



2016-2017 Officers

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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.

Sept./Oct. Meetings

Sept. 7—Alligator Snapping Turtle Study—Luke Pearson (USM PhD Candidate)

Luke is conducting a distribution and relative abundance survey of Alligator Snapping Turtles throughout Mississippi. This unique turtle is the largest freshwater turtle in North America and was abundant everywhere it was found. However, unregulated harvest for turtle soup from the 1920's to 1980's has caused massive population declines and some states have completely lost Alligator Snapping Turtles. We want to make sure that Mississippi does not lose this amazing turtle, and, through this survey, we are gaining information that is lacking in Mississippi which will be used to determine if Alligator Snapping Turtles need federal protection through the Endangered Species Act.

Oct. 5—Wild South in Mississippi—Nkrumah Frazier (Sustainability Officer—Hattiesburg Public Works)

Nkrumah is a husband and father who loves all things outdoors and likes to share his passion for the great outdoors with others. This interest has led him work for and volunteer with the non-profit organization Wild South. In partnership with the US Forest Service he helps to steward the Black Creek Wilderness within the DeSoto National Forest.

Nkrumah will talk about his work with Wild South and the hopes for the future of the Mississippi program. He will also serve as the leader for a field trip in the Black Creek area on Saturday, October 28 (see field trips below).

Sept./Oct. Field Trips & Events—Diane Lafferty

Sept. 2—(MCAS) Logtown & Possum Walk—Hancock County

Sept. 9—(MCAS) Seaman Road Lagoons—Jackson County

Sept. 23—Fall birds at McSwain Property. Meet at 8am across from Starbucks.

Sept. 30—(MCAS) Graveline Beach & Lake Mars Pier—Jackson County

Oct. 7—October Fest at St. John Lutheran Church. Not an official field trip but has served as lunch after field trips in the past.

Oct. 8—National Big Sit Bird Count. We will have our regularly defined circle just outside the gates to the Hattiesburg Sewage Lagoons. Someone will be there from sunrise to sunset. Anytime you are available and want to help count species seen, just drop by.

Oct. 14—Mississippi Ornithological Society (MOS) meeting (MCAS) Ship Island—Harrison County

Oct. 20/21/22—Fall migration at Dauphin Island. See the article in this issue about this annual event.

Oct. 28—Black Creek field trip. Meet at the trailhead for the Black Creek Hiking Trail just south of the Janice Landing Recreation Area on Highway 29 near Janice, MS. Nkrumah Frazier will be leading this field trip.

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

The Beginning of Another Meeting Year—Random Thoughts

It almost doesn't seem possible, but a new PWAS meeting year is upon us. Where did the summer go?

It's time to begin thinking about fall migration at DI and getting our backyards and feeders ready for our winter visitors. Although the current weather does not seem compatible with birding, we have faith that better weather will come, we hope.

The other item to remember is September/October is the time for local chapter dues. While we do not have major expenses, we do incur some expenses—occasional purchases (such as our projector), honorariums for speakers, speaker gifts, postage, etc.—during the meeting year. As a reminder, local chapter dues are \$10 for an individual or \$20 for a family. A bargain when considering the cost of most things these days. See Mike Lafferty at a meeting or send your dues to Mike at the address shown on this newsletter.

There are a number of members who freely submit their ideas for meeting topics and field trips to make each year a valuable use of your most limited asset—time. We encourage local speakers and topics but are always ready to consider speakers from further afield. We normally try to generate these ideas at a couple of Keg & Barrel meetings after the end of the meeting year. However, we would like to try something a little different this year to take some of the pressure off the K&B meetings (if you have ever attended one of them you know how much pressure “real business” can be). Diane would like to encourage all of us to submit potential meeting topics and field trips starting right now. Just give her a call, send her an email, or tell her about your ideas at one of this year's meetings. If we all do this, it should make filling out next year's meeting schedule much easier as well as building a reserve of topics for future years.



Photo from Redding.com

Answer to a Question about Eurasian Collared-Doves [Bird Watcher's Digest/July-August 2017](#)

The Eurasian collared-dove is a relative newcomer to North American avifauna. It occurs in many parts of Europe and Asia and is thought to have first arrived in the Western Hemisphere in the mid-1970's, when about 50 were released into the wild on the island of New Providence, Bahamas.

Their arrival into the United States was confused by their resemblance to the ringed turtle-dove, a form of the African collared-dove that has long been domesticated and kept as a cage bird. Ringed turtle-doves periodically escaped or were released into the wild in North America, frequently enough to be included in field guides and considered “countable” by the American Birding Association, but their populations never expanded. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, however, some birders in Florida reported rapid increases in the numbers of ringed turtle-doves. It took a while before the birding community realized that these were Eurasian collared-doves not ringed turtle-doves.

These birds quickly started dispersing across Florida and beyond, but many observers were surprised that they expanded west and northwest, and not north along the Atlantic coastline. The species is still a scarce visitor to the northeastern United States, but common throughout the South, across the Midwest, and all along the Pacific coast. I even saw one in Seward, Alaska, a couple of years ago. It's not known if the origin of this range expansion is strictly from the birds that came to Florida from the Bahamas; perhaps there were other birds released into other parts of the country.

Many people wonder what impact Eurasian collared-doves might have on our native birds, especially mourning doves, which they closely resemble. I can't find a definitive answer to this. One of my best references is *Birds of North America*, but in this source it's simply stated: “It remains undetermined what effects the Eurasian collared-dove will have on native American doves.” I can't help but wonder how our existing dove populations might have been different back in the days when there were many millions of passenger pigeons.

Fall Migration at Dauphin Island

The two field trips to Dauphin Island (spring and fall migration) are highlights of the year for many of us. They are the chance to see MANY species that do not spend time in our area. While the spring migration tends to be the more concentrated with the always present potential for a “fall out” event, the fall migration has much to offer also. In fact, with regard to warbler species it is the most challenging. There is a reason you hear some say “Oh those confusing fall warblers.”

In the fall many of the warblers passing through are often less colorful than they are in the spring when they are on the way to their breeding grounds. After all, in the spring there are only so many days available to get to the breeding grounds, claim a territory, woo a partner, and set up housekeeping. They really need to already be in their best plumage because the action starts as soon as they arrive. But in the fall the frantic activities have waned and now all they are trying to do is get back to the area where they will be able to maintain themselves until the next breeding season. The plumage has been well worn and often molted into the drabber look to enable keeping a low profile for safety. The newly hatched are also in their drab winter outfits.

If you are planning to spend the weekend on the island, there are 2 popular choices available. The Gulf Breeze Motel is the usual site for the Saturday evening compilation meeting and typically has several Chapter members in residence for the weekend. The contact number for the motel is (251) 861-7344. The motel is located on the western part of the island. For those who enjoy camping, the Dauphin Island Campground is available. It is located at the eastern end of the island near the ferry terminal. The campground adjoins the Audubon Bird Sanctuary and has entrances to the sanctuary. The contact number for the campground is (251) 861-2742.

Even if you are not planning to spend the weekend, Dauphin Island can be an easy day trip from this area. You can always find birders (including PWAS members) at Cadillac Square Park, the Shell Mound, the Airport, or the Goat Tree. Come join us for the chance to experience “warbler neck” as we scan the treetops for migrating warblers.



We're on the Web!

www.pinewoodsaudubon.com

The Pine Warbler

Pine Woods Audubon Society
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Address Service Requested

Bird Sightings & Field Trips



Hopefully before the next newsletter is published the weather will have moderated and we will begin seeing the birds who will be with us during the winter. Don't forget to post sightings of the winter visitors as they arrive (use our group mail server or Facebook, whichever works best for you). Or, contact the newsletter via one of the methods shown at the bottom of this article.

Looking at eBird reports for Forrest County beginning on August 1, there have been several interesting species reported : Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Yellow-throated Vireo, Wood Thrush, Hooded Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Northern Parula, and Swainson's Warbler. If anyone is familiar with Lillie Gibb, please invite her to our meetings. She has reported these species and more from observations at her home.

Another reminder to not forget our fall migration at Dauphin Island the third weekend in October.

The summer butterfly counts seemed to have been successful by all accounts. One of these years I must join them for the Delta count. While not a butterfly expert by any means, it would be interesting to see the NF area up there.

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.