



## 2018-2019 Officers

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Larry Basden

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Larry Basden

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Linda Basden

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month (September through May) in the Education Building at the Hattiesburg Zoo. Refreshments at 6:30 pm. Meetings begin at 7:00 pm and are open to the public.

Pine Woods Audubon Society is a chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.

## April/May Meetings

### April 4—Green Heron Nesting Success—Mollie Folkerts Campbell

Mollie will talk about research of Green Heron nesting successes in coastal Louisiana marshes at Audubon's Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Sanctuary, which was part of the largest ever Green Heron banding project.



### May 2—TBD

Several contacts have been made but nothing is confirmed at publication time.

## April/May Field Trips & Events

April 6 (Sat.)—Monthly Lagoon Survey (meet at north lagoon gate at 8am)

April 12-14 (Fri.—Sun.)—Spring Migration at Dauphin Island, AL (see article on Page 3)

April 20 (Sat.)—Birdfest (Earth Day Celebration) at Hattiesburg Zoo (PWAS displays to be open 12–2pm; signup sheet at April meeting)

May 4 (Sat.)—Monthly Lagoon Survey (meet at north lagoon gate at 8am)

May 11 (Sat.)—Bobolink & Dickcissel Trip (meet at Buck's Bargain Barn on US 49 at 8am)

May 18 (Sat.)—Painted Buntings at Lagoons (meet at north lagoon gate at 8am)

These, as well as other events, can also be seen (and downloaded) at the PWAS [website](#).

## President's Corner

It's hard to believe this is the last newsletter for this meeting year. It has gone by so quickly!

A big "Thank You" to the officers and volunteers who have made this another great year for Pine Woods Audubon Society. An even bigger "Thank You" to all who have participated in meetings, events, field trips, and Keg & Barrel "meetings".

We do have an important event coming up on April 20. That's the date of the Hattiesburg Zoo Earth Day Celebration. The Chapter has been invited to participate by providing some displays, etc. for zoo patrons to learn about birds and our organization (I still think of this as our BirdFest). The Zoo graciously allows us to use their education building facilities for our monthly meetings and this is our opportunity to show them how much we appreciate their contribution to our success. Please plan to volunteer a little of your time (about 2 hours) to make it clear how much we appreciate their support. Add your name to the sign-up sheet at our April meeting. Many hands make the time go quickly.

Although we don't have meetings during the summer, we plan to have once monthly Keg & Barrel meetings (at their usual time, 5:30pm) to plan for next year's meeting year. Tuesday, June 4 for meeting topic ideas, Tuesday, July 9 for field trip and event ideas, Tuesday, August 6 for recap and planning for our first meeting—Thursday, September 5. Mark your calendars and hope to see you there. If you have ideas but can't make the meetings, just send them to me in an email (larryb at basdenfamily dot com). We will try our best to make your ideas happen

Have a great summer and see you in September.

Larry Basden

## Binocular Familiarity—Pete Dunne (*Bird Watcher's Digest*, Jan/Feb 2019)

The greatest challenge new bird watchers face is not bird identification but binocular use. Just putting binoculars around your neck does not solve this problem. You need to use them. You need to become so familiar with the glass that it becomes an extension of you.

This means knowing where the glass lies on your chest so you need not take your eye off the bird. It means knowing which way to spin the focus knob for closer or more distant focus. It means throwing the binoculars up to your eyes and having them aligned with your target, no panning left, right, or up and down.

The good news is that new birders can greatly enhance their performance in the field by taking time to learn their optics. The best news is that the way to gain this familiarity is by birding—and birding in different situations. Woodland birding and locating fast-flying birds in the open demand different skill sets.

You say, "I can't get on birds in the open."

I say, "try". Start with big, slow-moving birds, like vultures. You'll get better with practice, and in no time you'll be getting on more fast-flying forms before you can say "hummingbird."

Actually, this speedy flier's name is about two syllables too long. Migrating hummingbirds are rarely in view long enough to form three, or even two, syllables. Try "hummer!"

You can do yourself a big favor by owning binoculars that offer a generous field of view, good depth of field, and close focus down to at least 10 feet—binoculars in the 7X and 8X power range. Lower magnification is simply more forgiving than higher magnification.

Two last points. If your binocular comes with ocular lens (big end) covers, remove them. They seem always to be in the way when you want to see a bird.

Make sure your eyecups (whether up or down) are the same height. Maladjusted cups make it nearly impossible to focus on birds.

Now...go birding.

## Spring Migration at Dauphin Island—April 12–14

It's here again. Time for my favorite PWAS Field Trip. A weekend at Dauphin Island, AL to see what we might catch during spring migration. I'm always reminded of a favorite quote from Forrest Gump. "Mama always said: Life (or a trip to DI in the spring) was like a box of chocolates. You never know what (species) you're gonna get." There are just too many variables to be able to predict what the weekend will bring. There is one prediction that is always true—it will be a weekend of birding with friends (some you've never met before) and the possibility to see birds that only pass through during migration.

Since everyone makes their own arrangements if they are going to spend the weekend at DI, here are some suggestions:

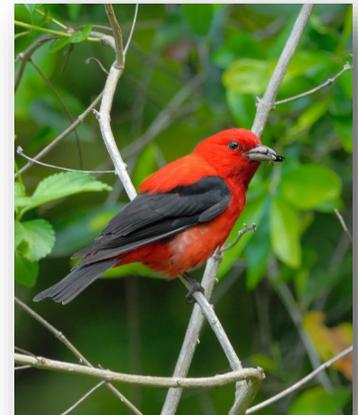
Gulf Breeze Motel (older, not fancy, but clean) - (251)-861-7344 (**Note:** When I checked for a room I found that the motel was completely booked for this weekend. There are a couple of weddings planned and the wedding parties had blocks of rooms being held. They will have to release rooms that they will not be using on Friday, April 5. So, you can contact them on that date to find if any rooms are available)

Dauphin Island Harbor House B&B - (251)-861-2119

Dauphin Island Campground (not fancy, 137 sites, next to Audubon Sanctuary) - (251)-861-2742

Pelican Nest RV Park (small, 12 sites, close to Gulf Breeze) - (251)-861-2338

Even if you can't stay the weekend, DI is not a difficult drive for a day trip. Come join us for whatever time you can spare. You'll have a good time.



We're on the Web!

[www.pinewoodsaudubon.com](http://www.pinewoodsaudubon.com)

## The Pine Warbler

Pine Woods Audubon Society  
134 Sweet Bay Trail  
Petal, MS 39465

Address Service Requested

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## Bird Sightings & Field Trips



The summer visitors are arriving. Lillie reported hearing a couple of Prairie Warblers at the Chick. I made a visit but didn't hear any spontaneously singing. But, I was able to get multiple responses to playback of the call.

The Big Branch Marsh NWR field trip took place on a gorgeous day. We missed Red-cockaded Woodpeckers completely. But we did tally 34 species and had a delicious lunch at Nathan's Restaurant in Slidell (thanks to the O'Neals for suggesting this lunch stop).

If you see any "out of the ordinary" sightings, send an email to [newsletter@basdenfamily.com](mailto:newsletter@basdenfamily.com) or use the contact form on our website [www.pinewoodsaudubon.com](http://www.pinewoodsaudubon.com) to let us know so we can include them in this section of the newsletter.