



October Program

Meeting: Wednesday, October 17th, at 7:30 p.m. in Room 117 of Millington Hall, on the campus of William and Mary.

Program: Guest speaker will be Dr. Jerry Via, and his subject will be: "**Flights Across the Tropics: Birds of Costa Rica**".

Jerry Via is no stranger to our podium, or to the Williamsburg scene. On a number of previous occasions, he has charmed us while instructing us on various aspects of ornithology. He earned his masters degree in Biology here at William and Mary—under the critical tutelage of a pair of our members named Byrd and Beck. Jerry then went on to a doctorate in Biology at Blacksburg, and has been on the faculty of Virginia Tech for a number of years.

Around all that exposure to academia, he has found time to serve the Virginia Society of Ornithology in a variety of capacities, including a term as the Society's president. He has travelled extensively south of the border, with frequent pilgrimages to Costa Rica. Don't miss this one!

October Bird Walk

The October "walk" will be on **Saturday, October 20th, to Kiptopeake** on the Eastern Shore, with brief stops at the Tunnel Islands while in transit of the Bay. At this time of year the Islands usually produce a wondrous variety of warblers, sparrows, and shore birds. And at Kiptopeake, there are the twin attractions of a banding station and Bill Williams' hawk watch. With migration in full swing, both operations should be bustling with activity.

Ruth Beck will be our leader, and asks that we meet at the C.W. Information Center Parking Lot (East) at 7:00 a.m. To alleviate the Bridge Tunnel per car fee (\$18.00 round trip) we'll consolidate into as few vehicles as feasible. Since there are no lunch facilities at Kiptopeake, you should bring whatever pleases you for a light lunch. Also, it might be wise to tuck in some of your favorite insect repellent. If the wind is wrong, Kiptopeake mosquitoes have been known to carry cruise missiles. Plan to be back about mid-afternoon, and save questions for Ruth at the meeting on the 17th.

A Coming Attraction

11/21 Scottie & John Austin
"Inter-National Expedition to
Malaysia, Thailand and
Borneo"

Newport News City Park Bird Walks

The Hampton Roads Bird Club has regular bird walks the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month from 7 to 9 a.m. at the Newport News City Park. You meet at the Ranger Station parking lot.

President's

I note with deep sorrow the passing of Anne Smith on September 9th. Her wide range of devotion and service to the young people of the local community is legendary, and has been lovingly documented in the press in recent weeks.

Anne was a Life Member of our Club, one of our original members. Her enthusiasm for birds (or for any of her many interests) was highly contagious, and the happy sparkle in her eyes as she described the wintering Northern Orioles which she enticed to her feeders was a joyous thing to share.

Anne will be missed, and long remembered with admiration and affection.

Tom Armour

Corner

Julie Hotchkiss-Author!

A lady of many talents, Julie was recently published in the September issue of *TRAILER LIFE* magazine. The title of her article is "Canyon Country Challenge", and it's all fact.

Julie and five other accomplished hikers left their husbands in Fort Collins, Colorado for two weeks while the ladies departed to seek out some pretty challenging trails and canyons in the Southwest. Their primary target was to hike to the bottom of the Grand Canyon from the North Rim, and to hike back out again. Her descriptions of that event are exceptional, and equally so are her accounts of their ventures into Anasazi, Navaho and other Indian sites and monuments.

If any of you are fans of the author Tony Hillerman, who has written a number of very authentic detective stories featuring Navaho lands and lores, this is especially for you. One of the Navago guides who shepherded Julie and her friends had guided Hillerman on a number of occasions and instructed him in some of the details of the Navaho customs and taboos.

September Bird Walk

As advertised in the September FLYER, Julie Hotchkiss and a small group of birders braved some marginal weather at York River State Park on Saturday, September 22nd. Among those present were Ann and Brian Beckley, Bettye Fields, Dorothy Whitfield and Marilyn Zeigler.

Enroute to the park, in the

vicinity of Barlow's Pond, they found a roost with a goodly number of Turkey Vultures in residence. Bad morning for flying, Julie said. At the park, the morning's highlights included: Bald Eagle, Magnolia Warbler, Redstart, Yellow-throated Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Pine Warbler, Tree Swallow, Purple Martin, Green-backed Heron—and a trio of flycatchers: Kingbird, Peewee, and Acadian Flycatcher—the species total came to about 45.

On the Road

Suzy Woodall recently ventured southwest to Albuquerque and Mesa Verde. It was not a birding trip, but she did get acquainted with Magpies, Pinyon and Steller's Jays and White-necked Ravens.

Tom and Jeanne Armour reported in on 9/27 from the Pacific Ocean in Salashan, Oregon, where they are visiting Dona and Bob Morris. Tom says he is "going crazy" trying to sort out the sea birds from Bob's deck. He adds that "it's very hard work, but someone has to do it." Shed a tear for Tom—that's as close to heaven as he can get! Tom finally added a Golden-crowned Sparrow to his Life List. This species has long evaded Tom. He also took some pictures of Black Turnstones and California Gulls. The Armours are due back mid-October—we think!

VSO Chincoteague Field Trip

This highly successful annual event took place September 14-16th., during which period about 150 birders invaded the Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge. To accomodate the group, a wide variety of local trips was offered: train, boat, bicycle, organized walking trips—all with highly skilled leaders. Ruth Beck and Brian Taber shared their sightings with us, and the highlights seem to be:

White Pelican
Bald Eagle
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Black-bellied Plover
Lesser Golden Plover
Piping Plover
Black-necked Stilt
American Avocet
Whimbrel
Hudsonian Godwit
Red Knot
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
White-rumped Sandpiper
Baird's Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Stilt Sandpiper
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Short-billed Dowitcher
Long-billed Dowitcher



Kiptopeake Hawk Watch September

Bill Williams has kindly provided summary data for his Kiptopeake Program:

- Station manned: 25 days
- Hours dedicated: 200
- Hawks seen: approximately as follows:

Sharp-shinned Hawk	1,200
Kestrel	1,200
Broad-winged Hawk	200
Merlin	100
Osprey	100
Cooper's Hawk	50
Harrier	50
Peregrine	50
Red-tailed	25
Red-shouldered	25
Bald Eagle	25

Local Land Conservation Trust Formed

A number of our members are actively and enthusiastically involved in forming an organization call THE HISTORIC RIVERS LAND CONSERVANCY. This is the first private non-profit Land Trust to be established under provisions of the Virginia Conservation Easement Act. The purpose is to preserve environmentally significant lands in the James and York River watersheds. Initially, the Trust will focus on protecting lands in the Peninsula area through acquisition, conservation easements or other methods.

An inaugural meeting will be held Saturday, October 20, in Room 119 of Marshall-Wythe School of Law from 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. The meeting is open to all interested persons. For more information, you may contact Carolyn Lowe (565-3167) or Brian Taber (253-1181).

From the October issue of the Monticello Bird Club Newsletter

Preventing Disease at Your Feeder

The October issue of *Birder's World* includes an article by Milt Friend, Director of the National Wildlife Health Research Center, on disease hazards associated with bird feeders and how to prevent them. He says "When you establish a feeding station, you create an artificial environment. Large numbers of birds gather at one spot, and species that don't normally associate with each other have contact—the probability of disease increases during cold winter months, when birds are stressed and therefore are more susceptible to disease." He offers the following recommendations for minimizing the risks of illness for the birds attracted to your feeders.

1. Platform feeders or other types in which birds are standing in the food should be cleaned regularly, perhaps every three to five days.
 2. Tube feeders that hang from a support and other feeder styles that require birds to perch away from the food, prevent bird feces from accumulating in the food.
 3. Use feeders that are made of impervious material such as plastic, metal, or sealed wood, which can be washed easily.
 4. Clean the feeder with a 5 percent bleach solution at regular intervals. Clean the perches around the feeding holes and anywhere where the birds are standing or putting their heads.
 5. Regularly clean the area on the ground beneath the feeder.
 6. Buy quality feed that you are sure is not contaminated with rodent feces and is not damp or moldy. Store the dry feed in a rodent-proof, water-proof container.
 7. Clean and disinfect your birdbath regularly. Provide fresh water frequently.
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Bird Encyclopedia for Library

In memory of Anne Smith, and to be so inscribed, a copy of *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds* is being donated to the Regional Library. The book was edited by John K. Terres, former Editor of Audubon Magazine and a prolific writer on ornithological subjects.

The book is extremely well-illustrated, and describes life histories of over 800 birds. It also describes many major topics including flight, courtship, singing, territories and young. 1,109 pages—1,675 illustrations

Birds of the Canadian Arctic in June

Ty Hotchkiss has provided us with a list of some of the birds they saw above the Arctic Circle during their explorations in Canada's Northwest Territories in June of this year. The June FLYER described their itinerary.

Long-tailed Jaeger
Rock Ptarmagin
Grey-cheeked Thrush *
Northern Wheatear
Merlin *
Willow Ptarmagin
Arctic Loon
Rusty Blackbird *
Red-throated Loon *
Short-eared Owl *
Gyr Falcon

Barrow's Goldeneye
Glaucous Gull *
Upland Sandpiper *
Smith's Longspur
Lapland Longspur
Baird's Sandpiper *
Common Redpoll *
Blackpoll Warbler *
Tree Sparrow *
Mew Gull

* Asterisk denotes those species of which we have a local record.

Birds of Southern Alaska-July

After their excursion through the Arctic to the shores of the Beaufort Sea, Julie and Ty visited several locations in southern Alaska, and Julie has provided us a partial list of the birds they saw.

Vicinity of Homer and Kachimak Bay—on Kenai Peninsula and Cook Inlet:

Red-faced Cormorant	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Northern Shrike *	Boreal Chickadee
Common Eider	Arctic Tern
Aleutian Tern	Black-legged Kittiwake

Vicinity of Seward and Chiswell Islands—also on the Kenai, but on the other side

Ancient Murrelet	Kittlitz's Murrelet
Marbled Murrelet	Thick-billed Murre
Thin-billed Murre	Pigeon Guillemot
Rhinoceros Auklet	Tufted Puffin
Horned Puffin	

Vicinity of Kodiak and the Barren Islands:

Northern Fulmar	Short-tailed Shearwater
Sooty Shearwater	Fort-tailed Storm Petrel

And if you get tired of birds, consider:

Hump-backed Whales	Grizzly Bear
Steller's Sea Lions	Wolf
Fur Seals	Dall Sheep
Harbor Seals	Caribou
Moose	

Local and Almost Local Birds

Bill Williams reports a Night-hawk over Williamsburg on 9/9, and that his last Hummer was 9/25—which was also the last date for Ty Hotchkiss. Bill also saw a Magnolia Warbler on campus on 9/27, and a Wood Thrush at his home on the 28th. And over at Kiptopeake on 9/15, Bill found an early Red-breasted Nuthatch. Same place, on 9/23, he watched an Olive-sided Flycatcher.

At First Colony, Ty Hotchkiss saw Palm and Black-throated Green Warblers, a Red-eyed Vireo, a Catbird and a very early Ruby-crowned Kinglet on 9/26.

In the Kingswood/Druid Hills area, Brian Taber was blessed with Black-throated Green, Cape May and Blackburnian Warblers on 9/23. A day earlier he heard a Parula—in song. Brian also reports Bald Eagles high above, almost daily.

The Sora migration is in full swing in the marshes of the Chickahominy and its many creeks. Bill Williams reports that (as of Sept. 21) there were literally hundreds per acre of tidal marsh, with their sharp calls and whinnies echoing through the areas whenever the birds considered themselves disturbed. Their migration season here is a short one, for they do not tend to linger as frosty nights prevail.

At Camp Peary on September 16, Grace & Joe Doyle report 4 Yellow-billed Cuckoos in the same tree at the same time—all apparently savoring some creepy-crawly caterpillars. They also saw at least 3 Pileated, and 9 Red-headed Woodpeckers.

In addition, Joe said that the season's count of fledged Bluebirds produced in the 40-odd boxes at Peary was **300 !!** Hats off to the Camp Peary folks, and to the Doyles, who have chaired the Club's Bluebird Committee with increasingly fruitful results.

Ruth Beck, at her sylvan estate near Barhamsville, reports seven warbler species on the 17th of September: Palm, Black and White, Yellow, Yellow-throated, Pine, Bay-breasted, and Black-throated Blue.

A Great-crested Flycatcher was seen on 9/21 by Bill Sheehan, as was a Black and White Warbler on the same date. His last Hummer was the 22nd, but a female Summer Tanager persisted at his peanut butter through the 27th.

On 9/29, Brian Taber, assisted by daughter Amelia and son John, made a pilgrimage to Kiptopeake. During the 3 hours they were there, they saw well over 300 raptors in southward migration. Most exciting event was watching a Peregrine Falcon stoop from on high and take a Blue Jay out of the air. A great number of Blue Jays were in the area at the time—moving south. For the falcon, a "Blue Plate Special"! Among the other raptors were over 100 each of Sharp-shinned Hawks and Kestrels with lesser numbers (under 10 each) of Cooper, Merlins and Harriers.

On the way home, they stopped briefly on the Tunnel Islands, and had close-up looks at a Harlequin Duck and some Black-throated Green Warblers—the latter right next to their car in the parking area.

Later in the afternoon, (about 5:30) Brian stopped by my house to

tell me about their Kipto trip, and to leave some other bird data. We watched my birdbath and two dwarf plum trees near it, and thanks to Brian's sharp eyes watched a Rose-breasted Grosbeak; and Bay-breasted, Prairie and Blackpoll Warblers cavort about. At one time, we counted six Bluebirds on the bath. Hadn't even had a cocktail, so help us!

On 9/30, Bill Williams reported that about 2,400 Blue Jays were observed migrating through Kiptopeake. The Jays may not even miss the bird that the Tabers' Peregrine had for lunch the day before.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks reported by Bill Williams near his home in Deerwood Hills, and your editor had one or two passing through on 9/30; 10/1; and 10/2.

On 10/1, Bill Snyder watched a perched Great Horned Owl late in the afternoon; he went directly home to find two Barred Owls in his trees!

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the newest member of the Williamsburg Bird Club.

Dr. Gustav Hall

Adopt-A-Highway Report

Chairman Bill Davies reports successful completion of the second go-around of cleaning up the Club's assigned highway section: Route 5 from Five Forks to Route 614 (Greensprings Road). While Bill himself made pick-ups on an occasional basis during the last 3 months, the big final efforts came on September 29 and October th.

Bill is most appreciative of the support given by the following members who came out when asked and did the job, and so is the club:

Martha Briggs, Catherine and Sam Hart, Phyllis Johnson, Dorothy Whitfield and Bill Williams.

Including Bill, these folks picked up 41 bags of trash. This includes 17 bags of recyclable glass and aluminum. The recycled bottles and cans provide income for the "Bottle Bank" of St. Martins Church and helps support their Pantry Program. At present this worthwhile program provides food and other assistnace to 17 needy persons in James City County.

The next major pick-up will be sometime early in 1991, although Bill could use a little interim help from time to time. If you think you might be able to help a bit, please call Bill Davies at 253-1461 and get on his "Helper List".

Changing of the Guard

It's time to do a little planning and preparation for feeding the birds. First of all, get your seed order in by Oct. 19th. Each order helps to finance the ornithological projects the Club supports.

But beyond that, it's a good idea to check the condition of your feeders, suet holders and fresh water sources before that first sudden blustery winter day.

Already, many of the birds who are with us during the Spring and Summer have packed their bags and headed South. The migratory birds from the North (and the mountaings to the west) are moving through and will soon be gone. And very shortly our year-round resident birds will be joined by those species which spend only the winter with us.

So keep a sharp lookout for the Red-breasted Nutchatches, Brown Creepers, Winter Wrens, Kinglets, Hermit Thrushes, Waxwings, Fox Sparrows, White-throats, Juncos, Sapsuckers, Siskins, Purple Finches and those beautiful Evening Grosbeaks. Then there is always the chance that we'll see some of the less common winter visitors: Water Pipits, White-crowned Sparrows, Snow Bunting, Rusty Blackbird, Redpoll, Crossbills, and Saw-whet Owls.

IMPORTANT

DON'T FORGET TO TURN IN YOUR ORDER FOR BIRDSEED BY OCTOBER 19TH. ALSO, PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH THE SALE IF YOU POSSIBLY CAN.

Local Feeder Watch Data Winter 1989-90

Project Feeder Watch is a nation-wide project organized and run by the Department of Ornithology. The Flyer has described it several times during the last couple of years, but basically participants count birds at their feeders and bird baths on one or two consecutive days during ten 2-week periods—reporting the numbers and species to Cornell periodically. We count the peak numbers seen at any one time, to preclude counting the same bird more than once. We do not count birds feeding on fruits or bushes or trees, or that drink from ponds or streams. Exception is that a predator bird may be counted if it appears to have been attracted by feeding birds.

Three of our members (and maybe others?) have participated in this program for the past several years, and we thought it might be of interest to consolidate highlights from the reports we indenpendently submitted to Cornell. The three of us are: Marion Simmons (Williamsburg Landing), Suzy Woodall (Norge-Toano) and Bill Sheehan (Hollybrook-Kingswood).

In the table below, following the species name, we arrived at three columns of data:

Col (1)—number of times reported out of 30. (Each of us reported ten times, so a species which showed at all stations on all reporting dates would be 30. We did not necessarily report on the same days)

Col (2)—number of stations reporting the species at least one time. Maximum 3.

Col (3)—The single high-count that any of us reported—all birds in sight at one time

(continued on page 7)

Species	Column 1 (No. of Times Reported)	Column 2 (No. of Stations Reporting)	Column 3 (Single Hi-Count)
Junco	30	3	18
House Finch	30	3	25
Carolina Wren	29	3	2
Carolina Chickadee	28	3	7
Am. Goldfinch	26	3	19
Cardinal	25	3	11
Tufted Titmouse	24	3	6
Wh.-throated Sparrow	22	3	12
Downy Woodpecker	20	3	3
Blue Jay	17	2	3
Mockingbird	17	2	1
Pink Warbler	17	2	5
Purple Finch	17	3	5
Pine Siskin	15	3	38
Mourning Dove	14	3	6
Red-bellied Woodpecker	14	2	2
Wh.-breasted Nuthatch	12	2	2
Eastern Bluebird	11	2	7
Song Sparrow	11	2	2
Brown Thrasher	6	1	2
Towhee	10	1	9
House Sparrows	9	2	4
Red-breasted Nuthatch	8	1	22
Robin	7	2	6
Starling	7	2	2
Brown Creeper	7	1	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	1	1
American Crow	5	1	1
Chipping Sparrow	5	3	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	2	1
Cedar Waxwing	3	1	5
Cowbird	3	2	6
Swamp Sparrow	3	1	2
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	2	1
Fox Sparrow	2	1	1
Common Grackle	2	2	50
Flicker	1	1	1
Hermit Thrush	1	1	1
Red-winged Blackbird	1	1	3
Boat-tailed Grackle	1	1	1

Anyone wishing more information on Project Feeder Watch should call Bill Sheehan (220-2122). Or, if you would be interested in organizing a local Feeder Watch group, we can talk about that, too.

Open Seasons for Game Birds & Game

Below, we have listed the inclusive legal hunting dates in Eastern Virginia for the 1990-91 hunting season. Some of our members are hunters and already know what the schedules are. For the rest of us, prudence will dictate the number of feathers, fur and/or antler appendages we will wear—especially when stumbling about in the fields, forests and country lanes as we birdwatch.

<u>Game Species</u>	<u>Open Dates</u>
Mourning Dove	9/1-11/3; 12/24-29
Rail	9/1-11/9
Quail	11/12-2/9
Woodcock	11/5-12/1; 12/19-1/5
Turkey	11/5-1/5
Squirrel	11/5-1/31
Rabbit	11/5-1/31
Raccoon	10/15-3/9
Deer (Bow)	10/13-11/10
Deer (Gun)	11/19-1/5

Please send any news or articles for future issues of the FLYER to me at
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23185