April Monthly Meeting

*Members’ Slide Show*
Thursday, April 28th, 7:00 p.m.
Birmingham Zoo Auditorium

We are calling on our members to share some of their recent favorite photographs during our last meeting of the year before summer break. In the past, pictures of birds, flowers, scenic sights, wildlife and images of nature at her finest have been shown. Your photos can be from vacations or trips you have taken, either here in Alabama or abroad or from your own back yard. This is a great opportunity to share your experiences with nature and tell us why these particular pictures have special meaning for you.

We ask you to limit your presentation to 5 minutes. Audubon has a computer and digital projector for those who have a PowerPoint program. Bring a travel drive or your own computer to hook up to the projector. Film cameras seem to have taken a back seat to digital cameras, but if you have 2X2 slides requiring a slide projector we can provide that too. Call Ellen McLaughlin at 595-0806 to schedule your presentation and let her know what equipment you will need. Note that this meeting is the FOURTH Thursday in April, one week later than our usual time.

Come early for refreshments and fellowship.

Audubon Teaches Nature

*An Introduction to the Fishes of Alabama*
Presented by: Mike Howell
Sunday, April 10th, 2:00 p.m.
Oak Mountain Interpretive Center, Oak Mountain State Park

Spring is here and with its arrival we often find ourselves taking pleasant strolls through the woods, walking along the lakeshore or loafing on the stream bank. We stop to smell and observe the wildflowers, listen to the bird songs emanating from the leafy canopy overhead or simply to enjoy the scenery and to take in the beauty of it all. But do you ever wonder about the fish that might be swimming in the nearby creek?

Alabama is blessed with a wealth of waterways, inhabited by an astounding array of fish and other aquatic species. Mike Howell will introduce us to a few of the fish species in our area, helping us to identify them and better understand their ecology. Weather permitting, we’ll visit a stream within the park and discover for ourselves which species are found there.

Come early and enjoy some refreshments in the Observation Room at the Alabama Wildlife Center, taking in the view of the forest and the birds at the feeder. Then, when it is time for the program we’ll make the short walk to the adjacent Interpretive Center. ATN programs are free and open to the public, after admission to the park.

Next Month’s ATN program:
Spring is Here ~ Time to Learn our Bird Songs
Sunday, May 22nd, 2:00 p.m.
Greg Harber, Guest Speaker
SoSo for the Record

Sightings from the field

15 January through 23 February, 2011

Video footage of three eaglets was taken 2 February at Guntersville Dam by Jerry Green. If my information is correct this many fledglings is unusual in the Bald Eagle world.

In other Bald Eagle news, 19 were reported at the Town Creek Fishing Center-Lake at Guntersville State Park by Ken Wills and one flying over Academy Drive at Bessemer 12 February was a nice surprise for Don and Gayle Sizemore.

The last report of the cooperative Snow Bunting at Guntersville was 23 February by Matt Morrow.

An Orange-crowned Warbler has spent this winter with Harriett Wright. Loves that suet!

Other sightings were:

1/15  Wilson’s Snipe (20); Jim Martin Park, Gadsden (KW).
1/28  Lesser Scaup (15); Tanyard Turf Farm (JS).
1/29  Pied-billed Grebe (12); Henry Neely Dam (JS). Loggerhead Shrike; Ragland (JS).
2/4   Over a thousand birds estimated, including Purple Finch (100); Pine Siskin (500); American Goldfinch (500); What a day !!!! Clay (BS, MS).
2/2   Rusty Blackbird (200); Water Cress Darter NWR (KW).
2/6   American Robin (400); Bluff Park Elementary School (KW).
2/7   American Pipit (15); East Lake Park (KW).
2/15  Great Blue Heron (nesting); Fish Crow (2); Savannah Sparrow (8); East Lake Park (KW). Vesper Sparrow (2); Birmingham Airport (KW).

Contributors:  Jerry Green
               Matt Morrow
               Bob and Martha Sargent
               Don and Gayle Sizemore
               Jim Sherrill
               Ken Wills
               Harriett Wright

Please submit sightings for May/June FF at least five days before the April 1st deadline to:
Ann Miller, 520 Yorkshire Drive, Birmingham, Al. 35209
April Field Trips

Perry Lakes Park and Marion Fish Hatchery Saturday, April 2nd, 7:00 a.m.

You will note that we have two full day field trips this month, the first of which is bound for my favorite birding place in all of Alabama: Perry Lakes Park! Early spring migrants will have already arrived by the time of our trip, so I expect we’ll have respectable numbers of Northern Parulas, Yellow-throated Warblers, Louisiana Water-thrushes, Yellow-throated Vireos and possibly a Summer Tanager. Lingering winter species such as Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers are certainly to be expected too.

Options for birding in the park include multiple trails through a variety of swamp and woodland habitats, a short trek to Barton’s Beach on the Cahaba River, and the birding canopy tower. I am hopeful that the leaves on the trees will not have emerged too much so we can enjoy views of the many birds we will undoubtedly hear singing.

We will have a picnic lunch at Perry Lakes Park, in the pavilion. Once we are finished with lunch we’ll spend some time birding at the Marion Fish Hatchery, which is adjacent to the park. Many other birding sites are located in the Marion area so we’ll have our pick of other places we’d like to visit that afternoon. A stop at the Golden-club Swamp, near Sprott, is certainly a must!

As an added bonus for this trip, members of the Bay County Audubon Society (Panama City, FL) will be meeting us at Perry Lakes Park. I am looking forward to introducing our guests, who will be staying in Selma, to the fine birding opportunities the park and surrounding region has to offer.

Travel Plans: Meet at the Hoover McDonald’s US-31 across from the Galleria at 7:00 a.m. From there, we will carpool and caravan south on I-459 to exit #97, the Woodstock/West Blocton exit. We will drive south on AL-5 to Centreville - Brent, stopping for a restroom break at the Wendy’s just south of US-82, before continuing on to Perry Lakes Park, near Marion. For those who wish to meet us at Perry Lakes Park, we should arrive there at approximately 9:00 a.m.

Remember to pack a lunch, bring plenty of fluids with you, and to dress appropriately for the weather. I don’t expect that the bugs will be too bad so early in the season, but one never knows.

For questions or further information, please call our trip leader Greg Harber, 205-251-2133.

Bankhead National Forest & Brushy Creek Lake Environ Saturday, April 23rd, 7:00 a.m.

The Bankhead National Forest is one of Alabama’s most under appreciated areas. Within its boundaries lies a remote and wild landscape. This trip will include birding in a variety of habitats from roadside pastures, deep woods, regenerating forestland and clear streams and lakes. Many of the breeding birds typically found in Alabama’s forested landscapes will be in full song, including great crested flycatchers, red-eyed and yellow-throated vireos, prairie warblers and indigo buntings. Blue-winged and cerulean warblers are a remote possibility too.

In addition to the birding, activities will include optional off trail hiking to some truly spectacular waterfalls in the forest. Spring wildflowers should be abundant. We will eat lunch on top of an easily accessible waterfall, located about 50 yards from the road. Other waterfall sites entail a bit more of a hike through open mature forests. Bath-

room facilities are somewhat limited but we will be making a midday stop at the Brushy Creek Lake Recreation Area where primitive facilities are available. Bring a sack lunch, snacks, and drinks. Dress appropriately for the weather and terrain keeping in mind that among the plants coming back to life is poison ivy. Bring your binoculars, birding scopes and a full tank of gas.

Travel Plans: We will meet at 7:00 a.m. in the parking lot of the Fieldstown Road shopping center in Gardendale, just off of I-65 north at exit #271 (Fieldstown Road). Turn right on Fieldstown Road, another right onto Odum Road, (this is the first light after you turn onto Fieldstown Road), and an immediate left into the shopping center parking lot. We will depart at 7:00 a.m. and head north on I-65 toward Cullman. We will make a brief stop for breakfast in Hayden, for home

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BAS Field Trip Cancellation Policy
If there is a possibility of dangerous road conditions due to inclement weather please contact the trip leader at the phone number provided.
Earth Day started on April 22, 1970, when a senator from the state of Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, called for an environmental teach-in. Every year since that first day, United States citizens have gathered to raise awareness about the environment. In 2009, the United Nations declared April 22 to be International Mother Earth Day! People from around the world celebrate Earth Day by holding festivals, planting trees and gardens, and cleaning neighborhoods, rivers, and parks.

Isn’t every day Earth Day? Shouldn’t we take care of where we live? Our parents would never let us throw trash on the floor of our bedroom or kitchen. We have to pick it up and throw it in the trashcan. We keep our homes clean and free from trash. Then, why trash the environment? The earth is in our hands.

In 2011 the Earth Day Network chose the theme of “A Billion Acts of Green®”. They want individuals and groups to register their projects that help the environment so that on April 22, 2011, a billion acts that help to keep our land, air, and water clean and usable by the people, plants, and animals on earth will have been completed.

Can one person make a difference? YES! Absolutely! Start local and think global!

1. Plant trees at home or at school. Choose native trees that provide shelter or food for wild animals. Ask a local nursery or plant store which plants are native to your area and would they donate any plants to your school.
2. Start a recycling campaign at home or school for paper and/or aluminum. Who will collect the cans and deliver them to the recycling center?
3. Pick up trash on the school campus.
4. Start an environmental club at school that picks up trash, teaches other students about the environment, and maintains the school gardens and trees. Find a teacher to sponsor your club.
5. Plant a garden at school or home for bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.
6. Write a letter to your senator and/or congressman to support green technology and energy and to support the environment.
7. Bring your own bags to the store instead of using paper or plastic.
8. Volunteer to help at an Earth Day festival in your area.
9. Communicate on FaceBook, Twitter, blog, Youtube video, or podcast about the importance of Earth Day and what everyone can do to help!
10. Raise money to preserve an acre (or more) of rainforest, coral reef, or other habitat.

Just one act of green CAN make this earth a better place to live. So what act will you commit to help the environment?

See page 5 for the monthly puzzle.

(Continued on page 5)
By: Kathy Stiles Freeland, Chairperson Conservation Committee

FOREVER WILD – REAUTHORIZATION CRITICAL IN 2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

It is hard to believe that almost 20 years have passed since the 1992 establishment of the Alabama Forever Wild Land Trust. Over 200,000 acres of some of Alabama’s best natural areas have been protected by this hugely popular program that 84% of Alabama voters in the 1992 elections approved. Birmingham Audubon Society as a part of the Alabama Audubon Council was a major player in this effort and now is working for its reauthorization in the 2011 Legislative session.

This week House Bill No. 126 was filed to reauthorize Forever Wild by Representative Randy Davis of Daphne and co-sponsors: J. Robinson, M. Hubbard, Sanderford, Canfield, McClendon, Ison, Buttram, McCutcheon, Merrill, Greer, Mask, Barton, Wren, Collins, Nordgren, B. Moore, Beckman, Baker, Wallace, Brown, Shiver, W. Johnson, Faust, Jackson, Warren, Coleman, R. Johnson, and Millican.

Also Senator Scott Beason filed Senate Bill No. 140 to reauthorize Forever Wild, with co-sponsors Waggoner, Allen, Brewbaker, Brooks and Marsh.

It is absolutely critical that your House and Senate representatives hear from you now that you want them to work for passage of this legislation. It is also important that you thank each of the House and Senate Sponsors for stepping forward to insure that Forever Wild continues.

To contact your Senate and House representatives and to thank the co-sponsors visit: www.conservationalabama.org, click on Action Center, and follow the directions to Take Action. Your email, phone call or letter will make a positive difference. You may also get updates on the legislation’s progress via www.conservationalabama.org.

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Circle the items that can be recycled:

[Images of recyclable items]

The Birmingham Audubon Society would like to sincerely apologize for the lateness of the following acknowledgements:

A gift from George C. Cusick
A donation to the Audubon Mountain Workshop in memory of Betty Susina from Linda Reynolds
A donation in memory of Mrs. Marie Bell Davis from Elberta G. Reid
Forty-sixth Annual Spring Bird Count  
Saturday, April 30, 2011

All BAS members and friends are encouraged to join us for the 46th annual Spring Bird Count! This is a fun count, when we venture out to welcome our returning neotropical migrants. The count provides a wonderful opportunity to spend some time outdoors and watch the feathered parade as the birds follow their migration route north! Many of the local breeding birds will be well on their way to raising young too.

This all-day count will cover parts of Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair and Blount counties, and we’ll need as many participants as possible to adequately cover the area. Even though this is an all-day count, you may join a party for any part of the day if you only have a limited amount of time. It is essential though that you make arrangements now to join a party on count day. Feel free to call me at 251-2133 for the names and phone numbers of party leaders in your area. Or, you may wish to count the birds at your feeders and call or e-mail your report to me later. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks will surely reward those who take the time to watch at home!

At the end of the day we will gather to compile our results, swap stories and share our adventures of the day. Those fortunate enough to find a real rarity should expect to provide appropriate written documentation. Jessica Germany and her husband Ed will host the compilation at their home at 3991 8th Court South, 35222, one block north of Clairmont Avenue near Avondale Elementary School. Jessica will provide light snacks but if you need to eat something more substantial grab a bigger bite before we get started around 7:00 p.m. If you need detailed directions call please call either Jessica (595-0814) or me (251-2133).

Greg Harber,  
For Bird Counts committee

Great Backyard Bird Count Report  
February 19, 2011

Saturday, February 19th, the Birmingham Audubon Society joined with the Birmingham Zoo to participate in the 2011 Great Backyard Bird Count and the Tom Imhof Memorial Family Bird Walk. Approximately 35 BAS members, Zoo volunteers and guests convened at 8:00 a.m. for coffee and hot chocolate before embarking on our walk through the Alabama Wilds section of the zoo. The weather was ideal and the birds were very active. Our trip leader, Greg Harber, recorded the birds we observed and submitted them into the GBBC database; a summary report is listed below.

Following the Bird Walk, a handful of BAS education volunteers joined zoo staff member Jamie Nobles, BAS Education Director Helena Uber-Wamble and zoo volunteers to host GBBC birding events at the zoo. 200 children and their families stopped by our location at Granny’s Porch to construct bird feeders, color bird images and play a short question and answer game. Frank Connery was particularly effective in engaging whole families as he explained interesting facts about birds and about the GBBC in general. All the volunteers agreed it was a fabulous way to spend a gorgeous late winter day!

| Canada Goose | 8 | American Crow | 8 | Eastern Towhee | 10 |
| Great Blue Heron | 1 | Carolina Chickadee | 3 | Song Sparrow | 5 |
| Turkey Vulture | 1 | Tufted Titmouse | 5 | Swamp Sparrow | 2 |
| American Kestrel | 1 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 2 | White-throated Sparrow | 3 |
| Killdeer | 5 | Brown-headed Nuthatch | 2 | Northern Cardinal | 12 |
| Rock Pigeon | 1 | Carolina Wren | 3 | Red-winged Blackbird | 8 |
| Mourning Dove | 6 | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 2 | Common Grackle | 11 |
| Red-headed Woodpecker | 1 | American Robin | 11 | American Goldfinch | 7 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 3 | Northern Mockingbird | 3 | House Sparrow | 12 |
| Downy Woodpecker | 2 | Brown Thrasher | 3 | | |
| Northern Flicker | 2 | Cedar Waxwing | 50 | Total | 211 |
| Eastern Phoebe | 1 | Yellow-rumped Warbler | 6 | Species Total | 35 |
| Blue Jay | 9 | Pine Warbler | 2 | | |
## Membership Application

### Birmingham Audubon Society/National Audubon Society*

- **Birmingham Audubon Society**
  
  New Members and Renewals $20.00  
  Seniors (62 or better) $15.00  
  Full-time Students $15.00  

  Make check payable to: **Birmingham Audubon Society**  
  Send application and check to:  
  Birmingham Audubon Society  
  P.O. Box 314  
  Birmingham, AL 35201

- **National Audubon Society**
  
  New Members* $20.00  
  Seniors (62 or better) $15.00  
  Full-time Students $15.00  

  Make check payable to: **National Audubon Society**  
  Send application and check to:  
  National Audubon Society  
  P.O. Box 314  
  Birmingham, AL 35201

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip code: _________________________________________________

Phone: (      ) ______________________  Email: ______________________________

My check for $___________ is enclosed.

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### There are two ways to become a member of Birmingham Audubon Society:

1. **Join Birmingham Audubon Society** without National Audubon Society affiliation. This chapter only membership provides you access to all chapter activities and benefits. **All dues stay in Birmingham to support local activities. You will not receive the National Audubon magazine.**

   — OR —

2. **Join National Audubon Society.** Birmingham Audubon Society serves as a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. Joining National Audubon Society also provides you a membership to Birmingham Audubon Society and access to all chapter activities and benefits. **You will receive the National Audubon magazine. Your dues support the work of National Audubon Society and a small percentage is returned to the Birmingham Audubon Society for local efforts.**

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made biscuits. Before reaching Cullman, we will take exit #308, US-278 and head west toward Addison. If you wish, you can meet us at the Chevron station, located on the west side of I-65 at the exit. If you choose to do this, please let the trip leader know in advance. We should arrive there around 8:00 a.m.

**Trip Leader:** Hans Paul   205-807-7357 cell or email cooterp14@gmail.com. The day of the trip once in the Bankhead area cell coverage is inconsistent.

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### 2011 Hog Island Programs ~ Audubon Camp in Maine

Celebrating 75 years!

Experience the birds, learning, laughter, and great meals! Join dynamic instructors, including Pete Dunne, Kenn Kaufman, Stephen Kress, Sara Morris and Scott Weidensaul.

Register Today!

- Joy of Birding (June 12-17)
- Field Ornithology (June 19-24)

For more information and to register, visit [http://hogisland.audubon.org](http://hogisland.audubon.org) or call 607-257-7308, Ext. 14
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<td>23  Earth Day at McWane Science Center</td>
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Copies of *Flicker Flashes* can be viewed and downloaded from the BAS web site: www.birminghamaudubon.org