

OCAS OFFICERS

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Ed Brown: Field Trip Chairman

Nancy Donald: CBC Coordinator

Ruth Ann Rosamond: Refreshments Coordinator

Pam Burns: Program Coordinator

Daniel Burns: Newsletter Editor

Okatibbee Creek Audubon Society

December/January 2009

Meetings are held at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Meridian every second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Trinity is located at 4223 Poplar Springs Drive.

Please use the SOUTH driveway on the church property (the one nearer downtown Meridian) and proceed around through the parking lot to the back, where you may enter the building through the double doors.

Next meeting: February 9, 2009

***Be like the bird, who halting in his flight /
On limb too slight, / Feels it give way
beneath him, yet sings / Knowing he has
wings.***

--Victor Hugo, writer (1802-1885)

--contributed by Nancy Donald

Read OCAS' newsletter online at
<http://home.comcast.net/~ocas/>

Opinions in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Mississippi Audubon or of National Audubon but of individual writers. We view it as important to provide a forum for discussion and therefore we include articles from diverse sources where we can.

CBC Results

Our CBC this year was conducted on January 3, 2009, with 19 people putting in 128 hours and 560 miles. A great effort! While the species count was low (83), the individual number of birds was high at 10,529. The weather was a warm 60 degrees--cloudy in the morning and raining in the afternoon—which kept many species like duck out of the area. A new species to the count was (30) White-winged doves observed by Van and Debbie McWhorter on Hill Thompson Rd. in a feedlot mixed with blackbirds. Our local Canada goose population seems to have doubled in the past couple of years--250 four years ago and 509 this year. Other species with high numbers this year were the Great egret, 104, American kestrel, 6, Mourning dove, 349, and Eastern bluebird, 341. Thanks to Ed Brown for turning in ten Common yellowthroat, also a high count for that species. Also, the Burns had 6 Loggerhead shrike, for a total of 8 for the count. That is encouraging after a few years of low numbers for this species. Only one Bald eagle was spotted thanks to the diligence of the Rosamonds. Our high count for this species was 6 in the 2002 count. The complete species list follows, or you can go to the CBC website to see all the counts and compare this year to previous ones.

	SPECIES	#
1.	Snow goose	2
2.	Canada goose	509
3.	Wood duck	10
4.	Gadwall	300
5.	Mallard	42
6.	Ring-necked duck	20

7.	Lesser scaup	130
8.	Bufflehead	131
9.	Hooded merganser	69
10.	Wild turkey	35
11.	Pie-billed grebe	40
12.	American white pelican	3
13.	Double-crested cormorant	3
14.	Great blue heron	78
15.	Great egret	104
16.	Black vulture	77
17.	Turkey vulture	110
18.	Bald eagle	1
19.	Cooper's hawk	3
20.	Red-shouldered hawk	19
21.	Red-tailed hawk	12
22.	Buteo sp.	3
23.	American kestrel	6
24.	American coot	82
25.	Killdeer	61
26.	Wilson's snipe	8
27.	Ring-billed gull	7
28.	Forster's tern	11
29.	Rock pigeon	83
30.	Eurasian-collared dove	9
31.	White-winged dove	30
32.	Mourning dove	349
33.	Barred owl	6
34.	Belted kingfisher	37
35.	Red-headed woodpecker	83
36.	Red-bellied woodpecker	96
37.	Yellow-bellied sapsucker	15
38.	Downy woodpecker	31
39.	Hairy woodpecker	8
40.	Northern flicker	46
41.	Pileated woodpecker	25

42.	Eastern phoebe	40
43.	Loggerhead shrike	8
44.	Blue-headed vireo	8
45.	Blue jay	291
46.	American crow	576
47.	Fish crow	11
48.	Carolina chickadee	222
49.	Tufted titmouse	133
50.	White-breasted nuthatch	3
51.	Brown-headed nuthatch	74
52.	Carolina wren	62
53.	Winter wren	1
54.	Golden-crowned kinglet	30
55.	Ruby-crowned kinglet	56
56.	Eastern bluebird	341
57.	American robin	152
58.	Northern mockingbird	160
59.	Brown thrasher	12
60.	European starling	134
61.	American pipit	84
62.	Cedar waxwing	364
63.	Yellow-rumped warbler	107
64.	Pine warbler	138
65.	Common yellowthroat	10
66.	Eastern towhee	50
67.	Chipping sparrow	215
68.	Field sparrow	54
69.	Song sparrow	71
70.	Swamp sparrow	49
71.	White-throated sparrow	96
72.	Dark-eyed junco	107
73.	Northern cardinal	327
74.	Red-winged blackbird	807
75.	Eastern meadowlark	54
76.	Rusty blackbird	424
77.	Brewer's blackbird	36
78.	Common grackle	802
79.	Blackbird sp.	1533

80.	House finch	24
81.	Pine siskin	11
82.	American goldfinch	130
83.	House sparrow	28

White-Winged Dove

By Nancy Donald

As noted in the results of the CBC, the White-winged dove is new to our count list with a sighting by Van and Debbie McWhorter. The birds were in a cattle feedlot mixed with blackbirds. A western dove whose usual range is Texas, New Mexico, and southern Arizona, its range is expanding farther north and east. Field guides show the winter range for the white-winged dove along the Gulf Coast to Florida. It has been listed on count circles from the Mississippi counties of Jackson and Hancock for several years in small numbers. Hunters have also noticed the increasing numbers, and bag limits include the White-winged. The White-winged dove is easily identified by the white band along the lower edge of the folded wing and the white wing patch when in flight. It is also a heavier bird with a square tail. Its song sounds like a softly calling hoot owl. It has also been reported at feeders; so take note. You may have a new bird to add to your backyard list. We were all very excited to be able to get a new species on this year's CBC.

Sightings: Nancy Donald 11/15/09 Ruby Crowned Kinglet at Office.

CBC Reorganization

By Nancy Donald

In an effort to better communicate and to give everyone a fresh outlook on **our CBC**, I am reorganizing the way we do our count-just a few small changes. The pre-count meeting this upcoming year (2009) will be at the November 10th regular chapter meeting. As CBC co-coordinator, I feel we need to redefine each team's count areas. Most of the team leaders we have now are no longer active members. We need to make sure we're not overlapping or missing large areas entirely. Also, when someone is not able to count or we have new people counting, the areas will be defined so anyone can take the map and cover any given area. I will be working on new maps and updated species lists for the 110th CBC which will be January 2, 2010! Also, in an effort to make count day an easier experience for everyone, the pot-luck dinner will no longer be. The tally meeting place will be announced at the pre-count meeting. Hopefully, this will make for an enjoyable count day for everyone. Thanks for everyone's effort this year. We counted a lot of birds!

The next Okatibbee Creek Audubon Society meeting will be February 9, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall of Trinity Presbyterian Church. The program will be on Homing Pigeons. Mr. Everett Stenman will be the guest speaker. This should be a very informative program. Hope to see you all there.