



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

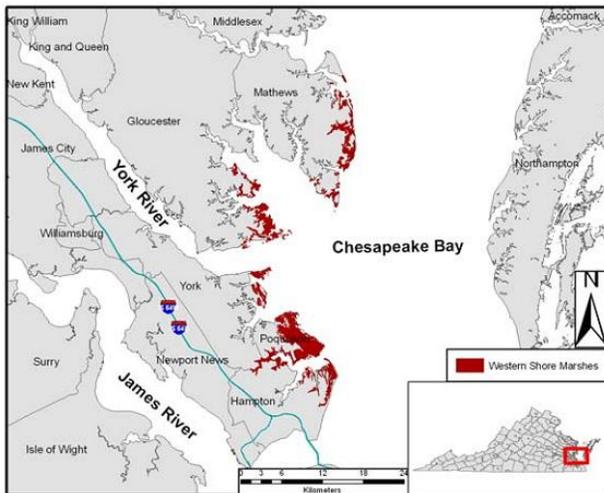
Vol. 59, No. 5

May / June 2011

May 12th Meeting—7:00 PM

“IBA—Western Shore Marshes”

Shirley Devan and Ruth Beck, of the Williamsburg Bird Club, will speak about an Important Bird Area (IBA): The Western Shore Marshes. Stretching from Grandview Beach north to Haven Beach, this area is being adopted in a cooperative effort between the Williamsburg Bird Club and the HRBC.



Host/Hostess: Barbara & Richard Hudgins

May Field Trips

May 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

MAY. 14 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Weyanoke Sanctuary

Our May field trip will take us to the Weyanoke Sanctuary and a follow-on visit to Hermitage Gardens if time permits. Directions: Take I-64 east to Norfolk and exit Terminal Blvd. At the end of Terminal Blvd, turn left on Hampton Blvd. Continue past ODU and turn right on Gates Ave (5th street after railroad tracks). Follow Gates Ave to the end and turn right on Armistead Bridge Rd. Weyanoke is on the left, and parking is down the road on the right. Sign up at the May meeting, or call Dave Youker at 344-9385 to let him know you're coming.

June 4th, Meeting

Annual Club Picnic

Our annual picnic will be held on Saturday, June 4th, at **Sandy Bottom Nature Park**. Mark your calendar to join us for a great time of birding and socializing!

8:00 –11:00 AM – For those who'd like to bird first, we'll meet at the visitor center at 8:00 AM and explore different areas of the park. This will serve as our June field trip.

11:30 AM-1:30 PM – The picnic will be held at the Parker Pavilion – just beyond the Nature Center, across from the parking lot with the rest rooms. The Club will provide the meat and beverages, please bring a dish to share (vegetable, salad or dessert). We look forward to seeing you there!

June Field Trips

June 5 & 19, 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

JUN. 4 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Sandy Bottom Nature Park

Our June field trip will be in conjunction with our annual picnic at Sandy Bottom Nature Park. Meet at the visitor center and we'll proceed from there.



The President's Perch

By Marilyn White

Your president is back on her perch again - at least for a while. I hope this finds you enjoying the beautiful spring flowers and trees without too much trouble with the pollen that accompanies all that beauty.

Our last two meetings brought us speakers who shared wonderful pictures - both Bob Schamerhorn and John Coiner were interesting and entertaining with glimpses of birds in our own area - perhaps some of you will benefit from those opportunities during your own summer outings.

As well, we were treated by a visit from Jackie Heatwell, a student from CNU who will be our scholarship recipient for the next year. She is taking advanced study in biology with an emphasis in ornithology and comes to us highly recommended by her professor. She has already expressed an interest in being involved in our HRBC activities and we look forward to hearing from her on progress.

Following is a list of those people proposed for HRBC office next year. The elections will be held at the May meeting with installation at the June picnic.

- President—Marilyn White
- Vice President—Clark White
- Secretary—Libby Carmines
- Treasurer—Richard Hudgins
- Field Trip Coordinator—Marc Nichols
- Newsletter Editors—Brent and Laura Slaughter
- Executive Board—Marilyn Adair

A big THANK YOU to all those who served last year and to those new folks who have volunteered for the coming year!

This is the time of year to be encouraging your own back yard birds with feeders and friendly plantings as well as getting out on our bird walks and trips to local habitats - warblers and other migrants, hummingbirds, bluebirds are seen everywhere and many young birds are seen and heard, so get off your perches and enjoy. The many fine nurseries in our area are filled with wonderful plants to invite birds and butterflies and they can offer many good suggestions. Many parks and gardens are holding plant sales at this time of year and they are usually offering native plants - always a good idea.

I look forward to seeing everyone at what promises to be a very interesting May meeting.

Taking the Next Step

By Nick Flanders

Nick has received a scholarship from the HRBC for the past four years while attending ODU and, of course, is an avid birder. He writes:

I'm graduating with a B.S. in Biology, as a member of the Honor's College, and recently received the Outstanding Biology Student Award from the College of Sciences. My plans are to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service this summer at Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge and then attend North Carolina State University beginning in the fall as a Masters student in their Wildlife Biology graduate program.

—Congratulations Nick and good luck from:

HRBC

VSO News

The annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology will be held May 13 – 15 in Harrisonburg, VA. Direct questions to Elizabeth Ihle, 540-234-8296 or eliza51@aol.com.

Upcoming VSO Field Trips (www.virginiabirds.net)
– Piney Grove Field Trip - May 28
– New River Valley (Blacksburg, VA) - June 17-19

VSO Foray 2011

Alleghany County, June 11— 19

The 2011 Foray will take place between June 11 and 19 in Alleghany County. As has become our custom this time period includes two weekends to try to avoid schedule conflicts. Alleghany County is along the border with West Virginia, but is rather accessible due to the fact that Interstate 64 passes through its center. There is no shortage of public land for birding, as a large fraction of the county is part of the [George Washington National Forest](#). Thus it contains some of the last vast tracts of pristine forest in the eastern US, accessible via many hiking trails. However, if you're more inclined toward a car-based survey, there are also many good but rather unpopulated (and scenic) roads to explore.

The rangers at the James River Office will be able to advise on hiking trails that may be options in participants' assigned routes. The office is located at 801A Madison Avenue, Covington - just off I-64 at exit 16, phone 540 962-2214.

If you wish to participate in the foray, please contact Susan Brown, by email (susanbb_AT_umich.edu).

Important Bird Areas

From Mary A. Elfner

Check out the latest Virginia IBA Newsletter at http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/virginia/Documents/IBANews_Spring2011.pdf

See videos and pictures of Richmond's Great Blue Heron Rookery at <http://varookery.audubon.org>

Upcoming Events

May 7th—Spring Bird Count

Contact Clark White at cwbirds@cox.net or 757-875-7649 if you would like to participate

May 11th-14th—Great Dismal Swamp Birding Festival

See the brochure at this link (or call 757-986-3705):

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/greatdismalswamp/pdf/GDSBF%202011%20brochure.pdf>

Survey Opportunity

By Doug Lewis

I am a student at NC State studying Fish and Wildlife and my class is conducting an online survey. The survey is intended to study the attitudes and personality traits of bird conservationist and feral cat colony caretakers. The survey is the same for both groups. It is an online survey, would take 10-15 minutes to complete, is anonymous, is unbiased, and any participant in the survey may have access to our data results when we finish. All you have to do is click on the survey link below and take the survey; they would not have to contact me or anyone else. Thank you so much for your time I appreciate it very much. Sincerely, Doug Lewis

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7KY7N59?c=51>

Improve Your Birding Success

From Wild Bird Magazine-1998

Before you go:

1. Study your field in *advance*, that means also reading the text!
2. Know which birds you are likely to see, i.e.: study checklists & range maps and consult local birders.
3. Study the calls and sounds of the most likely birds.
4. Study family groups: by studying characteristics of bird families, the process of elimination (in the field) soon becomes easier and faster.
5. Develop your own system for fast field id: index your field guide, highlight field guide text, make a list of target birds with some field marks, song or behavior characteristics that will alert you to a special bird.

In the field:

1. Relax and enjoy, don't pressure yourself.
 2. Watch the bird first as long as you can, noting distinguishing characteristics, then look in field guide.
 3. Develop a mental list of field marks: family characteristics, size, bill shape, plumage color and pattern.
 4. Focus on one bird at a time, do all identity steps one bird at a time, before looking at the next bird.
 5. Bird with more knowledgeable leaders, ask questions and don't be afraid to make a wrong call, you can always learn what you missed in your identification.
 6. Carry a camera, a picture always helps later ids and verifying out of range or accidental species.
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Field Trip Reports

By Dave Youker

Great Dismal Swamp Field Trip

The Hampton Roads Bird Club visited the Dismal Swamp on March 12th, spending most of the time at the Washington Ditch and then a briefer time at Jericho Ditch. The sun was shining, and there was only a slight breeze. Members present were: Jane Frigo, Bent & Laura Slaughter, Richard Hudgins, John & Marilyn Adair, Stuart Sweetman, Elisa Enders, Peggy Waterfield, George & Virginia Boyles, Dot Silsby, Mike Lowry, and Dave Youker. The highlight was a huge flock of very vocal Rusty Blackbirds gathering in the upper levels of the trees along the Washington ditch. Additionally, an American Woodcock was flushed along the boardwalk. Total species count for the day was 40 different species.

Blackwater Ecological Preserve Field Trip

On April 16th, we conducted our monthly field trip the Blackwater Ecological Preserve in the Isle of Wight County. Members included: Jane Frigo, Brent & Laura Slaughter, Richard & Barbara Hudgins, Mel Pettard, Robin McLeod, Stuart Sweetman, George & Virginia Boyles, Dot Silsby, Nancy Gruttman-Tyler, Nick Flanders, and Dave Youker. The threatening storms held off and we had a 10-warbler day which included: Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped, Yellow-throated, Pine, Prairie, Black-and-white, Prothonotary, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, & Hooded. Other highlights included Northern Bobwhite quail, Wild Turkey and three vireos: Red-eyed, White-eyed, and Yellow-throated. Total species count for the days was 45 different species.

President	Marilyn White	cwbirds@cox.net	(757) 875-7649
Vice President	Clark White	cwbirds@cox.net	(757) 875-7649
Secretary	Libby Carmines	Carmy5@aol.com	(757) 591-9174
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Board: (7/09-6/12)	John Dawson		(757) 874-2408
Board: (7/10-6/13)	Phyllis Roth	pjssr@cox.net	(757) 898-7354
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Web Editor	Meredith Bell	merandlee@cox.net	(804) 824-4958
Newsletter Editors	Brent & Laura Slaughter	baslaughter@gmail.com	(804) 693-6253

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 also be paid at Wild Wings Nature Store in the Hidenwood Shopping Center, Newport News, VA.

Meetings are held in the conference room 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.

Editor
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