



The Flyer

Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

Vol. 35, No. 7

www.williamsburgbirdclub.org

August 2011

President's Corner



By Shirley Devan

Fall migration! It started while we were whining about 100-degree temperatures a couple of weeks ago! For the next three months the Coastal Plain of Virginia is a migration hot spot—one of the best places in the U.S. to witness fall migration. Within an hour's drive are several migration hot spots that people from all over the U.S. travel to see.

Consider participating in the Bird Club's Field Trip to Craney Island in Portsmouth, VA Saturday, August 27. See details in the announcement on this page. Craney Island, not open to the public, is *the* shorebird migration spot in Virginia—the location you're most likely to see the most and the rarest migrants in one spot. Ruth Beck, who has been surveying birds at Craney for over 30 years, will be the leader, and Bill Williams will be along as well to help everyone see the birds.

Then consider registering for the VSO Field Trip to Chincoteague, VA September 16–18. Led by Bill Akers and Jerry Via, who have led this trip for years, this weekend features visits to every habitat at Chincoteague. No charge for the trip—you just need a hotel room or camping site. For more info, check the VSO web site: http://www.virginiabirds.net/f_trips.html#chinc2011

Remember to visit Kiptopeke State Park on the Eastern Shore September through November. You'll observe the hawk and songbird migration and banding every day at this park just a few miles from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. You might even see me behind the banding bench at the songbird station one day! These efforts are supported by the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, <http://www.cvwo.org>.

The Eastern Shore Birding Festival is October 7–9. The leaders of these field trips will take you to birdiest hot spots from the CBBT all the way to Chincoteague—some of them not usually open to the public. Here is the web site: <http://www.esvafestivals.org> or write ESVA Festivals, PO BOX 102, Cape Charles, VA 23310 for a weekend schedule.

Fall in Virginia holds lots of surprise birds. Get out there, enjoy the birds and then let us know about it. See you on the trail!

Two Field Trips in August

Join us the evening of 7 August for Martin Madness in Richmond!

Have you ever witnessed the fall spectacle of clouds of literally thousands of purple martins, swirling and pirouetting in the late light of day, made frantic by the attacks of a nearby peregrine falcon who hunts them in their nightly roosting ritual? Me neither!! But we have the chance to enjoy just that, on the evening of 7 August. A Sunday eve is our choice to ensure ease of parking and walking to the roost site at the 17th Street (and Cary St) Market in downtown Richmond.

If you are inclined to travel on your own, we will see you at the market square at 7 that evening. If you prefer to carpool with other Williamsburg Bird Club Martin and Peregrine fans, we will depart for Richmond at 6 in the evening on Sunday, 7 August from the IHOP parking lot near Walmart, at 199 and Rochambeau Road in Williamsburg. Hope you will join us for what should be a pleasant and memorable evening! For any further info, call Geoff Giles at 757-645-8716.

Our annual field trip to Craney Island will be on Sat., Aug. 27

Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, a Red Phalarope and a Black-bellied Plover are among the many birds that have been seen at Craney this July. As always, this is a field trip you do not want to miss.

In you want to go, please meet at the Colony Square Shopping Center (on Jamestown Road) at 7:00 am—carpooling is very important. Be sure to be prepared for mosquitoes and the sun—wear a hat, long sleeves, long pants and use sun screen. Bring water and snacks. If you have a spotting scope, please bring it. The administration building at Craney Island will be closed, so we cannot use the restrooms there, but there will be a bathroom stop made

Officers

President 813-1322
Shirley Devan sedevan52@cox.net

Vice-President (Programs) 871-3418
Joe Piotrowski joepiotrowski@cox.net

Vice-President (*The Flyer*) 229-4346
Fred Blystone fmb19481@verizon.net

Treasurer 221-6683
Ann Capenter gac17d@juno.com

Secretary 229-9764
Jennifer Boag Jaboag@cox.net

Member-at-Large **Open**

Member-at-Large 565-2597
Jeanette Navia jnavia@gmail.com

Past President 259-9559
Bob Long

Committee Chairpersons

Field Trips 645-8716
Geoff Giles tylerandal2@aol.com

Records & Bird Counts 229-1124
Bill Williams jwwil2@wm.edu

Library Liaison 565-6148
Lee Schuster dljschuster@cox.net

Refreshments 565-0250
Barb Streb gandbstreb@verizon.net

Membership/Webmaster 565-2597
Jeanette Navia jnavia@gmail.com

Adopt-A-Highway 566-2615
John Fennell maffjf07@netzero.net

Historian **Open**

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.

before entering Craney Island and then again on the way out. To observe the birds in the cells, we'll have to walk up to the impoundments and along the dike road so be prepared for some walking—but not long distances.

Ruth Beck will be the leader for this field trip.

June/July Bird Sightings

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

June 3-5: Mac and Kathy Mestayer enjoy the Canaan Valley Birding Festival in Tucker County, WV—among the highlights were Clay-colored Sparrows and a Red Crossbill.

June 5: Marilyn & John Adair and Virginia & George Boyles were on the HRBC Sunday walk led by Jane Frigo at Newport News Park which was cut short by a downpour. Twenty-two species were recorded during the 45 minutes of the shortened walk.

June 6: Among the birds seen on the HRBT by Ruth Beck, Shirley Devan, Bill Williams, Brian Taber and George & Virginia Boyles were a Gull-billed Tern and a Glaucous Gull.

June 9: At Craney Island, Ruth Beck, Alex Minarik, Shirley Devan, Bill Williams and Brian Taber had 19 Black-necked Stilts and 2 Red Knots (among many other birds).



Glaucous Gull

Photo by Bill Williams

Black-necked Stilt (June 6)



Photo by Bill Williams

June 16: At Craney Island Alex Minarik, Bill Williams and Brian Taber had 72 species of birds. Black-necked Stilts, Killdeer, Eastern Willets, Mallards, European Starlings, Common Grackles, and Boat-tailed Grackles all had fledged young.

June 17: Tom McCary had good views of a Horned Lark in the entrance road at Shirley Plantation. The bird would allow cars close approach before flying a short distance.

June 18: Shirley Devan drove around Jamestown Island—she reports the highlights were 3 Red-headed Woodpeckers (2 at Black's Point) and an Eastern Kingbird and a Blue Grosbeak, also at Black's Point. There were also two Killdeer on the sandbar at the isthmus as the tide was coming up.

June 19: In addition to another look at the Horned Lark at Shirley Plantation, Tom McCary sees 3 male Purple Martins at the “vintage” martin house at Haupt's Store in Charles City County.

June 22: Martha Briggs reports an immature Red-bellied Woodpecker eating sunflower seeds and suet in her back yard.

June 25: In the early evening, Tom McCary has 2 Cedar Waxwings on his driveway (so tame he had to blow his car horn to get them to move).

June 27: Brian Taber and Gary Driscoll saw two Wilson's Storm-Petrels in the channel of the southern CBBT island.



July 1: Shirley Devan, Bill Williams and George and Virginia Boyles spent part of the day surveying Craney Island. Among the 72 species

were 21 Great Egrets, 1 Glossy Ibis, 25 Black-necked Stilts, 1 White-rumped Sandpiper, 1 Glaucous Gull and 1 Common Nighthawk. Tom McCary reports “2 Yellow-throated Warblers observed as they enjoyed insects in mimosa tree and nearby trees close to Shirley Great House. One warbler often at eye level—very tame. Saw them in morn & afternoon.”

July 3: Geoff Giles, Marilyn & John Adair and Virginia & George Boyles joined leader Jane Frigo and other birders for the HRBC walk in Newport News Park. During the morning the group was able to identify 56 species.

July 5: Tom McCary sees two Eastern Meadowlarks in the field right behind the Charles City County Post Office.

July 7: From Cathy Millar—“At 8 am this morning, I was taking kitchen scraps to the compost when the morning quiet was broken by a loud commotion across the street. Tracked the calls down to two juvenile green herons who were awkwardly perched on the very top of two tall trees: a tulip poplar and a sycamore. They kept splitting the air with their sharp ‘skeew’ voices until they took off in the direction of College Creek.”

July 12: A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher is spotted by Tom McCary in the Shirley Plantation formal garden.

July 14: Cathy Millar reports—“These are perilous times in my gardens at Newport House B&B! Last week, a young black rat snake emptied the nest of a cardinal of all of its eggs (see photo on page 10), and today, saw a Cooper's Hawk carry away what appeared to be a full grown robin with its mate or parent in a screaming hot pursuit!” Tom McCary sees a male Orchard Oriole posing from top of a Shirley Plantation hedge and hears Northern Bobwhite calling near the Shirley Plantation exit gate.

July 17: While walking the west half of the Warhill Trial, Shirley Devan was able to identify 28 species of birds, including a Red-tailed Hawk, 2 Red-headed Woodpeckers and 2 Acadian Flycatchers.

July 22: Shirley Devan and Geoff Giles went to Dutch Gap and saw both Least Bitterns that have been there all summer. They also stopped by Crewe's Channel and found 6 immature White Ibis, a Great Egret, 2 Lesser Yellowlegs and 10 other species.

July 28: Among the 76 species Bill Williams entered for Craney Island, there was 1 **Red Phalarope**, only the 4th summer record for the Coastal Plain and Virginia.

Close Encounters with Red Shouldered Hawks By Cathy Millar

I am especially fond of red shouldered hawks. Most winter mornings, when I look out my kitchen window, I am greeted by the site of one or often a pair of them perched in a tall tree across the street and usually facing the warming rays of the rising sun. Frequently they linger until I've fed my Bed and Breakfast guests and have made up extra pancakes or waffles from the left over egg-rich batter. Once scattered on the lawn, the food attracts a variety of birds and sometimes a box turtle. But everyone makes way for the hawks when they swoop in to claim their portion. A B&B guest who was a falconer said he never would have believed they would eat anything without feathers, fur, or scales if he hadn't seen it for himself. There is never any interest in snatching a waffle-stuffed bird or turtle. I'll never forget the funny sight of a hawk stalking across the ground with big Belgian waffles attached to each foot like snow shoes before flying off with both of them. Nor the beauty of their impressive wing prints when they land in soft snow. When there are left over bones from a roast, I'll wave the bone in the air to catch the hawk's attention and tossing it in the air, delight in watching the hawk soar down and grasp the bone within seconds of it hitting the ground just a few feet away and carry it up to the roof-top to tear off the remnants of meat. But the rest of the year, other than occasionally spotting them soaring high overhead, I see very little of them.

So I was excited when my friend, Denis, who lives 1 1/2 miles as a hawk flies from my home to his in Kingspoint, called to tell me that red shouldered hawks had built a nest in the beech tree next to his house. These may not have been “my” hawks but I was eager to get a close-up view of their family life.

My first view of the nest was the evening of Mother’s Day, but saw neither parents nor chicks. Denis had first noted the nest on May 7th when a parent hawk swooped low over him when he was on his deck, which faced the tree. On May 11th, he started seeing droppings on the tree and ground beneath from the nestlings backing over the edge of the nest. He’d read that they thus start keeping their nest tidy at about 5 days old. So he assumed the oldest hatched around May 6th. I returned the following day, and from Denis’s kitchen window could see one fluffy white chick peering over the edge of the nest. As I “oohed” over its cuteness, Denis chuckled with the delight of a very proud grandfather. He told me that he and his wife, Maureen, had seen a second chick, but I only got glimpses of it as it stretched a wing and resettled itself. Denis suggested that I climb a neighboring tree that he had scaled years ago so I could look down in the nest. He discerned my lack of enthusiasm for this plan, so the following day he called me to say he’d put a ladder up against the house. After being reminded that the pitch of their roof was shallow, I grabbed my camera and eagerly headed over. I felt comfortable on the roof and was parallel to the nest just a little over 10 feet away. I could get a much better view of one chick but the other remained hunkered down in the nest. I had taken my third picture, and before I had time to register a warning from Denis, who was on the ground, I felt a strong hit on the back of the head. For NCIS fans, it was a proper dope-slap like Leroy Jethro Gibbs is fond of giving members of his team. The parent hawk continued on past the nest out of view and I respectfully left the roof. The assault had been made with outstretched talons which resulted in a couple of very shallow scalp lacerations. I couldn’t help admiring a parent attacking a creature so many times bigger to protect the young. I was pleased with the picture that I got but my camera is a digital point-and-shoot, and I felt this wonderful opportunity to photograph the chicks deserved a better camera. I called Inge Curtis and left a message on her answering machine.



Photo by Cathy Millar



Photo by Cathy Millar

I returned on June 1st when I heard that the 2 hawks were now perching on the edge of the nest. Once again I climbed up onto the roof determined to add some photos for Denis’s collection but this time wore my sturdy beekeeping hat without the veil. After getting some nice shots of one youngster, now minus the white down and looking like a proper young hawk, I was delighted when the second one stood alongside its sibling. After a couple more pictures I left feeling relieved that I hadn’t encountered the parents this time.

Inge called me on June 4th fit to be tied that she had finally been able to access her voice mail on her new Blackberry and had thus taken so

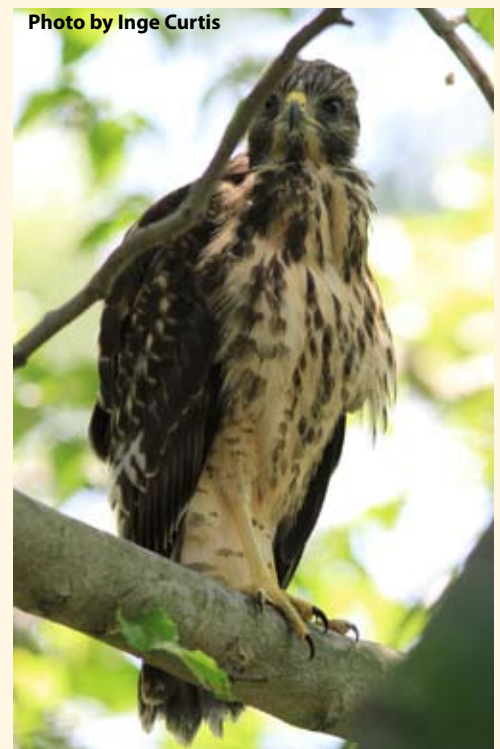


Photo by Inge Curtis



long to get my invitation. An hour later with hats on, we were climbing up on Denis's roof. Inge was the first one on and I froze when I heard her exclaim that there were three hawks on the nest. No one had seen more than two, so my immediate thought was that the third was a parent and that we were doomed! But indeed there were three youngsters! Inge clicked away with her Canon 7D and 300mm fixed lens. As we watched, the oldest leapt to a branch just outside the nest and gave quite a mature sounding cry to either intimidate us or summon the parents. Inge and I were too enthralled watching them at such close range to leave yet, but we did keep a wary eye. When we reluctantly left, there had still been no sign of parents. Maybe the hunting to keep three

'teenagers' fed took them farther afield and they were now big enough to perhaps not warrant close monitoring. Inge generously downloaded her wonderful pictures on my computer as well as hers. The resolution was so fabulous that I had a blast enlarging and cropping them so one could even see the remnants of the natal down resting so lightly on the feathers of the youngest.

As I write this on June 17th, the young hawks no longer return to the nest but stay in neighboring trees, where they loudly beg to be fed. While they were still young, I had given the info to Bill Williams and he notified the person at the W&M Center for Conservation Biology who is studying red shouldered hawks, in case she wanted to band them. Apparently that did not work out. And as for me, I am done climbing on roofs for a while...unless I get a similarly irresistible offer!



Birding in Southeastern Arizona

Article and photos by Shirley Devan

To a birder, the words "Southeastern Arizona" conjure up visions of exotic birds. The area is full of "hot spots" – now literally and figuratively. For several weeks in May and June, forest fires raged through the canyons of southeastern Arizona and many birding areas were closed.

Our trip the first week in May landed us in Madera Canyon in the Santa Rita Mountains in Coronado National Forest, a well-known resting stop for migrating birds. We had reserved three cabins at Santa Rita Lodge—one of three lodging facilities in the Canyon southeast of Tucson—and a well-known destination for birders who are welcome to hang out and observe hummingbird feeders and seed feeders without staying overnight. An Elf Owl welcomed us to the Lodge **late** on the evening of April 29. He was directly behind one of our cabins. Despite our best efforts over the week, we never did see him, but we heard him almost every night.

"Madera Canyon and its creek traverse four life zones and many habitats between the desert floor and the mountaintops. The variety of climates within less than 10 miles is similar to that found in driving from Arizona to Canada." This per the publication by the Friends of Madera Canyon. I will testify it is amazing place, unlike any I've birded before.

As we descended to land at the Tucson airport, the brown colors below shouted "dry" to us in the plane. The gentleman sitting next to me was returning home from a business trip in northern Virginia. When I remarked that the landscape below was SOOOO brown, he commented that the Virginia landscape he had just left behind had been "SOOOO green—no landmarks anywhere." I told him I was from Virginia and that we did "green" really well. I then realized what an "extreme" environment we were about to encounter.

Our traveling party consisted of Mike, Susan and Alex Powell, Felice and Tom Bond, and Seig and Alice Kopinitz. I rounded out the group to eight. Our informal tour "leader" Susan Powell had pre-arranged two tours: a local bird guide

for Madera Canyon for May 1 and a behind-the-scenes, all day tour of Kitt Peak National Observatory west of Tucson May 3. And to ensure we all got to each location: a 12-passenger van large enough (but just barely) for our birding and photography gear, coolers of food and drinks, and the eight of us.



Our first full day in the canyon was Saturday, April 30. We stayed close to the Lodge, checking out their public feeders and the private feeders behind each of our cabins. We thrilled at our first sighting of Lazuli Buntings, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Western Tanagers! They quickly became “yard birds” and we started squinting, checking every bird to find a new one. We were not disappointed. A Townsend’s Warbler and a Hermit Warbler showed up briefly at the water feature, then a Wilson’s Warbler. A Painted Redstart teased the photographers around the Gift Shop doorway—refusing to perch for a portrait photo. Resident woodpeckers were Gila, Acorn, and Arizona. Regular hummingbirds included Broad-billed, Magnificent, and Black-chinned.

Our Sunday morning started early with our scheduled bird walk led by Laurens Halsey, one of the compilers of the “Birds of

Madera Canyon Checklist.” The temperature when we set off at 6:30 was a chilly 46 degrees. The native Arizonans were shivering, but the Virginians were prepared with fleece and long pants. We walked along a trail near the middle of the Canyon. Just a few spring migrants had arrived and Laurens was struggling to show us some Madera Canyon specialties. We did find a Bridled Titmouse, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, a Bewick’s Wren, Cedar Waxwing, Black-throated Gray Warbler and a Summer Tanager among others. He had staked out the nest of a Broad-billed Hummingbird near a trail.



Acorn Woodpecker

The female sat tight as we worked to get our binocs and cameras focused on the tiny nest hidden in the low branches of a small shrub. We queried Laurens about our target bird for the week, the Elegant Trogon. “Not back yet” he replied. He advised us that the birds would be at the top of the mountain when they returned, possibly in the coming days. That kept our hopes up.



Broad-billed Hummingbirds

Monday we opened and closed the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, a “world-renowned zoo, natural history museum, and botanical garden all in one place” according to the flyer. The best bird find there was the Verdin, first spotted by Susan. I lurked around the spot for about 30 minutes and it finally appeared for my checklist – a first for me. Other notable birds at this outdoor museum included Hooded Oriole, Western Tanager, Swainson’s Thrush, Gambel’s Quail, Cactus Wren (all over the place and nest-building), Curve-billed Thrasher, and White-winged Dove. This desert museum is worth at least a full day’s visit if not two. Check out their web site where they show a video of a hummingbird feeding its nestling: <http://www.desertmuseum.org>.



Cactus Wren

Our behind-the-scenes private tour of Kitt Peak National Observatory Tuesday was a great change of pace and a memorable experience. This mountaintop west of Tucson hosts the most telescopes of any location on earth! We were thrilled to step inside control rooms and stand under the famous 4-meter mirror of the Mayall telescope—one of the largest in the world. Here's their web site: <http://www.noao.edu/kpno>.

Six of us piled in the van Wednesday afternoon for a “nature” drive through Box Canyon, the next canyon over from Madera Canyon. The one lane, winding, washboard gravel road forced our “leisurely” pace and gave us ample opportunity to scan the vegetation for wildlife. We observed over 30 bird species including Lark Sparrow, Western Kingbird, Vermillion Flycatcher, American Kestrel, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's population), Canyon Towhee, Pine Siskin, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and Chipping Sparrow.

Kathi Mestayer, Bird Club member and VA Master Naturalist, had recommended that we visit Sweetwater Wetlands in Tucson to check out the awesome birds and other wildlife. This renowned wastewater treatment facility reclaims water for eventual use by Tucson's “gray water” customers: golf courses, parks, schoolyards, and other large irrigated areas.

This area was also the greenest spot we had seen since we left Virginia. In fact it looked like a Virginia wetland—green, lush, wet—with many familiar species—Northern Cardinals, Mallards. We did spot some new and wonderful birds. In fact, Susan (and I) got a life bird, Albert's Towhee. We would definitely recommend a visit to the Sweetwater Wetlands the next time you visit Southeastern Arizona: <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/water/sweetwater>.

But the definite highlight at the Wetlands was a Western Diamondback Rattlesnake at the intersection of two paths. This was a species we (the naturalists!) had searched for the entire week. The 5-foot snake started moving across the path from the shade of a tree, and we alerted a school group heading directly toward it. Everyone gave it a wide berth as it slowly traversed the path and disappeared into the wetland. I took lots of photos and was the only member of our party to come home with photos of a rattler! We would definitely recommend a visit to the Sweetwater Wetlands the next time you visit Southeastern Arizona: <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/water/sweetwater>.



The end of the week came and we got serious about finding the Elegant Trogon. While Susan and I had been at Sweetwater Wetlands, others had ventured up the mountain in search of the trogon! They came back with great tales and photos of the trogon precisely where they guide had told us.



So Friday Susan and I along with Mike, Seig and Alice headed up the trail to find the trogon, whose distinctive call was resounding all around. Soon we came up on Laurens Halsey, our bird guide earlier in the week. He toted his big camera and lens and was birding on his own, sans group. The word had gotten around the canyon that the trogon was back and eventually the search party swelled to about 15 people on the trail, some with BIG cameras. Finally the trogon came to a perch where we could all see him. Oohs and ahhs all around; lots of pixels burned up on this exquisite male. Then he moved to an even more open spot and I was able to get a photo with my point and shoot camera. A very happy group headed down the mountain for cold water and lunch, our target bird ticked off the list.

Sara N. Dipity traveled with us and she led us to a row of fruiting mulberry trees at the bottom of the canyon near the railroad crossing, close to civilization (and cell phone coverage). The first time we passed it, we noticed lots of bird activity around the trees and on the ground.

We pulled in and realized that the trees were full of just arriving migrants – Western Tanagers, Lazuli Buntings, Black-headed Grosbeaks, warblers, Vermillion Flycatchers, and Phainopeplas (referred to as Pepto-bismol birds after the first sighting).

Susan, Felice, and I spent several hours there one afternoon chasing the Vermillion Flycatcher for a good photo. Also on hand: Lucy's Warblers, Wilson's Warbler, Hermit Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Black-throated Sparrow, and Western Kingbird. This spot was on the way to the grocery store and restaurants. It was not often that we did not pull in to see what was feeding around the mulberry bush. An unexpected "hot spot" that gave us good looks at several gems.

The number of trip birds—I have no idea—probably close to 100. The number of life birds—you know I don't keep a life list!

Those who have been to Southeastern Arizona know the weather—dry and hot, and in the summer **very dry** and **very hot**. While our humidity here ranges from 50–100%, the humidity in Madera Canyon while we visited was about 5%. We all had difficulty adjusting to the high altitude and the low humidity. With afternoon temperatures in the mid-to upper 90s, being outside was a risky venture—particularly alone. I decided it was a great place to visit and I definitely recommend it. Virginia has its drawbacks in the summer, but I prefer it to Southeastern Arizona!

Upcoming Master Naturalist Basic Training Class

by Shirley Devan

The Historic Rivers Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists will conduct its sixth basic training class this fall and winter and will sponsor volunteer service opportunities leading to Virginia Master Naturalist Certification.

The Virginia Master Naturalist program is designed to build a statewide corps of volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the conservation and management of natural resources and areas within their communities. Interested Virginians become Master Naturalists through training and volunteer service.

The number of participants for this class will be limited to 20. Fee is \$150.00 and includes all materials, instruction, and membership dues for 2011 and 2012.

Classes, which will meet about every two weeks, begin August 30, 2011 and continue through March 14, 2012. Volunteer service hours can be started prior to completion of classes and the requirements to be a Certified Virginia Master Naturalist could be completed as early as March 2012.

The basic training course offers knowledge and skills in the following: Virginia biogeography, habitats of the Historic Rivers region, wetlands and freshwater biology, Virginia native trees and plants, Virginia birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, insects, conservation and ecological systems, citizen science and interpretation skills.

The Virginia Master Naturalist Program is jointly sponsored by VA Cooperative Extension, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation, VA Department of Forestry, VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and VA Museum of Natural History.

Class dates and schedule are included in the Application Package, which is available on line at: www.historicrivers.org.

For more info, contact Basic Training Co-Chairs, Jennifer Trevino (phone: 757-903-8983, email: jenny451@yahoo.com) or Sharon Plocher (email: sharonjp4@cox.net) or Membership Chair, Shirley Devan, (phone: 757-813-1322; email: sedevan52@cox.net).

VSO Fall Field Trip—Chincoteague, VA, Sept. 16-18

Headquarters for this field trip is the Refuge Inn on Beach Road. Room rates are \$107.53 (includes tax) per night for a single or double room, minimum two night stay. The inn is totally non-smoking and no pets are allowed. To assure the VSO rate, make reservations by August 16th. Please state you are with the VSO when you call.

An evening orientation and slide program will be presented by Jerry Via (co-leader) at 8:00pm in the Conference Room. Bill Akers (co-leader) will also give preview of birds in the area and a synopsis of the field trips for the week-end.

You can select from a variety of field trip experiences: "Morning Warbler Walk" on the Woodland Trail to look for migrating songbirds; "Motorcade to Assateague Beach", to look at shorebirds; and "Birding and Biking" to explore the wildlife loop (bikes can be rented if necessary).

More information can be found at the VSO website—http://www.virginiabirds.net/f_trips.html#chinc2011

Photos from Members



Herb Spannuth took this photo of a nesting Killdeer in front of the Archaearium on Jamestown Island on June 30th. A docent working inside the building told Herb this was the 22 day the Killdeer pair had been on the nest. (Note eggs under the Killdeer)



Shirley Devan took this photo of an Eastern Towhee during the bird walk at New Quarter Park on July 9th.



Joe Piotrowsk took this picture of a Barn Swallow feeding young at New Quarter Park, during the bird walk, on July 9th.

More Photos from Members Continued



Posted by Cathy Millar on July 9th. "During this last week of daily rain, I'd been feeling sorry for a soggy looking female cardinal incubating her eggs on a nest right outside my living room window. This morning, I saw that her nest was empty but out another window saw the two cardinals and a catbird whose attentions were quietly fixed on something—a snake with a widened middle no doubt from recently eaten eggs. Light conditions were poor and I have only a point and shoot camera. The snake is a juvenile rat snake."



Immature White Ibis—taken by Shirley Devan at New Quarter Park on July 9th.



Bill Williams took this picture of a Gull-billed Tern on the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel on June 6th.



This is a photo that Kathi Mestayer took of a cardinal she calls Mr. Manky. On June 19th she wrote "he and his spouse, Maha, are around all day long. I think our yard is their turf. They get especially demonstrative when they see me going in or out, because they know if they get my attention, seeds are sure to follow. They spend a fair amount of time in the front yard, in the big apple tree in the middle. Their birdbath and the bench we use as a tray feeder are under it. Maha's interesting, too. Her crest goes all the way flat down on her head much of the time."

WBC June & July Bird Walks

Complete lists of species seen on each walk are on the club website at www.williamsburgbirdclub.org.



June 11—Geoff Giles led 12 other birders on the walk at New Quarter Park. The highlight of the day was an aerial display of two Bald Eagles harassing an Osprey until it dropped a fish it had caught back into Queen's Creek. The group also got good looks through spotting scopes at an Acadian Flycatcher sitting on a nest. A total of 32 species were identified during the walk.

Seated: George Boyles, Matthew Smith and Juliana Smith. Standing: John Adair, Geoff Giles, Cynthia Long, Buz Mason, Marilyn Adair, Deedy Mason, Bob Long and Virginia Boyles. Missing from photo Ellen Glasgow and Shirley Devan (who took the photo).

June 25—A total of 18 participants joined leader Bill Williams on a clear, calm morning for the walk at New Quarter Park. There were a total of 47 species of birds identified during the walk, including 4 Great Egrets, 6 Osprey, 1 Rudy-throated Hummingbird and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo.



Seated: Jeanne Carey, Michelle Carey, Jennifer Trevino, Natalie & Mike Baust, Virginia Boyles, and Joe Piotrowski. Standing: Sharon Plocher, Bill Williams, Joanne Waterman, Nelson Ensley, Tom McCary, Shirley Devan, Mike Lowry, George Boyles and Geoff Giles. Not pictured: Rick & Marian Bennet and Margaret Ware (who took this photo).



Seated: Virginia Boyles, Joe Piotrowski, Bringier McConnell and Shirley Devan. Standing: George Boyles, Geoff Giles, John Adair, Marilyn Adair, Tom McCary and Jeanette Navia. Missing from photo: Bob & Cynthia Long.

July 9—Leader Tom McCary led 11 birders on the walk at New Quarter Park. A total of 40 species were identified during the morning, including an immature White Ibis, 1 Snowy Egret and 2 Green Herons. Barn Swallows were feeding young under the bridge to the floating dock.

July 23—Leader Bill Williams led 12 birders on the walk at New Quarter Park. The highlights of the 41 species identified during the walk were 6 Wild Turkeys (2 adults and 4 young) seen on the bank across Queen's Creek and an immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron.



Left to right: George Boyles, Marilyn Adair, Nelson Ensley, Joanne Andrews, Joanne Waterman, Bill Ferris, Sara Lewis, Cathy Millar, Virginia Boyles, John Adair, Paul MdAllister and Bill Williams. Missing from photo is Shirley Devan (who took the picture).

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.



August's bird photo (taken in New Quarter Park)

June/July's bird was an immature Red-headed Woodpecker.



CALENDAR

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| Sunday, August 7 | HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7AM, Jane Frigo, Leader |
| Sunday, August 7 | HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7AM, Jane Frigo, Leader |
| Saturday, August 13 | WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 8AM, Geoff Giles, Leader |
| Sunday, August 21 | HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7am, Jane Frigo, Leader |
| Saturday, August 27 | WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 7AM, Shirley Devan, Leader |
| Saturday, August 27 | Field Trip to Craney Island. See front page. |
| Starting August 30 | Master Naturalist Basic Training Class. See Page 8. |
| September 16–18 | VSO Field Trip to Chincoteague. See Page 8 |
| October 7-9 | Eastern Shore Birding Festival. For further information— www.esvafestivals.org |