Hampton Roads Bird Club  
General Meeting Minutes  
Date: Thursday, September 14, 2023

1. The meeting was held at Sandy Bottom Nature Park and called to order at 7:07 p.m. There were approximately 20 attendees.
2. New members/visitors: Genevieve “Jenna” Cruz and Tina White attended as new members.
3. Bird Sightings: Wendy Maxey reported 5 Baltimore Orioles in her yard. American Flamingo reported at Pea Island. Mark Sopko reported a White Pelican. Pectoral Sandpiper and Semipalmated Sandpiper were seen.
4. ID Challenge: Short Billed Dowitcher was an ID challenge. Shawn pointed out that Ospreys are more successful fishing at low wind speeds (guess waves make it harder to see fish). Many birds, including the Barred Owl, eat the Spotted Lantern Fly.
5. Reports:
   1. Membership: Gwen Harris said that she is now able to convey all material to new members using email.
   2. Hospitality: Jane Frigo thanked Charm Peterman for supplying snacks (along with herself) for the evening. She had others sign up for subsequent meetings; list is not complete.
   3. Website: Ellis posted a new picture from Dianne Sawyer on the home page.
   4. Newsletter inputs need on the 25th of August, October, December, February, and April.
   5. Field trips. Shawn called attention to an event at the Mariner’s Museum on November 4, 2023. The HRBC effort for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, led by Bill, will be on December 16, 2023.
6. Annual Budget: John Adair summarized the budget. This year’s expenses were $1,875. VBBA/VSO was $300. Question of what to do with Education Fund ($500) as the student has graduated. Mark Sopko said speakers now expect $200 and he suggests 3 of them for the year. Much of our $8,000+ horde was collected long ago via contributions from other groups who were thus supporting the Bluebird Trail. Mark Sopko moved for a vote on the budget; motion seconded; approval was unanimous.
7. Discussion of Bluebird Trail and decision on it. There are 106 boxes, many in a poor state. Weekly tending from April to August, which takes about 3 hours by an experienced party servicing boxes that are in good shape, is needed. David Singletary explained the limitations of working with Boy Scouts to possibly repair and/or subsequently service the boxes. Shawn said we should decide on this issue now. A vote was taken on using our funds to repair the boxes and have club volunteers service them; 13 volunteered with Ellis Maxey as leader, assisted by C.L. Tanner; there would be workshops and training sessions; this was unanimously approved.
8. Presentation. Mark Sopko gave a detailed (and well-received) talk about his Galapagos Adventure, 25FEB-4MAR 2023, 16 passengers (8 crew) on a small catamaran cruise boat. 97% of the Galapagos is a national park; tourism is the main industry; population is 33K; 79K visitors per year. Animals there are astoundingly friendly; Mark showed his own video of mating Blue-footed Boobies. There are 56 bird species, 45 of which are endemic. Mark observed 47, including American Oystercatcher, American Flamingo, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Yellow Warbler, and Ruddy Turnstone.
9. Meeting was adjourned (time not recorded).

Submitted by: Tom Charlock on behalf of William Boeh, Secretary

Approved by: Dr. Shawn Dash, President