



# The Flyer

## Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

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[www.williamsburgbirdclub.org](http://www.williamsburgbirdclub.org)

January 2008

### President's Corner

by Shirley Devan

This is my first president's corner, so bear with me. Generally I don't like corners – I like wide open spaces. But tradition holds that the president writes a "President's Corner" so I'll do my best. I have to admit I'm intimidated. Consider all the folks that came before me: Bob Long, Alex Minarik, Ruth Beck, Bill Williams, Lee Schuster, Tom Armour, Hugh Beard, just to name a few. Wow – I've got some heavy binoculars to lift!

The purpose of our Bird Club is to promote interest in the study of wild birds; protect birds and their habitat; and share the joy of birding with others. The Board and the Club will continue its efforts in support of these goals. We'll continue our monthly field trips [third Saturdays], our twice monthly bird walks at New Quarter Park [2nd and 4th Saturdays], and our monthly programs [3rd Wednesdays]. We'll again sponsor two graduate research grants at W&M – the Ruth Beck and the William Sheehan Ornithological Research Grants. For the first time, in 2008 the Club will sponsor a youth to attend Nature Camp in Vesuvius, VA. Youth education will be a long-lasting legacy of the Bob Long presidency.

Some of the Club's most important citizen science efforts are the Spring Bird Count and the Christmas Bird count. Look for opportunities to make your contributions to these research efforts in 2008.

At its January meeting, the Board will consider several other educational and citizen science projects, so stay tuned. We hope you'll volunteer to help out!

Consider adding one more resolution to your New Year's List: learn more about birds in our area. The best way to learn about birds is to hang out with the Bird Club and participate in walks, field trips, and meetings. Check out the notes about upcoming events in the rest

of the newsletter. There are lots of opportunities and we welcome newcomers and beginners. So spread the word to your neighbors. Bookmark our web site: [www.williamsburgbirdclub.org](http://www.williamsburgbirdclub.org).

Thanks in advance for your support. I look forward to seeing you in January! Happy New Year Birding!

### January Meeting — Antarctic Ice, The Ultimate Adventure

Join us on January 16, 2008, and be prepared to be highly entertained and delighted by Teta Kain, "Queen of the Dragon" and VSO past president. Teta, a wildlife photographer for over 30 years, spent 17 days on a ship plying the Antarctic seas. You will witness the wild ocean, breath-taking icebergs, beautiful seabirds and the remote sub-Antarctic islands. It is doubtful anyone who has ever met Teta has forgotten her. It isn't just her energy, her astounding knowledge of all things outdoors. It isn't even her talents with camera, canoe or as a storyteller. Teta redefines the term "Renaissance man," lending it a definite feminine twist. Whether it's leading a canoe trip on Dragon Run, leading a bird walk at the Eastern Shore Birding and Wildlife Festival, being a special consultant to The Butterfly Society of Virginia, leading a Moth Watch at the Mountain Lake Birding Festival, Teta can do it all (type her name in Google and see all the "hits" that come up). You will not want to miss this program.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Millington Hall, Room 117, on the campus of the College of William and Mary. Refreshments will be provided by Barb Streb.

### It's Dues Time!

Enclosed with this issue is a renewal form for those owing dues for 2008. Thanks to those of you who responded to our December email and have already renewed.

## Officers

<b>President</b>	220-6269
Shirley Devan	<i>sedevan52@cox.net</i>
<b>Vice-President - Programs</b>	220-3382
Alex Minarik	<i>mrminarik@netzero.net</i>
<b>Vice-President - The Flyer</b>	229-4346
Fred Blystone	<i>fmb19481@verizon.net</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	220-9032
Chuck Rend	<i>carjean39@msn.com</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	566-2615
Mary Anne Fennel	<i>mafj07@netzero.net</i>
<b>Member-at-Large</b>	220-2042
Sara Lewis	<i>slewis@cox.net</i>
<b>Member-at-Large</b>	259-0867
Joanne Andrews	<i>kaiviti37@hotmail.com</i>
<b>Past President</b>	259-9559
Bob Long	

## January Field Trip to Newport News Park

Our next field trip will be Saturday, January 19, when Bill Williams leads us to Newport News Park. Please meet at the Colony Square Shopping Center for an 8 a.m. departure to the park. We will plan to car pool. Warm clothes and footwear suitable for birding the forest trail will be necessary. This is a good place to see seven species of woodpeckers as well as a good selection of ducks — for at least the last two years there has even been a Redhead there during January. Both kinglets, as well as Brown Creepers are normally seen on winter walks.

## The December 16, 2007 Christmas Bird Count

By Bill Williams

Counting the counts, this was the 31st consecutive Williamsburg Christmas Bird Count, labeled VAWI by the National Audubon Society. Few folks know that the count we initiated in 1977 as a bird club activity was not new for the greater Colonial Historic Triangle. A “Williamsburg” Christmas Bird Count was conducted on 22 December 1946 when one Ray Beasley covered 13 miles on foot from William and Mary to Jamestown between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. tallying 607 total birds of 36 species. Temperatures that day ranged from 38°–60°F. From 1947–1954 (sans 1953) there was a Yorktown CBC. A Toano CBC was held in the 1953 and 1954 count periods, and a Seaford CBC was conducted during the 1952 and 1953 count win-

dows. Hog Island Christmas Bird counts were held for the 1954, 1955, and 1960 counts periods and a “Jamestown” CBC was run 20 Dec. 1958. Add these 16 counts to the current consecutive run and the count total reaches 47.

So much for the history lesson. It’s on to the present. Yes, Snoopy, the beginning of 16 Dec. 2007 was “a dark and stormy night”. Rain fell heavily during much of the wee hours before dawn, then lightened or stopped just before daybreak, allowing a small window for 2 parties to do a little owling. The calm, overcast/foggy morning with temperatures in the low 40s created some good birding opportunities before the gale winds of the afternoon made many birds difficult to detect. In the end, however, the count numbers were quite impressive. The participant total of 37 was the highest since 43 folks turned out for the 1978 count. Our final tally of 111 species this year tied with 1987, 1998, and 2005 for the third highest in 31 years. Add in 3 “count week” (12–19 December) species, Clapper Rail, Virginia Rail and American Woodcock, and we tied the all-time high count of 115 posted for the 16 December 1984 Williamsburg CBC. As a group we logged 81.3 hours in the field covering 278.5 miles by car, foot and even 3 miles by “motorized watercraft” (the Jamestown Ferry— apparently quite a rock-and-roll evening ride back home!).

Count highlights included one new species for the cumulative CBC species list (ca. 185-includes all area counts since 1946), a Nashville Warbler found by the Hog Island band of birders Gary Driscole, Adrienne Frank, David Monahan, and Brian Taber.

Hog Island also had 7 Snow Geese, including 4 “white” and 3 adult “blue” geese. This species has not been CBC reported since one was noted 16 December 2001. Dan Cristol, Kathi and Mac Metsayer found 2 Ospreys in the Jamestown count section and added a Baltimore Oriole to the Middle Plantation totals. While a bit unusual, the oriole is not new to the count. In fact, the Williamsburg CBC of 21 December 1980 had 15, the highest total reported for any CBC in North America that year! With the exception of 2003 when none were found, one to 2 Ospreys have been recorded each CBC since 2000. The College Woods gang, Ruth Beck, Fred Blystone, and Jeanette Navia, found a Lesser Yellowlegs, a species not reported on the count since 1987 and sharp-eyed Lee Schuster picked up a lone Tree Swallow at Little Creek Reservoir in the Jolly Pond area. The last time this swallow was seen on the CBC was 17 December 1991, when 14 were counted. The Kingsmill contingent, Paul McAllister and Mike and Susan Powell, had 6 Purple Finches.

We posted new Williamsburg CBC all-time high counts for Ring-necked Duck—1539 (formerly 1116 for 15 Dec. 2002 count); Lesser Scaup—501 (formerly 400 for 2 January 1960 Hog Island CBC); Brown Pelican—26 (this species was first recorded on this CBC in 1992 and has been reported each CBC since 2000—former peak count 14 for the 14 December 2003 count); Cedar Waxwing—1300 (previous high 717 for 19 December 1982 count); and Chipping Sparrow—213 (former CBC peak count was 162 for 19 December 2004). With totals like that for Chipping Sparrow, it seems hard to fathom that through the late 1980s this species was seldom found on the count and, if so, in very small numbers! Some old friends we failed to detect were Northern Shoveler, Great Egret, Fish Crow, Common Yellowthroat, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak.

Many thanks to all the participants, especially our Seaford (Sandy Peterson), Newport News (Bettye Fields, Betsy Garrett, and Michael Meyer) and Hudgins, Virginia (Mary Pulley and Judy Anderson) loyalists. We may be saying farewell to Paul McAllister, who has manned the Kingsmill section leadership post, winter and spring, for many years (we hope not). Many thanks for your great efforts, Paul. And it looks like Sam Skalak will be departing for new horizons as well. Glad you have been with us, Sam!

### **Observations from Bird Count Participants**

**From Kathi Mestayer—**

Last Sunday was our first Christmas Bird Count (my husband Mac had been on one year ago, but it was in the spring). We were assigned to work with W&M faculty member Dan Cristol, who was to cover Jamestown Island and surrounds. Almost immediately, we realized we were going to have to walk a lot faster to keep up, and that we were not going to need our bird books; Dan is encyclopedic. We drove around in Dan's car, windows open (in case we spotted anything out the window) and heat blasting, and must've stopped at 20 places. He would jump out and start calling out the names of birds, and occasionally bring the spotting scope. The scope was amazing; there's stuff out there that you can't see at all even with your binoculars! Like red-headed mergansers. Mac and I added a couple of things to our life list: a fox sparrow and snipe. After coming home, Mac was looking out the front window and said, "Kathi, I think there's an oriole in the camellia!" I tiptoed over, not wanting to scare it away, and there it was, not even noticing us on the other side of the window glass (the camellia is right in front of the window; some of the branches touch) We ran and got the Petersen bird book, and identified it as an immature male Baltimore Oriole.

Then we called Dan to report it, and he said to write down everything we saw, where, when, who, all field marks, behaviors. So while we were doing that, and arguing over whether there were 2 or 3 wing bars, that little bird came back into the bush to let us have another look! We've seen it twice more since then, and I wedged a half grapefruit in the branches of the camellia. The oriole was the only one spotted in the Williamsburg Bird Count, so it made the reporting meeting exciting for us. That, and Shirley Devan's blue-crested mystery duck, which hopefully she'll post a photo of.

**From Shirley Devan—**

Our sector includes Little Creek Reservoir Park in the western end of James City County. Lee Schuster, Alex Minarik and I always end up there last on the CBC and the Spring Count. So we arrived about 3:30 Sunday afternoon just as the wind was picking up and the clouds darkened the sky. We proceeded to our usual first stop—the dead end on Lakeview Road. We grabbed our gear and marched around the barrier at the dead end and made our way down to the old boat ramp to scope out the geese and whatever else we could spot. The wind had increased such that we had to search through the white caps to find any birds. We only stayed about 10 minutes because of the blustery winds. As we trudged back up the hill through the woods, we spotted a James City County Police cruiser on the other side of the barrier and a police officer waiting for us. "What are you doing down there?" he asked. "We're counting birds. Today is the Audubon Christmas Bird Count," we cheerily replied. "You're not supposed to be down there. You're trespassing. Didn't you see those signs on the trees? This belongs to the Newport News Waterworks," the policeman countered.

"But we've always birded this spot," we replied. "You'll need permission from Newport News Waterworks to do it in the future," he reminded us. Grrrrrrrrrr. We got in Lee's car and drove off and so did he. [Alex and I were relieved to know that he "ran" Lee's license plate, not ours.]

We still had some daylight left so we decided to explore one of the newer trails at this Park. This area sported new, heated restrooms which we gladly took advantage of. This trail traveled around one of the little peninsulas that now prominently juts out into the water. The water level in the reservoir is very low and the ducks we saw were very far away on the other side. Most of them were Ring-neck Ducks—hundreds of them. They suddenly lifted off, swirling around in the sunset sky like sparrows. Quite a sight.

We turned back towards the parking lot. Coming up behind us was a man and his daughter—frantically calling for their dogs. The little girl was crying. We finally understood that they had let their two dogs off the leash on this trail and the dogs had run off. We all arrived back at the parking area looking for the dogs. Alex spotted one of the dogs coming down the back side of the trail and the man leashed the dog. But the other dog kept running away and howling. The man asked us to mind the dog and his little girl while he convinced the other dog to come. Shortly, the second dog realized he would be better off with his owner and agreed to be leashed. Both dogs had been swimming—no wonder they didn't want to be leashed! All's well that ends well.

### **It's a Small World**

**By Jeanette Navia**

My favorite sighting was not of a bird, but of a birder. When we gathered in Millington Hall for the compilation of the countings, we introduced ourselves to each other. I heard a name I hadn't heard in decades. One of the birders from Newport News, Betsy, had been married to a relative long ago, and because of divorce had stopped coming to our family reunions. She and my mother, and I learned, my late grandmother, had been very close. Although she didn't remember, I had stayed overnight at her house thirty years ago when I came to Virginia for the first time as a student. I remember that day vividly not only because it was the first day of my life here in Virginia, but because she and the guy she was with at the time had a motorcycle which they had urged me to try. I tried — crashed it into some bushes and got a little scraped up. I was kind of glad she didn't remember that, but it was so great to catch up with Betsy. I gave my mother her contact information when I got home and she, too, was very happy to hear she was fine and doing well.

### **December 8 NQP Walk**

**By Shirley Devan**

Thirteen people turned out for our 2nd Saturday Bird Walk at New Quarter Park. Our leader was Club member and Master Naturalist Susan Powell. Participants were: Cherie Aukland, Inge Curtis, Scott Deane, Shirley Devan, Barb Dunbar, Bob and Cynthia Long, Kathi Mestayer, Cathy Millar, Mike Millin, Jeanette Navia, and Rosanne Reddin.

We tallied 27 species with 100 American Robins, one Brown Creeper, and 35 Cedar Waxwings.

### **December 22 NQP Walk**

**By Shirley Devan**

Seventeen participants joined Leader Bill Williams at 7 am for the regular 4th Saturday bird walk at New Quarter Park. Per Bill, "Extremely high tide. Overcast upper 40s, northerly breeze. 7 Unidentified ducks and 3 unidentified swans plus 30 species."

Birds were hard to find this morning, but the highlights were a Northern Harrier forced to perch on the duck blind because of the high tide, two Bald Eagles over Queen's Creek, and all the woodpeckers except a Downy. We had good looks at two spectacular Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Finally, we saw 2 Red-headed Woodpeckers around the fire circle as we sipped hot chocolate and munched muffins, graciously provided by Molly Nealer and Sara Lewis as a thank you to the community and park volunteers for their efforts in 2007.

Participants were: Mike Baldwin and first-grader Ben Baldwin [who knew his birds and got a life bird today – the Northern Harrier], Marion and Rick Bennett, Jennifer Burrows and her parents Jerry and Sue Burrows visiting for the holidays from Alberta Canada, Shirley Devan, Alice and Seig Kopinitz, Sara Lewis, Bob and Cynthia Long, Kim McHugh, Jeanette Navia, Betty Peterson, and Jordan Westenhaver.

### **December 7 trip to Whitehurst Tract**

**By Shirley Devan**

The Whitehurst Tract is not easy to find. We had two maps, an on-board GPS system, written directions, and a previous visitor with us and we still managed to drive right by it. Alex Minarik, Susan Powell, and I left Williamsburg at 11 am Friday December 7 with the target of meeting the other VSO participants at 1 p.m. at the Whitehurst Tract in Virginia Beach. We arrived about 1:30 – along with other birders from all over Virginia. Finally over 30 people assembled, among them Ron and Bobbie Giese from Williamsburg. The Williamsburg Bird Club was well represented.

Our leader for the afternoon was David Hughes, well-known VSO birder. Clark White from the Hampton Roads Bird Club organized the event. The Whitehurst Tract is part of the Princess Anne Wildlife Management Area, a property managed by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the benefit of wildlife.

The area usually features large numbers of waterfowl but the impoundments were almost dry because of the recent drought. Susan Powell tallied 42 species for the afternoon.

Waterfowl included 40 Wood Ducks (mostly flying), 11 Mallards, 2 Northern Pintails, 30 Green-winged Teal and 32 Ring-necked Ducks. Shore birds were scarce – only 3 Killdeer and 22 Wilson's Snipe.

Other species of note: 16 Tree Swallows, 1 Winter Wren, 2 Gray Catbirds, 2 Brown Thrashers, 4 Palm Warblers, 1 Common Yellowthroat, 2 Savannah Sparrows, 2 Swamp Sparrows, and 10 Boat-tailed Grackles.

The mammal of the day was a fine Gray Fox that meandered back and forth across the path long enough for anybody who wanted it to get good looks through a spotting scope. He looked like he had just returned from the groomer!

We arrived back at the parking lot about 4:30 and several people suggested we check out the Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina. We were only about 6 miles from the state line and the observation tower was just across the line. So we all jumped in our vehicles and sped south trying to beat the sunset. We arrived at the Kuralt Trail Overlook about 10 minutes later. With our ears and scopes we found several hundred Snow Geese in the marsh across the highway. About a dozen Great Egrets were roosting for the evening on a duck blind out in Barleys Bay. The temperatures dropped along with the sun so we headed north and home.

### **Foreign RCW capture at Piney Grove**

**By Mike Wilson, Center for Conservation Biology**

On Thursday, December 6th, a team of biologists from the Center for Conservation Biology spotted a foreign color-banded Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) during the winter RCW census at The Nature Conservancy's Piney Grove Preserve. We knew this RCW was foreign to Piney Grove because the color band combinations did not match any of the birds we have banded or any birds purposely transported to this site as part of the translocation program.

On the morning of Tuesday, December 11th, a group from the Center for Conservation Biology and Bobby Clontz from The Nature Conservancy successfully captured the foreign bird so the numbers on the USGS-BBL serial band could be read to verify the bird's identity. We have since discovered that this bird was originally banded as a 10-day old female nestling on 5/22/06 by J. Carter and Associates in Tyrell County, North Carolina. This site is approximately 80 miles (128km) from Piney Grove.

We have long suspected that Piney Grove could be recruiting birds from outside populations, but this is the first time we could fully verify this phenomenon and the first

time we have had the opportunity to document the origin of a foreign bird. One reason for the increased awareness of foreign birds is because all of the RCWs at Piney Grove are now color banded to permit demographic study of the population. Color banding of the Piney Grove population began in 1998, but it took several years before all birds were marked. It is now easy to observe when new birds migrate into the population. Over the past several years, we have observed several birds during surveys we thought were foreign birds. In the winter of 2005 we observed a foreign banded bird, but it disappeared before we could capture it so we were never able to gain a full identification. We have also observed RCWs without bands suddenly appear in the Piney Grove population, but it was never known if these were long-standing Piney Grove birds that had never been captured or new birds migrating to the site.

Piney Grove Preserve supports the only known population of RCWs in Virginia. The preserve is absolutely essential for the ongoing species survival in Virginia. In addition, the positive identification of a foreign immigrant indicates that Piney Grove has the ability to recruit birds from outside populations. The new female is roosting overnight in an artificial cavity tree within a cluster that supports three other Piney Grove birds. She is the only adult female within this group, so there is hope she will breed at this site during the spring.

RCW population surveys in Virginia are supported by funds from The Nature Conservancy, Center for Conservation Biology, and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

### **Birders of a Feather**

Our Ruth Beck is featured in a December 2007 *Virginia Living* article by Richard Ernsberger, Jr. about the September VSO trip to Chincoteague. The article is too long to include here, but if you contact Jeanette Navia at [Jnavia@gmail.com](mailto:Jnavia@gmail.com), she will be glad to e-mail you a copy of the article as a PDF.

## Hampton Roads Bird Club Meeting Jan. 10

The guest speaker for this program, Reese Lukei, will talk about "Birds of Prey in Hampton Roads." He will also share his knowledge of the Bald Eagles which nest every year at Norfolk Botanical Gardens.

Mr. Lukei has years of experience in banding raptors and has participated in raptor research projects. He operated a raptor banding station for 18 years at Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge (ESVNR). Volunteering at Back Bay NWR, he led the effort to increase the Osprey population and also monitor Bald Eagle activity. He is licensed by the U.S. Geological Survey Biological Resources Division and is a volunteer research associate for the Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William and Mary. He has received a number of awards for his outstanding work including the 2005 Conservationist of the Year in Virginia Beach.

The meeting will be in the Conference Room of the Sandy Bottom Nature Center, at Sandy Bottom Nature Park, 1255 Big Bethel Road, Hampton at 7 pm.

## December Bird Sightings

Report your backyard birds and local sightings to Fred Blystone at 229-4346 or [fmb19481@verizon.net](mailto:fmb19481@verizon.net). If you encounter interesting birds on your vacation/travels, please share!

December 2: Doyles birded Camp Peary and found 14 Tundra Swans, plus Bufflehead, Hooded Mergansers, Canvasbacks, and Ruddy Ducks on the York River. Most of the other birds were the "usual suspects" but they did have Red-headed Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, and Pileated Woodpeckers.

Dec. 6: Cynthia Long reports 2 Red-shouldered Hawks perched in the sun in the top of a tree in her yard.

Dec 8: Susan Powell reports a Red-breasted Nuthatch on her seed feeder.

Tom Armour reports: Dec 9. The Ruddy ducks are finally back on the York River—this AM there were 2000+ just east of Felgates Creek. Not much else—1 Common Loon, 2 Horned Grebes, 3 Brown Pelicans and 6 Bufflehead. On 12/19 had a Gray Catbird at the end of Treasure Island Road.

Ron and Bobbie Giese (in Woodland Farms) report the following December yard sightings: on 12/1, a Brown Creeper; 12/12 & 12/13, a flock of at least 20 Cedar Waxwings drinking at their bird bath; 12/14, a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers at their suet feeder, and on 12/18 a pair of Red-Shouldered Hawks. They also report that,

as participants in the VSO trip on 12/8 to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, they saw a Purple Sandpiper on Island 2 and two male Harlequin Ducks on Island 1.

Dec. 20: Bill Williams reports a brief morning visit to his feeder by a Baltimore Oriole.

December 23: Doyles birded Camp Peary from the car because of the rain and wind. They were disappointed in the number of species but they did get good looks at a Northern Harrier chowing down on a meal. They also observed an American Kestrel, Killdeer, and Eastern Bluebirds.

## Florida birding with Linda Scherer

We went to the Wakodahatchee Wetlands yesterday (12/4) for our first visit of the season. On our way to and from the wetlands, we passed a recently dredged drainage canal along a major east-west road in suburban Boynton Beach. There were a dozen Wood Storks lined up in a row atop the dredged material. Never see this many a one time at any of the refuges—they seem to prefer roadside canals. There were at least 7 Great Blue Heron nests underway, but it looked as if the Anhinga numbers were down (at least in terms of birds at traditional nesting sites). In fact, bird numbers in general seemed down. We did see perhaps a dozen Purple Gallinules, and one beautiful Purple Swamp He. I know we should hate this exotic intruder, but it sure is a gorgeous sight to see in full sunlight. Also, there was a group of 4 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks—2 adults and 2 immatures. Other bad news: we saw 4 two-to-three foot long green iguanas.

On 12/6 we went to Green Cay Wetlands. The best sightings there were another 2 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, 3 Soras and 6 Limpkins. The Limpkins at Green Cay and Wakodahatchee are not very shy. Four of the 6 were quite close to the boardwalk, and 2 of those were actively feeding on large snails. We had already spotted several piles of snail shells from the boardwalk before we came upon these 2 birds working in the area of the nature center. Fun to watch!

## Make a Special Bird Treat— recipe from VA DGIF email Outdoor Report, Dec 12 edition

The following recipe is a great food mixture for birds that can be smeared on tree bark, fence posts, the wood in a wood pile, or pine cones hung in the yard where they can be seen from your windows. This mix provides a supplemental source of fat energy and nutrients to the birds. Making the mixture is fun, inexpensive and something the whole family can join in. First, in large bowl, stir together:

1 part flour  
3 parts yellow corn meal,  
1 part bird seed,  
a handful of raisins and  
a handful of shelled peanuts.

Then add 1 part of lard or peanut butter and stir until the mixture holds together in one big ball. (Or, you can substitute bacon grease that's been rendered and chilled, but do not use shortening.)

This mixture will attract nuthatches, chickadees, tufted titmice, brown creepers, woodpeckers, mockingbirds and even bluebirds. Keep a record of the different species of birds you observe, it's fun and educational for "children" of all ages. The birds will appreciate it too!

## Create a Holiday Tree for the Birds— from VA DGIF email Outdoor Report, Dec 12 edition

When the holidays are over and all the decorations and tinsel have been removed, put your cut tree out in the yard to provide additional cover for the birds. Outside, cut trees will remain green long after the holiday has ended, if they were cared for properly inside. You may want to anchor the tree with tent stakes and string to prevent the wind from blowing it over. Once stable, you can "decorate" the tree again, this time with food for the birds. An evergreen holiday wreath can be recycled in your yard the same way.

Fill the cut tree (or old wreath) with fruits and nuts strung on narrow twine or tied with other inexpensive string. Suitable foods include apple slices; whole peanuts in the shell or cranberries and raisins; suet in nylon net bags; or pine cones filled with peanut butter and rolled in seed. Use foods that are natural and not full of added sugars or artificial ingredients. Be sure to tie the treats close to the branches so that once eaten there isn't a long string dangling for a bird to become entangled in; remove strings as they are emptied. The birds will welcome the treats and will take advantage of the protective cover from the tree as winter winds and cold settle in. Keep re-decorating the tree

with more fruits and nuts as the food is eaten through the winter.

When spring comes, don't haul the now leafless tree to the dump. Instead, lay it on its side in an out of the way location, or incorporate the dead twigs and branches into a compost pile. The tree can also be used with other dead limbs or fallen branches in the yard to construct a brush pile for chipmunks, rabbits and other small animals.

## Want to receive the latest outdoors-related news in your inbox?

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries wants to send you our free, twice-monthly electronic newsletter, the *Outdoor Report*. Get the latest news on wildlife, hunting regulations and seasons, boating, law enforcement, safety tips, special events, the Fishin' Report, and more! Renowned wildlife artist and author Spike Knuth provides original illustrations and articles featuring some of the 925 different species of greatest conservation need that have been identified in the state Wildlife Action Plan.

To subscribe visit their Web site at [www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov) and simply fill in the required information.



## The WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN

Presents  
Monthly Walk and Talk Educational Series

### “Feeding and Sheltering the Birds in Winter”

with  
**George Copping**  
Owner, Wild Birds Unlimited

*The Williamsburg Bird Club Will Conduct A Nature Walk  
At the Conclusion of the Presentation*

Saturday, January 5, 2008

10:00-11:00 AM

5535 Centerville Road  
(Freedom Park) Williamsburg

Learn how to bring new life into your winter landscape by attracting colorful songbirds to your garden.

WILLIAMSBURG BOTANICAL GARDEN 757-229-1995



## CALENDAR

Saturday, January 5	Walk and Talk, Freedom Park (see page 7 for more information)
Sunday, January 6	Hampton Roads Bird Club walk, Newport News Park, 7 am
Thursday, January 10	HRBC monthly meeting (see page 6 for more information)
Saturday, January 12	WBC Bird Walk, NQP, 8 am. Tom McCary, Leader
Wednesday, January 16	WBC monthly meeting, Teta Kain, Speaker (see front page for more information)
Saturday, January 19	WBC Field Trip, Newport News Park, Bill Williams, Leader (see page 2 for more information)
Sunday, January 20	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 am
Saturday, January 26	WBC Bird Walk, NQP, 7 am. Bill Williams, Leader
Sunday, February 3	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 am
Saturday, February 9	WBC Bird Walk, NQP, 8 am. Susan Powell, Leader
February 15-17	VSO Outer Bank Field Trip (check VSO website: <a href="http://www.virginiabirds.net">www.virginiabirds.net</a> )



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



**January 16th Meeting**  
*Antarctic Ice—The Ultimate Adventure*