



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club (HRBC)

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org and on Facebook

Vol. 70, No. 2

November/December 2021

Notice on the November and December 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 Fort Monroe (see right column)

8:00 AM on Saturday, November 27, 2021

Leader: James Abbott jaa3469@gmail.com

757-320-9191 (text or phone)

Audubon Christmas Count (refer to Bill Boeh’s article in the Sept.-Oct. edition of this newsletter on www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org, click “Newsletter”

then “Newsletter Archive” or contact Bill below)
Saturday, December 18, 2021
Group leader: Bill Boeh
dolphrog1@yahoo.com (preferred) or 757-951-7959



Birders struggling to put a warbler in the fields of view of their optics on the HRBC Sunday walk led by Jane Frigo, October 17, 2021. Most succeeded.

Field Trip to Fort Monroe 8:00 AM Saturday, Nov.27, 2021

By James Abbott

The next Hampton Roads Bird Club field trip will be on Saturday November 27 at Fort Monroe in Hampton. Please meet at the Phoebus Waterfront Park at 8:00 AM. With this late date in November, we will be going after the species that call our region home during the winter months. We will make our way around the Fort visiting various locations and catch low tide at 8:26 AM. If you have a scope, I recommend bringing it along. Dress for wind chill,

as there's often plenty near the Fort. Cell phone message or text messages to 757-320- 9191 or [email: jaa3469@gmail.com](mailto:jaa3469@gmail.com).

Adair, Pete and Charm Peterman, Ryan Walsh, Elizabeth Wilkins, Jacques van Montfrans, and Jeanette and Brian Weinberg.



Bobolink (photo by Dave Youker)



HRBC at Hog Island (photo by Dianne Snyder)

HALF OF HRBC MEMBERS HAVE FAILED TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP.

The membership year is September 1 to August 31. The deadline is December 31, 2021, after which unpaid members are removed from the roster. The Treasurer John Adair (adairjj@gmail.com) will send a reminder notice in mid-November to members requiring renewal payment.

Water levels were high in the impoundments which limited our shorebird opportunities but great looks at American White Pelican, Northern Harrier, American Redstart, and Bobwhite were the highlights. We also had a Tricolored Heron which is a good catch that far inland.

Species list for Hog Island (9/12/2021)

Report of Field Trip to Hog Island Wildlife Management Area (9/12/2021)

By James Abbott

The Hampton Roads Bird Club had its first fall excursion beyond the Peninsula on September 12 to Hog Island Wildlife Management Area. Weather was in the 70s with a SSW wind around 12mph. Participants included Christiana Wilson, Wendy and Ellis Maxey, Lesley Meng, Eric Mathews, Gary Wright, June Hartzler, Bill Boeh, Cindy Schulz, Dianne Snyder, Rex Holmlin, John and Marylin

Mallard	Downy Woodpecker
American Black Duck	Northern Flicker
Northern Bobwhite	Pileated Woodpecker
Mourning Dove	American Kestrel
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Eastern Phoebe
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	White-eyed Vireo
Spotted Sandpiper	Blue Jay
Laughing Gull	Fish Crow
Great black-backed Gull	American Crow
Caspian Tern	Tree Swallow
Royal Tern	Carolina Chickadee
Forster's Tern	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Double-crested Cormorant	Carolina Wren
American White Pelican	Eastern Bluebird
Great Blue Heron	American Robin
Great Egret	Northern Mockingbird
Snowy Egret	Brown Thrasher
Tricolored Heron	European Starling
Green Heron	Bobolink
Black Vulture	Red-winged Blackbird
Turkey Vulture	Pine Warbler
Osprey	Palm Warbler
Northern Harrier	American Redstart
Bald Eagle	Common Yellowthroat
Belted Kingfisher	Summer Tanager
	Northern Cardinal

Report of Field Trip to Eastern Shore (10/23/2021)

By James Abbott

The Hampton Roads Bird Club had its second fall field trip on October 23 to Northampton County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The mercury was in the 60s and a cloudy morning gave way to sun by noon. There had been a significant flight of migrating birds the night before. Our group met at the Eastern Shore Visitor Center and walked the trails at the National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge had a lot of activity at dawn allowing great looks of a Blackpoll Warbler and a flock of migrating Tundra Swan. We also had Black-throated Blue Warbler and Northern Parula.



Blackpoll Warbler at Eastern Shore field trip
(photo by Pete Peterman)

One gift of that day was Pete's photo (below) of a Saltmarsh Sparrow. I sent it over to a colleague of mine who works on a marsh sparrow banding project at UNCW, and she confirmed the identity. However, she said this individual sparrow is an interesting one. Nelson's and Saltmarsh were lumped as Sharp-Tailed Sparrow before being split. The two species have been studied and are now found to hybridize. She says that the photograph definitely shows traits of "Nelson's" genetics. She cited the presence of the orange bib-like in Nelson's, though it is uneven and inconsistent on this individual and unlike a classic Nelson's; and that the heavy streaking characteristic of "Saltmarsh" is slightly reduced on this bird.



1st cycle Bald Eagle at Eastern Shore field trip
(photo by Pete Peterman, ID help from
James Abbott)

We next moved on to the town of Oyster and the marsh side trail. High water limited the shorebird activity, but we enjoyed fine views of a Tricolored Heron, American Bittern, Saltmarsh Sparrow, and Clapper Rail. Our last stop was the Ned Brinkley Preserve at the Cheriton landfill pond. They have done a really nice job here with the parking lot and a wonderful viewing blind at the pond. We saw many waterbirds including Black-crowned Night Heron and Little Blue Heron, along with some early Ruddy Duck and Ring-Necked Duck.



Saltmarsh Sparrow at Eastern Shore field trip
(photo by Pete Peterman)

Two special notes: On the way to the 7:00 AM meeting Ryan and I flushed 3 American Woodcock on Arlington Chase Road. And the Golden Eagle reported by the Kiptopeke hawk watch at 10:50 AM was found again along US 13 feeding on a deer carcass and was seen by group members.

Species list (83) for Northampton County (10/23/2021)

Canada Goose	Peregrine Falcon
Tundra Swan	Eastern Wood-Pewee
Gadwall	Eastern Phoebe
Green-winged Teal	Blue Jay
Ring-necked Duck	American Crow
Ruddy Duck	Fish Crow
Pied-billed Grebe	Tree Swallow
Rock Pigeon	Carolina Chickadee
Mourning Dove	Tufted Titmouse
Clapper Rail	Carolina Wren
American Woodcock	House Wren
Laughing Gull	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Great-black Backed Gull	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Herring Gull	Eastern Bluebird
Royal Tern	Swainson's Thrush
tern sp.	American Robin
Common Loon	Gray Catbird
Double-crested Cormorant	Brown Thrasher
Brown Pelican	Northern Mockingbird
American Bittern	European Starling
Great Blue Heron	American Goldfinch
Great Egret	Yellow-breasted Chat
Snowy Egret	Eastern Meadowlark
Little Blue Heron	Red-winged Blackbird
Tricolored Heron	Brown-headed Cowbird
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Common Yellowthroat
White Ibis	Northern Parula
Black Vulture	Blackpool Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Osprey	Palm Warbler
Golden Eagle	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Northern Harrier	Yellow-throated Warbler
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Northern Cardinal
Cooper's Hawk	Eastern Towhee
Bald Eagle	Chipping Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Savannah Sparrow
Belted Kingfisher	Saltmarsh Sparrow
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Song Sparrow
Downy Woodpecker	Swamp Sparrow
Northern Flicker	White-throated Sparrow
Pileated Woodpecker	

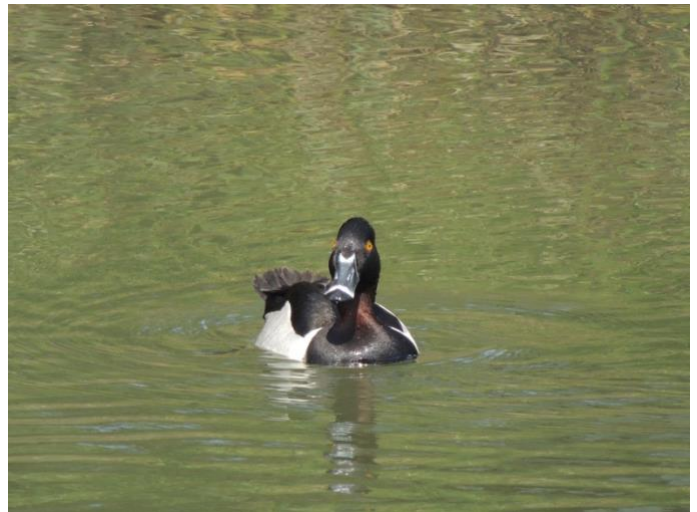
HRBC Photo Contest Winners June-October 2021

Contest managers Shawn Dash and Michael Meyer “decided that the top two images of all who contributed from June-October should be highlighted [a three-way tie for incredible captures].”



Brown Thrasher (photo by Harold Atkins)

Harold Atkins: “My photos were taken using a Nikon P510 which has a 4.3-180mm optical zoom. Both photos were taken in or from our back yard. While we often see a wide variety of birds out the back window, both of these sightings were not common for our location. In particular, the Ring-necked Duck below appeared on the second 90-degree day of May, and probably should have migrated north months earlier. He was hanging around with a couple of Mallards and seemed a little lost.”



Ring-necked Duck (photo by Harold Atkins)



Great Blue Heron (photo by Lynn Chandler)

Lynn Chandler: “The Great Blue Heron was sunning himself in the trees at the head of Salter's Creek (south branch); you do not often get to see them doing this. The Grey Catbird getting water was in my back yard. All photos are taken with my Nikon 40x.”



Blue-winged Warbler (by Pete Peterman)

Pete Peterman: “Here are the photos I sent to Michael. The Blue-wing Warbler was photographed on October 3 in my backyard water feature. I was sitting on my screened in back porch, and a pair of these came into the water feature and started to use the water to bathe and preen. I did not have my camera, so I had to go inside to obtain it and when I returned, the pair was gone. I went outside the porch in order to get a clear view and stood so my body was not in view from the water feature, but I could keep the area under surveillance. One of them came back and I was able to get a photo before the warbler flew away when an American Redstart claimed the water feature to do the bathing and preening.

“The Barred Owl was photographed on September 19 at Newport News Park. It was found by Stuart Sweetman and the owl moved to a different perch once we all gazed at him thru binoculars. I took several photos changing my position to try and get a clear view. Both photos were obtained using a Nikon D500 and a Nikon 200-500 mm zoom lens at f 5.6 and a high ISO to be able to use a 1/1000 shutter speed.”



Gray Catbird (photo by Lynn Chandler)



Barred Owl (photo by Pete Peterman)

Congratulations to our winners for their competence and patience (and good luck). The contest continues. Here are rules of submission:

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) by the 10th 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.

HRBC Education Fund Recipient

by John Adair, Treasurer

I received the following thoughtful letter from Katie Foster expressing her appreciation for being selected as the HRBC Education Fund recipient for the 2020-21 club year. I was very favorably impressed with her impromptu introduction at the September Zoom meeting and even more so with this letter. Katie was nominated by the HRBC Publicity Committee Chair and CNU professor, Michael Meyer, based on her ongoing conservation field research project. The nomination was unanimously approved by the other board and committee members.

September 10, 2021

Hampton Roads Bird Club
109 Nansemond Turn
Yorktown, VA 23693

Dear Hampton Roads Bird Club,

Thank you so much for your generosity in funding my thesis research. I wanted to express my gratitude and tell you a bit about myself.

I am a senior majoring in organismal biology with a minor in leadership studies. I am from Staunton, Virginia, where I graduated from Buffalo Gap High School. I have always had a deep interest in biology and the environment, and I have chosen to continue my education at CNU to get a masters degree in environmental science. My thesis research focuses on grassland bird conservation in Swoope, Virginia. In the future, I intend to pursue a career in wildlife conservation.

A few years ago, I became especially interested in birds when a Scott's Oriole was found at my house. My mother loves birds, so we were both fascinated by this bird that we had never seen before and couldn't identify. With the help of some birders, we were able to identify it and report it as the first Scott's Oriole sighting in Virginia. Dozens of birders came to observe it and take pictures, and talking to them really opened my eyes to the amazing world of ornithology. I took an ornithology class (taught by Dr. Rick Sherwin) last semester at CNU, and I absolutely loved it. We got to go on field trips once a week around Hampton Roads and look for different birds. My favorite place to look for birds is by the Lion's Bridge near the Mariner's Museum. I love seeing all the Great Blue Herons roosting in the trees and the buffleheads swimming by the shore. I also volunteer at Nature's Nanny Wildlife Rehabilitation in Chesapeake. Here, I get to work hands-on with raptors, water birds, and crows. It's definitely my favorite day of the week when I get to go hang out with some owls for a few hours.

Thank you again for your generous support, which helps make my thesis research possible.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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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.
- 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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*Editor (T. Charlock)
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