

THE WILLIAMSBURG FLYER

July 1985

This mid-summer report comes amidst more rain than previous Julys. Tide-water's fickle weather is a constant source of amazement as are the birds that inhabit its environs. John and Betty Williams had a brown creeper visiting their feeding stations in Skipwith Farms July 26 and 27 and a sharp-shinned hawk was observed in Hayes (Gloucester County) on July 28. These sound more like late fall or winter records. Mixed with them however, are two wood ibis that were found at Hog Island on July 11 (and last reported on July 18), white ibis in Salem, and the return of Thom and Rochet Blair to Williamsburg. It all makes for a wild and crazy time.

Don't forget to forget about club meetings until September. There will be a field trip on August 24 to Hog Island in Surry County. Departure time is 7:00 a.m. from the parking lot to the immediate right of the Colonial Williamsburg Information Center. Be prepared for warm weather, possible mosquitoes and good birding. Already we are getting reports from there on a wide selection of herons, egrets and shorebirds. A sizeable flock of gulls and terns (least, royal, Caspian, common and Forster's) is there and the swallow migration should be well represented.

The Virginia Society of Ornithology will hold its annual Chincoteague trip September 13-15. Headquarters will be at the Refuge Motor Inn. Bike and bird trips, safari train birding and bird identification programs are only part of the plans for one of the best avian adventures around. Last year Fenton Day discovered the state's first ever sharp-tailed sandpiper during the VSO weekend, and the group also found sandhill cranes, lark sparrow and yellow-headed blackbirds. Herons, egrets, ibis, waterfowl, shorebirds and a neverending array of warblers are virtually assured and overhead the migration of hawks will likely produce peregrine falcons and merlins.

I have recently received a copy of Brooke Meanley's newest book on rails entitled The Marsh Hen-a Natural History of the Clapper Rail of the Atlantic Coast Salt Marsh. Brooke is a resident of Fishersville near Waynesboro and has written several bird oriented books about Virginia's Eastern Shore and Tidewater. You'll find his latest edition fascinating as it delves into the lives of the secretive marsh hens.

Two or three anhingas have been seen regularly at Stumpy Lake in Virginia Beach since mid-June.

The Kiptopeke Banding station and hawk watch are scheduled to commence Labor Day weekend and run through October 20. There may be a change in the banding location since the old area is being developed for a campground. At this point in time no definite decisions about the banding site are firm so we'll have to wait and see.

If you are interested in late summer or early fall pelagic trips out of Cape Hatteras give me a call at 229-0098.