

# NEWS FROM THE ISLAND



Newsletter of the Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc.

Volume No. 13 No. 4

Spring 2007

## President's Message

*Greg Harber*

On this Saturday morning in mid March I awoke to relatively warm temperatures here in Birmingham, and with the promise of sunny skies and even warmer temperatures in the afternoon, the lure of a walk in the woods proved to be too irresistible. The pile of tasks on my desk would have to wait till later - after I had fed the ole soul a heaping dose of nature. US 280 traffic was light as I slipped out of town and an hour later I parked my car at Bull's Gap atop Rebecca Mountain, located in Clay County east of Sylacauga.

At 1500 feet in elevation the air temperatures were definitely cooler than they had been in Birmingham, but by the time I reached the mountain's crest at 1800 feet even the Turkey Vultures soaring aloft agreed that the temperatures were just right at these heights. In addition to some solitude I had also come with another quest in mind: a chance to see which birds might be found here in winter, after having visited the area a few times during recent summers.

The usual forest guardians could be heard in multiple locations along my route; the calls of Tufted Titmice and Pine Warblers seemingly filled the early spring air. The 'yank-yank' notes of a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches complimented the small ensemble. A Brown Creeper bounded into view as it landed on a pine tree and immediately began probing beneath the rough bark, inching its way upward as it went.

As if to add an exclamation point to the splendor of the morning two, and possibly three, Blue-headed Vireos began to sing their melodious song from the tops of the gnarled branches of the Virginia Pines anchoring this rocky landscape in place. Their song was sweet music to these long-starved ears. Winter's cloak of silence had been lifted at long last! I knew then and there that I need not go any further, and that I had found what I didn't even know I was seeking: some assurance that spring was on its way.

And so it is. Spring is here, and soon waves of neotropical migrants will herald its arrival as they advance their journey north to breeding territories across our continent. Theirs is an uncertain journey fraught with peril so take a moment to ease their burden. Clean your feeders and restock them, replenish the sugar water, scrub the water bath and check the spray on your water misters. Add a tree limb or two to your brush pile; the extra layer of security will be welcome. The birds will undoubtedly pay you a visit and reward your efforts with a glimpse of their freshly adorned spring wardrobe.

Recently my sister Lucy e-mailed to me an account of her three-week visit to rural South Africa. Her job with a family health agency carries her into some remote areas of this vastly impoverished region. At the conclusion of a weeklong series of workshops Lucy was invited by one of the participants to come with her out into the countryside, to visit the farm where she and her husband lived. What Franny had been so eager to share was the beauty of the African veldt, in all its sublime glory and diverse wildlife. Lucy brought back with her not just ticket stubs, her passport and pixels stored away on her digital camera, but something that Franny knew had to be "felt" in order for Lucy to better appreciate what she had observed.

It dawns on me now that one line of Lucy's journal applies to us in a familiar sort of way. She wrote, "It was sad to leave - so amazing to travel halfway across the world and meet people so kind and eager to share the beauty of their homestead with people who only a few days prior were complete strangers."

Soon, a migrant will arrive at your homestead too, in need of food, water and shelter. Be kind and share what resources you have to offer. We may not be able to change the whole world, but that doesn't prevent us from working to improve our little corner of it.

# International Migratory Bird Festival



\* Live Music in the Square \*

*Children's Activities* \* *Native Plant Info*

*Guided Bird Walks* \* *Vendors & Exhibits*

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2007

Cadillac Square Park

9:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc.



The Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc. would like to thank the following individuals, organizations, and companies for their financial support of our conservation efforts by becoming members, renewing their memberships, or making special, honorariums, and memorial gifts. This list represents contributions received between January 16, 2007 and March 10, 2007. If we have omitted your name from this list, please contact our treasurer, Mary Porter at 251/861-2120 or maryflintporter@gmail.com

**Special Gifts:**

Dorothy A. Burroughs  
Jinksie & Denson Burnum  
Mary Anderson Pickard  
The Hummer/Bird Study Group

**Memorials:**

**For: Maxie Taylor Bryant**

From: J.R. Gant  
Tana Fleming

**For: Mary Burks**

From: Jeanette & Jimmie Hancock

**For: Dorothy McCowan Pierson  
(mother of Eugenia Carey)**

From: Eugenia Carey  
Amy & Irvin Christian  
Pat Haddix  
Joan M. King  
Elaine Stonecypher

**For: Idalene Snead**

From: Bob & Cathy Taylor  
Helen Kittinger's Tuesday Morning Bird Class

**For: Al Wilson (father of Mike Wilson)**

From: Ann McLaurin

**Honorariums:**

**For: Bob & Lucy Duncan**

From: Edith U. Hunt

**New and Renewed Members:**

**Snowy Egret Level**

**New Members:**

Mr. & Mrs. James W. Shepherd

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak Level**

**Renewed Members:**

Dr. & Mrs. E. E. Ashbee

Jon Kemp & John Reed

Leslee King Reed

Betsy Tetlow

Bruce & Mary Thompson

George Thurlow

**Indigo Bunting Level:**

**New Members:**

Thomas R. & Julia A. Willis

**Renewed Members:**

Stella Anderson

Amy & Irvin Christian

Temd & Lucy Deason

Ben C. Garmon

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas O. Gaillard, Jr.

Juliette Hinton

Catherine C. Hodges

David Mehlman

Cathy O' Sheal

Ray & Barbara Price

**Cardinal Level:**

**New Members:**

Maureen Shaffer

**Renewed Members**

Gussie Arnett

Gayle & Sandy Barnett

Paul & Ann Burkholder, Jr.

Marion C. Bush

Jimmy & Virginia Dunn

Marjolein Gerritsen

Terry & Tom Harris

Anne F. Heard

Michael Jordan

Paul Kittle

Mr. & Mrs. Rodger L. Larsen

Sybil Lawson

Mel & Lamona Lucas

Ann & Al Miller

Harwell Moose

Edwina Mullins

Ethel Owen

Angela & James Owens

Joan & Herb Reiser

Mr. & Mrs. Phil Sankey

Jan Shaw

Floyd & Libba Sherrod

Charles M. Shirk

Ivan & Lawrence Trotter

Elizabeth Williams

~ Membership Application ~  
Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Levels:

- Cardinal, \$25
- Indigo Bunting \$50
- Rose-breasted Grosbeak, \$100
- Snowy Egret, \$250
- Great Egret, \$500
- Life Member, \$1,000
- Family Life Member, \$1,250

My check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed

**Please make check payable to: DIBS, Inc.**

**Mail this form and check to:**

Mary F. Porter, DIBS Treasurer  
P.O. Box 1295  
Dauphin Island, AL 36528-1295

## International Migratory Bird Day Celebration

Each spring the Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries, Inc. (DIBS) observes International Migratory Bird Day with a festival and a birding competition. The festival will be held on Saturday, April 14 at Cadillac Square Park from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, with live music, bird walks, and a DIBS sales and information booth and vendors too. Everyone is invited to attend.

The past several years DIBS has also participated in the America's Birdiest City/County (ABCC) competition, a fun nationwide effort to proclaim America's Birdiest Places. Thanks to the efforts of the teams participating in past competitions, Dauphin Island has been able to claim and defend its title as America's Birdiest Small Coastal City!

This year DIBS has moved the America's Birdiest City birding competition to the AOS weekend and we need your help to defend our title! Participating is easy and the rules are simple. At compilation we will total the species list for each team and award prizes to the members of the winning team. We'll then tally a grand total for

Dauphin Island and pray that it will withstand the challenges from small coastal cities nationwide!

1. Our 72-hour window starts Thursday, April 19 at 12:00 noon and runs till noon Sunday, April 22, when the compilation will be held.
2. Teams of 2-4 people will have the entire 72-hour period to count birds, i.e., they don't have to adhere to a 24-hour window.
3. All birds recorded must be seen from dry land within the Town Limits of Dauphin Island. This includes Sand/Pelican Island but birds must be seen from dry land, and not from a boat while in transit. There is no need to record individual numbers of birds, only bird species.

It's as simple as that! To facilitate keeping track of your checklist for the weekend DIBS will provide copies of the island bird list, printed on colored paper, at the Friday night AOS gathering (Chamber of Commerce Hall). Or, you may wish to download a copy in advance from the DIBS web site: [www.coastalbirding.org](http://www.coastalbirding.org).



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### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*A non-profit Organization dedicated to the Preservation of the Dauphin Island Audubon Sanctuary and other ecologically valuable Habitat on Dauphin Island*

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**PLEASE CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE**