

## **Back to the OBX - Winter Birding at its Best! Thursday Through Sunday, January 18-21, 2024**

By Susan Campbell



*Ruddy Turnstone with Blue Crab. Photo by Deb Regula*

### Host Hotel

**Comfort Inn South Oceanfront**

**\*8031 South Oregon Inlet Rd., Nags  
Head, NC (reservations: 252-441-6315)**

**Check-in time 4pm**

**Check-out no later than 11:00am**

### **Head to the Outer Banks and be prepared for some terrific birds!**

**T**he Outer Banks are separated from the mainland by immense bays. Here the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean, fueled by the not-too-distant, warm offshore Gulf Stream allows both water and air temperatures on this chain of sandy barrier islands to moderate the winter climate here and on the inner banks. The Outer Banks area is a natural magnet for wintering birds. Overwintering waterfowl find the area ideal as feeding opportunity abounds. Wading birds and passerines, too, arrive for brief stop-overs or over-winter. Yes, these barrier islands' relatively warm conditions provide habitat niches that allow migrating birds to linger, some remaining as they find the area has sources of fuel to survive the winter months. Air temperatures on the NC barrier islands in winter can be five to ten degrees

warmer than a few miles inland of the bays. Couple these conditions with the amazing variety of habitats and the setting is ever-present for high daily bird counts. Bird several habitats and daily counts can mount to over 100 on an all-day expedition.

National Wildlife Refuges along the Banks have significant area for migratory waterfowl and wintering resident species but most protected area is impossible to access except by boat, or restricted to the ocean shoreline. However, Pea Island NWR provides the quintessential opportunity to explore a section of the remaining undeveloped wilderness in earnest, and just a short distance from our host hotel. Nearby Alligator River NWR and Mattamuskeet NWR provide additional opportunities for seeking access to habitats for both expected and always hoped-for unexpected species. Over 160 species were recorded last year during the course of the weekend. A Golden Eagle always seems to tease at Alligator River NWR. The winter of 2023-4 had a couple Snow Buntings and an Ash-throated Flycatcher there as well. Of course, gulls were as abundant as ever with even Iceland and Glaucous making appearances on The Point. Wintering Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that spend the colder months along the coast in some numbers, were spotted as well.

The CBC Board is proud to invite you to the Outer Banks. Our host hotel and the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce also extend a warm welcome to members and guests to join us for a fun-filled weekend of birding. There is much information that follows. Please read carefully.

The northeast coastline of North Carolina is probably at its best birding in winter. Your CBC Board has planned Sunday morning trips with the more unusual species that have been observed the goal of more than one trip this year.

Four half-day trips have been planned specifically with wheelchair users in mind. All birding locations have trails designated for wheelchair users or the walk goes to boardwalks. These boardwalks will allow access to soundside and oceanside viewing. These trips are available to all attendees and would be beneficial for those seeking good footing.

Pea Island NWR is the primary hotspot at all of our winter weekends, seemingly the year-round site for those expected and unexpected birds. We will bird many of the area's best sites from the Currituck Banks Forest at Corolla to Cape Hatteras, and inland in Hyde, Tyrrell and Dare Counties. For so much more see the Trip Descriptions and plan for a full weekend of birding.



Comfort Inn South Oceanfront- our wonderful host hotel



Jennette's Pier – excellent ocean watching: right next door!

The Comfort Inn South Oceanfront will be CBC headquarters for the meeting. This Inn boasts amenities that include private balconies, in-room refrigerator and microwave. Go to <https://www.choicehotels.com/north-carolina/nags-head/comfort-inn-hotels/nc236> for more information about the welcoming hotel.

\*The CBC rates for this meeting are truly outstanding at \$89 per night for an ocean view room or \$64 per night for the street side. This cost does not include tax of 12.75%. When you call **(252) 441-6315 to make your reservation**, let them know you are with the **Carolina Bird Club – January 2024** to receive the special rate. **This rate will be guaranteed until December 18, 2023 (at midnight)**. Check-in time is 4 PM and check-out is by 11 AM.

\*Please sign up for the banquet buffet dinner on Saturday evening on the CBC website when you complete your trip selections. Sign-up attempts at the registration table will be too late. Advance reservation is required for the banquet. The buffet cost, including gratuity, is \$40 per person, again due with your meeting registration.

\*Also note that this hotel does not currently provide drink or meal service. Our buffet will, therefore, be catered. There are, of course, nearby restaurants that span the spectrum: from fast food places to very nice, sit-down eateries. Due to the time of year, some of these will be closed for the season. However, we will have a list of all the restaurants that are open at the registration table for participants to refer to. There is also a Food Lion grocery store on the main road (NC 158/Croatan Highway) just north of the hotel. More grocery options are also available further up the beach.

\*The deadline for hotel reservations is December 18. Room reservations after this date cannot be guaranteed the CBC conference rate.

Be sure to visit the conference registration table as soon as you check-in at the hotel, and sign in for the meeting. Your meeting packet will include a confirmed event schedule and driving directions for each birding trip, plus your banquet ticket(s) - if applicable.

We will have a presentation Friday and Saturday evening. These will be preceded by a social with cash bar. Friday evening, longtime CBC member and butterfly biologist Jeff Pippen will present *Carolina's Wild Butterflies: Identification and Monitoring*. This program will introduce you to North Carolina's wild butterflies, how to identify them, and how to become a citizen-scientist butterfly monitor. Because insect populations are declining at alarming rates, long-term monitoring of butterfly populations across the Carolinas will provide valuable data for scientists and land managers. The Carolinas Butterfly Monitoring Project aims to teach interested citizen scientists how to identify local butterflies and establish a fun, easy-to-conduct survey using standardized protocols where you can go for a walk and record the butterflies you see. Data are contributed to a national database for scientists to examine butterfly population trends across the continent.

This Birding Weekend's catered buffet dinner will be on Saturday evening. The banquet will be at 6:30 PM after the social. The evening keynote speaker presentation will begin at 7:30 PM. Our Keynote Speaker will be Cape Fear Bird Observatory's co-founder and managing director, Evan Buckland. Her talk is entitled "*Painting by Numbers: Investigating Painted Bunting Populations along the Carolina Coast*." Evan will bring us a status report on the distribution of the Painted Bunting population in North Carolina. Monitoring (including banding) of buntings is one of the current foci of the fledgling bird observatory. She will discuss the project's objectives, methods and most recent results. Come prepared to learn more about one of the Carolina's most colorful songsters!

**Online registration begins Saturday, December 9th at 2:00 PM, and closes January 7th, 2024 at noon.** Please note that **January 7th, 2024 at noon is the last date for any refunds for CBC registration or dinner cancellations. Also, very important - if you have to cancel, please notify the Headquarters Secretary so we can give your field trip space to someone on the waiting list. Walk-in registrations are accepted at the meeting**

All trips will leave from the hotel. Please reserve your room and thank them for their hospitality. CBC greatly appreciates your use of the host hotel. The rate is exceptional and you actually save CBC costs by staying with us.

Registration packets will also contain directions to the locations of the field trips offered during the course of the weekend. The [North Carolina Birding Trail—Coastal Plain Trail Guide](#) can be used to study up on the Outer Banks sites you will be visiting, as well as planning your trip to and from Kill Devil Hills. John Fussell's [A Birder's Guide to Coastal North Carolina](#) and Mike Tove's [Guide to the Offshore Wildlife of the Northern Atlantic](#) are standards for birding this area of North Carolina.

**Important note:** South Pond (south of the Visitor's Center) at Pea Island NWR, other than viewed from the NC12 shoulder, is ABSOLUTELY off-limits to casual birding. Please do not enter posted areas at South Pond or any other site unless you possess specific, explicit permission. Trespassers are being charged and fined. Our event is registered with the NWR to allow management of the entire NWR and permission into areas limited to the general public. Your leader will know where you are permitted access. If you are unsure, do not enter.

Finally, our trip leaders help the Board before the weekend with important planning assistance. So please thank them for the personal goals of a trip that helps you locate, identify and learn the rich bird life in the area.

As is becoming the tradition, we will have a raffle as part of our weekend. Proceeds will benefit our Young Birders (camp scholarship) Fund. Please consider bringing a bird related item or two for donation at the meeting. And as many of you know that regularly attend our meetings, we will also have bird books and magazines available for a small donation that will also go to the same fund.

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**Registration:** Lobby at entrance to Ballroom.

January 18<sup>th</sup>, Thursday 4:00pm – 9:00pm; January 19 and 20, Friday and Saturday, 6:45 – 7:45am and 12:30 – 1:30pm

**Field Trip sheets** will be in the registration room. After picking up your registration packet, please put a checkmark by your name on each of your trip sheets, so the trip leaders will know you have checked in for your trip. There will be people available to answer any questions regarding trips. If you are not able to attend a trip, please cross out your name, so someone from the wait list can fill your place.

**Departure Times:** The field trip departure times are for leaving the hotel. **Please arrive minimum 10-15 minutes early.** Look for the sign with your trip number and let the leader know you are there. We encourage carpooling. Please consider contributing toward gas expenses if you carpool. Trip leader cell phone numbers will be provided. If you cannot go on a trip, make every effort to advise one of the following: trip leader, meeting coordinator, or advise someone who is on the trip so the group doesn't wait for you.

**All Day Trips:** Please bring a lunch, snacks, water. Many of the sites are remote with no nearby restaurants.

**Hotel Returns:** Morning trips should be back to the hotel by noon; afternoon and all-day trips by 5:00 PM.

<p><b>Thursday January 18</b></p> <p>4:00-9:00PM Opening Registration</p> <p>Dinner on your own</p>	<p>Location: Host Hotel</p>
<p><b>Friday January 19</b></p> <p>Field Trips (1/2 and full-day trips)</p> <p>Dinner on your own.</p> <p>6:00-7:00PM Cash Bar/Social Hour</p> <p>7:00PM Evening Program. "Carolina's Wild Butterflies: Identification and Monitoring" by Jeff Pippen, Director-Carolinas Butterfly Monitoring Program.</p>	<p>Location: Start at Host Hotel</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel</p>
<p><b>Saturday January 20</b></p> <p>Field Trips (1/2 and full-day trips)</p> <p>5:30-6:30PM Social Gathering. Cash Bar.</p> <p>6:30-7:15PM Banquet Dinner</p> <p>7:15-7:30PM Announcements.</p> <p>7:30-8:30 PM Evening Presentation. "Painting by Numbers: Investigating Painted Bunting Populations Along the Carolina Coast" by Evan Buckland-Co-founder and Managing Director, Cape Fear Bird Observatory</p> <p>8:30PM Species Countdown</p>	<p>Location: Start at Host Hotel</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel. (Pre-registration required for the banquet dinner)</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel</p> <p>Location: Host Hotel</p>

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**2024 CBC OUTER BANKS MEETING FIELD TRIP DESCRIPTIONS**

**HALF-DAY FIELD TRIPS**

**Trip 1 – Palmetto Peartree Preserve & Futch Game Lands**

We will look among the possible seven species of woodpeckers for the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. During our search we should see a good assortment of woodland and edge species. After birding here, the group will travel to the Futch Game Lands where the flooded fields and catfish ponds hold ducks as well as other water birds and shorebirds.

***Approximate Travel Time:*** 1 hour

***Conditions:*** Vary from uneven trails to roadside surfaces. There is a service Station at Mann's Harbor; otherwise, plan on no restrooms.

**Trips 2, 21 & 29 – Audubon Pine Island Sanctuary & Duck Boardwalk**

Audubon Preserve is a remnant of maritime sandy forest and brush along Currituck Sound. The varied habitats and boardwalk will provide opportunity for land and water birds, and raptors are often identified as they hunt over the woodlands. Duck Town Boardwalk is a 0.4-mile gem. We will scope the sound for loons and ducks. Orange-crowned Warbler is often found along the boardwalk as well as winter sparrows.

***Approximate Travel Time:*** 45 minutes to Pine Island

**Conditions:** Vary from wet turf to gravelly trails to a boardwalk. Restrooms are available at Duck.

### **Trips 3 & 22 – Alligator River NWR (Rt. 264 Corridor to Milltail Road)**

The east side of ARNWR has woodland but also many wet fields. We will travel Rt. 264 as far as Stumpy Point Bay, targeting Pamlico Sound waterbirds. Then the drive will go west into ARNWR to Milltail Road's boat ramp area seeking woodland species, and finishing at the fields across from the Maintenance Buildings or the trail at the Rt. 64 intersection. Uncommon birds in the area have included Golden Eagle and Rough-legged Hawk.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 40 minutes

**Conditions:** Gravel roads. Restroom options will be quite limited.

### **Trip 4 – Corolla Escapade (A Handicap Accessible Trip)**

Four HC accessible trips are scheduled this weekend, and several other of our trips are partially HC accessible. There should be space available for non-HC attendees – same great birding but with good footing. This trip will visit both public and privately-owned boardwalks to Currituck Sound at Currituck Banks Forest Trail Preserve, the OBX Center for Wildlife Education and Duck Town Boardwalk.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 1 hour

**Conditions:** Boardwalks. Restrooms will be at Duck only, or a stop at a service station.

### **Trips 5 & 24 – Pea Island NWR Visitors Center and Southside Dike**

In the morning the pond behind the PI Visitors Center is lit by the rising sun. Resting and actively feeding birds are in the best direction for viewing field ID clues. The adjacent dike affords views of North Pond and Newfield Pond, capped by a two-story platform that also overlooks the inland waters and marsh.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 40 minutes to the Visitors Center

**Conditions:** Wide grassy trail to the viewing platform. Restroom at the Visitor's Center

### **Trips 6, 27 & 36 – Jennette's Pier (Nags Head) Ocean Watch. (\$3 entry fee)**

A scope is essential on this trip to scan the Atlantic for the winter nearshore birds and occasional pelagic species that feast on the bounty of the ocean. If you don't have a scope, there should be plenty in the group. Your leader will scan the ocean with you as you watch the action for loons, grebes, scoters, Razorbills, Gannets, sea ducks, gulls, and hopefully a Dovekie or shearwaters.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 15 minutes

**Conditions:** Boardwalk. Restrooms located in the Pier Entry Building.

### **Trip 7 – Waterfowl ID Workshop/Field ID**

This workshop will focus on key characteristics, such as profile, foraging behaviors, and habitat. The leader will provide clues to field ID features or activity which can aid birders on all levels to describe a species. The field trip location(s) will be as determined by the leader.

**Approximate Travel Time:** TBD

### **Trips 8, 12, 25 & 33 – Oregon Inlet and Bodie Light**

It seems every winter an unexpected bird spends the season in the dunes overlooking the ocean on the south side of Oregon Inlet. The local Peregrine Falcon never reveals its nighttime roost, but who looks for it at those hours? On the north side of the bridge is the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, where we will scope the inlet for Long-tailed Duck and other diving ducks. We'll continue on to Bodie Lighthouse Pond where we will scope for waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders from the observation platform. The boardwalk to the platform traverses marsh that is good for rails and marsh wrens. The platform is the last stop as the evening light can be spectacular on the waterfowl.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 30 minutes to Oregon Inlet

**Conditions:** Sand paths on the south side of Oregon Inlet, pavement on the north side and where a restroom is available. A restroom is also located at the lighthouse.

### **Trip 9 – Nags Head Woods Preserve & Jennette’s Pier Escapade (HC Accessible Trip)**

The forested sandy dunes of the Nature Conservancy’s Nags Head Woods Preserve are home to woodland species, some of which curtail migration for the warmer zone of the OBX. Their Handicap Accessible Trail offers opportunity for chair users and other participants, to search for birds in mixed foraging flocks. See Trip 6 for a description of Jennette’s Pier. (\$3 fee to the pier)

**Approximate Travel Time:** 10 minutes to Nags Head Woods

**Conditions:** Packed trail and boardwalks. A restroom is in the Pier Access Building.

### **Trip 10 – Kitty Hawk Woods Coastal Reserve area & Kitty Hawk Pier (\$3 Entry Fee)**

Several protected woodlands at Kitty Hawk will provide opportunity for wintering land birds. An Albemarle Sound view stop is planned and special permission has been acquired with the Pier at the Hilton Garden Inn at Kitty Hawk for ocean viewing. This final stop will fully and truly round out the birding opportunities. If access is unavailable at the pier due to hotel events, the Regional Beach Access will be used.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 20 minutes

**Conditions:** The pier or Beach Access has a restroom.

### **Trips 11 & 34 – Pea Island NWR North Pond and Visitor’s Center**

North Pond is open to the public all year. Simply enjoy the thousands of ducks and other water birds. Know we have a great opportunity to be a part of yet another tour to see the expected and unexpected at PINWR. A stop in the Oregon Inlet area may be included as time permits.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 30 minutes

**Conditions:** Easy going, wide, flat trails with impoundment overlooks. Restrooms located on site.

### **Trip 13 – Roanoke Island Marshes & Wanchese Harbor and Marshes**

Habitats will include woodland edges for winter land species and marsh birding and water views over the sound. We will tailor the visit based on local observations but will likely start at the Roanoke Marshes Game Lands in search of species such as Marsh Wren, Seaside Sparrow, and Clapper and Virginia Rails. The impoundment should hold a few shorebirds and waterfowl. Then we will stop by the harbor in Wanchese Village and scan the surrounding water and marina, interesting for the numerous gulls and land birds that roam about oyster piles. Just south of the harbor is a road across the marsh ending at the sound.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 25 min.

**Conditions:** Grassy trails at the Roanoke marshes to gravelly roads around the harbor. Use service stations for a restroom.

### **Trips 14 & 31 – Alligator River NWR (Buffalo City Road to Milltail Road)**

Alligator River NWR holds miles of huge impoundments with THOUSANDS of ducks, and often shorebirds. The trail at the end of Buffalo Road affords opportunity for land birds easily missed with so many flooded impoundments demanding viewer attention. The Buffalo Soldiers during the civil war resided here, the source of the namesake. Not a part of the tour is an option to stay in the refuge at dusk after the tour at the intersection of Sawyer Lake Road and Milltail Road, the place to be for Short-eared Owl, Red Wolf and Black Bear.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 35 minutes

**Conditions:** Gravel roads. Restrooms are limited. There is a waterless toilet at the entrance to ARNWR (Rt. 64 at Milltail Rd.)

### **Trip 15 – Rodanthe Big Yard Birding**

Join hostess Karen Lebing for a tour of her property on Pamlico Sound in Rodanthe. Gerry and Karen have observed 253 species to-date (most recent being Long-billed Curlew) on their two acres of heaven. From shrubby edge habitat to brackish marsh and open water, the birding potential on an afternoon is this spot is very good. Their feeder array (that includes sugar water for hummers) alone is a big draw in this very special Outer Banks backyard. Do not forget your camera if you decide to sign up for this unique experience!

***Approximate travel time:*** 30 minutes

***Conditions:*** Easy walking on mostly flat terrain. There is a long boardwalk out into the marsh. Restrooms are on site as well as at neighborhood convenience store.

### **Trip 16 – Jockey’s Ridge State Park**

Join a NC State Park Ranger to learn about this jewel of a park located adjacent to the famous Wright Brothers Memorial. Walk the trails in search of local flora and fauna associated with a variety of coastal habitat. Also, participants will be exposed to some of the rich human history associated with this part of the Outer Banks.

***Approximate travel time:*** 10 minutes

***Conditions:*** Moderate. Most of the trip will be hiking on well-defined trails, but the group will also encounter loose sand and some hilly terrain. Restrooms can be found on site at the park.

### **Trip 23 – Duck Town Boardwalk and Kitty Hawk Pier Escapade (HC Accessible Trip)**

The almost half-mile boardwalk at Duck is a viewing platform for both wintering landbirds and waterbirds. It is located along a brushy shoreline and Currituck Sound. As time permits other Currituck Sound view locations may be included. The trip also includes the great opportunity granted to CBC for ocean viewing at the Hilton Garden Inn Pier (\$3 fee). Scopes are the best tool for this last stop. If the pier is closed due to an event at the hotel the nearby Regional Beach Access will be our site for ocean viewing.

***Approximate Travel Time:*** 35 minutes to Duck

***Conditions:*** Boardwalks. Restrooms will be at both sites.

### **Trip 26 – Northern Roanoke Island - Fort Raleigh Area**

The northern area of Roanoke Island has several birding sites visited by the locals. Habitats range from manicured turf to woodlands and Albemarle Sound viewing. If Elizabethan Gardens is used by the leader, a fee is required (\$8). The trip may go as far south as the Roanoke Island Marshes.

***Approximate Travel Time:*** 25 min.

***Conditions:*** Maintained trails vary. Restrooms will be available, either onsite or at a nearby service station.

### **Trip 28 – Split Pea Sojourn**

We will walk the saltmarsh at the site of an old inlet on Hatteras Island, looking for bitterns, rails, Marsh and Sedge Wren, and the “maritime sparrows” - Saltmarsh, Nelson’s, and Seaside. Shorebirds and waders may be found as well. \*Note: In case of high wind, we will instead visit nearby hotspots, as wind makes viewing the marsh birds difficult.

***Approximate Travel Time:*** 45 minutes

***Conditions:*** This is a strenuous trip that requires some wading in up to six inches of water, so bring appropriate footwear. Closest restrooms are located at the Pea Island NWR Visitor’s Center, approximately two miles to the north.



### **Trip 30 – Futch Game Lands & River Road (ARNWR)**

There are hundreds of acres of impoundments at the Futch Game Lands. Ducks move about the artificially flooded cells of ag lands. Shorebirds and marsh sparrows round out the impoundment birds and brushy woodland edges offer a variety of passerines. River Road can be a bonanza when rains flood the field.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 45 minutes to the Game Lands

**Conditions:** Gravelly roads and grassy paths along dikes. Plan on no facilities (restrooms, food, etc.) available.

### **Trip 32 – Pea Island NWR Visitor’s Center and Bodie Light Boardwalk Escapade (HC Accessible)**

The PI Visitors Center viewing windows and area within the parking lot offer excellent birding on North Pond, especially for ducks, with chances for Brown and White Pelicans a distinct possibility. We will then travel to the boardwalk at Bodie Island Lighthouse where we will scope for waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders from the lower portion of the observation platform. The boardwalk to the platform cuts through marsh that is excellent for rails and marsh wrens. The platform is the last stop as evening light can be spectacular on the waterfowl.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 35 minutes to PINWR

**Conditions:** A restroom is available at both sites.

**Trip 35 – Photo Workshop.** This is an opportunity to glean tips that will help you hone your skills in the field. It is an afternoon trip so should afford excellent light conditions. Bird with your lens and binoculars.

**Approximate travel time:** TBD

**Conditions:** Sites will be selected by the leader.

### **Trip 41– Alligator River NWR for uncommon/rarities seen**

Details TBA at Saturday evening program.

### **Trip 42– Pea Island area for uncommon/rarities seen**

Details TBA at Saturday evening program.

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## **FULL DAY FIELD TRIPS**

**Trips 17 & 37 – Lake Pungo and Phelps. (Pocosin Lakes NWR).** Pocosin Lakes is famous for huge flocks of wintering Snow Geese lifting off at sunrise, a spectacle in itself. We will look through flocks of blackbirds with hopes of spotting a Yellow-headed Blackbird. Overhead, we'll keep an eye out for Golden Eagles, as this is one of the most reliable spots in the state for these awesome birds. Other possibilities include waterfowl species, and farm-field and edge species such as sparrows, pipits and Horned Larks. There is a lot of territory to cover on this trip with potential side trips on the way back in the Mattamuskeet NWR area.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 1.5 hours

**Conditions:** Roads, boardwalks and dirt paths. Restroom sites will not be available.

### **Trips 18 & 38 – Mattamuskeet NWR.**

A birder's paradise, Mattamuskeet can be incredible. We will bird the Lake Landing area for waterfowl, shorebirds and waders, sorting through the more common species and hoping for something rare. We will also bird along the causeway, famous for its overwintering passerines, and at other sections of the refuge where passerine habitat abounds. The entrance road follows the main viewing impoundment.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 1 hour 30 minutes

**Conditions:** Restroom at the Swan Quarter parking area, Lake Landing and in the Refuge Visitors Center in the center of the main part of the refuge.

**Trip 19 – Fort Raleigh to Wanchese**

This is the all-day trip to discover the many hotspots on the north end of Roanoke Island and have adequate time to search the Roanoke Marshes and the marshes at Wanchese.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 25 min.

**Conditions:** Maintained trails vary. Restrooms will be available, either onsite or at a nearby service station.

**Trips 20 & 40 – Pea Island NWR (North Pond to Split Pea Bridge)**

As part of an all-day trip, you will have more valuable time to scan the area habitats and increase those chances for life birds, or to study the posture and feeding habits that are guides to shorebird ID. The trip also goes south of the Visitors Center to the Newfield Platform (NOT the dike) and the Oceanview Trail for pelagic species hopefully near shore, and may possibly travel further south to the marsh area at Split Pea Bridge. A stop at Oregon Inlet will be considered dependent upon time. DO **NOT** WALK THE DIKE BEYOND THE NEWFIELD PLATFORM.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 35 minutes

**Conditions:** Sandy road shoulders and path to the ocean, grassy trails. Restrooms will be available at Oregon Inlet and the PINWR Visitor's Center.

**Trip 39 – Hatteras Point & Hatteras Island,**

A full day that just has – well – promise. We will bird the Point Campground, the Salt Pond and the beach, sorting through the gull flocks in search of Thayer's, Iceland, Glaucous and California Gulls. Lesser Black-backed Gulls should be common. We will scan the ocean for alcids or other rarities. The salt pond usually hosts good populations of birds. Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and a Sprague's Pipit may be present. Your leader may plan a stop at a local woodland area or some side trips on the way back depending on what has been seen that morning at points north. **Please note:** Depending on the weather conditions, we may be walking the sandy beach to Hatteras Point, about two miles round trip.

**Approximate Travel Time:** 90 minutes

**Conditions:** Moderate to strenuous. We will be exposed to the elements on the beach so dress accordingly. Restrooms will be available at the lighthouse Visitor's Center and neighborhood convenience stores.



**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.carollnabirdclub.org](http://www.carollnabirdclub.org)

**Friday, January 19 Morning Half Day**

- Trip 1– 7:00am Palmetto Peartree Preserve and Futch Game Lands
- Trip 2– 7:00am Audubon Pine Island Sanctuary & Duck Boardwalk
- Trip 3– 7:00am Alligator River NWR (Rt. 264 Corridor to Milltail Rd.)
- Trip 4– 7:15am Corolla Escapade (A Handicap Accessible Trip)
- Trip 5– 7:15am Pea Island NWR Visitors Center and Southside Dike
- Trip 6– 7:30am Jennette’s Pier Ocean Watch
- Trip 7– 8:00am Waterfowl ID Workshop
- Trip 8– 8:30am Oregon Inlet & Bodie Island

**Friday, January 19 Afternoon Half Day**

- Trip 9– 1:00pm Nags Head Woods Preserve & Jennette’s Pier Escapade (HC Accessible Trip)
- Trip 10– 1:00pm Kitty Hawk Woods Coastal Reserve area & Kitty Hawk Pier
- Trip 11–1:15pm Pea Island NWR North Pond & Visitors Center
- Trip 12– 1:15pm Oregon Inlet & Bodie Light
- Trip 13– 1:15pm Roanoke Island Marshes & Wanchese Harbor and Marshes
- Trip 14– 1:00pm Alligator River NWR (Buffalo City Rd. to Milltail Rd.)
- Trip 15– 1:30pm Rodanthe Big Yard Birding
- Trip 16– 1:30pm Jockey’s Ridge State Park

**Friday, January 19 All Day**

- Trip 17– 5:15am Pocosin Lakes (Pungo and Phelps) NWR
- Trip 18 – 6:15am Mattamuskeet NWR
- Trip 19 – 6:30am Roanoke Island – Ft. Raleigh to Wanchese
- Trip 20 – 6:45am Pea Island NWR (North Pond to Split Pea Bridge)

**Saturday, January 20 Morning Half Day**

- Trip 21– 6:45am Audubon Pine Island Sanctuary & Duck Boardwalk
- Trip 22– 6:45am Alligator River NWR (Rt. 264 to Milltail Rd.)
- Trip 23–7:00am Duck Town Boardwalk & Kitty Hawk Pier Escapade (HC Accessible)
- Trip 24– 7:15am Pea Island NWR Visitors Center and Southside Dike
- Trip 25–7:15am Oregon Inlet & Bodie Island
- Trip 26– 7:30am Northern Roanoke Island – Ft. Raleigh Area
- Trip 27– 7:30am Jennette’s Pier Ocean Watch
- Trip 28–7:30am Split Pea Sojourn

**Saturday, January 20 Afternoon Half Day**

- Trip 29– 1:00pm Audubon Pine Island Sanctuary & Duck Boardwalk
- Trip 30– 1:00pm Futch Game Lands & River Rd. in Alligator River NWR
- Trip 31– 1:00pm Alligator River NWR (Buffalo City Rd. to Milltail Rd.)
- Trip 32– 1:15pm Pea Island NWR Visitors Center & Bodie Light Boardwalk Escapade (HC Accessible)
- Trip 33– 1:15pm Oregon Inlet & Bodie Island
- Trip 34– 1:30pm Pea Island NWR North Pond & Visitors Center
- Trip 35– 1:30pm Photography Workshop
- Trip 36 – 1:30pm Jennette’s Pier Ocean Watch

**Saturday, January 20 All Day**

- Trip 37– 5:15am Pocosin Lakes (Pungo and Phelps) NWR
- Trip 38– 6:15am Mattamuskeet NWR
- Trip 39– 6:15am Hatteras Point & Hatteras Island
- Trip 40– 6:45am Pea Island NWR (North Pond to Split Pea Bridge)

**Sunday, January 21**

- Trip 41– 7:30am Alligator River NWR Search for uncommon/rarities seen
- Trip 42– 7:30am Pea Island NWR Search for uncommon/rarities seen

**CBC Winter 2024 OBX, NC Registration Form**  
**Registration Begins Saturday, December 9th @ 2pm.**  
**Register online for Best Availability of Field Trips at**  
[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Registration (Member) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Registration (Non-Member) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$40 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Buffet Dinner (A Vegetarian dish is on the buffet line)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ x \$40 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Field Trip Sign-Up	A.M. 1st/2nd Choice	P.M. 1st/2nd Choice	All Day 1st/2nd Choice
Friday	/	/	/
Saturday	/	/	/

To pre-register for Field Trips, place the trip number(s) in the boxes to the right of the days.

Meeting registration at the door costs \$45.

**Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club and send to:**

**CBC, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374**

Club policy requires all field trip participants to comply with the field trip leader's assessment and requests concerning the physical ability of each participant to make or complete the trip.

I will release and discharge (and will not make a claim against) the Carolina Bird Club for injury, death, or property damage arising from my participation at this meeting and/or Club field trips. This release of liability is entered into on behalf of all members of my family, including all minors accompanying me. I certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of any such minors and that I am over 18 years of age.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Processing of mail-in registrations will not begin until online registration opens.

**Special hotel pricing ends December 18, 2023, at Midnight (This may be extended if sufficient rooms have been reserved, but is not guaranteed.)**

**Cancellations will be refunded if received by noon on January 7<sup>th</sup>.**

Cancel by contacting the Headquarters Secretary at [hq@carolinabirdclub.org](mailto:hq@carolinabirdclub.org).

## **Welcome Bob Lewis - North Carolina Member-at-large**

I started birding in 1973 while a graduate student in mathematics at Cornell. I knew nothing of birdwatching. A friend talked me into visiting the famous Cornell Lab of Ornithology where they had popular lectures every week. Someone there casually mentioned how they had seen a few Kestrels recently. I looked at a painting in a field guide (first time I had ever even heard of a field guide) and thought "What?? That's ridiculous! There's nothing like that within a thousand miles of here." So of course, the next day while driving I saw one perched on a telephone wire. I was so astonished it's lucky I didn't crash the car. I was hooked.

A few years later I was a shiny new assistant professor at Lander College in Greenwood SC. I got heavily into birding and met Harry LeGrand, who was about fifty miles away at Clemson, and a few other birders.

From 1978-1980 I was in Chapel Hill picking up another graduate degree. Again, I birded heavily in the area and made lots of friends, such as John Fussell, Mike Tove, and Allen Bryan. The last year I was there Jordan Lake was being clear cut and dammed, and we found a lot of great birds, including a couple Black Rails.

In 1980 I got a great offer from a good university in New York City. I couldn't refuse, but hated to leave the Carolinas. I swore to return often. For the next 17 years I did three or more Christmas Counts on the Outer Banks every year and visited often during the summer and fall. For various reasons I skipped the years 1997 - 2007, but returned with a vengeance for the next ten years, helped by the fact that I had family in Durham by then.

As the Twenty-teens wore on and retirement loomed, it seemed like more and more a good idea to take advantage of the family situation in Durham. My wife and I finally moved here in 2021. It's been great reconnecting with people and places, and seeing lots of new things. The place sure has grown!

I hope to see you in the field, probably near Durham, on the OBX, or at Alligator Refuge.

*Bob Lewis*

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## **Welcome Jennifer Roberts - South Carolina Member-at-large**

Hi y'all! I've lived in South Carolina for almost three decades but I grew up wandering fields and forests in the Midwest (oh, the birds I probably saw but didn't appreciate back then). I didn't realize birding was a 'thing' until 2012 while on vacation in Costa Rica, but I was instantly hooked. Since then, I've taken a few birding trips, attended a festival or two, collected too many field guides and made quite a few new birder friends. I'm excited to give back to the club that showed a new birder how much fun it is to bird in groups!

*Jennifer Roberts*

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# 25th Anniversary Wings Over Water a Whopping Success!

By Susan Campbell

Anyone who did not attend our milestone festival in October missed quite an event! The birds and other wildlife did not disappoint. Fortunately, the weather also cooperated, (mostly—it was the Outer Banks!) and we were also treated to our renowned keynote speaker, Julie Zickefoose, on site for the entire week.



Between October 17<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, some sixty-one trips succeeded in finding 182 species of birds. As always, the festival area included locations from Mackay Island to the north down to Ocracoke in the south and the beaches inland to Lake Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. Avian highlights included the persisting flock of American Flamingos at Pea Island to the Tropical Kingbird found at Mackay Island to a late White-rumped Sandpiper and Black-necked Stilt as well as the now-expected eastern rarities such as Eurasian Wigeon and American White Pelicans.

But there was more! Persisting warm water temperatures meant that Cannonball Jellyfish were still present around Dare County piers. That meant that opportunities to see foraging sea turtles, especially rare Leatherbacks, were possible. Lots of participants had good views of turtles from the end of Jennette's Peir throughout the week. Warmer than expected air temperatures had snakes still on the move. Numerous Canebrake Rattlesnakes were observed crossing Milltail Road in Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. And that was not all! Juvenile Red Wolves were found hunting large insects and small game on the edges of the fields at Alligator River along Longcurve Road—oblivious to the awe and amazement of countless observers. Also, huge Black Bears were quietly feeding in the freshly cut cornfields there as well.



Attendees of the Keynote event enjoyed not only wonderful appetizers provided by Basnight's Lone Cedar Restaurant but were treated to Julie's tales of bird study in her own backyard. She shared experiences, photos and videos from years of observing and illustrating the lives of nestlings on her property in rural Ohio. It was not only an entertaining and educational presentation but also a heartfelt look into the development of familiar species when most of us are not watching. We were all riveted until the very

end. Julie really enjoyed her stay with us for the week. She was able to make new acquaintances as well as visit with old friends. Like so many, she took loads of photos of the wildlife spectacle and, being a plant-lover as well, the abundance of fall wildflowers.

Of course, Wings Over Water 2023 is not quite over. We have the Encore weekend coming up in December (9 & 10). As was the case last month, most of our trips are full. We are looking forward once again to searching an array of habitat from maritime forests to fields, impoundments as well as the ocean for wildlife. By then, marine mammals such as Atlantic Bottlenose Dolphins and Humpback Whales may be spotted amongst the sea ducks, gulls and terns along the coastline. The refuges should be full of waterfowl, waders and an array of raptors in addition to wintering songbirds.

So, stay tuned!



# Welcome New CBC Members!

## New Life Members

*Ian & Janelle McDonald, Hickory, NC*

*Fred Stein, Charlotte, NC*

*Mary Harward, Costa Mesa, CA*

*Marcelle Ross, North Myrtle Beach, SC*

Sandy & Dave Townsend  
Valrico, FL

Barbara Pigott  
Gloucester, NC

Gayle & Mike Krusinski  
Asheboro, NC

Deborah & William Woody  
Raleigh, NC

Robert Spearman  
Mary Edmonds  
Pittsboro, NC

Jay & Sharon Molvie  
Raleigh, NC

Ron Martin  
Apex, NC

Kate McCormack  
Charleston, SC

Phillip & Cristela Moreno  
Sylva, NC

Cindy Damon  
Chapin, SC

Andrea Nortier  
Sharon, SC

Mary Kevin Welch  
Beaufort, NC

Arbor Nickley  
Durham, NC

Helen Joyner  
Cary, NC

Katherine Dalton  
St. Pauls, NC

Rosemary Alston  
Windsor, NC

Sandy & Elizabeth  
Drolshagen  
Charleston, SC

Barbara Szombatfalvy  
Durham, NC

Jack & Susan Sponsler  
Myrtle Beach, SC

Allison Cahill  
Irmo, SC

Leonard Mull  
Clover, SC

Zach Ambrose  
Raleigh, NC

Claire McCullough  
Pittsboro, NC

Gail Cox  
Chapel Hill, NC

Chris, Aiden, Emma  
and Theresa Savilis  
Durham, NC

Myra Murphy  
Cary, NC

Lacy Kegley  
Clayton, NC

Katherine Monismith  
Mooresville, NC

Larry Hull  
Asheville, NC

Jennifer Rojas  
Cornelius, NC  
Eugenia Wade  
Pinetops, NC

Don Christy & Lisa Ellis  
Maggie Valley, NC

Mel Reed  
Greenville, SC

Aerin Skye Graham  
Salem, SC



Carolina Bird Club  
www.carolinabirdclub.org

**Carolina Bird Club**  
1809 Lakepark Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27612

**Periodicals Postage Paid**  
**at Pinehurst, NC 28374**  
**and additional mailing offices**

## Upcoming CBC Meetings

**Winter Meeting at Nags Head, NC – January 19-21, 2024**

**Spring Meeting at Charleston, SC – April 25-28, 2024**

### CBC Board Members

#### **President**

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susan@ncaves.com

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Betsy Kane, Washington, NC  
Robert Lewis, Durham, NC  
Paul Laurent, Banner Elk, NC

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

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Jennifer Roberts, Columbia, SC

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

**Deadlines for submission of Volume 70, Issue 1 is**  
**January 15, 2024**

**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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