

Flicker Flashes

*Published by
The Birmingham Audubon Society*



*For conservation and greater knowledge of
all wildlife, wilderness and natural resources*

MONTHLY MEETING

Alabama Power and the Environment
Willard L. Bowers, Vice President – Environmental Affairs,
Alabama Power
Thursday, November 16, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.
Birmingham Zoo Auditorium

Willard Bowers will be discussing many of the environmental challenges facing the state of Alabama today. He plans to highlight the active steps Alabama Power is taking to do their part to be good environmental stewards of the community. He also will talk about several stewardship projects that the company is proud to be a part of across the state.

The Power of Flight, one of these projects may be of particular interest to Audubon members. This project focuses on migratory birds in the southeast and restoring them to their natural habitat.

Willard Bowers joined Alabama Power in 1965 as a part-time employee doing water quality studies on Alabama Power Reservoirs and around steam plants. Upon graduation from the University of Alabama in 1969 with an MS Degree in Industrial Engineering, he worked for 3 years with the Navy Department in Washington, D.C. In 1971 he returned to Alabama Power and became supervisor of environmental activities related to the licensing of Farley Nuclear Plant in 1973. In 1975 he transferred to Southern Company Services as Manager, Environmental Licensing for Southern Company's nuclear, fossil and hydro facilities. He also was responsible for activities involved in EPA rulemakings under the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Resource Conservation and

Recovery Act and other environmental laws.

In 1984 he returned to Alabama Power as the Manager, Environmental Compliance and in subsequent years assumed increasing responsibility resulting in being named Vice President, Environmental Affairs in 2002. He has responsibility for Environmental Compliance, the activities of the Company's General Test Lab and environmental Field Services. He also represents the Company before regulatory agencies and in various public forums on environmental issues.

He currently serves on the Board of Legacy, Partners in Environmental Education, and the Board of the 4-H Foundation. Willard has served as President of Keep Alabama Beautiful and People Against a Littered State.

He and his wife Ruth Ann have six children and five beautiful grandchildren. Willard also enjoys hiking in the Grand Canyon, hunting and other outdoor activities as well as do-it-yourself projects.

Attend and enjoy this program. Please come early at 6:45 to socialize and enjoy some refreshments. Guests are welcome.

Hans Paul,
VP Programs

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Shirley Farrell

The Birmingham Audubon Society has been an organization for more years than many of us can remember. It began as a birding group and has grown through the years into a large chapter affiliate of the National Audubon Society. Our chapter continues to grow and change. We have focused on education and not only do we provide Audubon Adventure kits to teachers in the Birmingham metropolitan area, but also scholarships to Audubon Ecology Camp at Hog Island, ME, teacher scholarships to the Audubon Mountain Workshop and mini-grants to teachers for environmental projects. We also sponsor the Flying WILD curriculum from the Council of Environmental Education.

At the September board meeting of BAS, we took another big step in our organization's history. Starting October 1, the Birmingham Audubon Society has a new part-time employee. By creating this position, no board positions are eliminated –indeed we have created this position to help the board members and various committee chairmen discharge their responsibilities. For example, Ann Miller will continue to pick the mail up and answer the Birmingham

Audubon Society phone line for Bird Alerts, sightings, questions about birds, etc. The new employee will handle the business side of Audubon so that our members and committees can bring our message of conservation and greater knowledge of all wildlife, wilderness and natural resources to the Birmingham community.

I would like to introduce you to Bianca (BJ) Allen. BJ is originally from Tennessee but has lived in the Birmingham area for many years. Many of you already know her as a member of Alabama Ornithological Society (AOS), Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc. (DIBS), and BAS. BJ recently retired after 39 years at BellSouth. Not only did we find someone who knows how to run an office, but we also found someone who knows birds! BJ is a past editor of the AOS newsletter, current editor of the DIBS newsletter and is the editor of Flicker Flashes. Her first issue was the October 2006 issue.

We are currently looking for an office location. BJ will work out of her home until we establish our office. Once an office is secured, you will be invited to an Open House to meet BJ and the board members.

Audubon Sessions Sanctuary Workday Saturday, December 2, 2006 – 9:00 A. M.

The Sessions Sanctuary, situated in Mountain Brook on Shades Creek, is underdeveloped property that was donated to Birmingham Audubon as a bird sanctuary by the late Mr. & Mrs. Sessions. The BAS Sanctuary also helps protect the Cahaba River watershed.

Please join us for the fall workday at the Sessions Sanctuary on Saturday December 2 at 9:00 A. M. Bring your tools and gloves. Plans are to meet at the end of Forest Glen Drive, near the Sanctuary.

To reach the Sanctuary, in Mountain Brook, proceed east (away from the Zoo) on Montevallo Road. At the Crestline area, turn right at the signal light on to Montrose Rd, bear right onto Old Leeds Road, turn left onto Forest Glen, proceed to the end of Forest Glen and meet us at 9:00.

John Swan, 933-6469 & Ellen Mc Laughlin, 595-0806
Co-Chairs, Sessions Sanctuary Property

Stop Delivery of Unwanted Catalogs! Help Save Northern Forests and End Mail Box Clutter

The great northern boreal forests stretch from parts of our northern tier of states to the arctic regions of Canada and Alaska and around the world. The boreal forests are critical habitat for marvelous birds and animals: warblers, kinglets, crossbills, grouse, owls, bears, wolf and many more.

Timber cutting is a serious threat and much of the timber ends up in our mailboxes as catalogs. If your house is like mine, the catalogs arrive daily. One small order often results in many years of catalogs from the eager merchant. I bet a bunch of us don't want 90% of the catalogues that arrive and hate the thought that the boreal forest is lost, junking up the mailbox.

You can reduce the problem by sending "STOP MAILING CATALOGS POST CARDS" to businesses that mail unwanted catalogues.

Here is how:

Take an ordinary post card and on the message side print:

STOP MAILING CATALOGS TO THIS ADDRESS

Under that, tape the address label that the sender used to have the catalog mailed to you.

On the address side of the post card (stamp side of the post card) tape the catalog sender's return address.

Place a post card rate stamp on the card (24 cents as of fall 2006), mail it and enjoy the feeling of helping the great northern boreal forests. As a bonus, you are also reducing trash or problems of recycling.

John Swan – Conservation Committee

SoSo for the Record

Sightings August 28 through September 27, 2006

It seems very appropriate that the traditional Russell Bailey, Jr. field trip to Lake Purdy is continuing. This special day was Russell's idea and is always looked forward to by BAS members. This year's trip was very successful. Thank you Russell, we miss you.

Sightings for this period were:

8/29-

9/3 "Many migrants at our water features." **White-eyed and Red-eyed Vireos; Warblers- Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Northern Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-and-white, Worm-eating, Mourning ! and Canada. Record numbers of hummers.** "Two recent trainees from Georgia banded a total of **200 Ruby-throats** at our home (Clay), the Gillilands (Blount Co), and the Bergers (St. Clair Co). We have had **Scarlet and Summer Tanagers** feasting on poke berries and tiny champagne grapes!! The **Summers** ran the whole spectrum of colors from the bronzy females to the bright males. In between were several red-splotched young males." Clay (BS,MS).

9/8 **Common Nighthawk (80);** Crestline Village "Don't forget to look up" (SH,DH).

9/10 **Buff-breasted Sandpiper (14); Cliff and Barn (one albino) Swallows;** Shelby County (HW,FF,SF).

9/15 **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher;** Botanical Gardens (HK,TK,MB).

9/23 **Ruby-crowned Kinglet;** Botanical Gardens (GH).

9/24 **Many Pied-billed Grebes and Coots; Northern Shoveler and Blue-winged Teal; Merlin; Gulls- Laughing, Franklin's, Ring-billed and Herring;** Guntersville (SMcC). **Cooper's Hawk; Olive-sided Flycatcher!; Eastern Wood-Pewee; Swainson's Thrush (many); Warblers- Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and American Redstart;** Irondale Furnace Park (GH).

9/27 **Song Sparrow (a little early ?)** West Homewood Park (HK et al).

Contributors:

Duane and Donna Berger
Frank and Shirley Farrell
Bill and Jody Gilliland
Greg Harber
Helen Kittinger
Steve McConnell
Bob and Martha Sargent
Harriett Wright

Mac Braid
Kap Garmon
Stan and Dana Hamilton
Mary Hines
Ty Keith
Elouise Rafferty
Maureen Shaffer

Please submit sightings for January FF at least five days before December 1st deadline to Ann Miller, 520 Yorkshire Drive, Birmingham, Al. 35209.

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIP

Saturday, November 18, 2006

Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Decatur, AL

The November BAS field trip is to Wheeler NWR. This trip will provide the opportunity to see migratory waterfowl, including such species as Canvasbacks, Northern Pintails, American Widgeon, Ring-necked Ducks, and more. We hope to see Sandhill Cranes and White-fronted Geese as well.

This area has grasslands and open areas that will offer chances to see American Kestrels, Horned Larks, American Pipits, and a variety of sparrows.

Travel Plans: Bring a lunch, drinks, and a full tank of gas. Be ready to **LEAVE AT 7:00 A.M.** from the parking lot at the Fieldstown Road Shopping Center in Gardendale. To get to this shopping center, take I-65 N to the Fieldstown Rd exit (271). Exit right onto Fieldstown Road, turn right at the first traffic light onto Odum Rd, then left into the shopping center. We will carpool and caravan from there. We will meet the rest of the group at the Hardee's in Priceville at 8:30. Take exit 334 and then left onto HWY 67. Hardee's is on the left side of 67. At Hardee's we will take a restroom

break and divide into two groups for the rest of the trip. Greg Harber will lead one group and Dwight Cooley, Manager of Wheeler NWR, will lead a second group

In addition to lunch and drinks, bring warm clothing- gloves, jacket, hat, rain gear, etc. The temperatures at the refuge may be lower than here in Birmingham. There will be restroom breaks during the day.



November Half-Day Field Trip

Moss Rock Preserve

Saturday, November 4, 2006

Moss Rock Preserve (MRP) is a 250-acre nature preserve in south Hoover. It lies in a highland valley whose south facing slope is a part of Shades Mt and whose north facing slope is a part of Pine Mt. This preserve is unique because it is a variant of the Little River Canyon Sandstone Glade, one of thirty-five known worldwide. These glades are composed of scattered trees, wildflowers, and grasses that grow on large rocky outcrops. There are four rare species of plants that grow here, including Nuttal's Rayless Goldenrod and Menge's fameflower. When visiting here, be careful to step only on bare rock and not on these fragile plant communities.

Travel Plans: We will meet at the Publix Grocery Store at HWY 150 and Stadium Trace Parkway at 8:00 a.m. and carpool and caravan from there. Trip leader is Ken Wills (960-8570). There will be an arts festival there later in the morning with food and music for anyone who wants to stay after the field trip is over.



71st Annual Birmingham Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 23, 2006

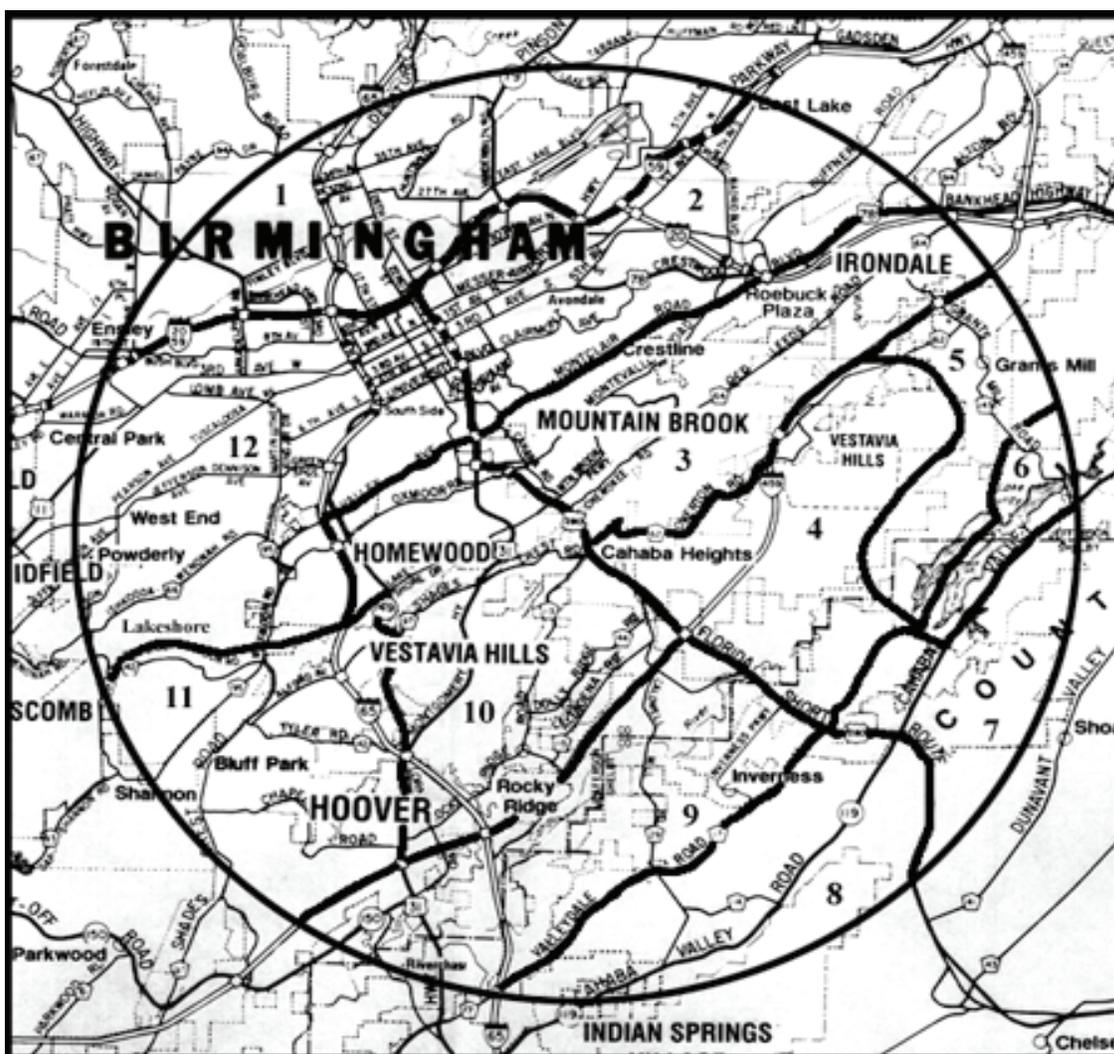
Saturday, December 23rd marks the date of the BAS Christmas Bird Count, our 71st. Amazing, isn't it? The Birmingham Audubon Society CBC was begun in 1946 and thanks to the continued support of our dedicated members and friends this wonderful Christmas tradition continues today. Consider making the Christmas Bird Count a part of your holiday tradition, as I have mine.

Accompanying this article you will find a copy of the map detailing the count circle and the various territories within the circle. I invite all of our members to consider participating in the count by choosing an area (you do not have to live within the territory or the count circle) and contacting the corresponding party leader to make arrangements to join the group. If you

are not able or do not wish to participate, but have some unusual winter birds visiting your feeders that we should record for the count, please call us in advance. We especially would love to hear from you if you have some owls in your neighborhood or wintering hummingbirds!

Get your holidays off to a merry start by joining in the count. Ty Keith and his wife Kenny will host our compilation at their home on Red Mountain, located at 1416 Wellington Road, just up from Carlisle Road (phone: 602-8037). The compilation will begin at 5:00 PM.

*Greg Harber
~ for the Bird Counts Committee*



<u>Area</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Phone</u>
1	John Imhof	995-0688	6	Pelham Rowan	970-0844
2	Greg Harber	251-2133	8/9	Helen Kittinger	560-0778
3	Mary L. Miller	879-5984	10	Maureen Shaffer	822-8728
4 / 7	Stan/Dana Hamilton	951-5630	11	Ted Weems	853-3681
5	Frank/ Shirley Farrell	815-3554	12	Sharon Hudgins	477-5390

Audubon Teaches Nature Learning to Identify Winter Waterfowl

Dwight Cooley, Refuge Manager, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge
Sunday, November 12, 2006 at 2:00 P.M.
The Wildlife Center at Oak Mountain State Park

Here in Alabama winter is a season of many delights: cool, crisp days and clear starry nights, dry leaves crackle underfoot, the faint scent of wood smoke hangs in the air, and blustery biting winds and bitter cold temperatures usher in blasts of arctic air. And thousands of waterfowl descend on our state's lakes, marshes and coastlines.



Identifying the many species of ducks and geese can be a real challenge, especially given the great viewing distances that are usually involved. This month's seminar is just the perfect refresher course you'll need in preparation for the arrival of these winter season visitors! Dwight Cooley, manager of Wheeler NWR, is an accomplished birder and good friend to the Birmingham Audubon Society. During his seminar Dwight will offer us helpful tips on identifying

the many waterfowl species we will likely encounter on our November 18th field trip to Wheeler NWR.

Come early for fellowship and refreshments in the Observation Room at the Center!

Bring your binoculars and spotting scopes, after the seminar we will visit the fishing lakes at Oak Mountain State Park in search of waterfowl and other winter visitors.

Upcoming ATN seminar:

January 14: Owls of Alabama,
Anne G. Miller, The Wildlife Center

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Clip along dotted line

~ Membership Application ~

Birmingham Audubon Society/ National Audubon Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Introductory membership ~ \$20.00
Includes quarterly subscription to *Audubon* magazine and 8 issues of *Flicker Flashes*, the chapter newsletter.
Senior (62 & older) and student (full-time) memberships available for \$15.00.
(Preferred method of payment for all new members is through the chapter, using this form).

Regular membership/Renewals ~ \$20.00
The National Audubon Society handles membership renewals through their Membership Data Center. Contact them at 1-800-274-4201 or write them at:
P.O. Box 52529,
Boulder, CO 80322-2529.
Submit renewals directly to NAS.

My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Please make check payable to: National Audubon Society

Mail this form and check to: Birmingham Audubon Society
P.O. Box 314
Birmingham, AL 35201

Birmingham Audubon Society *A007XCH8

42nd Annual BAS Fall Count – Saturday, September 30, 2006

Temp. 51-80 degrees, partly cloudy skies gave way to clear afternoon conditions; winds were light from the west/southwest. Observers (33) in 10 parties spent 97 hours in the field, covered a total of 462.8 miles in the car and 32 on foot, observed 126 species plus 6 count week species, for a total of 8,138 individuals. Highlights were Henslow's and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows observed by the Farrell party at Limestone Park on US 31 south of Saginaw, plus a Wilson's Phalarope found by them on Shelby CR 70.

Observers by party, leaders in boldface: **Greg Harber**, Jessica Germany, Bianca Allen, Edith Hunt, Guy Jones, **Frank and Shirley Farrell**, John Imhof, Harriett Wright, **Pelham Rowan**, Maureen Shaffer, **Mary Lou Miller**, Lida Hill, Mary Hines, Herman Kirk, Jamie Nobles, Jeff Pribble, Bob and Cathy Taylor, John Swan, **Jim Sherrill**, **Sharon Hudgins**, David George, **Louise Ayer Tommie**, Jean Folsom, **Helen Kittinger**, Ty Keith, Rick Kittinger, Tom Blankenship, **Ann Miller**, Alice Christenson, **Cheryl Horncastle**, Sallie Brice.

A special thank you to our compilation host, Maureen Shaffer. *Greg Harber*, Compiler.

Canada Goose	315	Rufous Hummingbird	1	European Starling	655
Wood Duck	33	Belted Kingfisher	39	Tennessee Warbler	9
Mallard	68	Red-headed Woodpecker	27	Northern Parula	6
Blue-winged Teal	13	Red-bellied Woodpecker	91	Yellow Warbler	3
Wild Turkey	29	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	6	Chestnut-sided Warbler	6
Northern Bobwhite	1	Downy Woodpecker	71	Magnolia Warbler	39
Pied-billed Grebe	28	Hairy Woodpecker	5	Yellow-rumped Warbler	7
Double-crested Cormorant	53	Northern Flicker	45	Black-throated Green Warbler	8
American Bittern	CW	Pileated Woodpecker	20	Yellow-throated Warbler	3
Great Blue Heron	48	Eastern Wood-Pewee	56	Pine Warbler	72
Great Egret	24	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	CW	Prairie Warbler	6
Little Blue Heron	1	Acadian Flycatcher	3	Palm Warbler	21
Green Heron	4	Empidonax Species	1	Bay-breasted Warbler	1
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	5	Eastern Phoebe	136	Black-and-white Warbler	9
Black Vulture	5	Loggerhead Shrike	2	American Redstart	35
Turkey Vulture	62	White-eyed Vireo	16	Worm-eating Warbler	2
Bald Eagle	1	Yellow-throated Vireo	7	Ovenbird	CW
Northern Harrier	2	Philadelphia Vireo	2	Northern Waterthrush	4
Cooper's Hawk	10	Red-eyed Vireo	6	Kentucky Warbler	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	22	Blue Jay	232	Common Yellowthroat	30
Broad-winged Hawk	77	American Crow	443	Canada Warbler	1
Red-tailed Hawk	19	Fish Crow	2	Summer Tanager	34
American Kestrel	11	Tree Swallow	3	Scarlet Tanager	15
Rail species	1	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	10	Eastern Towhee	67
Sora	8	Barn Swallow	8	Chipping Sparrow	83
American Coot	1	Carolina Chickadee	221	Field Sparrow	2
Killdeer	135	Tufted Titmouse	184	Savannah Sparrow	19
Greater Yellowlegs	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	34	Henslow's Sparrow	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	Brown-headed Nuthatch	53	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow	1
Solitary Sandpiper	3	Carolina Wren	130	Song Sparrow	3
Spotted Sandpiper	2	Sedge Wren	CW	Swamp Sparrow	4
Least Sandpiper	7	Marsh Wren	3	White-throated Sparrow	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	Northern Cardinal	260
Wilson's Snipe	4	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	5	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	37
Wilson's Phalarope	1	Eastern Bluebird	281	Blue Grosbeak	10
Rock Pigeon	268	Veery	1	Indigo Bunting	136
Eurasian Collared-Dove	6	Gray-cheeked Thrush	11	Red-winged Blackbird	135
Mourning Dove	631	Swainson's Thrush	25	Eastern Meadowlark	23
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	Hermit Thrush	CW	Common Grackle	638
Great Horned Owl	CW	Wood Thrush	26	Brown-headed Cowbird	273
Barred Owl	6	American Robin	91	Baltimore Oriole	2
Common Nighthawk	1	Gray Catbird	54	House Finch	154
Chimney Swift	610	Northern Mockingbird	243	American Goldfinch	52
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	38	Brown Thrasher	105	House Sparrow	69

November 2006

- 4 BAS 1/2 Day Field Trip—Moss Rock Preserve
- 7 Conservation Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Audubon Teaches Nature—The Wildlife Center, 2:00 p.m.
- 16 Board Meeting, (BZ) 5:45 p.m.
General Meeting, (BZA), 7:00 p.m.
Willard Bowers, Alabama Power Co.
- 18 BAS Field Trip, Wheeler NWR, Decatur, AL

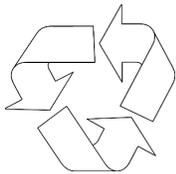
December 2006

- 1 *Flicker Flashes* articles due, January 2007 issue
- 2 BAS Sanctuary Workday (1/2 day)
- 5 Christmas Banquet—Vestavia Country Club
Dr. Jerome Jackson, speaker
- 16 Christmas Bird Count—Wheeler NWR
- 23 Christmas Bird Count—Birmingham (71st)
- 26 Christmas Bird Count—Guntersville
- 30 Christmas Bird Count—Gulf Shores

Birmingham, Audubon Society
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 314
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Co-Editors: Bianca J. Allen (205) 854-5233
Greg Harber (205) 251-2133

Birmingham Audubon Society

cordially invites you to attend its

60th Annual Christmas Dinner

*Tuesday, the fifth of December,
Two Thousand and Six
at Six-thirty in the Evening
Vestavia Country Club
400 Beaumont Drive, Vestavia Hills, 35216*



Migrant Birds in a Changing World

~ Dr. Jerome Jackson ~

Reservations cannot be accepted after November 28, 2006

Name _____

Address _____

Please make _____ reservations for the following people (at \$33.00 per person): _____

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$ _____

I prefer to sit with: _____

*Make check payable to Birmingham Audubon Society and return check & form to:
Mrs. Mary Brewer, 3145 Warrington Road, Birmingham, AL 35223; (205) 967-0752*

60th Annual Birmingham Audubon Society Christmas Dinner

Tuesday, December 5, 2006 – 6:30 P.M. Vestavia Country Club

Migrant Birds in a Changing World

Meet the Speaker, Dr. Jerome Jackson

Many of you may remember our speaker, Dr. Jerome “Jerry” Jackson, when he spoke to our group several years ago. At that time he was a professor at Mississippi State University, where he had taught Ornithology from 1970 – 1999. Dr. Jackson received his B.S from the Iowa State University, with a major in Zoology and a minor in Botany and Education. He started his teaching career at West High School in Bakersfield, California. After a year back in high school, he was accepted to the University of Kansas and earned his Ph.D. in Zoology. He has been teaching at the university level ever since. Dr. Jackson is currently on the faculty at Florida Gulf Coast University where he is the Whitaker Eminent Scholar in Science and Program Director for the Whitaker Center for Science, Math, and Technology Education.

Dr. Jackson is an accomplished author with more than 15 books and more than 220 publications in scientific journals and 120 publications in popular magazines. His expertise lies in three research areas. The first is the behavioral ecology of birds, focusing on endangered species, woodpeckers, birds of barrier islands and aquatic ecosystems. He is particularly well-known for his knowledge and research with woodpeckers! The second is the history of American ornithology. His last major area of interest is bird-human interactions and problems, especially those associated with airports and aquaculture. This area that is needed more than ever in our age of progress! The birds have an advocate in their corners.

In his banquet program, *Migrant Birds in a Changing World*, Dr. Jackson will be taking a look at the impacts on migrant birds of a diversity of changes that have and are occurring in our world. He will address not only habitat and climate changes, but also impacts on birds associated with invasive exotic species and things such as avian flu. While these topics are tough and potentially very negative ones to address at a banquet that is in a sense a traditional holiday celebration, he promises, amid the gloom that thoughts of these topics might conjure up, to focus on some positive things and end by delving into the resilience of birds and the positive things we have done, are doing, and could do to assure the continued return of the songs and colors of migrant birds to North America each year.

This excerpt from Dr. Jackson’s Faculty Profile from the Florida Gulf Coast University website sums up his passion for his work. He writes “The joy -- and yes, I mean real joy -- that I find in learning and teaching about the living world comes from recognition of the tremendous diversity of life, the complexity of relationships among creatures, and the complexity of interactions between these creatures and their physical environment. My interests in the living world grew strong when I was an 8-year-old delivering morning newspapers. I was out at 5 a.m. each morning -- a time when few other people are about, but when creatures of the night are shutting down for the day and creatures of the day are becoming active. Moths and other insects were still gathered around lights, yet birds were beginning to sing. No doubt I could have finished my paper route much quicker, but I loved those morning excursions and the potential for new discoveries each day.”