

# BIRD NOOZ

## Springfest Is A Big Success

*Green Heron Pauses Momentarily to Let Paul Padula Snap a Shot*



Amber Kuehn brought 90 folks to Pinckney Hall for the highlight event of our 2015 Springfest! In her presentation on the **Unique Lowcountry Ecosystem**, Amber blended warm and personal anecdotes about growing up on the May

River with data and explanations about its wildlife, marine life and ecology. Members and guests were most enthusiastic over Amber's presentation, and 35 folks enjoyed the box lunches. Informative reports on Springfest Field Trips appear on page 2.

### Improve Your "Backyard Habitats!"

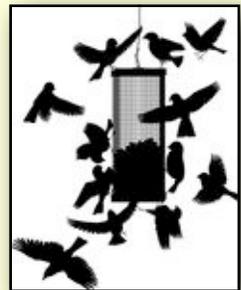
Where: Hidden Cypress Ballroom

Date: May 6, 2015

Time/Day: 4 PM Wednesday

Don't miss our SCHH Bird Club regular meeting on Wednesday, May 6. Meeting is **open to all Sun City residents**.

Guest expert, Diana Churchill, will help attendees begin, expand or enhance their backyard birds' habitats to encourage visits by the birds they'd most like to see.



### TWO-HOUR CRUISE ON "SPARTINA" TOPS OFF THE ECO-SPECTACULAR DAY



Whether you joined the 1 or 3 pm Springfest cruisers, you were one of the lucky Club members who made reservations early enough to join Amber Kuehn and husband Jeff (at the wheel) for an eco-excursion on the gorgeous May River. In the photo (left) the "Spartina" pulled away from the Calhoun Street dock in old Bluffton for an up-close look at, and an opportunity to learn about, this exquisite tide marsh area we want to appreciate, enjoy, and protect.

**SUN CITY TWEETS -- BOARD NOOZ**

Springfest ushered in a new season, and we already notice how spring is flying by! With spring, a mix of birding concerns arrive.

***Baby Bird Out of Its Nest?***

This is the time of year when we get calls from caring Club members concerned that they have a baby bird downed from its nest, and they need advice. It's on the ground. Do I rescue it? Do I feed it? Do I call Noah? Here's an excellent article with illustrations selected from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife website, recommended by former Club presidents Mary Helen Rosenstein and the late Helen Chatterton. Click to read.

[http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/rehabilitation/baby\\_birds.html](http://wdfw.wa.gov/conservation/health/rehabilitation/baby_birds.html)

***Bird-Friendly Communities***

Our May 6 meeting is dedicated to your backyard birds and their habitats. We'll meet with you and local expert Diana Churchill on that date, as we tackle how to make improvements to the habitats we provide our birds!

This year, also consider learning more about the Audubon's conservation program called "Creating Bird-Friendly Communities at [audubon.org](http://audubon.org). They say that "Where birds thrive, people prosper." Learn about environmental conservation and threats to birds -- then discover solutions in which all of us can participate.

Happy birding! *Noah*

**APRIL 1 -- GREAT SPRINGFEST FIELD TRIPS**



Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR) was cloudy and breezy for guide Paul Padula's Field Trip on April 1. Three green herons (one is shown in Paul's photo above) joined the usual suspects, plus large numbers of glossy ibis, one hermit thrush, a few straggler blue winged teals,

and plenty of gators! Osprey, harriers and a red-tailed hawk rounded out the group's sightings.

Jim and Doreen Cubie led a trip to Fish Haul Creek Park, a beautiful maritime forest. John Burrack led five Club members and two guests on a trip to Pinckney Island. Guest Peter Albero, with grandson Adam Zorn, (a naturalist with the University of Mt. Union, Alliance, Ohio) shared Adam's bird spotting skills, plus notes about bird ethology [behavior], which enriched the members' experience and made the trip most memorable!



Photo: Paul Padula

**WHAT IS IT? SWAMP OR MARSH?**

A swamp is a place where the plants covered in water are primarily woody plants or trees, like mangroves or cypress. A marsh is defined as having no woody plants, like salt marsh grasses, reeds or sedges.

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## SCHH Bird Club Basics

Visit Our Bird Club website: [www.suncitybirdclub.org](http://www.suncitybirdclub.org)



### **MANY, VARIED CLUB ACTIVITIES APPEAL TO FOLKS**

- Monitoring our more than 100 Bluebird nesting boxes
- Monitoring our 15 Purple Martin Condos
- Participating in Okatie-Sun City Christmas Bird Count
- Leading and/or Participating in Birding Trips, local and overnight, using our Club Birding Scope and walkie-talkies
- Participating in Seasonal “Birdfests”
- Conducting or participating in periodic Backyard Birding events

### **BIRD NOOZ INFORMATION**

**Bird Nooz** is produced by SCHH Bird Club officers, volunteers, and other contributors, and is published online from September through June as an educational and informational newsletter. Your subscription is a benefit of your Club membership. It contains original Club articles, photos and information, as well as

open-source material from other birding publications and sources.

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**MARK YOUR BIRDING CALENDAR**



*American Redstart*  
(arthursclipart.org)



*American Robin*  
(arthursclipart.org)



*Black Headed Grosbeak*  
(arthursclipart.org)

**Wednesday, April 22**

HHI Audubon's Program:  
6 PM, **Free, Open to Public**  
**"Eastern Bluebirds' Success on HHI and Palmetto Hall Plantation."** 111 Mathews Drive, Palmetto Electric Cooperative Bldg. George Banino and Jerry Griffen present the program.

**Thursdays, April 23 - May 28**

Guided walks (weather permitting) by HHI Audubon at 10 AM on Thursdays through May 28. **Free and Open to Public -- donations are helpful** to offset maintenance costs. Audubon Newhall Preserve on Palmetto Bay Road is the location. Contact Jack Greenshields at [jackg308@gmail.com](mailto:jackg308@gmail.com)

**Sunday, April 26**

Ogeechee Audubon field trip to Webb Wildlife Center. Contact Dot Bambach at [dotbam@bellsouth.net](mailto:dotbam@bellsouth.net)

**Fridays, April 24 - May 1**

Ogeechee Audubon "Spring Migration in Forsyth Park" (Savannah) on Fridays, 7:30 - 9 AM with Diana Churchill. **Free and Open to Public.** Bring usual Field Trip gear.

**Friday, April 24**

Port Royal Maritime Center offers "**Birding for Beginners**," a class reviewing basics on wading, waterfowl and shore birds that includes an outdoor experience at Widgeon Point. \$10 per person. Call 843.645.7774 for information.

**May 6 - Reminder!**

**"Creating a Backyard Habitat for Birds."**

Regular monthly SCHH Bird Club meeting with presentation by guest expert Diana Churchill who will help members and guests start improve, or enhance their backyard bird habitats.

This meeting is at 4 pm, and **FREE AND OPEN TO ALL SUN CITY RESIDENTS.** Location is Hidden Cypress Ballroom.

**July 25**

**"2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kite Outing"** by Lower Savannah River Alliance. 8 AM Meet at Lower Savannah River Alliance Educational Center, \$30. **8:30 AM** tour Allendale Kite Field. **11:30 AM Guest Speaker** naturalist and author John Cely, one of the founding fathers of Congaree National Park. **12:30 PMLunch**  
Contact: Catherine Campbell 803.584.4207 or [ccampb5@clemson.edu](mailto:ccampb5@clemson.edu)

## Meet “SKYLAR”

Sun City Hilton Head has at least one Bald Eagle family living here. In the Heritage Oak Place (HOP) neighborhood, young eaglet SKYLAR is ready to fledge, thanks to his devoted parents’ TLC and great food deliveries.

Most of SKYLAR’s human neighbors are big fans who’ve been sharing frequent photos and videos among themselves since the parents returned to their nest last winter. Eagle watchers post their videos on YouTube for all to enjoy. (SKYLAR’s name came from the winner of a HOP watchers’ contest, much like our contest to name Bird Nooz.)

You can learn a lot about eagle behavior by checking out recent videos by Doug Lanier on YouTube. See SKYLAR hopping and flapping in preparation for leaving the nest, which he accomplished on April 3, 2015!

*YouTube: “The Sun City Eaglet Progresses to Flight Over 5 Days: March 31-April 3, 2015,” Parts I and 2*

# Eagles in Our Midst



In South Carolina, the Bald Eagle is the largest raptor with the exception of the rare Golden Eagle. Bald Eagles can be identified by their large size, flat profile while soaring and gliding (in contrast to the “V” shaped profile of the similarly sized Turkey Vulture, *Cathartes aura*) as well as the characteristic white head and tail of the adult. The Bald Eagle’s preference for fish makes the state’s coastal and riverine areas its preferred habitat.

In fact, more than 50 percent of the state’s eagle population is found in the coastal zone. Many Bald Eagles utilize the rich resources of coastal SC to support the needs of their growing young. The eagles build large stick nests in tall, live trees near the water. Since the same nests are utilized year after year, they can often grow to enormous sizes with diameters over 3 meters and weights of over a ton!

-- *Center for Birds of Prey, SC*

## IDENTIFYING BALD EAGLES IN SOUTH CAROLINA

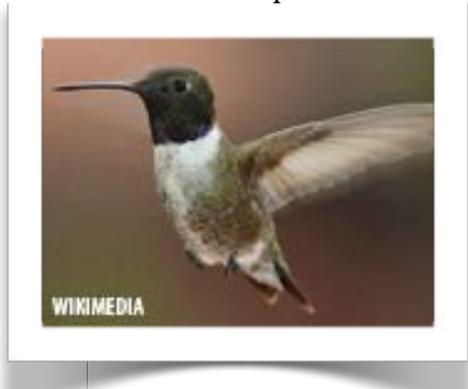
Adult bald eagles have a distinctive white head and tail, dark brown body with a bright yellow bill and feet with unfeathered lower legs. Eyes are large and yellow. Juveniles have a dark head, tail and body with dark eyes and bill and do not obtain adult plumage until they are 6 years old. As the juvenile ages, its

body plumage becomes mottled with white before obtaining full adult plumage. Bald eagles in South Carolina are smaller than their northern counterparts with a mean wingspan of 6 feet 2 inches and a mean weight of 7.14 pounds -- northern eagles can be twice that weight! (SC Dept. Nat. Resources)

**CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE HUMMINGBIRDS?**

**Lower Photo:**

This bird breeds throughout the western third of the US and winters in Mexico. Look for it in a variety of habitats, from isolated desert canyons to suburban backyards. Females and immature birds are difficult to separate from those of other hummer species. One clue that helps to distinguish this species is the white collar visible on perched birds.



**Upper Photo:**

The only common eastern hummingbird, this garden jewel makes its home in swamps, woodlands, parks and backyards. These birds are strongly migratory. Each year they travel remarkable distances between their wintering grounds and their summer breeding areas, which span from the Gulf of Mexico to southern Canada.

*Photos from BirdWire online e-newsletter published by Bird Watcher's Digest.*

**“BIRD DROPPINGS” - SCATTERED GRAINS OF INFO**

The National Audubon Society says: **Put a Bird On It!** Click next line to [Decorate your computer, tablet, or smartphone](#) with the best photos from past Audubon Photography Awards. Download images of your favorite birds with a single click. And keep in touch at [audubon.org](http://audubon.org)! Audubon will announce this year's winning photos on April 27.

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers **yardmap**, which you can use to get a bird's eye view of your habitat. **Yardmap** is a citizen science project designed to cultivate a richer understanding of bird habitat, for both professional scientists and people concerned with their local environments.

**Yardmap** is a free, interactive, citizen mapping program about habitat creation and low-impact land use.

Sign up at [content.yardmap.org](http://content.yardmap.org)



South Carolina Shorebird Project is dedicated to protecting seabird and shorebird

species through collaborative conservation in coastal SC. Follow them on Facebook or at <https://twitter.com/SCShorebirdProj> Right now, thousands of red knots are pecking away in flocks on Low-country beaches -- hordes of them at a time, feeding in the tide wash.

**HUMMINGBIRD IDENTIFICATION ANSWERS:**



*Lower Photo: Black-chinned Hummingbird*

*Upper Photo: Ruby-throated Hummingbird*

