



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

Vol. 61, No. 4

March / April 2013

March 14th Meeting—7:00 PM

“Birds of Panama”



White Necked Jacobin
DickDaniels (carolinabirds.org)

Randy Thrasher is a VSO Life Member and has become passionate about videotaping birds and other animals. He and his wife Sue have had an opportunity to visit far-away places to bird. Smaller birds are not often seen on nature television because of the difficulties with taping them, and this is Randy’s greatest interest.

Host/Hostess: Dot Silsby, Nancy Gruttman-Tyler

Meeting Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park

March Field Trips

March 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

MAR. 9 (Sat.), 7:45 AM – Fisherman’s Island NWR

In March, we will have travel to Fisherman’s Island NWR and Cape Charles. Take I64 East. Use exit 282 to merge onto US-13 N/Norhampton Blvd toward Chesapeake Bay/Bridge–Tunnel. Before you cross the toll booth, turn to the right for a parking lot near an official building. Our car pools will form there. Receipts should be saved and presented at the toll booth for a discount on the return trip.

If you wish to attend this event, please contact Tom Charlock by phone ([757-599-3418](tel:757-599-3418)) or email (TomCharlock@gmail.com).

April 11th, Meeting—7:00 PM

“Bats: Biology & Behavior”



Indiana Bat—Adam Mann,

This month features Susan Summers. She has enjoyed working as an educator at the Virginia Living Museum since 1995. Her talk is an in-depth look into the fascinating world of bats. Discover the secrets to their success, learn what is currently causing them distress, and explore ways in which you can help!

Host/Hostess: Dorothy Sharpe, Nan LaRue

Meeting Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park

April Field Trips

April 7 & 21, 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

APR. 14 (Sun.), 8:00 AM – Great Dismal Swamp

Our April destination is the Great Dismal Swamp. Meet at the Jericho Ditch parking lot at 8:00 AM. This will be a walking trip along the Jericho Ditch and may include a drive to the Washington Ditch. Directions: Take US 17 South across the James River Bridge (then go 13 miles). Turn right onto Bennetts Pasture Road (Rt. 627) and go 4.8 miles. Turn right onto Nansemond Parkway (Rt. 337) and go another 4.8 miles. Continue onto East Washington Street and go 2.4 miles. Take a very sharp left onto White Marsh Road (Rt. 642) and go 0.8 miles. Turn left (power lines overhead) onto Jericho Lane and go 1.0 mile. Bring lunch or snack. If you wish to attend this event, please contact Tom Charlock.

The President's Perch

By Dave Youker

We will not be hosting the 2014 VSO Annual Conference. Many of you are aware that HRBC was asked about possibly hosting the conference next year. After several discussions and a vote at the Feb meeting, it was determined that hosting the conference in 2014 was not within the club's capability.

As the days continue to get longer and warmer, spring migration can't be far behind. We had such an outstanding winter this year with all the finches, Evening Grosbeaks and Red-breasted Nuthatches; I'm looking forward to an equally impressive spring.

As this issue of the newsletter is being prepared, the monitoring of the Bluebird Trail has already commenced. Last year we had partial nests by the end of February and eggs before the end of March. If you're interested in getting involved with the trail, contact Libby Carmines or myself. There are many ways to assist.

Finally, there have been a number of changes in the club this year. Now is the time to provide feedback regarding the things you liked or didn't like so much. Feedback can be provided to me or any board member or committee chairman.

Used Book sale & Auction

April 11th HRBC Meeting



Search your bookshelves! Are you willing to donate no longer needed bird books to your HRBC? Paperback or hardback, stories or field guides, USA or foreign...bring them all. We will sell for \$1, \$2, or \$5. Specialty or more unusual books will be auctioned. Please mark all donated books with your suggested price. Bring your birding friends and neighbors to the meeting so they can start their library! Search to add to your library! Bring donations to April meeting or call Phyllis [757-898-7354](tel:757-898-7354) for pick up.

Upcoming Events

April 12-13th—Birding Cup Challenge

March 22 is the deadline to register for the Virginia Living Museum's new Birding Cup Challenge. "This event encourages people to go outdoors, breathe in fresh air, walk, look and listen throughout the Peninsula's wild and not so wild areas," says Rock Moeslein, assistant education director. This event is a

timed search for as many species of birds as can be found within a 24 hour period. Counting begins at 7 p.m. April 12 and ends at 7 p.m. April 13.

Teams of three to five members may count in any or all of the following six areas: Newport News, York County, Hampton, Poquoson, Williamsburg and James City County. Teams that raise at least \$150 are eligible for prizes. The event ends with a dinner at the Virginia Living Museum. Register by March 22 at 4 p.m. for a free T-shirt. Late registrations accepted through April 11 at 4 p.m. Information and registration available at thevlm.org or call [757-595-1900 ext. 217](tel:757-595-1900). Registration is \$20 per person. This is a fundraiser for the museum so teams are encouraged to solicit pledges toward their bird counting goal.

April 6th—For the Birds Family Fun Day

The whole family can enjoy a day-long event devoted to birds at the Virginia Living Museum. Meet live birds of prey. See bird mounts, eggs and feathers from the museum's collections. Try your hand at building a bird nest and get moving with bird activities on the lawn (weather permitting). Make bird themed crafts and treats for birds. Find out how you can attract hummingbirds and songbirds to your backyard.

This is also the opening day for the refurbished Children's Learning Garden and new Children's Play Area. The play area encourages kids to get out and move and is part of the VLM's new initiatives in the area of human health. The Children's Learning Garden exhibits plant life cycles and pollination and encourages composting and recycling. The areas were financed by a challenge grant from the Mary Morton Parsons Foundation.

Special activities will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. They are included in museum admission of \$17 adults, \$13 children (ages 3-12). Ages 2 and under and VLM members are free.

For more information visit thevlm.org or call [757-595-1900](tel:757-595-1900).

May 4th—Dragon Run Paddle Trip

Enjoy a 3 1/2 mile kayak trip down the Dragon. All equipment and instructions provided by Friends of Dragon Run. Narrative of life along the river is provided by Teta Kain. A donation of \$25.00 is appreciated. As of Feb. 18th, there are 2 spaces left; a waiting list will be created. Please call Phyllis Roth [757-898-7354](tel:757-898-7354) for info and reservations.

May 4th—Spring Bird Count

Contact Nancy Gruttman-Tyler at 850-3861 or gruttmantyler@gmail.com, if you would like to participate.

Nominating Committee

Our committee members, Phyllis Roth, Michelle Shinn, & Stuart Sweetman, are searching diligently for new officers. Now is your chance to get more involved in the club. If you would like to serve as an officer in the club, please contact Phyllis Roth at 757-898-7354. Don't wait for them to call on you.

VSO News

2013 Virginia Society of Ornithologists Annual Meeting: Leesburg, Virginia, April 26 - 28

This year's Annual Meeting on April 26 – 28 is rapidly approaching. Hosted by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, the weekend will include two great programs, exhibits, vendors, papers presentations and of course – great birding! Spring birding in the northern Piedmont offers local specialties, unexpected rarities as well as migrants amidst beautiful spring wildflowers in a wide range of habitats in close proximity.

Questions:

<http://www.virginiabirds.net/VSO-2013-Annual-Meeting.html>

Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jcoleman_AT_loudounwildlife.org.

Upcoming VSO Field Trips (www.virginiabirds.net)
– Piney Grove Field Trip – June 1
– Highland County, VA- June 7-9

Great Blue Heron Rookery Tours

Want to explore the [Great Blue Heron Rookery](#) on the James River? The [Richmond Audubon Society](#), the Virginia Audubon Council, and the [Friends of James River Park](#) are teaming up for the 2013 Great Blue Heron Rookery walks on February 16, March 16, and April 13. Bring your cameras and enjoy this natural wonder in the midst of our city! The walks are scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and begin at the [Pipeline Walk in the City's James River Park](#).

The Great Blue Herons will, throughout the spring, be courting, nest-building and breeding in preparation for egg-laying and raising their chicks. Every walk will bring its own set of sights and sounds for the whole family to enjoy, so bring your scopes and binoculars and benefit from a morning outdoors. The charge for each week's event is \$5.00 per person for the benefit of Audubon and the James River Park. Meet your guide at 10:00 a.m. in the grassy area just west of 14th Street. Please carpool and park at the

small lot closest to the Rookery, in Shockoe Bottom, or in the lot on the east side of 14th Street just south of the floodwall. If you park in this latter location, you will need to park head-in and place a note on your dash stating you are at the Heron Rookery walk. Want to know more? Contact Mary Elfner at melfner@audubon.org or [Facebook](#).

Walk in the Forest

The Rappahannock Chapter of the Society of American Foresters will present a free "Walk in the Forest" Saturday, March 23, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Virginia Department of Forestry's [New Kent](#) Forestry Center located at 11301 [Pocahontas](#) Trail, Providence Forge. The event is Rain or Shine.

The day will include:

- 7 a.m. Guided Birding Trip (led by Williamsburg Bird Club)
- 10 a.m. Guided Nature Hikes start every half hour until 2:00 p.m.
- 10 a.m. Exhibits Open and Free Seedlings Available. Choose from bald cypress, flowering dogwood, eastern redbud, persimmon and Chickasaw plum.

Hiking trails open at 7 a.m. and maps will be available at the Education Center.

Exhibits will include:

- "Goods from the Woods"
- Firewise Community Information
- Leave No Trace
- Wildlife Identification with the [Virginia Living Museum](#)
- American Tree Farm System® Information
- Virginia Waterfowlers' Association
- Papermaking
- Leaf Rubbing
- Animal Track Stamping

Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy the day with us.

Questions? Contact Lisa Deaton at 804-966-2201 or lisa.deaton@dof.virginia.gov



Surf
Scoter
at the
CBBT
—
by
George
Boyles

President	David Youker	Youkerd@aol.com	(757) 344-9385
Vice President	Clark White	cwbirds@cox.net	(757) 875-7649
Secretary	Libby Carmines	Carmy5@aol.com	(757) 591-9174
Treasurer	Richard Hudgins		(757) 596-9603
Board: (7/10-6/13)	Phyllis Roth	pjsr@cox.net	(757) 898-7354
Board: (7/11-6/14)	Marilyn Adair	adairmc@cox.net	(757) 224-8920
Board: (7/12-6/15)	Stuart Sweetman		(757) 595-1677
Field Trip Coordinator	Tom Charlock	TomCharlock@gmail.com	(757) 599-3418
Web Editor	Meredith Bell	merandlee@gmail.com	(804) 642-2197
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 September 1st to August 31st. **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.

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



FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Report of February Field Trip to Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Eastern Shore NWR by Tom Charlock



Photo by George Boyles

Our February 10 excursion to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) islands began shortly after 8 AM at Island #2 with the requisite security escort. The mercury was at freezing, and light southerly winds yielded a chill factor just below 20 F. Veteran club members assured the sole novice to this annual HRBC winter jaunt that such weather was much better than experienced in previous years. And they demonstrated an enthusiasm for maritime birding like that found in the Aleutian Island scenes of the film *The Big Year*: Upon hearing the phrase “White-winged Scoter”, pairs of legs caused well-insulated torsos, awkward tripods and field guides to dash to the opposite end of this featureless concrete island. The cry “Harlequin Duck” prompted a rush, punctuated with dribbles of gorp, to another point.

The escorted component of this trip had a three-hour time limit. This deadline was stretched by telescope-glued Geoff Giles and Dave Youker, who both failed to respond to the leader's police whistle; “Razorbill” was their excuse. Humor aside, the day was true; identifications with naked eye and binoculars were carefully confirmed with spotting scope and deliberation by the group. The adult male Long-tailed Ducks (Old Squaw) were spectacular by sight and by sound.

After enjoying the harbor seals at Island #4, we next spent the afternoon at the Eastern Shore Wildlife Refuge and vicinity. It warmed to the 40s. There were cirrus clouds of varying fractional coverage and optical thickness all day. A pair of eagles presented talon flashing acrobatics above the old WWII gun emplacements at the Refuge. Outside the Refuge, George Boyles caught fine pictures of Eurasian Collared Doves, which are pretty rare here, at Magotha Road. A big snowstorm had struck the Northeast a few days before this field trip. Did the storm drive some of those 75 species, seen by the 11 birders, our way? Hampton Roads Bird Club members Geoff Giles, Marilyn and John Adair, Jane Frigo, Stuart Sweetman, Virginia and George Boyles, David Youker, Jane Frigo and Tom Charlock were joined by George and Rosemarie Harris.

A species list follows.

Species list from the CBBT and Eastern Shore NWR

Brant	Turkey Vulture	Northern Flicker
Tundra Swan	Bald Eagle	Pileated Woodpecker
American Black Duck	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Blue Jay
Greater Scaup	Red-tailed Hawk	American Crow
Lesser Scaup	American Kestrel	Tufted Titmouse
Common Eider	Merlin	Brown-headed Nuthatch
Harlequin Duck	Killdeer	Carolina Wren
Surf Scoter	Greater Yellowlegs	House Wren
White-winged Scoter	Willet	Eastern Bluebird
Black Scoter	Ruddy Turnstone	Gray Catbird
Long-tailed Duck	Sanderling	Northern Mockingbird
Bufflehead	Purple Sandpiper	European Starling
Hooded Merganser	Dunlin	Cedar Waxwing
Red-breasted Merganser	Ring-billed Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Red-throated Loon	Herring Gull	Eastern Towhee
Common Loon	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Song Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Great Black-backed Gull	Swamp Sparrow
Horned Grebe	Black Skimmer	White-throated Sparrow
Red-necked Grebe	Razorbill	Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Gannet	Rock Pigeon	Northern Cardinal
Double-crested Cormorant	Eurasian Collared Dove	Red-winged Blackbird
Great Cormorant	Mourning Dove	Eastern Meadowlark
Brown Pelican	Belted Kingfisher	Common Grackle
Great Blue Heron	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Boat-tailed Grackle
Black Vulture	Downy Woodpecker	House Sparrow

Great Backyard Bird Count at York River State Park—Feb. 16th, 2013

By Dave Youker

Thanks for a great day at YRSP. Despite the weather conditions (light rain, variable winds around 5 mph, and 38°F), we managed to find 53 different species.

Canada Goose	3	Forster's Tern	1	Eastern Bluebird	8
Wood Duck	4	Mourning Dove	1	Hermit Thrush	2
American Wigeon	7	Red-headed Woodpecker	2	American Robin	20
Canvasback	87	Red-bellied Woodpecker	8	Gray Catbird	1
Lesser Scaup	4	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	Northern Mockingbird	2
Bufflehead	13	Downy Woodpecker	2	European Starling	250
Common Goldeneye	9	Northern Flicker	1	Pine Warbler	1
Red-breasted Merganser	20	Pileated Woodpecker	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	23
Ruddy Duck	675	Eastern Phoebe	1	Eastern Towhee	1
Double-crested Cormorant	14	Blue Jay	10	Song Sparrow	6
Great Blue Heron	8	American Crow	3	Swamp Sparrow	2
Turkey Vulture	3	Carolina Chickadee	8	White-throated Sparrow	22
Bald Eagle	5	Tufted Titmouse	13	Dark-eyed Junco	94
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	Northern Cardinal	11
Red-tailed Hawk	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	3	Red-winged Blackbird	1030
Bonaparte's Gull	1	Carolina Wren	3	Common Grackle	30
Ring-billed Gull	9	Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	American Goldfinch	3
Great Black-backed Gull	4	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Unidentified Gull Species	7