

# Greenville County Bird Club Trip Report



<b>Date:</b>	Saturday, February 22, 2014
<b>Location:</b>	Santee National Wildlife Reserve's Bluff Unit and Orangeburg Sod Farm
<b>Resources:</b>	<a href="http://www.fws.gov/santee/">http://www.fws.gov/santee/</a>
<b>Leader:</b>	Denise DuPon, with Santee NWR volunteer Mary Lou Dickson
<b>List Compilation:</b>	David Kirk
<b>Narrative:</b>	Denise DuPon
<b>Notable Highlights:</b>	<i>Santee NWR:</i> Greater White-fronted, Snow, and Ross's Geese, Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles, Northern Harrier, Osprey, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Ruddy Duck, Wilson's Snipes, and a singing Common Loon. <i>Orangeburg Sod Farm:</i> Least Sandpipers and American Pipits
<b>Duration:</b>	8:00 A.M. – 3:30 P.M.
<b>Species Total:</b>	65

Two GCBC members were escorted by Mary Lou Dickson, a volunteer at Santee NWR, for a guided tour of the Bluff Unit at Santee NWR. The Bluff Unit was reopened after a week's closure due to damages sustained in the recent winter storm. The remnants of the storm were still apparent as we walked the trails and roads looking for wintering waterfowl and other Santee specialties.

We started at the edge of the seasonally-closed agricultural fields, sifting through the Canada Geese looking for rarer species. Mary Lou's experienced eye quickly picked out a Greater White-fronted Goose, and with patience, we were able to identify both Snow and Ross's Geese. The same field gave us Sandhill Cranes, performing a dancing display, as well as good looks at our best raptors of the day, both an adult and an immature Bald Eagle, a Northern Harrier, an Osprey, and a Red-shouldered Hawk.

We were driven out into the fields and impoundments as Mary Lou described some of the different harvesting techniques used in wildlife management areas to support various species of birds--very interesting information! Although the far impoundments did not hold the diversity of waterfowl we have seen in previous years, we were able to get good views of American Wigeon, Gadwall, and Ruddy Ducks, until the ducks saw us and retreated farther out in the reeds. A group of six Wilson's Snipes gave us a quick look before flying up, landing *closer* to us and immediately disappearing into the grass. How do they do that?!

We had a pleasant lunch on the deck at the Visitor Center, with the highlight being a singing Common Loon.

Stopping on the way home at the Orangeburg sod farm, we managed to find one more GCBC member waiting for us. His scope was on a large group of Least Sandpipers and American Pipits. Nearby was a tree with entangled white netting that almost had us convinced it was a Snowy Owl! Even though we missed on the "owl" it was a good day with a total of 65 species.

## Species List:

Ross's Goose  
Snow Goose  
Greater White-fronted Goose  
Canada Goose  
Wood Duck  
Gadwall  
American Wigeon  
Mallard  
Northern Shoveler  
Ruddy Duck  
Common Loon  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Double-crested Cormorant  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Black Vulture  
Turkey Vulture  
Osprey  
Bald Eagle  
Northern Harrier  
Red-shouldered Hawk  
American Kestrel

American Coot  
Sandhill Crane  
Killdeer  
Least Sandpiper  
Wilson's Snipe  
Ring-billed Gull  
Rock Pigeon  
Mourning Dove  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Eastern Phoebe  
Loggerhead Shrike  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Fish Crow  
Horned Lark  
Carolina Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
Carolina Wren  
Golden-crowned Kinglet  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Eastern Bluebird

Hermit Thrush  
American Robin  
Northern Mockingbird  
Brown Thrasher  
American Pipit  
Cedar Waxwing  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Palm Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Eastern Towhee  
Chipping Sparrow  
Savannah Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
White-throated Sparrow  
Northern Cardinal  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Eastern Meadowlark  
Common Grackle  
House Finch  
House Sparrow

**Photos:** These photos, taken on previous trips, are used with the generous permission of GCBC member Don Faulkner.

**Gadwalls**



**Horned Lark**

**Sandhill Crane**



**Wilson's Snipe**



**Loggerhead Shrike**