

## Meet Our New President

by Steven Tracy



Steven Tracy  
CBC President

I grew up in Moses Lake, Washington (Grant County), where my initial exposure to birds was waterfowl and upland game birds. Of course, it was impossible to ignore Western Meadowlarks, Great Blue Herons, and Marsh Wrens along the way. As a graduate student in Zoology at Washington State University, I took an Ornithology class and went on my first organized field trips. My primary interest at the time was Herpetology. The next several years were consumed by medical school (University of Iowa), pathology residency, and hematopathology fellowship (UNC-CH).

We relocated to Gastonia, NC, where my interest in birds was rekindled by participating in Project Feederwatch beginning in late 1996. It took a while to distinguish the local sparrows from one another. One of my “Aha” moments was in spring of 1997, when I identified my first Swamp Sparrow in the yard. That got me interested in initiating a yard list and motivated me to start going on field trips with Gaston Audubon (now merged with Mecklenburg Audubon). I started choosing pathology seminars (in part) by geographic location, so I could go birding before or after the seminar, experience new habitats, and bird species. I joined the Carolina Bird Club and went on my first international CBC sponsored trip to Costa Rica with Simon Thompson in 2002. I was overjoyed and nearly overwhelmed with the vast new numbers of bird species. Since then, I have been to the United Kingdom, The Gambia (crossing the border briefly into Senegal), the Pantanal in Brazil, the Santa Marta Mountains in Colombia, Peru, and Cuba. I hope to eventually bird

all of Latin America.

However, it is always good to come back home and enjoy backyard birding. I am beginning my 25<sup>th</sup> season of Project Feederwatch. My current backyard tally is 159 species with the most recent addition last spring of Solitary Sandpiper. Highlights from the backyard include Evening Grosbeak (11/15/1997), Western Tanager (1/16/1999), Golden-Winged Warbler (9/26/1999), Cerulean Warbler (8/25/2000), Lincoln’s Sparrow (5/9/2005), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (9/25/2005), and Connecticut Warbler (10/18/2006). Perhaps my best Gaston County find was Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in June 2009 prior to discovering eBird.

I am a lifetime member of the Carolina Bird Club and I have learned a great deal from our volunteer field trip leaders. I thank them all and I thank those who have organized the CBC meetings over the years. These are trying times with the Covid 19 pandemic and I look forward to when we can all meet together again.

Besides the Carolina Bird Club, I am also a member of the American Birding Association and enjoy taking occasional trips with them. My first ABA trip to Tucson, AZ in July 1999 resulted in 71 new species. I am also a member of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, American Bird Conservancy, National Audubon Society, Mecklenburg Audubon Society, Center of Biological Diversity, Trust for Public Land, Catawba Lands Conservancy, Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, Ducks Unlimited, etc. I try to work for birds on all levels. I hope to meet you all on future CBC field trips. Gulls and shorebirds are my weak points and I look forward to turning these into areas of strength going forward.

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## Welcome New CBC Members!

Mati Karni & Family  
Greenville, SC

John Carpenter  
Wilmington, NC

Mark & Sarah Dugo Wesley  
Chapel, NC

Carl Hacker  
Claudia Kozinetz  
Duck, NC

Phillip Davis  
Davidsonville, MD

Julie Davis  
Pawleys Island, SC

Victoria Bannon  
Alexis, NC

Thomas Smyth  
Lydia Bliven  
Augusta, GA

Max Bolin  
Fountain Inn, SC

Margaret Knight  
Columbia, SC

John Bird  
Southern Pines, NC

Phillip Gibson  
Lake Junaluska, NC

Fred Stein  
Charlotte, NC

Tom Bowles  
Chapin, SC

Mary Stevens  
Steven Hart  
Lillington, NC

**Upgrade to Life Membership**  
Susan Lyon Stone  
Carrboro, NC

Jill Dalley  
Winston-Salem, NC

Nicola Stevens  
 Mooresville, NC

Eric Schaub  
Greenville, NC

Doug Walker  
Aiken, SC

## 2020 Pine Siskin Irruption

by Deborah Roy



If you've never seen a Pine Siskin, this is your year. According to Audubon, in the past few months, the birds have invaded the United States in search of food, inundating backyard feeders across the country. This is one of the biggest irruption years in recorded history for the finches. As with a handful of other northern species, Pine Siskins can irrupt southward in years when there is a shortage of food in their home range. This year, a meager supply of conifer seeds across Canada's boreal forest has caused the birds to push south in mind-boggling numbers. These birds are not shy and will eagerly come to feeders. They prefer nyger and sunflower seeds. My backyard has also had several Purple Finches which is the first time I have ever seen them in my yard. There is also a chance we could see some Evening Grosbeak and/or Redpolls. They have also moved much further south for the winter than they usually do.



Pine Siskin in my backyard; dozens have shown up this year at my feeders & bird baths  
Photo by Deborah Roy

**Email problems.** As has sometimes happened in the past, Microsoft email servers are blocking all mail from [carolinabirdclub.org](http://carolinabirdclub.org). This means that if you have a [hotmail.com](http://hotmail.com), [live.com](http://live.com), [msn.com](http://msn.com), or [outlook.com](http://outlook.com) email address, we cannot send you notifications about club business. Microsoft's advice on this is that each user should add the domain [carolinabirdclub.org](http://carolinabirdclub.org), or the email address [notification@carolinabirdclub.org](mailto:notification@carolinabirdclub.org), to your "contacts" or "safe-senders list". This should allow our email to be delivered to you. Sorry we can't do anything more.

## Opportunities for Young Birders

Carolina Bird Club offers scholarships for birders 19 and under living in the Carolinas, who are members of the Carolina Young Birders Club.

Scholarships provide assistance in attending bird-related events, such as camps, workshop, training programs or CBC seasonal meetings.

For more information, visit [www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org)



# Longtime WNC conservationist, past president of Blue Ridge Audubon, dies

Written by Karen Chávez

(reprinted with permission, Asheville Citizen Times)

“Nice,” “kind,” “wonderful,” aren’t the first words usually used to describe a newspaperman, but those who knew Len Pardue were unanimous in describing him that way.

Pardue was a retired newspaper reporter and editor but was well known and beloved in his adopted hometown of Asheville as an excellent birder, master gardener and all around “good man.”

Pardue, 81, died Oct. 1, according to his family, including wife, Esther Pardue.

“To me he was the epitome of a gentleman,” said Tom Tribble, a longtime friend and birding buddy of Pardue, who served on the board of the Blue Ridge (formerly Elisha Mitchell) Audubon Society from 1998-2017 and was the club’s president from 2011-2013.



Len Pardue, center, past president of the Blue Ridge (formerly Elisha Mitchell) Audubon Society, and his wife Esther Pardue, stand with Tom Tribble and the sign for the Pardue Wetland, an area named in their honor at the Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary. Len Pardue died Oct. 1. *Courtesy of Blue Ridge Audubon Society*

Pardue could often be seen working with his wife or other club members well into his later years at the bird sanctuary that hugs Beaver Lake off Merrimon Avenue in North Asheville, doing maintenance work, pulling invasive plants or greeting visitors.

“He was an outstanding birder, a better birder than I am,” said Tribble, who was president for six years of the club.

The group, which has about 1,000 members, leads public bird walks, participates in local and nationwide bird counts for the betterment of science, owns and maintains the bird sanctuary and works on conservation issues.

The more than 30-year-old club also made news this year by removing its name-sake, Elisha Mitchell, from all of its signs, materials and websites after discovering the 19th century geologist was an avowed racist.

“He was such a good friend and a good man,” Tribble said of Pardue. “He was very calm, very reserved and very thoughtful. He had that institutional knowledge.”

Pardue led the group through its \$150,000 fundraising campaign to upgrade the sanctuary in 2010-11.

“The bird sanctuary was being loved to death. The fundraising completed the boardwalk to make it handicap accessible, built the gathering area at the entrance and expanded overlooks by the lake and redirected the trail around the lake so that runners and dog walkers weren’t running through the sanctuary,” Tribble said.

Pardue graduated from Duke University and Columbia University’s Graduate School of Journalism. His career included positions as managing editor for the Louisville Times and the Courier Journal in Louisville, Kentucky.

After retiring in 1997, Pardue moved to Asheville and became “deeply engrossed in bird-watching and pursued that avocation in much of North America and in six Latin American countries,” according to his obituary, which he wrote himself.

He almost immediately joined the local Audubon Society as a board member.

“He was such a go-getter. He had a lot of experience organizing things. He had already been president of the Carolina Bird Club,” said Marilyn Westphal, a friend and past president of the Blue Ridge Audubon Society.

“He was so dedicated and single-minded about getting things done and doing it right. He was a really nice guy. He would never get angry. He would just get a wry smile on his face if he thought something wasn’t right. It’s a real loss to the birding society,” she said.

Pardue also volunteered at First Presbyterian Church and the Cooperative Extension Service’s Master Gardener program, and enjoyed protecting land he and Esther owned in the Sandy Mush region of Buncombe County.

In addition to his wife, Pardue is survived by two sons and many other relatives.



Trudie Henninger stands on a bench to get a better look as a group goes on a bird walk with Elisha Mitchell Audubon Society at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary on Saturday, April 1, 2017. *Angeli Wright/awright@citizen-times.com*

Below is the link to the original article:

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2020/10/05/blue-ridge-audubon-past-president-and-asheville-conservationist-len-pardue-dies/3623948001/>



## Go ahead and leave your hummingbird feeder up!

There are hummingbirds that over winter in North Carolina

By Susan Campbell

Yes, it's true! There are hummingbirds at sugar water feeders across our state during the cooler months. They are not common, but they are widespread and not as rare as we once thought. Although most of the individuals investigated have been Rufous Hummingbirds, there have been a variety of western species. Very few have turned out to be our summertime Ruby-throated Hummingbird. To-date twelve species of hummingbird have been documented while visiting North Carolina during the non-breeding season. But identification of these birds is difficult since most are nondescript females or juveniles. They tend to look very similar; their identity is often based on color, shape, or size of just a few feathers.

The early view that hummingbird feeders left hanging in the fall deter Ruby-throateds from migrating is false. These tiny marvels begin to head south as early as late July due to hormonal changes when the days begin to shorten. Food supply nor the weather has any effect on their behavior. Therefore, feeders left up can only help late migrants or supplement the diet of winter visitors. Although hummingbirds in general eat mainly small insects, nectar is a significant component of their diet year-round.

Please contact the state's hummingbird researcher, **Susan Campbell**, if you see or hear about a hummingbird anywhere in the greater Charlotte area between November 1 and March 15. Susan is an affiliate with the Museum of Natural Sciences who is studying and documenting these individuals. She can be reached at (910) 949-3207 or [susan@ncaves.com](mailto:susan@ncaves.com).



Selasphorus hummingbird in the snow, Charlotte, NC,  
Check out that perfect snowflake on her back.  
Photo by Deborah Roy

No special care is required for these hardy winter hummingbirds. The birds will appreciate a feeder with the usual 4:1 (water: sugar) nectar solution. The solution will not freeze unless the air temperature around the feeder drops below 27 degrees F. Most days during the winter this will not be a problem. And on colder nights, the feeder can be taken indoors at dark since hummers do not feed at night. Due to slower fermentation rates during cooler weather, the feeder should only need cleaning and refilling about once every two weeks.

If you live within a half mile of a wet area (lake, river, stream, pond or even a golf course water hazard), your chances of attracting a winter hummer are quite good. Just be sure your feeder is hung so that you can monitor it easily—especially early in the day when hummingbirds are most active.

For more information go to [www.naturalsciences.org/nchummers](http://www.naturalsciences.org/nchummers)



Selasphorus hummingbird in the snow, Charlotte, NC,  
Photo by Deborah Roy



Selasphorus hummingbird in spring after spending the winter in my yard, Charlotte, NC., Photo by Deborah Roy

## CBC Election Results

By Steve Shultz



The election results have been certified! No, not that election. This one that involved no debates, no mail in ballots, and none of those pesky mud-slinging television ads. And best of all? No phone calls! Yes, I am referring to the Club's annual election to confirm new members of the Executive Committee!

The Executive Committee consists of volunteers who plan seasonal meetings, review grant requests, seek out ways to support conservation, encourage young birders, and undertake dozens of other tasks and initiatives.

Historically, the Club elected new officers by virtue of an in-person vote as part of the annual spring meeting. Well, 2020 had something to say about that. With cancellation of the spring and fall 2020 and winter 2021 meetings, the election could not occur as it did in the past. After careful deliberation and a creative web-based solution engineered by Kent Fiala, the Club's webmaster, our first virtual election was held in November. After an initial solicitation for "nominations from the floor", members voted online to accept the presented slate of nominees.

We welcome our new President, Steve Tracy, along with Eastern North Carolina Vice-President Colleen Bockhahn, Western North Carolina Member-at-Large Julie Lee, and South Carolina Member-at-Large Ed Blicht.

The committee currently has one vacant position, Eastern North Carolina Member-at-Large. If you reside in the eastern portion of NC and are interesting in serving the Club in the role of Member-at-Large, or for more information on the role and responsibilities, please contact Paul Dayer, head of the nominations committee, or any member of the Executive Committee.

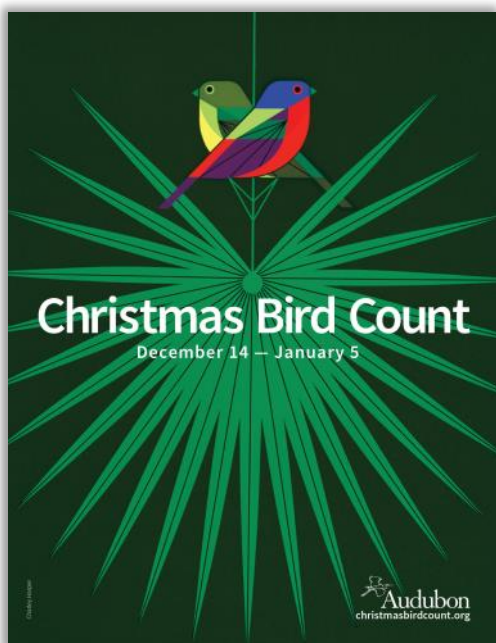
While this year's election process has come to a close, we are already looking forward to next year's vote, which we hope will occur in person at the spring meeting. Several positions have terms expiring in 2021, so if you are interested in serving your club, please contact Paul or any committee member for more information.

The full committee listing, along with contact information, is at

[https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/main/exec\\_comm.html](https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/main/exec_comm.html)



## North & South Carolina Christmas Bird Counts



Take part in National Audubon's 121st Christmas Bird Count this season. The count period runs each year from December 14 through January 5. If you go to the CBC website (address below). You will find a list of counts near you. If you'd like to participate in a count, contact the organizer listed in the table. (Click on their name to get their email address.)

Christmas Bird Counts are an excellent chance to join fellow birders of all experience levels, and allow you to participate in a tradition that dates back to 1900! And there is no longer any fee for participation!

More information can be found on the Carolina Bird Club website at:

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

or by going to the National Audubon website

[www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count](http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count)



Barred Owl,  
Photo by Deborah Roy



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**Raleigh, NC 27612**

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### Upcoming CBC Meetings

Winter 2021- Outer Banks, NC - *Cancelled*  
Spring 2021- Black Mountain, NC - May 6 - 9, 2021  
Fall 2021- TBD  
Winter 2022 - Outer Banks, NC - January 13 - 16, 2022

#### CBC Board Members

##### **President**

Steve Tracy, Gastonia, NC  
stevepath1@aol.com

##### **Vice Presidents**

Colleen Bockhahn, Clayton NC  
Guy McGrane, Deep Gap, NC  
Craig Watson, Mount Pleasant, SC

##### **Secretary**

Jill Midgett, Charleston, SC

##### **Treasurer**

Paul Dayer, Durham, NC

##### **NC Members-at-Large**

Lester Coble, Ernul, NC  
Marilyn Westphal, Hendersonville, NC  
Julie Lee, Nebo, NC  
Vacant

##### **SC Members-at-Large**

Ed Blitch, Charleston, SC  
Mac Williams, Hartsville, SC

**Immediate Past President:** Lewis Burke, Columbia, SC  
**Editor of The Chat:** Steve Shultz, Apex, NC  
**Website Editor:** Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC  
**Headquarters Secretary:** Carol Bowman, Pinehurst, NC,  
**hq@carolinabirdclub.org**  
**CBC Newsletter Editor:** Deborah McDougall Roy, Charlotte, NC,  
**newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org**

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

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

The *CBC Newsletter* is published bimonthly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc. Founded in 1937, the membership is open to anyone interested in birds, natural history, and conservation. **Current dues are:** Individual & non-profit, \$30; Family and Business, \$35; Student, \$15; Patron, \$50 and up; Life, \$500; Associate Life (in household with Life Member), \$100 (both Life memberships can be paid in four annual installments).

**Membership dues** include access to publications: the *CBC Newsletter* and *The Chat*, which is only available on line. Tax deductible as allowable by law.

**Cost for CBC bird checklists**, including postage: 10@\$5.45, 25@\$13.40, 50@\$27.00, and 100@\$54.00.

**Join the CBC** at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Enter change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Order checklists from: CBC Headquarters Secretary, 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst, NC 28374. Copyright © 2020.