



# Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society

[www.nwarkaudubon.org](http://www.nwarkaudubon.org)

NEWSLETTER

August 2011

## FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE FOR 2011

The primary source for information about NWAAS field trips is our website. This site has a listing for all field trips throughout the year at "Field trips and other upcoming events." Each upcoming monthly field trip, August-December, is posted with meeting times and places. During late summer and through the fall, we will have monthly field trips to places including the state fish hatchery at Centerton, Lake Atalanta, Ninestone Land Trust, and Lake Fayetteville. All field trips are free and open to the public. Y'ALL COME! We encourage participation by anyone with an interest, whether member or non-member. All ages are welcome. Those with mobility problems are quite welcome and we will try and accommodate these.

At "Places to bird in Northwest Arkansas," our society's website also includes many details about each of the places where we go, plus additional opportunities for places to see birds. Please check the web site if you have questions about place, time, or description of the place we are going. You can also call me at 479-521-1858.

For those of you who do not have access to the Internet, the rest of the 2011 NWAAS Field Trips are listed below:

**August 13, 2011 (Saturday).** Craig State Fish Hatchery at Centerton. Meet in the parking lot at the hatchery at 8 AM.

**September 11, 2011 (Sunday).** Lake Atalanta in Rogers. Meet at 9 AM in the parking area near the bathrooms.

**October 1, 2011 (Saturday).** Ninestone Land Trust in Carroll County. Meet at 9 AM at Ninestone.

**November 20, 2011 (Sunday).** Lake Fayetteville. Meet at 9 AM in parking lot on the north end of the dam (near ball fields and entrance to the boat dock).

**December 2011.** Fayetteville Christmas Bird Count. (Date to be announced.)

## Message from the President

*by Doug James*

### Habitat Certification

Please pardon me if I take this opportunity to address only the members of the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society who reside in Fayetteville. My reason for ignoring everyone else is that Fayetteville is approaching an important milestone. This refers to enjoying the enviable distinction of becoming the first city in Arkansas to be certified for the high quality of its urban habitat for wildlife. This Community Wildlife Habitat Project is coordinated by the National Wildlife Federation, which monitors the certification process. This requires that 200 homes in the city apply for and receive wildlife habitat certification for their yards. There are 5 criteria that have to be met: 1) food for wildlife from fruit, seed, or nectar bearing plantings, 2) a source of water such as a bird bath, 3) cover for wildlife such as shrubbery and evergreens, etc. 4) shelter and nesting sites (trees, shrubs, or nest boxes, etc.) and 5) sustainable gardening practices including using mulch and composting. The application form provides many more examples in each category and one has to satisfy only 1 to 3 per category. To register on line go to the on-line site <[www.nwf.org/nwfgarden](http://www.nwf.org/nwfgarden)>. There is a \$20 registration fee. The Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association has provided funds for 50 registrants. If you want one of these e-mail a request to Terri Lane at <[treehuggerlane@cox.net](mailto:treehuggerlane@cox.net)>. She will send you a fee-paid printed copy of the registration form to mail. If you wish to mail your own registration form to the National Wildlife Federation download the form from our site <[www.nwarkaudubon.org](http://www.nwarkaudubon.org)>.

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### Mission of the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society

The mission of the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study, and habitat protection, and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas.

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## **"Defending the Gulf" Screening Slated at the Fayetteville Public Library**

*by Joanie Patterson*

On September 14, 2011 at the Fayetteville Public Library the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society will hold an event: 'Defend the Gulf Movie Screening' which will give us recent information concerning our Gulf Coast.

A little more than a year from the British Petroleum oil spill, the Gulf Coast is still reeling from the damage that the oil has had on all aspects of life. As fishing industries struggle to recover, as numerous dolphins and sea turtles strand themselves on the beach and as recovery workers grow ill from the dispersant used on the oil, the country seems to already be forgetting about the vast blow dealt to the Gulf.

National Audubon is compiling a collection of great short films about the after effects of the oil spill that will educate folks about the issue and inspire them to take action. The films also explain the need to protect the wetlands along the coast. It explains how they used to protect the coast from hurricanes.

We need Congress to pass legislation in response to the disaster in order to safeguard drilling practices for the future and begin the restoration of these crucial ecosystems.

This film series helps citizens understand the continuing problems facing the Gulf coast and how those problems affect us in Northwest Arkansas.

## **Field Trip to Chesney Natural Area**

*by Joe Neal*

More than 20 members and friends of NWAAS braved heat and drought to walk trails at Chesney Prairie NA near Siloam Springs, July 10, 2011. It was the peak time for many prairie wildflowers, with an amazing bloom of purple blazing stars. We had birds you'd expect there: Northern Bobwhites, Indigo Buntings, Dickcissels, American Goldfinches, etc. The flowers were well-attended by pollinating insects, including butterflies and bees. To the delight of all, blazing stars were a mass of white and yellow sulphurs.

## **Banding Together for Birds, at Nightbird Books, July 9, 2011**

*by Joanie Patterson*

This event aimed at educating the public about the troubles facing our Gulf Coast. It was also a way to organize members of the National Audubon Society throughout the country to convince Congress to dedicate money owed by BP for Clean Water Act penalties (which could reach \$21 billion) to the restoration of the Louisiana Gulf Coast. Although attendance was small at this event, the excellent films inspired those attending to help inform our congressmen about this issue. Over 100 postcards were signed, and will be delivered to our Senators.

Love Birds, by *Stephanie Barr*

I am a birder who has married a birder – two months ago today, in fact – and in recent times I have been thinking about the emotional and romantic significance that bird watching has come to signify for me.

My husband and I met on a bird watching trip – he was a seasoned birder who had been twitching since early childhood, I had only been birding for a couple of months and had all the passion and enthusiasm of a neophyte, and from our first meeting, there have been certain birds which I have come to associate with the slow growth of our relationship over the years – the day we met was the day I saw my first chestnut-sided warbler; Tim and I were together down at Wallace Trust when I saw my first roseate spoonbill. And it was Tim who took me down to Holla Bend in the middle of a hellishly hot July to hunt down my first painted bunting. I will never forget the way it looked that day, singing out on a branch in full sunlight, with the breast the color of flame.

Our marriage does not seem to have changed our passion for birding in the least: most of our honeymoon was spent bird watching on the shores of Lake Michigan at Sleeping Bear Dunes and Crystal Lake: we saw sand-hill cranes, and baby piping plovers, and my first red-breasted merganser, and so new avian memories have become entwined with the romantic ones.

There is, in fact, something inherently romantic about the act of bird watching: watching the sun rise over a wetland area while the whole world comes alive with birdsong, or feeling the coldness of the dew on your feet while you walk through a prairie in the early hours of the morning, or seeing, across a glass-still lake, a lone heron, blue as smoke, standing in the shadows at the water's edge. What makes it even more romantic is to be able to share all this with someone you love.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

C0ZB5 207

Mail to: Bill Beall, Treasurer, 2204 Hendricks Blvd  
Fort Smith, AR 72903-3422

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SELECT:

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$20 Introductory Membership to the National Audubon Society** which is for 1 year and includes subscriptions to both the Audubon Magazine and the NWAAS newsletter, and membership in both the National and Northwest Arkansas Audubon Societies. **Please make check payable to the National Audubon Society.** (Note that after the first year, annual membership is \$40.00 per year.)

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$15 Local Chapter Membership** –which includes 1 year's membership in the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society only. You will receive the NWAAS Newsletter. 100% of your membership fee is used for NWAAS activities in Northwest Arkansas. **Please make check payable to the Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society**

Northwest Arkansas Audubon Society  
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Non-Profit Organization



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**Message from the President, Continued from page 1:**

Members of the NW Arkansas Audubon Society are pre-adapted for certification because they are already attracting birds by having feeders, bird baths, and plantings that provide protective cover. For example, my yard has several large hackberry trees that produce berries and a pine tree providing pine nuts as well as the bird feeders. My bird bath is an inverted black plastic trash barrel lid on the ground. For raising young; robins nest in the box elder tree, doves in the white pine tree, phoebes under our car port, and swifts in our chimney.

There are several criteria that have to be met by the city to meet all qualifications, and these have been met including; habitat certification at 5 schools (9 have been); certification of 6 common areas such as parks and the Botanical Garden (30 have been); an outreach program such as the habitat lecture series concluded at the public library; invasive plant removal and trail and stream clean-up. What remains is to certify 200 homes in Fayetteville and around 90 more are needed, so get busy Fayetteville inhabitants and certify your yard! (For more information and a brochure visit the Fayetteville city web site <[http:// habitat.accessfayetteville.org](http://habitat.accessfayetteville.org)>).

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORTHWEST ARKANSAS AUDUBON SOCIETY WILL CONVENE** at Nightbird Books, 205 W. Dickson St. in Fayetteville, at 7:00 pm on Saturday, December 3, 2011. The program features Dr. C. Joan Patterson and her presentation describing the exciting University of Arkansas class trip to Belize, Central America, last May led by Professors James and Kannan. The course in tropical ecology and ornithology visited tropical forests and savannas, wildlife sanctuaries, a howler monkey preserve, and Mayan ruins, all punctuated with caving, canoeing, and snorkeling on the coral reef.