



# The Flyer

## Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

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

April 2011



### President's Corner

By Shirley Devan

Two important dates coming up for you to save on your calendar: Sunday, May 1 and Sunday, June 5. May 1 is the Spring Bird Count for the Club. The sectors and protocols are the same as for the Christmas Bird Count. All we need is **you!** Contact Count Coordinator Bill Williams at 229-1124 to let him know you can help out. Read his extended note elsewhere in this newsletter. Also, feeder watchers are **very** important for this event. Help for even half a day is appreciated!

June 5 is our Annual Picnic at the home of Ruth and Sherwin Beck near Barhamsville. This is a great opportunity to socialize and bird with fellow members in a beautiful spot. I encourage you to join in this fun event. Look for additional details in the May newsletter, but mark the date on your calendar **now**. Many thanks to Ruth and Sherwin for opening their lovely home to our Club.

See you on the trail!

### Welcome to New Members

Janet Crowther, Scott & Janet Rathbun and Nancy Sturdevant

### April Meeting

At the April meeting, Sergio Harding will present a program on Bird Conservation Activities by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The DGIF, in addition to the restoration and management of game bird species, has a rich history of implementing and supporting the conservation of nongame avian species. DGIF takes a multi-faceted approach to bird conservation, including research and monitoring, education and outreach, habitat management and land acquisition. This presentation will give an overview of DGIF's bird conservation activities, with a focus on research and monitoring, highlighting a few select projects.

Sergio has worked as a Nongame Bird Conservation Biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries since 2005. In this capacity he is responsible for interagency

coordination on bird conservation issues, including coordination of the VA Bird Conservation Initiative. Sergio is also the VA coordinator of the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), and regularly participates in avian surveys. These have included breeding landbird surveys of Wildlife Management Areas as well as surveys of Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Golden-winged Warblers and breeding marsh birds.

Plan to join us on April 20 at 7:30 PM in Room 150, Millington Hall, on the W&M campus. Jan Lockwood will be providing the refreshments. **Don't forget to use your parking permit.**

### April Field Trip

On April 16, Alex Minarik will lead our field trip to the Dismal Swamp. There will be just enough insect life stirring to welcome the Prothonotary Warblers and other beautiful migrants like the ones who offered us stunning sights and sounds there last spring! For those wishing to carpool, a 6AM departure is planned from Colony Square Shopping Center, with a comfort stop planned en route before hitting the swamp. During last April's field trip, 48 species were seen, including an American Bittern, a Swainson's Warbler, Prairie Warblers and Prothonotary Warblers. For those wishing to meet us there, we will walk the Jericho Ditch portion of the swamp

### The Williamsburg Spring Bird Count-Sunday, May 1, 2011

By Bill Williams

Just as much as we can count on birds to migrate each spring, we can count on the Williamsburg Bird Club to hold its annual Spring Bird Count. This year our full day of censusing the Historic Triangle's spring avifauna will be on Sunday, May 1.

Structured along the same parameters as the Christmas Bird Count, we will endeavor to send teams to all corners of a 15-mile diameter circle centered at the Colonial Williamsburg Information Center. Each team's goal is to identify and count every bird of as many bird species as possible within the 24-hour period. Teams will be divided among sections leaders, just like those for the Christmas

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## Summary of Bird Data

The latest version of Bill Williams' *Summary of Local Bird Data through 2009: Williamsburg, James City County, York County, Hog Island WMA, Surry County* can be downloaded from our website.

## Wild Birds Unlimited

Don't forget that the WBC receives a 5% rebate on the pre-tax amount our members spend at Wild Birds Unlimited in Monticello Marketplace. You do have to let them know that you are a member.

Bird Count. Each section leader will work with team members to establish a plan of action for the day, and will be responsible for reporting the section totals for the count's final tally.

This Spring our count compilation event will be at Carrot Tree Kitchens on Jamestown Road, exactly where we held a comparable event for the Christmas Bird Count. We will begin assembling at Carrot Tree at 5:00 PM with the final tally beginning no later than 6:00 PM.

If you are interested in participating in the Spring Bird Count, for part of the day or all day, please contact Bill Williams at [jwwil2@wm.edu](mailto:jwwil2@wm.edu) or 229-1124. If you are already part of one of the count section teams, please contact the team's leader and let Bill know you will participating. We are really anxious to get as many people involved as possible, **especially feeder watchers!** We can never have enough birders, so please join us!

Thanks in advance for being a part of this grand Spring event. The data we collect has significant value for the long term understanding of our local bird populations.

## March 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 or travels, please share!

**Mar. 1:** Tom Armour reports seeing 12 Ring-necked Ducks on the pond at the Vineyard, the first ducks he had seen there in a week or so.

**Mar 2:** From Carol O'Neill: "I visited the Bald Eagle nest on the James River at Governor's Land and found the eagle pair on nest (or trying to be). The adults were continuously harassed by last year's 2 "kids" who begged for food and eventually caused the male to drop his fish. Later I found a Wilson's Snipe in the pond near the Two Rivers Country Club. I still have over a dozen Pine Siskins at my feeders; Brown-headed Nuthatches have been at my feeders all week and are showing up along the trails here (Governor's Land). The overwintering Baltimore Oriole at my home was last seen February 14th."

**Mar. 7:** Tom McCary (along with Randy Carter) saw a Northern Harrier (immature or female) near one of the Shirley Plantation impoundments.

**Mar. 12:** Shirley Devan finds an active Osprey nest at the Warhill Sports Complex.



**Mar. 13:** From Brian Taber: “We saw our first Royal Tern of the season today at the hawkwatch. There were also hundreds of Ring-billed Gulls streaming north and 30+ Tree Swallows.” Tom McCary sees 2 White-crowned Sparrows at Shirley Plantation arbor.

**Mar. 15:** Ruth Beck reports her FOS Yellow-throated Warbler at a hummingbird feeder in her yard. She says this has been the fifth year she has observed this warbler species at the hummingbird feeders.

**Mar. 17:** From Brian Taber: “Merlins are rare at the hawkwatch (average about 3 per season) and elsewhere in VA in late winter and spring, so the first one of the season here today was exciting. Many birds were moving on today's warm air, including our first American Kestrel, our first Rough-winged Swallows, 2 Great Egrets, 9 Great Blue Herons in a flock, hundreds of gulls and Tree Swallows, both scap species, many Red-breasted Mergansers, several Horned Grebes, a Pied-billed Grebe, several Brown Pelicans and 1120 Ruddy Ducks. We even saw Variegated Fritillaries and Clouded Sulphur butterflies. We're off to an above-average start at the hawkwatch (51 today)...daily results can be seen at the [www.Hawkcount.org](http://www.Hawkcount.org) website.” Tom McCary sees an Osprey flying over Martin's/Ukrop's in Williamsburg.

**Mar. 18:** Brian Taber reports the 9th best day ever at the College Creek Hawkwatch. The 108 migrating birds included 3 Black Vultures, 78 Turkey Vultures, 10 Osprey, 7 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 3 Cooper's Hawk, 3 Red-shouldered Hawks, 3 Red-tailed Hawks and 1 American Kestrel.

**Mar. 20:** From Shirley Devan: “Between basketball games (North Carolina game and then Duke), I rode my bike over to Warhill Sports Complex to see what was at the swamp in mid-afternoon. Highlight was a Red-headed Woodpecker, observed just as I was preparing to leave. I saw three pairs of Canada Geese, an Eastern Bluebird, five Pie-billed Grebes, a Double-crested Cormorant. The mammal highlight was a beaver swimming against the far shore, using his big tail as a rudder.

On the way out near the road, I observed three male Northern Cardinals chasing a lone female! As Ruth Beck always says, “the female chooses” and this one had three handsome suitors.

On the ride back down Longhill Road, I stopped at the bridge next to Longhill Swamp (next to Lafayette High School) and observed another Red-headed Woodpecker! Yea! Also, two Canada Geese and several Turkey Vultures flew over.

These Red-headed Woodpeckers have been around all winter. I hope to see a few more as spring goes on.”

**Mar. 20:** From Brian Taber (concerning the College Creek Hawkwatch: “We keep track of the date of our 1,000th bird each season, as a gauge of how the season is progressing, since we usually record about 1300–1600 birds. Today we recorded the 1,000th, a Turkey Vulture, on the earliest date by far of our 15 seasons. The previous early date was way back on March 30, 1997 and the average is usually mid-April. Our record February total and a great flight this week—nearly 350 birds over the past 4 days—has us way ahead of any previous season.”



Photo by George Boyles

**Mar. 20:** WBC members George & Virginia Boyles, Geoff Giles and Marilyn & John Adair join leader Jane Frigo and 12 other birders on the HRBC bird walk at Newport News Park. The group was able to

identify 22 species during the morning, including a Great Horned Owl, Tundra Swans, Gadwall, American Wigeon and Tree Swallows.

**Mar. 21:** Alex Minarik sees her FOS Louisiana Waterthrush in the Longhill Swamp.

**Mar. 22:** Tom McCary sees a Brown Thrasher with nesting material in his backyard.

**Mar. 24:** While checking out the Prothonotary Warbler boxes in Northwest River Park in Chesapeake, Shirley Devan and Steve Living of the DGIF found Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and an Anhinga.

**Mar. 28:** Shirley Devan forwards this email from Jean Bruce: “Ann Boehm and Jean Bruce on a trip to Peru in Feb. saw a flight of Chilean Flamingos flying over Lake Titicaca. In the nature reserve at Inkaterra they caught a glimpse of the Andean Cock-of-the-Rock. Outside their rooms they saw the Chestnut-capped Brush-finch feasting on banana peels hung on trees.”

## Ornithology Research Grants

The 2010 Ornithology Research Grants presented by the Williamsburg Bird Club have been awarded. The following students at William and Mary will each receive \$500:

**Megan Kobiela**—*The Effect of Mercury on Starvation and Redaction Risk Tradeoffs in Zebra Finches*

**Jenna R. Carlson**—*Sublethal Effects of Methylmercury on Avian Flight: A Captive Dosing Study on European Starlings*

**Kenton Buck**—*Variation and Heritability of Avian Mercury Bioaccumulation*

## February VSO Field Trip to the Outer Banks

By Virginia Boyles

Photos by George Boyles

Marilyn Adair coaxed George and me into joining John and her for the VSO trip to the Outer Banks Feb. 11-13. After meeting at the hotel, we rode north on Rt. 12 to explore the Center for Wildlife Education, Currituck Lighthouse, and the Whalehead Club Friday afternoon. If wealthy northeasterners found enough ducks to establish hunt clubs, surely we would see some ducks. The Center's film about "market" hunting gave us a sense of area history. As mixed precipitation fell, we walked to the gazebo looking for ducks, but found Sanderlings and Black-bellied Plovers at the water's edge. The Whalehead Club lawn yielded my first life bird of the trip, a song sparrow perched on some tall grass above a Northern Flicker. Not as rare as the Ipswich Sparrow we saw the next day, but a great sighting. We found the boardwalk through the swamp further north still covered in patches of snow, and a light mist made it a chilly walk in the woods. No wild horses, but lots of places for snakes in the summer. Our best ducks for the day were distant Red-breasted Mergansers. Damp and cold, we retreated south to the Lone Cedar Café, where we were seated by a window with a view of Buffleheads and Lesser Scaup swimming just below us while we ate N.C. seafood. Perhaps we should have been there looking for ducks instead of on snowy boardwalks.

Back at the hotel, we listened to tales of the pelagic trip and built enthusiasm for Saturday's walk at Pea Island and Bodie Lighthouse. After a hearty breakfast and instruction from Meredith about distinguishing Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gulls on the icy platform out back, we formed two groups for the day. Bill Akers led our group. At the marina there were Northern Pintails, and another Red-breasted Merganser swimming by. At another stop we saw a flock of Tree Swallows descend on a myrtle bush. We later saw a White Ibis, a Willet, a flock of Avocets with colorful Northern Shovelers and Canada Geese, a Merlin and a Bald Eagle. The diving Northern Gannets in the scope were almost as spectacular as the pair of White Pelicans. There were 63 species on our list for the day, many of the ducks seen from the boardwalk at the Bodie Lighthouse. Sadly, we missed the elusive Saw-whet Owl and the Swainson's Hawk.

Sunday's Alligator River trip, led by Meredith and Lee Bell, offered views of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Tundra Swans, Herons, a Palm Warbler, Meadowlarks, Coots, and an American Kestrel on some farm equipment in the field. There were other sightings, but you get the idea that a good time was had by all.



Black-bellied Plover



Song Sparrow



Northern Pintail

## March 12 Bird Walk at Shirley Plantation

By Tom McCary

We could not have asked for a better morning for our spring bird walk at Shirley on the 12th of March. Recent winds had abated, the sun was shining brightly, and the birds were in fine fettle and fine feather. An affable and knowledgeable band of birders joined Randy Carter and me for what proved to be a very pleasant and productive prowl. Our enjoyment was heightened by the spotting scopes which several of our companions shared with us.

The open field to the south of the gardens was our first “hot spot.” There, tidings of spring were announced by a few handsome tree swallows. On the field itself, we discovered a most cooperative meadowlark, a flicker, a ring-billed gull, and two killdeer. A red-winged blackbird and a cowbird displayed their stuff on a nearby tree. But the scene stealers were two charming horned larks, which delighted our company for some while as they scurried about the polo field. Even two ospreys, gorgeous and regal in flight over the James River, for the moment at least, didn't seem to have quite the same cachet. It was hard to leave the field, but the impoundments were calling. These areas normally not toured by visitors yielded a variety of waterfowl, but not quite as many species as we had sought. No doubt some waterfowl had left recently for northern breeding grounds. Even the Canada geese were not as ubiquitous.

Ruddy ducks and green-winged teal were still in good number and were readily seen. We were also treated to bufflehead, ring-necked duck, and gadwall.

The highlight of the outing for Randy Carter and me came as we were in his jeep heading for the body of water known as “The Cove.” A woodcock flew from the fields directly across the road in front of us on its way to a nearby thicket. What a magnificent sight! The extraordinary bill! The huge eye! Unfortunately our fellow birders in the vehicles behind us missed his sudden appearance. Fortunately, one of our group from Lynchburg told us that she would be leading a woodcock walk that very evening near her fair city. May our bird's cousins make the scene!

At “The Cove,” we added a red-tailed hawk, a calling fish crow, and, not to be overlooked, rock pigeons, to our list. Our morning's tally was a respectable forty-six species. As we pulled away, a large flock of tree swallows reminded us of more birds to come.

## Honey, I shrank the mockingbird!

By Geoff Giles

Last January was not a good time to be a cardinal at my house. For some reason that none of us could quite fathom, the mockingbird who owns our front yard began to see red every time he saw a cardinal! Suddenly it was as if the front yard (his exclusive domain before and after) did not exist, and for him all that mattered was chasing away the numerous cardinals who frequent my feeder in the back yard. I had never had a mockingbird in my Project Feederwatch counts until January, but for that month there was one every time I looked. He was either perched atop my feeder or on a nearby tree on the lookout for (you guessed it) cardinals.

What caused him to snap can only be a matter for speculation, but what was readily discernable was that he pursued his new-found mission with both passion and grim determination. He was like a man possessed. As soon as a cardinal (male or female) would make a move towards the feeder, the mockingbird would launch into a perfect intercept trajectory, come up in their six o'clock position and stay on them through any and all evasive maneuvers like white on rice. It was actually a pretty impressive show of aerial intercept and pursuit skills. He would run them out of my yard and then bank steeply and return to his ready alert position for the next intruder.

He showed no interest whatsoever in all of the other birds which came to my feeder. They came and fed without arousing any interest. He himself partook only modestly. When no cardinals were about, seemingly to stave off boredom, he would have a quick peck at the suet. Otherwise, from his dawn patrol to taps the mockingbird was focused on his mission and the cardinals were the single objects of all his attention. Then, as inexplicably as it had all begun, at the end of January it was over. The mockingbird failed to show at the feeder one morning, and slowly, reluctantly at first, cardinals started to show up there again and partake. The mockingbird was back in the front yard again, and couldn't have cared less when cardinals and other birds hopped around in the hedges and hollies there.

Life returned to normal at my feeder—for about a week. One morning as I glanced over the morning paper towards my feeder a familiar gray streak flashed out of nowhere and a bird broke from the feeder and fled for his life. When the target bird had cleared my yard, the pursuer broke off and curved back to perch cockily atop my feeder. I blinked in disbelief. It looked a lot like the attack mockingbird, but was no more than half his size! I blinked again

and groped for my binoculars. As I did so, the new grey terror launched again, this time chasing a tufted titmouse that was bigger than he was. As he broke off after driving the astonished titmouse well out of the yard and peeled back towards a perch at my feeder, he flashed an unmistakable patch of yellow on his posterior, which left nothing to the imagination. Good Lord! My new attack bird was a warbler, a yellow-rumped warbler!

I watched in amazement as it became apparent that the little dude was intent on guarding my feeder against any visits by any Carolina chickadee or tufted titmouse. His tactics were so similar to the mockingbird's earlier denial operations that watching him in action was "like déjà vu all over again", to quote the great philosopher, Yogi Berra. As the days and weeks wore on, the tiny warrior showed no signs of letting down his guard. For fully a month, no chickadee or titmouse got a grain from my feeder when he was around, and, although I had never seen him at the feeder before, that seemed to be most of the day. Unlike the mockingbird, my "attack warbler" did partake of the feeder he defended, lustily chowing down on the suet when he could work his way into the pecking order. His most frequent "ready" position was perched atop the roof of my feeder, followed closely by perches in the hollies nearby. For a solid month he never missed the chance to chase a chickadee or titmouse from my feeder.

I was perplexed. This normally mild-mannered and fragile-looking little fellow was an absolutely fearless flying tiger when "enemy" birds came on his screen. Why? There were rarely any others of his species around, and never another who came to my feeder. Had he imprinted on the mockingbird and just sized his target species down to a size he thought he could handle? Feverishly I pawed through the literature at hand and on-line sources looking for the obvious rubrics, such as "attack warbler", "chickadee aversion", "avian Napoleon complex", "small mockingbird syndrome". Nothing.

Just as I was about to swallow my pride and spill my problem to the Cornell Ornithology Lab, I awoke one morning to the unaccustomed sight of a chickadee picking seeds out of my feeder as if he didn't have a care in the world. Expectantly I waited for the hammer to fall, the fertilizer to hit the ventilator, for the gray flash to strike—but it didn't happen. I shrugged and went back to the morning paper after a titmouse came and went, also with no reaction. Had I dreamed all this? If it had really happened where was he?

Later that morning, my attention was drawn to two small bird forms zooming playfully among the top branches

of a tall red maple at the end of my yard. I trained my binocs skyward as one perched and then the other perched nearby. The first was a titmouse, and the second was—well, it sure looked like—my little yellow-rumped buddy! The two of them repeated the friendly-looking games of tag a few times that morning and again that afternoon, always landing near each other as if they had become pals. Was that it? Was he just looking for someone to play with the whole time? I guess that's just one more thing about nature I'll never really be able to understand. The more I learn, the more I marvel.

## **WBC Adopt-a-Highway Spring Cleanup**

**By Mary Anne Fennell**

Ten bags of litter were collected during the March 5 Spring cleanup of the Williamsburg Bird Club's assigned two-mile stretch of Croaker Road.



Mary Anne Fennell took this picture of the other participants: John Fennell, Alex Minarik, Chuck Litterest, Dave Monahan and Mike Minarik.

## **Eagle and Peregrine Cams**

If you are interested in watching nesting Peregrine Falcons on the James River Bridge, on Cobbs Island and on a highrise building in Richmond and Bald Eagles in the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, go to a website hosted by WVEC-TV at [www.wvec.com/marketplace/microsite-content/Eagle-Cam.html](http://www.wvec.com/marketplace/microsite-content/Eagle-Cam.html).

## **Eastern Shore Bald Eagle Pop Rises**

The Center for Conservation Biology within the College of William and Mary and the Virginia Commonwealth University completed the first bald eagle survey of the Eastern Shore of Virginia for 2011 in March. A record

60 occupied breeding territories was documented. The population has been growing dramatically in recent years. In 1990 there were less than 10 known pairs on the Shore and as recently as 2000 there were only 20 pairs. The population has tripled in the past 10 years.

Eagles are now seen regularly throughout most of the marshes and major creeks of the upper Shore. Very few historic records exist of eagles breeding on the barrier islands. Pairs are now nesting on four primary barriers including Little Cobb, Paramore, Wallops, and Assateague Islands, as well as Revel Island and Raccoon Island within the lagoon system. Both adult and subadult eagles are increasingly common sights.

### **Audubon SHARP Survey**

Mary Elfner, the Virginia IBA Coordinator for the National Audubon Society has a project she is looking for help with in the southern bay area around Poquoson and north of Virginia to conduct a saltmarsh habitat and avian survey for Saltmarsh Sparrow and a few other species. She is looking for about 15 mornings of help between mid-April and the end of June. For further information, please contact her at [melfner@audubon.org](mailto:melfner@audubon.org).

### **Volunteer Shorebird Help**

Dana Gulbransen of UVA will be surveying shorebird use of three different mudflats offshore of the town of Oyster, starting May 11, to determine the impacts of invasive algae on shorebird foraging and prey densities. She is presently soliciting help with shorebird identification from experienced birders for the beginning of her study. If interested, please contact Dana directly at 434-924-7129 or via email at Dana Gulbransen [djg4j@virginia.edu](mailto:djg4j@virginia.edu).

### **Weekly Walks at Great Dismal Swamp**

Robert Ake does a weekly walk in the Great Dismal Swamp. The starting point can change from week to week, and walks normally start at 7:30 and finish up by noon. This is a great chance to bird one of the premier local birding stops with one of our area's best birders. Further information can be obtained by e-mailing [rake@cox.net](mailto:rake@cox.net).

### **Richmond Audubon Society Walks**

#### **April 13, 7:30 AM, Second Wednesday Walk with Joe Coe.**

Tour the John J. Radcliffe Appomattox River Conservation Area for birds and wildflowers. Meet at the park at 21501 Chesdin Road, Petersburg, Va. 23803. Contact Joe Coe for details at (804) 276-1397 or email:

[johnwcoe@verizon.net](mailto:johnwcoe@verizon.net)

#### **May 5, Saturday, 6:30 AM, 42nd Street, James River Park.**

Meet at 42nd Street Lot to see warblers and spring migrants. Contact Arun Bose if you have any questions at (804) 335-8813 or email: [arun1bose@gmail.com](mailto:arun1bose@gmail.com).

### **Photos from Members**



This picture of a Barred Owl was taken by Alex Minarik in her back yard on March 30th. She imagines the bluebirds that are building a nest in the bluebird box were not very happy for awhile.

## More Photos from Members



This picture of Shirley Devan with Mary Clarke Aston was taken at a Kingsmill Garden Club meeting, where Shirley gave a presentation on “Birds and Gardens”.



Fred Blystone took this picture on March 18th of Geoff Giles, Bill Williams, Brian Taber and Tom & Jeanne Armour enjoying a beautiful day at the College Creek Hawkwatch.



Jeanette Navia took this picture during the field trip to the New Kent Forestry Center. She really liked the sky that day and I can see why.



Inge Curtis says “I never get tired of these guys”—and who can blame her for feeling that way. This picture was taken on March 23.



Jeanette Navia took this picture of Shirley Devan during the field trip to the New Kent Forestry Center. I think Shirley was trying to talk down one of the participants who had stepped on a snake.



## More Photos from Members Continued



Inge Curtis took these four photographs during the field trip to the New Kent Forestry Center.

Upper Left: Field Sparrow

Upper Right: Common Grackle

Lower Left: Osprey

Lower Right: Eastern Bluebird



## WBC March Walks and Field Trips

Complete lists of species seen on each walk are on the club website [www.williamsburgbirdclub.org](http://www.williamsburgbirdclub.org).



Back row: Cathy Bond, Bob Long, Geoff Giles, Janet Rathbun, Jeanette Navia, Jan Lockwood, Scott Rathbun, Tory Gussman, Bert Getty. Middle row: Sharon Falconer, Barbara Berlin, Ellen Glasgow, Cynthia Long, Lynn Getty. Front row, kneeling: Judy Olbych, Peter Olbrych, Shirley Devan. Missing from picture: Roger Gosden. Photo taken by Molly Nealer.

**March 12** Eighteen other birders joined Geoff Giles at New Quarter Park for our regular second Saturday Bird Walk at New Quarter Park. One of the highlights had to be the adult Bald Eagle perched in the top of a tree near Queens Creek. We spotted it as we made our way down the hill to the floating dock. We got him (her?) in the scope before we finished our trek to the dock. Surprisingly, the eagle remained in the tree until we reached the dock and we again enjoyed good looks at the bird in the scope.

Surprise bird was an adult Laughing Gull flying along the creek with 2 Bonaparte's Gulls and a lone Forster's Tern. A total of 34 species were seen during the walk.

**March 19** Shirley Devan wrote concerning the field trip to the New Kent Forestry Center: "The turnout for the field trip at the "Walk in the Forest" was quite impressive for 7 am. Susan Powell and I split the group in two and Susan took some by car to the end of the road to start birding at the Chickahominy river and walk back. The other group and I started walking down the road past the fields towards the river. We saw quite a few birds flying over in the few minutes just after dawn—Canada Geese, Double-crested Cormorants, Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures, Osprey, Great Blue Herons, Bald Eagles. Eastern Bluebirds were **everywhere**. Nice to see Tree Swallows too!" Forty-nine species were seen by the two groups.

No group photo was taken.

From Lisa Deaton, Forest Education Specialist with the Virginia Department of Forestry: "I would like to thank the Williamsburg Bird Club from the bottom of my heart for providing a key part of our Walk in the Forest event. Overall about 300 people attended the event, and it is quite an inspiration to see that level of interest. I am glad to hear that the beavers, ospreys and eagles put on a good show. I lectured them about that on Friday."

**March 26** Jennifer Trevino, Sharon Plocher, Margaret Ware and Geoff Giles joined leader Hugh Beard for the walk at New Quarter Park. Hugh wrote: "We had a better day than I anticipated, given that we started the walk with 40 degree temps, an overcast sky, and a slight drizzle. It was difficult to see anything in the low light conditions, so we headed straight for the dock, where we were entertained by bald eagles (4), vultures (15), and osprey (8) fighting (literally) for dominance of Queens Creek. It appeared that the vultures and the eagles were fighting over some food source, which was out of our sight, and the Osprey were peeved at them for being...well...I guess just being themselves and within their nesting territories. It would have entertained us for hours, except the cold breeze persuaded us to continue walking. We had 37 species at the end of regulation and Geoff and I picked up 9 more in overtime. Can you tell that I have watched too much basketball?"

A total of 25 species of birds were seen during the morning.

No group photo was taken.

## Bird ID from Recycle Bin Photos

By Joe Piotrowski

This feature is only on the website and in the electronic version of *The Flyer*. The answer to this month's "puzzle" will be given in the next electronic newsletter, as well as on the website.



April's bird photo



March's bird was a Willet (Eastern race).

## CALENDAR

Sunday, April 3	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 AM, Jane Frigo, Leader
Saturday, April 9	WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 8 AM, Geoff Giles, Leader
Saturday, April 16	WBC Field Trip, Great Dismal Swamp, See Front Page.
Saturday, April 16	HRBC Field Trip, Blackwater Ecological Preserve. Contact Dave Youker at 344-9385 or <a href="mailto:youkerd@aol.com">youkerd@aol.com</a> for additional information.
Sunday, April 17	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 AM, Jane Frigo, Leader
Wednesday, April 20	WBC Monthly Meeting. See Front Page.
Saturday, April 23	WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 7 AM, Bill Williams, Leader
Saturday, April 30	HRBC Tabb Section Spring Count. Contact Phyllis Roth at 898-7354 or <a href="mailto:pjsr@cox.net">pjsr@cox.net</a> for further information.
Sunday, May 1	WBC Spring Count, See Front Page.
Saturday, May 7	HRBC Spring Count, Contact Clark White at <a href="mailto:cwbird@cox.net">cwbird@cox.net</a> for further information.
May 13–15	VSO Annual Meeting, Harrisonburg, VA. Information at <a href="http://www.virginiabirds.net">www.virginiabirds.net</a>
Sunday, June 5	Williamsburg Bird Club Annual Picnic—look for information in the May newsletter.