



The Flyer

Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

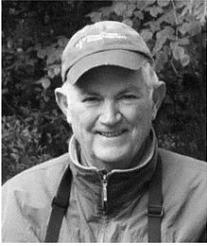
Vol. 40, No. 10

www.williamsburgbirdclub.org

December 2016

President's Corner

By Geoff Giles



It's that time of year when the view of the trees behind my feeder changes dramatically week to week. First the colors of the foliage begin their fall magic coloration changes, then

the leaves begin to swirl down in response to chillier breezes, and finally openings in the foliage afford me views of birds perched and foraging that a few weeks back would have been revealed by a movement of leaves in dense foliage, or not at all. All this appreciation of the nature around my home is due to weekly noting of what's going on at the bird feeder for Project Feederwatch. Although the purpose of the activity is to observe how many species and how many birds come to my feeder in a two-day count period weekly, I get much more enjoyment out of my count times.

As I wrote the last lines, the birds at my feeder scrambled into nearby trees for shelter, as a seemingly humongous immature Red-shouldered Hawk swooped into my yard and glided over to land atop my feeder. Fifteen to twenty feet away in all directions nervous songbirds which would otherwise have been zipping back and forth to the feeder flitted around in the protective cover of holly, juniper and wax myrtle leaf cover and watched the nearby hawk. His fierce and outsized talons and tearing beak made it manifestly clear that they should keep their distance. Nevertheless, when this hawk had made previous visits to the feeder and sat as long as an hour, the birds had resumed feeding less than a foot beneath him at the tray feeder while he stared at them from the roof perch just above. He and they knew that for all his grabbing and killing power, the hawk stood no chance of catching one of the small birds as they darted to and from the feeder.

Continued on page 3.

January 18th Club Meeting – 7 pm – BIRDS OF PREY

Please join us on Wednesday, January 18th, for a program with Bob Schamerhorn. He'll talk about some of our most exciting, fierce, and perhaps most interesting North American predatory birds, including hawks, owls, falcons, eagles and even vultures. The focus will be primarily on mid-Atlantic raptor species, with information on food, migration, adaptations and identification, as well as information regarding breeding to support the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas efforts.

December 18th – THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

By Jim Corliss

Please join us on Sunday, December 18th for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. It is the longest running citizen science birding project in the United States. This year marks the 117th count, and the 40th time that our Williamsburg Bird Club has participated. Our count area is a circle 15 miles in diameter centered at the Colonial Williamsburg Visitor Center and is divided into 11 teams. The 11 coordinators send out small groups to cover their areas, and then the coordinators tally the results for their areas. WBC then compiles the 11 reports into a singular report that is entered into the Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count database.

The Christmas Bird Count is a wonderful opportunity for *everyone* to get involved in valuable citizen science. Anyone can choose to team up with a party in the field for the entire day or participate through feeder watching. During last year's count we had 28 feeder watchers, more than one quarter of our participants, keeping an eye on their feeders throughout the day. During the winter months especially, our feeders are often where we spot unusual birds that aren't found anywhere else in the field all day.

Regardless of how you choose to participate, your help is greatly needed. Our goal is to have over 100 participants - a feat that we have only accomplished twice (last year and in 2013). The more eyes we have in the field, or on our feeders, will make the day more fun for everyone and help us provide the best data we can to this important project. If you want to help but you're not sure what to do, then contact me, Jim Corliss, and I will help connect you with an area coordinator. Phone: 565-0536. Email: jcorliss240@cox.net

2016 Executive Board

President 645-8716
Geoff Giles tylerandal2@aol.com

Vice-President (Programs) 206-1046
Cheryl Jacobson jjcherylj@comcast.net

Co-Vice-Presidents (The Flyer)
Shirley Devan 813-1322
sedevan52@cox.net

Judy Jones 293-8297
jjones184@cox.net

Treasurer 221-6683
Ann Carpenter carpent66@cox.net

Secretary 229-1775
Cathy Millar millar.cathy@gmail.com

Member-at-Large 707-3345
Jeanette Navia jnavia@gmail.com

Member-at-Large 634-4164
Jan Lockwood nzedr@msn.com

Past President 813-1322
Shirley Devan sedevan52@cox.net

Committee Chairpersons

Field Trips & Bird Counts 565-0536
Jim Corliss jcorliss240@cox.net

Records 229-1124
Bill Williams billwilliams154@gmail.com

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

Refreshments
Ruth Gordon ruthkagordon@gmail.com

Webmistress 707-3345
Jeanette Navia jnavia@gmail.com

Membership 704-562-6081
Lisa Nickel lnickel@gmail.com

Historian 229-2830
Tom McCary

Wild Birds Unlimited and Backyard Birder support Bird Club and birders

Visit Wild Birds Unlimited Store in Settler's Market. The Club receives a 5% rebate on the pre-tax amount our Club members. Remember to let them know you are a member.

At the Backyard Birder store at Quarterpath Crossing (near the Kingsmill Harris Teeter), receive a 10% discount on all merchandise. Just let the kind folks there know that you're a member.

Reported Bird Sightings for November 2016

We want to know what you're seeing in your yard and travels. Please share with Club members by sending your sightings to Judy Jones at jjones184@cox.net.

November 2: Linda Scherer reported "there were two Red-breasted Nuthatches visiting my sunflower seed feeders. A White-throated Sparrow was singing in the neighborhood that same morning. The sparrows have been coming to the front yard birdbath for several days."

November 2: Brian Taber found a Caspian Tern at the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry—"near Royal Tern, larger, dark cap, thick red bill."

November 3: Joyce Lowry observed a Yellow Warbler in Matoaka Lake and Woods—"bright yellow overall with red streaking on breast."

November 4: Arlene and Bill Williams saw the return of their Western Tanager. Bill tells us, "this male Western Tanager, first seen by Arlene on 4 November, has been noted almost every day since. A male Western Tanager (this one?) has been a late fall through early spring visitor to our feeders since one was first observed 6 January 2009."



November 4/5: Hayes Williams at White Marsh in Gloucester had a Brown Creeper on Nov. 4 and a Red-breasted Nuthatch on Nov. 5.

November 5: Shirley Devan explored Chickahominy Riverfront Park and tallies 22 species including an Osprey, Bald Eagle, both kinglets, and a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers.

November 5: Jan Lockwood discovered a Marsh Wren at Queens Lake Dam, telling us that the bird, small and round, white chest, short, spiky tail, brown cap with white eyebrow, was moving among stems of grass in an estuarine marsh at Queens Creek. Black and brown tail and back. Fussing "chock".

November 7: Virginia and George Boyles reported "the only exciting photos we took this month were of the Brant (six) on the hill at Messick Point boat landing Nov. 7th. We've seen them on the Eastern Shore, but that was a first for us in Poquoson, though Bill said they were expected at Grandview and Goodwin Islands this time of year. His book noted 55 Brant there on Nov. 11, 1991, and one at Hog Island Nov. 22, 2009. Sibley indicates that the ones without the white "necklace" are juveniles.

Continued on Page 7

President's Corner (continued from page 1)

I had seen a Red-shoulder grab and carry off only one bird at my feeder a few winters back. On that occasion the hawk had flown into my yard on a beeline and snagged a Red-winged Blackbird on the feeder. This bird had caught my attention by sitting day in and day out for a couple of days at the feeder while other birds had come and gone. The bird may have been sick, but its unusual (and imprudent) behavior had caught the hawk's attention as well as mine. Today the hawk stayed only ten minutes and then glided over to a perch in the tree line, where he faced into the woods. A few minutes later he glided down to the small creek behind our house where he regularly hunts frogs, snakes and other prey. The bird activity at my feeder had long since returned to full swing.

If you're not already doing Project FeederWatch, I recommend it highly.

Scientists who study changes in our nature are few and overworked. To put it succinctly, there are lots more of us than there are of them to make valid observations of what is occurring in our natural environment. Millions of folks like us with back yard birds are in an excellent position to collect and report observations of birds all over the country. By comparing data year to year and region to region which we provide, the scientists are able to gain and climate in ways that affect our birds, but ultimately affect us too. Plus, it is interesting and enjoyable. If you are new to this activity, you will find all you need to get going on the internet at ProjectFeederwatch.org. This activity is sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, one of the foremost centers of avian science internationally.



Photo of a White-throated Sparrow by Carol Annis

For whatever reason, the tufted titmice are way out in front on numbers at my feeder this year, with relatively few Carolina chickadees. Next most numerous are cardinals, which seem to have had a banner year. Bluebirds are around, as are Blue Jays but not always. Not yet present are sometimes winter treats of Pine Siskins, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Hope they're on the way. I have had one junco, which looked lost and did not stay long. Maybe the Cornell Lab is missing a bet by not counting squirrels at the feeders. But I guess that would throw open the door to raccoons, possums, flying squirrels and heaven knows what!



Photo of Ruby-crowned Kinglet by Barbara Houston

While we're on the subject of counting birds, hope you are getting pumped up for the Christmas Bird Count. It's a treat to get out and see what is out in nature year to year and to pool our data in the national counts. We have a loyal crew of section leaders who are happy to have new counters join their crew, so please join us if you would like to get out and count. If you prefer to stay snug at home and add the birds in your yard or neighborhood, please participate from the comfort of home and let your birds be counted by calling them in to add to our Williamsburg count tally. We welcome your additions to the count this year.

And one more thing as the birding year draws to a close. We look forward every year to the magnificent waterfowl that winter with us on our Bay and its tributaries. Each winter a hearty crew of well-bundled winter birders ventures out on the mouth of the Bay to the islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and the Virginia capes to get up close and personal with thousands of bay ducks, sea ducks, mergansers, gannets and much more on a winter boat trip. The last several years we have had close viewings and photo ops with harbor seals and humpback whales as a bonus. This trip departs and returns to a beautiful spot less than an hour away with a major league seafood restaurant at the dock. Yes, you can bury me right there when it's done – 'cause it won't get any better. This trip will be on 28 January this year. Keep an eye out for sign-up instructions. Hope you will bundle up and join us!!

It's Time to Pay Your Dues!

2017 is our Club's 40th year! And we have 40 years of community support to celebrate and continue!

Almost since the beginning, the Club has awarded scholarships to W&M biology graduate students. These "**Ruth Beck & Bill Sheehan Ornithological Research Grants**" provide critical funds for the field research these students need to complete their theses. As you know, grad students are not "flush" with liquid capital and these funds often pay for specialized equipment, gas, and other unanticipated expenses. We plan to award at least three scholarships in 2017.

Since 2008, the Club has awarded the "**Bill Williams Nature Camp Scholarships**" to local youth to attend this two-week experiential camp focusing on natural history/environmental studies. Often these camp experiences are "life-changing" for young people and lead them to a future in science and biology. We hope to sponsor three youth again in 2017.

Since 2010, the Club has provided **bird feeders and birdseed for the "Developmental PlayGroup"** room at Child Development Resources (CDR) here in Williamsburg. These children are attracted to the room's large windows and often gaze right at the feeding birds. Often this provides a wonderful opportunity to expand a child's language. CDR's birdseed needs now exceed what the Club has been able to provide, so we turn to you to supplement what the Club can provide.

Have you ever checked out a "bird" book at the local library and found a bookplate recognizing the Bird Club? For the past 35+ years the Club has donated funds to the Williamsburg Regional Library for the purchase of "bird" books and media. The Club's donation allows the library to add over a dozen titles each year.

These research and community commitments total over \$5000 per year. Our membership dues alone are not sufficient to support these important efforts. Wild Birds Unlimited in Williamsburg is very generous in supporting our Club, but we still **NEED YOU** if we are to continue these same levels of support.

We know many worthy organizations compete for your donations. Your Bird Club dues and donations stay right here in Williamsburg supporting and improving our community.

You've been very generous in the past! If you still support these projects and believe they are as important as we do, then I trust you will respond with an extra donation. We greatly appreciate your support at whatever level you choose. So please consider an extra donation to the Club for the Ruth Beck & Bill Sheehan Ornithological Research Grants Fund,

the Bill Williams Nature Camp Scholarship Fund, and the CDR Birdseed Fund. Each of these is an investment in the future and reflects our Club's commitment to education and research.

Remember – we can't do anything without **YOU**. We look forward to your participation in our 2017 events and your continued financial support.

Heads' Up – It's a New Field Guide

A Note from Barbara Houston

There is a new field guide that may be of interest to members of the Williamsburg Bird Club. Jon Storm and his colleagues at the University of South Carolina Upstate created it to help the general public easily identify and learn about things they may encounter in their backyard or while hiking a local trail or greenway. *The Field Guide to the Southern Piedmont* is a picture-based identification guide to over 700 species in the region, including common animals, plants, fungi, slime molds, animal tracks, skulls and bones, rocks, minerals, and nature sounds. The field guide can be downloaded as an eBook for free to any electronic device from www.uscupstate.edu/fieldguide. Although the guide focuses on the Carolinas and Georgia, it would still be a very useful resource for most of Virginia. For more information, Jon can be reached at jstorm@uscupstate.edu.

2017 Our New Officers & Committees

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| President: | Bill Williams |
| Vice-President, Programs: | Cheryl Jacobson |
| Vice-President, Newsletter: | Judy Jones |
| Treasurer: | Ann Carpenter |
| Secretary: | Cathy Millar |
| Member-at-Large: | Gary Carpenter |
| Member-at-Large: | Deane Gordon |

Committee Chairs

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Past President: | Geoff Giles |
| Field Trips: | Shirley Devan |
| NQP Bird Walks: | Jan Lockwood |
| Bird Counts: | Jim Corliss |
| Records: | Bill Williams |
| Library Liaison: | Lee Schuster |
| Refreshments: | Ruth Gordon |
| Membership: | Lisa Nickel |
| Webmistress: | Jeanette Navia |
| Historian: | Tom McCary |

A "Tail" of 300 Species

By Cheryl J. Jacobson

"Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the Visible." Tony Robbins

"The going is the goal." Horace Kallen

For 2016, I set goals of continuing to improve my bird identification skills, adding more photos to my eBird lists, and seeing and learning more about all of Virginia. To accomplish this I decided to do a Bigger Year (increase the number of bird species I have seen in Virginia).

In 2013 (my first year of serious birding in Virginia) I saw 230 species, 2014 was 263, and 2015 was 270. I knew that 300 species would be a big stretch but that is what I decided to do. On November 11th, I saw my 300th bird and joined the ranks of four other birders who had also seen at least 300 species of birds in Virginia. The bird (*pictured at the right*) was a very handsome Scissor-tailed Flycatcher near Franktown on the Eastern Shore.



Truly, the going was the goal and I saw some very lovely places in Virginia that I went to because a rare bird/or one I hadn't yet seen for the year had been seen at that location. Some of them were: Lickinghole Creek, near Crozet (Black Swan, Common Raven); Silver Lake (Trumpeter Swan); Machipongo River near Willis Wharf (Western Grebe); Back Bay NWR (King Rail, Buff-breasted Sandpiper); Hog Island WMA (Black-necked Stilt); Gull Marsh (Long-billed Curlew); Gloucester Court House (Ruff, Stilt Sandpiper, Yellow-breasted Chat); Route 604 near Wakefield (Eastern Whip-poor-will); Piney Grove Preserve (Red-cockaded Woodpecker); Purvis Lane (Loggerhead Shrike) (*photo on the left*); Warbler Road

(Cerulean Warbler, Canada Warbler); Poor Mountain Natural Area Preserve (Grasshopper Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager, Bobolink); Guinea Marsh (Nelson's Sparrow); NE Suffolk (Lazuli Bunting).

These are just a few of the great places to find birds in Virginia...so set a goal and get going in 2017.

Future Programs....

February 15, Dr. Leslie Bulluck from VCU will speak on her work with Prothonotary Warblers and will discuss the food web with an emphasis on the impact of toxic algae on the Prothonotary Warbler's diet.

March 15, W&M student Nick Newberry will share his research with us. How does having a diverse population of birds in your yard increase the dollar value of your home? Nick will present information regarding his research findings. His study was a follow up to a study by Farmer, Wallace, and Shiroya on Bird diversity and indicates of ecological value in urban home prices.

January 1st Greensprings Boardwalk Bird Show

Join Shirley Devan New Year's Day – Sunday, January 1, 2017 – at the Greensprings Trail Boardwalk for the 12th Annual "New Year's Day Boardwalk Bird Show." We'll meet on the "old" boardwalk over the old beaver pond from 1–3 pm (not the Virginia Capitol Trail boardwalk.)

Park in the lot at the end of Eagle Way, beyond Jamestown High School. Come as you are; bring visiting family, friends and children; come early, stay late or just drop by. Celebrate the New Year with a birding adventure close to home with birding friends.

Remember, every bird is a year bird on New Year's Day! Hope to see you there.

New Quarter Bird Walk on November 12th

On November 12th, a valiant group battled the cold weather to head to New Quarter Park for the Saturday morning bird walk. In attendance were:

Back row, L - R: Tom McCary, Diane Joyner, Liam Joyner, Susan Nordholm, Jan Lockwood, Ann Marie Wojtal, Bob Wojtal, Alyce Byrne, Bob Byrne

Front row, L - R: Shirley Devan, Nancy Barnhart, Joyce Lowry, Susan Wolfe, Barbara Neis, Portia Belden

Not in the photo: Anne-Marie Castellani



Reitz, Jim Corliss Front Row: Catherine Flanagan, Betty Peterson, Geoff Giles, Jan Lockwood, Oliver Patterson, Sapphie (on Oliver's lap), Jean Flanagan

New Quarter Bird Walk on November 26th

Those chilly winter mornings on the Queen's Creek floating dock are back, but eleven birders braved the wind on Saturday to tally 22 species. We had some nice surprises including a flyover by a pair of Wood Ducks, four different Bald Eagles, and an Eastern Meadowlark - a bird seldom seen in New Quarter Park. But where were the woodpeckers? The only woodpecker entry we could make on eBird was "woodpecker sp," in this case coming from a bird that we could hear pecking on a tree but could not find. But fun was had by all, especially by Sapphie, our canine friend who was also an incredibly patient birder.

Back Row: Lieve Keeney, Cathy Patterson, David Hall, Connie

February 3-5 at the Outer Banks – VSO's Winter Field Trip

Make plans to join us for the VSO's Winter field trip at the Outer Banks of North Carolina February 5-7, 2017! The weekend's leaders include Bill Akers and Jerry Via, as well as VSO field trip co-chairs Lee Adams and Meredith Bell. To help us plan for the weekend, please register in advance. Provide the names of participants in your party with a telephone number and email address so we can contact you if needed. Register with Meredith Bell, trip coordinator, at merandlee@gmail.com or 804-824-4958. The weekend itinerary will be sent via email to all registrants a few days before the trip, and it will also be available at the front desk of the hotel Thursday evening.

The Comfort Inn South Oceanfront in Nags Head will be the trip headquarters again this year. The special VSO room rate is \$70 for oceanfront and \$62 for bay-view plus tax. Contact information for the hotel is: 8031 Old Oregon Inlet Road, Nags Head, NC 27959; Phone: 252-441-6315. Reservations must be made by January 2, 2017 to get the special VSO rate.

VERY Important! All VSO field trips will have a registration fee of \$20 for NON-members only. This fee will be applied to an individual membership that will be active until the end of 2017. If 2 or more people from the same family register, the registration fee will be \$25, which covers a family membership. Non-members can join in advance at <http://www.virginiabirds.org/membership-and-donate/> or pay the registration fee on the first evening of the event.

Sightings (continued from page 2)



Cheryl's Ruby-crowned Kinglet

November 6: Cheryl Jacobson wrote, "You asked me for a photo of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet for the newsletter. Others were saying they have never seen one coming to suet and this little guy comes to mine all the time. He is a very difficult bird to get a photo of so I had to do it through the window...took many attempts...this one shows a little ruby dot on the top of his head. He is a pretty bird."

November 7: Birders and Master Naturalists Nancy Barnhart, Virginia Broome, Connie Reitz, Cheryl Jacobson, Les Lawrence, Judy Jones, Shan Gill, Deane Gordon and Sue Mutell saw and heard a Marsh Wren at York River State Park – "four birders heard its distinctive gurgling notes from the marsh reeds."

November 10: Jim Booth reported "the first Dark-eyed Junco of this season in my yard. This is two days later than last year's first sighting."

Jeanette's Red-headed Woodpecker

November 16: Jason Strickland observed a Blue-headed Vireo at Harwoods Mill Reservoir, York County.



November 19: Jeanette Navia took a photo of this Red-headed Woodpecker at Powhatan Creek Trail.



November 20: Lois Leeth related the tale of an immature Red-shouldered Hawk who fell behind a group of boxes in St. Augustine and became trapped. With a little effort, she helped to rescue him—a happy ending.

Lois's Hawk in a Blanket

November 20: Mike Jaskowiak observed 5 Frigatebirds circling a school of fish about 200-300 yards off the inlet between Singer Island and Palm Beach Island in Florida. They were identifiable by their long tails and verified by a local fisherman.

November 22: Shirley Devan was happy to record a Hermit Thrush on her Project Feederwatch tally.

November 23: Jan Lockwood spied a Red-breasted Nuthatch and on...

November 25: Jan Lockwood discovered a very 'camera shy' Hermit Thrush at her feeder.

November 30: Lois Leeth was pleased to spot 10 adult White Ibis and 5 immatures feeding in the grass in front of the condo.



Jan's Red-breasted Nuthatch

Vultures Keep Disease at Bay

By Jessica Ausura, Bird Nerd

Reprinted with permission from the author

Photo by Judy Jones

Vultures are usually looked upon as ugly birds, ones to shy away from. What folks might not realize is that, thanks to our vultures, disease is kept at bay. Vermin miss many chances to wallow in rotting animals and spread potential bacteria and viruses. We have two types in Hampton Roads, the Black Vulture and the larger Turkey Vulture, distinguished by its naked red head. If you ever drive on Interstate 64 in the mornings or afternoons, you will see a large group of them roosting on either the cell tower at the J. Clyde Morris Boulevard exit or hunkered down on the roof of the church nearby.

Both birds are classified as raptors, but they are not raptors in the traditional sense, in that they feed mostly on dead animals. They are carnivores like their other raptor cousins, and they soar high on thermals looking and sniffing for rotting meat.

Both vultures have mostly naked heads so that bacteria, blood, and food particles don't collect there. They sit and soak up heat from the sun to dry off, cool off, or warm up and ride the building thermals.

Turkey Vultures have low, teetering flight patterns, and it's thought that they stay low in order to smell freshly dead food, whereas Black Vultures, who are more compact with strong wing beats and a higher aerial pattern, don't have a strong sense of smell, so they watch the Turkey Vultures to find food. (Turkey Vultures have been known to find gas leaks, drawn to the chemicals used to scent odorless gas.)

Vultures also have great long-distance vision, but it's limited to 60 degrees to protect them from the glare of the sun above.

Turkey Vultures are polite and will only feed one at a time, even though many may congregate around a carcass at once. They can clean up more than two pounds of rotting meat in a minute. They are often solitary but can form in large roosting groups of dozens to hundreds at a time.

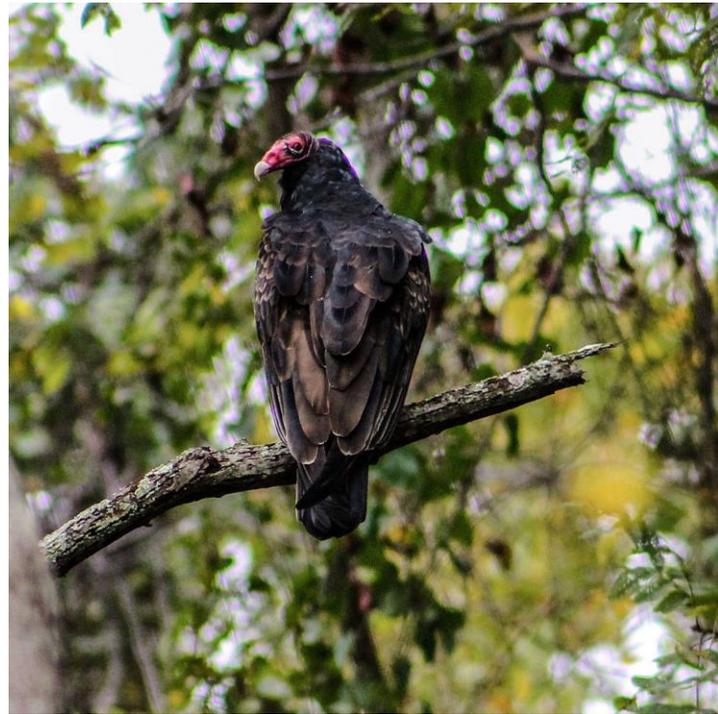
Vultures are easy to identify in flight by the long 'fingers' at the ends of their wings and the 'V' shape in flight when you are looking at them head or tail on. Eagles, hawks, and falcons appear more flat when in flight. Turkey Vultures are dark brown while Black Vultures are a drab black with stubbier wings and tail, a gray head and white patches under their fingertip feathers.

Throughout the years, there has been controversy over Black Vultures as they were thought to be responsible for spreading disease, but it has been proven that they actually help prevent the spread of rabies, anthrax, and more. Vultures were trapped, killed, and poisoned until the 1970's, and then they faced the threat of DDT and lead-poisoning from eating the carcasses of contaminated animals. While lead-poisoning is still a concern, the eradication of DDT has helped this species to rebound.

In other parts of the world, species of vultures have faced near decimation from pesticides used to poison lions and, recently, from veterinary use of diclofenac in cattle. This has a compounding effect, causing an explosion of rats and feral dogs, as well as a \$34 billion price tag from the rabies increase. A ban of diclofenac is now helping vultures as they slowly rebound.

These birds will lay one to three eggs once a year, and it is thought that they mate for life, living up to 16 years in the wild. They have extensive mating rituals, soaring and dipping in the sky, sometimes for as long as three hours. They maintain strong family bonds, feed their young for up to eight months, and co-parent.

So even though some might think of them as ugly or repulsive, fit only for Halloween decorations, vultures are a vital part of our ecosystem. Smart and social, they happily clean up after all of us.



Photos From Our Talented Members



(left) George Boyle's photo of one of the Brandts they saw on November 7th at Messick Point.

(Below) Barbara Houston's Cape May Warbler on October 26th at Henricus Park.



(Above) Nancy Barnhart captured these two just as hunting season began.

(Right) Mike Mike Jaskowiak's photo of Frigatebirds from the Galapagos Islands.



Jan Lockwood spotted this pair of Red-shouldered Hawks hanging out on the baseball diamond fence at the Queens Lake Community Park early in the morning of December 4th.



Raptors Are Amazing

At our last bird club meeting, on November 18th, we were lucky to have the talented folks from Busch Gardens bring in a few raptors for us to see and admire. It was a very educational as well as entertaining meeting, with the flight of the kestrel and the Harris Hawk leaving us still wanting to duck. But the star of the evening was a raptor most of us



had never seen before, a Tawny Frogmouth from Australia. This photo, by Barbara Houston, captures his unique look well.

We are very grateful to Cheryl Jacobson for arranging this unique program (and for all the others she spends so long organizing!)

(Below) Susie and Kendall from Busch Gardens join Geoff and Cheryl for a photo op with the Tawny Frogmouth!



Many thanks to our outgoing president Geoff Giles for his years of hard work and leadership on our Board. We are so grateful for his time and efforts on our behalf and welcome the

fact that his support continues on in his role as "Past President".



CALENDAR

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sunday, December 4 | Hampton Roads Bird Club sponsors Bird Walk at Newport News Park, 7 am. Meet in the parking lot near Ranger Station. |
| Saturday, December 10 | Williamsburg Bird Club (WBC) sponsors Bird Walk at New Quarter Park, 8 am. Meet at the parking lot near the office. |
| Sunday, December 18 | Williamsburg Area Christmas Bird Count! Save the date!! |
| Sunday, December 18 | Hampton Roads Bird Club sponsors Bird Walk at Newport News Park, 7 am. Meet in the parking lot near Ranger Station. |
| Saturday, December 24 | WBC Bird Walk at New Quarter Park, 7 am. Meet at the parking lot near the office |
| Sunday, January 1 | Greensprings Boardwalk Bird Show, 1:00-3:00 at the boardwalk by the Old Beaver Pond (see page 5 for more details) |
| Wednesday, January 18 | WBC Monthly Meeting, 7 pm, Andrews Hall, Room 101 on W&M Campus. |

Project Feeder Watch Has Begun!

Sign up – If you have not yet signed up, go online to: <https://join.birds.cornell.edu>. During the season, it takes a few weeks from when you sign up for your kit to arrive with your ID number and for your ID number to be activated in Your Data.

Select your count site – Choose a portion of your yard that is easy to monitor, typically an area with feeders that is visible from one vantage point.

1. **Choose your count days** – Select two consecutive days as often as once a week (less often is fine). Leave at least five days when you do not count between each of your two-day counts.



Photo of a Tennessee Warbler by Barbara Houston, taken on October 26th

How to count – Watch your feeders as much or a little as you want over your selected count days. Record the maximum number of each species visible at any one time during your two-day count. *Keep one tally on each of both days.*

Do not add your counts together!

What to count – Please count

- all of the individuals of each species in view at any one time
- birds attracted to food or water you provided
- birds attracted to fruits or ornamental plantings
- hawks and other predatory birds that are attracted by the birds at your feeders



Photo of a Red-breasted Nuthatch on the feeder taken on November 8th by Nancy Barnhart

But do not count

- birds that simply fly over the count site, such as Canada Geese, Turkey Vultures, or Bald Eagles.
- birds seen on non-count days

Report your counts –

- Submit counts through the Your Data section of the FeederWatch website. Please join Project Feeder Watch and help as Citizen Scientists. Your work does make a difference!



(Left) Photo of a Common Snipe taken by Jan Lockwood over at New Quarter Park

Photo of an immature Red-headed Woodpecker on Jamestown Island, taken by Nancy Barnhart on November 19th

