



2016-2017 Officers

President

Vice-President
Kelly O'Neal

Secretary
Larry Basden

Treasurer
Mike Lafferty

Committees

Newsletter
Larry Basden

Field Trips
Diane Lafferty

Education
Diane Lafferty

Conservation
Joshua Hodge

Hospitality
Jerr Simmons

Membership
Kelly O'Neal

Historian
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.

Jan./Feb. Meetings

Jan. 4—Scrumptious Moths, Butterflies of the Night—Diane Lafferty

Join us to learn about moths. Diane has been black lighting with some butterfly people from New Orleans for several years. She will be sharing some pictures she has taken using this technique. We know about her butterfly pictures and we can only anticipate what's in store for us when she shares her moth pictures. We will learn why she calls them "butterflies of the night".

Feb. 1—The Sarah Gillespie Bird Sanctuary and the January Tornado—Dr. Thomas Rauch, Biological Sciences Chair, William Carey University

In his presentation Tommy will share the impact of the January 2017 tornado on William Carey University including its impact on the Sarah Gillespie Bird Sanctuary. He will also give us a preview of what can be expected of the sanctuary as we go through the next few years.

Jan./Feb. Field Trips & Events—Diane Lafferty

Dec. 30—Hattiesburg Christmas Bird Count. It's not too late to join. Call Larry Basden at 601-329-8698.

Jan. 5—Jackson County Christmas Bird Count (Ocean Springs)

Jan. 13—Ducks at Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons & Eagle Study

Jan. 27—Sparrow Trip to Pearl River County (also chance to get a Paul's Pastry kingcake)

Feb. 3—Lux Road Birding. Meet at Buck's on Highway 49 (time to be determined)

Feb. 16—William Carey Bird Count (this is tentative date)

Feb. 16-19—Audubon-Cornell Great Backyard Bird Count

Feb. 17—Annual Window Watch followed by Lagoon Count. This year's Window Watch will be hosted by Jim and Dee Bishop.

Feb. 19—Annual President's Day Gull Run

Mar. 3—Camp Shelby Gopher Tortoise Field Trip

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

Hattiesburg Christmas Bird Count

Last call for volunteers to help with this annual event. Saturday, December 30 is the date. If you haven't yet volunteered, there is still time to do so. Contact Larry Basden (601-329-8698 or larryb@basdenfamily.com).

Great Backyard Bird Count & PWAS Window Watch

The second winter bird count event will take place February 16-18, 2018. This is the Great Backyard Bird Count. It is sponsored by Audubon, the Cornell Lab, and Bird Studies Canada. eBird provides the data storage for the event. While the Christmas Bird Count has happened for over 100 years, the Great Backyard Bird Count is fairly recent having been initiated in 1998. It is a more laid-back event with the primary requirement being the count(s) take place within the dates above. Counting can be done in groups or individually, at any location (even your own backyard), for as long as you wish to count. The suggestion is the count time be at least 15 minutes. You can count 15 minutes each day or several times per day so long as the counting time for each count is at least 15 minutes. The counts can be stationary—like counting around feeders in your backyard—or as traveling counts. Since the data will be entered into eBird, keeping track of time and mileage is helpful when the data is analyzed.

PWAS schedules a couple of events during the GBBC. The major event is our Window Watch held on Saturday, February 17, 2018. Jim and Dee Bishop have volunteered to host this at their home. Additional information will be forthcoming at our January and February meetings. It is always a great time and the Bishop's home can provide a good variety of birds, including the occasional surprise species—like the Red-breasted Nuthatch.



Full disclosure—these pictures were not taken at the Bishop's even though a Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen there at a Window Watch.

We also do a bird count at the Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons after the Window Watch is completed and a count at William Carey on a different day during the GBBC.

Even if you choose not to do any group counting, just taking some time during the GBBC dates to look at and count birds in your own backyard adds to information concerning bird distributions and may help answer questions about whether climate change is impacting populations, whether birds are changing their desired habitats over time, and many more facts about the health and diversity of birds across North America.

Q:

I was recently on a trip to the mountains in Colorado and was delighted to see dippers in several mountain streams. I'm guessing that they're called "dippers" because of the way they bob up and down. Why do they do this? Why aren't there dippers along Appalachian mountain streams?

A:

Dippers are fascinating birds, beloved by many birders. The ones you saw in Colorado were American dippers, little dark gray birds that are found along fast-flowing streams and rivers in the West.

Nobody is certain why dippers so frequently bob up and down when they're standing on land. Why do they dip? I'm sure it's an instinctive behavior—if you're a dipper, you're just going to dip. But behavior like this must have evolved because it provides the birds with some advantage. I've read of several possible advantages to this behavior, and perhaps each is part of the answer to your questions. There's evidence that the bobbing behavior is a form of communication between dippers—the bobbing becomes more rapid and emphatic when another dipper is nearby, both in courtship activities and agonistic encounters with rivals. Dippers have loud voices, but their streamside habitat can also be very loud, and visual communication can be more valuable when sounds get drowned out.

It's also been speculated that the dipping behavior, which moves the head up and down as well as the body, helps dippers locate and zero in on prey and/or good foraging locations. It's a combination of triangulation and avoiding some of the inevitable glare off the water's surface. Some also suggest that dipper's rhythmic movements, often seen against a background of moving water makes them harder for predators to find. It's curious that several other birds that frequent flowing streams also engage in bobbing behaviors: Spotted sandpipers and our two water-thrushes come to mind. There must be some advantage.

I have many friends who have wondered why there are no dippers in the rapidly flowing cool mountain streams of the higher Appalachian Mountains. There's no easy answer to this question. Perhaps the appropriate food in those streams isn't consistently available throughout the year. Maybe there have never been dippers crossing the vast prairie and lowland forest habitat that separates the eastern and western mountains in the United States. Through observations, we can accurately describe the range of a species, but the "why" questions are harder to answer.

American dippers are found throughout the mountains of the western United States and Canada, from northern Alaska south to the mountains near the Mexican border and continuing through the high mountains of Mexico and Central America all the way down to central Panama.



We're on the Web!

www.pinewoodsaudubon.com

The Pine Warbler

Pine Woods Audubon Society
100 Virginia Drive
Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Address Service Requested

Bird Sightings & Field Trips



Here's hoping that we get some "surprises" on our CBC. Some have been found on the coast—Iceland gull, Western kingbird, Scissor-tailed flycatcher. It would be a great year to find a Vermilion flycatcher wintering in the area again.

Asking all to be sure to listen for owls to be added to our CBC. If you hear (or better yet see) an owl during the count week—December 27 through January 2—please let us know. If this should occur on our designated count day—December 30—we need the number of birds seen/heard. Anytime besides count day, we just need to know the species heard/seen. It would be great to have at least 2 owl species for the count. We can easily expect Great horned owl, Eastern screech owl, and Barred owl. It would be a real treat to add Barn owl.

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