



# Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

## Hampton Roads Bird Club

Vol. 56, No. 2

November / December 2007

### November 8th Meeting—7:00 PM "The Making of a Field Guide"

Our guest speaker on November 8, Edward S. Brinkley ("Ned" to us), will give us a review of his recently published field guide, *National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Birds of North America*. Ned will describe the joys and challenges he experienced getting his book ready to be published.

Jim Hill from Wild Wings Nature Store will have copies for sale to be signed by Ned, with a 15% discount to all club members. Bring your cash, check or credit card and buy yourself or friend a Christmas present!

**Hostesses: Sue Gray Al-Salam, Dot Silsby, Doris Smith**

### December 13, Meeting—6:00 PM "Christmas Dinner and Slide Show"

Join us at the early start time of **6:00 PM** at Sandy Bottom for the Club's annual Christmas party. This year we'll have a potluck dinner, with meats and beverages provided by the club. **Bring your favorite side dish and dessert to share.** Contact Hilary Propst (886-1150) if you'd like to help with preparations for the event.

Following the meal, we'll have a slide show of pictures taken by our club's talented photographers at field trips and other events. Contact Tom Claydon (930-1038) if you have photos you'd like to show that night.

**Coordinators: Hilary Propst** (food, decorations and set-up) and **Tom Claydon** (slides)

### November Field Trips

**November 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

**Nov. 10 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Mathews County**  
Mathews County provides many excellent spots for viewing waterfowl and shorebirds. To carpool, meet at 7:00 AM behind the Citgo Station at Patriot Square at the intersection of Rt. 17 and Ft. Eustis Blvd. Take 17 to Gloucester Courthouse and turn right at the light on Main St. (17 Business). Take Main Street to the first light, and turn right on Rt. 14. Stay on 14 until you reach Rt. 198, then turn right. Go less than a mile and turn left into the recreation center parking lot, adjacent to the high school (driving time about 50 minutes). Bring lunch, beverages and snacks. Trip leaders are Meredith and Lee Bell. Sign up at Nov. meeting or call Jane Frigo (873-0721) to let her know you're coming.

### December Field Trips

**December 2 & 16 (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

### December 15 (Sat.), 7:00 AM – Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count

Our field trip for December is the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. We're always looking for volunteers to help with the count. Whether you're experienced or a new birder, your eyes and ears are needed for this event!

The area is divided into 13 sectors, with an experienced leader for each. Most sectors count from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM. There's a \$5 fee for each participant, and you'll receive a copy of the full report published by the National Audubon Society.

Sign up at Nov. or Dec. meetings, or call Hayes Williams, coordinator, at 804-693-4417. Check out details on page 2.

## The President's Perch

*Meredith Bell*

As the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays approach, it's the perfect time to reflect on the people and things we're grateful for. There's no end to the wonders of nature that we can appreciate, if we take the time to look and listen at what's around us. If you find yourself rushing around during this busy time, take a few minutes to walk in a nearby park or just sit on your porch and observe nature in action. You'll see how hard our feathered friends have to work just to stay alive, and it will give you a new perspective on the things you "have" to do.

I want to express my appreciation and gratitude to the Club's Board. They work very hard to make sure HRBC runs smoothly and provides members a variety of fun and educational activities.

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### Thanks to Dorothy Mitchell

We want to express our appreciation to long-time devoted member Dorothy Mitchell, who recently made a \$100 contribution to the HRBC scholarship fund. Thanks, Dorothy!

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### Dues are Due!

If you haven't sent in your dues for 2007-08, now's the time! Dues are \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family.

**If you do not pay by December 31, your name will be dropped from our mailing list.** Don't let this happen! We want to keep you as a member.

Fill out the form on the back page and bring it with your check to the next meeting, or mail to: HRBC Treasurer, 19 Hertzler Road, Newport News, VA 23602-6125

You can also drop off your dues at Wild Wings Nature Store in Hidenwood Shopping Center or at Wild Birds Unlimited in Kiln Creek Shopping Center. And these stores carry all kinds of wonderful items for the nature-lovers on your Christmas list!

## Audubon Christmas Bird Count

The first "Christmas Bird Census" was held on December 25, 1900. In 1951 The Hampton Roads Bird Club was formed and started doing the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in 1952. The 15-mile diameter of the "Newport News" area, which includes Newport News, Hampton, Poquoson and a good part of York County, is divided into 13 sectors to facilitate using small groups for good coverage.

The count in each of the sectors is led by an experienced birder who is familiar with the area. There is a "tally" at the end of the day where the data collected is assembled. It is fascinating to hear the number of species found in each sector.

We need volunteers for this year's count on **Saturday, December 15**. The more eyes and ears we have, the better! Your participation is valuable in helping us get an accurate count for this important annual event.

Audubon requires a \$5.00 fee for all participants except those 18 and younger. This covers less than half the cost of recording and publishing the data. The remainder is covered by grants and other fund-raising efforts. You'll receive a copy of the full report, published by the National Audubon Society.

Hayes Williams has served as coordinator and compiler since 1994. We appreciate his dedication and hard work to make the count so successful every year. **Contact Hayes at 804-693-4417**, or sign up with him at the Nov. or Dec. meeting. You can request a specific sector or let him assign you to one. Sector leaders will communicate the time and meeting place to everyone in their sector. The day usually runs from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM, with the tally at 5:00 PM. Come out for a fun day of very important bird counting!

### In Memory

The Club extends its sympathy to the family of Mary Mandziak, especially to her daughter Louise Kozlowicz, a member of our club. Mary died on October 3 and was active in HRBC for many years.

## Field Trip Reports

### York River State Park – 9/15/07

Eighteen people participated in the field trip to York River State Park on September 15. Led by Lee and Meredith Bell, we recorded 48 species. On the way into the park we had Scarlet Tanager, White-eyes Vireo and Northern Parula.

One of the most spectacular and memorable moments was when 5 adult Bald Eagles appeared in the sky at the same time. We had Hairy Woodpecker, American Redstart and Pine Warbler around the parking lot and Yellow Warbler and female Summer Tanager near the visitor's center. Thanks to Walt Livant for providing this photo!



More photos from field trips are on our website:  
[hamptonroadsbirdclub.com](http://hamptonroadsbirdclub.com)

Summer Tanager

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### Eastern Shore – 10/13/07

The weather and birds could not have been more cooperative for our annual field trip to the Eastern Shore on October 13. We had a record 24 participants, with Ben Copeland as our expert trip leader. We tallied 88 species.

We started at the banding station and spent more than two hours there. We saw many species that we rarely get to see up-close such as Swainson's and Grey-cheeked Thrush. Jethro Runco, head bander, did an excellent job pointing out field marks of each species. When an immature Cooper's Hawk was caught, we all gathered at the Hawk Watch station to see it up-close. A beautiful bird!

From Kiptopeke, we traveled to the Landfill near Oyster. Waterfowl included Ruddy Duck, Black Duck, Pied-billed Grebe and Mallard. Other highlights included Snowy Egret, Greater Yellowlegs, and an immature Bald Eagle. In Oyster there were Ruddy Turnstone, Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpiper close in. Using scopes, we found Oyster Catcher, Willet, and Caspian Tern.

## Upcoming VSO Va. Beach Field Trip

The Cape Henry Audubon Society, with support from our club, Virginia Beach Audubon Society and Back Bay Bird Club, will host the annual VSO field trip to Virginia Beach, to be held December 7-9.

The event will kick off with a field trip Friday afternoon to the Whitehurst Tract, followed by a tour of the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum and a slide presentation of birds that might be seen. Featured trips include a visit to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Saturday and Back Bay NWR/False Cape State Park on Sunday.

Headquarters is the Howard Johnson Hotel at 1601 Atlantic Avenue in Virginia Beach (phone: 757-437-9100). Oceanfront rooms with private balconies will be available at \$45 plus tax.

It is important to register for the field trips as participation is limited. Contact the coordinator, Clark White (875-7649 or [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)), to provide your information.

Check the VSO website for complete details at [www.virginiabirds.net](http://www.virginiabirds.net). And while you're there, read page 7 of their fall newsletter and learn about the **Thanksgiving Window Watch Count** on Nov. 22. Everyone can participate!

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## Nursing Home Feeder Project

Did you know... One of HRBC's community service projects is maintaining "absolute" bird feeders at five area convalescent and rehabilitation centers under the Virginia Health Care System. Thanks to **Jane Frigo** for coordinating the volunteers who maintain the feeders:

**James River** (Newport News) – Karrin Frankie and Mary Kozlowicz

**York** (York County) – Lee and Meredith Bell

**Walter Reed** (Gloucester) – Jean Zuk (past) and George and Rosemarie Harris (current)

**North Hampton** (Hampton) – Carolyn and John Witherspoon

**Newport** (Newport News) – Harry Carlson and Jane Frigo

As compensation for this service, HRBC receives \$300 annually.

President	Meredith Bell	<a href="mailto:merandlee@cox.net">merandlee@cox.net</a>	(804) 642-2197
Vice President	Mary Copeland	<a href="mailto:ben_cop@msn.com">ben_cop@msn.com</a>	(757) 851-7007
Secretary	Gail Claydon	<a href="mailto:gclaydon@cox.net">gclaydon@cox.net</a>	(757) 930-1038
Treasurer	Nan LaRue	<a href="mailto:nan.larue@cox.net">nan.larue@cox.net</a>	(757) 877-9415
Board: (7/05-6/08)	Jane Frigo		(757) 873-0721
Board: (7/06-6/09)	Ben Copeland	<a href="mailto:ben_cop@msn.com">ben_cop@msn.com</a>	(757) 851-7007
Board: (7/07-6/10)	Tom Claydon	<a href="mailto:tclaydon@cox.net">tclaydon@cox.net</a>	(757) 930-1038
Field Trip Coordinator	Jane Frigo		(757) 873-0721
Newsletter Editors	Alison/Meredith Bell	<a href="mailto:merandlee@cox.net">merandlee@cox.net</a>	(804) 642-2197

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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 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>. **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.

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### Hampton Roads Bird Club – Membership Form

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthday (month-day): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Editor*  
*Hampton Roads Bird Club*  
*8270 Little England Road*  
*Hayes, VA 23072*

