



The Flyer

Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

Vol. 36, No. 9

www.williamsburgbirdclub.org

October 2012



President's Corner By Shirley Devan

A Bird Club could not ask for better friends than George and Val Copping at our local Wild Birds Unlimited! The Club recently received a \$595 donation from "the bird store" to sup-

port our scholarships for youth to attend Nature Camp and for biology graduate students at William and Mary.

In addition to great advice about how to best attract and take care of your backyard birds, George and Val and their associates often serve as the "clearing house" for identification of mystery birds in our area. Rarities often come to the attention of the Bird Club through Wild Birds Unlimited, whose staff knows who to call when an unusual visitor appears at a patron's feeder.

Next time you shop at Wild Birds Unlimited, be sure to let them know you are a member of the Williamsburg Bird Club. They will keep a copy of your receipt in a special file. Twice a year the Club receives a rebate of 5% on the pre-tax amount of your purchases.

And while you're in there, be sure to say "Thank You" to George and Val Copping and their wonderfully helpful staff. They are an important part of our Club's efforts.

Welcome New Members

Rock & Sue Moeslein—and we would like to welcome back as a member Winifred Buchanan.

October Meeting

The October program will be a summary of a three week trip Mike and Jeanne Millin took this past spring to Lima and the Amazon basin in Peru, Quito and the eastern Andes in Ecuador, and the Galapagos Islands. It will include some of the cultural aspects of the trip as well as birding and wildlife.

Mike became interested in birding around 2003 while he and his wife were visiting their daughter in Malaysia. Since then destination trips have included Denali, Cape May's Fall birding weekend, the Panama Canal zone, Utah, and Costa Rica. He and Jeanne moved to Williamsburg in 2007. Mike is also a member of the Colonial Nature Pho-

tography Club and he enjoys photographing what he sees as much as he enjoys birding and the outdoors.



Date: Wednesday, October 17, 7:30 PM, Millington Hall, Room 150. Jan Lockwood and Cheryl Jacobson will be providing the refreshments. The raffle for the two items highlighted in last month's newsletter will continue at the October meeting, with the drawing taking place at the end of the meeting

Don't forget to use your parking permit: Please place it on your dashboard when you park in front of Phi Beta Kappa Hall, the Art Museum, or Morton Hall.

October WBC Field Trip: Eastern Shore, Here We Come By Geoff Giles

The WBC field trip for October will be on Saturday, 20 October, and we will do a birding fling through the Eastern Shore of Virginia. That time of year is prime time for raptor migration (accipters, buteos, falcons and more!) and songbird migrants are still coming through. Plus a host of birds which rarely make it over our way will be at home on the Shore. We'll be led by an experienced trip leader who knows this area thoroughly!

En route and on our return, we will check Island One of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel for ducks, shorebirds, and seabirds, plus the mammals, such as harbor seals, otters and dolphins, that feed and frolic around the rocks there. A peregrine occasionally hunts there, too!

Officers

President	813-1322
Shirley Devan	<i>sedevan52@cox.net</i>
Vice-President (Programs)	871-3418
Joe Piotrowski	<i>joepiotrowski@cox.net</i>
Vice-President (The Flyer)	229-4346
Fred Blystone	<i>fmb19481@verizon.net</i>
Treasurer	221-6683
Ann Carpenter	<i>gac17D@juno.com</i>
Secretary	229-9764
Jennifer Boag	<i>Jaboag@cox.net</i>
Member-at-Large	221-8506
Geoff Giles	<i>tylerandal2@aol.com</i>
Member-at-Large	565-2597
Jeanette Navia	<i>Jnavia@gmail.com</i>
Past President	259-9559
Bob Long	

Committee Chairpersons

Field Trips	221-8506
Geoff Giles	<i>tylerandal2@aol.com</i>
Records & Bird Counts	229-1124
Bill Williams	<i>juwil2@wm.edu</i>
Library Liaison	565-6148
Lee Schuster	<i>dljschuster@cox.net</i>
Refreshments	565-0250
Barb Streb	<i>gandbstreb@verizon.net</i>
Membership/Webmaster	565-2597
Jeanette Navia	<i>jnavia@gmail.com</i>
Adopt-A-Highway	566-2615
John Fennell	<i>maffjff07@netzero.net</i>
Historian	Open

Updated Summary of Bird Data

The latest version of Bill Williams' *Summary of Local Bird Data through 2011: 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.

When we hit the shore, first hotspot will be Kiptopeke State Park for raptors and songbirds. Then it's on to the Eastern Shore National Wildlife Reserve, great spot for wading birds, including ibises, herons and egrets. We should see Northern Harriers at work there, and with a bit of luck that is another Peregrine Falcon spotting location.



Then it's on to Magotha Road to see if the Eurasian Collared Doves are there this year, and then on to Willis Wharf and other hotspots as time allows for more shorebirds, marsh birds, gulls and raptors! Will the Golden Eagle that was there last year return? This time of year is a great opportunity in this habitat to see birds which are otherwise hard to find in our region.

On Saturday morning, 20 October, we will meet to form carpools at Colony Square Shopping Center (just south of the intersection of Jamestown Road and 199) and plan to depart from there at 0700 hours. No signup needed, just join us. Should be a great morning of birding, and we hope to see you there! Any further info needed can be had from Geoff Giles by email at tylerandal2@aol.com or by phone at 757-645-8716.

August 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!

August 30. While birding Jamestown Island Bill Williams finds 1 Blue-headed Vireo, a new local early date.

September 2. Jane Frigo writes: "September began with hot and steamy weather. Rain threatened but Marilyn and John Adair, Virginia and George Boyles, Richard and Barbara Hudgins, Bill Ferris, Dave Youker, Tom Charlock, Jon Steinbach, Judy Remsberg, and Jane Frigo made it through the morning and spotted 42 bird species, two beavers, and one colorful swimming snake. A Pied-billed Grebe was spotted early in the morning, making the group look forward to the return of the winter ducks. Pileated Woodpeckers were quite active. The group was treated to a good sighting of a pair of Summer Tanagers. Green Herons were also still in the area but no one could find a Northern Mockingbird! All participants were looking forward to cooler fall temperatures and the arrival of winter residents."

September 3. At the Greensprings Greenway, Bill and Arlene Williams see 4 Common Nighthawks.

September 4. While birding at Drummond's Field/Mainland Farm Bill Williams finds a Buff-breasted Sandpiper (seen later that day by Shirley

Devan and Geoff Giles), while Carol O'Neil reports seeing 2 Chestnut-sided Warblers at Governor's Land.

September 6. Among other birds spotted by George and Rosemarie Harris at the Walkerton Sod Farm, were 1 American Golden Plover, 5 Pectoral Sandpipers, and 5 Buff-breasted Sandpipers.

September 6. The Craney Island Disposal Area survey group, consisting of Ruth Beck, Bill Williams, Virginia & George Boyles, H. Hortwitz, Dave Youker, and Brian Taber, came up with 67 bird species including 1,385 Northern Shovelers, 2 American Golden-Plovers, 17 Wilson's Phalaropes, and 1 Hudsonian Godwit.

September 10. Birding near Norge, Bill Williams has 1 Tennessee Warbler, 2 Nashville Warblers, 1 Connecticut Warbler, 1 Wilson's Warbler, and 5 Chesnut-sided Warblers (a new local high).

September 11. Among the species spotted by Bill Williams while birding at the Debord Tract were 1 Veery, 1 Tennessee Warbler, 1 Connecticut Warbler, 1 Magnolia Warbler, 5 Chestnut-sided Warblers and 1 Wilson's Warbler.

September 12. At Mainland Farm, Bill Williams finds 1 Savannah Sparrow (a new local early date).

September 16. Jane Frigo writes: "The walk began with fog over the reservoir and the temperature a little chilly. Rock Moeslein, Louis Johnson, Mike Lowry, Tom Charlock, Eileen O'Toole, Cathy Bond, Richard Hudgins, Stuart Sweetman, Geoff Giles, Dorothy Sharp, Ernie Miller, Mike Cuthriel, Jane Frigo, Brent and Laura Slaughter, Phil and Angelina Bogart, and newcomer Joyce Lowry participated in the morning walk. The group ran into Marc Nicholas who had scouted the White Oak Bridge and trail and had spotted a Solitary Sandpiper and American Woodcock missed by the rest of the group. Stuart Sweetman also made a trip to the Swamp Bridge and was able to add both Barred and Great Horned Owl, Veery and Swainson's Thrush, Field Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird and Common Grackle to the group list. Ernie Miller spotted a Magnolia Warbler among the American Redstarts foraging and got some amazing pictures. All totaled the group identified 61 species including 5 warblers. A lone Green-winged Teal was spotted among a group of Mallards. Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks were heard but not seen. For the second month no Northern Mockingbirds were spotted. It was a **great** morning."

September 20. While birding at near Norge, Bill Williams finds (among other birds) 1 Philadelphia Vireo, 1 Golden-winged Warbler, 1 Tennessee Warbler, 3 Nashville Warblers, 1 Connecticut Warbler, 1 Cape May Warbler, and 1 Blackburnian Warbler.

September 23. Lois Leeth (at her local watering hole in Florida) reports 15 Roseate Spoonbills, 6 White Ibis, 10 Mallards, 6 Snowy Egrets and 4 Great Egrets.

September 27. One Blue-headed Vireo is among the birds Bill Williams finds at Jamestown Island.

September 29. One male Connecticut Warbler was found by Bill Williams at Mainland Farm.

WBC Adopt-a-Highway Fall Cleanup



John Fennell, Adopt-a-Highway Chairman is planning the next semi-annual cleanup for Croaker Road on Saturday, October 27th. The group will meet at Garretts Grocery on Croaker Road at 9am with a rain date of Sunday, October 29th. John is asking for participants to send him confirmation via email (mafjff07@netzero.net) so that he can bring an adequate number of safety vests and sacks and so that he can send reminders and inform them of any changes in the schedule.

VSO Chincoteague Weekend

Article by Virginia Boyles

Photos by George Boyles

Our causeway crossing to Chincoteague in the early afternoon was a spectacular beginning for the VSO fall field trip. The weather was perfect, and the marsh was awash in the white dots of birds. We observed Snowy and Great Egrets, but were passing too fast to see the White Ibis. We saw the American Oystercatchers on the oyster beds, and also saw a Clapper Rail leap from the marsh's edge, call loudly, and quickly fly into the grass again. Rails were also visible each day on the walkway beside the bridge to Assateague. We saw a Black-crowned Night-Heron, Green Heron, several Great Blue Herons, Snowy and Great Egrets, and a Tricolored Heron from that walkway, and Forster's Terns perched along the bridge.

The parking lot of the Refuge Inn yielded the expected Brown-headed Nuthatch, but also a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in the pony pen. A ride around the Wildlife Loop gave us our first look at a flock of Blue-winged Teal,

Black-bellied Plover



with three Northern Pintails hiding among them, and our first Little Blue Heron of the weekend. A second one at Tom's Cove had drawn a group of admirers. We watched a Herring Gull trying to eat an eel on the sandbar of Swan Cove, with a backdrop of other gulls, terns, egrets, Greater Yellowlegs, Marbled Godwits, Willets, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, and a flock of Black Skimmers with striking youngsters. A Caspian Tern was followed by a chick still begging for food. We missed the American Golden Plovers spotted by others.

After being treated to an eagle flying by the window to spook the gulls while we ate dinner at Wright's with John and Marilyn Adair and Bill Ferris, we watched a Belted Kingfisher showing off before we joined other birders for the first VSO meeting. Bill Akers and Meredith Bell told us what to expect for the weekend, and Jerry Via gave an informative presentation about migration routes and distances.

On Saturday morning George joined Meredith and Lee Bell for the bike ride around the Wildlife Loop where a Lark Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Shovelers, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teals, and Mallards were seen. Also spotted at this site later were egrets, herons, Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plovers, Semipalmated, Least and Pectoral Sandpipers, a

Peregrine Falcon, and Sika Deer. I joined the beach walk led by Michael Beck, and watched people surf fishing and pulling in catch while Ruddy Turnstones came within a few feet checking the sand for bait or food tidbits. Three oystercatchers walked the beach, and a Bald Eagle landed on the beach quite near us. We observed Caspian and Royal Terns, and many Laughing, Herring, and Great Black-backed Gulls flying above Sanderlings running at the surf's edge.

We joined the boat trip that Ruth Beck led for the afternoon, and were treated to a dolphin display, an oyster bed with oystercatchers, cormorants, egrets, Marbled Godwits and Willets, plovers, gulls and the Caspian, Royal, and Forster's Terns enjoying lunch. One smaller white bird was not a Snowy Egret, but had the grayish green bill with black tip, and dull greenish gray legs of an immature Little Blue Heron. Oystermen were engaged in the backbreaking work of harvesting the beds, and Captain Carlton took us by the place where the Pony Swim is held. A Peregrine Falcon flew by, and a Bald Eagle observed the boat from a duck blind. Kingfishers chattered and perched, and several Clapper Rails dotted the edge of the marsh grass, while a Tricolored Heron searched the bank of an inlet. Before returning to the motel, we rode out to the beach to find the Piping Plovers and were directed to them by Larry Meade. Coming back, Cattle Egrets rode the backs of wild ponies beside the road. After the tally meeting, we picked up Dot Silsby and Nancy Gruttman-Tyler for a lovely dinner at Bill's Seafood downtown.



Sunday's walk on the Woodland Trail, led by Bill Akers, proved to be as much about mosquitoes as birds. A flock of American Redstarts greeted us initially, and we heard several Carolina Wrens, though we missed seeing the House Wren that others observed. However, a Black-throated Green Warbler was a life bird for me, and we had good sightings of a Black-throated Blue Warbler, as well as a Northern Parula. We saw Pine, Cape May, and Black and White Warblers. Others saw a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Cedar Waxwings flew into a tall tree, while Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers,



Clapper Rail

an eagle and a Peregrine Falcon were observed, and Robins were abundant, feeding on berries and ripe grapes. Northern Cardinals and Carolina Chickadees chipped and flew nearby. An Eastern Screech Owl returned Bill's call, and Red-breasted Nuthatches called and foraged in trees close to the trail, providing great views.

Our last beach run yielded a long look at the Little Blue Heron near the Black Skimmers, and a Black-bellied Plover still showing breeding plumage in the pools beside the parking lot. The water at high tide was washing up onto the beach as far as the parking lot and into the grassy areas, and the road to the Coast Guard Station was closed. This was troubling, considering the storm damage and reconstruction observed last year.

A stop at Kiptopeke on the way home added another good view of Red-breasted Nuthatches, Mourning Doves, Chipping Sparrows, and an American Goldfinch at the feeder, with several American Kestrels and Osprey soaring overhead. I won't mention the green snake I walked past while looking up for hawks!

The weekend weather was perfect, and the birds were abundant, though we didn't take the bus trip, or participate in the formal motorcade to the beach this year. That's how the tally reached nearly the total species count from last year, over 80 pairs of eyes searching for birds in many locations.



Willets at Sunrise

Gulls Gone Wild and the Kiptopeke Challenge—2012 edition

By Shirley Devan, Jennifer Trevino, Susan Powell, and Mike Powell

The wind was not our friend for the Kiptopeke Challenge, September 22, 2012, on the Eastern Shore. All teams struggled with the wind and the challenges it presents for finding beach birds and woodland species, particularly warblers, when we **know** they are there!

But—back to the beginning—Friday afternoon’s reconnaissance mission to see what was where. The “gulls”—Susan Powell, Mike Powell, Jennifer Trevino, and Shirley Devan—checked Taylor Pond Friday afternoon and discovered a couple of “good” birds. Then we traveled to Magotha Road to see if any birds were about. We did hear a Great Horned Owl and added that spot to the list for the next day’s itinerary if we needed the owl.

Then the pivotal decision that often determines the outcome: where to be at sunrise the day of the Challenge. So many places on the Eastern Shore are “go to” spots for early morning warbler movement. We decided to focus on Kiptopeke State Park and arrived at Taylor Pond by sunrise with two spotting scopes, field guides, iPhone apps, cameras, and binocs. Sure enough the previous day’s birds were still there—a lone Ruddy Duck, a Green Heron, Pie-billed Grebes, and Double-crested Cormorants. With our scopes scanning the pond’s shoreline we found two Wilson Snipes! The bird of the day so far. By 7:30 we had 21 species and we decided to check the Park’s “Songbird Trail.”

The sun hit the tree tops just as we reached the depth of the woods and songbirds moved fast and furious through the treetops. Highlights included Blue Grosbeaks, Connecticut Warbler, White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Indigo Bunting, Common Yellowthroat, Pine Warbler, American Redstart, Black-and-white Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, and Gray Catbird. After “ticking off” Brown Pelican, Forster’s Tern, Caspian Tern, and Great Black-backed Gull at the Kiptopeke Beach, our total was 50 species.

10:30: Time for dry socks, a bathroom break, and a snack!



Jennifer Trevino, Susan Powell, Shirley Devan and Mike Powell

Photo by Jan Frye

We all jumped in the SUV and Susan drove as we headed to one of the Eastern Shore’s famous birding hotspots—the Dump at Oyster! We bumped into another team, the Augusta Bald Eagles, and team member Jan Frye took our official group photo with the dump’s pond in the background. The Augusta Bald Eagles failed to share with us the Gallinule hiding in the corner of the pond! So we missed that great find. We added 11 species to our list with Black-crowned Heron being the best find. Cattle Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and Great Egrets plus Little Blue Herons were easy to spot along the edges.

Magotha Road and the Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge gave up only five species, including Cowbirds (yuck!) and Clapper Rail (yea!). By 1:30 our list sported 68 species.

As the team headed north to Chincoteague, an ice-cream break was in order! Machipongo Trading Company sells ice cream from the Island Creamery in Chincoteague. “Java Jolt” was just what the team needed to finish out the day!

Did we mention the wind? And the mosquitoes? Chincoteague was showing off two of its specialties! The wind was so stiff the team could not even walk to the beach. Scanning with a scope was very difficult; the mosquitoes were so thick that Jennifer, the only one with a hoodie, huddled in the car with her hood up! Birds were tallied slowly—one by one—not the expected dozen or so at a time that you expect at Chincoteague. The team kept seeing birds already on the list! Where were the all the shorebirds? And the raptors? Not a Northern Harrier to be seen; nor a Red-tailed Hawk. A Merlin put in an appearance. Despite the wind and mosquitoes, the team’s new “ticks” included a Tri-colored Heron, Pectoral Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, Gull-billed Tern, Royal Tern, Gadwall, and Northern Shoveler.

Still no Great Horned Owl or Barred Owl. The team drove down Magotha Road about 10:30 pm trusting the Great Horned Owl of the night before would still be hooting. Too bad for us—he did not give a hoot!

The final tally for the “Gulls” was 94 species. We did not get the most species, but we think we had the most fun and ate the most ice cream!! Can the winning team, with 121 species, say that?

Your support of the “Gulls Gone Wild” means so much to the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (CVWO). The Kiptopeke Challenge is their primary fundraiser each year and they “count” on supporters like you to support their mission of education, conservation, and research. Thank you from the “Gulls” and from CVWO! Just wait until next year! !

WBC September Walks

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



Front: Rock Moeslein and Nelson Ensley. Back: Joyce Lowry, Bill Williams, Deb Woodward, Virginia Boyles, John Shoosmith and Tom McCary. Missing from picture are Margaret Ware and the photographer, George Boyles.

Bird Walk on September 8th at NQP

Walk leader Tom McCary wrote “It was a pretty morning. Yes, there were sporting events there, but our intrepid band worked “around” the sportsmen. To be sure, my confidence was boosted by the presence of Bill Williams; indeed our bird list was likewise boosted by his remarkable skills. His discernment proved to be very helpful, to put it mildly.

The “bird of the day” was the immature Snowy Egret, which perched on a post right opposite us on the creek. Through the scope we could see all of his field marks quite clearly. He remained a long while and finally jumped down to forage at creek’s edge. A very tame little guy! Second place honors went to the Bobolinks which flew over our heads.”

Craney Island: a beautiful day in the dredge spoils!

By Geoff Giles

Muck is what it starts with. Not my normal idea of a rich substrate for a cornucopia of sustenance for a plethora of wildfowl, shorebirds, songbirds, and raptors. But at Craney that is exactly what it is. Thanks to the aircraft carriers and other large ships which use the port facilities at the mouth of the Chesapeake in the James River, the channel must be constantly dredged to prevent silt and shifting bottom from making it impassable. Enter the Army Corps of Engineers, not always credited with environmental projects of unquestioned benefit. But anyone who has visited Craney has to give them credit for hitting a home run with this one, as it is an incredible magnet for migratory and nesting species which have seen their scarce and vital undisturbed habitat decline to the point that a patch like Craney feels like heaven to them, for feeding and breeding.

So what is it about river-bottom **muck** that is so appealing? The stuff that is dredged from the bottom of the James and pumped into Craney to create an ever-larger island habitat looks every bit what it is called—dredge spoils. But appearances are deceiving. This brownish, soupy, well...muck, is loaded with unseen nutrients that collect at the bottom of our favorite estuary. These include the rich deposits of nitrogen and phosphorous from agricultural and suburban rainwater runoff and raw sewage that fuel micro-plankton blooms and feed the bajillions of microscopic vertebrates and invertebrates, plus decaying carcasses of larger critters returning their matter to the nutrient bank from which they came. Pump all of the above onto large expanses to bake in the sun, where it can sustain varied native plant life and the insect world that comes with it, and throw in large brackish and fresh water impoundments and **voila!** You have come up with the habitat that hungry migrant birds and some nesters not normally common to our area flock to.

Oh yes, there is one more critical ingredient, and that is Ruth Beck. Ruth has dedicated decades of her expertise, love for nature and yes, hard work, to advising the Corps of Engineers on how to maximize the benefits to wildlife of this unique habitat while the Corps does what it needs to do. We were fortunate to have Ruth, assisted by her son Michael, a birding

expert who comes by his expertise honestly, through both heredity and environment, lead us on a gorgeous late September morning through Craney. Both for protection of the public and for protection of nesting and migrating birds, the compound is normally closed to the public. Ruth opened the gates to an eager band from our Bird Club and led us on a tour of the choicest spots. She was thoughtful of our comfort in arranging a perfect, sunny, breezy, mild weather day as a backdrop for admiring and photographing the birds.

Avocets



By Inge Curtis

Among the first of the particularly beautiful sights was a flock of American Avocets which flushed and flew about in spectacular synchronized formation flights several times in response to passes by hawks and harriers. The avocet flock shimmered like sparkling white tatters with black patches highlighted against green lush marshland and clear blue sky. Their graceful coordinated

movements were reminiscent of Snow Geese, but they stayed lower in flight and conveniently returned to patches of water close enough for us to admire and photograph them between flights. There were a variety of peeps and shorebirds finding good things to forage, and oblivious to us, on muddy flats on all sides of that pond. Scopes, binoculars, field guides, but above all Ruth and Michael helped us to identify multiple species among the shorebirds, almost all adorned in their most inconspicuous migratory garb of fashionable brown feathers above with lighter bellies below, most with a few brown spots. No easy feat to pick out different ones among them. Among the ones that got our attention were White-rumped and Pectoral Sandpipers. Stilts, Whimbrels and phalaropes, which often come through Craney, did not appear that day, but happily there was plenty that did. The frolicking and hunting patrols of raptors, including Red-tailed Hawks, Merlins, and Northern Harriers, roused up the flocks and attested to the fact that the raptors on migration and resident are fully appreciative of the rich food supply available to them at Craney.

Pectoral Sandpiper



By Barbara Houston

The next stop at a small impoundment brought us the unexpected sight of a small bevy, very close up, of about nine Pied-billed Grebes, which went about their business paying us little mind. Pied-bills have been present but sparse in our area in summer, and the sight of this group was a happy reminder, as were several Northern Harriers in the course of the day, that our winter visitors are making their way south from their breeding grounds to where they will join us until next spring. As Ruth led us along trails among the shallow water impoundments we were frequently interrupted in our travels to squint at this or that shorebird, raptor or duck along the way.

We occasionally saw huge flocks of ducks taking flight on distant impoundments and as we approached one large expanse of water we were treated to closeup views of sizable flocks of Blue-winged Teals and Northern Shovellers. There were many Mallards and some Black Ducks recognizable among the vast flocks which preferred to keep their distance from us that morning. The reason became obvious when we noticed a female Peregrine Falcon on a high perch very close to us. She sat peering for a considerable time, surveying the impressive flocks of peregrine food arrayed on the expanses of water below and before her

Great Egret



By Inge Curtis

perch. Some of the aforementioned peregrine food, a large flock of Blue-winged Teal, gave us a spectacular view close-up of a tightly clustered flock of blue-wings doing evasive maneuvers in response to the peregrinations of the distinguished diner in their midst. The mosaic of those frenzied ducks flashing gorgeous light blue wing patches en masse is one of the visual images from this day that I will never forget. The peregrine patrolled effortlessly as if she were riding herd on the large flocks of ducks, but her nonchalant air belied fixed concentration on which of the stragglers in the flocks might be breakfast.

While the birdlife was the main attraction, we were also treated to fly-bys by a variety of butterflies, basking in the gentle sunshine and floating on a pleasant breeze. Along the banks of the James River we were accompanied by a seemingly endless stream of frolicking (and doubtless feeding) marble-nosed dolphins. The little ones hugging the sides of their moms were particularly cute. Those won mammal of the day competition hands down!

All of the above made for a lovely day among great company of kindred spirits. Our group, led by Ruth and Michael Beck, included Shirley Devan, Barbara Houston, Dave Youker, George and Virginia Boyle, John Adair, Jim Corliss, Cheryl Jacobson, Ruth and Dean Gordon, Geoff Giles, Ernie Miller, Dick Kiefer, Linda Scherer, Inge Curtis, Ron Giese and Sylvia Corbin. Thanks to one and all for making this a pleasant and memorable trip!

All of the above made for a lovely day among great company



Double-crested Cormorant

By Inge Curtis

Scope Line

By Barbara Houston



Bird Walk on September 22 at NQP.

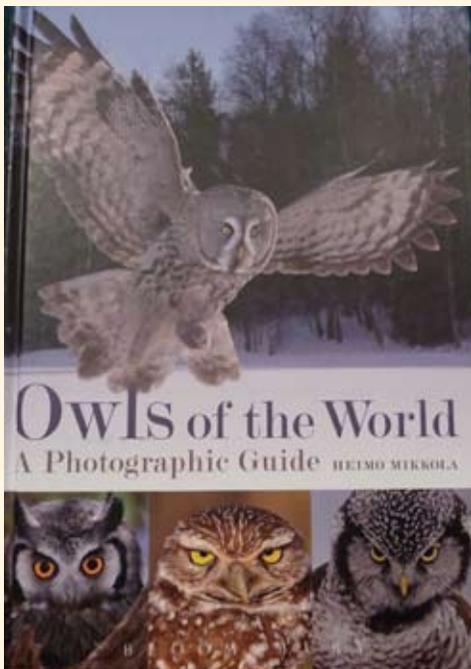


Bill Williams led the fourth Saturday walk that found 39 species of birds including 1 Clapper Rail, 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoos, 6 Red-headed Woodpeckers, 1 Black-and-White Warbler, 2 American Redstarts and 3 Northern Parulas.

Seated, left to right: John Adair (who set up photo), Joanne Andrews, Betty Peterson, Cathy Millar, Joyce Lowry, Cheryl Jacobson, Marilyn Fourney and Wendy Bardrof. Standing are George Boyles, David Taylor, Virginia Boyles, Bill Williams, Marilyn Adair, Tracey Detwiler, Bill Fox and Eric Bardrof.

Raffle at October 17th Meeting

Don't forget that raffle tickets for these two donated items will be sold at the October meeting. A drawing will be held at the end of the meeting.



Photos from Members



Forster's Tern photographed by Inge Curtis on September 12th.



Pied-billed Grebe photographed at Jones Mill Pond on September 27th by Inge Curtis.



George Boyles took this photo of a Snowy Egret during the September 8th walk at New Quarter Park.



Virginia Boyles photographed this Cooper's Hawk near her home on September 21st.

Photos from Members, cont.



These Marble-nosed Dolphins were photographed by Inge Curtis during the Craney Island field trip.



Inge Curis took this photo of terns on an old James River barge wreck on September 12th.



Inge Curtis photographed these three Mute Swans at Jones Mill Pond (on the Colonial Parkway) on September 27th.

Bird ID 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.



Photo for October



September's photo was of a Greater Black-backed Gull.

CALENDAR

Sunday, October 7	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 AM, Jane Frigo, Leader
Thursday, October 11	HRBC Monthly Meeting. See www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org for more info.
Saturday, October 13	WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 8 AM, Jim Corliss, Leader
Saturday, October 13	HRBC Field Trip to the Eastern Shore. See www.hamptonroadsbirdclub.org for info.
Wednesday, October 17	WBC Monthly Meeting. See Front Page
Saturday, October 20	WBC Field Trip to the Eastern Shore. See Front Page.
Sunday, October 21	HRBC Bird Walk, Newport News Park, 7 AM, Jane Frigo, Leader
Saturday, October 27	WBC Bird Walk, New Quarter Park, 7 AM, Bill Williams, Leader
Saturday, October 27	Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup. See Page 3.
December 7-9	VSO Field Trip to Va. Beach. Check www.virginiabirds.net for further information.