



# Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

**Hampton Roads Bird Club**

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

Vol. 60, No. 2

November / December 2011

## November 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting—7:00 PM



**Carl Boast, "Awesome Alaska"**

Wildlife photographer **Carl Boast** from Moneta, Virginia, will be our guest speaker for November. Carl's program about Alaska is set to music and uses zoom and pan effects. We'll be able to experience the beauty of this state through his photos of a variety of wildlife and scenes.

Carl began Peaceable Kingdom Photos after retiring as a neuroscientist in the pharmaceutical industry. He quit his job at age 55 and moved to a five-acre property on Smith Mountain Lake. He stays busy hiking, boating, reading, writing songs and traveling.

**Host/Hostess:** tbd

## November Field Trips

**November 6 & 20, 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. 12 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – First Landing SP**

November's field trip will be to First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach. They are starting to get a good number of waterfowl. Take I64 to CBBT/ RT 13 Exit, then take the last exit before the CBBT to the right. Follow along and the Park Entrance is to the right at the last stop light. Campground is to the left. We can meet at the Shopping Center with the Hot Tuna restaurant and lounge to car pool. There will be a fee per car to enter the park. Meet at the shopping center at 7:30 am and we will begin birding at 8:00 am at 2500 Shore Dr. Sign up at the meeting or contact Marc Nichols for more information.

## December 8<sup>th</sup>, Meeting—6:00 PM "Christmas Dinner"



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 appetizer, side dish or dessert to share.** Contact Dot Silsby (534-7963) if you'd like to help with preparations for the event.

## December Field Trips

**December 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

**Dec. 17 (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 contact our coordinator/compiler, **Clark White** (875-7649 or [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)). Check out details on page 2.

## The President's Perch

*Marilyn White*

Fall is coming, that's for sure - the colors are beautiful out toward the mountains and the birds are changing places, in our yard at least. That means it is time to plan for our feathered friends and their winter needs. Moving water is really important in the winter - heat coils for bird baths and fountains are available at local bird stores. Suet and seeds with higher fat content will help to keep them warm and roosting baskets with soft fabric and dryer lint make welcome nesting places. Tree branches, especially evergreens, left on the ground with seed scattered in them will attract lots of visitors. I always leave our Christmas tree in the back yard after Christmas with seeds tossed in to see who might come by.

I hope you all are looking forward to our trip to the Western Marshes habitat on November 5. It has been a while since our club has picked up a new project and it seems this one will be very worth our efforts. Dave and Geoff have spent a good bit of time surveying the area and have a plan for our participation, so pull out those warm sweaters and jackets and warm comfortable shoes and hats and let's get out and enjoy the company and make some things happen in the Western Marshes IBA on Saturday, November 5. More information can be found in this newsletter.

Until then - good birding  
Marilyn

Starring Owen Wilson, Jack Black and Steve Martin. The film was based on the book The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature and Fowl Obsession written by Mark Obmascik.

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## Audubon Christmas Bird Count

The first "Christmas Bird Census" was held on December 25, 1900. Our Club started doing the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in 1952, with the 15-mile diameter of the "Newport News" area (Newport News, Hampton, Poquoson and part of York Co.) divided into 13 sectors.

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. We need volunteers for this year's count on **Saturday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>**. 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 helps cover the cost of recording and publishing the data. You'll receive a copy of the full report, published by the National Audubon Society.

**Clark White** is the coordinator/compiler for the Newport News Count. Contact him (875-7649 or [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)), or sign up at the Nov. or Dec. meeting. The day usually runs from 7am-4:30pm. Sector leaders, we'll meet at Dot Silsby's home at 5pm for the tally (241 James River Drive, Newport News, phone: 534-7963).

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## New Movie for Birders



A group of bird enthusiasts set on a [big year](#), a quest to outdo each other by finding the most species of birds in North America. Their competition is an allegory for the challenges faced in their lives.

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## VSO Va. Beach Field Trip

The VSO'S annual field trip to Virginia Beach will be Friday, December 2 through Sunday, December 4, 2011. An outstanding weekend is planned with a Friday afternoon field trip to the Whitehurst Tract for those arriving early. Field trips include a visit to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) on Saturday and a half day at Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park on Sunday. The possibilities are endless for these areas at this time of the year!

You do need to sign up in advance because two trips have limited space and require a nominal fee. See registration details below or on the VSO web site: <http://www.virginiabirds.net/index.html>

**FRIDAY AFTERNOON FIELD TRIP:** Friday afternoon's field trip will leave the hotel at 12:15 PM for the Whitehurst Tract, one of the many good birding areas in Virginia Beach.

### **SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS**

1. Morning on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Fee is \$10 per person to cover the cost of the security guards. This trip is limited to 45 people. Register with Clark White ASAP so you can complete the security form and return it to him by November 11.

2. Afternoon on the Eastern Shore. 12 noon - 4 pm. Meet at Kiptopeke State Park at noon to join the group coming from the CBBT trip.

### **SUNDAY FIELD TRIPS**

1. Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park. 8 am. Trip limited to 25 people; fee is \$10 for tram transportation from Refuge Headquarters to False Cape State Park and Back.

2. First Landing State Park. 8 am.

### **HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Country Inn and Suites at 1801 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, will be the host hotel. Oceanfront rooms with private balconies will be available at \$75 plus tax. Check-in time is 4:00 PM and check-out is 11:00 AM. It will be necessary to check out on Sunday before leaving on the field trip. Those planning to stay at the hotel should make reservations by November 11, 2010, specifying they are with the VSO. The hotel phone numbers are [\(757\) 437-9100](tel:757-437-9100) or [\(800\) 456-4000](tel:800-456-4000).

### **REGISTER BY NOVEMBER 11**

Register with the trip coordinator, Clark White, by US mail or e-mail by November 11. Include your name, street or e-mail address and telephone number, the field trips you are requesting and a check for the cost of the trips (if applicable) payable to Clark White.

Send registration to:

Clark White, 101 Brookstone Court, Yorktown, Virginia 23693

Phone: [757-875-7649](tel:757-875-7649) or email: [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)

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### **IBA Survey & Clean-up Event**

*By Dave Youker*

The Hampton Roads Bird Club will be helping with the Important Bird Area (IBA) survey and clean-up

in Matthews County scheduled for this coming Saturday, November 5th.

Right now the weather is projected to be great with a few clouds and temperatures in the low 60s. The plan for the day will be as follows. We will meet in the parking lot next to Mathews High School at 8:30 AM. Before we depart, we will go over some administrative details and everyone must complete a liability/photo release form. We should depart Mathews HS no later than 9:00 AM and head to New Point Comfort. We will initially perform the bird survey, followed by a clean-up of the adjacent area. Trash bags will be provided, and we will separate the trash and recyclables. We will then proceed to Bethel Beach and follow the same routine. We should be finished for the day by mid afternoon. Remember to dress appropriately for the weather and activity. Bring work gloves, long-handled grabber (if you have one), and boots or shoes you don't mind getting muddy. Bring lunch, snacks, sunscreen and bug spray as desired. And most importantly, don't forget your binoculars, field guides, and a spotting scope (if you have one).

I know most of you are carpooling from Richmond, Williamsburg, or the peninsula, and we may be able to further consolidate once we are at Mathews HS. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to shoot me an email or call me on my cell (757-344-9385)

Thanks for your support of this important activity.  
Dave Youker

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### **Field Trip Reports**

*By Dave Youker*

**Eastern Shore Field Trip.** The Hampton Roads Bird Club visited the southern end of the Eastern Shore starting with the Kiptopeke banding station and traveling to the Oyster landfill, Oyster inlet, Magotha Rd, Ramp Rd, and finishing at Island #1. The banding station was very active and gave us great views of many warbler species such as Tennessee, Nashville, Cape May, Palm, Magnolia and Yellow-breasted Chat. The landfill afforded nice looks at Black-crowned Night-Herons (both immature & adult), Little Blue Herons (both immature & adult) and several waterfowl including Pied-billed Grebe, American Wigeon, Ruddy Ducks, American Black Ducks and Coots. Hundreds of Tree Swallows were swirling at the landfill and Oyster inlet. One of the last birds we found was an immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Island #1. A truly great day of birding. A total of 77 species were observed

President	Marilyn White	<a href="mailto:cwbirds@cox.net">cwbirds@cox.net</a>	(757) 875-7649
Vice President	Clark White	<a href="mailto:cwbirds@cox.net">cwbirds@cox.net</a>	(757) 875-7649
Secretary	Libby Carmines	<a href="mailto:Carmy5@aol.com">Carmy5@aol.com</a>	(757) 591-9174
Treasurer	Richard Hudgins		(757) 596-9603
Board: (7/09-6/12)	John Dawson		(757) 874-2408
Board: (7/10-6/13)	Phyllis Roth	<a href="mailto:pjssr@cox.net">pjssr@cox.net</a>	(757) 898-7354
Board: (7/11-6/14)	Marilyn Adair	<a href="mailto:adairmc@cox.net">adairmc@cox.net</a>	(757) 224-8920
Field Trip Coordinator	Marc Nichols	<a href="mailto:mnichols@hampton.gov">mnichols@hampton.gov</a>	(757) 865-3438
Web Editor	Meredith Bell	<a href="mailto:merandlee@gmail.com">merandlee@gmail.com</a>	(804) 642-2197
Newsletter Editors	Brent & Laura Slaughter	<a href="mailto:baslaughter@gmail.com">baslaughter@gmail.com</a>	(804) 693-6253

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

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Editor*  
*Hampton Roads Bird Club*  
*5274 Haynes Mill Lane*  
*Gloucester, VA 23061*

