Greenville County Bird Club Trip Report

**Date:** July 25-26, 2015  
**Location:** Allendale Kite Fields, Bear Island WMA and Donnelley WMA  
**Leader:** Denise DuPon

**Species List:** 74

Six GCBC members met on Millett Road in Allendale County, SC on a warm July morning in the hopes of seeing Swallow-tailed and Mississippi Kites feeding over the fields. We were not disappointed! Shortly after our arrival, we were rewarded with a display of a Swallow-tailed and a Mississippi kite chasing each other right over our heads! Although we did not have the numbers of kites that we have had in previous years, the show was well worth the trip, with over 20 Swallow-tailed and almost 15 Mississippi Kites. We chased a Shrike down the power line for a ways; he was not as cooperative as the kites, and found Eastern Meadowlark, White Ibis and Cattle Egret in the field, as well. From there, we had a quick stop at a pond off Furse Mill Road where we had sightings of Anhinga, Green Heron, Common Gallinule and Wood Duck. The gnats and heat were bad enough to keep the stop short, and we headed off for an air-conditioned lunch.

After lunch in Allendale, we took a loop around some of the agricultural fields south of town. The heat kept bird activity to a minimum, but we managed to add Little Blue Heron, Painted and Indigo Bunting and Blue Grosbeak to the list. The kite field at Barton Road and Revolutionary Trail was quiet, with only a few kites spotted at a distance. Here we lost a couple of our participants and added one before heading to Walterboro. Lewis Burke led us to the Great Swamp Sanctuary in Walterboro, where we walked the boardwalk through a hardwood forest. It was late in the day but we managed to get a glimpse of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and good looks at a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher before heading to dinner in Walterboro and preparations for the next day’s adventure.
Sunday we drove to Bear Island finding over 400 Tree Swallows on the power lines along Bennett’s Point Road. I have never seen Mary’s House Pond so empty of bird life, and every impoundment was full as we searched for low water and shorebirds. We had a sudden glimpse up ahead at a trunk gate full of activity. We tried to sneak up without flushing all the birds and found abundant Wood Stork, White and Glossy Ibis and good numbers of herons. While we were watching, a WMA employee drove up and we asked where we could find low water, he told us Hog Island was in the process of coming down and where to park for the best views. We were invited to the party! Hog Island impoundment was full of waders: 21 White Pelicans, more than 50 Roseate Spoonbills, Wood Storks, Glossy and White Ibis, Snowy Egrets too numerous to count, Black-necked Stilts, Tricolor and Little Blue Herons. We had a bit of trouble identifying the terns, but we had Black Tern and Forester’s, for sure. The water was still a bit deep for shorebirds, but we were able to find Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted and Solitary Sandpiper and a couple of unnamed peeps. As a fitting end we had a Least Bittern make a quick appearance to send us off to lunch in the shade at the edge of Mary’s House Pond.

The afternoon was spent at Donnelley WMA in the hopes of Purple Gallinule and Black-bellied Whistling-Duck. We spotted one immature Purple Gallinule at Savage Backwater, but were unable to find any Whistling-Ducks. We ID’d a Northern Parula to bring our warbler count for the weekend up to two. The heat finally did us in, and we headed home with a total count of 74 species. Good birding and great birders had made for a fantastic weekend!
Species List:

Wood Duck
American White Pelican
Anhinga
Least Bittern
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Little Blue Heron
Tricolored Heron
Cattle Egret
Green Heron
Black-crowned Night-Heron
White Ibis
Glossy Ibis
Roseate Spoonbill
Wood Stork
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Swallow-tailed Kite
Mississippi Kite
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Purple Gallinule
Common Gallinule
Killdeer
Black-necked Stilt
Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
Solitary Sandpiper
Spotted Sandpiper
Laughing Gull
Forster’s Tern
Black Tern
Black Skimmer
Mourning Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher

Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Acadian Flycatcher
Great-crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Loggerhead Shrike
White-eyed Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Fish Crow
Purple Martin
Tree Swallow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Carolina Wren
Marsh Wren
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Eastern Bluebird
Northern Mockingbird
Northern Parula
Common Yellowthroat
Summer Tanager
Eastern Towhee
Northern Cardinal
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Painted Bunting
Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark
Boat-tailed Grackle
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
House Finch
American Goldfinch

References:
Here are links to a couple of Google Maps we used this weekend, provided by Jeff Click.

Allendale:
https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zoDI8k9rcYNM.kl0PNkmRN1vo

Bear Island:
https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zoDI8k9rcYNM.kBlgh6s2wlrM

Allendale, Bear Island and Donnelley, July 25-26, 2015
Greenville County Bird Club www.gcbirdclub.org