



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

Vol. 58, No. 4

March / April 2010

March 11th Meeting—7:00 PM **"A Walk in the Wild"**

Dr. Bill Leaning, a retired veterinarian, will be our guest speaker in March. Following retirement in 1991, Bill acquired "some serious photographic equipment," and nature photography became a passion! Originally from New Zealand, Bill and his wife, Clare, now reside on a 17-acre wooded property in Earlsyville, outside Charlottesville. His program presents a pictorial diary of the winged creatures that have visited their property in recent years – including birds, butterflies and dragonflies. Join us for what is sure to be a very informative and entertaining evening!

Host/Hostess: Marilyn White, Marilyn Adair

March Field Trips

MAR. 7 & 21, Sunday ~ 7:00 AM
Regular bird walk in Newport News Park
Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.
Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

MAR. 13 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Hog Island
We will travel to Hog Island Wildlife Management Area. Meet in the parking lot of Surry Nuclear Power Plant at 8 AM and carpool into the area. BRING A PICTURE ID. All cars will be subject to a search; no drugs, alcohol or guns are permitted. Bring drinks and snacks if needed. From Newport News: take the James River Bridge south. Right on Rt. 258/32 to Benn's Church. Right on Rt. 10 to Poolesville. Right onto Hog Island Rd--Rt. 650 to Power Plant. From Williamsburg: take the Scotland Ferry. Travel Rt. 31 (Rolfe Hwy). Left on Rt. 10 to Poolesville. Left on Rt. 650 (Hog Island Rd) to the power plant. Please sign up at the March meeting or call Dave Youker at 344-9385 if attending.

April 8th Meeting—7:00 PM **"Going Wild - Creating a Backyard** **Habitat with Native Plants"**

Our April speaker is **Steve Living**, a Watchable Wildlife Biologist with the Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries. With wildlife habitat under increasing pressure from development, our yards can play an increasingly important role in preserving wildlife. Steve's presentation will give an overview of the current challenges wildlife face, along with practical ideas for making your yard a refuge for wildlife. His professional experience includes work as a consultant in habitat management and invasive species control. Steve is also an avid birder. We have a Silent Auction that night, too (see p. 2 for details), so bring your friends!

Host/Hostess: Gail Claydon, Hilary Propst

April Field Trips

APR. 4 & 18, Sunday ~ 7:00 AM
Regular bird walk in Newport News Park
Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.
Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

APR. 10 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Great Dismal Swamp
Our April field trip will take us to the Great Dismal Swamp. Meet at the Jericho Ditch parking lot at 8:00 AM. This will be a walking trip along the Jericho Ditch and possibly including a drive to the Washington Ditch and boardwalk stroll there. Directions: Take the James River Bridge Route 17 South, and turn right on Bennett's Pasture Road (627). When it ends, turn right on Nansemond Parkway (337), then left on White Marsh Rd (642). Turn left onto Jericho Ditch Lane (a gravel road) and proceed to the parking lot. Bring lunch or snack. Sign up at the April meeting, or call Dave Youker at 344-9385 to let him know you're coming.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendar for these HRBC activities that will take place at future meetings!

April 8 - Silent Auction

HIGHEST BIDDER BUYS it at this silent auction, which will be part of our April meeting! We will sell mostly birding related items (books, object d'art, outdoor sculpture, feeders, plants). However, any new or gently used item may be donated by members to be sold at this HRBC fund-raising event. Donations may be brought to Sandy Bottom Nature center April 8th between 1-3 or 6:30 pm. A suggested beginning bid should accompany each item. Bring your DONATIONS, LOTS of FRIENDS and your checkbook. You can place your bids before and after Steve Living's presentation. Come join the FUN. Questions or willing to Help? Call Phyllis Roth at 757-898-7354.

May 13 - HRBC Photo Contest

We're running our first-ever Photo Contest for our May 13 meeting! You can submit photos taken between May 2009 and May 2010. There are 4 categories of photos, and you may enter up to 3 photos in each category.:

1. Birds (all feathered friends)
2. Flowers
3. Critters: will include bugs, butterflies, frogs, any animal, people, etc.
4. Scenic Seasons: sunsets, beaches, boats, water, mountains, trees, clouds, etc.

We will have judges at the meeting. Please fill out an index card at the meeting for each entered photo to be judged. State your name on back; on front list category, date (mo./yr.), and title (e.g., "Sunset on the James" or "Bluebird" at NN Park). Winners will receive prizes for an overall grand prize, as well as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prize for each of the 4 categories & maybe honorable mention.

REMINDER!

You can buy a Club patch for \$5- great for caps, vests, etc. See Richard Hudgins or Mary Copeland at any of our meetings.

Nominating Committee

Thanks to Clark White (Chair), Marilyn White, and Phyllis Roth for agreeing to serve on the Nominating Committee. During March they'll prepare a slate of officers for 2010-11 to present at the April meeting. *We need more members to step up and get involved!* If you're interested in serving as an officer, Board member or newsletter editor, please contact Clark White @cowbirds@cox.net or 757-875-7649.

May 1 - Spring Bird Count

Plan to participate in our annual Spring Bird Count on MAY 1. This count covers the same territory as the winter Audubon Christmas Count but is not an Audubon event. Compiler Clark White will assign sectors and distribute folders to team leaders at the April meeting. These counts are always fun and have the added excitement of the migrating birds to challenge us. We welcome experienced and new birders alike! To participate, contact Clark at cwbirds@cox.net or 757-875-7649.

Welcome new members!

We extend a warm welcome to these people who've recently joined the Hampton Roads Bird Club:

Selma Al-Salam
Karen Brophy
Dr. Mary Gibbons
Melanie Paul
Brent and Laura Slaughter
Thomas F. Watts, Jr.

VA Society of Ornithology (VSO) News

The VSO now has a Fan Page on Facebook and is encouraging everyone to become a fan! As a fan, you can post messages or photos about birds you've seen and stay up to date on other birding activities throughout VA.

The VSO annual meeting will be April 23-25 in Farmville. A field trip to Highland County is planned for June 4-6.

Get the details on all these events at the VSO website: www.virginiabirds.net. You can get a membership form there if you'd like to join the VSO.

Field Trip Reports

Dave Youker, Field Trip Coordinator

CBBT Islands, JAN 16, 2010

A group of 35 birders got together on Sat, 16 Jan to visit the CBBT islands and the southern end of the Eastern Shore.

Brenda Tekin joined members from the Hampton Roads and Fredericksburg Bird Clubs on what was a very pleasant January day. HRBC members included: Dave Youker, Jane Frigo, Nick Flanders, John and Marilyn Adair, Lee and Meredith Bell, Julie Breeden, Elisa Enders, Michael Lowry, Kenneth Lipshy, Ben Copeland, John Porter, Hayes and Joyce Williams, Clark White, Walter Livant, Richard and Barbara Hudgins, and Melvin Pettard.

Island 2 was closed, so we spent the first part of the morning on islands 3 & 4 before continuing on to the Eastern Shore. At Kiptopeke, a peregrine falcon put on an aerial display toying with a group of rock pigeons. That same playful nature didn't exist between a bald eagle and gull at Oyster, as the eagle snatched the gull out of the air. Low tide at Oyster treated us to a diverse group of shore birds, as well as a nice flyover by a large flock of tundra swans. Total species count for the day was 78.

Mathews County, FEB 13, 2010

Eight members of the Hampton Roads Bird Club, along with three members from the Williamsburg Bird Club, braved the weather and birded along the shores of Mathew County for our February 13 trip. HRBC members included: Dave Youker, Jane Frigo, Elisa Enders, Susie Engle-Hill, Nancy Gruttman-Tyler, George and Rosemarie Harris, and Richard Hudgins.

With a persistent wind and temperatures in the 30s, the group managed to spot 53 species. Areas covered were the shores near Bavon, Bethel Beach and North Haven Beach. Highlights included 50+ Tundra Swans, Common Goldeneye, American Pipit, and a lone Boat-tailed Grackle.

Christmas Bird Count Results

Compiler Clark White reported a total of 101 species were seen in this year's Audubon Christmas Bird Count, despite adverse weather conditions. Some areas in Poquoson and Grandview were impassable due to flooding. Still, many faithful counters stuck with their sectors for the full day, and we appreciate all of you! Unusual species included Eastern Kingbird at Langley AFB and Eurasian Wigeon at Ridgeway Park.

Member Spotlight: Dorothy Mitchell

Dorothy Mitchell and her husband Mike were charter members of the Hampton Roads Bird Club. For many years they banded birds in their back yard, and helped start the Eastern Bluebird trail at Newport News Park. They banded 3,500 bluebirds from 1973-1989!



They were also instrumental in helping set up the songbird banding station at Kiptopeke State Park on the Eastern Shore with Walter and Doris Smith and Charlie Hacker, also charter members.

Dorothy led the Sunday morning bird walks at Newport News Park for many years until 2004. She did a lot of work for the Club while she was able to be active, and we are indebted to her for the many current Club activities that she was instrumental in starting.

Dorothy now lives in Staunton with her daughter Carolyn Hensley and will celebrate her 90th birthday on March 6. We miss her presence here locally but she receives the newsletter, and several friends keep her up-to-date on events here. If you'd like to send Dorothy a birthday card or a note at any time of the year, please send to her at Carolyn's home:

1185 Pinehurst Road
Staunton, VA 24401

Happy Birthday from the Hampton Roads Bird Club, Dorothy! We miss you and your famous Ribbon Jell-o Salad (in the Club's cookbook).

President	Mary Copeland	benmarycop@cavtel.net	(757) 851-7007
Vice President	Marc Nichols	ravensfan@hotmail.com	(757) 810-0231
Secretary	Libby Carmines	Carmy5@aol.com	(757) 591-9174
Treasurer	Richard Hudgins		(757) 596-9603
Board: (7/07-6/10)	Tom Claydon	tclaydon@cox.net	(757) 930-1038
Board: (7/08-6/11)	Mike Propst	M9538@cox.net	(757) 886-1150
Board: (7/09-6/12)	John Dawson		(757) 874-2408
Field Trip Coordinator	Dave Youker	youkerd@aol.com	(757) 224-1188
Newsletter/Web Editor	Meredith Bell	merandlee@cox.net	(804) 824-4958

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: **Richard Hudgins, 803 Riverside Drive, Newport News, VA 23606-3629.**

Membership is from July 1st to June 30th. **Dues are \$15.00 for individuals and \$20.00 for families.** NOTE: Membership dues can be paid at Wild Wings Nature Store in the Hidenwood Shopping Center, Newport News, VA, or at Wild Birds Unlimited in the Village Shops at Kiln Creek.

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 7:00 PM.

Hampton Roads Bird Club – Membership Form

Renewal _____ New Member _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Birthday (month-day): _____

Email: _____

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

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