

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the
Williamsburg Bird Club
Wednesday, October 16, 2013
Room 101, Andrews Hall, W&M, 7:30 pm**

Attendance: 45

President's Remarks:

- President Shirley Devan opened the meeting and welcomed club members, guests and visitors. In response to her request for new folks to identify themselves, there were 2 W&M Freshman students.
- Shirley reminded people to put Parking Permits on their dashboards to avoid being fined.
- Shirley enquired about recent bird observations, especially new migrants. Redstarts, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Black-throated Blue Warblers, Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and White-throated Sparrows had been noted.

Upcoming Events:

- Shirley asked Geoff Giles, Field Trip Coordinator, to tell the group about the upcoming field trip to Grandview Beach in Hampton on Saturday, October 19th. Geoff reported that participants should meet at 7:30am at Colony Square Shopping Center on Jamestown Road to carpool. The walk led by Dave Youker will include marsh and shoreline so an interesting variety of birds is anticipated esp. as a cold front may push in new birds.
- Saturday, October 26th, Shirley reported that there will be the customary 4th Saturday bird walk at New Quarter Park to be led by Bill Williams. Meet in the NQP parking lot at 7 am.
- Shirley reminded members that our club had adopted the Western Shore Marshes Important Bird Area and that a beach clean-up and bird survey has been scheduled for November 9th. WBC will join forces with the Hampton Roads Bird Club and probably a couple of Master Naturalist groups. Dave Youker will lead this event. More info will be in the November newsletter.
- Shirley described the upcoming VSO Field Trip to VA Beach on the first weekend of December (6-8). This adventure includes a Friday trip to Pleasure House Point in VA Beach. This is a new birding destination as it is a recently opened park. Shirley guaranteed lots of Yellow-crowned Night Herons can be seen there. Saturday trips are to CBBT islands and Fisherman Island. Sunday trips are to Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park. More info is available in our October newsletter.
- Shirley asked that members mark their calendars for the Audubon Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 15th. Bill Williams is the compiler. Last year there were just over 80 participants. This year the goal is 100. Bird feeder watchers are most welcome whether it be for 30 minutes or 2 hours. More info to follow in the newsletter.
- Shirley reported that at the next bird club meeting, November 20, there will be a book fair. Members are encouraged to bring in extra fiction/nonfiction books about birds that they are willing to part with. A bird box will be available for a donation of 1-2 dollars to the Bird Club. Left over books will be given to the Williamsburg Library.

Announcement:

- Shirley announced that refreshments tonight are provided by Geoff Giles and Barb Streb.
- Shirley reported that this is the time of the year for selecting new board members for the WBC. This year the Nominating Committee of Jeannette Navia, Bill Williams, and Shirley Devan are seeking to be filled three positions: President, VP of Programs, and VP for Newsletter. Shirley asked that members consider serving and contact a member of the Nominating Committee.

Program:

Shirley introduced Fletcher Smith of the Center for Conservation Biology who is the Center's primary rocket netter and has worked with a variety of bird species throughout the western hemisphere, following migrants from their breeding grounds to winter grounds. His current research projects include work with Whimbrels, Red Knots, Marsh Sparrows, and neo-tropical migrants and he also manages the Saw-whet Owl banding program. He presented a very informative program titled *Satellite Tracking and Migration Ecology of the Whimbrel*. He reported the results of 5 years of satellite tracking. The Eastern Shore of VA is a critical stop over during their migratory route to and from Mackenzie Delta in Canada to NE South America (ex. Brazil). Whimbrels have suffered a decline by 50% since 1994 and the study sought to establish the connectivity of the Eastern Shore to their breeding grounds and wintering sites as well as more info about their migratory routes. To date, 32 Whimbrels have been tagged. One of the Whimbrels, Hope, flew into a hurricane struggling at 9 mph (average flight speed 35-45 mph) and rode out the back side of the hurricane at 92 mph and became an international star! The large size of Whimbrels has made them an attractive target of hunters in their wintering grounds. Hope was killed by a sport hunter in Guadeloupe where she'd landed to rest and feed. This attracted international outrage which helped establish a 3 year moratorium on hunting Whimbrel in Guadeloupe.

At the end of the meeting a free raffle was held.

Shirley adjourned the meeting at 8:55 pm and refreshments were served at the back of the room.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary, Williamsburg Bird Club
October 22, 2013