



# THE FLYER

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September 1991

Williamsburg Bird Club

Bill Sheehan, Editor (220-2122)

## September Events

### Meeting

Wednesday, **September 18<sup>th</sup>**, at 7:30 p.m. in Room 117, Millington Hall at the College.

### Program

Bill Williams, founding member and multi-term ex-president of this Club, will present a double-header to open the fall/winter season. His subjects will be:

- a. **Hawk Migrations through Kiptopeake**, and
- b. **Adventures with Woodcocks**

### Field Trip

**Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>**. If there is enough interest, we will make a day of it and visit Bill Williams' Kiptopeake Hawk

Watch Station, the nearby Eastern Virginia National Wildlife Refuge, and, of course, the four Bridge/Tunnel Islands.

At Kiptopeake, it will be mostly Hawk flyovers—which Bill Williams will describe to you during his prior program on the 18<sup>th</sup>. At the Refuge, it will be largely passerine birds such as thrushes and fall warblers. The Tunnel Islands present unusual opportunities for unusual waterbirds, plus "dropins" by smaller migrating birds. No refreshment facilities are immediately available, so a lunch and a thermos are indicated. Bugs are not unknown, so bring a can of your favorite anti-bug juice. Tentative plans are to meet at the CW Info Center Parking lot at **6 am**.

**To provide trip control, please call Brian Taber at 253-1181** for an advance reservation or for answers to questions you may have. There will be an opportunity to register at the Sept. Club meeting on the 18th. Leaders are not certain as of early September but will probably be several from among Taber, Armour, Beck and/or Williams. This is a real winner!

## Coming Attractions

On **October 16<sup>th</sup>**, Dr. Jack Brooks, Professor of Biology at the College, will tell of some of the birds of Australia. He might even go beyond birds and introduce us to a few of the other natural treasures from Down Under. Dr. Brooks has had extensive experience exploring the Australian continent through the eyes of a professional biologist.

On **November 20<sup>th</sup>**, Julie and Ty Hotchkiss will share with us some of their adventures above the Arctic Circle in the Northwest Territories, and in various Alaskan locales.

## President's

Corner

The September meeting will be the first since May, and a great many of us are not at all unhappy with a retreat from the heat and humidity of late summer. The fall migrations are already upon us, with shorebirds on the move in increasing waves since late July. As we write (9/9), the fall warblers are beginning to sift through, not at all vocal and presenting their annual challenges of sedate winter plumages. Our Hummers have their bags packed, and will be scarce beyond September. And then our winter visitors will show up—old friends like the Juncos, White-throated Sparrows, Purple Finches, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Sapsuckers, Pine Siskins and waterfowl. An exciting time of year, indeed. Enjoy!

*Tom Armour*

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## Migrating Songbird Study

A very ambitious survey of migrating songbirds is underway over a 4 state area between Cape May, New Jersey, and Cape Charles, Va. In Virginia, the major players are the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Nature Conservancy, the Virginia Society of Ornithology and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Results of the study are expected to be of immediate value in the protection of songbirds in their migratory routes and to provide a basis for recommendations to local governments for optimum land use.

Six hundred sites in the 4-state region are being methodically surveyed each weekend between August 3 and October 27. Participants at each assigned site play a 10 minute standardized tape of bird alarm calls—then report all observed birds between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Among our members, Tom Armour and Steve Rottenborn have already participated and were greatly impressed with the program and its goals. We believe that Ruth Beck, Brian Taber and Bill Williams are scheduled for future dates—perhaps other Club members, too. Happy Hunting!

## Away from Home

In late July near Avon, N.C., on the Outer Banks, Brian Taber, Adrienne Frank and Gary Driscole had an avian feast! Over 100 each of Whimbrels and Black Terns; **all** the other Terns; **all** the Herons; Moorhens, Upland Sandpipers, Stilt Sandpipers and many others.

From their exploits in N.C., Adrienne and Gary vacationed in Montana. Their own account of some of their sightings is as follows:

*In August, Gary and I vacationed in Montana in the Flathead Valley and at Glacier National Park. Glacier is not known for its birds, especially in mid-August when the park is relatively dry & hot. We were lucky enough to see more than 75 different birds.*

*In the Flathead Valley, at a wildlife reserve, we saw Red-necked Grebe with young. We also watched dozens of Snipe, Canada Geese, and Shovelers. There were multiple Osprey and their nests along Flathead Lake.*

*We watched a Dipper dip under a waterfall and saw a Common Loon and several Common Golden Eye fishing in the small lake around Glacier National Park. In the alpine, we saw a Blue Grouse. We watched Red Crossbill and White-wing Crossbill singing from the top of pine trees. At Fish Lake in Glacier, we ate our packed lunch while watching a Hairy Woodpecker, a Yellow-billed Sapsucker, and a Three-toed Woodpecker—as well as Boreal, Mountain, and Black Capped Chickadees, and plenty of Red-breasted Nuthatches.*

*Gary & I also had close encounters with mountain goats, bison, marmot and ground squirrels.*

*Adrienne Frank & Gary Driscole*

Julie Hotchkiss and her faithful driver, Ty, are in California for an American Birders Association Convention in early September. A mid-August card from Arkansas reported a Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Winter Wren, the latter of which serenaded them somewhere in Tennessee.

On August 8<sup>th</sup>, Julie Hotchkiss checked out the old watering-hole at Drummond's Field and came up with 8 Common Egrets. On the 10<sup>th</sup> there were 6 visible. Then, on the 11<sup>th</sup>, the Doyals (Southern phonetic spelling) found 6 Common Egrets and 6 Snowy Egrets at Camp Peary. The DoYLES also noted two young Kestrels, a Green-backed Heron and a single Black-crowned Night Heron. Same day, Tom Armour found a Redstart in his yard. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, I found 11 Blue Jays at my feeders at one time. Several of these were young birds which were being fed by adults—occasionally! On the 14<sup>th</sup>, the Sharretts saw 2 Brown-headed Nuthatches at one of their Kingsmill feeders.

Same day, Armour recorded 106 Royal Terns at the KM Marina, and on the 16<sup>th</sup> Tom watched a male Parula Warbler in his back yard. Also on August 16<sup>th</sup>, Bill Williams spotted an early female Cooper's Hawk at Hog Island, along with a good number of shorebirds. Next day, Brian Taber and son John worked Hog Island and came up with a long list. Highlights were; a Marbled Godwit, nine species of Sandpiper, both Yellowlegs, a Little Blue Heron, 3 Tri-colored Herons, and 2 Black-crowned Night Herons. Among the terns were

Forster's, Least (40), Royal and Caspian. The birds are definitely on the move!

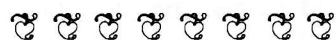
On August 19<sup>th</sup>, Alice Springe watched an adult Kingbird feeding two young 'uns. Also on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Tom Armour and the Sharretts found about 50 species at Hog Island. Noteworthy among them were; 3 Black-crowned Night Herons, a Peregrine Falcon, 6 Semi-palmated Plovers, both Yellowlegs, 5 species of Sandpipers, 5 Blue Grosbeaks and a Northern Oriole. And on the 24<sup>th</sup>, in James City County at Drummond's Field, Williams picked up 7 Solitary Sandpipers, 1 Short-billed Dowitchers, 3 Lesser Yellowlegs and a pair of Pectoral Sandpipers. Next day, at his home, Brian Taber commenced his private annual "Hawk Watch", from his steps no less. Highlight for hawks was an early male Harrier, but also—rans were 5 Osprey, 2 Bald Eagles and a Black Vulture. Not realizing that this was a "Hawk Watch", a mixed bag of Swallows also got counted: 7 Cliffs, some Martins, and Rough-winged, Tree, and Barn Swallows. August 26 favored Bill Snyder with several Yellow-billed Cuckoos at Jamestown Island—and what Bill described as a "very large" Red-tailed Hawk perched in one of his trees at home.

Back to Drummond's Field went Brian on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The low spot in the field held quite a bit of ground water, and with horses grazing nearby, Brian found; 6 Stilt Sandpipers, 2 White-rumped Sandpipers, 20 Semi-palmated Sandpipers, 1 Spotted Sandpiper, 6 Solitary Sandpipers and 20 Least Sandpipers and a Dowitcher. In addition, throw in a Green-backed Heron. Brian and Tom Armour monitored the field several times through the end of August and saw both Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, 1 Semi-palmated Plover and several Western Sandpipers. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, Armour's bird-bath attracted Redstarts and a female Hooded Warbler. The latter showed again on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 28<sup>th</sup>, Bill Williams checked out an immature Swallow-tailed Kite and over a hundred Bobolinks at Hog Island. This Kite is only our **second** local recorded observation! On August 29<sup>th</sup>, Dick Mahone reported at least 25 Nighthawks over a 5 acre field near Queen's Creek at Route 143. Taber and Armour counted 8 Nighthawks on the 31<sup>st</sup> over the Jamestown Marina just before dusk. Tom's birdbath—with the lure of its slowly dripping water—enticed a Chestnut-sided Warbler and 2 Redstarts to try the water (8/30).

To start September, with a nice cool northerly wind, Brian and Tom checked Kingsmill Marina. Tree, Barn and Rough-winged Swallows were moving about, as were Swifts. Also noted were a Yellow Warbler, a Northern Oriole, some small flocks of Bobolinks and over 50 Eastern Kingbirds. Armour had 5 Redstarts in his yard Sept 1—perhaps hitchhiking on the northerly winds of the cold front which blew

through at that time.

A Black & White Warbler appeared in my yard on Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>; others were reported in Kingsmill on 5<sup>th</sup>. Armour watched a Blue-winged Warbler use his birdbath on 9/2. (We have very few fall records). Tom also reported 2 Kestrels at Drummond's Field on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Bob Morris spotted 3 Snowy Egrets on 9/3 —flying north! On the 4<sup>th</sup>, Tom saw single White-rumped and Spotted Sandpipers at Drummond's Field, and a Solitary Vireo at Kingsmill. A pair of Summer Tanagers used one of my birdbaths on 9/6 and 9/7, and a Red-eyed Vireo, 2 Crested Flycatchers and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo were singing and/or calling on those dates.



## Important

**Enclosed with this issue of the FLYER are two copies of the price list for this year's Bird Seed sale. We will be mailing copies to non-members who ordered from us last year so please pass one copy on to a friend who you know did not order seed from us in 1990.**

## Virginia Waterfowl Hunting

Within guidelines issued by the U.S. Wildlife Service, the Board of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has established the following dates and restrictions:

**General Duck:** Oct 9-12; Nov. 28-30; Dec 13-Jan 4

Daily bag limit of 3, which may include: 3 Mallards (but only 1 hen); 2 Wood Ducks; 2 Redheads; 1 Black Duck; 1 Pintail; 1 Fulvous Tree Duck. Possession limit is 6. Closed season on Canvasbacks and Harlequins.

**Canada Geese:** Nov 20-23; Dec 2-Jan 20

Bag limit is 2 per day; 4 in possession.

**Tundra Swan:** Nov. 4-Jan 31.

Department will issue 600 permits that will allow hunters one swan per season. [Ed. note: last season the 600 hunters with permits bagged 144 of the Swans]

(In addition to the above categories, separate dates and limits have been established for Sea Ducks, Snow Geese, Atlantic Brant, Coot; Mergansers and Gallinule)

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Please send any news or articles for future issues of the FLYER to  
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or call **220-2122**