



The Flyer

Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

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www.williamsburgbirdclub.org

October 2011

President's Corner

By Shirley Devan



Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 5; a TogetherGreen Volunteer Day, the inaugural event in our co-adoption of the Western Shore Marshes Important Bird Area (IBA).

Volunteers from the two bird clubs closest to the Western Shore Marshes—Hampton Roads Bird Club and Williamsburg Bird Club—will conduct a bird survey and a road/beach cleanup at Bethel Beach and New Point Comfort Natural Area Preserves, both in Mathews County. A couple of volunteers from the Virginia Audubon IBA office plan to join us that day and will assist in advance with publicity and outreach to media.

The Western Shore Marshes is one of 20 IBAs in Virginia and one of 424 Global IBAs. This IBA covers more than 12,000 acres that range in elevation from 0 to 8 meters.

Western Shore Marshes IBA is important because it supports the largest concentration of salt marsh habitat in the lower Chesapeake Bay and largest in Virginia outside the Eastern Shore, surrounding lands are under increasing pressure for residential development and avifauna in these areas has received little study.

These marshes stretch from the cities of Poquoson and Hampton up through the shores of the counties of York, Gloucester and Mathews. Check this web site for more details about “our” IBA and the habitats and species that depend on these areas: <http://web4.audubon.org/bird/iba/virginia/Documents/Western%20Shore%20Marshes.pdf>.

Logistics: If you can help out November 5, contact Dave Youker, Hampton Roads Bird Club, by November 3. Phone: 757-224-1188 or email: yukerd@aol.com. If we have enough volunteers Dave will divide the group so that we can cover Bethel Beach and New Point Comfort at the same time. Everyone will meet at Mathews High School at 8:30AM Saturday, November 5. Folks from Williamsburg should meet at Colony Square Shopping Center on Jamestown Road at 7 am to car-pool to Mathews High. The Bird Clubs will provide trash bags

and data collection sheets. Volunteers should wear appropriate footwear (and clothes) for wet ditches and sandy beaches. Gloves are recommended. If you have long-handled grabbers, bring them along. You should also bring water, snacks, lunch and binoculars, of course.

Look for opportunities like this each quarter. The IBA points of contact are Geoff Giles for our Williamsburg Bird Club (phone: 757-645-8716) and Dave Youker of the Hampton Roads Bird Club. Please join us in this important conservation effort. See you there!

Welcome to New Members

Bringier and Sally McConnell

October Meeting



At the October meeting Bob Ake will present a program on his Big Year. During 2010 Bob traveled the US chasing birds in an attempt to tally as many species in the ABA area as possible. For much of the year he traveled with John Spahr. Bob tells the tale of their year from the beginning when a well-considered itinerary was followed, trying

to keep costs under control, until the end, when every rarity was chased. In the process they drove personal cars, rented cars, took commercial flights, went on lots of pelagic trips, hiked, rode ATVs, and along the way saw some great scenery, were involved in some minor difficulties, had some really exciting times, and soared to many terrific highs. Bob finished the year with 731 species, ranking him second all-time among those completing an ABA Annual list. His illustrated talk, in addition to detailing his travels, describes the planning and the execution, gives a summary of the costs and miles traveled, and offers suggestions for anyone interested in trying an ABA Big Year. You can gain a taste of his Big Year by logging onto his blog <http://bobsbirds.blogspot.com> which he posted daily during his travels.

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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.

Plan to join us on October 19 at 7:30 PM in **Room 101, Andrews Hall**, on the W&M campus. Sara Lewis, Sharon Plocher, Jennifer Trevino and Lois Ullman will be providing the refreshments. **Don't forget to use your parking permit.**

October Field Trip

October WBC Field Trip to Shirley Plantation: Want to have the run of a beautiful plantation along the James River for a great morning of birding? That is exactly our plan for the 15 October trip to Shirley Plantation. Tom McCary has arranged access to the plantation grounds and one of the wildfowl impoundments, which should give us some unique views of this year's fall migrants in a



particularly beautiful setting. Several species are regulars at this beautiful spot which are otherwise very hard to find in our area. Almost every habitat our region affords will be on our program for the morning, and Tom knows right where to take us to make the most of the visit!

We will assemble at Colony Square Shopping Center parking lot at 7 AM to arrange carpools and caravan to the plantation. For those wishing to meet us there, we will meet in the Visitor's Parking at Shirley Plantation, near the restrooms at about 8 AM. There is a \$5 per person fee for access to the grounds for the day, and for those who are interested there is an option of a tour of the plantation house for a discounted rate of \$12 per person. Hope you'll join us!

For any questions, please feel free to contact Geoff Giles at 757-645-8716.

September 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 or travels, please share!

September 4: Among the 57 species of birds Bill Williams identified during his Sunday walk at Greenspring Nature Trail were a Swainson's Thrush and 47 Bobolink.

September 4: WBC members Betty Fields, Geoff Giles, Marilyn & George Boyles, and Marilyn & John Adair were on the HRBC walk at Newport News Park led by Jane Frigo. The walk was limited to some extent because of downed trees from last weeks brush with Hurricane Irene. All trails and bridges were closed. A total of 52 species were seen, including six species of woodpeckers.

September 7: Bill Williams reports 2 Common Nighthawks flying about over Settler's Mill.



Photo by Bill Williams

September 10: On island 1 of the CBBT, Mitchell Byrd and Bill Williams relocated an adult Clay-colored Sparrow that had been found earlier in the day by Arun Bose. Bill also reports 4 Common Nighthawks passed over Settlers' Mill.

September 8: Bill Williams entered 65 species into ebird for the survey done at Craney Island. These included 74 Blue-winged Teal, 82 Northern Shovelers, 1 Sora, 13 Black-necked Stilt, 78 American Avocet, 457 Black Terns and 3 Black Skimmers.

September 9: Brian Taber reports that from the Jamestown Ferry he saw 455 Laughing Gulls, 47 Royal Terns, 142 Forster's Terns, 2 Common Terns and 2 Black Terns. At Hog Island he saw 832 Caspian Terns, 3 Least Terns, 23 Royal Terns, 9 Forster's Terns, 2 Semi-palmated Plovers, 7 Stilt Sandpipers, 2 Short-billed Dowitchers, 4 Pectoral Sandpipers, 1514 Semi-palmated Sandpipers, a Greater Yellowlegs and 3 Lesser Yellowlegs.

September 13: Tom Armour reports seeing his first American Kestrel of the fall on the wires along Treasure Island Road.

September 15:

Bill Williams entered 67 species into ebird for the survey done at Craney Island. These included 39 Snowy Egrets, 11 Black-bellied Plovers, 10 American Golden-Plovers, 11 White-rumped Sandpipers and 15 Red-necked Phalaropes.



Photo by Shirley Devan

September 16: Bill Williams reports a Least Flycatcher on Jamestown Island—the third local record.

September 18: Bill Williams sees 2 Northern Shovelers at Drummond's Field. Despite a light rain, Margaret Ware joined Jane Frigo and 3 other birders for the HRBC bird walk at Newport News Park. Before the walk ended at 9:30, 38 species were identified, including species of warblers, a Summer Tanager and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

September 25: A Clay-colored Sparrow was seen by Bill Williams at Mainland Farm on the Greensprings Trail—this is the second local record (first fall record).

September 27: According to Bill Williams, a Solitary Sandpiper has joined the Northern Shovelers, of which there are now 4, at Drummond's Field. Tom Armour reports having a group of thrushes feeding on the fruit of their sour gum tree—a least 2 Veerys and a Swainson's.

September 28: From Geoff Giles: "We awoke at my house to torrential rains. By seven this late September morning the rain had stopped, but it was still overcast and dark. As I looked out over my newspaper I could see small birds pirouetting among the maple and gum leaves in the treeline behind my house. A quick reach for my binocs showed them to be Magnolia warblers, I counted five at one time in view. By the way, they ignored my large Southern Magnolia tree, which is still full of berries and red-eyed vireos eating them.

My guess is that these warblers were weary travelers who dove for cover in the trees to ride out the storm, then came out to grab some breakfast when the deluge subsided. Later in the morning, among the many chickadees and titmice who staged out of these trees for a hop over to my feeder, I noticed a redstart (yellow) and a pine warbler foraging.

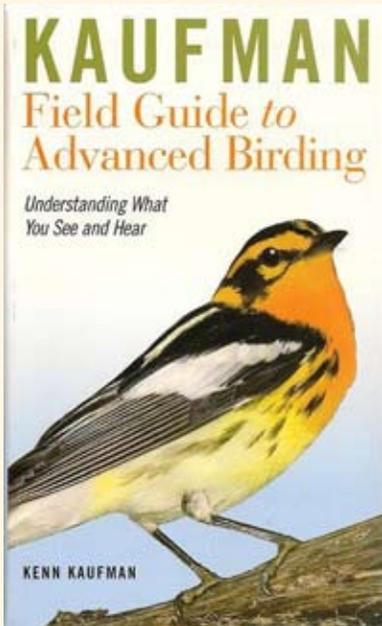
My yard list is growing. I still have a few hummers. And right now I'm seeing warblers more easily at home than in the Freedom Park, although they are still there. Problem is traffic. Parents with young children seem to have decided the Ellipse Garden is a great play pen to let their kids run in. Construction traffic rumbling by flushes flocks of warblers and sparrows every time I get set up with scope or binocs. I did have a lovely common yellowthroat last night, who tiptoed through the Rudbeckias, foraged and called chip notes to his mate, near me and oblivious to my admiring stares. That one and many, many pine warblers were the ones I could catch up with yesterday evening."

September 29: Bill Williams was busy—At Drummond's Field he sees, 3 Northern Shovelers, 1 Blue-winged Teal and one Solitary Sandpiper; at College Creek he found 2 Magnolia Warblers and 4 Yellow Warblers, then on to Jamestown Island where he came across 1 Rose-breasted Grosbeak and an Indigo Bunting. From Florida, Lois Leeth reports 4 Roseate Spoonbills, 2 Mallards, 5 Snowy Egrets, a Common Moorhen, 2 Wood Stocks and several Great Egrets.

September 30: Bill Williams reports a a Merlin at Drummond's Field.

Williamsburg Bird Club Book Review

By Jeanette Navia



Kaufman Field Guide to Advance Birding: Understanding What You See and Hear, by Kenn Kaufman. Houghton Mifflin, 2011. ISBN 9780547248325. \$21. 448 p. James City Count Library call number 598.2 KAU.

I usually won't review a book until I've finished reading it. Kenn Kaufman's new edition of *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding* is an exception. I've barely started this book, but I know it will be one from which I will learn so much, that I consider it one of the most important bird books I've encountered. Don't think of this as a review, then, but as an alert that a new book is available that you may want to read.

In 1990, Kaufman wrote a guide to advanced birding, which I have not read, but in an interview with *BirdWatching Magazine* (<http://bit.ly/ggtccH>), he says that 85% of the material in the 2011 edition is new. He also says, "I look at [the first edition] now, and there's so much in it that's out of date that I sort of cringe..." If you have the old edition, you may want to upgrade.

The first chapters include: 1. An Integrated Approach to Field Identification of Birds. 2. Principles and Pitfall of Field Identification. 3. How Birds Are Built: Terminology and Bird Topography. 4. Plumages, Molt, and Wear: Understanding What You See. 5. Behavior and Voice: Understanding and Using Them in Identification. 6. Identification Beyond the Species Level.

7. Techniques and Resources for Learning Bird Identification. He then has chapters on indentifying specific types of bird: "Learning to Identify Waterfowl"; "Learning to Identify Owls"; "...Tyrant Flycatchers"; "...Swallows"; "...Warblers," and other types of birds.

Sections of chapters include things like, "What to Look for in Identifying Ducks," with subsections "Habitat and Behavior," "Eye Colors," "Leg and Foot Colors," "Molt Patterns in Ducks," etc. He tells you how to look at a bird to be able to, perhaps, distinguish between species. "Of course most views of ducks don't allow their feet, but in a few cases, foot color is a useful mark."

At the beginning of each chapter on types of birds, he lists which species he discusses in detail. For instance, in the 41-page chapter on Empidonax Flycatchers, he lists twelve species that he treats in detail, but in the 2-page chapter on identifying owls, no specific species are treated in detail. Flycatchers are much more difficult to identify than owls, but he does give good advice for looking at owls: "Points to Consider in Identifying Owls" include "Variation in voices", "Pitfall of viewing conditions", "Variations in plumage", "Juveniles and downy young."

This "field guide" is shaped like, and similar in length (448 p.) to a basic field guide, but it may not be something you'd want to consult for the first time out in the field. It may be handy in the field, but reading through the material at a leisurely pace to understand how to distinguish between similar species could be done ahead of time. The seven introductory chapters look like they have excellent information for all levels of birders; the chapters with specific, detailed information should be great for advanced birders.

The Red-eyed Ghosts and the Pirate!

Article by Geoff Giles Photos by Inge Curtis

Among the birds of summer are some "ghost birds" for me. At least they might as well be. They are the ones that are supposed to be here, but are almost always out of view. Some of them I can associate with a disembodied voice, which I can hear from time to time and take on faith to be theirs, although they almost always deny me the pleasure of matching a face with the song. Among them is the red-eyed vireo.

In a good year I have generally had a fleeting sighting or two at best of this bird, although I have heard them sing much more often, and sometimes quite a lot. And so it went, until last fall. I was surprised to see a single red-eyed vireo who showed up in the southern magnolia tree in our back yard around Labor Day, then spent the next several weeks stuffing himself every day on the lush red berries which are in the fist-size seed pods, the "fruit" of the magnolia, which are ripe

that time of the year. He was a loner, but he was so regular and so entertaining in the way he stuffed the large red seeds, almost too big for him to swallow, down his gullet. He would show up in the tree and choke down about five of the berries, before flying off to digest, I suppose, and then coming back later. I thought I had discovered something new about this vireo, until I visited the Cornell Lab's web site description and noted that the poster child for this species was pictured choking down a big red magnolia seed. Oh well.

So it was that in the last hot, sultry days of August this year my red-eyed ghost bird would show up out of nowhere again to dazzle me. And when Labor Day arrived, sure enough he was visiting my magnolia daily. Only this time he brought reinforcements. In the first few days I could count up to six happy vireos at a time flitting about the magnolia and gobbling down the berries. They generally start to work soon after sunrise and work at this until near dusk. They are not at all secretive, but are active, and hop in and out of the foliage, giving occasional long pauses on one of the seed pods for easy viewing. They seem to occasionally glean insects also from the large magnolia leaves. A few times I have glimpsed an additional, and unexpected visitor, who also once grabbed and ate a large red seed. More often he has lurked in the shadows of the magnolia and a few times dropped down to forage under the tree. Even without binocs I could see that the greens and yellow of the vireos was missing on this bird, who appeared more brown above and white below.

When I finally got a decent look at him I could see that he (or she!) is a thrush. He did not appear to be a wood thrush (color and spotting on breast looked wrong) or an early hermit thrush coming for the winter (more uniform color overall, vice reddish brown tail color). He has been more elusive than the vireos and until today has made one or two fleeting appearances a day. Today something happened.

I glanced out to see one of my red-eyed "ghost birds" doing the routine extraction operation of one of the red seeds from the seed pod. As it was not quite ripe, he had his beak around it and was rocking it back and forth to pull it loose, like a dentist with a stubborn tooth. As he did I could see a dark form lurking behind him in the tree. Just as the seed began to work loose and the prize was near at hand—wham! A bird only slightly bigger than the vireo came darting out and pushed him off the seedpod, then with one smooth motion yanked out the loosened seed and gulped it down the hatch. He paused just long enough to give me a good look at my old friend, the thrush!!

I had only a moment to muse on that when the next hapless vireo perched on the same seed pod and began to pry out the next seed. He worked industriously until it looked as if the seed would pop out, when ... whammo!!!! The Pirate Thrush had struck again! Once again, after his startled victim fled he plucked out his prize and polished it off. This time it was the red-eyed "ghosts" who were saying aaarrghhh!! and not the pirate.

But who was that thrush? I now have three thrushes in and around my magnolia tree. The former mystery thrush has now given me looks from all angles and is definitely a veery. He is still present and has occasional knock-ups over ripe seeds with the energetic red-eyed vireos. There is also a hermit thrush who now occasionally pops in and out of the tree and sits on a fence nearby, giving



Veery (aka The Pirate)



Red-eyed Vireo



me good looks at this familiar winter bird with a distinctive reddish tail. And yesterday there was a wood thrush, with striking reddish brown on his upper body and bold black spots on his light underparts, foraging on the ground under the tree. Last weekend I had the pleasure of looking at veeries (my bird!!) being banded at Kiptopeke, as well as several Swainson's and grey-cheeked thrushes also banded at the Kiptopeke Songbird Banding Station. This rare opportunity to admire birds in the hands of the banders laid to rest any questions I might have had about those latter two species being among those I can currently see in my yard.



I pondered what all of this means for the magnolias of the future, since the seeds are being gobbled as fast as they ripen, instead of falling on fertile soil in my yard. But wait a minute. Come to think of it, those seeds are being carried away somewhere and being deposited with a nourishing coating of fresh guano! Guess that's a better chance at becoming a tree than falling without fertilizer on the shaded ground under the tree in my yard. Once more Mother Nature is a few steps ahead of my idea of how things should work, and is harmonizing the needs of her creatures in ways I would not have imagined.

The VSO Field Trip to Chincoteague Sept. 17-19

Article by Virginia Boyles

Photos by George Boyles

The field trip began with an evening gathering at the Refuge Inn to review activities for the weekend, and report birds already spotted. Jerry Via showed a film about the relationship of Red Knots and horseshoe crabs whose eggs are a food source during migration. A decline in numbers was noted in both species.

George and I joined John and Marilyn Adair, Geoff Giles, Jeanette Navia, and HRBC members Richard and Barbara Hudgins, Bill Ferris, and Dot Silsby and friends at the Kiptopeke State Park Songbird banding station on Friday morning to watch Shirley Devan work with Calvin Brennan, Chief Bander, and the rest of the banding team extracting birds from the nets and processing them. The birds were plentiful, and we enjoyed seeing warblers, a Grey-cheeked Thrush, and an Ovenbird.



Left to Right: Virginia Boyles, Geoff Giles, Jeanette Navia, Shirley Devan (banding), Marilyn Adair, John Adair, Bill Ferris

As we came across the causeway to Chincoteague, we stopped to enjoy the many American Oystercatchers and Forster's Terns, but missed the Clapper Rail that Geoff Giles saw crossing behind our car. Others observed a Peregrine Falcon, Northern Harrier and numerous White Ibis on their way across the causeway.

A mist settled in on Saturday morning that soaked those on the bicycle tour on the Wildlife Loop led by Meredith and Lee Bell, but not before they observed a Green Heron, Black Tern, Black-bellied Plover, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown-headed Nuthatch and Magnolia Warbler.

Jerry Via led the Beach Walk, also curtailed by rain, along Assateague Beach. The birds sighted were Red Knots, Black



Shirley knows you shouldn't all look in the same direction.

Skimmers, Black-bellied Plovers, Marbled Godwits, plus Royal, Caspian, and Forster's Terns, many gulls and "peeps". A stunning immature Little Blue Heron flew in with a Snowy Egret to show us his green legs and white plumage. Others reported Black-crowned Night Heron, Whimbrel, and a Sora near the Visitor's Center. Hurricane Irene had caused the ocean to wash over the beach into the area by Tom's Cove, and the over wash continued on the north side Sunday at high tide.

The Saturday afternoon bus trip to the Wash Flats was also hampered by the weather, and both days the mosquitoes were beating on the windows pleading access. However, Wild Turkeys, Semipalmated Plovers, a Pied-billed Grebe, Belted Kingfisher, Merlin, Mallards, Blue-winged Teal, Double-crested Cormorants, Great Blue Herons, and both Snowy and Great Egrets were seen. Sika Deer were near the road, and several groups of wild horses were spotted with Cattle Egrets nearby.

The species tally on Saturday night was already over 130, indicating a most productive weekend. Sunday Ruth Beck led a caravan driving tour back toward the beach. We chose the walk on the Woodland Trail with Bill Akers, Michael Beck, and Larry Meade, who had volunteered to help new birders. Sightings included Blackburnian, Black and White, Chestnut-sided, Blue-winged, and Cape May Warblers, and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, along with many American Redstarts who flashed their yellow tails. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, plus Merlins were reported looking for lunch along the Woodland Trail. Bill said the Grey-cheeked Thrush was his best look at this bird in years.

We weren't the only car of birders to pull off at the Eastern Shore of Va. National Wildlife Refuge on the way to the bridge tunnel. A flock of adult and immature White Ibis, perhaps including one Glossy, flew just over our heads as they returned to the pond after the kayakers exited the creek. We observed a Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Belted Kingfisher, juvenile Red-tailed Hawk, Spotted Sandpiper, Laughing and Ring-billed Gulls, Tree Swallows, and two Bald Eagle nests with birds nearby.

Thanks to VSO Field Trip Coordinator Meredith Bell who planned the weekend and did her usually outstanding job.



American Oystercatcher



Immature Little Blue Heron with "Western" Willets.



A Laughing Gull with 2 Ring-billed Gulls.



Forster's Tern



Shirley Devan took this picture of Jerry Via leading the beach walk.

WBC September Walks & Field Trips

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

September 10 Bird Walk at YRSP—Geoff Giles

Since Hurricane Irene chased us out of New Quarter Park, we fled to another good venue, York River State Park, on short notice. It appeared to be a bit early still for fall migrants, including waterfowl, to be coming through, and the park was full of other activity, including canoeing, hiking, fishing, dog-walking and photography groups. Nevertheless, our few hardy participants saw and heard forty species. Among them were a pair of pine warblers, an adult with a young one tagging along, which came close and into the open for unusually good looks. At the Croaker Landing pier, there were royal and Forster's terns among the hungry gulls in evidence. Our "bird of the day" was the raccoon, as we had a loveable-looking family of four (parents with two wee ones) which foraged in the marsh near Taskinas Creek, undisturbed by the adult bald eagle who sat high in a dead tree limb surveying the marsh and the nearby river shore. Participants George and Virginia Boyles joined Geoff Giles for a lovely, if quiet, day in a beautiful setting.



Left to Right: Geoff Giles, George Boyles and Virginia Boyles.
Photo by Jeanette Navia

Kiptopeke Trip—rained out! —Geoff Giles

Our scheduled trip to Kiptopeke on September 17 was curtailed by very rainy weather. Our leader, Susan Powell, rallied with two carloads of intrepid WBC birders at Kiptopeke, only to find that the Songbird Banding Station and Hawkwatch were closed for the day due to weather. Dang!!

Susan offered rainsoaked birding in the nearby area from cars or a warm and cozy breakfast at the nearby Stingray's Restaurant. The vote was unanimous, and the breakfast was hearty and good! Spirits were not dampened, in spite of the weather! The Williamsburg contingent, intent on not going home without a good bird or two, stopped on the first island of the bridge tunnel and got some very close and good looks at ruddy turnstones.

Since Geoff Giles was going northward to the VSO weekend at Chincoteague NWR, Susan offered him a ride to his car via a brief spin through nearby Magotha Road. That short foray was rewarded with spotting a perched Eurasian collared



dove, plus views of a majestic (even though drenched) adult bald eagle. A similarly drenched merlin demonstrated his falcon skills stunningly, by taking off in pursuit of a sharp-shinned hawk which attempted to cross a nearby field. The merlin moved quickly up to intercept the sharpie and then climbed above its flight path and stooped like a falling comet at the sharpie twice, causing him to beat a hasty and disorderly retreat into the nearest woodline. All of the above was in a steady, drenching rain.

Pictured at Stingray's, happy and dry, are the WBC birders who braved the elements for the Kiptopeke trip. Going clockwise around the table from the foreground are: Jennifer Boag, Sara Lewis, Jan Lockwood, Cheryl Jacobsen, Dean and Ruth Gordon, Susan Powell, Geoff Giles and Tom McCary. Thanks to all for braving the elements!

The 24 September 2011 Greensprings Greenway Bird Walk by Bill Williams

Normally the fourth-Saturday-of-the-month community bird walk is accomplished at New Quarter Park in York County. However, storm damage and clean-up from last month's Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene necessitated closing that facility until further notice. Throughout the week prior to the walk an upper level low pressure system had stalled inland setting up a northward flow of warm, moist air over the mid-Atlantic, conditions that brought rainfall in torrents over the area. And so it was that cabin fever prompted 25 eager birders to tempt an 80% chance of rain in hopes of finding some fall migrants passing through the Greensprings Trail Greenway/Mainland Farm complex on the morning of Saturday, September 24. Just before the group convened at 7 AM a Great Horned Owl was singing nearby, picking up where an earlier Barred Owl left off. Predawn, 8 Veerys and 2 Swainson's Thrushes passed by, identified by each species distinctive nocturnal flight call notes.

Our first excitement of the morning was 8 Killdeer that watched us enter the trail parking lot, followed very soon thereafter by some Chipping Sparrows feeding in the nearby shrubbery. As soon as the gang set foot onto the trail boardwalk across the "beaver pond" the specter of roosting Black and Turkey vultures was locked in place by the odor of decomposition. The scavengers were with us throughout the morning, perched throughout the marsh area, finding little in the way of lift from the humid, overcast conditions. Tory Gussman spotted a conveniently placed immature Red-shouldered Hawk everyone got excellent spotting scopes views of, the latter activity interrupted by an Eastern Phoebe, a couple of Eastern Bluebird family groups, an accommodating Brown-headed Nuthatch, and a couple of Common Yellowthroats. Almost without a break from that action, Alex Minarik found a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak just about everyone saw before it flew forth in search of Dogwood berries and the like. We tried to get a singing White-eyed Vireo to make an appearance, which it briefly did for several folks. All of this was unfolding as bikers, walkers, and joggers were making their way along the user friendly Virginia Capital Bikeway Trail where we were assembled.

A crafty American Redstart, seen by Carol O'Neil, escaped the rest of the group unfortunately. As the group wended its back across the beaver dam an adult female Belted Kingfisher rattled around for all to see. One of the final species for the morning was an Eastern Wood-Pewee that had us all making sure what it was with spotting scopes and field guides at the ready. The total species list for the walk was 39. Thanks to all who made the way to the trail!

(Participants were: Joanne Andrews, Virginia Boyles, George Boyles, Jim Corliss, Joe Corliss, Inge Curtis, Ron Giese, Geoff Giles, Nancy Gore, Deane Gordon, Ruth Gordon, Tory Gussman, Ben Kaurich, Joyce Lowry, Rick Lowry, Alex Minnarik, Carol O'Neil, Betty Peterson, Larry Perlow, Sharon Plocher, Marjorie Smith, Jennifer Trevino, Liz Wallin, Margaret Ware and Bill Williams—walk leader.)

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.



October's bird photo

September bird was a Field Sparrow.



CALENDAR

Saturday, October 8	Due to New Quarter Park still being closed, the bird walk scheduled there has been moved to Beaverdam Park in Gloucester County. Meeting time for the those wanting to carpool will be at 7 AM at Colony Square Shopping Center. Walk will start at the main entrance to Beaverdam Park at 8687 Roaring Springs Road.
Thursday, October 13	HRBC Monthly Meeting, York County Public Library, 100 Long Green Blvd., Yorktown, Va. (this is the location off York-Hampton Highway) 7 PM. Program will be <i>Along Came a Spider</i> presented by Teta Kain.
Saturday, October 15	WBC Field Trip to Shirley Plantation. See page 2
Saturday, October 15	HRBC Field Trip to the Eastern Shore. This is an all day trip. Meet at 7 AM in the south toll plaza of the CBBT. Contact Marc Nichols at 865-3438 or mnichols@hampton.gov for further information
Sunday, October 16	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 AM, Jane Frigo, Leader
Wednesday, October 19	WBC Monthly Meeting. Bob Ake's Big Year. See front page.
Saturday, October 22	WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 7 AM, Bill Williams, Leader
Sunday, December 18	Save the Day—Williamsburg Christmas Bird Count. More information to follow.