

## **Williamsburg Bird Club**

*Wednesday, January 18, 2017*

Andrews Hall, Room 101, W&M, 7:00 pm

**Attendance:** 75

### **President's Remarks:**

President Bill Williams opened the meeting and greeted the assembly. He acknowledged Geoff Giles for his 3 years of service to the club as president. He noted that this is the club's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as of Sept. 2016 and that there will be a planning committee for celebratory activities at our Sept 2017 anniversary meeting and other activities leading up to it. He is looking forward to the assistance of volunteers from the membership.

Bill also noted the comfortable new chairs in Andrews Hall.

After noting 301 species for 2016, he asked Cheryl Jacobson to introduce tonight's speaker.

**Program:** Cheryl Jacobson, VP and Program Chairperson, introduced Bob Schamerhorn whose presentation tonight will be his 4<sup>th</sup> at our club meeting and thanked him for his generosity. She gave a brief background including the fact that he'd been a Nature Camp Scholarship recipient twice in his youth. He started birding as a youth at Lynchburg Bird Club; studied Art & Design at Virginia Tech; started his own photography business in 1996 and is an active member of Richmond and Hawaii Audubon Societies, Colonial Nature Photography Club and VSO. He has a great web site at [iPhotoBirds.com](http://iPhotoBirds.com).

Bob's presentation was about local Birds of Prey and included amazing photos and video and audio clips. It focused on information about identification, diet, migration and breeding behavior to aide our efforts in the current Breeding Bird Survey.

At the end of the program, Bill Williams noted that in the spring of 1977 when he had approached Ruth Beck about forming a local bird club, he had next contacted Miriam Moore who was mentioned in Bob's presentation. Miriam had provided the template for all the legal papers (constitution, bylaws, etc.) necessary for being approved by the VSO as a local chapter. Prior to that birders had traveled to Hampton Bird Club founded in 1954.

### **Announcements:**

- Bill Williams reminded club members to renew their membership and for those wishing to join the club to give their money to our membership chairperson, Lisa Nickel, or go to the WBC web site.
- Bill announced that during the course of this year we plan to pull together a lot of data about what the bird club has accomplished over the 40 years including Nature Camp scholarships and W&M Graduate Student scholarships. He pointed out that our club is in a partnership with W&M and that we've been meeting on the campus since 1977 and helping students achieve their goals.

- Bill pointed out for the benefit of new people that there are WBC newsletters on the table at the back of the room and that when one becomes a member, you can receive them electronically.
- Bill noted that Geoff Giles and Ruth Gordon provided tonight's refreshments. Ruth is the chairperson for refreshments and he urged folks to volunteer. A sign-up sheet was at the back table.

### **Upcoming Events:**

**Programs:** Cheryl Jacobson, VP and Program Chairperson, reported on the following upcoming programs:

- **Wednesday, February 15:** Cheryl noted that we had a lot of guests tonight who were Master Naturalists and that the February meeting will be a joint meeting with the local Master Naturalist chapter. Dr. Lesley Bullock will be the speaker. She is an assistant professor at VCU at the Dept. of Biology and will talk about her work with Prothonotary Warblers and discuss the food web with emphasis on the impact of toxic algae in their diet.
- **Wednesday, March 15:** Nick Newberry, a W&M undergraduate student, will share his research findings about how a diverse population of birds can increase the property value of one's home.
- **Wednesday, April 12:** Ashley Kennedy will present *What Birds Eat*, a project she is working on with Douglas Tallamy at the University of Delaware.

**Bird Counts:** Jim Corliss, Chairperson of Bird Counts, gave a report on the Christmas Bird Count. He noted that there were an all-time high number of participants at 133. 117 species of birds were tallied on count day and for the count week, 120, which historically was a high figure. A little over 25,000 birds were tallied that day. Jim thanked the participants and added that we are hoping for even more participants. The next bird count will be the spring one in April.

Bill Williams added that he is challenging the club for 150 participants for our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. He noted the importance of feeder watchers as some of the rarer birds were noted on feeders. He said that even just 1-2 hours of observation is important and contributes to an international data base.

**Field Trips:** Shirley Devan, Field Trip Coordinator, reported on upcoming field trips.

- **Saturday, January 21:** Sandy Bottom Nature Park in Hampton led by Andy Hawkins. We will car pool at 7 a.m. at Colony Square Shopping Center on Jamestown Rd. Andy said that for those who are interested, he will also go to Messick Point in Poquoson when tide is low for shore birds and to Fort Monroe where a flock of Snow Buntings has been reported.
- **Saturday, January 28:** Annual boat trip on the Bay Princess to tour the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands. There is a \$30 fee. We have 25 people signed up to date and the boat has a capacity of 60. We will gather at the dock at 8:30 and the ship leaves at 9 am. Carpooling will be available at Colony Square Shopping Center at 7 am.
- **Saturday, February 18:** Touring the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands by car. There is a \$10 fee as we have to reserve 2 security guards (1 security guard per 15 people). So far 15 people

have signed up and there is space for 15 more. Shirley has forms for participants to fill out. We will be carpooling at 7 am at Old Colony Square Shopping Center.

**Reminders:**

- **Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2:** Bill Williams reminded us that this is year number 2 for the Breeding Bird Atlas. He said birds are already beginning to set up their territories and that Bald Eagles are already sitting on eggs. We don't need to wait until spring to document observations.
- **Great Backyard Bird Count** will be on February 17-20. Anybody can participate. The protocol is not as strict as is for the Christmas Bird Count.
- **Birds of note recently seen:** Betty Peterson reported that Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets have been showing up at her feeder daily and invites folks who are interested to come see them. Bill Williams said that hummingbirds are still in the area and have made it through the snow and single digit temperatures. He said that the Western Tanager has been visiting his feeders every winter since Jan. 2009. The oldest known Western Tanager in all of N.A. is recorded at 6 years and 11 months. Bill's bird is at least 10 years old! Cathy Millar reported that a Williamsburg friend has been having 4 Baltimore Orioles visit her feeders all winter.

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

Bill adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Millar, Secretary Williamsburg Bird Club  
January 23, 2017