



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC)

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org and on Facebook

Vol. 67, No. 2

Nov/Dec2018

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

December 13 Meeting
6:30 PM Holiday Dinner Party
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

Feeding the Birds

By Teta Kain

If you are trying to attract birds to your backyard, you won't want to miss Teta Kain's presentation "Feeding the Birds." Teta will discuss different types of feed to use and what birds are attracted to each. She'll show you different types of feeders and which ones work the best. She'll mention special tricks that not only help to attract a greater variety of birds year round but also how to help keep the birds safe from predators as they feed. Mixed in with all of this are some of Teta's funny and unusual moments she's experienced trying to photograph birds in their natural and unnatural habits.

Teta has been a wildlife photographer for over 40 years, and has traveled extensively, photographing everything from bugs to birds. Since she and her husband arrived in Virginia in 1978, Teta has been involved with many nature and environmental organizations. She was president of the Hampton Roads Bird Club in the late 1980s, and was compiler of the Newport News Christmas bird count in the early 1990s. Over a 27-year period she served on the board of the Virginia Society of Ornithology as president, secretary, chairman of the state bird records committee (VARCOM), and editor of the state's bird journal, *The Raven*. She received the Society's Myriam P. Moore award for outstanding service in 2008.

Information/scheduling from Pete Peterman

Hosted By V. Boyles, E.&W. Maxey, J. Frigo

By Jane Frigo

The end of the year is coming! Remember that the December club meeting is the annual Holiday Dinner. Anyone interested in helping Dianne Snyder, Charm Peterman and Jane Frigo with planning decorations and set up, should contact Jane (757-873-0721, birderjane@gmail.com). Usually everyone helps with clean up. This event is a pot luck, so members are asked to bring a dish to share that serves 8-10 people. This can be an appetizer, a side dish, or a dessert. Volunteers are needed to assist with cooking the main course which traditionally has been ham and turkey. A sign-up sheet will be passed at the November 8 meeting for those planning to attend or you can contact me (Jane) by December 1, allowing accurate seating to be made available. Last year we had a wonderfully successful Silent Auction thanks to Charm Peterman. This year will be more relaxed to allow time for the casual conversation that so many enjoy. Having had our September meeting canceled because of Hurricane Florence and our October meeting falling under Hurricane Michael's rain and wind, we'll hopefully have good weather and a wonderful meal catching up with everyone.



Help wanted decorating (by Dianne Snyder)

HRBC Outdoors Nov-Dec.

Regular bird walks in Newport News Park
First and third Sundays each month 7:00 AM.
Meet at big parking lot behind Ranger Station.
Leader: Stuart Sweetman
nnva4x4@aol.com 757-660-6590

Field Trip to Virginia Beach (this page)
Saturday, 7:00 AM, November 10, 2018
Leader: Stuart Sweetman
nnva4x4@aol.com 757-660-6590

Audubon Christmas Bird Count (page 3)
Saturday, 7:00 AM, December 15, 2018
Leader: Bill Boeh
757-951-7959 dolphrog1@yahoo.com



Yellow-billed cuckoo at Sunday bird walk in Newport News Park (by Dianne Snyder)

Field Trip to Virginia Beach Hot Spots Saturday, 7:00 AM, Nov. 10, 2018

by Stuart Sweetman

The November HRBC field trip to Virginia Beach will focus on a few of that area's birding hot spots. The group will assemble in the parking lot of Bass Pro on the far right of the lot by 7:00 AM; we will leave at 7:15 AM for a drive to Virginia Beach that should take about 45 minutes. The first stop will be at Pleasure House Point Natural Area and the Brock Environmental Center located at 3663 Marlin Bay Dr., just off Shore Dr.; we plan to be there by 8:00 AM. The area has extensive walking trails through tidal marshes and wetlands adjacent to the Lynnhaven River Inlet. It's ideal for looking out over the water for seabirds entering the mouth of the bay, as well as for wading and shore birds along the flats. Just next to the Nature area is the Lynnhaven Boat Ramp at the end of Piedmont Circle. The Ramp has views of the River and mouth of the bay under the Lesner Bridge.



*Cypress swamp at First Landing State Park
(wiki photo by Angela Pan)*

The next stop will be First Landing State Park located at 2500 Shore Dr. in Virginia Beach. This is a state park with a \$5.00 car fee (exact change helps); the grounds are unique and well worth it. The park has several walking trails, plus a boardwalk through a cypress swamp where new migrants are sure to be found. Then we'll visit Rudee Inlet at the

end of Atlantic Avenue and Second Street by the Boardwalk. Leaving First Landing on Shore Drive, it turns into Pacific Avenue. Make a left on Fifth St. over to Atlantic, and then a right to the Rudee Loop. Here we can see the mouth of the Inlet and the Atlantic Ocean. There should be plenty of seabirds in this area, so those with scopes will find it a perfect place to use them.

Our last stop will be further up into the inlet. We will get back on Pacific and cross the bridge onto General Booth Blvd. From there, it's a short drive to Owls Creek Boat Ramp, which is right next to the Virginia Aquarium. Both places are next to tidal marshes that are great for wading birds; and possibly ducks or rails.

I expect this trip will go no longer than 2:00 PM. Please bring a lunch or snacks. Our length of stay at each location will depend on the quality of the birding. We can do the whole agenda or modify it as we go. Most club members have never been to these sites, so it'll be fun. Please feel free to contact me at 757.660.6590 if you've signed up but cannot attend, or if you have questions. My email is nnva4x4@aol.com.



Craney Island field trip of Sept. 5, 2018, arranged by Jason Strickland (photo by Mark Sopko)

Audubon Christmas Bird Count Saturday, 7:00 AM, Dec. 15, 2018

By Bill Boeh

Please support the Hampton Road's Bird Club's effort in conducting the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) on Saturday, Dec 15, 2018.

You'll be participating in the nation's longest-running citizen science bird project—the first count was conducted in 1900. HRBC first participated in the CBC in 1952, the year after the Club's inception. 2018 marks the 119th CBC and the 67th year that HRBC has been involved. The Club has observed and recorded over 1,497,000 birds since 1952!

If you've never participated, here are the basics (what, when, where, why, and how):

- **What:** Record the number birds (by species) observed during the count a single 24-hour period.
- **When:** One 24-hour period, Saturday, Dec 15, 2018. The club usually participates from around 7:00 AM. through mid-afternoon (varies by sector).
- **Where:** The CBC is conducted in established 15-mile wide diameter "circles." In 2015, 2,505 circles were covered, with 1,902 counts in the United States, 471 in Canada, and 132 in Latin America, the Caribbean, Bermuda, and the Pacific Islands (a map depicting the circles can be found at Audubon's website (<http://tinyurl.com/nhervk2>)). Our Club's circle is centered at the intersection of Commander Shepard Blvd and Magruder Blvd in Hampton, and is sub-divided into 13 sectors. Our sectors are depicted on a map at the following site: (<http://tinyurl.com/jd5a8nd>). A sector leader will lead the effort in their sector.

- How:
 - Groups of Club members, led by an experienced leader, conduct a count in each sector. Most participants count from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Volunteers in the field bird on foot, by car, or by boat.
 - If you can't participate in the field effort, you can still contribute by recording the birds that visit feeders in your yard.

- Why: Be a "citizen-scientist" and collect data that is vital for bird conservation. According to the Audubon website, the data collected by observers over the past century has allowed Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys, such as the Virginia Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years. This long term perspective is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

So, please sign up at the November Club meeting, or contact Bill Boeh (call 757-951-7959 or email at dolphrog1@yahoo.com). It's great fun and a great way to help conserve the birds!

For more information about the CBC visit the Audubon's CBC web page: <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>.



*Your national bird should be counted
(by Dianne Snyder)*

Why I now wear sunglasses outdoors while birding

By Thomas P. Charlock

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss for the aged in the USA. I've switched over to wearing prescription sunglasses while birding outdoors at the advice of my ophthalmologist. She's concerned that those who spend a lot of time in the sun may be affected by Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), due to significant exposure to blue light.



A distorted image of the sun, just to the right of the sunglasses: red, yellow, green, and (faint) blue bands of the solar spectrum.

Under many conditions, lots of light can strike the *back* of your glasses and reflect into your eyes. Wearing a broad-brimmed hat will greatly reduce the source that would otherwise thus reflect from the glass (unless you're on snow, bright sand, or water with certain types of sunglint). Wrap-around shades would be a solution, too.

Researchers have not yet nailed the exact causes of macular degeneration, which is incurable. Besides age, risk factors include genetics, race (Caucasians), and smoking. Not every ophthalmologist will rush you to sunglasses because of blue light (400-500 nm). But the American Macular Degeneration Foundation (AMDF) does note, "Recent studies suggest that the blue end of the spectrum may also contribute to retinal damage and possibly lead to AMD" <https://www.macular.org/ultra-violet-and-blue-light>

AMDF advises to "protect eyes from potentially harmful UV" and that "sunglasses should be labeled UV400". Some glasses filter only UVB (290-320

nm), which causes sunburn and is strongest near local noon and summer solstice. UVA (320-400 nm), in contrast, is as almost as ubiquitous as visible (400-700 nm) light for typical sky conditions. The Mayo Clinic also calls for sunglasses that strongly protect from both UVA and UVB.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/expert-answers/uv-protection/faq-20058021>

Not related to macular degeneration: spectral bands in the figure were made by refraction of the direct solar beam through a plastic equilateral prism. To the naked eye, the bands appeared fairly straight. The bend and other distortion of the solar spectrum seen in the figure come from the use of a 2013 Ipad Mini camera. William Herschel, the first to identify the planet Uranus in 1781, also discovered infrared radiation (IR). He placed thermometers both within and beyond the various color bands of such an image of the sun. The strip just below the bright red band, which shows only shady interior background light, was found to be hot. The sun sends plenty of heat energy in the infrared which we can't see. At the other end, birds see a fourth primary color, the UV above blue, also invisible to humans.

2018 Kiptopeke Challenge

By Andrew Hawkins

Late September, during the fall migration, is always the time of Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory's (CVWO) Kiptopeke Challenge. This is a 1-day birding competition divided into four areas. There is a 24-hour marathon, for adults and youth, a special venue and a 3-hour sprint. It is also the CVWO's only fund raiser of the year not counting membership dues.

James Abbott and I entered the 3-hour sprint representing the Hampton Roads Bird Club. It had to be 3 consecutive hours, so driving time between spots would count and hurt the overall tally. Scouting all week and checking out multiple eBird sites we decided on Hog Island, but with a twist. We took bicycles, me on my one speed Huffy beach bike

trying to keep up with James on his Trek mountain bike. We were not allowed past the Dominion Check Station until after 7:00 AM. We spent the first part of our time on the main road checking the close fields and ponds. After the sun got a little higher, we took the road back from the fishing area looking for passerines in the hardwood and pine mixture. Last we took our bikes and hustled to the back areas looking for anything we had missed.

Our goal was at least 50 species and we were happy with 55. The list is below. Also, we both felt that the bikes opened a new way to bird Hog. Too often we do not get to the back areas because of distance, heat or time. With the bikes we passed quickly through the hot, non-productive fields and were able to check the back area of Hog Island which added a good bit to our tally.

Only unexpected birds were a gull-billed tern and sanderlings, but a large turkey gobbler, tens of egrets both great and snowy, and multiple shore birds made Hog an enjoyable outing. You may still support our efforts by going to the CVWO Kiptopeke Challenge webpage at <http://www.vawildliferesearch.org/annual-kiptopeke-challenge.html> and clicking on the Hampton Roads Bird Club Team and donating or just email me or and I will make arrangements to pick it up.

Many thanks to all who already have donated.

Teams in the Kiptopeke Challenge chose names such as Wandering Whimbrels and Gulls Gone Wild. The handle for our winning pair, Andy and James, was Hampton Roads Bird Club. Congratulations and thank you! Here's their species list:

Canada Goose
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Wild Turkey
Mourning Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Black-bellied Plover
Semipalmated Plover
Killdeer
Sanderling
Least Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper

Semipalmated Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Solitary Sandpiper
Laughing Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Gull-billed Tern
Caspian Tern
Royal Tern
Double-crested Cormorant
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Bald Eagle
Belted Kingfisher
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Eastern Phoebe
Blue Jay
American Crow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Brown-headed Nuthatch
House Wren
Carolina Wren
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Northern Mockingbird
Field Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Eastern Towhee
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
Common Yellowthroat
Pine Warbler
Northern Cardinal
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting



Le Houton (Georges Leclerc)

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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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