



# Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

**Hampton Roads Bird Club**

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

Vol. 61, No. 3

January / February 2013

## January 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting—7:00 PM "Birding Ireland"



Brent Slaughter, an amateur photographer & birder, enjoys sharing his experiences traveling and photographing birds in their natural habitat. Ireland is a beautiful and lush land with habitats ranging from rocky coasts and cultivated fields to riparian, forest, and alpine meadow. We will explore pictorially the various landscapes and some of the birds you can find there.

**Hosts:** Meredith Bell, Laura Slaughter, & Tom Charlock

**Meeting Location:** Sandy Bottom Nature Park

## February 14<sup>th</sup>, Meeting—7:00 PM "Nature in Patagonia"



By Cláudio Dias Timm

Jose Hernandez will share his experiences photographing birds and other wildlife in South America, particularly in Chile.

Concentrating mostly on nature in Torres del Paine (a national park encompassing mountains, a glacier, a lake, and river-rich areas in southern Chilean Patagonia) and wildlife in the straits of Magellan.

**Hosts:** Marilyn Adair, Bill Ferris, & Virginia Boyles

**Meeting Location:** Sandy Bottom Nature Park

### January Field Trips

**January 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

**Jan. 12 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Piankatank River**  
**1071 Holland Point Road, Dutton VA**

Directions: Head north on US 17 to Gloucester Courthouse and then bear right onto Main St (Bus. 17). Follow Bus. 17 for 1.1 miles  
Turn right onto Rt. 14E to Mathews and go 6.3 mi.  
Turn left onto Rt. 3, and go 2.1 miles  
Turn left onto Buckley Hall Rd/Rt. 198 and go ¼ mi. (if you reach the Gloucester Co line turn back).  
Holland Point Rd is next road on the right, turn there.  
Continue down Holland Point Rd, past Wading Creek Rd on the right and keep going onto the dirt road (please limit your speed to 15 miles an hour).  
Barn and pastures will appear on the left. Follow dirt road to the left and head towards the barn. Park along the road, in the grassy field, or near the barn.

### February Field Trips

**February 3 & 17, 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. 10 (Sun.), 8:00 AM – **Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands**

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, those signed up and paid (\$10 per person) 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 (The forms must be filled out in advance and collected by the trip leader). We will be visiting Islands 2, 3 & 4. After visiting all 3 islands, those interested in going on to the Eastern Shore may do so. If carpooling, be sure all riders are in agreement as to extending the trip or returning to the South Plaza. Dress warmly, as the weather is always colder in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay. For any last minute questions, call Tom Charlock at 757-599-3418.

## The President's Perch

By Dave Youker

It's the New Year and that means sea ducks! This time of year we often find ourselves on the shores overlooking the bay and ocean, or even on the CBBT islands. This means birding conditions will be a little more challenging, but this is also when some of the best sightings are possible. I'm looking forward to scanning for those Scoters, Eiders, Mergansers, Long-tail Ducks and all the other waterfowl that grace our area during the winter months. This year we again have the opportunity to join the Williamsburg Club on their boat trip to the CBBT islands on 19 Jan. Hope you signed-up already.

With the New Year come resolutions, so here are two to consider. Start a year bird list. Many people have a life list, but it may be growing at a very slow rate. Keeping a year list enables you to add new birds frequently and can renew that excitement you felt when you first started birding. You get to relish listing that Tufted Titmouse or American Robin all over again.

The second resolution involves becoming more active in your HRBC. Nominations for next year's officers and committee chairs will occur in the spring, so be thinking about how you'd like to help. Other involvement options could be through our existing projects or consider starting one of your own. You'll get to enjoy the camaraderie of other members as you help our feathered friends.

February is the time for the Great Backyard Bird Count. See a separate article for details. Also be on the lookout for a new membership roster which should be published early in 2013!



### **VSO Winter Field Trip North Carolina Outer Banks February 1-3, 2013 Leaders: Bill Akers & Jerry Via**

Make plans to join us at the Outer Banks of North Carolina February 1-3 for the VSO's Winter field trip. We always have great waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors, along with a wide assortment of land birds. Back by popular demand, an optional Friday trip to Lake Mattamuskeet, led by VSO member Lee Adams.

**Trip Registration:** To help us plan for the weekend, please register in advance. Provide the names of participants in your party, along with a telephone number and email address so we can contact you if needed.

**Headquarters:** NEW! The Comfort Inn South Oceanfront in Nags Head will be the trip headquarters this year. We have never stayed at this hotel before but it's even better than the other one! There's a huge deck off the second floor, which offers great beach-viewing opportunities. The special VSO room rate is \$67 for oceanfront and \$62 for bay-view plus tax. Ocean front rooms are available on a first come, first served basis. The hotel is also just two blocks from Jennette's Pier, a 1,000-foot long, 24-foot wide pier! Contact information for the hotel is: 8031 Old Oregon Inlet Road, Nags Head, NC 27959; Phone: 252-441-6315; fax 252-441-2868. Reserve by January 15, 2012 to get the special VSO rate.

**Meals:** A complimentary breakfast buffet is included with your stay, beginning each morning at 6:30 AM. Participants should bring lunch provisions for Friday (optional trip) and Saturday. For dinner there are many fine restaurants in the area.

**Friday:** A program of events and announcements will be available at the front desk on Friday. A day-trip to Lake Mattamuskeet will be led by Lee Adams, who knows all the "hot spots!" Last year we spotted Black-crowned Night Herons, a Common Gallinule, Baltimore Oriole, Orange-crowned Warbler, American Bittern (up close), and a nice assortment of ducks. Meet in the hotel lobby at 7:15 AM for 7:30 departure. Expected driving time is 90 minutes. Bring snacks, beverage, and lunch. Also, bring camp or lawn chair to enjoy a break while eating lunch. Those interested will stop at Alligator River on the return trip to listen for Short-eared Owls at dusk.

**Friday Night:** We'll have an orientation and slide program at 8:00 PM in the Neptune Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at the end of the hall.

**Saturday:** All day will be spent visiting the impoundments of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge and the beaches of Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The generally milder climate and the proximity of the Gulf Stream make for an interesting combination of wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, ocean birds and sometimes whales. We will divide into smaller groups for a safer caravan experience, but every group will visit all areas. Be sure to bring lunch.

**Saturday Night:** There will be a tally at 6:30 PM in the Neptune Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at the end of the hall.

**Sunday:** We'll explore Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. The trip will depart from the hotel at 8:00 AM, giving those wishing to continue straight home from the field trip time to check out of their rooms.

Come prepared for variable weather, lots of birds and a good time. To register, or if you have any questions, contact field trip coordinator Meredith Bell at 804-824-4958 or [merandlee@gmail.com](mailto:merandlee@gmail.com). Also visit the VSO website at: [http://www.virginiabirds.net/f\\_trips.html](http://www.virginiabirds.net/f_trips.html)

## **Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)**

**15-18 February 2013**

The GBBC occurs annually in February, and provides valuable data regarding avian populations. You can participate in the GBBC from the comfort of your backyard or any place you bird during this four day period. Simply tally the number of individual bird of each species you see during your count period. Count periods must be at least 15 minutes in duration, and each new count period will require a separate tally. You must then enter your numbers on the GBBC website. If you don't have internet access, have a friend enter for you. For those that already use eBird, there is no need to enter your data separately on the GBBC website ([www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)). Look for more details during our club meetings.

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## **Winter Wildlife Festival**

**January 25-27, 2013**

**Princess Anne Recreation Center**

*Presented with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries*

This is your chance to witness winter wildlife all around Virginia Beach; whether it's following fascinating bird activity, exploring the natural areas of our community, or the musings of harbor seals near the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Learn what it takes to properly observe and identify wildlife in their natural settings.

Activities include an excursion to the bay bridge tunnel, learning about wildlife photography, an owl prowl, a winter wildlife boat trip, and many others. Contact Virginia Beach Outdoor & Environmental Programs at: 757-385-4461 or [outdoors@VBgov.com](mailto:outdoors@VBgov.com) Or visit the festival website at: <http://www.vbgov.com/winterwildlife>

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## **Birding CBBT BY BOAT**

**19 January 2013 Boat Trip**

Again this year, the Williamsburg Bird Club is sponsoring a birding boat trip to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013. The Bird Club's Field Trip Coordinator, Geoff Giles, has chartered a large comfortable boat for this eye-level look at the bay ducks, scoters, shore birds and seabirds; plus other wonderful species are possible such as harbor seals. The boat will stay around the CBBT tunnel islands and pilings and will likely go as far as Fisherman's Island on the Eastern Shore. The CBBT area tends to have smoother water than ocean trips with many of the same exciting views of birds and wildlife. It will be possible to do some birding from the warm, dry cabin, but the best views

and photos will be outside on the deck, so wear clothing that protects against wind and weather. We'll enjoy a large, comfortable boat with ample heated cabin space, rest rooms, tables, and indoor seating. The boat will depart from Lynnhaven Inlet in Virginia Beach on Saturday, January 19, 2013, at 9:00 am and return to the dock at about 1 pm. If the trip gets weathered out, checks will be returned. Note that your check will not be cashed until after the trip. Cost is \$25 per person. Your check is your reservation. Sorry – we cannot hold a spot for you until you send a check. Sign up early so we can be sure to have enough people for the trip to go – we need 30. Reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis until the trip is filled. The maximum number of people for the trip is 60.

Please make checks (\$25.00 per person) payable to "Williamsburg Bird Club" and mail to Geoff Giles, PO Box 133, Lightfoot, VA 23090. Include your email address and phone # so we can contact you to confirm departure location and contact you if plans change. For additional info contact Shirley Devan at [sedevan52@cox.net](mailto:sedevan52@cox.net) or (757) 813-1322. After January 7, you can also contact Geoff Giles at [tylerandal2@aol.com](mailto:tylerandal2@aol.com) or 757-645-8716 Hope to see you onboard!

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## **Grandview Beach Field Trip Report**

**By Tom Charlock**

We began our trip through a still muddy, post-Sandy, path to Grandview Beach at low tide on November 3. Every bush retaining a touch of green seemed to be accented by its own "butter butt" (Yellow-rumped) warbler. Sandy had reduced the dunes to about half their previous height – but enough slope remained for a light off shore breeze to kite a Peregrine Falcon for a great view. Beach highlights included Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover and Ruddy Turnstone. Ernie Miller and camera worked like a pied piper on the innumerable Sanderlings; they came so close, that Ernie probably wished he'd left the long range lens back at home. At Fort Monroe, approaching the moat by the Postern Gate, all were treated to a Cooper's Hawk patiently posing atop a fence just 50 feet away. We walked almost half way around the Fort's tall ramparts and then down into the Live Oak Park, but with the wind and clouds having picked up, our tally rate for newly seen species slowed. Returning past the Engineer Pier we enjoyed a tight group of a dozen Forster's Terns busily fishing about the whitecaps. We saw the uncommon Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow on the rip raps. 53 species were observed.

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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 September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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