



MAY

May 4th: Beginners' Walk with guest leader Jack Johnston, to Gibson Bottoms in Franklin. In order to take advantage of the best time of day, this trip will meet at Highlands Town Hall at 7:00 AM to carpool down the hill. Chapter President Russ Regnery will be assisted by George Kaye and Mary Lou Waas. Gibson Bottoms is a 65 acre conservation easement just north of Franklin. It includes a half-mile of riverfront on the Little Tennessee River, with several nest-boxes along the river. In addition to the bottomland, which was formerly farmed, it has upland, hilly habitat. When walking off the dirt roads, the grasses can be high, so closed toed shoes and long pants are recommended.

May 11th: A special joint walk with the Franklin Bird Club, led by Jim & Ellen Shelton, for the first time will visit the area near their home at Walnut Gap. Michelle Styring will assist. Highlands participants should carpool from the Highlands Town Hall Parking lot, meeting at 7:30, while Cashiers residents will meet at the Community Center parking lot, at 7:45. We will be looking especially for Golden-winged Warblers as well as other wood-warbler species. Please contact Michelle at 828-743-9670 if you plan to join the walk.

May 18th: Lonesome Valley will once again welcome birders to their beautiful 800 acre canyon in Sapphire. Romney Bathurst will lead, assisted by Avary Doubleday, HPAS Vice President, and Kyle Pursel, HPAS Board Member and Stewardship Coordinator of the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust. Please carpool as on 11 May, since parking is limited. Breeding migrants, such as Hooded and Blackburnian Warblers as well as many others will be featured. The walk will begin at 8 AM at Lonesome Valley.

May 21st: A special Tuesday outing to the beautiful Southern Highlands Reserve atop Mt. Toxaway. The flame azaleas and other native flora which the reserve helps protect and propagate should be in bloom and will assure a beautiful as well as bird-filled morning. This outing is limited to 20, so reservations are a must: Call Romney Bathurst, 526-1939, to sign up. The Reserve requests a \$20 donation from each participant. Bring a bag lunch to enjoy in the gardens, and don't forget cameras – the views are lovely!

May 25th: This week's walk in Highlands will visit one or more of the best birding sites in Highlands, and will be led by Brock Hutchins, Past President and Outings Committee Chairman, assisted by Michelle Styring and Pat Strickland. All participants should meet at 7:30 in the parking lot behind Highlands Town Hall.

JUNE

June 1st: This month's Beginners' Walk will work on feeder species as the home of Edwin and Kaye Poole in Highlands. Last year's group loved the action at multiple feeders and the help of HPAS leaders Brock Hutchins and Edwin Poole, who will be assisted by Mary Lou Waas. If you don't have your own binoculars, HPAS will loan you a pair for the morning and help you learn how to use them too. Meet at Highlands Town Hall Parking lot at 7:30 for a fun morning of easy birding!

June 8th: A walk in the mountain community of Chinquapin, adjacent to Panthertown and above Lonesome Valley. The walk will be led by Russ Regnery, HPAS President, with assistance by resident Ann Campbell, HPAS Board Member. Chinquapin is a private, gated, conservation-oriented development in Cashiers and our walk will be on the 700 acre Carlton Family conservation easement. This property is available only to groups with prior arrangements. Participants are encouraged to bring a bag lunch to enjoy after birding the trails. Brown Creepers will be target species of interest today. Meet in the Cashiers Community Ctr. parking area at 7:30 to carpool up to the community.

June 13th, Thursday: Our annual Owl Prowl, in conjunction with the Highlands Nature Center and featuring the live birds of the Charlotte Raptor Rehab Center, will once again be a popular event. This fun and instructive evening is free, and always a hit with children as well as adults, so bring your flashlights and join us in learning all about raptors which occur in the NC Mountains, and afterwards on a walk in town to see what owls we can find. The program will begin at 7:30PM in the amphitheater behind the Highlands Nature Center. Parking is very limited, so please do carpool and arrive early for the best seats.

June 15th: A new venue for bird-banding and study with Mark Hopey will be Cowee Mounds, north of Franklin. This lower elevation habitat offers some species not seen in Highlands, and the up close and personal opportunity to participate in gathering vital information on our migrant birds. George Kaye and Brock Hutchins will lead, with everyone meeting in Highlands at the Town Hall Parking lot for 7:30 car-pooling to the site in Franklin. This trip will offer great photographic opportunities, so don't forget your camera! Meeting site in Franklin will be across from the Iotla Recycling Ctr., approximately 5 miles north of Franklin at the intersection of Hwy. 28 and Sanderstown Rd.

June 22nd: Our joint EcoTour with the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust will visit Sweetwater Farms, a mixed habitat 80+ acre property which is under a conservation easement with the Land Trust. This is a new venue for HPAS walks this year so it will be exciting to see what species we can turn up! Romney Bathurst, HPAS Board Member, will lead, assisted by Kyle Pursel, HCLT Stewardship Director, and Pat Strickland, also a Board Member, in charge of membership for HPAS. As lunch will be part of the trip, HCLT Members should bring \$5 to enjoy the yummy picnic that HCLT will provide. Those who are not yet members may join HCLT by visiting their web site, www.hicashlt.org or calling Julie at 526-1111. Julie will be taking reservations, which are a must in order to plan properly for lunches. Details on meeting place and time will be given when you call to reserve your spot.

June 29th: Paula Gorgolione of the Franklin Bird Club will lead this week's walk along the Franklin Greenway. Romney Bathurst will co-lead, with Michelle Styring assisting. Many of the birds seen down in Franklin do not regularly appear, or do not appear at all, on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau, so this week's walk along the Greenway should be especially interesting. Last year a Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen, and other possibilities include Yellow-breasted Chat, Common Yellow-throat, and perhaps even more "yellow" things! Meet at the Highlands Town Hall Parking lot at 7:30 sharp for car-pooling to the Macon County Public Library in Franklin.

More Field Trips and outings will be offered in July and August and on through mid-September, so stay tuned for more opportunities to join in the fun!