



# Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

**Hampton Roads Bird Club**

[www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org](http://www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org)

Vol. 58, No. 3

January / February 2010

## January 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting–7:00 PM "Discover Our Wild Side"

**Jeff Trollinger** from the Va. Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries will be our guest speaker. Jeff is the program manager for the Watchable Wildlife Program and is a certified wildlife biologist. His program will focus on a "must-have" book for birders in Virginia: *Discover Our Wild Side*, the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail book. Join us to learn about the Trail and its positive impact.



**Host/Hostess:** Libby Carmines, Melanie Paul

## February 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting–7:00 PM "Keri the American Kestrel"

We're in for a special treat at in February! **Courtney Worrall**, a Senior Park Ranger Aide at Sandy Bottom Nature Park, has been working with an American Kestrel named Keri for almost a year. They team up to teach visitors about wildlife. Courtney will share information about American Kestrels and how she came to work with Keri.



**Host/Hostess:** Meredith Bell, Nan LaRue

### January Field Trips

**JAN. 3 & 17, Sunday ~ 7:00 AM**  
**Regular bird walk in Newport News Park**  
Meet at Ranger Station parking lot.  
Trip Leader: Jane Frigo, 873-0721

### JAN. 16 (Sat.), 7:45 AM – Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands

On January 16, those signed up and paid will meet at the South Plaza of the CBBT. Please be there by 7:45 AM so that carpools can be arranged and security papers checked. We have 3 groups this year. Each group will begin on a different island and switch to another island after an hour until all 3 islands have been visited. After visiting all 3 islands, 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. Dress warmly and bring snacks.

### February Field Trips

**FEB. 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

### FEB. 13 (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 St to the first light, and turn right on Rt. 14. Stay on Rt. 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. Sign up at the Jan. or Feb. meeting, or call Dave Youker at 224-1188 to let him know you are coming.

## Upcoming Events!

### 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. 12-15.** Make plans to participate because your entry counts! You can get more details on their website:

[www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://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. 5-7**. The Comfort Inn (formerly Clarion Inn) at Kill Devil Hills will be the trip HQ, with special room rates of \$62 (oceanfront) and \$57 (streetside). Make reservation by JAN. 16 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 the VSO field trips page: [http://www.virginiabirds.net/f\\_trips.html](http://www.virginiabirds.net/f_trips.html)

Questions? Contact Meredith Bell, VSO Field Trip Co-Chair, 804-642-2197 or [merandlee@cox.net](mailto:merandlee@cox.net).

#### \*\*\*In Memory\*\*\*

Long-time Club member Dorothy "Dot" Sinclair died on December 18. Dot was very active in the Club and hosted our annual picnic on her beautiful property several times. We will miss her can-do attitude and strong spirit but will remember her many contributions. We extend our sympathy to her family.

## Field Trip Report

Dave Youker, Field Trip Coordinator

### Eastern Shore – November 21, 2009

We spent the day exploring the lower end of the Eastern Shore and came up with 88 species. The morning started with a stop at Island 1 where we had great looks at a Common Eider along with a Great Cormorant, Purple Sandpipers, and Northern Gannets. We also got to observe the Coast Guard escorting a submarine through the bridge passage way. The Snow Bunting at the Kiptopeke boat launch was very cooperative, giving us plenty of photo opportunities. Both Black and Surf Scoters were present, as were Common Loons and Red-breasted Mergansers. All three nuthatches were observed around the hawk watch platform. A short stop at Cape Charles gave us White-winged Scoter and American Oystercatchers. We were also fortunate to see 6 dolphins swimming leisurely around the pier area. Short-billed Dowitcher, Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover, Willet, Marbled Godwit, Oystercatchers, and Brant were seen on and around the mud flats at Oyster. The day concluded with a beautiful sunset as we crossed back over the CBBT.

### 2009 Newport News Park Walks

Many thanks to **Jane Frigo** for her faithful attendance and leadership at the Sunday walks in Newport News Park. Join us when you can – see page 1 for dates! Get details about the species seen on each walk on our website under **Sunday Walks**.

Month	1st Sunday		3rd Sunday	
	# People	# Species	# People	# Species
JAN	6	42	4	47
FEB	7	35	8	45
MAR	6	44	4	51
APR	12	67	--	--
MAY	8	63	10	22
JUN	8	55	5	51
JUL	3	58	9	58
AUG	6	50	12	45
SEP	16	51	12	43
OCT	11	41	13	52
NOV	8	53	8	53
DEC	10	44	3	43
<b>Average</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>46</b>

## **Introducing the Virginia Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program**

**David Bryan, Outreach Coordinator,  
Virginia IBA Program**

From the marshes of the Eastern Shore to the steep slopes of the Appalachian Mountains, the Commonwealth of Virginia hosts a multiplicity of unique habitats and the birds that call them home. Unfortunately, due to habitat destruction, invasive species and other anthropogenic causes, much of this prime habitat is at a risk of being lost in the decades to come, a loss which will come to the detriment of our native populations of birds and other wildlife. Conservation is thus at a premium.

In order to identify and protect the areas of the Commonwealth that provide the most essential habitat for nesting, migrating or wintering birds, the Virginia Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program was created in 2002 by way of partnerships between the Virginia Audubon Council, Virginia Society of Ornithology, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the National Audubon Society as part of a global IBA effort headed by BirdLife International.

Since its inception in 2002, the Virginia IBA Program has worked to identify 20 IBAs that cover over 12.4% of the Commonwealth's lands. IBAs may encompass just a few acres or many thousands, but are usually ecologically distinct from their surroundings. Some of the IBAs have been delineated based on elevation or landscape borders, while others are outlined by political boundaries. Additionally, the lands included in Virginia's IBAs may be public or private, protected or unprotected. Birds, after all, don't consider man-made boundaries! IBAs can thus be found all across Virginia, but the Hampton Roads region is particularly important to avian life as it is located within close range of the Back Bay IBA, Great Dismal Swamp IBA and Western Shore Marshes IBA. The Lower James River IBA and several Eastern Shore IBAs aren't too far off either!

While the Virginia IBA Program will continue to work on IBA delineation well into the future, a

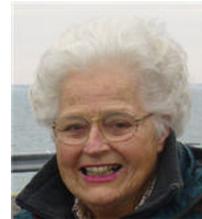
## **IBA Program (cont'd.)**

majority of our resources are now being devoted to conservation and outreach. In particular, we are utilizing a grassroots and partnership-driven approach that involves us working with private conservation-minded organizations, federal and state agencies, local governments, Audubon chapters, and local bird clubs like your own. Additionally, the Virginia IBA Program is very thankful for its passionate volunteer base, without which our habitat protection efforts would not be successful. If you are interested in learning more about the Virginia IBA Program and how to get involved, please visit our website at <http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/virginia/index.html> or email David Bryan, Outreach Coordinator, at [dbryan.audubon@gmail.com](mailto:dbryan.audubon@gmail.com).

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### **Member Spotlight: Dot Silsby**

We want to recognize one of the hardest-working members of our Club, **Dot Silsby**.



Most recently, Dot organized our December Holiday dinner and prepared several delicious dishes. She also hosted the tally for the Newport News Christmas Bird Count on December 19 and served up chili, brownies, and other delights for the cold, weary participants. What a gal!

Dot has made so many other contributions to our Club over the years. She and Harry Carlson maintain 100 nesting boxes for Eastern Bluebirds in Newport News Park. This requires many hours of dedicated work each year.

Also, Dot takes photos at all events and serves as historian for the Club. She's created several beautiful albums and scrapbooks with pictures of events and field trips since the Club started 58 years ago! And did you know that Dot started HRBC's first newsletter and named it "Bird Notes"? Thanks, Dot, for being so dedicated to the Hampton Roads Bird Club. We appreciate you!

President	Mary Copeland	<a href="mailto:benmarycop@cavtel.net">benmarycop@cavtel.net</a>	(757) 851-7007
Vice President	Marc Nichols	<a href="mailto:SBNPRANGERS@hampton.gov">SBNPRANGERS@hampton.gov</a>	(757) 810-0231
Secretary	Libby Carmines	<a href="mailto:Carmy5@aol.com">Carmy5@aol.com</a>	(757) 591-9174
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Board: (7/07-6/10)	Tom Claydon	<a href="mailto:tcaydon@cox.net">tcaydon@cox.net</a>	(757) 930-1038
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Board: (7/09-6/12)	John Dawson		(757) 874-2408
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To join, please fill out the form below and bring it along with your check (made 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 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 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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