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THE BIRDERS OF ST. JAMES

Special Upcoming event:

“The Changing Nature of our Coastal Birds”

A 30-year career as a Botanist, Conservation Biologist, Horticulturalist, Author, Television and Radio Personality and TV Producer, Patrick is best known as the Emmy Award-winning host and co-creator of the ETV nature program; “Expeditions with Patrick McMillan” which ran for eight years on PBS.



Naturalist, author, educator and Emmy-winning PBS host **Dr. Patrick McMillan** to speak in St. James.

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 7PM (*doors open at 6:30*)

Homer Wright Event Center

“The Changing Nature of our Coastal Birds.
How the Carolina coast has changed and how birds tell our story.”

- Experience a preview of the keynote speaker for the Hammock Coast Birding Festival!
- Free to Members. \$5 for non-members at the door.



The Birding Journey

It could be because I'm new to birding, but it seems that I am noticing that interest in our birds is becoming more popular than ever. Take for instance, the Buffalo Bills... yes, the football team. A video was posted online by team members showing them

taking a break from workouts to lift binoculars and observe the birds all around them. “Ornithology, it’s all about the process,” says 6’4” center Sedrick Van Pran-Granger. Of course, this video went viral by reposting mostly by birding groups cheering on their now “very cool” past time. Look! Football players love birds too!

This past month several members of our group have enjoyed “the process” while going on bird walks in St James and on Bald Head Island. And I hope that the backyard birders are noticing the changes taking place at their feeders as the seasons change, another “process” that keeps things interesting. Check out the progress on our website Birdersofstjames.com with lots of information about our group and birding in our area assisting with “the process.”

Our Speaker Series is shaping up nicely. Next up to present on November 12th at 7pm at the Homer Wright Event Center is **Dr. Patrick MacMillan**, a naturalist, author and educator. MacMillan had a TV show on the Carolina PBS station “Expeditions with Patrick Macmillan” in which he took viewers on nature habitat excursions throughout the Carolinas. He is presenting to us “*The Changing Nature of Our Coastal Birds.*” While the Carolina coast is changing, our birds change too and they tell “our” story of the changes we have made. As we continue our St James birding journey, to quote Pran-Granger, “there are birds all around us...keep your eyes peeled and you may see something beautiful.”

Trish Greene
President
Birders of St. James

Birding in St. James

What is required to achieve the optimal experience while seeking those birds all around us? There isn't a straightforward answer, as it is a personal journey, and what is effective for one individual may not be suitable for another. However, the Birders of St. James are available to assist with opportunities and recommendations in this newsletter and throughout our newly launched website.

Home page of our website:



[Home](#) [Membership](#) [Outreach](#) [Discover Birding](#) [Resources](#)

The Birders of St. James



Take a journey through our new website. While there, enjoy photos from your neighbors, schedules of upcoming events, and discover local birding hot spots. You can also gather useful information to enhance your birding experience, including over [140 resource documents](#) focused on birds and their habitat.

Here are two examples:

[Great Horned Owl](#)

[The Atlantic Flyway](#)

A Birding Excursion to Bald Head Island: October 6.



What a lovely day for a bird tour! The weather was perfect with low 80s and sunny. This excursion was planned months ago so we were fortunate that the weather cooperated. Fourteen of us Birders of St James met at the Bald Head Island Terminal early to take the 8am ferry to cross. We were met at the island by Jennifer Wigen of the Bald Head Island Nature Conservancy and transported via a tram to their building and then transferred into golf carts.

Guides Heather and Olivia drove us all over the island, through a “maritime forest”, described as a thick canopy of oak trees and moss, then out to marshes and beach heads. We stopped and did the birder thing looking at birds through our binoculars and their telescope.

This day we saw pelicans, gulls, herons, egrets, king fisher, osprey, and hawks. Not a bad take. We were looking for the elusive Painted Bunting, making bird calls but no luck this time. There’s always next time!



November is an excellent month for birding along the North Carolina coast, as it marks the arrival of numerous wintering waterfowl like this Wood Duck and continues the late-season migration of songbirds like the Dark-eyed Junco.

Notable highlights include large numbers of waterfowl like Buffleheads and Gadwalls, various sea ducks in ocean waters like the Red-breasted Merganser, and a mix of late-arriving



migratory songbirds like Swainson's Warbler, Cedar Waxwing, and Hermit Thrush.

We have more local bird walks coming up that you may sign up for on the ["Members"](#) section of our website.

Landscaping for Birds

American Beautyberry

A great bird-friendly shrub that produces bright berries that ripen just prior to fall migration.

Want more birds in your yard?
Give them a reason to be there!

We've gathered over 35 documents on plants that enhance a nature friendly landscape.

Native Plants for Birds





Pictured above is Hugh Shaw, our official Bird Walks Leader. Hugh is passionate about helping people develop the necessary birding skills, including equipment. Below are his comments on the first bird walk he led for our group:

This morning, (Oct.9), was our first Birders of Saint James bird walk. Five of us visited ponds and bird feeders on St James. In three hours we logged 18 species: 8 Snowy Egrets, one Tri-colored Heron, one immature Bald Eagle, one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, one Pied-billed Grebe, 6 White Ibis, 20 Canada Geese, 3 Great White Herons, Crows, Turkey Vultures, Yellow-rumped Warblers, two Downy Woodpeckers, one Spotted Sandpiper, 3 Double-crested Cormorants, 6 Carolina Chickadees, 3 Mourning Doves, and 23 Mallards.

We are still in the migration season. As colder weather arrives in the northern U. S., we will see more ducks, Buffleheads, and mergansers in our ponds at St James. As fall is arriving, our Red-headed Woodpeckers, Kingbirds and several warbler species have already departed for their wintering locations in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

Respectfully submitted,
Hugh Shaw



Upcoming events,
Highlights & Features

November + Dates of Interest

- Tuesday, Nov. 11: Veterans Day
- Wednesday, Nov. 12: The Birders of St. James program. **Details here.**
- Thursday, Nov. 13: Hugh Shaw leads a local bird walk
- Thursday Nov. 13: Waterfowl overwinter peak begins at Pea Island, NC
- Saturday, Nov. 15: America Recycles Day
- Monday, Nov. 17: Leonid's Meteor Shower
- Tuesday, Nov. 18: Hugh Shaw leads a local bird walk
- Friday, Nov. 21: World Fisheries Day
- Thursday, Nov. 27: Thanksgiving
- Friday, Nov. 28: Native American Heritage Day
- Wednesday, Dec. 3: Hugh Shaw Presents: "*Winter Bird Counts & You*"
- Wednesday, Jan. 21: Diane Duloft "*Eastern Bluebirds*" - St. James

A sample of Patrick McMillan's presentations:



The Birders of St. James appreciates your membership and participation. Your membership enables us to host distinguished speakers and presenters. In addition, your support contributes to the production of professional and informative newsletters, along with an engaging and enlightening website, all of which enrich our understanding and appreciation of birds and their habitat. We're building something meaningful together, and we're looking for passionate individuals like you to help us achieve uncommon results. Know a neighbor who would benefit from becoming a member of the Birders of St. James?

Forward this newsletter & share the joy of birding!

*Fear not November's challenge bold
We've books and friends;
And hearths that never can grow cold:
These make amends!*

- Alexander Louis Fraser



We look forward to
seeing you on November

12th at 7PM
Don't miss out on this
chance to connect with
our board members,
fellow bird enthusiasts,
and an Emmy Award-
winning presenter.



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