



Bird Notes

Newsletter of the

Hampton Roads Bird Club

www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org

Vol. 61, No. 5

May / June 2013

May 9th Meeting—7:00 PM

"The Effects of Urbanization on the Relationship Among Birds, Ticks, and Tick-borne Diseases in Hampton Roads"



Erin, an MS candidate at ODU, is a native of Richmond, Virginia. She obtained her BS from Virginia Tech in 2011 and her master's research examines the role of ticks as vectors of disease transmission, mediated through the bird hosts they are found on.

She is pictured here with her dog Rocky.

Host/Hostess: Hilary Propst, Mary Copeland, Barbara & Richard Hudgins

Meeting Location: Sandy Bottom Nature Park

May Field Trips

May 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

MAY 4 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Spring Bird Count

The Spring Bird Count will be held on the 2nd Saturday of the month. We need volunteers to help with the count, you do not need to be an experienced birder to participate! Contact Nancy Gruttman-Tyler (850-3861 or gruttmantyler@gmail.com) to sign up and help with one of the 13 sectors in our area.

[See inside for an additional field trip.]

June 15th Meeting Annual Club Picnic



The picnic has been scheduled for June 15, 2013 at Newport News Park. We have shelter #3 reserved for the day. It is located off the parking lot where we begin Sunday walks, and is near the overlook off the path. There is a paved path from the parking lot out to the shelter. We will enjoy a bird walk at 8:00 a.m. lead by Meredith and Lee Bell, so we urge that you plan to come early. We hope to eat about noon, and (to assure variety) a sheet will be available at the May meeting to sign up for a dish to bring. The club will provide burgers, hot dogs, the trimmings, and paper products; so appetizers, side dishes, and desserts will be needed.

You might want to bring folding chairs for relaxing, cheering on the horseshoes, and visiting. Don't miss this chance to celebrate the fantastic year we've had with the club, before we take the summer off.

If you have questions, contact Virginia Boyles at (757) 867-8857.

June Field Trips

June 2 & 16, 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

JUNE 15 (Sat.), 8:00 AM – Newport News Park

Our June field trip will be in conjunction with our annual picnic at Newport News Park. Meet at the Ranger Station parking lot and we'll proceed from there.

President's Perch

By Dave Youker

This newsletter is the last one before we break for the summer, and it signifies the end of our 2012-13 year. My focus for this past year has been on teaching. For you who regularly attend our monthly meeting, you know that we started each evening with bird identification. Not only was it fun, but hopefully everyone learned a little more about our avian friends.

Even though we break for those hot summer days, many of our club activities continue. The Feeder Program and Bluebird Trail are just a couple to mention. If you would like to help in any way over the summer, let me know. And also before summer, don't forget about our picnic. This year it will be held in a new location at Newport News Park. Also remember that the May meeting is considered our annual meeting. This means that we must vote on the slate of candidates for the Executive Committee for the year 2013-14. Here is the list of candidates for the next year.

- ▲ President – Dave Youker
- ▲ Vice President – Laura Slaughter
- ▲ Secretary – Libby Carmines
- ▲ Treasurer – John Adair
- ▲ Director – Elisa Enders
- ▲ Host – Virginia Boyles
- ▲ Membership – Brent & Laura Slaughter
- ▲ Publication – Brent & Laura Slaughter
- ▲ Publicity – Marilyn Adair
- ▲ Field Trips – Tom Charlock
- ▲ Programs – Laura Slaughter



From Nancy Gruttman-Tyler

OspreyWatch, a project run by the Center for Conservation Biology at William and Mary at <http://www.osprey-watch.org/>, is a global community of observers focused on breeding osprey. The observers are linked by an interest in osprey, concern for the health of aquatic environments, and data submitted to a repository through the OspreyWatch website. The

mission of OspreyWatch is to collect information on a large enough spatial scale to be useful in addressing three of the most pressing issues facing aquatic ecosystems including global climate change, depletion of fish stocks, and environmental contaminants.

Ospreys are one of very few truly global sentinels for aquatic health. They feed almost exclusively on live fish throughout their entire life cycle. They are a top consumer within aquatic ecosystems and are very sensitive to both overfishing and environmental contaminants. Nearly all populations breed in the northern latitudes and winter in the southern latitudes, effectively linking the aquatic health of the hemispheres. Their breeding season in the north is highly seasonal making them an effective barometer of climate change.

VSO News

Piney Grove Field Trip

June 1, 2013

REGISTER EARLY if you want to attend. Contact Lee Adams, VSO Field Trip Co-chair, to register: 540-850-0777 or [leeloudenslageradams AT gmail.com](mailto:leeloudenslageradams@gmail.com). VSO Members Only.

VSO Summer Field Trip—Highland County

June 7-9, 2013

Join us in the beautiful, scenic mountains of western Virginia (aka "Little Switzerland") for our summer field trip! Highland County is a hot spot among birders throughout Virginia, and we're excited about the arrangements we've made for you on the weekend of June 7-9. Register with Meredith Bell at merandlee@gmail.com or call 804-824-4958.

2013 VSO Foray—Rockbridge County

June 8–16

Each year the VSO conducts a foray, the purpose of which is to have as many birders as possible make observations in a specific area during a week-long period to contribute to the understanding of the status of birds in that area. The 2013 foray will be conducted in Rockbridge County June 8 - 16. No previous forays have been held in Rockbridge and it may be a new area to some birders. The VSO summer trip will be held in Highland County (approximately a 90 minute drive from Rockbridge) on June 7–9, so there is an opportunity to participate in both events. To sign up for the foray, contact Elisa Enders at 757-879-1034 or elisaenders@hotmail.com.

Family Fun for the Birds at the Virginia Living Museum

By Dave Youker



The Virginia Living Museum held a Family Fun for the Birds Day at their facility on April 6. Our club set up our display and provided information to the families in attendance. As always, these events are enjoyable and much appreciated by the hosts. Many families stopped to admire the professional display which was loaned by members Tom and Gail Claydon. Many thanks to the following club members who came out to work the display and talk to families: Jane Frigo, Phyllis Roth, Hilary Propst, and Dave Youker.

Field Trip

May 11th—Belle Isle & James River Parks
Please contact Tom Charlock (757-599-3418 or TomCharlock@gmail.com) if you wish to attend.

In Memoriam

On April 9, 2013, YuLee Lerner, longtime friend of Dot Silsby and Dorothy Mitchell, passed away. She served as VSO president and did a lot of work as a member of the Augusta Bird Club in Staunton. A noted organist and piano instructor for many years, she also served her church as the music director.

We offer our condolences to her family.

Memorials may be sent to the Augusta Bird Club, c/o Penny Warren, 215 Kalorama St., Staunton, VA 24401, or Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2001 N. Coalter St., Staunton, VA. 24401

Book Sale Results

From Phyllis Roth

Thanks to all who donated and who purchased to make our book sale such a great success! The total collected for the HRBC book sale held at the April 11th meeting was \$95.00.

The remaining books were donated to Virginia Living Museum and Sandy Bottom Nature Center for their staff libraries.

Matteson Trail Clean-up Day

By Dave Youker



On April 15, several club members arrived at the beginning of the Matteson Trail for a clean-up event. We were met by long-time club member Tess Matteson for whom the trail is named. Under Tess' guidance, we removed shrubs, weeds, and small trees. We restored the area to its original, uncluttered condition, and the trailhead is once again an attractive entrance to the trail. This trail is a 3-mile loop around The Hamptons Golf course and is home to a nice variety of birds. The trailhead has a kiosk that depicts resident birds found on the trail and has a reference to the Hampton Roads Bird Club. Members present for the clean-up were Tess Matteson, Phyllis Roth, John Adair, and Dave Youker.



Report of March Field Trip to Fisherman's Island and Cape Charles Vicinity

by Tom Charlock



Jennie Lewis (Eastern Shore of Virginia, National Wildlife Refuge) was our guide for the valued Fisherman's Island portion of our field trip on Saturday, March 9. While the Island is the north terminus of the busy Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT), birders may stop and observe there only with an official escort. The Island is a vital nesting refuge for waterfowl, and we were fortunate to have arranged for the last tour of the season. Fisherman's Island itself began to spring from the sea only during the early part of the nineteenth century; now covering a few square miles, it is still growing by the displacement of sand from the likes of Smith Island (formerly inhabited) and Mockhorn and Goodwin

Islands to the northeast. We had company at Fisherman's: a temperature of about 40 F, nearly cloudless skies, a stiff north breeze, and another party of Cro-Magnons. The others were mostly middle school males; polite as they were, a few unfortunately did relish the chasing of birds. Our mid-morning walk began at a football field-sized pond on the western portion of the Island. There we saw American Widgeon and enjoyed the scolding rattle of Kingfisher. Sticking as required to a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile trail, we stopped for distant looks at Lesser Scaup, Great Blue Heron, American Black Duck and Northern Gannet over a large saltmarsh to the northwest. At trail's end we descended to the beach for a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walk; and there lingered at the foundations of the Route 13 bridge (the more energetic boys had departed) for especially fine views of Sanderlings, Ruddy Turnstone, and the uncommon Piping Plover (kudos to Ernie Miller for his photos). The cold headwind on the return along the beach proved a chore for those carrying scopes; but once again secure beyond the dunes, the way back among songbirds and scruffy vegetation was welcoming. Thus the final birding tour of Fisherman's Island for Spring 2013.



We next drove northward to the quaint and rehabilitating town of Cape Charles on the Chesapeake Bay. It was still breezy and clear but warmed to about 50 F. The long fishing pier at the Cape Charles beach was closed, so the telescopes came out again, here concentrating on Red-breasted Merganser, Horned Grebe and Bufflehead. We saw our first Canada Goose (!) of the day on the lake (now fenced) just north of Washington Avenue. Sprawling King's Creek, which we accessed from a car park at the Bay Creek Marina, gave high sport: two Ring-billed Gulls repeatedly buzzed a Red-tailed hawk. But the delight of Cape Charles was the old industrial harbor just to the south of town. Horned Grebes were so close, so cooperative, and in significant numbers. And there was cooperation again in a one-man, one-bird show near an old railroad siding, where Dave Youker spotted a Savannah Sparrow; man lectured on habit of said introverted avian, and bird demonstrated. Our next stop was the long, elevated boardwalk of the Sustainable Technology Industrial Park, ending at a tall bluff with a prospect of the far side of the Bay. Nancy Gruttman-Tyler peered carefully at a large ship in the channel through her scope, toward New Point Comfort and Mobjack to the northwest; she spotted a flash mob of over a thousand Northern Gannet behind the ship, which was headed out to sea. The same vessel, but without its glorious flock, crossed our path in late afternoon as we finished the day with a chilly blast from the north and vanishing sun at CBBT Island 1. I believe that our last identified species was the White-winged Scoter, seen at Island 1 by Laura Slaughter.

Hampton Roads Bird Club members Phyllis Roth, John and Marilyn Adair, Dave Youker, Rock Moeslein, Ernest Miller, Nancy Gruttman-Tyler, Laura Slaughter, and Tom Charlock participated. Sandy DiCarlo of the Cape Henry Audobon Society joined us for the Fisherman's Island portion. 56 species were identified.

Canada Goose	Double-crested Cormorant	Downy Woodpecker
American Widgeon	Great Blue Heron	Northern Flicker
American Black Duck	Black Vulture	Blue Jay
Mallard	Turkey Vulture	American Crow
Green-winged Teal	Osprey	Fish Crow
Ring-necked Duck	Bald Eagle	Carolina Chickadee
Greater Scaup	Red-tailed Hawk	Carolina Wren
Lesser Scaup	American Kestrel	American Robin
Surf Scoter	Piping Plover	Gray Catbird
White-winged Scoter	Ruddy Turnstone	Northern Mockingbird
Black Scoter	Sanderling	European Starling
Long-tailed Duck	Purple Sandpiper	Eastern Towhee
Bufflehead	Dunlin	Savannah Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	Ring-billed Gull	Song Sparrow
Red-breasted Merganser	Herring Gull	Northern Cardinal
Ruddy Duck	Great Black-backed Gull	Red-winged Blackbird
Common Loon	Rock Pigeon	Common Grackle
Horned Grebe	Mourning Dove	Boat-tailed Grackle
Northern Gannet	Belted Kingfisher	

HRBC Field Trip to Richmond's Belle Isle and James River Park System

Saturday, 11 May 2013

Contact: TomCharlock@gmail.com (757-599-3418)

Each May the James River rapids at Belle Isle near downtown Richmond offer a rich bounty of fish – and birds that feed on them. We'll loop up and down over the historic Isle on scenic, rocky, but well-established trails (the more intrepid will be free to boulder scramble, should they dare). Then we'll drive across the River and bird from the elevated platform near the 42nd Street entrance to the Park System; it allows close, canopy level views of warblers on tall trees. Our third stop will focus on the bird blinds at the Wetlands near the Pony Pasture Rapids yet further upstream. If time and energy permit, we'll conclude with a walk in Forest Hill Park, which has a pretty lake that's fed by a fast-moving, rocky stream. Bring lunch and snacks as the trip will run to mid-afternoon.

Meet 8:00 AM Saturday, 11 May 2013, in Richmond on Tredegar Road at the entrance to the Belle Isle footbridge.

Car pool forms at 7:00 AM behind Ranger Station in Newport News Park.

From I64 West, take exit 190 on the left to merge onto N 5th St toward Downtown/Coliseum/I-95 S/Petersburg

Drive 1.4 miles on 5th Street toward James River

Right turn onto Tredegar Street at River

Park in rough lot where elevated rail line intersects bridge

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
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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
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