



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC)

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org and on Facebook

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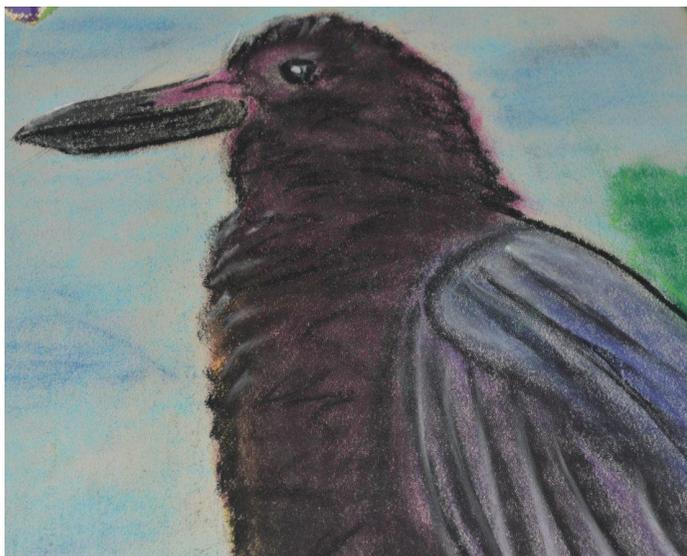
Sep/Oct 2016

September 8th Meeting
6:30 PM Social 7:00 PM Program
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

"The Art of Bird"
By Grace Ruiz

Grace Ruiz is a respected artist specializing in ceramics and recently earned a M.A. in Arts Leadership from the University of Houston. She will discuss the influence of birds and other aspects of nature in both historical and contemporary art. Join her for an interesting look at a side of birding frequently left unexplored.

Hosted by the Executive Committee of the HRBC



Sketch of Raven (by Grace Ruiz)

October 13th Meeting
6:30 PM Social 7:00 PM Program
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

"Fall Flyways and the Fascinating Facts of Migration"
By Shawn T. Dash Ph.D.

Autumn is a busy time with many mammals provisioning for the winter ahead, plants giving one last chance for mating, and for numerous birds, travel. Beloved speaker in the Hampton Roads area, Shawn will share his passion for nature by presenting a journey through perhaps the most asked about bird behavior, that of migration. He will explore the basic nature of why migration evolved in the first place, what adaptations have led to migration and the ability for species to travel the globe. Shawn will entertain with a presentation that will excite us as we move into the fall migration with hints on warbler and hawk identification.

Hosted by Jane Frigo and Tom Charlock



Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, New Mexico (by Shawn Dash)

November 10th Meeting
6:30 PM Social 7:00 PM Program
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

**“What do birds eat?
Help us find out!”**

By Ashley Kennedy

Every good birder knows that birds eat fruits, nuts, and insects, but many underestimate the importance of the latter. Even birds that are described as primarily granivorous, nectarivorous, frugivorous, and folivorous rely on insect protein during the breeding season and will dramatically change their foraging patterns during that time. Field guides and other references, however, rarely provide details as to which kinds of insects are the most important in birds' diets. Most studies to date only provide order-level identification of prey (e.g., “beetles”, “caterpillars”), but this broad categorization implies that all beetles or all caterpillars are equally important to birds. Would a chickadee rather eat a smooth, green inchworm, or a toxic monarch caterpillar— or a densely hairy “woolly bear”? Intuitively, we would guess the inchworm, but until we have the data to back it up, this is just speculation.

To answer questions like this about birds' feeding preferences, and ultimately to help us make better-informed decisions about bird habitat management, Doug Tallamy's lab at the University of Delaware is undertaking a long-term research project— but we need help from citizen scientists to make it work! We are compiling a database of bird-insect interactions based on photos contributed from all over North America. Anytime you see a bird with an insect (or other arthropod: spider, millipede, centipede, etc.) in its bill, snap a photo and submit it on our website at <http://www.whatdobirdseat.com> or on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/WhatDoBirdsEat>. Our team will then identify the arthropod prey and add it to our database.

Ultimately, we will be able to answer questions like “Do house wrens in Montana prefer the same types of insects as house wrens in Pennsylvania?” or “Do eastern bluebirds feed their second brood the same insects as the first?” Eventually, with enough photo contributions, we will be able to make

recommendations to land managers about what types of plants they should grow to aid specific bird species. Many insects are host specialists, depending on a particular plant for survival; once we know which insects the birds prefer in their diets, we will be able to encourage the planting of those insects' host plants to promote avian conservation. Until we have a better understanding of what birds eat, we can't create or maintain ideal bird habitat. Please consider helping us out by sending us your photos!

Ashley Kennedy is a PhD student at the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. She is a Virginia native.



By Ashley Kennedy

HRBC Outdoors Sept. and Oct.

Regular bird walks in Newport News Park

First and third Sundays of *every* month 7:00 AM.
Meet in big parking lot behind the ranger station.
Walk leader: Jane Frigo (birderjane@gmail.com
757-873-0721)

Field Trip to Hog Island (see page 4)

Saturday, 6:45 AM September 10, 2016
Andy Hawkins andrewcurtishawkins@gmail.com or
text at [757-870-9641](tel:757-870-9641)

Kiptopeke Challenge (see page 5)

Saturday, September 24, 2016
Dave Youker (youkerd@aol.com or 757-344-9385)

Field Trip to Eastern Shore (see page 4)

Saturday, 6:45 AM October 16, 2016
Andy Hawkins andrewcurtishawkins@gmail.com or
text at [757-870-9641](tel:757-870-9641)

The President's Perch

By Shawn T. Dash

A new year is commencing for the Hampton Roads Bird Club with a number of changes, including myself as the new president, coordination of field trips by Jason Strickland and Andy Hawkins, and hospitality managed by Jane Frigo and Wendy Maxey. As the club is changing, so are the seasons. After a rather hot summer, the promise of autumn and a bit more bird activity must be on everyone's minds.

Upon reflection about becoming the new president, I have thought of the great legacy of the HRBC and its future. I want us to continue to be strong in outreach, and focused on conservation and celebrating the joys of nature and birding. I also thought about what it meant to be a new birder back when I started at 16 and how it would be different if I started today. There is so much information with apps, digital guides and, of course, the challenges of a being a birding bibliophile.

In my humble opinion, one of the great joys derived from nature is gaining knowledge either from first hand experiences or from the efforts of others. I can honestly say that there are few feelings in life like having acquaintance with an idea or phenomenon and then seeing it unfold in the field. One such event for me was the connection between my knowledge of Gannet diving ability with the actual sight of dozens of birds dropping from the sky like bolts of lightning into the depths. It gave me a sense of pleasure in the knowledge I had before going into the wild. Having interacted with a variety of people and spending time on social media, I have come to find my feelings in this regard are quite common. Additionally, getting to know fellow nature lovers has led me to a frequent discussion on how to learn about birds and natural history. This has inspired me to compile a list of books that I would consider a necessity for any birder.

In making this list I excluded general field guides and included the newer texts that would be great additions to your library and aid in your learning of birds.

General Ornithology

Birding by Impression: A Different Approach to Knowing and Identifying Birds by Kevin T.

Karlson and Dale Rosselet

Better Birding: Tips, Tools, and Concepts for the Field by George L. Armistead and Brian L.

Sullivan

Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of North American Birds by Paul J. Baicich and J. O. Harrison

Bird Tracks & Sign: A Guide to North American Species by Mark Elbroch, Eleanor Marks, and C.

Diane Boretos

Bird Feathers: A Guide to North American Species by S. David Scott

Peterson Reference Guide to Molt in North American Birds by Steve N.G. Howell

Bird Groups

Ducks, Geese, and Swans of North America: 2-vol. set by Guy Baldassarre

Waterfowl of Eastern North America by Chris Earley

Peterson Reference Guide to Seawatching: Eastern Waterbirds in Flight by Ken Behrens and Cameron

Cox

Petrels, Albatrosses, and Storm-Petrels of North America: A Photographic Guide by Steve N. G.

Howell

Shorebirds of North America, Europe, and Asia by Richard Chandler

The Shorebird Guide by Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, and Kevin Karlson

Peterson Reference Guides to Gulls of the Americas by Steve N.G. Howell and Jon Dunn

The Crossley ID Guide: Raptors by Richard Crossley, Jerry Liguori, and Brian L. Sullivan

Hawks in Flight by David Sibley and Pete Dunne

Hawks at a Distance: Identification of Migrant Raptors by Jerry Liguori

Peterson Reference Guide to Owls of North America and the Caribbean by Scott Weidensaul

Hummingbirds: A Life-size Guide to Every Species by Michael Fogden, Marianne Taylor, and

Sheri L. Williamson

North American Hummingbirds: An Identification Guide by George C. West

The Warblers by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle

The Wood Warblers An Introductory Guide by Barth Schorre and John Rappole

Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America by Stephen Shunk
Sparrows of the United States and Canada: The Photographic Guide by David Beadle and James D. Rising

Bird Ecology

Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife by John M. Marzluff and Jack DeLap
Mind of the Raven: Investigations and Adventures with Wolf-Birds by Bernd Heinrich
The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman

Without doubt, you noticed many books focus on birds of prey, shorebirds, and warblers (there is also a great app called *The Warbler Guide* that provides 3-D views of the birds and all the ID information from the book of the same name). All of these groups are likely to be our focus this fall season. Another tool that you may wish to utilize for birding plans is signing up with *eBird* for hourly, daily, and weekly email updates for rare birds in various regions such as Virginia or Virginia Beach. I want to encourage our members to continue with their support of the club and want to invite everyone to join us for the monthly field trips and of course the twice-a-month Newport News Park Sunday morning walks. As a reminder, dues need to be paid between September and December to remain in good standing with the club.

Field Trip to Hog Island

Saturday, 6:45 AM, Sept. 10, 2016

By Andy Hawkins

Jason Strickland will lead this trip. The ponds at Hog Island afford one of the few local opportunities to observe the huge American White Pelican, and we've seen great flocks of 'em there earlier. We will meet at the Huntington Park Beach parking lot at 6:30 AM and pull out at 6:45. To cover the cost of the daily permit there will be a \$2.00 charge. You will need to have your driver's license with you, even if you are not driving, to get through security at the Dominion nuclear power plant. As there are no facilities on Hog Island, you should bring water,

snacks and bug spray. There will be little shade and lots of walking. For questions email Andy Hawkins at andrewcurtishawkins@gmail.com or text him at [757-870-9641](tel:757-870-9641). We need a list for this trip for VDGIF, so either sign up at the first meeting Sept. 8th or contact Andy Hawkins with an email or text.

Field Trip to Eastern Shore

Saturday, 6:45 AM, Oct. 15, 2016

By Andy Hawkins

Jason Strickland will lead this excursion. We will meet at the south toll plaza parking lot of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel at 6:30 AM. We plan to pull out at 6:45 AM heading to southern Northampton Co. Our first stop will be the Eastern Shore NWR checking out the Butterfly Trail and Ramp Rd. Our next should be Kiptopeke State Park spending time at the hawk watch station and some of the trails. Magotha Rd., Cape Charles and Oyster are all possibilities depending on time. There will be a signup sheet at the September and October meetings. Any questions can be emailed to Andy Hawkins andrewcurtishawkins@gmail.com or texted to Andy at [757-870-9641](tel:757-870-9641). This should be prime time for the fall migration so put the date on your calendar.

What's an IBA Anyway?

By Dave Youker

An Important Bird Area, or IBA, is a site that provides essential habitat for one or more species of concern. Species of concern can be officially designated, such as threatened or endangered (think Piping Plover.) Or they can be vulnerable due to their nature to congregate or they need specific habitat. IBAs are designated as Global, Continental, or State. In Virginia, Audubon lists 21 IBAs (9 Global, 4 Continental, and 8 State.)

Do you know that our club is responsible for a State-designated IBA? It's called Western Shore Marshes IBA. It's along the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay and ranges from Grandview Beach in Hampton to Gwynn's Island in Mathews County, and it

encompasses an area of 12,590 acres. There are 28 species of concern identified in this IBA that rely on these marshes as residents throughout the year or during the winter/summer months, or they use the marshes during migration.

Like many shoreline habitats, these marshes are threatened by human development, sea-level rise, pollution, invasive species, and a host of other factors. For us to accurately assess the impact of these threats, we first need to know the baseline population of the species reliant on these marshes. Fortunately, we have a team in place to help gather this data. For standardization purposes, 11 sites have been selected for data collection. These sites and the HRBC member performing these surveys are listed below. If you would like to assist in this effort, contact me (youkerd@aol.com or 757-344-9385) or one of the members listed for a particular site.

Grandview Beach – Pete Peterman

Messick Point Area – Andy Hawkins/Walt & Gwen Harris

Langley AFB – Bill Boeh

Bethel Beach – Hayes & Joyce Williams

Plum Tree Island – Dave Youker

Guinea Neck Area – Harry & Rochelle Colestock

New Point Comfort – Jason Strickland

Robins Neck Area – Harry & Rochelle Colestock

Seaford Area – John Hogan

Gosnold's Hope Park – Nancy Gruttman-Tyler/Walt & Gwen Harris

Goodwin Island – Jacques von Moncrief & Elizabeth Wilkins

A Note from the Treasurer

by John Adair

Our club remains in good financial standing and achieved another balanced budget year thanks to our membership dues, the club's primary source of annual income. Dues remain \$15/singles and \$20/families and are payable in September for the club fiscal year (1 September through 31 August).

So, remember to bring your dues to the September meeting. Additionally, members may pay dues for future years if desired and the treasurer will keep track of the advanced payment. In addition to paying your dues at a meeting, here are three additional ways to submit dues:

1) Mail renewal form (optional) and check to: John Adair, HRBC Treasurer, 109 Nansemond Turn, Yorktown VA 23693, (757) 224-8920;

2) Drop off payment at: Wild Wings Nature Store, 12458 Warwick Blvd, Newport News, VA 23606, (757) 595-3060;

3) Drop off payment at: Wild Birds Unlimited, 3120 Kiln Creek Pkwy, Suite A, Yorktown VA 23693, (757) 875-1936.

Your prompt attention to dues payment is most appreciated by your (volunteer) club treasurer.

The Kiptopeke Challenge

By Dave Youker

This is an invitation to participate in the Kiptopeke Challenge (KC), a birding contest that serves the interests of science and conservation. The count area for the Kiptopeke Challenge has been expanded from just the Eastern Shore to include the entire coastal plain of Virginia. The Board of the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (CVWO) has received requests over the years to expand the domain so additional teams could participate, especially youth teams. So get your teams together for the 22nd annual Kiptopeke Challenge to be held on Saturday, September 24.

The categories for this “Big Day” of birding will remain the same: 24-Hour, 3-Hour, Youth Team (age 18 and under), and Special Venue. You don't have to be a birding expert to participate. This event is open to everyone who enjoys getting out for some great birding and a lot of fun. Since the event occurs during fall migration, each year we have a few unexpected species show-up and some that don't make an appearance. What surprises will we have this year with the new expanded birding area?

All you need to do to register your team is send me your team name and the members of your

team. Then start your planning to visit your favorite locations to record as many species as possible.

Also, don't forget those sponsors/donors. This is CVWO's annual fundraiser. All donations go toward the CVWO mission of protecting Virginia's wildlife through education, field research and habitat conservation. To learn more about CVWO and the Kiptopeke Challenge, visit our website at www.cvwo.org. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me (youkerd@aol.com or 757-344-9385) as the CVWO Kiptopeke Challenge Coordinator.

A Time Capsule from Our Annual Picnic on 06/04/16

By Katrina Dash

First of all, it was well before the noon-time feasting that Jason Strickland led a party for some *real* birding over Newport News Park. But on to the prep for our summer food fete: The picnic planning committee included myself, Jane Frigo, and Wendy Maxey. Jane and Wendy were a huge help with both organizing and setting up, and I know that they will do a fantastic job as they take over the role of hospitality coordinators. Bill Boeh and John Adair were nice enough to take care of the grilling for us again, and everything turned out fantastic. Everyone in the club really pitched in to make sure we had plenty of food and drink, plus the benefit of enjoyable conversations. The rain thankfully held off so we ended up with a perfect day. Even the bugs seemed to give us a little bit of a break. And I'm still thinking about the amazing apple pie that Andy made.

One routine of the annual HRBC June picnic is the installation of the members of the EXCOM, the HRBC Executive Committee. They're all volunteers who work for the club in focused positions as approved by the membership. Shawn Dash is the new President. Jason Strickland and Andy Hawkins constitute the Field Trip Committee. Brenda Gervais is the VP and the Program Committee. The Secretary is Bill Boeh. Jessica Ausura runs Publicity. Tom Charlock is Publications (newsletter). Meredith Bell is the Web Editor. Pete Peterman, Andy Hawkins and Dave Youker are Directors with respective 3-year terms. Jane Frigo

and Wendy Maxey form the Hosting Committee. John Adair is the Treasurer. Gwenn Harris is the Membership Committee.



*Most of EXCOM: Bill Boeh, Wendy Maxey, Jane Frigo, Meredith Bell, Gwen Harris, John Adair, Andy Hawkins, Brenda Gervais, Jessica Ausura, Jason Strickland, and Shawn Dash
(photo by Justin Ausura)*

Report of Field trip to the Great Dismal Swamp (04/16/16)

By Stuart Sweetman

The April field trip for the HRBC was to The Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Suffolk, VA. Our group of 23 met at the Jericho Ditch parking area at 7:00 AM to a beautiful spring morning of cool air and bright skies. We assembled here for our morning walks along the wooded trails that border the drainage and irrigation ditches that crisscross the whole refuge, allowing a unique habitat for numerous migrating and breeding bird species. Springtime in the swamp is a perfect time to see and hear many different Warbler species that visit the swamp and call it their home. Twelve Warbler species were identified with the resident Prairie Warbler being the most common giving great looks and singing throughout the morning. White-eyed Vireos, Catbirds and Common Yellowthroats were also well represented. The group later headed down the road to Washington Ditch to bird the boardwalk and the ditch walking trail. We arrived at the parking area where we ran into Bob Ake and his group from the Williamsburg Bird Club that had just finished up their morning walk of the ditch area. We

were excited to see old friends and exchanged notes, letting them know what we saw, and they let us know what to look out for. The boardwalk gave a few of us a good look of the always heard but almost never seen Ovenbird. Everyone's favorite Hooded Warbler came in close for all to see this beautiful bird of spring. Our trip finished up in the early afternoon with 58 bird species identified on a great day for all in the swamp. A complete list of participants and bird species are listed below.



Hooded Warbler (by Bill Boeh)

Participants: Stuart Sweetman, Doug Rogers, Joanne Brickner, John and Marilyn Adair, Ellis and Wendy Maxey, Bill Boeh, Tom Charlock, John, Kim, Thomas and Travis Hogan, Anthony Nixon, Sandy Dicarolo, Jane Frigo, Peggy Rommen, Bill Lundberg, Andy Hawkins, Ernie Miller, Jessica Ausura, Justin Ausura, and Karen Brandt visiting from Arlington.

Species list for the Great Dismal Swamp field trip (04/16/16)

Wood Duck	Great Crested Flycatcher	Yellow-throated Warbler
Wild Turkey	White-eyed Vireo	Pine Warbler
Great Blue Heron	Blue Jay	Prairie Warbler
Black Vulture	American Crow	Palm Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Purple Martin	Black-and-white Warbler
Cooper's Hawk	Carolina Chickadee	Prothonotary Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	Tufted Titmouse	Ovenbird
Red-tailed Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	Common Yellowthroat
American Kestrel	Carolina Wren	Hooded Warbler
Mourning Dove	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Eastern Towhee
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Chipping Sparrow
Barred Owl	Hermit Thrush	Field Sparrow
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	American Robin	White-throated Sparrow
Red-headed Woodpecker	Gray Catbird	Northern Sparrow
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird	Red-winged Blackbird
Downy Woodpecker	European Starling	Common Grackle
Hairy Woodpecker	Northern Parula	Brown-headed Cowbird
Northern Flicker	Yellow Warbler	House Finch
Pileated Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler	American Goldfinch

Report of Field Trip to Richmond's Belle Isle & James River Parks (05/14/16)

By Stuart Sweetman

The May field trip for the HRBC was to Richmond, VA to hike the trails of the James River Park System to include the Reedy Creek/ Buttermilk Trail and Belle Isle. Our group met at the parking area by Riverside Drive in Richmond around 7:00 AM for a full day of hiking the trails of this unique area. The park system is adjacent to downtown Richmond and runs along the upper end of the James River. Some of the trails are elevated high over the river and give a near treetop perspective; this is ideal for hearing and viewing the spring migrants that have made this trip one of our favorites over the past few years. The trails are not just steep and twisty: they are also narrow and covered with poison ivy on both sides. That said, the Richmond Park System is a sought after location for birders and hikers. It is also loved by mountain bikers and seekers of such

beautiful scenery, the lush woodlands, rock covered shores and river rapids. This area during the spring seems to be a hot spot for migrants, and we were not disappointed. We managed fifteen Warbler species as well as Thrush, Flycatchers and Orioles. It's a long walk from Reedy Creek to Belle Isle, but it's worthwhile for not just the scenery, but for the uncommon species that nest out over the river. The suspension foot bridge that hangs under the Robert E. Lee (US 301) roadway gives the only vantage point to one the few Cliff Swallow colonies found in Virginia. The colony was unfortunately much smaller this year; but this might be because of a pair of Peregrine Falcons that we believe were nesting on the outside edge of the bridge. Due to the length of this mostly walking trip, not everyone who begins the trip makes it till the end. Regardless, all enjoyed the day trip and felt well rewarded for the efforts. Our group of 18 managed an impressive 75 species. A complete list of participants and species are listed below. One participant was Jane Frigo, whose nudging a few years back first induced HRBC to use this fine area.

Participants: Stuart Sweetman, Dianne Snyder, Bill Boeh, Tom Charlock, Pete and Charm Peterman, Anthony Nixon, John, Kim, Thomas and Travis Hogan, Nick and Elisa Flanders, Jane Frigo, Kathy Bond, Elizabeth Wilkins, Jacques Van Montfrans, and Lieve Keeney.



HRBC south of Bell Isle on a footbridge (not the one with Cliff Swallows)
Photo by Dianne Snyder

Species list for field trip to Richmond's Belle Isle and James River Parks (05/14/16)

Canada Goose
Mallard
Double-crested Cormorant
Great Blue Heron
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Peregrine Falcon
Spotted Sandpiper
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Acadian Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird

White-eyed Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Tree Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Barn Swallow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Carolina Wren
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Veery
Wood Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Northern Mockingbird
European Starling
Cedar Waxwing
Northern Parula
Yellow Warbler
Magnolia Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler

Yellow-rumped Warbler
Pine Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
American Redstart
Prothonotary Warbler
Ovenbird
Northern Waterthrush
Common Yellowthroat
Hooded Warbler
Canada Warbler
Summer Tanager
Scarlet Tanager
Song Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
House Finch
American Goldfinch
House 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: **John Adair, 109 Nansemond Turn, Yorktown, Virginia 23693**. Membership is from September 1st to August 31st. **Dues are \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families.** NOTE: Membership dues can be paid at Wild Wings Nature Store in the Glendale Shopping Center in Newport News, or at Wild Birds on Kiln Creek Parkway in Yorktown. Meetings are held at the Sandy Bottom Nature Park, 1255 Big Bethel Road, Hampton, VA, on the second Thursday of the month, September through May, at 6:30 PM.

Hampton Roads Bird Club – Membership Form

Renewal____ New Member ____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

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

*Editor (T. Charlock)
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