

Mobile Bay Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society Since 1971

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BirdFest 2006 Speaker Dr. Sidney Gauthreaux

Alabama BirdFest 2006 is still months away, but organizers have already lined up an exciting speaker.

Dr. Sidney Gauthreaux, Centennial Professor of Biological Sciences at Clemson University in South Carolina, will discuss "Radar Ornithology and the Conservation of Migratory Birds." His presentation will be part of the BBQ & Seafood Social to be held at the James P. Nix Center in Fairhope on Friday, Oct. 20.

Although the topic sounds complicated, Dr. Gauthreaux said it is information that any interested bird watcher can easily understand and use. "There are several sites on the Internet where you can get real-time information from Doppler radar. I believe that after hearing my presentation, people will have the skills to monitor bird migration the same as I do."

According to Gauthreaux, there are three levels of using remote sensing technology. "The first uses thermal imaging that detects migrating birds during the day or night based on the heat

they generate. The second uses high-resolution radar that can detect individual birds or migrating flocks within three or four miles of the radar. Doppler radar is the third level, and that detects birds out to 100 miles and can pinpoint the speed and direction of their movements. Using all of the approximately 150 Doppler radar sites around the country, you can easily detect migration patterns."

Birders will find the radar information to be a valuable tool, Gauthreaux said. "There is a significant relationship between what you see on radar one night and what you see in the woodlands the next morning."

A native of New Orleans and graduate of LSU, Dr. Gauthreaux has studied using weather radar to track migrating birds since the 1970s, initially using standard weather radar and then the more powerful and sophisticated Doppler radar. In 1990, he established the Clemson University Radar Ornithology Laboratory (CUROL).

IN 1995, with support from the Department of Defense, CUROL began archiving bird movements using a national network of NEXRAD Doppler radar sites. This database has aided in the development of national and regional maps of bird migration and maps of important migration stopover areas.

According to information on its web site, "use of the NEXRAD network in the United States has allowed us to record large-scale migration events and relate these to topography and local and regional weather conditions. Researchers are also using this data to develop continent-wide and regional migration maps and to build predictive models of migration for different regions of the United States."

The Alabama Coastal BirdFest 2006 is scheduled for Oct. 19-22. For more about this year's festival, call 929-0922 or visit

www.alabamacoastalbirdfest.com. News and photos from the 2005 BirdFest are also available on the web site.

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Coastal Birding Assn

Winter 2006 Field Trips

February

- 4 Dauphin Island** for Mardi Gras parade and birding. Meet at **10:00 a.m.** at Mike and Karen Wilson's house (910 Cadillac Avenue) on the island. After birding awhile followed by lunch, we will attend the Island Mystics Mardi Gras parade at 1:00 p.m.; we may also bird again after the parade. Mike and Karen will provide lunch. [for info: Tom/Joan Siegwald, (251) 666-1762]
- 11 Mississippi Water Treatment Facility** for ducks, rails, and winter birds. Meet at **7:15 am** in the Wal-Mart parking lot behind the Ruby Tuesday restaurant on Rangeline Road or at 8:00 am in Mississippi at the Texaco service station north of I-10 exit #50 (turn north at exit; service station is on right at corner of Seaman Road). Mississippi birder Charley Delmas will lead. [for info: Tom/Joan Siegwald, (251) 666-1762]
- 25 Chevron Pascagoula Property** for ducks and winter birds. Stefanie Bond, Chevron's resident birding expert, will lead. Meet at **7:15 am** in the Wal-Mart parking lot behind the Ruby Tuesday restaurant on Rangeline Road or at **8:00 am** at Chevron's front gate (take exit 69 off I-10, then go south on Hwy 63 to Chevron gate on left). [for info: Tom/Joan Siegwald, (251) 666-1762]

Forever Wild

Since it's inception in 1992, the Forever Wild Land Trust has purchased 47 tracts of land that total 110,822-acres for public use. Also, the purchase of several large tracts should be completed in the very near future. Two of the largest tracts purchased at the south and north ends of the state are the 39,795-acre Mobile-Tensaw Delta Tract in Mobile and Baldwin Counties and the 12,510-acre Walls of Jericho tract in Jackson County near the Tennessee state line. Land is purchased for (1) nature preserves, (2) additions to state parks, (3) wildlife management areas, and (4) natural recreation areas. In an era where we are witnessing large wild areas fall victim to the twin scourges of development and increased population growth, The Forever Wild Land Trust is our greatest hope for preserving some of the best of these wild places for the future.

You can show your support for Forever Wild and help purchase additional lands by buying a Forever Wild tag for your vehicle. For fiscal year 2005 which ended September 30th, the tag netted Forever Wild \$208,616.00. This is a large increase from the \$135,176.00 of fiscal year

Calendar

February

- 2 7:30p.m. Tom Sterling presents “**Bhutan, the Cloud Kingdom**,” Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile.
- 14 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting
7:30 p.m. General Meeting—Natural History Film. “**Eagles the Masters of the Skies**” This program includes eagles from across the globe. It is a breathtaking film packed with memorable moments in stunning locations. (50 minutes) Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile.

March

- 14 Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
General Meeting. “The Purple Martin Riviera” presented by **Garland Sims**. Faulkner State Community College Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall. 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend.

April

- 1-15 Hummer Bird Study Group Spring Banding Session at Fort Morgan, AL Banding hours from before dawn until mid-afternoon, depending on the flow of birds. Contact Bob or Martha Sargent at 205-681-2888.
- 11 Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
General Meeting. “The Weeks Bay Reserve Foundation” presented by **Walter Ernest**. Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile. 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend.

May

- 9 Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
General Meeting. “Oyster Research and Reef Restoration in Mobile Bay” Presented by **Dr. Rick Wallace**, Director Auburn University Marine Extension and Research Center. Faulkner State Community College Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall. 7:30 p.m. Bring a friend.

June

- 2 Field Trip to Gaillard Island in Mobile Bay to observe nesting Brown Pelicans as well as gulls, terns, and Black Skimmers. Meet at Beachcomber Marine Supply at Dog River in Mobile County. Going south, take the first left at Dog River Bridge. There will be a \$15 per person fee. Limited to 20 people. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. For reservations call **John Borom** 251-990-0423.

2004, which was the first year the tag was available. We hope to exceed \$300,000 for FY 2006 and eventually bring in over \$750,000.00. This attractive tag is available at all county courthouses and annexes throughout the state. When you purchase your tag, you can personalize it with up to 6 letters/numbers at no additional cost. For more info concerning this tag contact joec@powernet.org; 256-287-1652
Joe Copeland



Mobile Bay Audubon Wants You!

Join Us Today!

Every membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, wildlife and natural habitats.

As a member, you'll become an important part of our dynamic chapter and receive a host of benefits including:

- A 1-year subscription (6 bi-monthly issues) of our chapter newsletter.
- Automatic membership in National Audubon Society, and a 1-year subscription (4 issues, one per quarter) of Audubon, its award-winning magazine.
- Admission to Audubon Centers across the country.
- A 10% discount on products at select Audubon Nature Stores and more!

Yes! I want to join Mobile Bay Audubon and National Audubon Society!

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National Audubon Society
Mobile Bay Audubon Society
P O Box 483
Fairhope, AL 36532
www.mobilebayaudubon.org

