



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

Vol. 60, No. 3

January / February 2012

January 12th Meeting–7:00 PM “Birding the Outer Banks”



Our speaker this month will be our own Marc Nichols, park ranger at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. His presentation will be on the birds of Eastern North Carolina. Bird club members traveled down to the Outer Banks last February and birded spots like Pea Island Wildlife Refuge, Bodie Island Lighthouse, Alligator River Wildlife Refuge and more.

Host/Hostess: tbd

Meeting Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park

January Field Trips

January 1 & 15, Sunday ~ 7:00-9:00 AM

Regular bird walk in Newport News Park

Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.

Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

Jan. 14 (Sat.), 7:45 AM – Chickahominy WMA

The January field trip will be to the Chickahominy Wildlife Management Area located in Charles City County. The best way to get to the management area is to take I-64 to Rt. 199. Take Rt. 199 to Rt. 5, John Tyler Highway. From Rt. 5, turn right onto Wilcox Neck Road. The entrance to the management area is on the right, Eagles Nest Rd. Meet at 8:00am in first parking area on the right hand side. The management area is located 11 miles outside Williamsburg.

February 9th, Meeting–7:00 PM “The Birds of Newport News Park”



After transferring to Jefferson Laboratory from the Northeast, physicist, avid birder, and amateur photographer, Michael Lowry was delighted to discover Newport News Park and the twice monthly bird walk sponsored by HRBC. The rich and varied habitat of the park is home or way station to a large and diverse bird population. Photographing his sightings in the park, he has captured images of over 125 bird species in less than three years. These form a collection of sometimes amusing, sometimes amazing, and sometimes absolutely awful photos which he will share at the February meeting.

Host/Hostess: Meredith Bell & Laura Slaughter

Meeting Location: Please check the website or call one of the officers, location may need to change.

February Field Trips

February 5 & 19, Sunday ~ 7:00-9:00 AM

Regular bird walk in Newport News Park

Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.

Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

Feb. 11 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Yorktown Battlefield

The February field trip will be to Yorktown Battlefield and Yorktown Beach. Meet at 7:30am at Surrender Field. Take Rt.17 George Washington Highway; turn right at the light onto Cook Rd. State Rt. 704. Take slight left on Surrender Rd State Route 634. Parking area to Surrender Field will be on left hand side.

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we let you know that one of our most active and beloved HRBC members, Ben Copeland, died on Sunday, January 1.

The funeral will be on Friday, January 6, at 11:00am at Hampton Baptist Church at 40 Kings Way in Hampton, followed by a reception in the fellowship hall. Burial will be at 2:30pm at Parklawn Memorial Park.

Memorials may be made to the Hampton Baptist Church Building Fund, 40 King's Way, Hampton, VA 23669; or the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, c/o Marty Edmonds, Treas., 2805 Ann Johnson Lane, Williamsburg, VA 23185.



TogetherGreen Volunteers in Gloucester and Matthews Co.

By Mary Elfner



Thanks to a TogetherGreen grant from the National Audubon Society and Toyota, the Virginia Important Bird Area (IBA) Program has held two TogetherGreen volunteer events. The IBA program worked alongside the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Richmond Audubon Society, IBA Adopter for the Lower James River IBA, to coordinate the first event on September 24th and October 1st. Volunteers conducted a fall bird survey at the James River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and worked on several infrastructure projects at the Presquile NWR, both a part of the Lower James River IBA. The second TogetherGreen event was held at the Western Shores Marshes IBA on November 5th and was put together by the Virginia IBA Program and the Williamsburg and Hampton Roads Bird Clubs, who have co-adopted the Western Shore Marshes IBA. The November 5th event took place at Bethel Beach and New Point Comfort to engage volunteers in a bird survey and picking up and disposing of/recycling trash. For more information visit: www.togethergreen.org/volunteer

VSO Winter Field Trip

North Carolina Outer Banks

February 3-5, 2012

Leaders: Bill Akers & Jerry Via

Make plans to join us at the Outer Banks of North Carolina February 3-5 for the VSO's Winter field trip. We always have great waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors, along with a wide assortment of land birds. This year we're excited to announce a special optional Friday trip to Lake Mattamuskeet, led by VSO member Lee Adams.

Lodging: The Comfort Inn at Kill Devil Hills will be the trip headquarters. The special VSO room rate is \$65 for oceanfront and \$60 for street side plus tax. Ocean front rooms are available on a first come, first served basis. Contact information for the hotel is: 1601 S. Virginia Dare Trail, Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948; Phone: 252-441-6333; fax 252-441-7779. Reservations must be made by January 13, 2012 to get the special VSO rate.

Meals are on your own. A complimentary breakfast buffet breakfast is included with your stay, beginning each morning at 6:30 AM. You can select from coffee, juice, fruit, cereal, Danish, hard-boiled eggs, and make-your-own waffles. Participants should bring lunch provisions for Friday (optional trip) and Saturday. For dinner there are many fine restaurants in the area.

Program: A program of events and announcements will be available at the front desk on Friday morning.

Friday: A day-trip to Lake Mattamuskeet will be led by Lee Adams, who has explored this area with NC birding groups and knows all the "hot spots!" Last year they spotted a Screech Owl, American Bittern and Common Gallinule. Species often found here include Snow Goose, Tundra Swan, and various ducks. Meet in the hotel lobby at 7:15 AM for 7:30 departure. Bring snacks, beverage and lunch. The group will stop at Alligator River on the return trip to listen for Short-eared Owls at dusk.

Friday Night: An orientation and slide program will be given at 8:00 PM in the conference room near the lobby.

Saturday: All day will be spent visiting impoundments at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge and the beaches of Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The generally milder climate and the proximity of the Gulf Stream make for an interesting mix of wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, ocean birds and sometimes whales. Participants may be divided into smaller groups, but every group will visit all areas. Participants should bring lunch.

Saturday Evening: There will be a tally at 6:30 PM in the VSO conference room at the hotel.

Sunday Morning: We'll travel in caravan to Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. We will depart from the hotel at 8:00 AM, those continuing straight home from the field trip will have time to check out of their rooms.

Come prepared for variable weather, lots of birds and a good time. If you have any questions, contact Bill Akers at 540-951-7692 or bill.akersj@comcast.net or Meredith Bell at 804-824-4958 or merandlee@gmail.com. Also visit the VSO website at: http://www.virginiabirds.net/f_trips.html

Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

The GBBC is a FREE annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent.

This year's count is FEB. 17-20. Make plans to participate because your entry counts! You can get more details at: www.birdsource.org/gbbc

Although it's called the Great "Backyard" Bird Count, the count extends well beyond backyards. Lots of participants choose to head for national parks, nature centers, urban parks, nature trails, or nearby sanctuaries. More information, including bird-ID tips, instructions, and past results, are also available at their website. The count also includes a photo contest and a prize drawing for participants who enter their bird checklists online.

Winter Wildlife Festival

January 27-29, 2012

Princess Anne Recreation Center

Presented with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

This is your chance to witness winter wildlife all around Virginia Beach; whether it's following fascinating bird activity, exploring the natural areas of our community or the musings of harbor seals near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Learn what it takes to properly observe and identify wildlife in their natural settings.

Activities include an excursion to the bay bridge tunnel, learning about wildlife photography, an owl prowl, a rain barrel workshop, a viewing of Winged Migration, and many others.

Call or email Virginia Beach Outdoor & Environmental Programs at:

Phone: (757) 385-4461 Email: outdoors@VBgov.com

Or visit the festival website at:

<http://www.vbgov.com/winterwildlife>

Birding CBBT BY BOAT

21 January 2012 Boat Trip

Again this year, the Williamsburg Bird Club is sponsoring a birding boat trip to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands Saturday, January 21, 2012. Enjoy our beautiful Chesapeake Bay and its winter bird life with us!

Geoff Giles, has chartered a large comfortable boat for this eye-level look at the bay ducks, scoters, shore birds and seabirds plus other wonderful species such

as the harbor seals we saw last year around the tunnel islands. Photo opportunities should be very good from the boat. We will stay around the CBBT tunnel islands and pilings and will likely go as far as Fisherman's Island on the Eastern Shore.

We will depart from Lynnhaven Inlet in Virginia Beach on Saturday, January 21, at 9 am and return to the dock at about 1 pm. There is a very good seafood restaurant dockside for those inclined to have lunch on return. If the trip gets weathered out, we'll return your check, of course. Should that happen, we will try for a rain date one week later. Note that we will not cash your check until after the trip.

Cost is \$25 per person. Sign up early so we can be sure to have enough people for the trip to go -- we need 30. Reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis until the trip is filled. Your check is your reservation.

Please make checks (\$25.00 per person) payable to "Williamsburg Bird Club" and mail to Geoff Giles, PO Box 133, Lightfoot, VA 23090. Include your email address and phone # so we can get back to you to confirm departure location and contact you if plans change.

For additional info, contact Shirley Devan at sedevan52@cox.net or (757) 813-1322.

More info at Williamsburg Bird Club web site:

<http://williamsburgbirdclub.org/>

After January 7, you can also contact Geoff at [Tylerandal2@aol.com](mailto:Tylerrandal2@aol.com) Phone: [757-645-8716](tel:757-645-8716)

Hope to see you onboard!

Field Trip Report

By Jane Frigo

First Landing State Park Trip Report. Members of the Hampton Roads Bird Club visited First Landing State Park on November 12, 2011 for their club field trip. Participants included leader Marc Nichols, Tom Charlock, Libby Carmines, Stuart Sweetman, Jane Frigo, Laura and Brent Slaughter, Virginia and George Boyles, and Marilyn and John Adair. The group concentrated the morning of the 62nd Street entrance and boat landing but stopped by the beach side before returning to the Peninsula. Ducks were still scarce but several Horned Grebes were a treat. Some other good finds included Brown-headed Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Bufflehead, and Swamp Sparrow.

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To join the Hampton Roads Bird Club, please fill out the form below and bring it along with your check (payable to Hampton Roads Bird Club) to the next meeting or mail to: **Richard Hudgins, 803 Riverside Drive, Newport News, VA 23606-3629.**

Membership is from July 1st to June 30th. **Dues are \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families.**

NOTE: Membership dues can also be paid at Wild Wings Nature Store in the Hidenwood Shopping Center, Newport News, VA.

Meetings are held in the conference room at the Sandy Bottom Nature Park, 1255 Big Bethel Road, Hampton, VA, on the second Thursday of the month, September through May, at 7:00 PM.

Hampton Roads Bird Club – Membership Form

Renewal _____ New Member _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Birthday (month-day): _____

Email: _____

Check this box to receive newsletter via email/website instead of hard copy by mail.

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