




PINE WOODS
Audubon Society

The Pine Warbler

January/February 2017

Volume 2016/2017

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January/February Meetings

January 5—Hattiesburg Trees Do Make A Difference—Andy Parker

Andy Parker, Certified Arborist for the City of Hattiesburg will present this program. He will focus on the importance and impact of trees in our city—why Hattiesburg needs trees, what they mean to the area and how they make a difference in our community while looking at what the City of Hattiesburg Urban Forestry Division does. This is an opportunity to provide input on projects and programs that citizens have ideas about.

February 2—How Birds Sing and Phonics—J. R. Rigby

J. R. Rigby is currently President of the Mississippi Ornithological Society and field research associate for bioacoustics for the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science. His presentation will introduce us to the biology and diversity of bird sounds including how and why birds sing, how to analyze a song, and tips for identifying birds by ear to make you a better birder!

January/February Field Trips & Events—Diane Lafferty

January 2—Jackson County Christmas Bird Count (Ocean Springs)

January 21—Ducks at the Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons (and Eagle Study). Meet at the sewage lagoon gates at 8am.

January 28—Sparrow Trip to Pearl River Agricultural Station (McNeill)

February 4—Lux Road Birds

February 17-20—Great Backyard Bird Count (more info found in article)

February 17—William Carey Bird Count

February 18—PWAS Window Watch—Hosted by Jim & Dee Bishop (more info found in article) followed by Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons Count

February 20—Annual President's Day Gull Run (more info found in article)

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.

These, as well as other events, are included in the calendar pages included with the e-mail version of the newsletter. This can also be seen (and downloaded) at the PWAS [website](#).



Great Backyard Bird Count

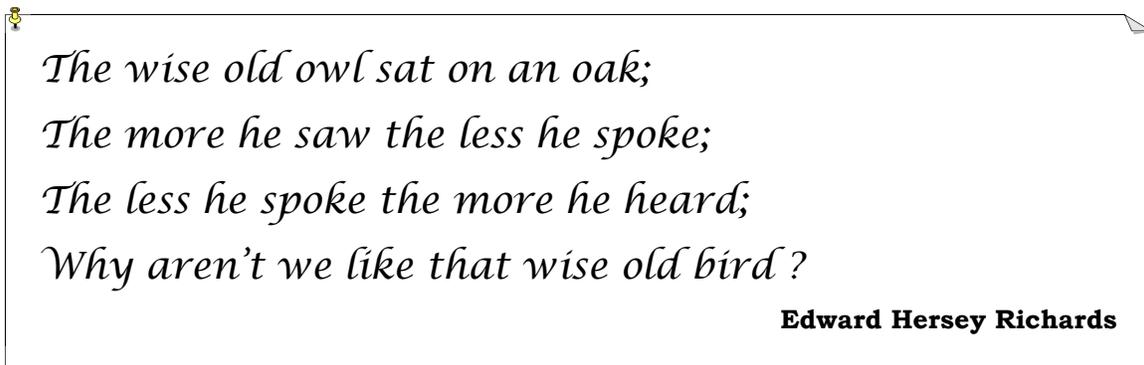
The Great Backyard Bird Count, along with the Christmas Bird Count, are the two significant “citizen science” events that Pine Woods Audubon participates in annually. The GBBC for 2017 runs from Friday, February 17th through Monday, February 20th. The instructions for participation in the event are as easy as 1–2–3:

1. Count birds anywhere you like. The recommendation is to count for at LEAST 15 minutes—but you may count for as long as you wish. Keep track of the numbers and species of birds you see and how long you counted.
2. Make your best estimate of how many birds you saw of each species. For example, 5 Northern Cardinals, 3 American Crows. Huge flocks of birds may be a challenge, but your best guess is still valuable. If you are counting at your backyard feeder, submit the largest number of individuals for each species seen at the same time. This is meant to correct the count number for birds that grab a seed out of your feeder, fly off to eat it, and return time and time again and for the inevitable flight from the feeder because of an alarm call and subsequent return when the danger call (or false alarm) has passed.
3. Enter your list(s) online at BirdCount.org. Put in a new checklist:
 - For each new day
 - For each different location
 - For the same location, same day, if you counted at a different time of day

This may all sound very complicated to you but, it takes more time to explain it in words than it does to actually do it.

To get a more detailed description of how to do a count for the GBBC and how to enter the data for collection, go to the site gbbc.birdcount.org. Click on the tab “Get Started” and look in the sidebar of that page for “Instructions (PDF)”. You can read the instructions on-line or download them to your computer so you may read them and even print them out.

Mark your personal calendar now (the dates are shown as a note on the PWAS calendar included with this newsletter) and plan to participate in the 2017 Great Backyard Bird Count!



PWAS Window Watch

The Window Watch is a Chapter activity in conjunction with the Great Backyard Bird Count. It will be held on Saturday, February 18th (right in the middle of the GBBC period). Jim and Dee Bishop will be hosting this event (THANK YOU). This morning activity is a relaxed time observing birds for the GBBC, socializing with members and friends of PWAS, and enjoying a “potluck brunch”. All activities that seem to be enjoyed by all who attend. Additional details and logistics will be shared at both of our next meetings. It is marked on the PWAS calendar and all are encouraged to attend to “pass a good time”.

Immediately following the Window Watch, a field trip to the Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons will occur for those who would like to extend their birding activities for the day (before doing their own feeder count for the GBBC). The results of both the Window Watch and the field trip will be added to the GBBC data for the year. So, this is yet another chance to participate in a “citizen science” activity that can ultimately have an impact on the future understanding of our avian friends.

On behalf of the many PWAS members who have hosted “Window Watches” (and the many who have attended them), our heartfelt thanks to the Bishops for allowing us to meet at their home this year. They have a very productive area for birding and our only regret is that it is not within our Christmas Bird Count circle.

Welcome, New Members!—Kelly O’Neal

Here are the new members who have joined Audubon at the national level since the last issue of The Pine Warbler. If you know any of these people, please take a few minutes to welcome them, to tell them about PWAS, and to invite them to join us at a meeting, field trip, or other activity.

Elizabeth Davis—Hattiesburg
Lou Bankston—Laurel
Gwen Myers—Laurel
Patricia Cruise—Laurel
Katherine Seeley—Petal

Don Gee—Petal
Glenda Johnson—Purvis
Mary Purvis—Purvis
Charlotte Davis—Richton



Q & A From Bird Watcher’s Digest

From January/February 2017 issue:

Q: How much does a great horned owl weigh? A friend thinks they must weigh more than ten pounds, but I don’t think so
—Penny M

A: You win, Penny. A great horned owl weighs about three pounds. Most birds are much lighter than people imagine. Birds have many adaptations to reduce weight. Most bird bones are hollow, and feathers are remarkably light for structures that are so strong.

I believe many of us imagine that birds weigh more because our only reference points are the weights of birds we buy in the grocery store to eat—chickens and turkeys. These birds have been bred and are raised in ways that allow them to build up extreme weight in the edible parts. This skews our expectations, and we typically guess that birds weigh more than they do. Even eagles, which seem enormous, are generally less than ten pounds.

I find it interesting to learn the weights of birds, and, fortunately, a few field guides do list average weights. A few examples: an average great blue heron weighs about five pounds, a ring-billed gull about one pound, a mourning dove about a quarter-pound, a red-winged blackbird just under two ounces, and an American goldfinch just about a half-ounce.

Try doing a bit of math and comparing your weight to that of some birds. I did this and determined that I weigh about the same as 15,000 kinglets!

Blue-headed Vireo



Common Goldeneye



Horned Grebe



Loggerhead Shrike

Don’t you even think about buying this property. This is MY territory!

A few random shots from the South Hancock County Christmas Bird Count

We're on the Web!

www.pinewoodsaudubon.com

The Pine Warbler

Pine Woods Audubon Society
544 West 4th Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Address Service Requested

Bird Sightings & Field Trips



While the numbers of winter birds still seems small (except for flocks of American Robins), The variety is picking up. My backyard variety includes a couple of sightings of both House Finch and Purple Finch. Recently American Goldfinch have appeared again (but still in low numbers). As mentioned at the last meeting, I have now seen a Red-breasted Nuthatch several times foraging through the trees in my backyard. Never more than 1 individual so far.

The couple of CBCs that chapter members have participated in also have yielded slightly lower numbers of species as well as total individuals. So, it may be a little harder to see the increase that I hoped for in our own CBC. But, hope springs eternal for this birder.

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.

January

2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Jackson County CBC (Ocean Springs)	3	4	5 PWAS Meeting	6	7
8	9	10 Keg & Barrel	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 Ducks at H'burg Sewage Lagoons
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Sparrow Field Trip - Picayune
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Notes:



February

2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	1	2 PWAS Meeting	3	4 Lux Road Field Trip
5	6	7 Keg & Barrel	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 Wm Carey Bird Count	18 PWAS Window Watch
19	20 President's Day Gull Run	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Notes:

Hosts for this year's Window Watch are Jim and Dee Bishop
Great Backyard Bird Count – Friday, February 17 – Monday, February 20

