

Bird Nooz

Everyone likes birds. What wild creature is more accessible to our eyes and ears, as close to us and everyone in the world, as universal as a bird? -- David Attenborough

A Monthly Newsletter

2016.06 June Issue

They Had Feathers!

Is the world ready to see dinosaurs as they really were?

Could this Roadrunner be a tiny version of the T. Rex, which may have been like "a 20,000 lb. road runner from Hell."

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Club Recognition.

Our Club got special recognition for CBC.

Noah Strycker's Big Year.

Birding's wunderkind broke records with low-tech approach to Big Year.

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Fun at Harbor Island



Our Club's May 20 trip to Harbor Island was a great experience!

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Club Programs are Hits

The Bird Club Program for June 1 will appeal to birders and gardeners alike. It's open to all SCHH residents, so bring a friend!

MAYFEST was a total WOW! See highlights.

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Club Basics

Over the summer, consider having some extra fun in 2017 by serving on the Board.

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Dinosaurs Had What?

Is the World Ready to See Dinosaurs as They Really Were?

Hollywood may not realize it yet, but the science is clear. Many, many dinosaurs had feathers, including the velociraptors made famous by Jurassic Park, and probably even T. Rex itself.

Lately, a group of visionary artists has been having fun portraying the new reality -- even if the mainstream isn't quite ready to accept it yet. Check out more information and mind-blowing illustrations in The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's

All About Birds eNews. Subscribe (free) at allaboutbirds.org



Mounting evidence from fossils shows that many dinosaurs wore coats of feathers.

(Illustration by Zhao Chuang in Cornell Lab eNews)

Dinosaurs evolve in paleontologists' minds

Dinosaurs have been getting slowly more birdlike for decades—perhaps not in mainstream depictions, but at least in the minds of paleontologists.

New Fossils Tell the Tale

Now, thanks to troves of new fossil discoveries, those paleontologists and dinosaur-obsessed kids don't just think but know: "Dinosaurs had feathers!" And not just hairy kiwi-style feathers, but complex, asymmetrical vaned ones, like the flight feathers of modern birds. This new thinking has been spurred on by discoveries of exquisitely detailed fossils in deposits of fine-textured lithographic limestone.



Modern birds -- are dinosaurs.

A dinosaur renaissance in scientific research began in the late 1960s...birds are now believed to have descended directly from the "theropod" group of dinosaurs, and are thus classified as dinosaurs themselves. (Wikipedia.org, "Feathered Dinosaur.")



Tyrannosaurus Rex

Dinosaurs have been getting slowly more birdlike for decades—perhaps not in mainstream depictions, but at least in the minds of paleontologists. Perhaps the most memorable, was Robert Bakker, a bearded, ponytailed paleontologist, who was once called a “fossil-junkie genius, the Galileo of paleontology.” He liked to describe Tyrannosaurus rex as “the 20,000 pound roadrunner from Hell.”

Velociraptor



The velociraptor has long been depicted as a scaly creature. That’s all changing as fossil evidence shows how widespread feathers were among dinosaurs.

(Preening velociraptor illustration by John Conway in “All About Birds” by TheCornellLab at allaboutbirds.org)

Detailed Fossils Prove It



Now, thanks to troves of new fossil discoveries, both paleontologists and dinosaur-obsessed kids don’t have to imagine anymore. Dinosaurs had feathers! And, not just hairy, kiwi-style feathers, but complex, asymmetrical vaned ones, like the flight feathers of modern birds. This new thinking has been spurred on by discoveries of exquisitely detailed fossils -- in China.

Roy Chapman Andrews



Roy was an explorer, adventurer, and naturalist of the early 20th century who may have been the inspiration for the Indiana Jones character. He led expeditions to the Gobi Desert and Mongolia, and discovered the first fossil dinosaur eggs ever found.

Image #410733 and #410765, American Museum of Natural History Library.

Fossil Dinosaur Eggs



In addition to the eggs, Andrews found bones of a strange, bird-like creature taller than a man which he named Oviraptor, a group ranging in size from smaller than a human to 10 feet tall, with toothless beaks and “wings” with clawed hands, too small to fly but with enough wing span to cover their eggs when on the nest.

Birding Without Borders

Can one "bird nerd" with little more than a backpack and a spotting scope crush the world Big Year record?



Christmas Bird Count (CBC): Club Recognition



"CBC Bird Count Update"

Congratulations to the Sun-City Okatie Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

Our Club had the second highest number of participants in the state -- trailing only Hilton Head Island.

The date for the upcoming 2016 Christmas Bird Count (CBC) has been chosen. It is *Friday December 16*.

Finally, a special thanks to Bob and Anita Bagley. They have entered all of the CBC data going back for 10 years. When we report our results to the newspaper next year we will be able to highlight what new birds we have found, whether any bird count is higher in comparison to earlier years, and make other helpful comparisons.



Noah Strycker's recent book is "The Thing With Feathers" (2014)

Birders can be competitive, or they can seem obsessed! Some keep bird lists for every county in the US (there are more than 3,100). On a large and complicated website, the American Birding Association (ABA) tracks birders' tallies for every region in the world; each listing category is defined by boundaries, rules, and red lines. Books and movies recount their adventures and competitions.

Thirty years old now, Noah Strycker is a writer, photographer, and birder who set out in 2015 to become the first person to see 5,000 species of birds in one calendar year, without the help of professional guides (just passionate locals). He planned to span 41 countries on all seven continents. He won't worry so much about geographic boundaries; he'll pay more attention to exploring how birding, and the conservation of birds,

fits into our new, crowded, globalized millennium. He calls it "birding in the digital age."

The Species List -- He Set a World Record



As Noah Strycker completed his 2015 Big Year, he set a world record by seeing 6,042 species of birds -- more than half the birds on earth -- in one calendar year!

To read his amazing story, check out MEN's JOURNAL MAGAZINE: The Biggest Big Year, April 1, 2016, at mensjournal.com

Strycker's Amazing Statistics:

# Bird Species Seen 2015	6,042
# Bird Species in Ecuador	625
Most Birds Seen in Single Day	186
Air Miles Traveled in 2015	100,514
Days in 2015 he didn't record a new species	3

Where Field Trip fun begins!

Your spirit of adventure is all you need, because we live in a birder's paradise! Join other club members on field trips. Jim and Doreen Cubie are the organizers behind the fun for all.



Black Skimmer? Royal Tern? Build bird identification skills when you get out with other Club members on field trips. Or, just head out for the fun.

If you can't tell a Robin from an Oriole, you can still enjoy one of our Club's field trips. All you need is your own spirit of fun and openness to Mother Nature -- field trip coordinators Jim and Doreen Cubie are great spotters and experts who help with bird identification. Other trip participants will help novice birders spot, identify, and perhaps even photograph your favorite subjects.

Despite the threatening sky, on May 20 Club Board Member John Burrack got some great photos on our trip to Harbor Island. John uses his bird photos as mementos of trips, and he sharpens his bird identification skills by researching the I.D.s of those that are tough to recognize.

Classic gear for such trips includes: hats, sunglasses, drinking water, sturdy closed shoes, bug spray, sun block, binoculars, and a snack. But lots of folks don't stop there: spotting scopes, cameras, backpacks, jackets or weather-gear, etc., are often seen.



Photo by John Burrack

Eurasian Eagle Owl Practices Her Posture

2016's MAYFEST was a great success! Standing-room-only for the Center for Birds of Prey's education/demonstration of exciting birds of prey, plus 2 evening field trips. Check out thecenterforbirdsofprey.org



Guests Who-o-o Came to MAYFEST



Meghan Spakman of the Center for Birds of Prey, with Eurasian Eagle Owlets



June 1 Club Meeting
It's The Last One Till Fall, Y'all

Day/Date: Wednesday, June 1
Time: 4 pm
Place: Hidden Cypress Ballroom
Program: "Birds, Blooms, and Butterflies"

Our June program is open to all residents of Sun City. Bring a friend who loves birds and/or gardens.

Norman Winter, Director, Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens, will share what is happening bird-wise at the

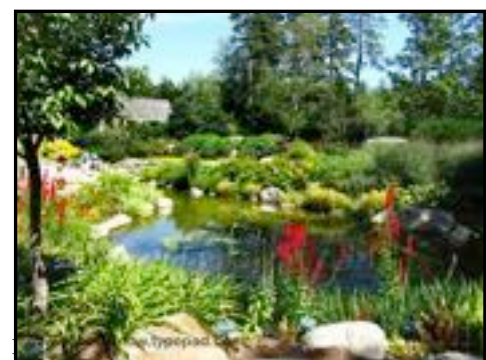
Garden. The Gardens, just 35 minutes from Sun City, are known for their:

- Camellia Trail
- Water Garden
- Historic Georgia Trustees Garden Replica
- Shade Garden

and much more. Of note to the Bird Club is the Bamboo Collection because of its now-rare Lowcountry habitat. Norman Winter is a nationally known garden columnist and author who writes the "Garden Guru" column for *The Sun Today* newspaper. Check out coastalgeorgiabg.org



Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens is just 35 minutes away from Sun City.





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Have More Club Fun!

Enjoy the Bird Club even more next year.

Throw your hat in the ring for a 2017 Board position. Bring your ideas and creative spirit to this wonderful group of bird lovers -- the rewards are fantastic!

Ask the current Board members and they'll tell you -- it's great!

suncitybirdclub.org



See you in September! Happy Summer!

Love Birds? We do, so we love and care for their environment!

- We monitor our more than 100 Bluebird Trail nesting boxes to help build the Bluebird population
- We monitor our 15 Purple Martin Condos
- We participate in Okatie-Sun City Christmas Bird Count
- We sponsor/lead Field Trips, local and overnight, using our Club Birding Scope and walkie-talkies
- We participate in seasonal "Birdfests"
- We conduct or participate in periodic Backyard Birding events
- We educate Club members through our meeting programs and Bird Nooz

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 to **Bird Nooz** 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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