



# Roundtable

... with Louis C. Fink

## Bird Finding in the Carolinas

**MOUNTAINS OF NORTH CAROLINA**—People wishing to look for birds in the higher elevations of North Carolina in the summer may find that well-known locations such as Clingman's Dome, Mt. Mitchell, and Grandfather Mountain are flooded with tourists. Birding along the Blue Ridge Parkway can be frustrating as cars whiz by. Two paved roads offering the best combination of good birding and little noise are the road to Heintooga Overlook in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and a new U.S. Forest Service road in western Macon County.

For information on the Heintooga road, at the southeastern corner of the park, see the article by H. Douglas Pratt (*Chat*, 35:10-11). This road generally ranges between 4,500 and 5,500 feet in elevation, and is the easiest and best place I have found for Black-capped Chickadees. Most of the birds of the northern hardwood and spruce-fir forest zones can be found here.

An apparently new Forest Service road runs from approximately 2 miles W of the Wayah Bald road junction on SR 1310 to the Kyle community, a distance of 15 miles. The road runs through deciduous and mixed deciduous-hemlock forests at an elevation of 4,000 to 5,000 feet. The road is different from most mountain roads, however, as there are wide open strips of grass and saplings between the road and the forest. This "opening up" of the forest is a boon to the birder, because it provides habitat for birds frequenting woodland margins and bushy areas. I birded along this road in late June and early July 1975, often parking on the road and saw fewer than 10 cars in 6 hours. Because of the absence of traffic, I saw a Woodchuck, a Gray Fox, and a Ruffed Grouse standing on the road on the afternoon of 27 June. A 4-hour trip on 1 July showed that Veeries, Dark-eyed Juncos, and Indigo Buntings were very common and could be heard at practically every stop. Probably the most interesting species along this road is the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, which I found to be common along the southernmost end. Their "Morse Code tapping" could be heard at great distances on the mountainside (Nantahala Range). Other species that are fairly common or common are Carolina Chickadee (no Black-capped), White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Wood Thrush, Solitary Vireo, Golden-winged, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, and Canada Warblers, Northern Parula, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

I have two words of caution about this road: first, gates are present at each end, meaning that the road may be closed in winter and at other times; and second, the terminus near Kyle is on an insignificant dirt road just off the main highway (SR 1310) and may be difficult to find. Nevertheless, this is a fine spot for birding, and I highly recommend this road for people who want to see plenty of birds with a minimum of disturbance.—HARRY E. LeGRAND JR., Department of Zoology, Clemson University, Clemson, S.C. 29631.

FOUR BRIDGES, Franklin County, N.C.—On NC 39 approximately 4 miles S of Louisburg and 5 miles N of Bunn lies a large swamp formed by the junction of Cedar and Big Branch Creeks in their course to the Tar River, which flows more or less parallel to the highway some 2 miles to the east. Although only two bridges (0.1 mile apart) now span Cedar Creek on Hwy 39, the location still is known locally as Four Bridges. Several wide places on the east shoulder of the road afford safe parking, and a mile-long stretch of the swamp can be studied quite easily from the roadside. Leading to the edge of the water are short paths kept open by fishermen. My most exciting finds at Four Bridges thus far have been an active Red-shouldered Hawk nest and a family party of Pileated Woodpeckers, but the large variety of birds I have seen here in just a few visits indicates that unusual species will be found sooner or later. Four Bridges is a convenient side trip for travelers on US 401. SR 1110 connects US 401 with NC 39 about 2 miles N of Cedar Creek, which saves driving all the way to the junction of the two major highways in Louisburg.

Incidentally, I am working on a list of the birds of Franklin County. I would like to correspond with anyone who has records for the area. My own field work is particularly weak in respect to waterfowl, shorebirds, and feeder visitors.—ELOISE F. POTTER, Route 3, Box 114 AA, Zebulon, N.C. 27597.

#### From the Photo File

From time to time the editors of *Chat* receive drawings and photographs that for one reason or another remain in our files an embarrassingly long time without finding an appropriate place in the bulletin. Many of these photographs are too wide in proportion to their height to fit the allotted space on our cover. In some cases the species of bird just happens to be one seldom mentioned in our papers and notes. A few of these file photos are reproduced below and on the next two pages. Others will appear in this department whenever space is available.

White Ibis Colony, Blackbeard Island, S.C.—E.O. Mellinger





Red Phalarope, Lake Benson, N.C., 27-31 October 1973  
(Chat, 38:71)—Chris Marsh

Wood Stork, Rockingham County, N.C., 31 May 1974  
(American Birds, 28:788)—Ed Burroughs





Gull in Flight—Tom Owen