



# THE FLYER

NEWSLETTER OF THE WILLIAMSBURG BIRD CLUB

Volume 29, Number 4

Website: [www.wmbgbirdclub.com](http://www.wmbgbirdclub.com)

April 2005

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Alex Minarik

Of our website's list of Best Bets for Finding Birds in the area, the loop road at Jamestown Island is my favorite. Not only do I enjoy the beauty of the woods and marshes, but I like the exercise I get by walking the 3 or 5-mile loop. The pace is leisurely as I make lots of stops to listen and scan for birds. I have been out to walk the loop road four times in the past week hoping to catch the first spring migrants as they arrive. I'm also keeping track of the great horned owl that Shirley found nesting in a squirrel's nest near the Island House pull-off. If you would like to join me for a birding walk, meet at the parking lot on the island at 8:45 A.M. on 4/20 and 4/27, weather permitting.

## APRIL 23 FIELD TRIP

Bill Williams will lead the Club's bird walk at the Green Springs Trail behind Jamestown High School Saturday, April 23. Meet at 7:00 AM in the parking lot behind the High School. There should be good numbers of migrants by then and Bill will find it if it's there. He has recorded 199 species in his weekly treks around the trail. Perhaps this will be the day he finds number 200!

## APRIL 20 PROGRAM

Join us Wednesday, **April 20** at 7:30 p.m. in Room 211 at Millington Hall at William and Mary. We'll see the movie, "**The Colonial Naturalist: The Life and Work of Mark Catesby.**" This is a truly delightful portrait of one of America's first naturalists, sometimes poking fun at the scholarly Catesby. The photography is impressive with some beautiful shots of local birds. Both the history buff and the nature lover should be well entertained.

**Note:** Meeting location is **Room 211** in Millington Hall until further notice.

## MAY 18 PROGRAM

Join us Wednesday, **May 18** at 7:30 p.m. in Room 211 at Millington Hall at William and Mary. Bill Williams will discuss the Goatsuckers, with emphasis on our local Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widows.

According to The Sibley Field Guide to Birds of Eastern North America, Goatsuckers were so named because of an old erroneous belief that they would fly into barns at night and suckle on goats!

## ANNUAL SPRING COUNT MAY 1

The Spring Bird Count will be Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, according to Brian Taber, organizer for this annual club event. Take this opportunity to go with an experienced birder/leader to check out a location you've not birded before.

The procedure is just like the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, same areas and same leaders, but there's no fee. The groups count birds in a circular territory 15 miles in diameter. The center of our circle is the Colonial Williamsburg Visitor Center. Contact one of the area leaders listed below to join this fun event and important count. You're sure to see some surprises and perhaps add a bird or two to your life list. Contact these volunteers to get the details about where and when to meet:

## MEMBER PHOTOS ON WEB SITE

If you haven't checked the club's web site lately, click your way over to: [www.wmbgbirdclub.com](http://www.wmbgbirdclub.com) to check out some new features: pictures and information from the March field trip to the Vineyards plus two pages of photos by club members Herb Spannuth (bird photos from New Zealand and Arizona), Tom Armour (photos from Florida), Ariel White (photos from Florida and Jamestown) and Shirley Devan (photos from Jamestown.)

## FYI

- The Williamsburg area was 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in submitting birding checklists for the Great Backyard Bird Count February 18 to 21. Congratulations to all birders!
- Chris and Tony Dion, faithful and active club members for the last five years, have moved to England (our loss, Dorset's gain.) Before leaving they donated their videotapes of the BBC's "The Life of Birds" hosted by David Attenborough to the Bird Club. This 10 part series features spectacular photography and extraordinary bird life histories. If you want to borrow the set, contact Shirley Devan at 757-220-6269. Eventually, the club will donate the set to the Williamsburg Library

## BIRD SIGHTINGS MARCH 2005

*Report your backyard birds and local sightings to Shirley Devan at 220-6269 (evening phone) or [sedevan52@cox.net](mailto:sedevan52@cox.net) (home email). If you encounter interesting birds on your vacation/travels, please share!*

**March 1:** Tom Armour reports: at the Vineyards, 1 Osprey, 2 Ringed-neck Ducks, 7 Bufflehead.

**March 6:** Joe Doyle reports 6 White Pelicans on York River. He and Grace found 35 species on their regular Sunday visit to Camp Peary. Other highlights included Tundra Swans, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasbacks, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, Ruddy Ducks, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Towhee, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark.

**March 8:** Alex Minarik reports 2 Fox Sparrows in her yard this morning as it poured down snow.

**March 9:** Linda Scherer reports a flock of about 25 to 30 Tree Swallows feeding at Lake Pasbeheg in First Colony between 8 and 9 am.

**March 11, 12, 13:** Dorothy Whitfield reports Pileated Woodpeckers, Brown Thrasher and Northern Flicker around her backyard.

**March 12:** Tom Armour reports from the James River Hawk watch: a Common Loon, 20 Tundra Swans, 4 Brown Pelicans, 10 Red-breasted Mergansers, 4 Tree Swallows and many Fish Crows migrating; and at the Vineyards, 5 Buffleheads and 1 Pied-billed Grebe. Bill Williams reports 2 Red-necked Grebes were at College Creek.

Shirley Devan counts at least 7 Great Blue Heron nests in the swamp on Longhill Road across from Lafayette High School (between the Christian Life Center and Longhill Gate.) There were also three

Ring-necked Ducks on the pond behind the Williamsburg Indoor Sports Complex.

Bill Holcombe reports: "Three Wild Turkeys were scurrying through the brush on my morning dog walk. And then I heard faint but beautiful calls from Tundra Swans. They were so high that it was difficult to spot them with the bright morning light reflecting off of them, but then, THERE they were – several hundred of them flying in more of a wedge than a V and then several great long lines of them all heading for their Arctic summer."

**March 13:** Tom Armour reports from the James River Hawk watch: 1 Red-throated Loon. Joe and Grace Doyle report 40 species at Camp Peary, highlighted by six Pine Warblers, first of the year. Other good birds: Pied-billed Grebe, both swans, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chipping Sparrow and Red-winged Blackbird.

Shirley Devan finds a Great Horned Owl nest just off the loop road on Jamestown Island. What looked like a squirrel's nest (and might once have been!) sported a set of ears and eyes looking back!

**March 15:** Tom McCary reports a nice flock of Tundra Swans in V formation flying over Shirley Plantation at day's end, emitting their eerie calls the while. Dorothy Whitfield reports four Purple Finches at her sunflower feeder. Tom Armour reports a Forster's Tern and Laughing Gulls.

Bill Holcombe reports: A trip to the Bay Bridge Islands found only some of the possibles but still a satisfying excursion. "Bob Newman and I found lots of Black Scoters, sending up their weird wails, and Surf Scoters, but couldn't find the White Wing. Also Long-tailed Ducks, Lesser Scaup, Red-breasted Mergansers, both Cormorants, one Common Loon and perhaps two female Harlequin Ducks, but without a confirming expert I wasn't sure."

*Also note: Except for Island One, access to the end of the island containing the building is blocked off and there is a threat to close them completely to birders as a security measure.*

**March 16:** Bill Holcombe reports: Large flocks of Canada Geese in V's and strings heading north. Bill Williams reports a single Laughing Gull at College Creek.

**March 16 and 17:** Dorothy Whitfield reports male Pileated Woodpecker and male Hairy Woodpecker, plus a Red-shouldered Hawk in her yard.

**March 16:** Ruth Beck reports Pine Siskins in her yard for the last five days.

**March 17:** Dorothy Whitfield reports 13 different species around her yard, including Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Purple Finches and White-throated

Sparrows. Tom Armour reports on the Great Horned Owl nest at Jamestown: appears to be one or more good sized young.

**March 20:** Joe and Grace Doyle report 41 species at Camp Peary. New species for the month (not reported earlier): Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Fish Crow. Bill Williams reports: A Northern Rough-winged Swallow was at the Green Springs Trail.

**March 21:** Tom McCary reports a flock of 10 ? 12 Wild Turkeys feeding in a field not far from Charles City Courthouse.

**March 22 and 23:** Dorothy Whitfield reports a Hairy Woodpecker and a Brown Thrasher in her yard.

**March 24:** Bill Williams reports: There were 337 Northern Gannets off Yorktown Beach this afternoon. A single male Boat-tailed Grackle was at Felgates Creek near Cheatham Annex. Tom McCary reports from a walk around Lake Matoaka: two Blue-winged Teals in company with small group of Green-winged Teal. Also saw one Hooded Merganser and one male Ring-necked Duck with perhaps four ladies. Also saw a Golden-crowned Kinglet, one Bald Eagle in a tree and one Phoebe.

**March 25:** Bill Williams reports: Tom Armour and I had 4-6 Royal Terns at College Creek today.

**March 26:** Shirley Devan reports from Jamestown Island: "Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglets (thanks to an alert from Fred Blystone) plus a handsome male Green-winged Teal on the water at the Pitch and Tar Swamp." Also, she still has Juncos at her yard feeder.

**March 27:** Shirley Devan reports a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Junco at her feeder, plus Yellow-rump Warblers. Tom McCary spotted a White-crowned Sparrow in gardens at Shirley Plantation.

**March 29:** Tom Armour reports: "In the flooded field at Treasure Island Road this afternoon I had 3 Greater Yellowlegs, first this spring. Also in the marsh at the end of the road a pair of Green-winged Teal. At the Hawk Watch on the James River, my first Northern Rough-winged Swallow." Ruth Beck reports: "two Yellow-throated Warblers and one Blue Gray Gnatcatcher in my yard this morning. Spring is here."

**March 30:** Tom McCary finds three Horned Grebes at Felgates Creek on the Colonial Parkway on the way to Yorktown. "All were changing into summer clothes."

Shirley Devan reports on the Great Horned Owl nest at Jamestown. "Adult was perched near by and the owlet was just barely visible. Fuzzy, white head peaked over the edge. Adult flew off and left the owlet alone. Patience paid off and at 4:05 p.m.

he popped up and presented a great look at his head. He (she?) stretched and yawned and looked around, probably for a snack."

**March 31:** Ruth Beck reports: "I may have heard a Louisiana Waterthrush this morning, but I want to listen again before I confirm. I have a couple of huge flocks of American Goldfinches – I've counted over 250 little guys. I also have 10-12 Pine Siskins mixed in."

**April 1:** Ruth Beck confirms "good clear call" of a Louisiana Waterthrush this morning. Shirley Devan reports from Jamestown Island that the Great Horned Owllet and its mother are still inhabiting the squirrel's nest. Owllet provided good looks between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m with Mom perched directly behind. Also, she still has Junco at her feeder.

## NEW MEMBERS

Williamsburg Bird Club welcomes new members Richard Joosten, Gail Mann, Pieter Buning, Louise Burns, Eleanor Walker and Gary Noakes. We look forward to seeing you at upcoming meetings and field trips.

## VSO ANNUAL MEETING IN NORFOLK MAY 5 - 8

The Virginia Society of Ornithology annual meeting, returning to Hampton Roads after a thirteen-year hiatus, will be held in conjunction with Birds & Blossoms, a weekend for birders and naturalists hosted by the glorious Norfolk Botanical Garden. VSO members will have the opportunity to enjoy field trips to birding hot spots such as the Great Dismal Swamp, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, False Cape State Park, Fisherman's Island and Piney Grove (home to the last known nesting area for Red-cockaded Woodpecker.) Spring songbird migration should be well underway, offering a chance to observe both migrant and resident bird populations.

In addition to enjoying the great field trips, attendees will be able to explore 155 acres of magnificent theme gardens surrounded by Lake Whitehurst at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Words cannot adequately describe the beauty of these flower gardens when they are in bloom. The Garden is home to more than 95 species of birds, including nesting Bald Eagles. There will also be interesting displays and exhibits, which may include live birds as well as information and products related to birding.

There is an early bird registration by April 8th that saves \$10.00. Regular registration deadline is April 21<sup>st</sup>.

The information can be found on the VSO Web site [http://www.viriniabirds.net/vso\\_2005\\_annual\\_meeting.htm](http://www.viriniabirds.net/vso_2005_annual_meeting.htm) with links to a registration form you can print out and links to the Botanical Garden – <http://www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org/>. Any questions should be directed to Clark White at 757-875-7649 or [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)

## NEST CAMS ARE “LIVE” AGAIN

1. The Peregrine Falcon nest box in downtown Richmond is “live.” The web camera is at <http://www.mcguirewoods.com/falcons/others/asp/>.
2. Mariah and Kaver, Peregrine Falcons nesting on the Kodak building in Rochester, NY are back and Kodak has launched its birdcam at <http://www.kodak.com/go/birdfans>.
3. Cornell Lab of Ornithology and their nest box cams use real time internet technology to technology to observe and interpret the nesting behaviors of cavity-nesting birds and promote understanding of their breeding biology. Currently they have two cameras looking in at a Barn Owl nest in CA and one on a Barn Owl nest in TX. They also have cameras trained on several Eastern Bluebird boxes and an Osprey nest. Click over to <http://birds.cornell.edu/birdhouse/nestboxcam/>
4. You can watch live video (vs. a photo taken every three minutes) of a pair of Peregrine Falcons nesting in New York City at: <http://www.55water.com/falcons/index.html>.

You can find links to all of these nest cameras on the Bird Club’s web site: <http://www.wmbgbirdclub.com>

## COLLEGE CREEK HAWKWATCH

Brian Taber

March 7, 2005. Migratory birds took advantage of a small window of warm weather today to move north past College Creek Hawkwatch. Luckily, Tom Armour and I were there to see them. During just 2 hours there were 95 Turkey Vultures, one Osprey that appeared to be migrating (out of about 6 that were around) an immature Bald Eagle, 5 Cooper's Hawks and 6 Red-tailed Hawks. The flock of 33 Turkey Vultures was the largest we have seen crossing the river at the site. The Cooper's Hawk number ties the daily high count. The total of 108 is the 5th largest daily total in the 9 years of the count.

East winds are not generally good for migration at the site but the winds were light and the sun was strong, creating thermal updrafts. By the time the

wind had shifted to strong southwest, the flight was over.

Hundreds, maybe thousands of Ring-billed Gulls were also moving northward, some very high. Small groups of Tree Swallows and Fish Crows were regularly crossing the river.

March 26: Brian Taber reports: After 3 days of poor flight conditions, today's good flight in seemingly marginal weather was a nice surprise. The forecast said northeast winds, but they were southerly and the sun even shined briefly before the cold drizzle set in. There were 88 birds, the second best total of the season, of 6 species in less than 3 hours, including 6 Bald Eagles, 5 Black Vultures and 3 Northern Harriers. As usual, Turkey Vultures made up the bulk of the flight, though that should begin to change in the next 2 weeks as Sharp-shinned Hawks and American Kestrels arrive. Ring-billed Gulls and Tree Swallows were moving north by the dozens and a few new arrivals like Rough-winged Swallows, Royal Terns and Laughing Gulls were appearing as well. The first butterfly of the season at the site, a small orange one, escaped unidentified. Unsettled but warmer air is on the way next week.

March 31: Tom Armour found 16 birds today despite east winds, which have been rather persistent this week. The 200+ birds for the week is a very good weekly total. Yesterday's 8 species was the best variety of any day so far. The season total of 702 is the second best total going into April, since the first season in 1997. American Kestrels finally appeared, with 5 total by week's end.

College Creek Hawkwatch is located on the James River near Williamsburg and is sponsored by Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory.

## MARCH 19 FIELD TRIP FINDS 40 SPECIES AT THE VINEYARDS

By Tom Armour

Randy Coleman lead a record 17 Club members and guests on our March 19 Bird Walk at the Vineyards in beautiful weather. We recorded 40 species, including a late winter Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and a Hermit Thrush, but no early spring migrants. Randy provided great close-up views of a Great Blue Heron in breeding plumage, a pair of Eastern Bluebirds, also in fine color in bright sunlight, and a good look at a Pied-billed Grebe, all through his marvelous spotting scope. Participants included: John and Mary Anne Fennel, Charles Rend, Marilyn Zeigler, Dave Anderton, Louise Burns, Dick Kiefer, Louise Menges, Fred Blystone, Dorothy Whitfield, Shirley Devan, Alex Minarik, Barbara Rockwell, Tom Armour and Jan Garrity.

## LISTER'S BLISTERS: OVER THE LINE

By Bill Williams

The personal ethics associated with adding ticks to one's bird list are, at best, testy even though the American Birding Association over the years, has refined a very specific set of criteria to which birders are supposed to adhere when tacking a twitch to the list, life or otherwise. It includes heard birds and, obviously, birds one sees.

As age and all that time you wanged away on your Stratocaster guitar at maximum volume or listened to the full force of Mimmy Mama and the Bing-Bongs take their hearing acuity toll, necessity may dictate that an auditory enhancer be placed discretely where it will have the most impact. Great! Golden-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creepers and Black-poll Warblers instantly become more abundant than they have been in years! A population explosion so to speak! The marvels of human technology assist us, therefore, in keeping our lists, and thus our social standing, at peak functional efficiency. So were it not for such compensating devices we would be less likely to tally any heard birds. Those "suitable for counting" sounds would simply drift the way of the Mute Swan call into the ether.

Not long ago the phone rang at home one evening with a call from my sister in Silver Spring, Maryland. "Bill" she said, "We are sitting out on the patio and there's this noise out here we can't identify. I'm going to turn the phone that way and see if you can tell us what it is." Instantly the tremulous whinny of an Eastern Screech Owl transcended the 140-mile distance from Maryland to me via A. G. Bell's most notable contribution to humankind. The sound enhancement device integral to the phone's function made that auditory connection possible. It is a hearing aid, if you will, one used by the millions each moment of every day to span the globe. So the question is, can that Eastern Screech Owl be counted on my Maryland list? It was heard. The ABA rules were followed. How is detecting it through the telephone's sound enhancement any different than having the sound enhanced by a device hidden in the canal of the external auditory meatus?

What would birding be without binoculars and spotting scopes? Less expensive and definitely less strenuous on the neck and back, of course. Nevertheless, these extensions of the human condition are an absolute necessity to get to the list. Binoculars allow us to reach across distances our *Homo sapien* eyes have not evolved to overcome. Even greater distances are conquered with spotting scopes. "See the eye-ring on that Blue-gray Gnatcatcher flitting around in the top of

that Loblolly Pine over there on Hog Island? Here, just look at it in the scope." "Oh, wow! I never saw that before!" The naked eye could not do that without the visual extension assistance of the finely ground and meticulously placed series of glass pieces arranged just so in an air-tight metallic tube. So we routinely count on such assistance to pad the list, experiencing no compromised ethics whatsoever.

There is a story that during the blah-blah-blah of a pre-game pro football show announcer John Madden joked about the presence of some kind of chicken running around on the playing field. Alert cameras swung in the bird's direction allowing millions of fans to see the feathered football fan. Some minutes later Madden had to make a public request that bird watchers quit calling the network to tell him the "chicken" was in fact a Sora! Can the people who saw the bird via TV count it? How is seeing it on TV any different from using a spotting scope to pull in a Northern Gannet over the ocean somewhere near the curvature of the earth? Can't wait for the British Open! Lister's blisters.

## ARIZONA BIRDING BONANZA

By Herb Spanuth

My wife Beverly and I recently attended a Birding Elderhostel in Douglas, AZ, which is located about 100 miles from Tucson in the SE corner of AZ. We were there from January 30 to February 4, 2005. One of the things that clinched our decision to attend this program was finding a list of 50 Birding Hot Spots in the US & Canada and learning that 6 of the first 13 places on the list were within an hour or two of Douglas. The area we covered ranged from Willcox (north) to Douglas (south) and Sierra Vista (west) to Portal (east). Specific areas in this range included the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation area in the west to the Cave Creek and Rucker Canyon areas in the Chiricahua Mountains to the east.

Our program coordinator was Bill Stocku of AZ (formerly of the Philadelphia area), who was a member of the winning team in several World Series of Birding competitions. Bill is an outstanding spotter and frequently identified birds before many of us even saw the bird.

An interesting aspect of birding in SE Arizona is visiting private homes in the countryside where the owners keep dozens of feeders filled and they welcome birders (individuals and groups) to visit. There is usually a jar or can in which one can leave donations (for birdseed). It was not unusual to remain at these private feeders for an hour to watch the various birds come and go. Since it was early February, we would not have gotten to see

the hummingbirds and a few other birds if it were not for these feeders.

Our days were quite busy. We traveled in 3 vans – 7 participants in each van plus a local driver who was also an experienced birder. Breakfast was served at 6-6:45, and we were in the vans and on the road by 7:00 sharp. We birded from the vans along the routes to the intended destinations, at the private feeders and during several long walks. Temperatures in early February were in the low 30's at 7 a.m. but warmed to the 60's during the afternoons. One day we had a half-inch of snow in the mountains at 5000-6000 ft elevation. Several days we did not return to the hotel until almost 7 p.m. There was little free time.

If you have never checked the list of Elderhostel programs, you might be surprised to learn that a search of [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org) using the keyword "birding" returns a list of about 100 programs, most in the US but also several international. I found programs in 29 different states and 6 foreign countries. Three programs are listed for Virginia: Marine Science Consortium/Eastern Shore; Pembroke/Mountain Lake; and Chincoteague.

Each evening after dinner our coordinator reviewed the species we observed that day. Our total for the four and one-half days was 111 species. A number were new to us. Some of our new favorites are the Harris's hawk, ferruginous hawk, Gambel's quail, white-winged dove, greater roadrunner, magnificent hummingbird, Anna's hummingbird, acorn woodpecker, gila woodpecker, vermilion flycatcher, bridled titmouse, verdin, cactus wren, the towhees (green-tailed, spotted, canyon, and Albert's), pyrrhuloxia and yellow-headed blackbird. We also saw thousands of sandhill cranes one evening about sunset as they were returning to a lake – large flocks containing hundreds of cranes kept arriving one after the other. This spectacle continued for 30-60 minutes and was one of the visual highlights of the trip. We also saw coyotes, elk, a coati and pronghorn antelope.

When you go to SE Arizona do not miss several other nature attractions in the Tucson and Phoenix areas. We thoroughly enjoyed a day at the Saguaro National Park ( <http://www.nps.gov/sagu/> ), and the Sonora Desert Museum ([www.desertmuseum.org](http://www.desertmuseum.org) ), both a short distance west of Tucson. Don't miss the hummingbird aviary or the raptor free flight experience at the Desert Museum. We heard a 30-minute presentation from the handlers and watched in awe as four Harris's hawks dived and flew free very low overhead to retrieve food from the handlers and then returned to the tops of nearby saguaro cactus. The raptors used in these

exhibitions have been conditioned to work with the handlers but are free to fly away at any time depending on local prey.

In Phoenix, don't miss the Desert Botanical Garden ([www.dbg.org](http://www.dbg.org) ). A 1-hour guided tour of the gardens was outstanding. On our walk through the gardens we spotted many cactus wrens, some Gambel's quail and a hummingbird nesting on a branch just above one of the walkways.

## REMEMBERING JOY ARCHER

By Brian Taber

Joy Archer enjoyed all aspects of bird study and habitat preservation. She was President of the Williamsburg Bird Club and helped to publish the booklet, "Birds of the Williamsburg Area," which put into print the decades of bird observations compiled by the club's record keeper and her friend, Bill Sheehan. Joy was present on many of the club's field trips and her happy attitude made those trips even more rewarding. She was an advocate for easier access to bird related materials and put much of her efforts toward outreach and increasing the visibility of the Club throughout the community. She also helped shape Club policies, such as providing scholarships for bird study to William and Mary students and donating bird books to the Williamsburg Regional Library.

Joy joined the faculty of the College of William and Mary in 1968. She taught tennis and was head Field Hockey and Lacrosse Coach. She became Professor of Kinesiology in 1983 and served as Department Chair before retiring in 1994. Among many other outdoor activities, she bicycled through Europe and stayed at elderhostels, enjoying the wildlife, scenery and fresh air.

When Lou Gehrig's disease, or Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, struck her, her friends rallied around her in support, to return the type of kindness she displayed all her life. A dedication ceremony and tree planting were held at William and Mary in October 2001. Joy attended but was unable to move around. The following July 4<sup>th</sup>, she passed away.

The Observatory was greatly touched, but not announced that she had left a wonderful donation to the organization. The Observatory then created the Joy Archer Migration Studies Fund to honor her as new initiatives were now possible. The Joy Archer Student Grant was also created from the Fund and in May 2004, the first award was made to a William and Mary graduate student, Elizabeth Long, studying Peregrine Falcons. Another use of the Fund was to provide materials for the creation of the Observatory's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary color photo which contains more than 400 images of birds, butterflies and people who have helped make the



**Joy Archer**

Observatory a success.

The Observatory is currently planning other ways to use the donation to benefit wildlife and habitat conservation in coastal Virginia. Joy has helped the Observatory to achieve financial stability and there are now many more options for education and field research.

**CVWO BIRDING OPPORTUNITIES**

These upcoming events are from the April 2005 issue of the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory's newsletter, Coastal Flightlines:

*May 14:* Northampton County Migratory Bird Count Day sponsored by CVWO to find as many birds and species as possible in this southern county of Delmarva Peninsula. This peak migration time for the Eastern Shore. No habitat to be uncounted! Contact Tom Saunders at 804-435-0351 (weekends) or [tsaunders@baycreek.net](mailto:tsaunders@baycreek.net).

*June 4:* Parker's Marsh Adventure. CVWO in partnership with the Natural Heritage Eastern Shore Region is sponsoring the second annual census of birds at this 750 acre bayside saltmarsh in Accomac County. Volunteers needed to census this unique habitat. Skiffs and kayaks will be provided! Counting will take place from before sunrise (for some) to about noon. For more information and to volunteer, contact Kurt Gaskill at 703-768-2172 or [kurtcapt87@aol.com](mailto:kurtcapt87@aol.com).