




PINE WOODS
Audubon Society

The Pine Warbler

Nov./Dec. 2017

Volume 2017/2018

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Nov./Dec. Meetings

Nov. 2—Ecosystem Restoration & Sustainable Forestry Practices in the DeSoto National Forest—Tate Thriffiley, FS Ecologist

US Forest Service Ecologist Tate Thriffiley will speak about the history and ecosystem types of the DeSoto National Forest and describe ongoing efforts to restore Longleaf Pine forests, Pitcher Plant bogs, bottomland hardwood forests, coastal plain savannah, and Mesic slope forests. These restoration efforts have been made possible by the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program. DeSoto National Forest is one of only 23 forests across the country selected to receive CFLR funding. Sustainable forestry practices, proscribed burning, and restoration techniques currently being conducted on DeSoto National Forest will be presented and discussed. Tate will lead the field trip on Nov. 4 focusing on ecosystem restoration work in the forest. Seeing is believing!

Dec. 7—Freedom Ranch Outreach Education—Krissy Hamilton, Founder & Director

Krissy will describe the operation and goals of Freedom Ranch and lead a tour of the facilities on Dec. 9.

Although Freedom Ranch specializes in native birds of prey, they have other exotic birds and animals. They strive to educate people regarding the vital role each animal plays within their habitats. They travel throughout Mississippi, Louisiana, and Alabama presenting to libraries, pre-schools, churches, schools, scout groups, and many others. Freedom Ranch has 11 native birds within their collection. Krissy is especially passionate about vultures. She believes that education is key to inspire people of all ages to appreciate vultures and other birds of prey.

Nov./Dec. Field Trips & Events—Diane Lafferty

Nov. 4—DeSoto NF Ecosystem Restoration. Meet at 8am across from Starbucks.

Nov. 11—Ducks at Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons. Meet at 8am across from Starbucks.

Nov. 18—(MCAS) Seaman Road Lagoons—Jackson County

Dec. 2—(MCAS) Grand Bay NERR—Hancock County

Dec. 9—Freedom Ranch. Meet at 8am across from Starbucks.

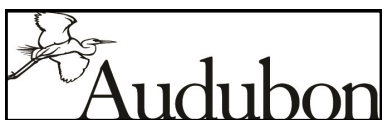
Dec. 21—Camp Shelby Christmas Bird Count. Note: This is a Thursday.

Dec. 30—Hattiesburg Christmas Bird Count. See article in newsletter for information.

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, can also be seen (and downloaded) at the PWAS [website](#).



Random Thoughts

Hopefully by the time we get through the events listed in this issue, summer will have finally ended and our winter residents will have arrived in full force. I know it sounds crazy but I am really looking forward to having sparrows visit my backyard again (especially White-throated Sparrows). I also always look forward to seeing Dark-eyed Juncos again. Just seeing them bustling in and out of the yard never fails to put a smile on my face.

Invoking my rights as Compiler, I would like to remind all that the Christmas Bird Count season is almost here. PWAS members have been very generous with their time for not only the Hattiesburg count but also the counts at Camp Shelby, Hancock County, and Jackson County. This has given several of us the opportunity to familiarize ourselves with birding habitats outside of our own area. And it usually results in being able to see some unusual species which seems to pop up most every year along the Coast during their CBCs.



Q & A From [Bird Watcher's Digest/March/April 2017](#)



Why do cormorants have to spread their wings to dry them after being in the water, whereas ducks and geese don't?



Cormorants use their wings to help push them through the water, so the wings get somewhat waterlogged. Waterfowl, on the other hand, don't use their wings under water.

Cormorant wing feathers are structured in a manner that allows them to get somewhat saturated, which allows the wings to efficiently push the bird through the water. Most birds produce natural oils from a preen gland that they spread through the feathers when preening, and these oils help the feathers repel water. Cormorants don't spread much oil onto their wing feathers. They literally need to dry out their wings before being able to fly efficiently.

Waterfowl fall into two basic categories. Dabblers don't typically submerge under the water, using just their big webbed feet to propel them across the water's surface. Diving ducks do submerge, but they only use their feet for propulsion, keeping the wings folded. Most waterfowl species have very long scapular (shoulder) feathers, and these create something of a waterproof pocket into which the wings fold. They also liberally oil their wing feathers when preening.

Hattiesburg Christmas Bird Count

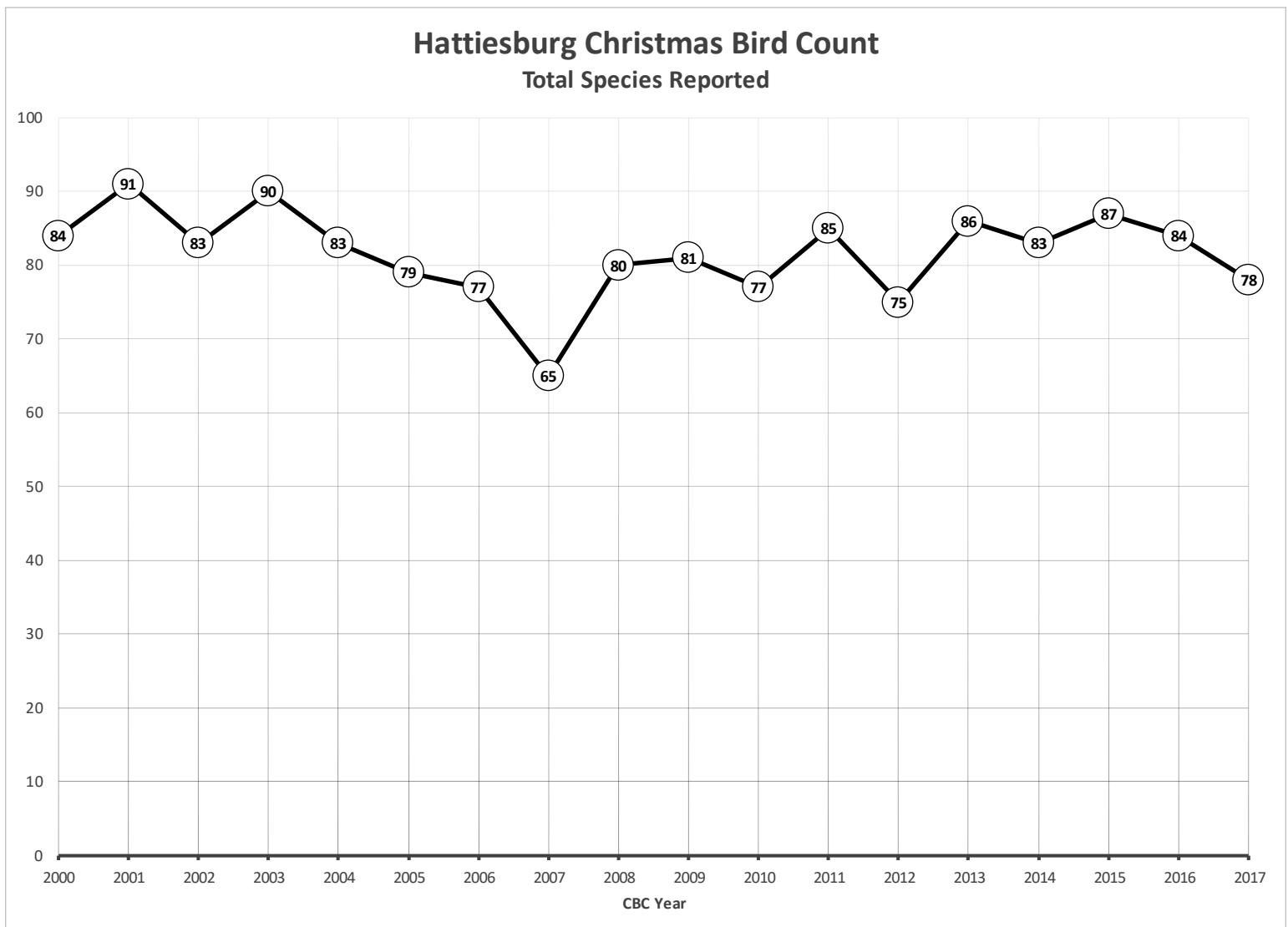
Mark the date on your calendar—Saturday, December 30, 2017.

The 118th Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) takes place between December 14 and January 5. Our traditional time for the Hattiesburg count is the Saturday after Christmas.

While we would love to have you join us as we cover our 15-mile count circle on the 30th, if that isn't possible you can still contribute to our effort by doing a feeder count in your own backyard.

The Hattiesburg CBC is a small but important part of our Chapter's contribution to citizen science for the Audubon Society. This count will mark the Chapter's 44th year of participation. If you are willing to help with our effort this year, contact Larry Basden (home-601-544-1784 or cel-601-329-8698) whether you want to help in the field or as a feeder counter. All help in this effort is appreciated.

The graph below shows the total species counts for Hattiesburg CBCs since 2000. Pre-Katrina we show 80's and 90's for the number of species found on the count. Since Katrina we have yet to get to the 90's. More eyes searching make higher species counts more probable. The actual count number of birds in each species can include only the count day itself, December 30 for this count. However, we can report species (but not count numbers) for the 3 days prior to and the 3 days after our count date. So, if we all keep eyes (and ears) open during this period, we may be able to reach this year's target of 90 species. Let's see if we can make that happen with your help.



We're on the Web!

www.pinewoodsaudubon.com

The Pine Warbler

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Address Service Requested

Bird Sightings & Field Trips



The Big Sit didn't yield too many species (31) and had no real surprises. However, it was considered a real success as 2 Bald Eagles were seen during the day—an adult and a juvenile. There is no indication of nest rebuilding but it remains for a field trip covering the total lagoon area to see if any evidence can be found in a different part of the lagoon. Some subsequent visits have yielded an interesting non-bird sighting—an adult and juvenile Bobcat!!

Lillian Gibb has been reporting a nice variety of migrants in her backyard. Since she lives within the CBC circle, we hope to pick up a few species different from our “usual suspects” on our count (no pressure).

The MOS meeting on the coast resulted, as normal, in some “rare” sightings. Late Eastern Kingbirds, a Tropical Kingbird, and Scissor-tailed Flycatchers.

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.