



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

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January / February 2009

January 8th Meeting—7:00 PM "Rehabilitation of Wildlife"

Lisa Barlow, wildlife rehabilitator from Norfolk, will speak to us about the rehabilitation of the Snowy Owl that was captured on November 28 in Norfolk, as well as other wild creatures. Lisa is President of Wildlife Response, Inc., a non-profit organization devoted solely to the care of orphaned, injured and displaced native wildlife and the education of the public. This is the first time we have had Lisa speak to the Club, so let's show our appreciation by bringing a guest.

Host/Hostess: Libby Carmines, Jim North

January Field Trips

JAN. 4 & 18, Sunday ~ 7:00-9:00 AM
Regular bird walk in Newport News Park
Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.
Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

JAN. 10 (Sat.), 7:45 AM – Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands
On January 10, 2008, those signed up and paid will meet at the South Plaza of the CBBT. Please be there at 7:45 AM so that carpools can be arranged and security papers checked. We have one group of 15 this year. We will begin on Island 2 and proceed to the Islands 3 and 4 in one-hour stops. At that time, those interested in going on to the Eastern Shore may do so, while those wishing to return to the Peninsula may do so. If carpooling, be sure all riders are in agreement as to going or returning. Be sure to dress warmly and bring snacks if desired. Let's hope the ducks will have arrived!!!

February 12th Meeting—7:00 PM "Visiting New Zealand"

Peggy Opengari will speak to us on February 12 and show us video of her trip to New Zealand and maybe touch on Australia. The Brush Turkeys, Koalas courting and Little Penguins with chicks should be most interesting, as well as views of the scenery and Peggy's engaging narrative. She lives in Pearisburg, VA, with her husband Bill and is very active in VSO. Let's welcome back Peggy, one of our most informative and entertaining speakers, with a great turnout and please bring a friend/guest.

Host/Hostess: Meredith Bell, Angela Herring

February Field Trips

FEB. 1 & 15, Sunday ~ 7:00-9:00 AM
Regular bird walk in Newport News Park
Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.
Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

FEB. 14 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Hoffler Creek and Craney Island
On Saturday, February 14, 2009, we will meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot of Hoffler Creek. We will tour the facility, circling the lake in search of water fowl and woodland birds. We will then go down the road to Craney Island and continue the search for waterfowl and look for shore birds. Clark White will be our trip leader. Directions to Hoffler Creek: From I-664, take Exit 9 onto SR 164. Follow this for 2.0 miles to Towne Point Road/Twin Pines Road, turn left off the exit ramp and proceed straight for approximately 2.0 miles. The preserve entrance is at 4510 Twin Pines Road on the left. Dress warmly, and bring snacks/drinks.

The President's Perch

Julie Breeden

Winterizing...If the birds can do it, so can we!

Have you ever found yourself looking forward to a birding adventure on a crisp winter day just to find that you opt to stay in the car for the warmth every other stop? Maybe you choose not to go birding as often as you would like to avoid the chill. You can make the most of winter birding trips with a few economically-conscious winterizing preparations from head to toe.

Face:

In addition to the essentials such as hats, ear muffs, and scarves, keep the effects of cold weather at bay by preventing that dry winter skin. Using a facial and body moisturizer, chapstick, and drinking plenty of water help maintain hydration and minimize skin irritation. Kleenex and cough drops can come in handy.

Body:

Key components to maintaining body warmth are layers and air-activated heating warmers. For those especially prone to the freeze, down coats and flannel lined jeans are tried and true weapons. If you prefer the layering approach, thermal underwear has come a long way. Forget bulky waffle thermals... just as effective are the soft, smooth, and form fitting Cuddl Duds or Jockey Comfies for women, or for men the Jockey 3D-Innovations line. Many versions of these modern thermals can be found at department stores or sporting good stores.

If you don't like the bulk of down coats or thermals... air activated warmers can be your good friend... Wellpatches or similar brands for muscle aches have a light adhesive on one side and can be applied to the chest, arms, or thighs for 8 hours of warmth. Tip: Be sure not to inadvertently purchase the mentholated warming products.

Hands and Feet:

How often have you experienced the uncomfortable feeling of tingling or numb fingers and toes? Why suffer? Inexpensive disposable hand warmers can slide either into your gloves or into your pockets and similarly for feet with socks or shoes. If you'd prefer a

Winterizing... (cont'd.)

more permanent solution for your tootsies, try this economical solution: insulator insoles with aerogel-infused inserts by Polar Wrap. These shoe inserts not only keep feet warmer and cushioned in the winter, they also keep feet cooler in the summer!

Wrapping it up:

Remember, a thermos of hot chocolate, coffee, or tea plus plenty of healthy snacks throughout the day serve to bring a group together for nostalgic chats and memory creating moments. So, enjoy the turn of the season and don't let the winter weather keep you from experiencing fun birding excursions with good company... If the birds can do it, so can we!

Audubon Christmas Bird Count

Compiler Clark White reported a total of 122 species were seen by 41 participants in this year's Christmas Bird Count. Unusual species included: Lesser Black-backed Gull, Rusty Blackbird, Pine Siskin, Black & White Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Eurasian Wigeon, Common Eider, Semipalmated Sandpiper.

2008 Newport News Park Walks

Many thanks to **Jane Frigo** for her faithful attendance and leadership at the Sunday walks in Newport News Park. We had an increase in # of participants (was 9) and average # of species (was 44). Join us when you can – see page 1 for dates!

Month	1st Sunday		3rd Sunday	
	# People	# Species	# People	# Species
JAN	12	48	9	42
FEB	14	60	10	44
MAR	13	62	6	48
APR	4	43	11	60
MAY	11	72	14	58
JUN	16	55	8	51
JUL	11	51	7	50
AUG	18	47	9	50
SEP	6	44	13	46
OCT	4	24	8	57
NOV	12	53	12	47
DEC	6	50	rain	--
Average	11	51	10	50

2008 Report on the Hampton Roads Bird Club Bluebird Trail

Our Club is fortunate to have four individuals who dedicate countless hours each year to maintaining local Bluebird trails: **Harry Carlson, Dot Silsby, Jim Hill, and Nan LaRue**. Dot and Harry submitted the following report for this season's activities.



During the winter all of the 100 boxes and guards on the two golf courses at Newport News Park were inspected and necessary repairs were made. The joyful task of checking the Bluebird Trail began April 10th. Many boxes were being used, and seven already had nests.

From April to the middle of August, progress in Bluebird-raising was checked on a weekly basis. At the end of the season, we counted 449 fledged Bluebirds, 6 Carolina Chickadees, 6 Tree Swallows, and 7 House Wrens. The House Wrens created problems by invading Bluebird boxes to peck and destroy eggs in 7 boxes. Next year, we will be careful to remove the sticks the wrens use for their nests as soon as they appear, so no new House Wrens can do their dirty deeds.

Dan Cristol and Ryan Burdge of William and Mary continued their research this year. They and assistants took blood samples and banded some birds. Their research is intended to compare the health of birds raised on golf courses to those raised elsewhere and to assess their dispersion after leaving the nests. We do not as yet have their assessment.

Nan LaRue and Jim Hill have 40 boxes in the Arboretum section of the Park. In these boxes, 92 Bluebirds, 35 Carolina Wrens, 20 Carolina Chickadees, and 3 Tufted Titmice were raised.

Although no records were set, it definitely was a good year!

Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

The GBBC is a FREE annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, GBBC gives everyone a chance to discover the birds in their neighborhood.

This year's count is FEB. 13-16. Mark your calendar, and plan to participate! You can get more details on their website: www.birdsource.org/gbbc

Just count the highest number of each species you see during an outing or a sitting, then enter your tally online at the GBBC website (link above).

VSO Field Trip to Outer Banks

The VSO annual winter field trip to the Outer Banks will take place **FEB. 20-22**. The Clarion Inn at Nags Head Beach will be the trip HQ, with special room rates of \$62 (oceanfront) and \$57 (streetside). Make reservation by JAN. 20 to get special rate: 252-441-6333.

You don't have to be a VSO member to participate, and there is no registration fee. There will be an orientation and slide program Friday evening, with field trips on Saturday and Sunday. Get trip details at

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org/events.asp

Questions? Contact Peggy Opengari at 540-921-4340 or gramby@pemt.net.

NEW BOOK: *Birdwatcher*

We've just learned about a new book sure to become a favorite among birders. It's *Birdwatcher: The Life of Roger Tory Peterson* by Elizabeth J. Rosenthal. We've received a review copy from the author, so watch for a more detailed summary in the next issue. PBS producer and nature journalist George H. Harrison calls the book "a brilliant, definitive biography of the man who made birdwatching the leading outdoor recreation in America." Learn more about the book and the author, read reviews, and buy the book at: www.petersonbird.com.

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To join the Hampton Roads Bird Club, please fill out the form below and bring it along with your check to the next meeting or mail to: **HRBC Treasurer – 19 Hertzler Road, Newport News, VA 23602-6125.**

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 Kiln Creek Shopping Center.

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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