

WILLIAMSBURG FLYER

September 1985

The early days of this month have reminded us that seasonally it's still summer, in fact, more so than at any other time this year it seems. For the birds its migration time and on bird checklists we call this Fall.

On your social calendar I hope you call Wednesday, September 18, mandatory. That's when our next monthly meeting will occur at 7:30 p.m. in room 117 in Millington Hall on the campus of William and Mary. Lynn Walter, a graduate student at the college, will present a program on the "Puffins of Eastern Egg Rock", a project of the National Audubon Society. I'm sure you won't want to miss the tale of these engaging alcids and how man is attempting to right the wrongs he committed against this species in his ignorance.

This month's field trip will take us to the environs of Mariner's Museum in Newport News Big Bethel Reservoir in Hampton. Essentially it will be a morning for migrant searching, scanning the trees and shrubs for stop over warblers, thrushes, tanagers, orioles, vireos or the possible unexpected oddity. The trip will take place Saturday, September 21, leaving at 7:00 a.m. from the Colonial Williamsburg Information Center parking lot to the immediate right of the center on the Parkway side. Be there.

Last month's field trip to Hog Island was attended by six clubbers. The heat kept bird movement to a minimum but the group, along with the Richmond Audubon Society, saw a mute swan, bald eagle, numerous little blue herons in immature plumage, least sandpipers, blue grosbeak and a great mixture of gulls and terns.

Our most recent purchases for the Williamsburg Regional Library are Shorebirds by John Marchant and Tony Prater and Birdwatching with American Women by Deborah Strom. All right!

The Kiptopeke banding station opened Labor Day weekend at the location it's occupied for 22 previous years. The eight consecutive season of hawk counts was begun there as well. The absence of cold fronts has greatly limited bird flight. However, some interesting movements were noted. On August 31, 1800 kingbirds were seen flying north just after daybreak as were over 300 cattle egrets. The oddity of the day was a single fly-by red-crossbill that came by the hawk look out. On September 1 a grand total of 141 northern orioles were seen far short of the Coastal Plain record of 210 also from Kiptopeke in September. Hawk movements have been minimal with mainly kestrels and harriers going by.

Dick Hines has heard sora rails on the Chickahominy recently and he and Rich Goll saw 6 nighthawks and a harrier fly over Berkeley School September 8.

On the rare bird ledger there's been a non-flying (probably due to molting) immature king eider on the beach at the America House on the tip of the Eastern Shore. Lew Wilkinson has a fly-over pink flamingo at Grandview Beach in Hampton on August 28 and coincidentally Bruce Reid saw probably the same bird fly over Fisherman Island on September 7. WOW!

Tom Armour reports an immature female Cooper's hawk was killed failing to negotiate a plate glass window at Kingsmill on September 7. Red-breasted nuthatches have been almost common on the Eastern Shore recently.

The annual Bill Akers, Jerry Via, Brian Taber (B. T. remember) Day after Labor Day jaunt to the Out Banks produced curlew sandpipers, wood ibis and Hudsonian godwits this year. What will the VSO Chincoteague trip turn up September 13 - 15?

ASK OWL:

Owl has been listening to the vocalizations of starling recently (okay Bill Sheehan, so I've been bored) and has heard excellent mimics of the following from them; meadow-alk, wood peewee, red-bellied woodpeckers, white-throated sparrow, willet, black-bellied plover and bobwhite.