



THE WILLIAMSBURG FLIER
October, 1979

The October meeting of the Williamsburg Bird Club will be held Wednesday, Oct. 17, 1979, at 7:30 P.M. in room 117 of Millington Hall.

Our program for this month will be a presentation on barn owls which will be given by Dan C. Smith. Dan, who is currently a graduate student at William and Mary; working with Dr. Mitchell Byrd, studied the development of barn owl nestlings while he was an undergraduate at Va. Tech. At the time he was working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a cooperative education student at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. His presentation will include a brief overview of projects currently being undertaken at Patuxent, as well as a detailed look at the physical and behavioral development of barn owl nestlings. Also included will be a brief description of the "frizzle trait" in barn owls; a plumage mutant which has never before been witnessed in a wild bird population. Several slides and a short film will be featured.

Our Sept. field trip to Lake Matoaka fell victim to the rainy weather we have been experiencing for the past few weeks. This is the fourth field trip to this area that has been postponed due to bad weather. Brian, however, remains undaunted; but just to be on the safe side, he has scheduled our Oct. field trip to Cheatham Annex, Sat. Oct. 20. Please assemble in the Information Center parking lot by 8:00 A.M.

Bill Sheehan reports that a visit to Cheatham on Sept. 30 yielded 5 turkeys and some 50 pheasants. Because there are so many pheasants at Cheatham, there must certainly be an overflow out into the surrounding area. Those of you who live in the more rural areas should be on the look-out for pheasants, and if you should see any, please make a note and relay the information to Bill.

Our bird club was represented at the Williamsburg Council of Garden Clubs Oct. 5-7 by an impressive table display. We wish to thank Sue Ridd and Martha Armstrong for their hard work on this display.

We hope everyone has been able to sneak out into our somewhat brief periods of sunshine this fall for a bit of birding activity. Bill Williams reports the sighting of some 1,967 sharp-shinned hawks and 1 bald eagle Sept. 29 at Kiptopeke. Bill also reports seeing Wilson's and worm-eating warblers, a marsh hawk and a merlin in the Queen's Lake area; and a nighthawk as late as Oct. 3.