



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC)

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org and on Facebook

Vol. 70, No. 1

September/October 2021

Notice on the September and October General Meetings of the Club Will Be Coming Soon.

Shawn will inform members by email of the link to the next meeting, which will be virtual (by internet). Also keep an eye on HRBC Facebook and web page www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

HRBC Outdoors

Because of Covid-19, all HRBC outdoor events require minimum social distancing of 6 feet. Groups larger than 8 will be divided; this requirement can cause “first-come/first-served” circumstances. Face covering is needed and must be worn if distancing cannot be maintained. Carpooling and sharing of equipment are not allowed. Failure to comply will result in immediate cancellation of the event.

Regular Bird Walks in Newport News Park

7:00 AM on 1st and 3rd Sundays all 12 months
Meet at big parking lot behind Ranger Station.
Leader: Jane Frigo birderjane@gmail.com
home 757-873-0721, cell 757-660-3405

Field Trip to Hog Island WMA (see page 2)

7:00 AM on Sunday, September 12, 2021
Leader: James Abbott jaa3469@gmail.com
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

HRBC Big Day of Birding (see page 2)

Saturday, October 9, 2021
Leader: Dave Youker
youkerd@aol.com 757-344-9385

Field Trip to Eastern Shore Sites (see page 2)

6:30 AM on Saturday, October 23, 2021
Leader: James Abbott jaa3469@gmail.com
757-320-9191 (text or phone)

Audubon Christmas Count (see page 3)

Saturday, December 18, 2021
Group leader: Bill Boeh
dolphrog1@yahoo.com (preferred) or 757-951-7959



Juvenile Pileated Woodpeckers at Newport News Park on May 16, 2021 (photo by Dianne Snyder)

Jane Frigo on the above Sunday walk photo:

“The most memorable observation took place just before beginning the White Oak Trail. A photographer was busy photographing something on the Constitution Drive side entrance to the bridge. Curiosity got the best of us, and the group went to see what had caught his eye. It turned out to be a Pileated Woodpecker nest with two nestlings ready to fledge! Observations with binoculars from a respectful distance was a treat.”

**Field Trip to Hog Island
Wildlife Management Area
7:00 AM on Sunday, Sept.12, 2021**

By James Abbott

The Hampton Roads Bird Club September outing will be on Sunday, September 12 to the Hog Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA). We should expect to see a variety of birds; 60-70 total species is not uncommon there. Hog Island is great for waterbirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and migrating songbirds. It is also a rarity hotspot, some very good birds for Virginia have been seen there including the Roseate Spoonbill.

I would like to provide everyone with some important information so that we can be prepared on arrival to make the most of our time. All Virginia WMAs require access permits. I have my own, but as trip leader, I will be filing a group access permit. I will **need a count of participants by September 7**. This does not need to be exact. I can file for a larger participant permit to be safe.

All participants must have identification to pass through its gate. They are serious about this requirement. I have seen people arrive to a walk unable to participate. Most of the time it was because they rode with other people and did not bring their driver licenses. We will drive the two-mile access road stopping at various points along the way. We can also walk around the impoundment areas for more viewing. Participants can walk as much as they feel comfortable with.

We will plan to meet at the entrance gate around 7:00 AM. There is a parking area on the right and in front of the guard house. All cars that will be entering the WMA will be subject to an inspection since we will be driving through Dominion's Surry Nuclear Power Plant to access Hog Island. You can search (Hog Island Wildlife Management Area) in Google Maps or use these GPS coordinates to the parking lot: 37.163174, -76.700857

My email is jaa3469@gmail.com and my cell number is 757-320-9191. Email me or leave a message if you intend to join.

**HRBC Big Day of Birding
Saturday, October 9, 2021**

By Dave Youker

Set aside Saturday, October 9 for the Hampton Roads Bird Club Big Day of Birding. This year it's on the same day as Cornell's Big Day, so you can participate in both at the same time.

Remember, the goal of our Big Day is to see how many different species we as a Club can find in Virginia on this particular day. That means every species from House Sparrow to migrating warbler is important. So bird your backyard, local park, favorite coffee shop or wherever you are in Virginia that day. When you're done birding for the day, simply send me a list of the different species you saw.

Last year as a Club we identified 138 different species on our fall Big Day. This year we're holding it a month earlier, so we'll see if there is a difference in the number and variety of birds. After consolidating the lists, I'll provide an analysis to the Club.

If you bird with others, please ensure you comply with current Covid-19 precautions. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at youkerd@aol.com

**Field Trip to Eastern Shore Sites
6:30 AM on Saturday, Oct. 23, 2021**

By James Abbott

On Saturday October 23, we will meet at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) south parking lot (36.9122991, -76.1304775) at 6:30 AM, leaving shortly for the Eastern Shore. This is our annual opportunity to observe migrating songbirds and their raptor pursuers in the narrow coastal domain over which they briefly concentrate. We typically visit the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, Kiptopeke, and Magothy Bay. We can also visit Oyster and Willis Warf for shorebirds. This is a full day trip, so bring a meal. Cell phone message or text messages to 757-320- 9191 or email: jaa3469@gmail.com

2021 Audubon Christmas Bird Count: HRBC on December 18, 2021

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 are quarantining or isolating due to COVID-19 or 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’s CBC web page at <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>).

As it has since 1952, the Hampton Roads Bird Club will be sponsoring the 2021 CBC. Our count will take place on Saturday, Dec 18, 2021 (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.



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 can 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 helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

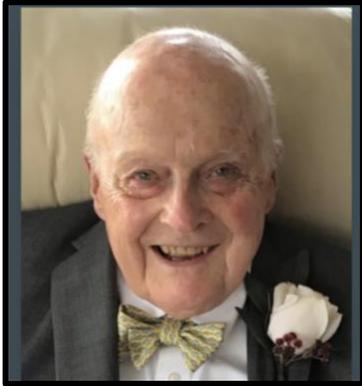
Why is this important? Birds are not doing well. According to Cornell’s [All About Birds website](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/), wild bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada have dropped by almost 30% since 1970 - a 2.9 billion decline in bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada.

Of course, last year we were required to follow Audubon and Hampton Roads Bird Club’s COVID-19 guidelines. At this point it is unclear whether there will be any guidelines this year. I will be sure to advise all participants of any guidelines that are promulgated.

Finally, please 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 (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.

Richard Hudgins 1930-2021



Richard Hudgins, who many regarded as the most affable member of our club, died on July 7, 2021, at the age of 91. He was a gifted man of merit, integrity, and ever cheerful heart who served as HRBC Treasurer several years ago. About ten of us attended his large funeral on the banks of the James at Lion's Bridge. A native of Hampton Roads, Richard is survived by his sons Jesse and Scott. His wife Barbara passed in 2016.



La Bergeronnette (by Georges-Louis Leclerc)

27th Annual Kiptopeke Challenge Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory

Saturday, September 25, 2021

The Kiptopeke Challenge is a local version of the Olympics for birders in our area: They form teams in selected categories and compete to identify the largest number of species. Teams are encouraged to solicit donations, and all funds go directly to support the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory's (CVWO) mission of field research, education and habitat conservation throughout the coastal plain of

Virginia. Each fall CVWO hires 3 seasonal employees. A dedicated professional hawkwatcher conducts a scientific count every day during fall migration and orally sounds off to us aspiring experts gathering at the hawk tower. A young biologist is employed as an educator to inform school groups, local organizations and the general public on conservation aspects of hawk migrations. Finally, a biologist is hired to conduct research and tag monarch butterflies as they migrate south.

Each year a few of our HRBC Olympians compete. Teams are forming now. Dave Youker, our former club president, is the Challenge Coordinator this year. Please support the effort at <https://vawildliferesearch.org/kiptopeke-challenge>



Red-tailed Hawk seeking crayfish at Newport News Park on Independence Day 2021
(photo by Dianne Snyder)

Report of Field Trip to York River State Park (5/8/2021)

By Harry and Rochelle Colestock

Jane Frigo and Marilyn and John Adair met up with the Colestocks at the visitors' center at 8:15 on a lovely Saturday morning. The area near the center was busy with Eastern Bluebirds, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, a Northern Mockingbird, Tufted Titmice, a Great Crested Flycatcher, Indigo Buntings and a Blue Grosbeak, which posed very nicely at the top of a tree. Jane was first to spot two Cedar Waxwings. The river overlook provided views of a Bald Eagle, Ospreys and 4 Ruddy Ducks that hadn't yet flown north with their companions.

The pond area was fairly quiet except for the Great Blue Heron rookery, which had about a dozen herons in residence. Nearby we spotted an Indigo Bunting and Brown Thrashers and heard Blackpoll Warblers and a Common Yellowthroat.

The trail through the woods yielded lots of bird sounds, but not many good views of Red-eyed Vireos, Yellow-throated Warblers, Carolina Wrens, Black-throated Blue Warblers, Ovenbirds, a Pileated Woodpecker, a Yellow-throated Vireo, a Blue-headed Vireo, Northern Parulas, and a Downy Woodpecker, among others. Two birds that we got good looks at were a Summer Tanager and Ruby-throated Hummingbird. We also had close, fleeting views of an Acadian Flycatcher that seemed to be following us along the trail.

The drive back out of the park afforded more opportunities to see and hear multiple bird species.

Ruddy Duck	Red-eyed Vireo
Mourning Dove	American Crow
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Fish Crow
Laughing Gull	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Double-crested Cormorant	Carolina Wren
Great Blue Heron	Northern Mockingbird
Turkey Vulture	Chipping Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Eastern Towhee
Blue-headed Vireo	Yellow-breasted Chat
Purple Martin	Ovenbird
Barn Swallow	Common Yellowthroat

Cedar Waxwing	Northern Parula
American Goldfinch	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Brown-headed Cowbird	Yellow-throated Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler	Scarlet Tanager
Blackpoll Warbler	Indigo Bunting
Pine Warbler	Osprey
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Red-bellied Woodpecker
Blue Grosbeak	Downy Woodpecker
Red-shouldered Hawk	Blue Jay
Pileated Woodpecker	Tufted Titmouse
Eastern Wood-Pewee	European Starling
Acadian Flycatcher	Brown Thrasher
Great Crested Flycatcher	Eastern Bluebird
White-eyed Vireo	Summer Tanager
Yellow-throated Vireo	Northern Cardinal

September is the Time to Renew Your HRBC Membership

by John Adair

Paying dues by credit card proves popular! Last year, more than half of HRBC members discovered the ease and convenience of paying dues online by clicking on a tab at the bottom of the HRBC website [Membership Page](#). The HRBC annual dues remain at \$15 for individuals and \$20 for family membership and you can also pay dues Wild Wings Nature Store in Newport News, at Wild Birds Unlimited in Yorktown, or by mailing a check to the treasurer (payable to HRBC). For renewing members, no form is required unless there are changes to your contact information. While physical restrictions to keep us safe and healthy are continuing, we need more than ever to remain a strong and committed club by supporting each other and the common interests we share in bird observation, study, and conservation. Please support your club and the volunteer treasurer by renewing during September. And thank you for your past membership.

John Adair, (757) 268-5446
HRBC Treasurer
109 Nansemond Turn
Yorktown VA 23693

HRBC June 2021 Picnic and Presentation of 2021-22 Officers

Covid-19 abbreviated our annual summer picnic and presentation of officers, board, and committee heads. The decision to forgo the traditional full meal denied us the pleasure of the grilling by the otherwise over-smoked Bill Boeh and John Adair. That, and a thick fog on June 6, cut attendance – but not the enthusiasm of Jane Frigo and Dianne Snyder, who handed out elaborate certificates of appreciation (not shown or named) with good humor. Most of those who deal with the nuts and bolts of HRBC are identified, along with their respective tasks, in the caption of the photo below.



From left: Shawn Dash (President), Dianne Snyder (Hospitality), John Adair (Treasurer), Jane Frigo (Hospitality and Sunday Walk Leader), Wendy and Ellis Maxey (Website Editors), Tom Charlock (Newsletter Editor), Katrina Dash (newly on the Board), and Dave Youker (Ex officio on Board as former President). Photo by Angie Herring using Dianne Snyder's camera.

Club officials not appearing include Barbara Abraham (Board), Bill Boeh (Secretary and Bird Count Compiler), Gwen Harris (Membership), Walter Harris (Board), Michael Meyer (Publicity), and James Abbott and Marc Nichols (our new Field Trip Coordinators).

(More) News on Feeding Birds Safely

Bulletins in Virginia starting in late May advised against feeding birds because of possible widespread avian contagion. Abnormal rates of bird mortality were reported in the northern parts of our state and elsewhere. The latest word from the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) is that those who choose to feed and water birds can resume doing so, provided special procedures are taken to keep both us and them clean. One upshot that I didn't recall earlier is to **“use disposable gloves”**. A DWR notice, which was also posted on the HRBC Facebook page on August 27, is worth reading:

<https://dwr.virginia.gov/blog/dwr-advises-of-guidelines-to-resume-feeding-birds/>



Turkey Vulture (photo by Judy Jones of the Williamsburg Bird Club)

President	Shawn Dash	drshawntdash@gmail.com	915-491-6227
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Board: (7/20-6/23)	Walter Harris	walthh2@gmail.com	757-898-8649
Board: (7/21-6/24)	Katrina Dash	kmdash4@gmail.com	915-471-1287
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Membership	Gwen Harris	gwenkharris65@gmail.com	757-898-8649

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.
- 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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