

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board
Williamsburg Bird Club
Wednesday, July 8, 2015**

Meeting Room, Human Services Building, 5249 Old Town Road, Williamsburg

Board Member Attendees: Geoff Giles, Ann Carpenter, Shirley Devan, Judy Jones, Jan Lockwood, Jeanette Navia

Board Members Absent: Cheryl Jacobson, Cathy Millar

Chair Attendees: Jan Lockwood, Jeanette Navia

Chair Attendees Absent: Jim Corliss, Ruth Gordon, Tom McCary, Lee Schuster, Bill Williams

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Geoff Giles. Professor Dan Cristol sent regrets that he was unable to attend the meeting to discuss the Breeding Bird Atlas project and potential uses for the Ruth Beck Memorial Fund, two principal agenda items. Geoff noted that a quorum was present.

The minutes of the February 11, 2015 meeting were accepted as written and approved unanimously by the Board.

Treasurer's Report - Ann Carpenter: Ann reviewed a spreadsheet summarizing the financial status of the Williamsburg Bird Club in 2015 year to date compared with 2014. She noted that:

- \$3,295 has been received in dues in 2015, less than the \$3,360 received in 2014. However, income received in 2015 is \$14,636, which is considerably more than the \$9,825 received in 2014. This is largely due to donations totaling \$5,205 to date that were made to the Ruth Beck Memorial Fund and the \$1,200 donation and matching grant received from Ms. Lois Shevlin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation;;
- In 2015 members designated less towards the Nature Camp Funds and the Children's Development Center Feeder program;
- Expenses have increased in 2015 as additional funds were allocated to Nature Camp Scholarships and the Williamsburg Library Gab Bag project;

A member has suggested that the Club sponsor another used books sale. It was very popular in the fall of 2014.

President's Report - Geoff Giles: A new Bird Feed and Supply store has opened in Williamsburg. *Backyard Birder* is owned by Melissa Cousins and is located in the Harris Teeter shopping . She is interested in joining our club. Geoff told her that the Williamsburg Bird Club would welcome her membership but we do have a long-standing and continuing relationship with Wild Birds Unlimited. A range of bird feeding equipment and seed, suet, nectar, bird baths, some nestboxes, gifts, and books, etc. are displayed in the showroom of *Backyard Birder*. Members may also check out the store website, www.backyardbirder.org.

Geoff will obtain hard copies of the WBC Newsletters from Fred Blythstone to distribute at the Club's monthly meetings.

Field Trips - Geoff reported for Jim Corliss

- The Board agreed that priority should be given to a field trip to Craney Island in August. Geoff will ask Jim Corliss to see if one can be arranged for Sunday August 23.
- Field trips for succeeding months remain to be scheduled.
- Geoff recently visited the Sylvan Heights Waterfowl and Bird Park in Scotland Neck, North Carolina, and suggested that a visit to this exceptional avian collection from several countries and continents would be an interesting and informative field trip and one which could be taken at any time of the year. The owners are knowledgeable and accessible. www.shwpark.com.
- The second and fourth Saturday Bird Walks at New Quarter Park are continuing.

Programs - Geoff reported for Cheryl Jacobson

- September 16, meeting - Ann and Gary Carpenter will present a program about their recent travel to Texas. They also plan to talk about the opportunities available to travel and learn through the Road Scholar program.
- October 21 meeting - Dr. Eric Walters of Old Dominion University will report on the banding projects he oversees at Kiptopeke.
- November 18, meeting - Patti Reum, Kestrel Coordinator of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, will present information about the Society's program to mount kestrel nestboxes to conserve the dwindling kestrel population of Virginia.
- Recently Inge Curtis presented an excellent program to the Hampton Roads Bird Club about her birding trip to Colombia. It was agreed that she should be asked to present the program to the Williamsburg Bird Club.

Refreshments - Jan Lockwood

- Even though it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers to bring treats to the monthly bird club meetings, the Board wishes to continue to provide attendees with the opportunity to mingle and socialize following the meetings. It was decided to return to the practice of providing cookies, water, and napkins only. Hopefully, this will help to reduce any intimidation members feel about supplying the "birder feeding stations".
- It was felt that small bottles of water would be preferable to large gallon jugs. The need for cups and ice would be removed. A recycling bin will be needed for the bottles.
- Shirley volunteered to bring the treats in September, Jan in October, and Judy in November. The experience can be evaluated following the November meeting.

Membership -Jeanette Navia

- No new members since the last meeting.

Old Business

1. Fourth W&M Research Grant:
The grant was approved and awarded to Nick Newberry on the recommendation of Professor Dan Cristol.

Future discussion will be needed about repeating a Fourth Grant this year or increasing the other three grants. It was noted that the students are required to pay taxes if the grant is over \$600.00.

2. WBC Facebook Page:

The page is up and running and has been favorably received. Jeanette will place a link to the page on the WBC website.

New Business

1. Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas - Shirley Devan

VDGIF is funding the compilation of a Breeding Bird Atlas for Virginia, at a cost of \$1 million, with the survey beginning in the spring of 2016 and continuing for 5 years. The previous atlas was completed in 1986-1987. VDGIF will hire a Statewide Coordinator to direct the project (hopefully by September) and provide the software and database, as well as recruit the twelve Regional Coordinators to manage the survey throughout the state.

VSO has agreed to recruit the volunteers to work in the field. Hundreds of people will be needed to observe and complete the census of the state's breeding birds and their distribution throughout Virginia. The data will be gathered according to a specific protocol, online data entry will be made in the field, with the goal being to produce an ongoing data-based technology-based product which can be used to aggregate data, produce maps, etc. rather than a printed document. The technology to do this was lacking in the 1980's.

Similar Atlases have been undertaken by Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York in recent years and Cornell has been approached for assistance with the database (which would be different from e-Bird.)

2. Ruth Beck Memorial Fund

Potential uses for the funds received require discussion. Currently, suggested uses include supporting the Spring and Christmas Bird Count tally meetings at the Carrot Tree, increasing grant funding for W&M scholarships, and continuing funding for Ruth's projects at the HRBT, Grandview Beach and Craney Island.

When they donated to the Bird Club in Ruth's memory, many people assumed the funds were intended to support W&M scholarships. However, other donations were made by people or organizations involved in Ruth's projects such as Dandy Haven Marina for unknown purposes.

To learn whether Ruth has provided continued funding for the projects, it may be necessary to meet with Sherwin and Michael Beck to determine whether a proposal should be made to the Bird Club to use the donated funds for the projects. Geoff will ask

Bill Williams if he and others who've assisted Ruth with this significant work in the past, will talk to Sherwin and Michael about Ruth's plans and the best way to proceed.

3. Butterfly Festival - Judy Jones

In celebration of their 10th anniversaries, the Williamsburg Botanical Garden and Virginia Master Naturalists Historic Rivers Chapter are hosting a Butterfly Festival at the Williamsburg Botanical Garden at Freedom Park on August 1 and 2, from 9:00-5:00 p.m. each day. Virginia Master Naturalist, Catherine Short, is providing a butterfly tent housing over 200 native butterflies which will give guests an extraordinary opportunity to see and learn about the butterflies close up.

The VMN-HRC will be asking for volunteers to assist with the program by helping with setup, serving as docents, assisting with presentations on butterfly related topics, etc. Local nature groups such as the Colonial Nature Photography Club, the Master Gardeners, the Williamsburg Botanical Garden, and the Virginia Master Naturalists will be invited to host information tables and displays.

The Board asked Judy to invite the Williamsburg Bird Club to participate in the event.

Geoff adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Lockwood
Williamsburg Bird Club
July 29, 2015