
The Williamsburg Flyer

DECEMBER ISSUE 1989



90th Annual National Audubon Christmas Count

Date: December 17th

Time: meet 7AM-Colonial Information Center Parking Lot

5PM-Millington Room 108 for tally

Contact: Brian Taber 253-1181 Ruth Beck 566-8234

Christmas Count Areas and Area Highlights:

- 1) Cheatham Annex
Camp Peary, Queen's Lake, Cheatham Annex, Felgate's Creek,
Indian Field Creek.
- 2) Kingsmill
Country Road to Carter's Grove, Kingsmill, Williamsburg Airport, Parkway
from Info Center to just before College Creek.
- 3) Hog Island
Ferry ride over and Hog Island Refuge.
- 4) Jamestown
Parkway from College Creek to Jamestown and Jamestown Island.
- 5) College Woods
College Woods and Campus, Lake Matoaka, Lake Powell, College Landing
Park on South Henry Street, Population Laboratory, Hickory Signpost
Road, Treasure Island Road.
- 6) Middle Plantation
Mid-County Park, Waller Mill Park (both entrances), Drummonds Field, News
Road, First Colony.
- 7) Jolly Pond
Jolly Pond, Landfill, Cranston's Mill Road, Little Creek Reservoir.
- 8) Skimino
Barlow's Pond. Skimino Farms, Mirror Lakes, entrance to York River
State Park, Riverview Plantation.

Join us for an exciting day of birding!

PRESIDENTS COMMENTS

It has been a stellar year serving as president of the Williamsburg Bird Club. I want to thank each of this year's officers and board members. So, Grace Doyle, Craig Tumer, Jamie Doyle, Joy Archer, Fred Blystone, Martha Armstrong, Cindy Carlson, thank you. A special thanks to Brian Taber, Tom Armour, Bill Sheehan for assisting with field trips and records. Hats off to Shirley Raynes, Fred Blystone, Joy Archer, Grace Doyle, and the College of William and Mary Biology Club for handling the bird seed sale and pick-up. Thanks to Joe Doyle, Martha Armstrong, Julie Hotchkiss and Tom Armour and all others that worked with the Blue Bird and Purple Martin Committee.

I know I speak for the entire membership when I extend support to the new slate of officers. They are:

Tom Armour	President
Julie Hotchkiss	Vice Pres. (programs)
Jamie Doyle Ruth Beck Fred Blystone	Acting Vice President
Joy Archer	Secretary
Fred Blystone	Treasurer
Marilyn Zeigler Anne Beckley	Members at large

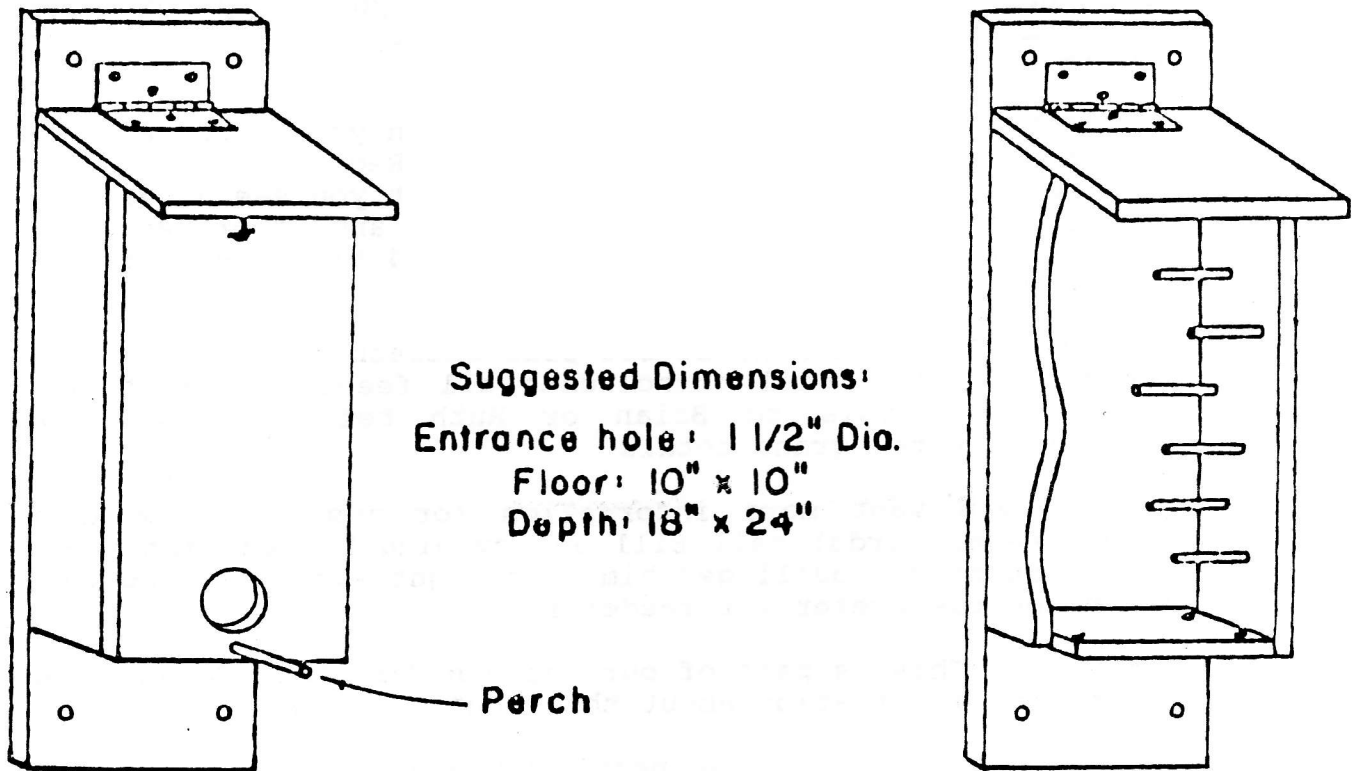
Remember, no program this month (Dec. 20). But, please support the counts on the 17th of December.

FEEDER SPECIALS

A selection of feeders is still available. If you are interested, contact Fred Blystone at 229-4346 after 6 pm.



What Can We Do to Save the Bluebirds?



Plans for a winter roosting box

This winter roosting box should be mounted on a pole or post at least six feet above the ground and should be protected from predators. It may be used by bluebirds, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, wrens, and the smaller woodpeckers.

WANTED!!

FEEDER WATCHERS ON SUNDAY DEC 17



Sunday the 17th of December is our Club's Day to participate in the annual nation-wide Christmas Bird Count. In past years, we have not paid much attention to the birds in our yards and at our feeders--even though we provide them with free lunches on a fairly regular basis.

This year, we would like to include some feeder observations in our club totals. You don't even need to "sign up." All you need to do is COUNT your very own birds and CALL in the totals to your friendly coordinator. Here's how it works:

COUNT the number of birds you see in your yards and at your feeders, by species. Record only the maximum number of each species that you see at any one time. (That's the only "rule," and it prevents us from counting the same tired old titmouse every time he comes by for a seed.)

CALL Bill Sheehan, at 220-2122 between 3pm and 4pm that afternoon. Bill will consolidate all feeder observations, and report totals to Brian or Ruth before 5 pm for inclusion in the grand totals.

If you want more information (or just want to chat about feeder birds) call Bill any evening between 4pm and 6 pm. Most days, you'll get him. He might even tell you what his bluebirds prefer for feeder food?

Reminder: This is part of our Audubon Christmas Count. See additional information about the count.

We need your help!



LOCAL BIRDS

NEW KENT COUNTY

The field trip on November 18 was an interesting trek to New Kent county. We all traveled in Tom Armor's van for a cold birding morning. Highlights of the morning included a Fox sparrow. It is recognized by the heavily streaked underparts and its orangish-brown rump and tail. It has a central breast spot like the song sparrow. IT was feeding in a scratching, towhee-fashion.

It was a good day for the woodpeckers. All the permanent residents, the Flickers, Pileated, Downy, Hairy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers, were observed. Also the wintering Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers provided a few cat-like meows and good views.

Also found were Pied-billed Grebes, Mute Swan, Belted Kingfishers, and an immature Eagle, along with 10 pairs of towhee thrashing about in the deciduous brush and coniferous thickets. We saw every sign of turkeys--tracks, feathers, scratches and scat, but no turkeys. Sorry, maybe next time.

Our January field trip will be announced in the January newsletter.

HOG ISLAND

Reports from Tom Armor and Bill Sheehan are that wintering species are arriving in more abundance at Hog Island Waterfowl Refuge, in Surry Co. Highlights included 5 Eagles, 7 species of water fowl (Wigeon, Gadwall, Pintail, Green Winged Teal, Black Ducks, Canada Geese, and Snow Geese. About 200 Bonaparte's Gulls were feeding above and around flocks of Hooded Mergansers. This is always a productive birding spot especially new in the winter when waterfowl can be so easily observed in the impoundments. It is good for a morning trip. Take the ferry over, bird for a couple of hours and have breakfast or lunch at the Surry House. Try it!

JAMESTOWN

Martha Briggs reports seeing a Snow Bunting on Thanksgiving while enjoying the day at Jamestown Island.



RENEWALS FOR 1990

Reminder: If you haven't paid the annual dues, for 1990, please complete the renewal forms enclosed in this newsletter and send to :

Williamsburg Bird Club
P. O. Box 1085
Williamsburg, VA 23187

COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Williamsburg Bird club supports the Williamsburg Regional Library by providing a variety of bird-related books and audio and video tapes as they become available. The funds for activities are generated by the proceeds from the bird seed sale. Please go by the Library and check out what may be of interest to you. The new selections include:

1. Audubon Videos #4 & #5 which are Songbirds I & II
2. Birding Around the Year - Aileen R. Lotz
3. The Hummingbird Book - Donald and Lillian Stokes
4. Lords of the Air - Morton and Page
(Smithsonian Books of Birds)
5. Introducing Birds to the Young Naturalist
6. Song Birds: How to Attract them and Identify their songs. Noble and Procter (Book and Cassette)

Alice Springe handles this public service project.

Thanks Alice !!

PURPLE MARTIN TIME

The Williamsburg Bird Club is pleased to donate a new Purple Martin house to the Virginia Coast Reserve for the old Machipongo Coast Guard Station on Hogg Island, one of the barrier islands on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Charlie and Jackie Farlow of Quinby serve as caretakers and host and hostess to the facility, which houses researchers interested in barrier island dynamics. The existing Purple Martin house is beyond repair and the new house will be waiting for the return of the martins in the spring. We hope to travel to Hogg island in late winter to erect the house in time for the spring arrival.

BIRDING IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

Summer 1990 - Tentative Schedule

June 23

Leave from Washington National.

June 24

Arrive at Heathrow for breakfast.

Wicken Fen near Cambridge: shovelers, great crested grebes, grasshopper warblers, and long eared owls in early afternoon. Drive through the heaths of northwestern Suffolk: crossbills, gadwalls, ringed stone curlews, plovers, and golden pheasants. Afternoon in the Norfolk Broads with bearded tits and water birds followed by a trip to Blakney Point and Cley Marshes for passage waders. Lodging in Blakney or Cley.

June 25

Birding at Humber Wildlife Refuge: waders and other waterfowl. This would be followed by a trip to Spurn Head at the mouth of the Humber: site for rare birds and common migrants. Up the coast to Hornsea Mere and Brompton Cliffs: guillemots, razorbill auks, puffins, kittiwakes, rock doves and feral pigeons. Afternoon drive through James Herriot's Yorkshire on route A19. Lodging in Durham or Newcastle and evening trip to Marsden Rock for kittiwakes and commorants. Alternative shopping trip in Newcastle or Durham.

June 26

Up the North Sea Coast on A1 after stop at Hadrian's Wall with visit to Lindisfarne and Holy Island: willow warblers, white throats, and spotted flycatchers. Then onward to St. Abb's Head and Dunbar (John Muir Park): cliff breeding house martins and seabirds. Lodging in Edinburgh.

June 27

Trip to islands of the Forth: terns, commorants, and other seabirds. Eiders and gannets at Bass Rock. Alternative tour of Edinburgh and Stirling for those interested. Dinner and evening in Edinburgh. Lodging in Edinburgh.

June 28

Through the Scottish Highlands to the Cairngorm Mountains. Lodging in Aviemore. Possible sightings include golden eagles, green shanks, dotterels, capercaillies, siskins, black grouse, ptarmigans, and snow buntings. Visit to

Highland Wildlife Park at Kincaig and chairlifts to Cairngorm Mountains.

June 29

North to Inverness and up A9 to John o' Groats. Chance to view Highland Birds. Lodging at Kirkwall in the Orkneys after evening ferry trip. Viewing seabirds on the far north coast of Scotland at Duncansby Head and Dunnet Head.

June 30 - July 1

In the Orkneys. Birds include, arctic skuas, puffins, kittiwakes, auks, hen harriers, short eared owls, red-necked phalaropes, guillemots, oyster catchers, corn crakes, arctic terns, gannets, fulmars, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, and many other species. Lodging at Kirkwall on June 30 and at Lairg on July 1 after return ferry in the afternoon.

July 2

South through the Scottish Highlands to Glasgow. Chance to see more Highland birds. Visits to Loch Ness and Loch Lomond. Evening in Glasgow. Lodging in Glasgow or Balloch (L. Lomond).

July 3

Drive through Lake District: pied flycatchers, dippers, grey wagtails, twites, buzzards, merlins, common sandpipers, ringed ouzels, and golden plovers. Visit to Beatrix Potter's home. Lodging at Buxton in the Peak District.

July 4-6

Three days in London. Lodging in London. Alternative birding trip to Dungeness on the English Channel: wagtails, shore birds, and others. Also visit to Romney Marsh and Charles Darwin's home. London tours available. Dinner and theater in London.

July 6

Visit to British Museum or National Gallery. Afternoon trip to Windsor Castle. Lodging in London.

July 7

Flight back to Washington from Heathrow.

Estimated Cost: \$1,400, includes flight, lodging, meals, van, ferry trip, reservations, and planning costs.

If interested: Call Bob Wynne at (804) 276-5520 (home) or 359-2403 (work)

Mailing address: P. O. Box 4725, Richmond, Virginia 23220

INTERESTED IN GOING TO PERU THIS SPRING ?

A groups of students and faculty from the College of William and Mary is planning a Spring Break trip to Peru March 2-12. The trip will concentrate on wildlife observations and conservation issues. Approximate costs are 1,500 dollars. We need fifteen people total for the trip. If you are interested contact Jamie Doyle or Dr. Jack Brooks in the Biology Department at 221-LIFE.

Send all future newsletter information for the January Issue to

Jamie K. Doyle
Biology Department
College of William and Mary
Williamsburg, VA 23185 by December 20th

or call me in Charlottesville by the 26th- 804-977-6026

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO EVERYONE !

Jamie and Ruth