

Williamsburg Bird Club Notes

The February meeting of the Williamsburg Bird Club will be held at 7:30 p.m. in Millington Hall, Wednesday, February 15, 1978. Our speaker will be Dr. Keith Bildstein of the Biology Department at William and Mary. Dr. Bildstein will speak to us on the orders Falconiformes and Strigiformes (hawks and owls).

Our field trip for the month will follow a different format. We will meet Friday night, February 17, at 8:45 p.m. in front of Millington Hall. Tom Wieboldt of Charlottesville will lead us on an owling excursion. Some owls nest in February so we shouldn't have to work too hard to find them. We are practically assured of finding screech and barred owls, and we may get really lucky and find a great-horned owl!

At our last meeting Mrs. Betty Williams agreed to become our publicity chairman. Mr. and Mrs. Burke Davis will also be working on that committee. Brian Taler will be our new field trip chairman. Brian will be needing help from us - so if you know of good birding spots or can help him with arrangements for a field trip, please let him know.

Don't forget to pay your dues to Billy Jones. Billy says that she will accept payment in any reasonable form - check, cash, etc. The rates are \$3 for students, \$5 for individuals, and \$7.50 for families. If we don't have your dues by the April meeting, we'll have to drop your name from the mailing list since mailing expenses can become rather costly.

If you have any drawings for a suggested club logo, please bring them in to the next meeting. We need to be voting on this soon. We'd like to narrow the possibilities down to three this month and have the final vote in March.

At our last meeting we discussed the possibility of having a field-identification workshop. The possibility is now a reality; Bill Williams has agreed to begin the workshop on Monday, February 27, from 7:30-9:00 p.m. The first session will be a study of the topography of the bird and the use of field equipment. Bring your field guides and binoculars. Bill plans to meet with the workshop every Monday thereafter as long as there is interest.

Pay special attention to the birds at your feeders. You may have something really special since the weather has been so severe lately. Mrs. Ann Smith has had Baltimore Orioles and house finches at her feeders. She contributed the orioles to our Christmas count and to our last field trip. Bill Williams had a tree sparrow at his feeder in Queen's Lake. And keep an eye out for Redpolls; these birds have been seen in numerous places in the state this winter. For those of you who are more adventuresome in your birding activities, quite a few rare birds have been seen in the state in recent weeks. Briefly, there is a varied thrush in Monterey, a Harris's sparrow in Lexington, and white-winged crossbills in Bridgewater. Other sightings include an Eared Grebe in Hampton Roads, an European Widgeon in Newport News City Park, and great cormorants, a glaucous gull, and a common puffin off the Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands.

On our last field trip, there were 7 of us who braved the early morning cold to go birding. Ruth Beck took the group on a birding excursion along the Colonial Parkway from Williamsburg to Yorktown. The highlights included a barred owl, red-tailed hawks, pileated woodpeckers, and numerous waterfowl in the York River. We ended with a visit to Ann Smith's feeders where we enjoyed the Baltimore Orioles, house and purple finches, pine siskins, and evening grosbeaks.

Bill Sheehan has obtained permission for us to take monthly birdwalks in Cheatham Annex; these will probably begin in March. Bill also relates that Walt, the Cheatham Ranger, has observed a bald eagle at the confluence of Queen's Creek and the York River.