

**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the
Williamsburg Bird Club**
November 20, 2013
Andrews Hall, Room 101, W&M, 7:30 p.m.

Attendance: 48

President's Remarks:

- President Shirley Devan opened the meeting and welcomed club members, guests and visitors. She reminded them to make sure they'd put Parking Permits on their dashboards.
- Shirley thanked everyone who'd brought books to the club's first Book Fair and gave additional thanks to those who selected some of the books and donated a dollar or two to the Bird Club's treasury to support the Club's 2014 Scholarships that go towards Nature Camp and Ornithology Research Grants. She announced that the club was also having a small clearance of Bird Club hats for \$15 and shirts for \$20 donations.
- Shirley noted that Project Feeder Watch sponsored by Cornell Lab of Ornithology began since the last meeting and enquired how many were participating. A number of members raised their hands. She enquired about what birds members have been seeing recently. Hairy Woodpeckers, Hermit Thrush, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flickers were reported.
- Shirley announced that the Audubon Christmas Bird Count was approaching and to mark Sunday, December 15, 2013 on the calendar. She invited Bill Williams to add further comments. Bill Williams said the bird count covers an area 7 ½ miles in all directions from the CW Information Center. He invited folks to participate for a full or half day or for any amount of time as feeder watchers. He also noted the importance of keeping track of the amount of time spent keeping count. Shirley said that last year 82 people participated and if at least 18 more join this year, it will bring the number of participants to 100. She said there will be additional information in the December newsletter about how to participate. Bill reported that 2 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds have showed up at two different homes and that each time the hummingbirds were attracted to the red blossoms of pineapple sage. So he advised to keep an eye on pineapple sage for more hummingbird sightings. At Shirley's urging, Bill also reported that a Western Tanager (possibly the same bird) has showed up again for the 5th year in a row at his feeder on November 10th. Shirley noted the opportunity for members to add a Western Tanager to their 2013 bird list.
- Shirley announced the upcoming regular 4th Saturday bird walk at 7:00 a.m. at New Quarter Park led by Bill Williams. After the bird walk, from 9:30 to noon, folks are invited to stay for a thank you celebration being held for volunteers and visitors during which hot cider and cookies will be served and materials provided to make a pinecone bird feeder. Bill Williams will be signing his book, *The Birds of Virginia's Colonial Historic Triangle*. Shirley warned that there are fewer than 20 copies left so this is a chance to get one or more and have it signed by the author!

- Shirley announced that refreshments tonight are being provided by Sharon Polcher, Patty Maloney and Jennifer Trevino.

New Business:

Bird Club Elections

Shirley announced the slate of nominees for the Board for 2014 as proposed by the nominating committee of Shirley Devan, Jeannette Navia and Bill Williams.

- President - Geoff Giles
- Vice President – Programs: Cheryl Jacobson
- Co-Vice Presidents- The Flyer: Fred Blystone and Shirley Devan
- Secretary – Catherine Millar
- Treasurer – Ann Carpenter
- Member at Large – Jeanette Navia

After asking if there were any nominations from the floor, Shirley asked if there was a motion from the floor to accept this slate of officers. Lucille Kossodo made the motion which was seconded by Bob Long. The slate was unanimously elected by the members of the meeting without further discussion.

As a result of the election, there is an opening on the Board for the Member-at-Large. The new Board will appoint the person to fill that position in January.

Announcements:

- Rock Moeslein of the Virginia Living Museum had two announcements. (1) He said the VLM is holding a Western-themed kids gathering on New Year's Eve called Noon Year's Eve and that he is in need of the loan a Texas Longhorn skull for decorations! Much laughter ensued. (2) The VLM is holding the second annual Birding Cup which is a 24 hour count the species competition. This year there will be an added novice category in which half of the team have 2 years or less experience. It will be held from 6:30 p.m. April 11 to 6:30 p.m. April 12, 2014.
- Shirley showed the membership the certificate from the Virginia Department of Highways given to John Fennel in recognition of his efforts over the past 23 years in the Adopt-the- Highway program. Shirley then reported that the Bird Club officers had decided the Club was no longer going to participate in the Adopt-the- Highway program due to very poor participation by club members over the last couple years. It appears that members would rather be out bird watching. She thanked John Fennel for his service.

Program:

Shirley introduced Mike Wilson of the Center for Conservation Biology who presented *Silent Night: The Decline of North American Nightjars*. Michael reported that very little has been known about Nightjar's (locally: Whip-poor-will, Chuck-will's-widow, Common Nighthawk) biology due to difficulty studying their nocturnal lifestyle. In recent years, there has been a general belief that Nightjar populations in North America have been declining, but until recently there has not been a widespread survey program to systematically document this trend. The U.S. Nightjar Survey was launched as a citizen science project in 2007 by Mike Wilson to gather information on population changes and responses to land use. Mike described the interesting life cycle of the Nightjars, including how the Whip-poor-will and Chuck-will's-widow time their egg laying with the cycles of the moon as the moonlight helps them to hunt. Hence,

volunteers survey these birds only when the moon is at half-moon or greater as that is when they are most likely to be heard. He also described how the Survey has been showing how the Nightjar species are influenced by human footprints on the landscape. The Survey is still too young to make accurate projections, but the numbers of these species are declining.

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

Shirley adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m. and refreshments were served at the back of the room.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary, Williamsburg Bird Club
November 24, 2013