

Did you know? At one point, different parts of NC were on different continents and moving in different directions. Talk about birds being confused about borders! Try to find someone else who already knew this.

Did you know? The remnants of a once-great mountain chain the height of the Alps begins east of Raleigh and these sediments reach a depth of 10,000 feet thick under Cape Hatteras. The Appalachian mountains have been pushed up and eroded back several times – and this has played a large role in the habitat that is available to birds (and to us). Find someone and discuss this.

Question: When the first supercontinent, Rodinia, began to break apart about 680 million years ago, great gashes like Africa's Great Rift Valley appeared. Some of these gashes were where NC is now. So where are the gashes now?

Answer: Rivers eventually filled these rift valleys with sediments, but you can see rift-valley sediments from when the first supercontinent, Rodinia, started breaking up about 280 million years ago, preserved in rocks at Grandfather Mountain and in the Smoky Mountains.

Question: What is the oldest geologic evidence found so far in NC?

Answer: 1,800-million-year-old rocks in scattered outcrops near Roan Mountain in the western Blue Ridge Mountains near the Tennessee state line. No other rocks in the Carolinas are even close to being this old. The rocks were probably part of another continent that was stuck onto North America during a continental collision.

Question: If a bird had flown over NC about 90 million years ago, where would the shoreline had been?

Answer: 90 million years ago, the sea level was 800 feet higher than it is today and the shoreline today would run from Winston Salem to Charlotte to Spartanburg.

Question: How come we have solitary mountains such as Pickards Mountain and Occaneechi Mountain?

Answer: Gondwana collided with Laurentia about 330 million years, pushing the Appalachians up again to Himalayan proportions over 26,000 feet or more. Layers of sediment and ash from Gondwana were deposited on Laurentia which with erosion became the monadnocks we know as Pickards and Occaneechi Mountain.

Question: What is Ethno-ornithology?

Answer: If you don't know what ethno-ornithology is, have fun making something up.

Question: What little yellow bird usually shows up in the Durham/Chapel Hill area around April 1 each year?

Answer: The Atlantic Flyway: it encompasses some of the hemisphere's most productive ecosystems, including forests, beaches, and coastal wetlands.

Answer: The Prairie Warbler

Question: NC has two rift basins formed about 260 million years ago – what are their names?

Question: NC is on a major route for migrating birds. Do you know its name?

Answer: NC has 2 major Triassic basins, formed when the continent Pangea started to break up about 260 million years ago: the Deep River basin and the Dan River basin.

Question: If you were a bird flying over NC, how do you think you could tell NC from SC or Virginia?
Tip: There is no answer card out there. Simply find someone and have fun trying to figure out an answer.

Question: What is the highest point of elevation in NC?

Question: When did the first cockroaches appear?

Answer: We have the highest point in eastern North America with Mt. Mitchell being 6,684 ft. and we have 43 peaks with elevations over 6,000.

Answer: 340 to 300 million years ago, along with the first reptiles.

Question: How many species of trees are found in the Blue Ridge Province?

Answer: The Blue Ridge Province more trees than all of Europe – over 100 species and over 2,000 plants including many that are rare and endangered.

Question: Of all the ecoregions of the world, how does the Piedmont compare?

Answer: The Piedmont has the highest number of herbaceous and shrub species in North America – 3,635. The Piedmont ranks among the top ten ecoregions in richness of amphibians, reptiles, butterflies, birds and mammals.