

3 Programs You Won't Want to Miss, July 21, 23 & 25

Highlands Audubon and the Highlands Biological Foundation are pleased to announce that they are co-hosting noted ornithologist and conservationist John Gerwin for three local events. On Thursday the 21st at 6:30 p.m. he will speak at the Highlands Nature Center on his research. The title of his talk is "Birds of a Feather Researched Together, Bird Monitorin in the Southern Appalachians" On Saturday July 23rd at 8:00 a.m. he will conduct a mist net and bird banding demonstration at the Old Ranger Station on Flat Mountain Road. On Monday July 25th at 7:30 p.m. Gerwin will speak at the Hudson Library on "Golden-winged Warblers of Costa Rica." John Gerwin is the Research Curator for Ornithology at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh. All events are free and open to the public.

John Gerwin is a 27-year veteran with the NC Museum of Natural Sciences. His work with birds includes research and educational projects, in collaboration with other biologists. These projects have taken him around the State and into the tropics. For his Thursday presentation, he will discuss a few of those projects that relate to the southern Appalachians. These include work with the breeding population of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; a new project with Hermit Thrush; and work on the Black-throated Green Warbler in the Uwharrie mountains (with a tangent in the southern Appalachians). He will discuss a collaborative effort on Veeries and possible future work on Saw-whet Owls.

John currently conducts research on the life cycles of migratory birds in North and South Carolina, with a focus on breeding biology, but he works on the non-breeding component of some species as well. He primarily uses radio telemetry to study how these birds use the habitats they live in, and their nesting chronologies and reproductive success. John also co-leads ecotours to local, national and international destinations and has been co-leading an annual bird banding/ecotour trip to various Shade-coffee plantations in northern Nicaragua. John enthusiastically conducts outreach events to groups of all ages throughout the State of NC, and occasionally elsewhere. He is fluent in Spanish. He enjoys gardening, especially with native plants, and attracting butterflies. He does programs and blogs on this topic as well, and leads butterfly walks in the Raleigh area.

Directions to the Old Ranger Station Bird Banding Demo: From Highlands, take Rte. 64 East towards Cashiers, turn left on Flat Mt. Road, go approx. 1 mile, bear right over the bridge. At 2.0 miles from 64, look for a left turn, just beyond a private driveway, into the parking area. From Cashiers, heading West on 64, turn left onto Flat Mt. Rd., which is the second left turn beyond the Hospital entrance.

This is a wonderful opportunity to observe the beauty of our birds up close and in the hand. There will be opportunities to transport birds for release, so be sure to bring your camera!

Mist nets are carefully placed and closely monitored.

John Gerwin with a Mourning Dove in hand.

