

August/September Field Trips Promise to be Exciting!

The 2nd of August will be our last Beginners' Walk of this year, and will be led by Audubon President Russ Regnery, and assisted by David Thorne. The walk will meet in the parking area behind Highlands Town Hall, at 7:30 AM that Saturday. Loaner binoculars will be available as will Field Guides. Assistance will be given in the use of binoculars and we hope to see such birds as Cedar Waxwings, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and other colorful species. If you know someone who might be interested in learning a bit more about our area birds, this is an ideal opportunity to help them get involved in the joy of birding!

Saturday, Sept. 6th will be a joint outing with the Franklin Bird Club along Turtle Pond Road. Highlands and Cashiers participants will meet as usual at 7:30 behind Highlands Town Hall to carpool along Turtle Pond for some excellent roadside birding. Species that may be seen include Eastern Bluebirds, Canada and other Wood Warblers, and possibly even a Barred Owl, which was seen on a past trip. Brock Hutchins will lead, loaner bins will be available.

From 15 – 30 Sept. we will attempt to offer Hawk-watching opportunities atop Whiteside Mountain. Last year we had 4 outings up the mountain and enjoyed the spectacle of as many as 300 Broad-winged Hawks in kettles as they sought to catch the thermals on their long trip south for the winter. There are also migrating American Eagles, Black and Turkey Vultures, Sharp-shinned and Coopers Hawks, as well as Peregrine Falcons and resident Ravens. These outings are very weather dependent, however, and require last minute notification to participants, so we ask that you send us your email addresses if you are interested so that we can let you know the night before we determine that the following day will be favorable. There are no guarantees, of course, but this can be a truly exciting and rewarding experience! Please send your indication of interest with best email address to brockhutchins@bellsouth.net. For questions, please call Brock at 770-486-3715 or Romney Bathurst at 526-1939.

On Sept. 20th we will head out for our annual Charlie Davis Memorial Blue Ridge Parkway Field Trip, a perennially popular outing to search for Fall migrants such as Broad-winged Hawks, Scarlet Tanagers, Tennessee Warblers and many others which use the Blue Ridge to guide their journeys southward. The group will meet at **7:00 AM** at the Highlands Town Hall Parking lot to carpool to the Parkway. Please note the earlier time, which is necessary in order to reach our destination before the traffic gets too hectic and while the birds are still active. Participants should bring a packed lunch and drink which we will stop to enjoy at one of the scenic overlooks. Birding should be relatively easy, roadside for the most part though there will be one or two optional, short walks. Loaner binoculars will be available. Brock Hutchins and Romney Bathurst will lead, with various board members assisting. For questions, please contact Brock at 770-486-3715, or Romney at 526-1939.