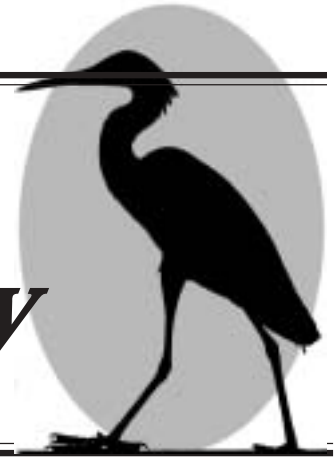


Mobile Bay Audubon Society

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY SINCE 1971



VOLUME XXIV NO. 2



Disappearing Birds 1

Board of Director 2

Calendar 3

Artic Refuge 4

Film Week 2005 5

Intl Migratory Bird Festival 5

Forever Wild Threatened..... 6

Iceland Gull..... 6

New Members 7

Membership Application..... 8



Disappearing Birds



Estimates are that at least two out of every three bird species are in decline worldwide. Four percent—403 species—are endangered.

The most threatened major groups include rails, cranes, parrots, pheasants, partridges, grouse, guans, albatrosses, petrels, and shearwaters. About one-quarter of the species in each of these groups is endangered. While just nine percent of songbirds are threatened, they still contribute the single largest group of endangered species because they com-

prise the most species—rich bird order.

The causes for the decline of birds are a familiar set of interrelated factors, all linked to human activity: habitat alteration, overhunting, exotic species invasions, and chemical pollution. The leading cause is habitat loss. At least three-quarters of all threatened bird species are in trouble because of the fragmentation and transformation of forests, wetlands, grasslands and other critical habitats by human activities, including intensive agriculture, heavy livestock grazing, commercial forestry, and suburban sprawl.

High concentrations of endangered birds occur on oceanic islands worldwide. Birds endemic to islands account for almost one-third of all threatened species and 84 percent of all historically known extinctions. For instance, virtually all of the original 90-odd bird species on the Hawaiian Islands were found nowhere else in the world. Barely one-third of the species remain alive today, and two-thirds of these continue to be threatened with extinction. The degree of

Board of Directors

2004

John Borom, Ph.D., President
P O Box 432 990-0423 (B)
Fairhope, AL 36533 928-5219 (H)

Elizabeth Williams, Vice President;
Birdathon and School Film Prog.
3616 Pepper Ridge Drive
Mobile, AL 36693 643-7257

Bill Jones, Treasurer
742 S Mobile Street
Fairhope, AL 36532 928-8976

Eleanor Livaudais, Secretary
P O Box 492 928-1901(B)
Point Clear, AL 36564 928-8967(H)

Ottillie Halstead, Membership
33 Paddock Drive
Fairhope, AL 36532 928-9537

Delane Small, Editor
1 Fiesta Drive 460-2400 (B)
Spanish Fort, AL 36527 626-9700 (H)

Edwina Mullins, Publicity
4606 N Sunset Drive
Mobile, AL 36608 344-1175

Cindy McDonald
P O Box 81371 510-1279
Mobile, AL 36689

John Porter, Ph.D., Dauphin Island
Audubon Sanctuary
P O Box 848 861-2120
Dauphin Island, AL 36528

Elizabeth French, Ph.D., Field
Trips
36 Ridgeview Drive
Chickasaw, AL 36611 452-1121

Roger Clay, Field Trips
P O Box 247 626-5474 (B)
Daphne, AL 36526 928-9047 (H)

Garland Sims, Special Projects
101 Laurel Street
Fairhope, AL 36532 928-6772

Melvin Long, Field Trips
P O Box 86 943-8392
Foley, AL 36536

Minnie Nonkes, Field Trips
50 Spring Run
Fairhope, AL 36532 928-0296

Celeste Hinds
11321 Marshall Lane
Fairhope, AL 35532 928-6526

Bob Ridgeway
3974 Hillcrest Lane West
Mobile, AL 36693 591-7531

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Keith Carter
7362 Tara Drive N 666-2506
Mobile, AL 36619

Nancy Hora
416 LaBorde
Mobile, AL 36609 342-6824

Edith McClinton
170 N Lafayette Street
Mobile, AL 36604 432-4898

ecological disruption by humans is so great that all lowland Hawaiian songbirds are non-native introduced species.

Another disturbing trend is population declines in more widespread species that migrate seasonally between breeding and wintering grounds. Long-term population declines are tied to human activity. Habitat loss squeezes species on both breeding and wintering grounds, as well as critical stopping points such as rich tidal estuaries for shorebirds and maritime forests for songbirds along their migratory routes. In North America, the loss of almost half of all wetlands has been a major factor behind a 30 percent drop in the populations of the continent's ten most abundant duck species.

Many birds also face chemical pollution hazards. The greatest risk of pesticide and pollution exposure occurs in developing countries, where many chemicals banned from use in industrial nations continue to be applied or discharged indiscriminately.

The decline of migratory songbirds is of great concern because it is a loss not just of individual species, but of an entire ecological phenomenon. Present-day migrants must negotiate their way across thousands of miles of disturbed ecological landscapes. The fact that many birds continue to make this journey, despite the threats and obstacles, is cause for hope and inspiration. However, as long as bird diversity and numbers continue to spiral downward, there can be no rest in the effort to protect and restore breeding grounds, wintering areas, and key refueling sites that all birds—

migratory and resident—cannot live without.

What can we do about all of this? Environmental education programs must be built into school curricula to help people understand the complexity and intrinsic value of natural communities. Practical, culturally sensitive development initiatives are needed that can help local people make a living from nature without permanently damaging it. For example, well-planned ecotourism projects can play a role.

To give wildlands and biodiversity breathing space, humans must find ways to reduce the size of their imprint on the planet. That means stabilizing the human population. It means greater efficiency in materials and energy use. It means intelligently planned communities. It means educational standards that build on awareness of our responsibility in managing 3,200,000,000 years worth of biological wealth. Ultimately, it means replacing our consumer culture with a less materialist and for more environmentally literate way of life.

Humans, after all can change. Even in the midst of this mass extinction of biodiversity, we still largely control our destiny if we act now. The fate of untold numbers of species depends on it. So does the fate of our children, in ways we barely can begin to conceive.

Sources:
Worldwatch Institute, Washington D.C.
Society for the Advancement of Education
Gale Group



Calendar

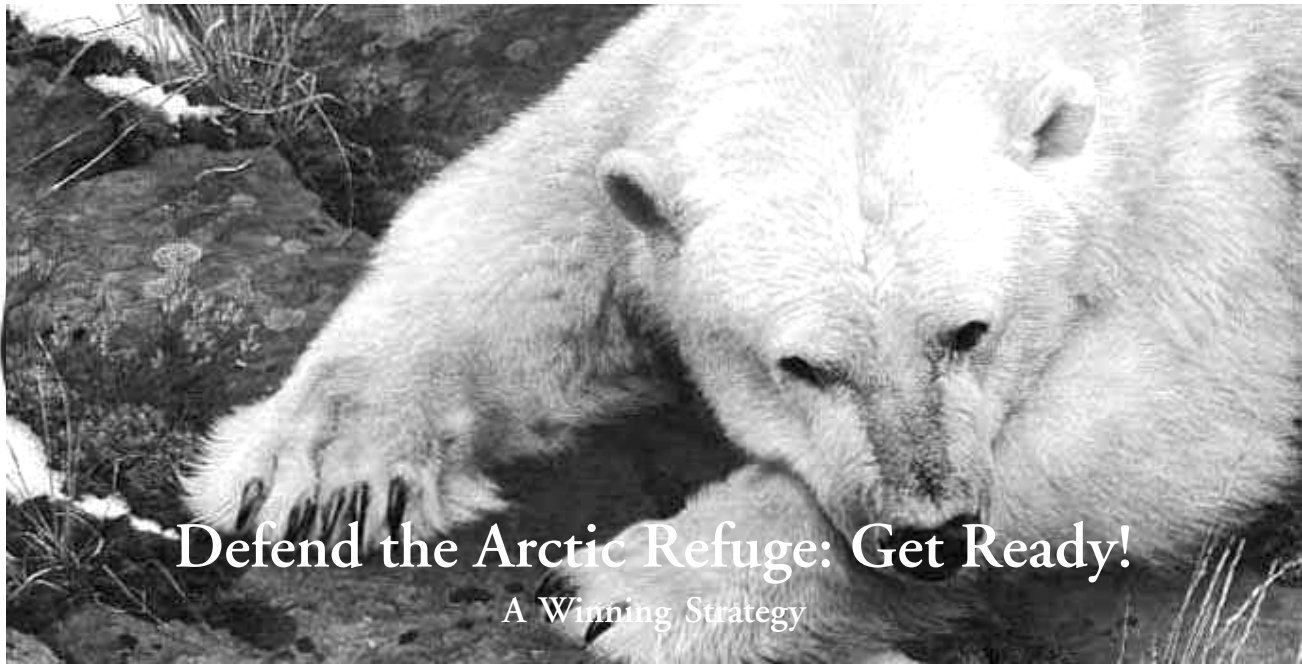


March

- 8 Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
“General Meeting 7:30 p.m. “”The Mobile-Tensaw Delta: In the Realm of Rivers.”” This new book is now in stores! Dr. Sue Walker, author, and Mr. Dennis Holt, photographer, have done an amazing job capturing the history and folklore of our Delta through prose and photography. Faulkner State Community College, Fairhope Campus, Centennial Hall. “
Bring a friend

April

- 1 Friday, 7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m., Mobile Museum of Art, Langan Park
“Cocktail with the Critters; a Whimsical Fusion of Art and Science” featuring special guest Dr. E. O Wilson, Pulitzer Prize-winning scientist and author, and Stig Marcussen, noted Gulf Coast Artist, \$75.00 per person. For more information call Freda Roberts at (251)463-4311.
- 2 Saturday, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
Discovery Day at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, North Campus of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab. Free except for reduced admission to the Estuarium. For more information call (251)861-2141.
- 8-10 International Migratory Bird Day Celebration, Dauphin Island. For more information, contact Dr. John Porter, (251)861-2120.”
- 12 Board Meeting 6:30 p.m.
General Meeting 7:30 p.m. “Audubon Activities on the Mississippi Gulf Coast”” presented by Dr. Mark LaSalle, Coast Project Director of Audubon Mississippi in Moss Point. Government Street Baptist Church in Mobile.”
- 14-17 The Great Louisiana BirdFest, an event of the Northlake Nature Center, Mandeville, Louisiana. For more information, call Larry Burch, (985)626-1238
- 15-17 Alabama Ornithological Society spring meeting at Dauphin Island. For more information, call Dr. John Porter (251)861-2120.
- 16 Weeks Bay Day to be held at the Reserve 10:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Foundation members, supporters, volunteers and staff will be treated to crawfish, mullet and other delicacies. For more information, call L. G. Adams (251)928-9792 or Walter Ernest (251)990-5004.
- 17 Earth Day Celebration at the Fairhope Municipal Pier and Park. Literature, events and activities for all ages. For more information, call Lee Yokel (251)431-6450.
- Birdathon—Get sponsors and count birds any 24 hours during spring migration. For more information call Elizabeth Williams (251)643-7257.



Defend the Arctic Refuge: Get Ready!

A Winning Strategy

The polling places had hardly closed on Nov. 2 before a cocky Bush Administration began crowing of an alleged mandate to drill in the Arctic. Media reports egged them on with predictions that with Republicans in control of the Senate by a margin of 55-45, they will finally muscle Arctic drilling through the Senate—the body that defeated drilling in 2003 by a vote of 52-48.

This is truly counting their chickens before they hatch. Recognizing the broad opposition to drilling in this pristine, remote area of northeast Alaska, and without the 60 votes needed to stop a filibuster, Senate leaders plan to use the budget process to slip Arctic drilling revenues into the Federal Budget resolution (which can't be filibustered) early in 2005. And here we have a good chance to stop them—as we have always stopped the before!

In the past, House Budget Chairman Jim Nussle (R-IA) has declined to use his budget as a vehicle to move Arctic drilling. He supports opening the Arctic and has voted to do so in the energy bill, but he has always kept his budget clean. We must appeal to him to keep that worth stance.

In addition to direct contacts to all members of Congress we need many Letters to Editors on the importance of protecting the threatened coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Letters can incorporate one or two of the following points, but should be kept to 200 words or less.

*The majority of the American people oppose drilling in the Arctic Refuge. Despite the tone reported in the media, this election was not a referendum on punching holes in America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

*Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would ruin one of America's last unspoiled wild places for what the US Geological Survey and oil company executives concede is only a few months' worth of oil that would not even be available for a decade.

*Slipping controversial drilling into the Budget Resolution has nothing to do with the budget or with generating revenues for America. Instead of using normal open debate for the important issue of drilling in the Arctic, drilling proponents want to include speculative revenues from leasing in the FY2006 budget. Speculative, indeed: even some big oil companies have expressed skepticism

about economics of such remote development.

*The push to drill in the Arctic is part of a much broader agenda. This debate transcends the pristine expanses of the Arctic—the integrity of all of American's remaining wild places is at stake. Last year, Rep. Tom DeLay (R-TX) told a group of high-ranking Republicans that the controversy over drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a “symbolic” fight over whether energy exploration will be allowed in sensitive areas elsewhere. If they can get into the Arctic, no place in America is safe.

*Protecting the Arctic Refuge is important ecologically and culturally. The narrow coastal plain is the biological heart of the Arctic Refuge with its spectacular diversity of wildlife. The area is the birthing grounds of the porcupine caribou herd, the basis of the subsistence and culture of the Gwich'in people. You, the many concerned activist around the nation, are our winning Arctic strategy. Your letters and phone call in the next few months *will* make the difference!

Copied from the Sierra Club Alaska Report, Volume 30—Number 3, December 2004.

Film Week 2005

Another Success Story

Kudos to all who helped to make **Film Week** a big success. Tom Sterling was well received in each school as he presented the film, *An Alaskan Autumn*, to the students. We appreciate Lloyd Scott at the Environmental Studies Center coordinating the public school programs.

Dinner hosts were John Winn, Nadine and Raymond Lovell, and Cindy McDonald. A special thank you to Laurie and Charlie Bailey, who opened their home to Tom for the week.

The film was shown to students at Baker High School, Clark Magnet School, Dodge Elementary, Maryvale Elementary, Vigor High School, Mobile Christian School, Robertsdale Elementary, UMS Wright Preparatory School and Faith Academy.

We could not undertake such an ambitious program without the financial help from our sponsors. Thank you to Degussa, Ciba Specialty, Dupont DeNemours and John and Bev Winn.

The film was shown Tuesday, January 25, at Faulkner State Community College in Fairhope and on Thursday, January 27, at Government Street Baptist Church. Those who missed seeing the film missed an excellent, entertaining and informative program.

It takes a lot of planning and a lot of time to put the program together but when you hear the questions the students ask after the program, it all becomes worthwhile.

Class at Robertsdale School enjoy Mr. Sterling's presentation of An Alaskan Autumn

*International Migratory
Bird Festival
April 9, 2005*



Cadillac Square Park Dauphin Island, Al

- * Children's Activities
- * Native Plant Sale
- * Guided Bird Walks
- * Vendors & Exhibits

Join the Bird-a-thon...
**Help win the title of Birdiest Coastal City
for Dauphin Island**

Visit <http://coastalbirding.org>

ALABAMA POWER



Forever Wild Threatened

Below is urgent news that came to us from Joe Copeland in support of Forever Wild. This is happening right now, so immediate action is required! Please take a minute now to call, fax or write your state senator.

Senator Gerald Dial has proposed to slash funding for the Forever Wild Land Trust by 5 million dollars per year. This would cut the funding by almost ½. At this point, the bill SB555, has not been reported out of committee for a full senate vote. I spoke with Jeff Danter, the Executive Director of the Nature Conservancy, today about the bill and what we need to do. The plan to combat this bill is to force public hearings and also to contact the cosponsors of it and try to get them to withdraw their support. By doing these two things, we hope that the bill will die in committee.

Also, we need letters to the editors of your local newspapers urging the bill be dropped. The idea is that, with next year being an election year, most of the senators will not want their names associated with anything controversial. To force public hearings on the bill we need to write or fax the committee chair at the address below and urge him to hold these hearing.

Sen. Pat Lindsey
Chairman, Economic Expansion and Trade Committee
Alabama State House
Room 726

11 South Union Street
Montgomery, AL, 36130
Phone: (334)242-7843
Fax: (334)242-2490

I am sorry that I don't have the full name and districts of all the cosponsors, but you are urged to write or call them, especially if that are the senator from your district.

Sponsor Gerald Dial: (334)242-7882
Fax (256)396-2756

Thanks to everyone for your help.
Joe Copeland



Laura Catterton and Dr. Bill Summerour found this beautiful white Iceland Gull at the Magnolia Landfill on February 15. There are only about four or five records of this gull in Alabama.



Newsletter Deadline

Any member is welcomed and encouraged to submit articles for the newsletter. I would be happy to include anything you think would be of interest to the membership. Please send your articles for the May/June issue to Delane Small by April 22nd.

New Members

Welcome to the Mobile Bay Audubon Society, the local chapter of the National Audubon Society. We thank you for your support. A few facts about our chapter: Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday from September thru May at 7:30 PM alternately in Fairhope and Mobile (See calendar for details of programs and locations.) Programs of interest are planned for each meeting and field trips are scheduled regularly. We are a non-profit organization—all donations are tax deductible. A list of officers is listed in the newsletter; feel free to call any of them for information. Join us as often as you can—we want to get to know you.

Ottilie Halstead, Membership Chairman

Bay Minette

Mary J Crosby

Bayou LaBatre

Mary Singer

Bon Secour

Brenda Cook

Claude M Edbanks

Brewton

Rebecca Blackmon

Susan Graves

Daphne

Dorian Hill

Karen Pearson

Ted Stevens

Rebecca Trosclar

Fairhope

Toni F Ackerson

High McCaffrey

M J Ford

Laura Street

Foley

Sara S Ince

Gulf Shores

Dorris Lanning

Irvington

Wendy Hagy

Sherri J Sprinkle

Lillian

Frances Wolfe

Loxley

Bobby C Webb

Magnolia Springs

Mary B Finger

Mobile

Amedie A Finnessey

Vaughn's Fowler

Richard Holder

Fay Hughes

Sue March

Pat Pritchard

Frieda Steele

Laura Vanlandingham

Vivian Cannon

Willie C Jones

F Mitchell

Jane Roberts

Alice M Byrd

Orange Beach

Keith J Burroughs

Prichard

Pat P Cockrell

Robertsdale

Henry C Brady

Silverhill

J Y Murphey

Diana Quinn

Spanish Fort

David Thomason

Stapleton

J Cabiness

Summerdale

Paul Ashton

Theodore

Stephen Dill

Lynda Wade

Transfers

Ron Parks

Raymond Jarrett



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!

\$20 – 1 year Introductory Rate

\$15 – 1 year Student/Senior Rate

\$30 – 2 year Special Rate

My check is enclosed.

\$1,000 – Individual Life Membership

\$1,500 – Dual Life Membership

Please bill me.

Name:

Address:

City/ST/Zip:

Telephone:

Make check payable to National Audubon Society and Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center, P.O.Box 52529, Boulder, CO 80322-2529

ChapterCode: A01

7XCH

"Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive, and even spiritual satisfaction. Each species is a masterpiece, a creation assembled with extreme care and genius." Edward O. Wilson

Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE
PAID
Fairhope, AL
Permit No. 24

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

