



# Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

***Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC)***

[www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org](http://www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org) and on Facebook

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Vol. 71, No. 2

November/December 2022

**Thursday, Nov. 10 Meeting**  
**6:30 PM Social 7:00 PM Program**  
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

## **“Life Cycle of the Wild Turkey”**

By Bruce Ingram

Bruce Ingram is the author of over 2,500 magazine articles on the outdoors and has sold over 3,000 photos to magazines since he began writing in 1983. He writes for Virginia Wildlife, Wildlife in North Carolina, Bassmaster, Virginia Game and Fish, Turkey Country and others. Our VP Mark Sopko, who schedules presentations, says that this one will include the Wild Turkey’s “many calls and demonstrations on how to make them.” Bruce will be presenting live from a remote location.



**Thursday, Dec. 8 Holiday Party**  
**6:30 PM Punch 7:00 PM Dinner**  
at Sandy Bottom Nature Park

By Jane Frigo

We will meet this year on December 8, 2022, at our regular spot in the Conference Center at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. This year Charm Peterman has volunteered to make chili and cornbread as the main dish. Members are asked to bring a dish to share that serves 8-10. That dish could be an appetizer, salad or dessert. Please sign up at the November meeting or call me, Jane Frigo, at 757-873-0721 or text at 757-776-7925 to inform how many are attending and what you are bringing. This is a wonderful time to bring spouses and significant others and spend some much needed time together catching up on the past three years. Hopefully we can enjoy appetizers and punch at 6:30 PM and begin dinner at 7:00 PM. Anyone interested in helping to set up can let me know. As in the past everyone usually lends a hand to clean up so we can clear the conference center by 9:00 PM.

## **COVID and HRBC**

The Hampton Roads Bird Club membership is encouraged to receive vaccinations and boosters related to COVID. The club suggests everyone use caution to safeguard against potential exposure to COVID by practicing distancing, wearing masks and other established protocols for avoiding pathogen exposure. All members are encouraged to wear masks when inside at meetings and limit unknown

persons when carpooling. Most importantly any individuals feeling ill, with a fever, or any typical flu or cold-like symptoms should NOT attend meetings, field trips, or Sunday morning walks. It is up to all members to be mindful of the health of others by staying home when appropriate, and to employ their own precautions.

## HRBC Outdoors

### Regular Bird Walks in Newport News Park

7:00 AM on 1st and 3rd Sundays all 12 months, unless the city schedules a special mass event like the One City Marathon on March 5, 2023. Meet at big parking lot behind Ranger Station. Leader: Jane Frigo [birderjane@gmail.com](mailto:birderjane@gmail.com) home 757-873-0721, cell 757-776-7925

### Field Trip to Grandview Beach

7:00-11:00 AM Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Field Trip to Dutch Gap by Richmond

7:30 AM to Noon Sunday, Dec. 11, 2022  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Audubon Christmas Bird Count (see p. 3)

Saturday, December 17, 2022  
Leader: Bill Boeh [dolphrog1@yahoo.com](mailto:dolphrog1@yahoo.com)  
757-951-7959

### Field Trip to York River Colon. Pkwy.

Sunday, January 8, 2023  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Outreach at NN Discovery Center (see p. 4)

Saturday, January 14, 2023  
Leader: Jane Frigo [birderjane@gmail.com](mailto:birderjane@gmail.com)  
home 757-873-0721, cell 757-776-7925

### Field Trip to Back Bay Tram

Sunday, February 12, 2023  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Field Trip to Hog Island WMA

Sunday, March 19, 2023  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Field Trip to Dismal Swamp

Sunday, April 23, 2023  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### HRBC Spring Bird Count

Saturday, May 6, 2023  
Leader: Bill Boeh [dolphrog1@yahoo.com](mailto:dolphrog1@yahoo.com)  
757-951-7959

### Field Trip to James River Pk. Richmond

Sunday, May 7, 2023  
Leader: James Abbott [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com)  
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

### Field Trip to Grandview Beach 7:00-11:00 AM Sun., Nov. 13, 2022

By James Abbott

On Sunday November 13 the HRBC field trip will be at one of our traditional birding hotspots, Grandview Beach (2 Adriatic Dr, Hampton, VA 23664). We will gather at the entrance at 7:00 AM. This is a walking heavy field trip and scopes are a good idea. As always, I will have mine with me. Participants can walk as much for the beach as they feel comfortable. It is about 1.6 miles to the overwash area and 3 miles to the end at Factory Point. Dress for cooler temperatures due to wind on the beach. You can reach out to me at [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com) or 757-320-9191. Please include your name in voicemails or text so I can add you to my contacts.

### Field Trip to Dutch Gap by Richmond 7:30 AM to Noon, Sun., Dec. 11, 2022

By James Abbott

A new addition to the normal field trip calendar this year the HRBC will be heading to Dutch Gap Conservation Area on the James River Richmond. One of the best winter hotspots for waterfowl in Virginia. We will meet at the parking area at 7:30 AM (341 Henricus Park Rd, Chester, VA 23836). We will do the wetland boardwalk at the entrance and then walk the impounded area of a former oxbow of the James River. The total walking distance for this trip will be comparable to Grandview (~5.5 miles). We will be at least going

out along the east and south ends of the impoundment (~3 miles). Carpooling is a great idea. I will be returning home via Route 5 with a stop by the James River Association (JRA) Williamsburg office at 1335 Colonial Parkway. Contact me at [jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com) or 757-320-9191.



As it has since 1952, the Hampton Roads Bird Club will be sponsoring the 2022 CBC. Our count will take place on Saturday, Dec 17, 2022 (rain or shine) within the Newport News Circle (depicted below). The circle is divided into 13 sectors, each headed by a sector leader who coordinates the count in their sector.



## 2022 Audubon Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 17, 2022

by Bill Boeh

Please allow me to inform you regarding an opportunity to support an important bird conservation effort. Anyone can participate--even those who have mobility issues. That opportunity is the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

For those who are not familiar, the CBC is a bird census that has been conducted by the National Audubon Society since 1900. It is held annually from December 15 to January 5 within 15-mile diameter geographic "circles" in the U.S., Canada, and other countries in the Western Hemisphere. Each circle has a compiler who manages the count in their assigned circle. For more information visit the Audubon CBC web page at <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>

There are two ways you can participate—by observing in the field or by feeder-watching. Field observers count birds in the field as part of a sector team (this can include “owling” as well as observing during daytime). Feeder watchers record observations at a feeder.

By participating, you act as a “citizen-scientist” by collecting 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 it helps to identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

Why is this important? Birds are not doing well. According to Cornell's [All About Birds website](#), wild bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada have dropped by almost 30% since 1970— a 2.9 billion decline in bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada.

As with last year, we must once again follow Audubon's and the Hampton Roads Bird Club's COVID-19 guidelines, as follows:

Audubon:

- Masking is required if social distancing is not possible while in the field.
- Carpooling may only occur within existing familiar or social "pod" groups.
- Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

Hampton Roads Bird Club:

- See **red font** on pages 1-2 of this newsletter.

IMPORTANT--I will need support with the Tabb sector. As you may be aware, Andy Hawkins, the longtime leader for this sector, is moving out of the area this fall. Please let me know, if you are interested in taking Andy's place as the Tabb sector leader (many thanks to Andy for his support to the CBC!).

Finally, be aware that you may be able to participate in multiple counts, since there are other circles nearby that conduct their counts on various dates. Go to <https://tinyurl.com/svotc8z> to view a map of CBC circles. Zoom in on our region and click on neighboring circles to view the count date and compiler's contact information.

So please be part of this great tradition and support this important citizen science effort. It's great fun and a meaningful way to help bird conservation efforts--and for those new to Hampton Roads, a terrific way to be introduced to some of the best birding sites in our region. Sign up by emailing me at [dolphrog1@yahoo.com](mailto:dolphrog1@yahoo.com) (preferred method) or by phone at 757-951-7959. Please advise in your email whether you'd like to participate in the field or by feeder-watching.

## **Outreach at Discovery Center of Newport News Park Saturday, January 14, 2023**

By Jane Frigo

Newport News Park has asked us to present a short family friendly program at the Discovery Center on Saturday, January 14. This program is to discuss Winter Birds at the park, which species can be found, and where to look for them. It also can include a short walk around the Discovery Center to see what can be found. Contact me if you are interested in helping ([birderjane@gmail.com](mailto:birderjane@gmail.com) home 757-873-0721, cell 757-776-7925).

## **Report of Field Trip to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) (09/10/2022)**

By James Abbott

The HRBC September field trip was at Back Bay NWR on September 10. Our group of 9 participants walked the Raptor Trail and the dikes out to C pool. We observed 48 species with some highlights being great views of Wilson's Snipe and King Rail. We had looks at Sora and Peregrine Falcon as well as Bobolink and Seaside Sparrow. The best bird was a female/young male Painted Bunting.

## **Report of Field Trip to Eastern Shore (10/16/2022)**

By James Abbott

On Sunday October 16 the HRBC held its traditional fall field trip to the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. A large group of birders met at the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge (ESVA NWR) Center at 7:00 AM. We headed out for the trails. The morning was cool and overcast, and the bird activity was very high. We encountered thousands of Yellow-rumped Warbler and 20-30 American Kestrel as well as other migrating raptors. Some late Northern Parula and Black and White Warbler were highlights. We had views of Little Blue Heron, White Ibis and Tricolored Heron at the marsh overlook.



With backs to the bramble of the WW2 gun battery mound. Lori in green, Beate in black, Ryan, Loretta, James, Cindy, Stuart, Will, and Dianne.

We then continued by car up to the seaside town of Oyster to walk the Horse Island Trail. Perfect mid tides concentrated shorebirds on sporadically exposed oyster reefs. We saw very large numbers (200-300) of both Willet and American Oystercatcher. There were flocks of Short-billed Dowitcher and Dunlin. We had a group flyover of Blue-winged Teal and a brief view of Saltmarsh Sparrow. The birds of the day were great looks at three Marbled Godwit and four Whimbrel with one foraging in the marsh at extremely close range.



Whimbrel in the cord grass at Oyster (10/16/2022).  
By Dianne Snyder.

A small faction continued up to Chincoteague NWR. We walked the Woodland Trail and drove the Wildlife Loop. We encountered early winter visitors in Red-breasted Nuthatch, Dark-eyed Junco, and

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker as well as two late warbler species, Ovenbird and Cape May. On the Wildlife Loop group members viewed Green-winged Teal, American Black Duck, Peregrine Falcon and White-rumped Sandpiper. The group stopped at Blank Narrows Brewing Company in Chincoteague to try their Longleaf IPA made with longleaf needles from Piney Grove Preserve. The artwork on the pub's beer can has a Red-cockaded Woodpecker. We observed 70 species. For the corresponding eBird trip report, click <https://ebird.org/tripreport/72421>

## Bluebird Trail Opportunity

By Andy Hawkins

We need a small team to take over the Bluebird Trail at Deer Run Golf Course in Newport News. I've done it for years and am soon moving out of the area, The job involves maintaining the houses and collecting data once a week during the breeding season. It is a very rewarding activity, for we fledge hundreds of bluebirds and a few Carolina Chickadees a year. I will be doing maintenance on the houses this fall and can explain the operation. Contact me at 757-870-9641. Texts are probably the best method to reach me. We have a few people interested in helping, but we need someone in charge. The golf course lets us use a golf cart, so there is no long distance walking involved, and HRBC pays for supplies.



Jane Frigo and Andy Hawkins  
at the HRBC June 2022 Picnic

## Tribute at the Matteson Trail in Hampton, Virginia

A celebration honoring the late Tess Matteson, a former member of HRBC, will be held 10:30-11:30 AM on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 300 Butler Farm Road in Hampton, near a shelter at the base of the road leading to the Hamptons Golf Clubhouse (ample parking). There will be comments by Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck and refreshments. Those interested should RSVP Tess's daughter Tyla Matteson (804-275-6476) [tmatteson1@mindspring.com](mailto:tmatteson1@mindspring.com)

## Appreciation to Those Who Have Brought Snacks This Fall

By Jane Frigo

I want to thank John and Marilyn Adair, Charm Peterman and Gwen Harris for bringing refreshments for September, October and November meetings. Remember we would like to have at least two people per meeting bring snacks so the burden is shared. There will be a sign-up sheet at each meeting or you can contact me ([birderjane@gmail.com](mailto:birderjane@gmail.com) home 757-873-0721, cell 757-776-7925) to volunteer. Drinks, cups, napkins and small plates are provided by the club. Anything special beside that should be brought along with the snack.

## Photo Contest Winners Sep.-Oct.

By Michael Meyer

Rules for the HRBC photo contest:

1. Each member may submit up to 2 photos taken in the last 60 days each month.
2. Please name each file with the photographer and the bird's name (i.e., ShawnDash\_Osprey).
3. Submit to Michael Meyer ([michael.meyer@cnu.edu](mailto:michael.meyer@cnu.edu)) by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.
4. Winners will be contacted by the newsletter editor to provide either a short writeup or a brief phone interview from which a narrative may be composed.

## September



King Rail.  
Gold by Pete Peterman

“Both photos [see also the Wilson's Snipe on next page winning Bronze, Ed.] were taken at Back Bay NWR on September 10 using a Nikon 200-500 mm lens at 1/1000 sec @ f/5.6. The King Rail was spotted by Stuart Sweetman and proceeded to give us great views for the next 3-5 minutes.”



Short-billed Dowitcher  
Silver by Mark Sopko

“The photo is of a group of Short-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus*) taken on Bethel Beach Natural Preserve, Mathews, Virginia, September 2 at about 8:40 AM. The morning sun backlit the subjects. But I was able to capture a great example of one flexing its bill upward displaying what is referred to as Rhynchokinesis. I used a Cannon

Powershot SX60 HS. It was on auto focus and at approximately 100x zoom.”



Wilson's Snipe  
Bronze by Pete Peterman

“The Wilson's Snipe was spotted by James Abbott. There were two of them with one tucked in behind a grass clump, and the other feeding out in the open.”

## October



Barred Owl  
Gold by Pete Peterman

“Both photos [see also American Redstart to immediate right winning Bronze, Ed.] were taken at Newport News Park on October 2 using a Nikon D500 with a Nikon 200-500 mm lens at 1/1000 sec at @ f/5.6. The Barred Owl was spotted by Stuart Sweetman as it flew over our heads as we proceeded along the White Oak Trail going to the Swamp.

Bridge. It stopped for less than 30 seconds in a branch to check us out and then flew away.”



Snowy Egret  
Silver by Lynn Chandler

“As always, the photo was taken with my Nikon Coolpix B500; the Snowy Egret was feeding right off my deck on the South Branch of Salter's Creek in downtown Hampton. I spend a lot of time just watching all the shore birds feed.”



American Redstart  
Bronze by Pete Peterman

“There were several American Redstarts at the Arboretum, and this one presented itself for a very short time.”

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TO JOIN OR RENEW. If you would like to join the Hampton Roads Bird Club or renew your membership, there are several convenient ways to do so. Dues remain at \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families. New members, and anyone whose information has changed, please complete the form below and send to John Adair, HRBC Treasurer. Submit your application and payment as follows:

- 1) Mail to: John Adair, 109 Nansemond Turn, Yorktown, VA 23693, [adairjj@gmail.com](mailto:adairjj@gmail.com).
- 2) Drop off at: Wild Wings Nature Store, Glendale Shopping Center in Newport News.
- 3) Drop off at: Wild Birds Unlimited, Kiln Creek Parkway in Yorktown.
- 4) Pay by PayPal or Credit Card at: <https://www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org/membership>.

**Hampton Roads Bird Club – Membership Form**

**New Member (F/I) \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H: \_\_\_\_\_ C: \_\_\_\_\_ W: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Only check this box if you need the newsletter delivered via the postal system;  
 HRBC is trying to save trees and reduce club expenses by using email.

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