

# BirdWalk Newsletter 4.16.2017

Walk Conducted by Perry Nugent  
Newsletter Written by Jayne J. Matney



Photo by Marina Coppedge

BLUE FISHERMAN      Dave Ruslander

“I watch blue fisherman wade in the James  
their patience eternal. Nine Great Blues  
line across churning rapids to stand  
in eddies, on rock edges, or brave white water.  
Elongated “S” shaped necks end in rapier beaks  
Angled down. Eyes unblinking, they wait.



Photo above by Jo Frkovich

A sudden thrust at a target invisible  
and a fish squirms on his foil.  
With aplomb and grace Great Blue  
tosses the fish, catches his meal, and swallows.  
Heron sated, folds his neck against his back,  
closes eyes,  
and  
rests.



Photo above by Angie Bridges  
Photo left by Guenter Weber

# Birds in Culture: A Quick Historical and Global Overview

Birds have been roaming, or should I say flying, this earth since prehistoric times. Depictions of birds have appeared on cave dwelling walls. Ancient artifacts and sculptures illustrate man's early infatuations with these creatures. From the beginning, man did not



Photo by Cary McDonald

see the bird as just a food source for survival. Birds represented many things over the years to many different cultures. In India, the peacock is considered Mother Earth. The Yazidi religion considers the peacock an angel and a central figure in their faith. Tangata manu birds on Easter Island were chiefs, while many early civilizations in South America and the Andes Mountains felt the birds were transitional, magical creatures that travelled between Earth bound and spiritual worlds. Ancient Greek writings and art depicted the owl as being on the arm of the goddess of wisdom. Magyars's mythical Turul

holds national power and nobility. Hungary reveres this philosophy so much so that the largest statue in the world is of this bird. Some mythological stories represent birds as monsters. Of course, Aesop's Fables represented birds in its characters, and even as late as Beatrix



This Yellow-crowned Night Heron looks similar to a character in a Dr. Seuss Book

Photo by Jo Frkovich

Potter's book, *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-duck*, birds were kept in the forefront of storytelling. On stage, birds have been represented widely. From Aristophane's 414 BC comedy "The Birds", to the ballet classic "The Swan" and Stravinsky's "The Firebird", and all the way up to Lion King in more recent years, the bird is never left out. One to remember, Alfred Hitchcock's film, "The Birds", birds ruled and attacked humans.

In writings, a poem written in Persian describes "The Conference of the Birds" for choosing of a king, and John Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" became a classic as well as "To a Skylark" by Percy B Shelly. Many other poems, too numerous to list, were also representing birds. Collectable art from such artists as Thomas Bewick and John James Audubon illustrate and celebrate the nature of birds.



Photo by Guenter Weber

**All types of birds, especially the eagle, are represented in coats of arms. On a lighter note, over 3000 pubs in the United Kingdom have a bird or birds in its name! Falconry was very popular in the early ages and is still practiced today but on a smaller scale. Here at Magnolia Plantation, we acquired a saker falcon from Medieval Times Dinner Show in Myrtle Beach, SC. “Natasha” was used for falconry exhibitions during the pageantry each night.**

**Messenger pigeons were used for general communication and during war times, as well as recreation for racing. Cockfighting has been practiced through the ages, captured birds have been caged for their beautiful song and colors, caged canaries have been used by miners as indicators of poison gases, and some species such as parrots and parakeets are talking pets. Feathers have been used for mattresses and pillows, hat clothes decorations, boas around the neck, the traditional headdresses of tribes, quill pens, arrow quills, and fishing lures. Birdwatching, whether it be while walking in nature or watching a birdfeeder in the backyard, has become a worldwide pastime. Millions of bird enthusiasts join associations and organizations for the protection and enjoyment of birds. Many are beginning to grow in an appreciation for these animals and how we are connected to them. From the symbiotic relationship between the honeyguide birds and people or badgers, to the interdependency of humans and birds such as vultures, to the beauty that birds show us, birds are an integral part of our lives.**

**[Above article is a summary from Wikipedia.com “Birds in Culture”](#)**

**April 16<sup>th</sup> was a very busy day for the plantation. This was the day the Easter Egg Hunt was hosted! Despite the extra activity, noise, and traffic, the bird walk carried on. 47 species of birds were located on this morning with 5 participants on the walk. Our mornings are typically cool but not cold but warming throughout the day.**

**The Rookery was busy for many types of birds. Anhinga, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, Little Blue Heron, Tricolored Heron, Green Heron, and Black-crowned Heron all participated in the nesting and family activities of the season. Wood Duck glided across the water as a part of the ambiance. Only 1 Blue-winged Teal and 1 Pied-billed Grebe were spotted on this day. Most of the Common Moorhen, 60 total, were seen in Perry Field or the large impoundment along the cross dike. 20 Laughing Gull were included as flyovers. Black and Turkey Vulture were mixed together above the fields and forest. 2 adults and 1 third year bald eagle were spotted along the walk as well.**



**Young Great Blues in nest calling for food  
Photo by John Nickerson**

**3 Red-shouldered hawk sightings were made- typical of the exit road/cabin area and the back side of the Audubon Swamp. Red-bellied, Downy, and Pileated**



**Woodpecker were either seen or heard. The Pileated are usually making their appearances in the forest near the Indian mound. What fabulous woodpeckers they are to see in nature!**

**Photo by Cathy Padgett**

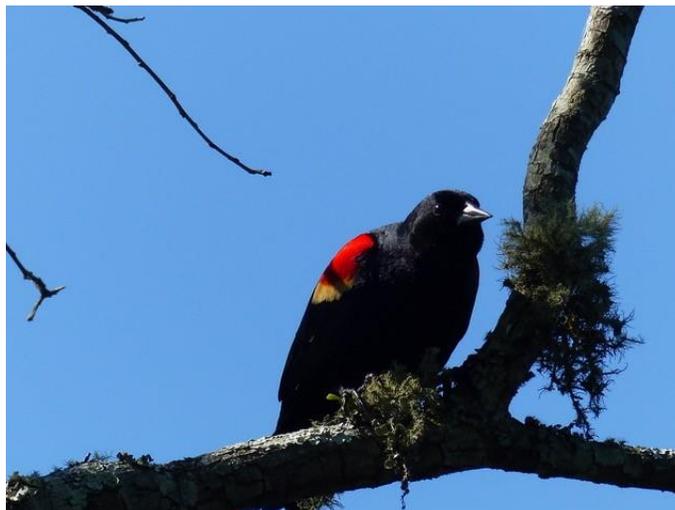


The Prothonotary Warbler are finally starting to get more active and visible these days, and the Summer Tanager showed up near the Indian mound area. Another highlight was the spotting of 3 of the Great-crested Flycatcher!

Prothonotary Warbler

Photo by Guenter Weber

Three types of vireo were counted: White-eyed, Yellow-throated, and Red-eyed. Three additional types of warbler were the Northern Parula, Yellow-throated, and the Black-and-white. The two species of sparrow were the Savannah and Swamp Sparrows. Finishing up the 47 identified were: Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, American and Fish Crows, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren (our state bird), Eastern Bluebird, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, and the Common and Boat-tailed Grackles.



Red-winged Blackbird

Photo by Marina Coppedge