecology field in North Carolina, The Cape Fear Bird Observatory is sure to become a fixture in the local science and education community.

The Cape Fear Bird Observatory is starting strong with four ventures:

1. Color banding Painted Buntings in southeastern North Carolina, which allows members of the community to identify uniquely marked individuals which easily connects communities with these vibrantly colored, charismatic birds.
2. Establishing a migration banding station at Carolina Beach State Park. Migration monitoring provides insight into seasonal movement and timing of migration as well as habitat use in the area.
3. Creating a program focused on young people in the community called Wilmington Youth Birding which is working to engage elementary and middle-school aged children through in-school nature walks and activities.
4. The CFBO is the new home of hummingbird research in North Carolina. This long-term endeavor that was begun in 1999 by Susan Campbell will now be conducted through the observatory. The move should allow for greater visibility of the various aspects of this endeavor. As a result, the scope of Susan's research should broaden significantly with increased support.

Birds are indicators of environmental health; their ubiquity makes them accessible to many people of all levels of interest and skill. Monitoring them with community assistance allows the Cape Fear Bird Observatory to positively impact the local environment. Donations to this non-profit fund directly support local avian research. Go to [capefearbirdobservatory.org](http://capefearbirdobservatory.org) for more information.



### 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)**

# Welcome New CBC Members!

## New Life Members Gretchen Locy, Fort Mill, SC

Kris & Ray Petrusch  
LaGrange, NC

Heather Main  
Efland, NC

Kert Kolehma  
Charleston, SC

Ric & Kitty Carter  
Washington, NC

Tom & Susan Harrington  
Storrs Mansfield, CT

Christopher Koegel  
Chocowinity, NC

Trevor Sleight  
Greenville, NC

Susan Parrish  
Fayetteville, NC

Tessa Wells  
Burlington, NC

Alexander Trifunovic  
Greene, NY

Charlie Ayers  
Carnesville, GA

Tim Lewis  
Lori Unruh  
Whittier, NC

Wendi Sharp  
Camp Lejeune, NC

Monica Sweigart  
Greenville, NC

Joree Brownlow  
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Erin, James & Colin Beeler  
Raleigh, NC

Allen Kindman  
June Almenoff  
Durham, NC

Judy Luetkemeyer  
Gatlinburg, TN

Wayne Lewis  
Calabash, NC

Lee Justice  
Franklinton, NC

Sarah Gardner  
Cary, NC

Jane Bailey  
Manteo, NC

Ann Robertson  
Winston-Salem, NC

Laura Mae  
Chesapeake, VA

Josh Darnell  
Mint Hill, NC

Luz Aveleyra  
Charlotte, NC

Kerri Adams  
Lawndale, NC

Benjamin Baldwin  
Apex, NC

Richard DeFazio  
Ann Arbor, MI

Carol Hamilton  
Hillsborough, NC

## WINGS OVER WATER - 2023

Mark your calendar for North Carolina's only wildlife festival which will be celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on October 17-22, 2023 at the Outer Banks in North Carolina. Plan on joining us for special events as well as the return of Julie Zickefoose as our guest of honor. Julie is a world-renowned natural history writer, artist and wildlife rehabilitator. Julie will be with us for most of the week. In addition to being our keynote speaker on Saturday evening, she will be involved with several birding trips. Stay tuned for the opening date of online registration coming this spring.



# OBX Winter Birding Weekend a Big Success for Members and Birds!

by Susan Campbell

Photos by Susan Campbell, Bob Lewis and Pam Ford

January 13 through 15 was a terrific weekend on the Outer Banks. 150 intrepid birders enjoyed trips, speakers and socializing—finally! This was the second seasonal meeting held since the pandemic hit in early 2020. By all accounts, it was a big success!

Not surprisingly the weather was not ideal. But what would a weekend in January on the Outer Banks be without some wind and wintry precipitation? Some field trips experienced rain, sleet, and snow in the span of just a few hours! The birds, and the birders, did not really seem to mind.



Photo by Pam Ford

One hundred sixty-three species were tallied over the course of the weekend with a few interesting birds making the list. A Snow Bunting that had been in the same area of Alligator River Refuge for over a month was seen by most participants. But conversely, the Ash-throated Flycatcher also at Alligator River was seen by few. Unfortunately, alcids were few and far between with only a few Razorbill tallied from Jennette’s Pier. A couple of flyby Common Eiders, a few Manx Shearwaters, and a Long-tailed Duck were also good birds at the pier. A handsome drake Eurasian Wigeon impressed a couple of groups at Pea Island, while an apparent Northern Pintail/Gadwall hybrid was a great find. Gull numbers at Hatteras Point were impressive, with an Iceland and Glaucous in the mix.



Photo by Bob Lewis

Many would say that the “best bird” of the weekend was actually not a bird at all. Multiple participants (including yours truly) were treated to shockingly good views of Red Wolves. These locally reintroduced canids had been active at Alligator River Refuge in the vicinity of Milltail Road in weeks leading up to the meeting and so, with a bit of luck, could be seen at fairly close range. Several members managed some good photos of the animals, and Bob Lewis even captured some amazing video!

Field trips ranged north from our base in Kill Devil Hills to the village of Corolla, south along the Outer Banks to Cape Hatteras, and inland to sites from Pocosin NWR (where an epic encounter with tens of thousands of geese and swans amazed participants) to Lake Mattamuskeet to Palmetto Peartree Preserve for a visit with the area’s resident Red-cockaded Woodpeckers.

Our hotel, the Comfort Inn on the Ocean, provided wonderful hospitality. Early breakfasts and optional bag lunches in addition to a delicious banquet ensured participants were well fed.

Evening presentations ranged from an update on Golden-winged Warblers in North Carolina by Aimee Tomcho, to an in-depth taxonomic review of Carolina subspecies by John Gerwin, to a virtual birding tour of the Galapagos Islands by Steve Shultz.

Evening events also included a raffle in which over 20 donated items were won by lucky participants, a feather identification challenge, and a fun series of “dingbats” that asked folks to put on their creative thinking caps to guess the bird’s name described by custom artwork provided by Les McCallum. Tables representing the Cape Fear Bird Observatory, Ventures Birding Tours, and the North Carolina Breeding Bird Atlas provided information and swag, while young birder Ian House received a scholarship to attend the meeting and assisted by acting as the official drawer of raffle tickets Saturday evening. Last not least, as a result of member generosity, the sales of donated books and ceramics as well as raffle tickets netted the Young Birder Fund over \$400 during the course of the weekend.



*Photo by Pam Ford*



*Photo by Pam Ford*

I would like to extend a special thank you to Les Coble, whose planning for the Covid-cancelled 2022 winter meeting provided significant input into our 2023 meeting, our evening speakers, and the many volunteers who led field trips. We could not have done it without you! With the winter meeting in the annals of history, I am looking forward to seeing you at our next meeting in Banner Elk, NC. After too many canceled meetings, we are back! 😊



*Photo by Pam Ford*



*Photo by Susan Campbell*



*Photo by Pam Ford*



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## Upcoming CBC Meetings

**Spring Birding Weekend at Banner Elk NC – April 27-30, 2023**  
**Fall Birding Weekend at Litchfield, SC – September 28th-October 1st, 2023**

### CBC Board Members

#### **President**

Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC  
stevepath1@aol.com

#### **Vice Presidents**

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Katie Greenberg, Arden, NC  
Cathy Miller, Charleston, SC

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Karaleah Reichart, Raleigh, NC

#### **Treasurer**

Jared Miles, Charlotte, NC

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Barbara (Kitty) Reynolds, Asheville, NC  
Betsy Kane, Washington, NC  
Michael Clark, Durham, NC  
Paul Laurent, Banner Elk, NC

#### **SC Members-at-Large**

Richard Hayes, Charleston, SC  
Julie Davis, Pawleys Island, SC

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**Website Editor:** Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC

**Headquarters Secretary:** Carol Bowman, Pinehurst, NC,  
hq@carolinabirdclub.org

**CBC Newsletter Editor:** Steve Dowlan, Vilas, NC,  
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**Deadlines for submission of Volume 69, Issue 2 is**

**March 6, 2023**

**www.carolinabirdclub.org**

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

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