

April 1978



THE WILLIAMSBURG FLIER

The April meeting of the Williamsburg Bird Club will be held Wednesday, April 19, at 7:30 P.M. in Millington Hall. Our speaker will be Jerry Via, who will present a program on bird songs and how to identify them. Many of you may know Jerry from his days in Williamsburg when he was working on his Master's degree at William and Mary. He is currently working on his Ph.D. at Virginia Tech. and is very active in the Roanoke Valley Bird Club.

Do you like our little friend at the top of the page for our club logo? This drawing, which was submitted by Annie Newman's husband, has received the most number of comments from individuals in the club. Please let your views be made known at our next meeting.

Our March field trip to Hog Island proved to be a bit more blustery and cold than anyone had anticipated, but about 15 hardy souls endured. The birds were smart and did not appear in the bitter weather, but the day was not a total loss. The Canada geese and whistling swans put on some spectacular displays for us, and an osprey was observed by the entire group - giving us hope that spring was indeed on the way.

By contrast, the early morning bird walk to Cheatham Annex could not have been more splendid. The weather was perfect and it would be difficult to ask for better avian activity. The bluebirds were almost too numerous to keep up with and we all enjoyed the pheasants, osprey, tree swallows, and pine and yellow-throated warblers. In the York River we had excellent sightings of canvasbacks, ruddy ducks, scaup, and a horned grebe that was going into breeding plumage. Not to be out-done by the birds, the mammals got into the act. We saw a flying squirrel who had taken up residence in a bluebird box, and everyone was awed by the deer we seemed to find almost everywhere we went. Special thanks go to Bill Sheehan for his efforts towards getting us permission to go into Cheatham, and to those who missed this trip, plan to go on the next one scheduled.

Our field trip for this month will be held Saturday, April 29 (please note this is a week later than usual). We will assemble at 7:00 A.M. in front of Pizza Hut in the James-York Plaza. We will be going to Grandview Beach in old Hampton. This area is always good for waterfowl, shore birds, and marsh birds and at this time of year, the birding possibilities are almost unlimited.

Several of our club members led birding groups for the Garden Symposium on April 4. They were Martha Armstrong, Ruth Beck, Everette Raynes, Bill Sheehan, and Bill Williams.

A symposium on threatened and endangered species will be held in Blacksburg, Va., May 19 and 20. Club participants will include Mitchell Byrd (Chairman), Ruth Beck, and Bill Williams.

Homer Jones has agreed to be chairman of our Bluebird Committee. And Roy Trow is the chairman of our Purple Martin Committee. Both need support and help with house building, house-cleaning, banding, etc.; please volunteer to help one or both with any of these activities.

Speaking of purple martins, the James City Co. Board of Supervisors has declared the week of April 16-23 as purple martin week in James City County. In honor of the occasion, a martin house will be donated by the James City Ruritans to be placed at the new James City Co. government building. Congressman Paul Trible will be on hand for the dedication ceremonies, but at this time we are unsure of the date. Watch your local newspapers for the exact date and time.

We are on the threshold of what is probably the busiest and most exciting birding time of the year. Almost every day brings new spring arrivals into the Williamsburg area. Already we have observations of gnatcatchers, phoebes, purple martins, royal terns, and black and white and parula warblers, to name a few. If you have any opportunity at all to get out, grab your binoculars and field guide and see what birds you have in your area. And remember to keep records of your sightings.

Please keep the following dates open for next month. The Williamsburg Spring Count will be held Saturday, May 6. Hopefully we will have better weather than we did at Christmas. May 13 is the date of the Hampton Roads Spring Count, and they not only need but depend on our help. And May 19-21 will be the annual V.S.O. meeting here in Williamsburg. We hope you will be able to participate in some if not all of these activities.

Are you planting a garden this spring? Do yourselves and the birds a favor and plant some sunflowers. Squirrels have been known to enjoy these seeds too.

Final Reminder - If you have not paid your dues, this is your last newsletter until Billy Jones receives your dues of \$3.00 for students, or \$5.00 for individuals or \$7.50 for families. We are sorry, but after awhile mailing expenses do become significant.