



## Litchfield Beach, SC to Host Winter Meeting

Lewis Burke

Plans are already underway for the CBC Winter Meeting in February at Litchfield Beach in Georgetown County, South Carolina. Our dates are Friday, February 5th and Saturday the 6th. Not only can you enjoy a weekend of exciting winter birding, but you'll have plenty of time to get home and settle in for Super Bowl 50!

Our return to Litchfield marks the first winter meeting held in South Carolina since 2008, and the variety of nearby habitats for wintering and resident birds has us excited to make a run at the list of 169 species (including 27 types of waterfowl) that we enjoyed on our last visit. One of our main field trip venues, Huntington Beach State Park, hosted Long-tailed Duck, Common Eider, Razorbill, Purple Sandpiper, and Eared Grebe in the first week of February 2015, so who knows what could show up for our meeting!

In addition to the always-fun Huntington Beach, we plan to offer a trip out of McClellanville targeting Long-billed Curlew. Other local hotspots receive their own trips, including famed Lowcountry bird magnets like Bulls Island, Santee Coastal WMA, the Conway Sewage Treatment Plant, Yawkey WMA, and South Tibwin.

This meeting also features new trips to Sandy Island, Lewis Ocean Bay, Brookgreen Gardens, and a "bird crawl" of Grand Strand fishing piers. We plan to offer a "new birders workshop/field trip" and a workshop

led by Professor Chris Hill on those pesky gulls followed by a field outing to test your newfound skills.

The host property for our winter meeting will again be the popular Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort at 14276 Ocean Hwy, Pawleys Island, SC 29585. Special CBC meeting rates are \$62.10 for rooms and \$80.10 for suites. Be advised that there are a limited number of the \$62.10 rooms. Once these are taken, the remainder of the block consists of \$80.10 suites, so if you prefer the room, act quickly. To make your reservation, call (888) 734-8228 or (843) 237-3000.

We are planning a Friday evening reception honoring mentors and young birders, followed by what should be a very entertaining bird calling contest (no electronics allowed). At least two former club presidents plan to compete. Do you have what it takes to be the next CBC Idol!? The evening also features a cash bar.

Saturday evening is time for our nearly famous CBC Meeting Buffet. Participants who opt in to the banquet (\$30 per person including gratuity and taxes) can look forward to an evening of great food and fellowship. A vegetarian option is planned. After dinner, enjoy our keynote speaker, Julie Hovis, an endangered species biologist at Shaw Air Force Base, and her program entitled "Tracking South Carolina's Purple Martins to Brazil and Back".

Hope to see you at Litchfield!

# CBC Bonus Trip Ecuadorian Amazon Ornithology Workshop

**12 DAYS, 11 NIGHTS  
DEC 5<sup>TH</sup> – 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2015  
STARTING FROM QUITO**

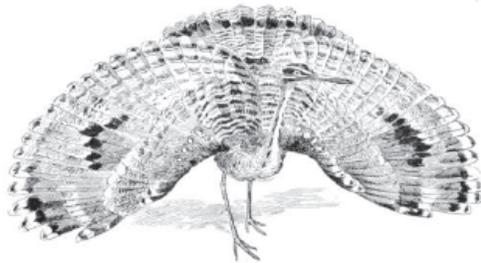
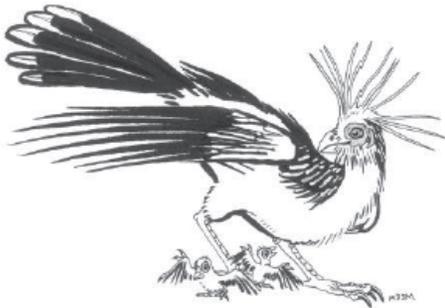
Led by Scott Winton and  
Natalia Ocampo-Peñuela



**\$2650 - 8 SPOTS -  
SIGN UP BEFORE SEPT 20<sup>TH</sup>**

*Explore the most biodiverse place  
on Earth—Tiputini Biological  
Station in Yasuní Biosphere  
Reserve, and learn bird ecology in  
the heart of the Amazon!*

*Bonus 2 days birding the  
Ecuadorian High Andes*



**Includes:** 4 nights in Quito and 7 at Tiputini, all transport within Ecuador,  
all meals, guides, speakers

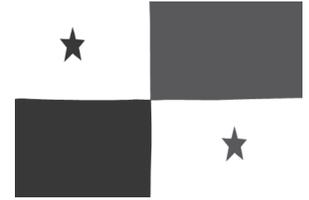
**Does not include:** International airfare to Quito, travel insurance

*To see the complete trip itinerary and reserve your spot, visit  
[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)*



# CBC Offers Bonus Trip to Panama!

## January 18-24, 2016



Toucans, trogons, pairs of emerald green Amazon parrots, the lovely Blue Cotinga, comfortable accommodations, brilliant weather, and a customized birding itinerary for you and a small group of your fellow Carolina Bird Club friends. Sound great? Then join us for a 6-night 7-day adventure in the crown jewel of Central America, Panama!

Boasting stable government, surging economic growth, excellent infrastructure, and more skyscrapers per square mile than Miami, Panama is on one hand a cosmopolitan destination with a bright economic future. On the other hand, Panama offers some of the best tropical birding in the hemisphere, thanks in large part to the extensive habitat protected along the former Canal Zone. We'll take advantage of the modern roads, easy air access, and comfortable hotels while enjoying daily guided birding to some of the most famous birding sites in Panama.

Our trip begins with complimentary transfer from the airport to our home for four nights, the Radisson Summit. Set within the rainforest, birding is never more than a few steps from your room. Enjoy evenings sharing day lists with a glass of wine at the bar, or relax in one of the outdoor pools. During the day we'll visit famous birding destinations including **Pipeline Road** (home of the record 385 species-in-one-day CBC count), **Old Gamboa**, **Summit Ponds**, the **Amo Dump ponds**, **Anchiote Road**, **Metropolitan Park**, and more.

Enjoy a morning atop a canopy tower with treetop birds at eye level while toucans, aracaris, and parrots alight nearby. Settle in at hummingbird feeders where jeweled birds land just inches away from your camera lens. Marvel at three species of monkey, two types of sloth, and lovable Coatis. Maybe take an optional afternoon trip to visit the Panama Canal and see ocean-going ships lifted to Panama's great interior lake.

From the Canal Zone we'll bid farewell to the Radisson Summit and travel by air-conditioned minibus 2.5 hours to the highlands of El Valle de Anton for birds

that prefer higher elevations. Spending two nights at Cabanas Potosi, we'll enjoy mountain views, fresh air, the ability to bird on the grounds of our motel, and guided walks where we'll search for species like Silvery-throated Tanager, Barred Hawk, Green Thorn-tail, Purplish-backed Quail-Dove, Blued-throated Toucanet and more.

In order to ensure that all participants have personalized attention, this trip is **limited to 7 participants**.

The **trip fee of \$1,850** covers land transportation, including airport transfers, 6-nights double accommodation, entrance fees, guided birding each day, bottled water daily, and breakfast, lunch, and dinner on each day other than arrival and departure. Not included are airfare to and from Panama City (PTY), alcoholic beverages, meals not indicated, gratuities, and items of a personal nature. Those wishing for single rooms pay an additional \$240. A passport valid for six months from the date of travel is required. Visas are not required for US citizens. No immunizations are required to visit Panama, but as with any travel, check with your doctor for individual recommendations. Panama uses the US dollar as currency; no conversion to local currency is required. Trip leaders are **Steve Shultz** and Panamanian guide **Jose Carlos Garcia**.

Act now to reserve your spot on what promises to be an exciting and rewarding exploration of Panama's avifauna. **A deposit of \$800 is due by November 1** with the **balance due December 18**. Six participants are required to run the trip. In the event that we are unable to fill six slots by 12/18, your final payment and/or deposit will be returned to you. Cancellations after 12/18 will receive a refund if we can fill your slot from the wait list.

*Act now to avoid disappointment!* For more information, including a detailed itinerary, or to reserve your spot, contact Steve Shultz at (919) 608-2069, (919) 629-7226, or [sshultz@nc.rr.com](mailto:sshultz@nc.rr.com).



# Arizona Trip Report

Ron Clark



*This report details the CBC Bonus Trip to Southeastern Arizona this past April.*

Most of the group got in early enough the first day to visit Sweetwater Wetlands, a wonderful water treatment facility in Tucson. It provided our first looks at Cinnamon Teal, Gila and Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Verdin, Phainopepla, Abert's Towhee, Black-chinned Hummingbird, and Greater Roadrunner, always a favorite. A bobcat strolled by about 20 feet away, unconcerned with us. We finished the afternoon with 54 species.

On Saturday morning we headed southeast, stopping at Cienega Creek Nature Preserve. Here we walked through desert scrub and woods and along a creek that actually had water, an Arizona rarity for April. Local species included Zone-tailed Hawk, Rock, Bewick's and Cactus Wren, Vermilion Flycatcher, Lucy's Warbler, Bell's Vireo, Broad-tailed Hummingbird and Curve-billed Thrasher along with the first of many Cassin's Kingbirds.

We continued toward our destination of Portal, a very small town located five miles from the New Mexico border. To get there from the northwest involves a 40+ mile drive on winding, gravel roads cresting at 7,600 feet. Of course, there are great birds along the way, so it's worth all the bumps and curves. Stopping for our first Mexican Jay, we also found Arizona Woodpecker, Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Painted Redstart, and Grace's Warbler. Continuing on, we picked up Golden Eagle, Bridled Titmouse, Violet-green Swallow, Western Kingbird and Say's Phoebe before getting to town. A Western Screech-Owl used the tree next to our lodging as a daytime roost. The weather was much cooler than usual for April, and the locals were saying that some species were late in arriving.

After dark, we drove some of the gravel roads looking for Common Poorwill, but it ended up a Poorwill-not! We were out very early Saturday morning to seek staked out Scaled and Gambel's Quail. On the way we stopped at a known site for Bendire's Thrasher, which we saw after some effort, along with ten Lark Bunting. We had a hearty breakfast at the Portal Peak

Inn Restaurant, the best food in town. Also the only food in town! During the day, we covered many local spots, including driving back up to the 7,600' Onion Saddle, Rustler, and Barfoot Parks. We were rewarded with good looks at the very local Mexican Chickadee as well as Pygmy Nuthatch and Cordilleran Flycatcher.

The area just above Portal is good for the elusive Montezuma's Quail, which has a lousy habit of freezing when approached. We were moving slowly when someone yelled, "back up!" There was a pair about 15 feet away on the hillside offering excellent looks. Local feeders around town got us Hooded, Bullock's, and Scott's Orioles, Green-tailed and Spotted Towhees, and Broad-billed, Magnificent and Blue-throated Hummingbirds. Nearby we found Brewer's Sparrow, Yellow-eyed Junco, Cassin's Finch, and a fly-over by eleven Band-tailed Pigeons. A Rufous-backed Robin was being seen around town, but only one of us managed a quick look. Mammals seen included a small family of Collared Peccaries and a Coyote.

That night we went out with a local guide for owls, finding Elf, Western Screech-Owl, Great Horned, and Whiskered Screech-Owls. While waiting for the Whiskered, one participant cried out. She had been hit in the forehead with a wing! A really close encounter! A Northern Pygmy-Owl, soon to be Mountain Pygmy-Owl, was heard but couldn't be lured into view. Another chase for a Poorwill was scratched as it was likely too chilly for them to be out in the road, so we called it a night with 99 species on the trip list.

Sunday morning brought killer looks at an Elegant Trogon from 30 feet away along with nearby Black-throated Gray Warbler and Plumbeous Vireo. Near town, a Canyon Wren was lured in for great looks while it sang its beautiful descending melody. Pyrrhuloxia, Lazuli Bunting and Ash-throated Flycatcher made the trip list. Stopping at some feeders, we looked up to see a Swainson's Hawk, a Prairie Falcon and a Peregrine Falcon in close proximity. After stopping in Bisbee to look at the incredibly huge copper mine and visit Dairy Queen, we headed on to Sierra Vista, with 132 species.

# Arizona Trip Report



Our first stop on Monday was Ramsey Canyon, a Nature Conservancy property. New trip list species were Anna's Hummingbird and Hepatic Tanager. Another trogon was heard. In Ashe Canyon we visited Mary Jo Ballator's feeders and saw Rufous-crowned and Lincoln's Sparrows, Canyon Towhee, and more Lesser Goldfinches. A nesting pair of Gray Hawks called from an out-of-sight location, but finally flew into a nearby tree for viewing. The Lewis's Woodpecker that had been in the area was finally spotted on a nearby hillside, so we all got to see it. Our miss there was a Lucifer Hummingbird that was making irregular visits.

Next we went to the San Pedro River, not much bigger than a creek this time of year, with tall trees (and welcome shade) on either side. From the distance, it looks like a green snake winding through the brown desert. We accessed trails from Hereford Road and added Brown-crested Flycatcher and Black Phoebe. Our last stop for the day was Miller Canyon, looking for Mexican Spotted Owl. We sat at the extensive collection of hummingbird feeders before some of us made the uphill trek for the owl. Many great birds were seen, including a quick look at a Red-faced Warbler, but we struck out on the owl. We decided to try again the next morning with Tom Beatty Jr., who lives there, offering to guide us.

Four of us were there at 6:00 for another walk up the mountain. On the way, a Greater Pewee gave us "greater" looks, but an active Northern Goshawk nest was without birds. Unfortunately, the Spotted Owl was, again, a no-show. So, with tears in our eyes, we left for the San Pedro House. We had just arrived when one participant called out "rattlesnake!" We hurried over to see a three-foot Western Diamondback right beside the entrance to the Visitor's Center. It obligingly coiled and rattled as we took pictures before the snake crawled around the side of the house, probably to get away from the gawking humans. We had five doves there, including White-winged, Inca and Common Ground-Dove. A group of six Wilson's Warblers foraged in the brush along the river.

Fort Huachuca, an active army post, allows access to birders and was one of two possible locations for Sinaloa Wren, a Mexican species that rarely nests in Ari-

zona. We searched for over an hour at the picnic area, but to no avail. One person saw a small brown bird dive into the brush, but that was all he got. Someone went to the restrooms and noticed the sign "Inhalation Hazard" on each door. We wisely chose to use the bushes. Garden Canyon, the other area on the post where we might find local specialty birds, was closed, so we drove back to town and went to Dairy Queen to drown our sorrows. We then left for Sonoita, our lodging for the night, with a trip total of 150 species.

Our first stops on Wednesday were the (former) Patton's House, with a large array of feeders, and the Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve. We had 49 species for the two sites, including the very local Violet-Crowned Hummingbird. The Patagonia Picnic Rest Stop got us a great look at a Thick-billed Kingbird. Then we went to the Patagonia Lake State Park. A walk there added Neotropic Cormorant, Eared Grebe and Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, a squeaky sounding bird with a name that is bigger than it is. Botteri's Sparrow had been reported nearby, so we drove to the location. While standing on the side of this narrow road, we noticed a large-bellied, shirtless man watching us from his yard. I noticed that, luckily, he didn't have a rifle, and told him we were birders. To our surprise, he asked if we were looking for Botteri's. He monitors them and told us a good spot to try. We found three. Never judge a man by his shirtless belly!

In Tumacacori, we had a late lunch at Wisdom's Café, a great Mexican restaurant opened in 1944. Then we went to the nearby De Anza Trail for a second shot at a Sinaloa Wren. We dipped on this one also. Our lodging for the next two nights was in Madera Canyon, arguably the best birding spot in Southeast Arizona. After checking in, we drove to Florida Wash where a pair of Black-capped Gnatcatchers were nesting. One was spotted and most got decent looks.

That night, we drove up the canyon listening for Mexican Whippoorwill, a fairly recent split. We heard one and walked up the trail. It was singing about 30 feet away but was not to be seen. An Elf Owl serenaded us most of the night, nesting in a nearby power pole.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# CBC Makes Grants Available for Avian Research, Conservation, and Education



During 2014 the Carolina Bird Club awarded the following grants in pursuit of our goal of supporting avian research, conservation, and education, with a focus on projects in the Carolinas:

**Audubon North Carolina** - \$500 for local conservation efforts. Awarded at the Wrightsville Beach winter meeting.

**Mecklenburg Audubon** - \$2,700 for support of the Brown-headed Nuthatch nest box program. The grant provided for the installation of 80 nest boxes.

**Eliza Mitchell Audubon** - \$500 for local conservation efforts. Awarded at the Hendersonville spring meeting.

**Kristen Oliver** - \$2,387 for research on avian glandular secretion.

**Carolina Young Birders** - \$500 seed money to

launch the Young Birders program.

**Charter School of Concord** - \$105 as part of a crowdfunding effort to outfit a school classroom with binoculars, field guides, and bird feeders.

**Wings Over Water** - \$500 in support of the keynote speaker and birding programs.

Information on how to apply for future grants can be found on the Grants page of the CBC website. Applications for research and education grants must be made through an educational or non-profit organization. Conservation grant requests should be submitted by an official representative of the conservation organization. Awardees may be invited to seasonal meetings to share the results of their work.

If you or someone you know might benefit from a CBC grant, please email [grants@carolinabirdclub.org](mailto:grants@carolinabirdclub.org)



*(Continued from page 5)*

The next morning, we watched the feeders for a bit, adding Red-naped Sapsucker and Black-headed Grosbeak to the list. At Florida Wash, we got a better look at the gnatcatcher as well as Townsend's Warbler and a pair of Northern Goshawks. The day was spent birding different areas in the canyon, ending with another run at the De Anza Trail. I got better directions for the Sinaloa Wren from Tucson Audubon, but it was strike three for the species.

On Friday morning, we headed for Tucson, stopping first at the eastern unit of Saguaro National Park.

Walking a trail there, we added Gilded Flicker to our list, along with seeing many other desert species. One highlight was a good look at a Gila Monster, the only poisonous lizard in the U.S. Then we were off on the road to 9,157' Mt. Lemmon, ascending from Saguaro

## Arizona



desert scrub to mixed coniferous forest. The higher we drove, the chillier it got. We stopped at the Iron Door restaurant for hot chocolate and dessert. A walk on Incinerator Road provided great looks at Red-faced and Olive Warblers, and Costa's Hummingbird. A Buff-breasted Flycatcher was seen at another site. It was ABA #600 for one participant, who obliged us with the "even-100" celebratory dance. Then we went down the mountain to our lodging in Tucson.

Our last day started with another visit to Sweetwater Wetlands. During the afternoon, we drove 1 ½ hours north of Tucson to Aravaipa Canyon for nesting Common Black-Hawks. We finally saw two, making the long drive worth it. Harris's Hawk and Black-tailed Gnatcatcher were also added to our list.

It was a great trip, finishing with 183 species, including eight types of hummingbird.



# Birder's Book Review

Steve Shultz



*Offshore Sea Life ID Guide - West Coast*  
Steve N.G. Howell and Brian L. Sullivan  
ISBN 978-0-691-16613-1, 56 pages, paper  
2015, Princeton University Press, \$14.95

Field guides are great to have along on a birding or nature outing, but unless one has a personal Sherpa, lugging texts on your birding or nature adventure may be inconvenient. Especially when the subject matter ranges across more than one type of animal. Like on a pelagic trip. If there has ever been a place where one might like to have a guidebook handy, but for which actually using one is nearly impossible, it's on a small boat pitching in the open oceanic waters.

Yes, some have matriculated from bound paper tomes to smartphone or tablet apps, but again, I don't really want to be using my sensitive electronic device on the bowsprit of a birding or whale watching vessel where I'm blessed with the kiss of salt spray.

So one could argue that the market exists for a small, lightweight, bound book covering birds, marine mammals, sea turtles, and surface dwelling pelagic fish most likely to be encountered by the offshore naturalist. And while such products exist for naturalists exploring the North Atlantic, to date nothing similar exists for the Pacific Ocean off the coast of North America. Enter the newly published *Offshore Sea Life ID Guide: West Coast* by renowned pelagic birders Steve N.G. Howell and Brian Sullivan.

The *Offshore Sea Life ID Guide: West Coast* hits the mark in four key areas of size, span, ease of use and price.

Whether on a dedicated pelagic, whale watching trip, or even taking a cruise along the Western Seaboard, having a pocket-sized (5x8", 56 page) reference makes the difference between being able to use the tool on the spot versus keeping the book in the cabin or day bag for reference before or after sightings. Let's face it, most field guides are just too large to have in hand while observing, and toting individual volumes for mammals, birds, and fish limits space for other important items. Like snacks.

The very fact that a limited number of species inhabit offshore waters makes it possible to present the vast majority of likely sightings in a single, portable vessel. The book covers pelagic birds, marine mammals, sea turtles, flying fish, and more, showing each species in easy-to-read format and portrayed as they typically appear "on the water". And the price, with an MSRP of \$14.95, ensures that you can still afford a batch of candied ginger or Sea Bands to ward away the dreaded *mal de mar*.

The authors depict species in "Crossley fashion" whereby multiple photos are combined onto a background to show different, and generally realistic, views of how the animals appear at sea. Plates and text are on the same or opposing pages, and due to the small format of the book, text is limited to abundance, range, and identification notes. The authors quaintly extend the "four letter banding code" practice of referring to birds in shorthand to marine mammals, which is sort of silly when referring to an Orca (KIWH), and makes one wonder what size band or ring would be required to tag a Blue Whale, and just what type of mist net to use!

Overall this is a neat little book that fits handily in the pocket, and I can easily see myself using it while "on deck".

Surely most naturalists would want to follow up by consulting specialized (and often weighty) texts before or after the trip, but while at sea, it will be hard to beat Howell and Sullivan's offering. An East Coast version is due this fall.



# Welcome New Members!

The Carolina Bird Club warmly welcomes the following new members:  Ellen Nason Chapel Hill, NC  Jim Hutto Forest Acres, SC  Kathleen Flint Fletcher, NC  Jim & Wanda McCoy Greenville, SC  Rodney Chalker Sanford, NC  Jamie, Anna, Greg & John Tarasidis Greenwood, SC	Chris Crolley Coastal Expeditions Mt. Pleasant, SC	Chris Anderson Aiken, SC	Anne Buxton Charleston, SC	Dave & Lynette Minnich Hillsborough, NC
	Teresa Morris Garner, NC	Cherie Pittillo Hendersonville, NC	Hollace Boswell Charleston, SC	John Hutchens, Jr. Myrtle Beach, SC
	Rachel Pigg Franklin, TN	Lynda Bechtold Barnwell, SC	Joe Mickey State Road, NC	Andrea, Mike & Colin Lay Raleigh, NC
	Bethany & Dave Harmon Columbia, SC	Joan Beck Colbert, GA	Richard Kline Charlotte, NC	Jenion Tyson & Christy Lowell North Charleston, SC
	Jeff Gleason Charlottesville, VA	Debora Montgomery Greensboro, NC	Rosemary, Rachael, Samuel & Jackson Barringer Columbia, SC	
	Martin Sturla Raleigh, NC	Jason Horn Emmaus, PA	David Edwards Belhaven, NC	
	Richard Atkins Durham, NC	Janet Packman Fayetteville, NC	Anita Wood Columbia, SC	
		Jan Hansen Chapel Hill, NC		



Lynne Mattocks Lucas

## 19th Annual Wings Over Water Festival

Registration is open for the 19th annual Wings Over Water Wildlife Festival, scheduled for Tuesday, October 20 to Sunday, October 25.

During the six-day festival over 100 birding, paddling, photography, art, and natural history trips explore the nature of North Carolina from the ocean beaches of the Outer Banks to the dark pocosins of the Albemarle Peninsula. New trips this year include Outer Banks Big Day Birding, Birding Hatteras Village, a Pocosin Lakes NWR Scuppernong Interpretive Boardwalk Plant Hike, and much more.

Also new for 2015 is a “bonus winter weekend” of trips designed specifically for birders. WOW Encore-A Winter Weekend takes place December 4-6, a time when most of the migratory waterfowl that call Eastern North Carolina home have arrived for the season. Massive flocks of geese, ducks, and swans make for incredible birding experiences, and this bonus slate of trips should prove popular, so sign up now!

The keynote speaker for this year’s festival is birder and humorist Al Batt. Hailing from Hartland, Minnesota, Al wears many hats including writer, speaker, storyteller, and of course, birder. You may recognize Al’s irreverent writing style from his regular contributions to Bird Watchers Digest, or have seen one of his four weekly humor and nature columns in major newspapers. Al also does a thrice weekly radio show on nature-related subjects. According to Robert Mortensen, “Al is knee slappin’, belly laughin’, eyes-waterin’ fun. He is one of the most kind, genuine and motivating human beings due to his deep love of people and birds.” Al says that he will talk to anyone who will listen, and that his mom tells him that he is special.

To peruse this year’s offerings, register for the festival, or to find out more, visit the WOW website at: <http://wingsoverwater.org/>

# Red Knot Afforded Protection Under Endangered Species Act

Steve Shultz

A visit to the Carolina coast in winter often allows birders to sort through flocks of shorebirds, most in pale grey and white plumage. Often a few birds stand out by virtue of their apparent lack of field marks. They are medium sized, stand on medium length legs, sport unremarkable bills and plain medium grey coloration. The most obvious field mark on many may be the presence of brightly colored flags or leg bands. For this bird is the Red knot (*Calidris canutus*). Come spring a marvelous transformation occurs as robin-red underparts replace the pale feathers of winter and upperparts take on beautiful black, red, and white flecking. Long distance migrants from southern South America swell the number of knots on our beaches, building to a May crescendo.

But long-time birders point out that the numbers of knots we enjoy today pale in comparison to historic counts. Sadly, the world population of the *rufa* subspecies, the type most likely to be seen in the Carolinas, plummeted from an estimated 100,000-150,000 individuals in the 1980s to about 33,000 in 2007. Reasons for the decline may include climate change that affects both wintering and breeding habitat, asynchronous arrival with food sources at favored stopover sites, and overfishing of a critical food source (Horseshoe Crab eggs) in the Delaware Bay.

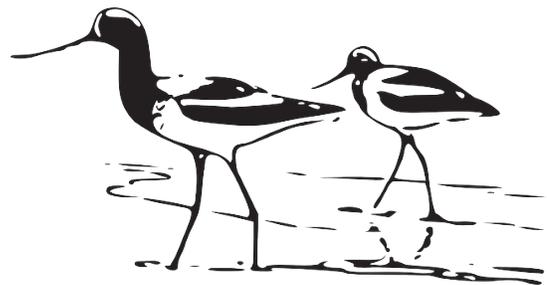
In hopes of stemming the decline, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended Federal protection for the *rufa* subspecies under the Endangered Species Act. On December 9, 2014 the *Calidris canutus rufa* was declared “threatened”, which means a risk of becoming endangered throughout all or a significant portion of its range. This is the most critical status that can be assigned to a subspecies under the Act.

Six subspecies of Red Knot are widely recognized and the bird enjoys a circumpolar breeding range with wintering birds in far-flung locales including Africa, Australia, Europe, and the Americas. Two subspecies breed in North America, *rufa* (breeding in eastern and central Arctic Canada and mostly wintering in South America) and *roselaari* (breeding in Alaska and most-

ly wintering along the North American Pacific Coast and Brazil). The estimated population of the *roselaari* subspecies is 10,000. Some question exists as to which subspecies winters in the Carolinas, with some evidence that *roselaari* winters in small numbers in South Carolina. However the general thought is that most of our wintering birds are *rufa* (the subspecies are generally not separable in the field).

While some *rufa* Red Knots grace our winter shores, most travel on epic migrations of more than 9,300 miles in each direction, putting the Red Knot on the short list of animals with the longest migration. Perhaps the most famous knot goes by the name Moonbird. Banded in Argentina in 1995, this bird has flown the equivalent of the distance between the Earth and the Moon... and halfway back!

So the next time you spot a knot on one of your birding forays, tip a hat to the seemingly plain sandpiper and hope that you will be able to enjoy this intriguing shorebird for decades to come.



The Newsletter and The Chat are online on the CBC website, and you can elect either electronic or paper delivery. The most recent electronic editions of each are only accessible to CBC members.

To access the “members only” content, you must first create a login and password. This can be done at the Member Services page at:  
[http:// www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/)



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**Upcoming CBC Meetings**

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 Spring 2016 - TBA

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*Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of December, February, April, June, August, and October.*

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[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)

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