The Bulletin Chapel Hill Bird Club

c/o C. W. Cook 418 Sharon Rd. Chapel Hill, NC 27514



Vol. XXVIII, No. 10

Monthly Meeting

Monday, October 25, 1999, at 7:30 pm

Program — Birds of East Africa, presented by David Smith & Judy Hinderliter-Smith

Location — **Binkley Baptist Church**, the Lounge. Binkley is on Willow Drive at 15-501 in Chapel Hill, near University Mall.

Dreams of Africa at the October Meeting

by Ginger Travis

Fall and winter are the seasons to dream of future birding trips. Here's a major aid to the imagination: Birds of East Africa will be the subject at our Oct. 25 meeting. Durham residents David Smith and Judy Hinderliter-Smith have gone to Africa twice in search of birds - most recently to Tanzania, where in two weeks this summer they saw more than 330 species, including hornbills, bustards and vultures. They'll show slides from the trip and talk a little about the logistics of birding in Africa. Come widen your horizons.

Since it worked out well last month, once again we'll have cookies and juice at 7:15, which is just a few minutes before the new regular meeting time — 7:30 pm. So come early and bring your sweet tooth.

And coming up at our Nov. 22 meeting, Phillip Manning of Chapel Hill will talk about his latest book, Islands of Hope, which describes the system of U.S. wildlife sanctuaries including Lake Mattamuskeet in Hyde County, North Carolina. This talk will be a great lead-in to Mattamuskeet's Swan Days Festival on Dec. 4 and 5, when people can get close looks at the thousands of geese, ducks and swans wintering there. The vastness of the lake and the din of so many swans calling at once are among the most thrilling sights and sounds North Carolina has to offer. Phillip Manning will tell us how this exceptional wildlife refuge came into existence and how we can best enjoy it.

The Chatham County Fall Bird Counts just keep getting better and better. This year, our fourth, we had record high participation, with 27 birders in 13 parties, and counted a record high 4609 birds of 115 species on September 18. We were aided by a welltimed cold front that brought plenty of warblers, but hindered by two hurricanes that dumped a lot of rain on us and made the mudflats and shorebirds disappear.

Saturday morning trips leave the Glen Lennox parking lot (on the north side of 54 just east of the inter-

section with 15-501 in Chapel Hill) at 7:30 am sharp and return by noon. Reservations are not necessary.

Beginners and visitors are welcome! Bring binocu-

lars, boots (or old tennis shoes), a scope if you've got one, and be prepared for a hike. Contact Doug

Oct. 23 - Brickhouse Road near Falls Lake (the

Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, 20 - call Doug for destination Nov. 27 - no field trip because of Thanksgiving

Shadwick (942-0479) for more details.

The rarity of the day was Doug Shadwick's Connecticut Warbler at Old Hope Valley Farm Road. Others new to the count were Broad-winged Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Forster's Tern, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (early), Red-breasted Nuthatch (early), Veery, Blackpoll Warbler, and Bobolink. Other unexpected

Membership Information

Calendar-year (Jan.-Dec.) dues for most individuals and families are \$15; for students, \$10. If you wish to renew for more than one year, multiply the annual dues rate times the number of years. Please send your check (payable to the *Chapel Hill Bird Club*) to club treasurer Fran Hommersand, 304 Spruce Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. If you have questions, please call Fran at 967-1745.

Name(s):

Field Trips

"sparrowfields").

Fall Count Results

by Will Cook

Address:

Telephone: (_____) ____ - ____

E-mail

Please take a moment to fill out the CHBC survey on page 3

goodies, though not new to the count, were 4 Whippoor-wills singing at Old Hope Valley Farm Road, 2 Nashville Warblers, and an adult male Orchard Oriole.

We set record highs for 48 species, which is not surprising given the high number of counting hours, but oddly enough also set some record lows — Osprey, E. Wood-Pewee, and White-eyed Vireo.

It was an excellent day for warblers, with 23 species and 570 individuals, of which 293 were not the ubiquitous Pine Warblers. Surprisingly, we had 5 species of shorebirds, which is more than expected, but well below last year's 12.

See pages 5-6 of this *Bulletin* for the full count results.

Sightings

Jul 11: Jordan Lake Great Blues about to fledge

by Ginger Travis

Late Sunday afternoon, July 11, I paddled on the little arm of Jordan Lake that sticks up toward Lystra, Jack Bennett and Big Woods Roads. When I got as far up the side arm toward Big Woods Road as I could go, I stopped with at a beaver dam and looked ahead in the willows. On a dead tree 75 yards away was a stick nest and two young Great Blue Herons standing on it. (I think somebody reported a nest in this vicinity back in the spring. By map, I'd estimate that this particular nest was a half mile east of Big Woods Road.)

The two big babies looked ready to leave the nest at any moment. They resembled adults and did some flapping without getting airborne. I finally left them to paddle back but happened to turn around in time to see an adult heron arrive at the nest and apparently give something to the babies. For the next five minutes the agitated babies were beak to beak — possibly pulling on opposite ends of the same food item making a huge racket with growls and yowls and other indescribable sounds.

Also in the same vicinity I saw two other adult Great Blues, a family of four Green Herons that alighted in a dead willow quite close to me, and two Great Egrets that flew away. En route to this spot I got good looks at a Red-shouldered Hawk that flew to a dead pine near me in a cove and proceeded to groom its bedraggled self. (It was raining. And I wondered if this bird possibly could be molting from juvenal to adult plumage. It appeared quite light on its front with light rust streaks up high on the breast — not the solid rust of an adult. The edges of its tail feathers looked worn, and the tail did not look as dark as on an adultplumaged bird.) I also saw three Spotted Sandpipers, a couple of Osprey and a Kingfisher.

This arm of the lake would be great to explore by canoe or kayak in the spring. It's only a mile and a half from the Farrington boat ramps to the end. And because of the shallow water you lose a lot of the motor boat traffic. Thanks to the rain and the late hour I had the ramps pretty much to myself when I got off the water at 7:30. Usually it's mayhem there.

Aug. 8: Falls Lake Shorebirds

by Les Todd

Bert Fisher, Leto Copeley, and I paid a visit to most of the "major" shorebirding areas of upper Falls Lake today (Sunday). Migration is definitely underway and with the dry weather, there's lots of great habitat at the lake. Here's what we found:

Redwood Road RR trestle - This was our last stop and by far the most productive of the day. A great deal of excellent habitat can be accessed by walking down the exposed bank of the river from the trestle toward I-85. The view from the tracks is not as good as in past years since the low water level means that the flats close by are quite dry.

Solitary Sandpiper -8 Spotted Sandpiper -12 Semipalmated Sandpiper -40 Least Sandpiper -20 Dowitcher -2 Greater Yellowlegs -9 Lesser Yellowlegs -2 Pectoral Sandpiper -15 Semipalmated Plover -7 Stilt Sandpiper -1 Killdeer - many

Olive Grove Church Rd- This area has yet to reach its full potential. Some sandbars and flats have emerged and a few birds including a Semipalmated Plover and a couple of Least Sandpipers were present. For those of you unfamiliar with this excellent spot, it can be reached by taking the Creedmoor exit from I-85north and turning right. Turn right onto Will Suitt Rd and follow it on past the parking area for the birding spot noted just above. You will cross one road at a stop sign and then turn right at the next paved intersection which is Olive Grove Church Rd. Park where the road ends and walk straight ahead to a power line easement. Turn right and follow the power lines to the lake. Walk to your left along the shore until you round a point. Much shorebird habitat should be before you at this point. If you continue along the shore you will fairly quickly reach a point at which you can view the swimming beach at Rolling View Recreation Area in the distance across the lake.

Aug. 22: Big Shorebird Day at Jordan-Falls

by Ricky Davis

When I heard about the Hudsonian Godwit at Falls on Saturday (8/21), I decided to make a swing of Jordan and Falls today for some shorebirding. I ended up with 21 species, it was a very rewarding day, although tiring and hot! Following is a list of birds at two major areas — at Jordan, I checked the New Hope Creek area upstream from the NC 751 area, and at Falls, the I-85-Redwood area. As you can see, there is quite a movement of shorebirds through our area right now.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

CHBC Program Survey

Dear CHBC members,

Although both our meetings and field trips had excellent attendance last season, we would like to improve these programs. Therefore, please take a moment to consider the survey below and respond to me either electronically or by mail.

Monthly meeting (check one or more items, add comments)

- □ Not interested in programs
- □ Enjoy/might attend programs on:
 - □ Basic birding/identification skills
 - □ Specific identification programs (e.g. fall warblers)
 - □ Hands on identification (skins, tapes, quizzes, etc.)
 - □ North America travel
 - □ Exotic travel (Africa, Australia, etc.)
 - □ Bird science (census, counts, phylogeny, etc.)
 - □ Conservation/environment
 - Domestic birding (birdhouses, feeding, gardening, etc.)

Comments:

Field trips

• Not interested in field trips

- □ Enjoy/might attend field trips:
 - 🖸 Chapel Hill/Durham area
 - □ Raleigh area
 - □ Farther afield, one day
 - □ Farther afield, overnight
 - □ Focused trips (e.g. shorebirds, wintering eagles, winter sparrows, woodcocks)
 - □ Recurring "migration walks" at single location
 - Beginner trips, perhaps in conjunction with ID
 - □ Fieldtrips with more leaders

Comments:

Service projects

- Not interested in service projects
- Trail maintenance/trail cutting (Hackberry-Warbler and other trails where birds are seen)
- □ Bird-related projects for schoolchildren
- Beginners' workshops on topics such as hummingbirds, bluebirds, birdsong etc.
- Comments:

Social aspects

- \square Not interested in socializing in connection with meetings.
- □ Social time before regular meetings with light refreshments.
- Develope Potluck supper (once in fall, once in spring, more often?)
- Comments:

Other

Many of you may have belonged to bird clubs in other parts of the country. If you have a great idea for an activity, tell us!

Also, if you are willing to organize an activity or special field trip or help arrange speakers, please tell us. The projects most likely to get done are those with a willing organizer.

Please send your completed survey to me, Magnus Persmark, at 9309 Bethel-Hickory Grove Rd., Chapel-Hill, NC 27516, or email me at : emp34157@glaxowellcome.com Thank you very much for your input.

Happy birding, Magnus Persmark, CHBC President

Page 4

October 1999 (First number is Jordan, second Falls) Black-bellied Plover - 0,1 Semipalmated Plover - 34,17 Killdeer - couple of hundred over both sites Greater Yellowlegs - 3,4 Lesser Yellowlegs - 25,18 Solitary Sandpiper - 7.3 Spotted Sandpiper - 6,4 UPLAND Sandpiper - 1,0 (quite rare on lake mudflats!) HUDSONIAN GODWIT - 0,1 (very rare inland anywhere, anytime) Ruddy Turnstone - 0,1 Sanderling - 1,1 Semipalmated Sandpiper - 23,8 Western Sandpiper - 4,0 Least Sandpiper - 80,40 White-rumped Sandpiper - 2.0 BAIRD'S Sandpiper - 1,0 (rare but not too unexpected here this time of year) Pectoral Sandpiper - 140,70 Stilt Sandpiper - 4,1 BUFF-BREASTED Sandpiper - 1,1 (kinda neat to get one at each of the lakes) Short-billed Dowitcher - 14,20 Common Snipe - 1,0 Also had 5 Caspian Terns and 1 Black Tern at Falls. Sep. 5: Hurricane Dennis Birds at Crabtree

by Dan Kaplan

I birded Lake Crabtree (Wake County, NC) this afternoon on the heels of Dennis between about 4:15 and 5 pm, in moderately heavy rain and gusty southerly winds. The list of notables:

Least Sandpiper - 1 Pectoral Sandpiper - 1 WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER - 5 LAUGHING GULL - 5 **COMMON TERN - 2** Forster's Tern - 2 Black Tern - 1-2

A county list bonanza!

Sep. 6: Dennis Birds at Falls

by Chris Eley

I decided to bird Falls Lake this morning to see if Dennis brought anything in. I met Ricky Davis at the Cheek Rd. causeway. By the time I got there Ricky had already found a Red Phalorope, and Common and Sandwich Terns. Other birds we saw were:

2 AM. GOLDEN-PLOVER

1 Ruddy Turnstone 1 Sanderling 1 Semipalmated Sandpiper **12 RED-NECKED PHALAROPE 2 ROYAL TERN** 5 Black Tern

3 Forster's Tern **10 LAUGHING GULLS 3** Bank Swallow

Sep. 7: Dennis Birds at Jordan

by Will Cook

I checked out Jordan Lake Tuesday afternoon 9/7 to see if hurricane birds were left. Here's what I found:

34 LAUGHING GULLS (20 at Farrington bridge, 14 at Ebenezer)

6 Forster's Terns (Ebenezer)

5 Common Terns (Ebenezer)

4 Black Terns (Ebenezer)

Also checked out Crosswinds Marina (no birds) and the 751 bridge (4 Blue-winged Teal and some Mallards). I bet there were some great shorebirds around on 9/5-6! Looks like the mudflats at Jordan are gone for good this year.

When Dennis first passed by the coast (8/31), I visited Falls and Jordan Lakes on the off chance anything was blown in. I found 8 Black Terns at the Cheek Road causeway (Falls), but I think they were there before the storm. Also 1 Baird's Sandpiper at the 751 bridge, but the same story there.

Sept. 11: Savannah and Nashville at Mason Farm

by Will Cook

On the CHBC walk at Mason Farm on Saturday 9/11, 6 of us found that a cold front did indeed bring in a few migrant birds. We had at least 2 Savannah Sparrows, the earliest fall local report ever, a Nashville Warbler (normally scarce in eastern NC), plus N. Waterthrush, Palm, Prairie, and Chestnut-sided Warblers. Several Great Egrets flew by, no doubt Jordan Lake birds displaced by Dennis's flood-waters. On Sept. 12 I visited the site of the former New Hope Creek mudflats and found not a single wader.

Sightings in Brief

American Golden-Plover - 1, 9/4/99, New Hope Creek mudflats, Jordan Lake, Chris Eley, Leto Copeley, Les Todd.

Marbled Godwit - 1, 9/4/99, New Hope Creek mudflats, Jordan Lake, Chris Eley, Leto Copeley, Les Todd.

Baird's Sandpiper - 1, 8/24/99, 751 bridge, Jordan Lake, Doug Shadwick, Sandy Cash

Baird's Sandpiper - 1, 8/31/99, 751 bridge, Jordan Lake, Will Cook Misc Shorebirds - 2 Greater Yellowlegs, 4 Spotted Sandpiper, 1 Least Sandpiper, 3 Short-billed Dowitcher, 8/8/99, Falls Lake, Durham Co., Will Cook

Bridled Tern - 1, 9/16/99 (Hurricane Floyd), Farrington Rd. bridge, Jordan Lake, Magnus Persmark

Royal Tern - 3, 9/16/99, Farrington Rd. bridge, Jordan Lake, Will Cook Forster's Tern - 50, 9/16/99, Farrington Rd. bridge, Jordan Lake, WC, Steve Schultz **Common Tern** - 75, 9/16/99, Farrington Rd. bridge, Jordan Lake, m.ob.

Black Tern - 3, 9/16/99, Farington Rd. bridge, Jordan Lake, m.ob. Swainson's Thrush -1 singing, 5/26/99, Duke Forest, Orange Co., Rachel Harden Magnolia Warbler, 1, 8/27/99, Duke Gardens, Jim Bloor

Blackpoll Warbler -1 singing, 5/26/99, Duke Forest, Orange Co., Rachel Harden

Club officers

President: Magnus Persmark (933-2255, emp34157@glaxowellcome.com) Vice President (CH): Ginger Travis (942-7746, Ginger. Travis@unc.edu) Secretary: Judy Murray (942-2985, jmurray.uncson@mhs.unc.edu) Treasurer: Fran Hommersand (967-1745) Field Trip Chairman: Doug Shadwick (942-0479) Publicity Chairman: Ginger Travis (942-7746, Ginger Travis@unc.edu) Bulletin Editor: Will Cook (967-5446, cwcook@duke.edu) http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/chbc.html

1999 CHATHAM COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT

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Brown-headed Nuthatch 48 7 3 17 5 10 6 10 Carolina Wren 218 H 58 13 24 14 24 9 18 22 12 9 10 House Wren 2 2 2 4 3 3 5 6 3 3 10 6 10				1												
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House Wren 2 2 1 1 1 1 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 35 H 7 4 3 3 5 6 3 3 1 Eastern Bluebird 127 H 1 27 17 8 33 4 14 3 12 8 Veery 1 NC 1 4 3 12 8 Swainson's Thrush 1 1 1 4 1 2 6 3 3 1 1 1 1																
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 35 H 7 4 3 3 5 6 3 3 1 Eastern Bluebird 127 H 1 27 17 8 33 4 14 3 12 8 Veery 1 NC 1			Н		13	24	14	24		9	18	22	12	9	10	5
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European Starling 81 H 3 5 8 2 55 8 1 Tennessee Warbler 7 H 5 2			H			2	3								3	6
Tennessee Warbler 7 H 5 2				1							3			1		
Nashville Warbler 2 1 1 1					3			8	2	55			8			
			H	5			2									
Northern Parula 16 H 1 1 7 3 2 1 1 1												1				
	Northern Parula	16	Н	1		1	7	3		2	1		1			

1999 CHATHAM COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT

Species	9/18	NOTES	WC	CEg	CEI	TL	JM	BP	JR	DS	JS	MS	GT	AU	LVM
Yellow Warbler	3	Н			1				2						
Chestnut-sided Warbler	14		4		1				1	2		2			4
Magnolia Warbler	19	Н	7		2				1	7		1			1
Cape May Warbler	5	Н							5						
Black-throated Blue Warbler	7	Н	1				2		2	1					1
Black-throated Green Warbler	4		3									1			
Blackburnian Warbler	1								1			-			
Yellow-throated Warbler	3	Н			1				1				1		
Pine Warbler	277	11	61	19	67	8	30	5	8	36	9	30	3		1
Prairie Warbler	4	Н	01	19	2	0	50	5	1	50	9	1	5		1
	9	п	2		2				2		1				
Palm Warbler	-	NO	3						2		1	3			
Blackpoll Warbler	1	NC	1		2					-					-
Black-and-white Warbler	24	H	7	1	3	1			1	2	1	4		2	2
American Redstart	42	H	12	1	11				4	4	1	5			4
Worm-eating Warbler	2	Н	1		1										
Ovenbird	5	Н	4					1							
CONNECTICUT WARBLER	1	NC								1					
Common Yellowthroat	122	Н	42	4	26	6	4	2	2	18	4	8	2	2	2
Hooded Warbler	1									1					
Yellow-breasted Chat	1								1						
Summer Tanager	12				3	3				1	1	2			2
Scarlet Tanager	20	Н	5		10	2			2		-	1			
Eastern Towhee	46	H	16	5	10	7	2		2	2	8	4			
Chipping Sparrow	29	H		10	9	/	10		<u></u>	2	U	4			
	29		10	10	У					10					
Field Sparrow		H	10	10	26		5			12	10		9	1.0	1.5
Northern Cardinal	195	H	27	10	26	27	26	2	5	14	12	6	9	16	15
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5	H				3			1			1			
Blue Grosbeak	18		3		1	6		1	1	2	1	3			
Indigo Bunting	74		25				16			17	11	5			
Bobolink	1	NC	1												
Red-winged Blackbird	205	Н							205						
Eastern Meadowlark	4						4								
Common Grackle	314		25	40		117	50		65		17				
Brown-headed Cowbird	10	Н							10						
Orchard Oriole	1											1			
Baltimore Oriole	1											1			
House Finch	6						4					1		1	1
American Goldfinch	147	Н	3	4	6	49	14		2	6	14	12		22	15
	3	H	5	4	0	49	3		2	0	14	12		22	15
House Sparrow		п					3								
TOTAL SPECIES	115	TI	62	41	52	42	4.4	10	71	57	25	50	20	24	25
TOTAL SPECIES	115	H	62	41	53	42	44	19	524	57	35	58	28 103	24	35
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS NOTES: NC = New to Count.	4609	H	858	305	538	421	417	49	534	367	189	369	105	235	224
NOTES: $NC = New to Count$,	H = Re	cord High													
~						.									
Start	530		630	530	600	645	600	722	630	630	730	545	830	530	700
End	1915		1600	1200	1300	1915	1400	1037	1800	1230	1030	1215	1430	1130	1900
Regular Party Hours: Total	86.7	Н	9		6	10	8	3.2		6	3	6.5	6	6	6
Party Hours: On Foot	65.4	Н	9	5	4	9	2	2.4	9.5	5.5	3	6		5	5
Party Hours: By Car	15.3	Н		0.5	2	1	6	0.8	2	0.5		0.5		1	1
Party Hours: By Kayak	6	Н											6		
,	2	-											-		
Party Miles: Total	217.9	Н	8	4	15	25	21.4	39	41	10	2	20.5	4	14	14
Party Miles: On Foot	38.4	Н	8	1	2	5	1.4	3	1	5	2	20.0		4	4
Party Miles: By Car	175.5	H	0	3	13	20	20	36	40	5	4	18.5		10	10
				5	15	20	20	50	40	5		10.5	4	10	10
Party Miles: By Kayak	4	Н											4		
	,			4	4					0.5		0.5		4	
Owling Hours	4	Н		1	1					0.5		0.5		1	
Owling Miles	7	Н		1	5									1	
			_	_											
Area			•	Party I											
Farrington Point, O'Kelly Chpl	Rd impt	, etc.	WC			chel Ha									
Tody Goodwin Road															
Vista Point, Seaforth			CEĪ	Chris E	Elev										
Bynum Ridge, Pokeberry Creek			TL	Terry I											
backroads west of Pittsboro				Judy M											
Harris and Jordan Dams			BP	Bob &		erking									
						CIKIIIS									
Ebenezer Point, etc.			JR	Josh Ro		1_									
Old Hope Valley Farm Road				Doug S			.								
751 bridge						e, John			-	_	~		~ .		
Big Woods Road			MS								e Curtin	, Mike			
Roberson Creek			GT			Kathy	Roggen	kamp, 4	Anne Be	ckw ith			Carol V	Villiams	son
Jay Shambley Road, Pittsboro			AU	Andy U	Jpshaw	-	-	-							
Lystra Rd., Boothe Hill Rd., etc. LVM Lee Van Malssen, Shelley Theye															
	Lystra Rd., Boothe Hill Rd., etc. LVM Lee Van Malssen, Shelley Theye														