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<http://chbc.carolinanature.com>



Doug Pratt

# Chapel Hill Bird Club Bulletin

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## Next Meeting: Monday, January 26

**When/where:** 7:15 pm refreshments;  
7:30 pm meeting. The lounge, Olin T  
Binkley Baptist Church, corner of  
Highway 15-501 Bypass and Willow Drive,  
behind University Mall, Chapel Hill.

### **26 January 2015 – Kim Brand: *Bird friendly gardening – your yard matters.***

Your yard – and the kind of plants in  
it – matters more than you may  
know. Native plants play an  
important role in providing food birds  
need to survive and thrive. By  
planting shrubs that provide high-fat  
berries, trees that host caterpillars,  
and flowers that provide nectar,  
your yard can make a real  
difference year round.

Kim Brand is the Bird-Friendly  
Communities Project Coordinator for  
Audubon North Carolina which  
promotes bird conservation efforts in  
urban areas. Kim has a masters  
degree in ornithology and has

served on the board of Forsyth  
Audubon for five years.

## Saturday Field Trips

Rob Rybczynski leads field trips for the  
Chapel Hill Bird Club. The trips leave from  
Glen Lennox Shopping Center on  
Highway 54 in Chapel Hill at 7.30  
Saturday mornings except for the  
summer hiatus. All skill levels are  
welcome. Trips usually end by noon. If  
the trip is not local and/or leaves from  
another location, the change will be  
posted to CarolinaBirds (readable also  
at [birding.aba.org/maillist/NzC](http://birding.aba.org/maillist/NzC)) and at  
the Chapel Hill Bird Facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/groups/chapelhillb  
irdclub/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/chapelhillbirdclub/). For yearly schedules see  
<http://chbc.carolinanature.com/fieldtrips.html>).  
Need more details? Call Rob at  
919 460 9383.

### Welcome New Members!



Norma Johnson of Saxapahaw  
Cheryl Drescher of Durham

## CHBC President's First Annual State of the Club Address

Happy New Year, Chapel Hill Bird Club members!

It's that time of year when we, like the two-headed Roman god Janus, look forward and backward. What did we accomplish last year? What great events did we experience? And what do we anticipate in the year ahead?

2014 was a good year for the Club. Membership of our Facebook group more than doubled, from about 55 to 125. Attendance at meetings was strong, averaging 36, and visitors and first-time members introduced themselves at every meeting. Certainly we have Eddie Owens and Kent Fiala to thank for securing fascinating speakers. In 2014 we learned about research into migratory birds in Washington, DC and Lake Mattamuskeet; we listened to the calls of the Cerulean Warblers on the Blue Ridge Parkway; we journeyed with birder/photographers to Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Uganda, and our own NC State Parks; and we brushed up on our raptor identification skills. In early October, some of us joined Mike Tove on a weekend field trip to the Hawk Watch site at Kiptopeke State Park in Virginia, where we were treated to a near-record flight of Merlins, plus hundreds of other raptors.

There was sad news in 2014, as we marked the passing of Doug Shadwick, who had been our field trip leader for 25 years. Members of the Club made generous donations in his memory to Mason Farm, one of our favorite birding locations, and we hope in the next few weeks to attach Doug's name to one of the

benches on the new boardwalk there. Stay tuned. Meanwhile, Bob Rybczynski has taken up the mantle of field trip leader. Join him each Saturday at 7:30 at Glen Lennox Shopping Center for a trip to one of our local hot spots. (Check the Facebook group for any specific plans for the week's field trip.)

We also learned of the passing of Maury Graves, who was an active member of the Club for more than 35 years, as well as an officer and a speaker. You can read his history of the early years of the Chapel Hill Bird Club on our website, <http://chbc.carolinanature.com>.

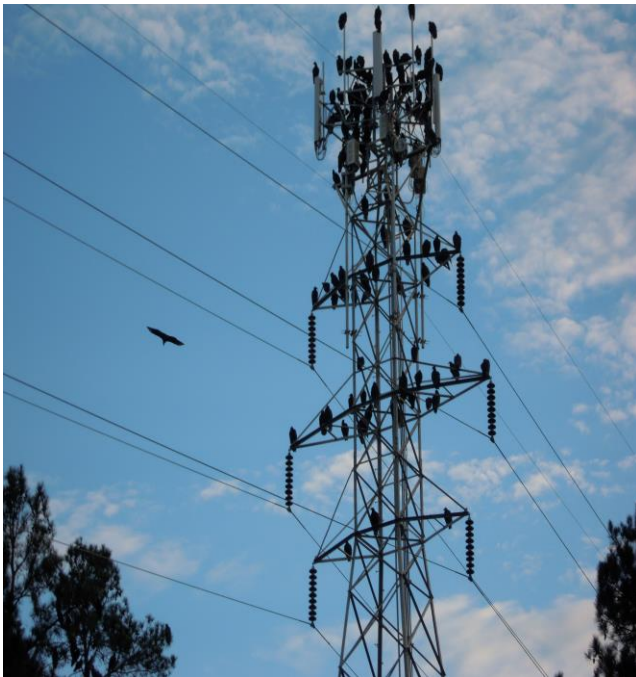
And now we look ahead to 2015. Of course there will be great presentations at our monthly meetings, as we learn about birds as far away as Colombia and as near as our own yards. And of course there will be great field trips every Saturday morning. There will also be opportunities for you to become more involved. Several of our officers have been in their posts for many years, and they might decide to step down. Do you have ideas about a new direction for the Chapel Hill Bird Club? A new kind of meeting presentation? A new way for us to connect with others who love watching birds? A new way for us to be active in support of the birds of the Triangle and beyond? Elections will be held at our May meeting. If you want more information, please speak to one of the officers.

The Chapel Hill Bird Club is strong in 2015, and you are a part of it. Join us at our meetings and field trips. Invite a friend to go birding. Enjoy the birds.

## Woodcroft Vulture Roost

Towards dusk I often walk the trails in the Woodcroft subdivision in SW Durham. Behind the tennis courts in the club area is a vulture roost. They are hard to count, but often as many as 200 roost in the neighborhood. They use three pylons of the power line, a cell tower and several pine trees. One particular pylon is very much the preferred site with nearly a hundred birds in it. The remaining sites have 5-10 birds in each one. I have been trying to figure out why this one site is superior to the others. Earlier sun in the morning?

The flock consists of both Black and Turkey Vultures, at dusk it's hard to see the color of the head, and when they're shoulder to shoulder it's



hard to differentiate their stance (Blacks are more upright), so I can't tell the ratio of Black to Turkey, but half and half is a reasonable guess. (When I first moved to North Carolina it was unusual to see Blacks, they're more common now.)

As the light starts to go (the photo was taken at 5pm), you can see vultures flying in from all directions. They check out the preferred pylon; first comers find a perch on the top rail; later comers jostle for position sometimes displacing another. Lower, less desirable, rails have fewer birds, the lowest only two or three. Why is the top rail better? Do birds tend to occupy the same space night after night? What is going on in vulture psyche? I would love to know!

## Next Meeting

**23 February 2015** – **Natalia Ocampo-Penuela**: The birds of Colombia.

**23 March 2015** – **Judith Fortney**: Birds and Islands

**27 April 2015** – **Tom Driscoll**: Topic to be announced (it will be either the birds of Chile, or South Africa)

18 May 2015 – **Dave Gammon**: Vocal Mimicry in Northern Mockingbirds.

## Officers of the Chapel Hill Bird Club Elected Officers

**President:** David Smith

([davidjudysmith@frontier.com](mailto:davidjudysmith@frontier.com))

**Vice President (Durham area):** Eddie Owens ([banjoman\\_57@yahoo.com](mailto:banjoman_57@yahoo.com))

**Vice President (Chapel Hill area):** Kent Fiala ([kent.fiala@gmail.com](mailto:kent.fiala@gmail.com))

**Treasurer:** Patricia Bailey ([pbailey\\_489@yahoo.com](mailto:pbailey_489@yahoo.com))

**Secretary:** Edith Tatum ([ektatum@nc.rr.com](mailto:ektatum@nc.rr.com))

### Appointed Officers

**Bird Count Supervisor/compiler:** Will Cook ([cwcook@duke.edu](mailto:cwcook@duke.edu))

**Field Trip Chairman:** Bob Rybczynski ([squawk510@att.net](mailto:squawk510@att.net))

**Bulletin Editor:** Judith Fortney ([jafortney1@aol.com](mailto:jafortney1@aol.com))

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