



# The Flyer

## Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

Vol. 44 No. 8

[www.williamsburgbirdclub.org](http://www.williamsburgbirdclub.org)

September 2020

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Cheryl J. Jacobson



#### HOPE

I recently met an amazing woman named Hope. She said that in her teens she pledged to herself that she would try to live the spirit of her name. I've decided to make this the focus of this month's Corner because, in this time, we all need hope.

Nothing could highlight the belief in hope and action by bird lovers more than the recent ruling by U.S. District Judge Valerie Caproni regarding the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Her ruling strikes down a 2017 legal opinion issued by Daniel Jorjani, the US Department of the Interior's top lawyer, which claimed the MBTA did not prohibit "incidental take," a term for the unintentional but foreseeable and avoidable injury or killing of birds, often through industrial activity. The National Audubon Society reports at <https://www.audubon.org/news/court-strikes-down-trump-administration-policy-let-companies-kill-birds>: "For decades, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has used the threat of potential prosecution under the MBTA to convince companies to take steps to prevent killing birds, such as covering oil waste pits or marking power lines to make them more visible to birds in flight. Under Jorjani's opinion, even mass killings of birds—such as the 2010 BP oil spill, which killed an estimated 1 million birds and resulted in a \$100 million fine against the company under the MBTA—would not be punishable if killing birds wasn't the intention. Guided by that interpretation, the USFWS has opted not to investigate cases of incidental take, and even counseled companies and local governments that they need not take steps to protect birds." I reflect back on one of our WBC meetings during which we wrote post cards to our legislators and afterwards continued to contact them regarding our support of the MBTA. (Continued on Page 2)

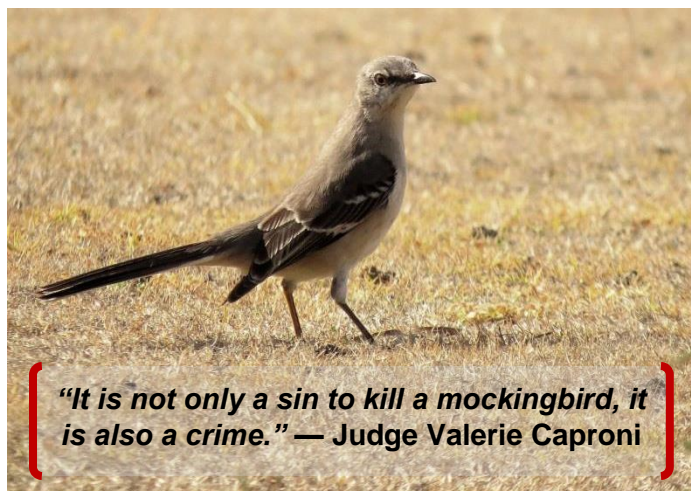


Photo by Cheryl Jacobson

### UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**September 16, via Zoom at 7 PM:**  
**"Purple Martins," with presenter Mike Bishop**

**October 21, via Zoom at 7 PM:**  
**"Saving the Cerulean Warbler," with presenter Katie Fallon**

**Mike Bishop**, founder and director of the [Northern Virginia Purple Martin Initiative](#), will speak on Purple Martins and other cavity-nesting birds and the work of the Initiative on **September 16**. The talk is timely as our club renews its efforts to support martins. WBC has a history of providing for Purple Martins. As early as 1978 there was widespread interest in martins and the WBC had an active Purple Martin Committee. That year the James City County (JCC) Board of Supervisors declared April 16-23 Purple Martin Week and the JCC Ruritans placed a martin house at the county government building. By July, the Purple Martin Committee reported that 600 young martins had been banded locally. In subsequent years the Purple Martin Committee maintained martin houses at several sites in our area, including (Continued on Page 2)

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## Upcoming Programs, Continued from Page 1

the Williamsburg Regional Library, the Southern States Store, the McDonald's on Richmond Road, the Governor Spotswood Inn, and the WJCC courthouse to name a few. During the summer of 1983 the Purple Martin Committee banded 450 young martins.

**Katie Fallon** is the author of two books: [\*Vulture: The Private Life of an Unloved Bird\*](#) (2017, see review on Page 6) and [\*Cerulean Blues: A Personal Search for a Vanishing Songbird\*](#) (2011). Katie will speak on **October 21** about the challenges Cerulean Warblers face as the fastest-declining Neotropical migrant songbird and share tips for finding and identifying Cerulean Warblers. 🐦

## Presidents Corner, Continued from Page 1

### Backyard Good News

The WBC also was active in expressing concern about the construction at the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and the impact on thousands of nesting birds. I hope you read the article in the *Daily Press* titled "[Against all odds, the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel bird colony is saved](#)," that is on the WBC [Facebook](#) page. In the article it stated "the feathered cloud over Fort Wool today testifies to triumph. Westbound drivers can see for themselves as they near the tunnel chute. Below all those circling, fishing parents are thousands of chicks squawking for dinner. 'So many times, environmental stories go the other way,' said Mike Parr, president of The American Bird Conservancy, a D.C.-based nonprofit. . . . 'In a world with plenty of bad news, here's something that's going right,' Parr said. 'It's nice when you get a win. It gives hope. On so many fronts.' "

### Global Good News

I think this pandemic is showing us we must continue to think and act globally. Some good news beyond our own back yards was recently reported in the *East Bay Times*: Condors have returned to Sequoia National Park for the first time in nearly 50 years. According to the USFWS, they were listed as endangered in 1967 by the federal government. Through conservation efforts, "Condors were released back into the wild in 1992 in the mountains of the Los Padres National Forest in Southern California. The flock grew to 100 through the continued release of captive-bred birds and wild reproduction, along with the (Continued on Page 3)

## President's Corner, Continued from Page 2

support of private and public agencies and organizations, local communities and landowners. . ." A wildlife biologist with the park has noted: "It took decades for the population to recover to the point where they were being seen in locations far beyond their release site. This is evidence of continued recovery of the species. The animal was on the brink of extinction, and arrival in Sequoia is good evidence that they are utilizing and occupying habitat where they once lived. It is an important milestone." Read all about it at by clicking on this [link](#).

### **More Good News**

Last month Congress passed legislation to provide permanent, mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The LWCF helps preserve open spaces in every county in the country.

### **Bluebirds as a Symbol of Hope**

For many birders, bluebirds are a symbol of hope. Currently, the conservation status of Eastern Bluebirds is considered of low concern. Our Club has been active in efforts to save bluebirds as documented by my article on Page 9 in this newsletter. These efforts continue today with the support of the Historic Rivers Chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists and show success and hope.

The Cornell Lab [website](#) details successes that have been achieved in the recovery of bluebird populations since the 1970s: "Eastern Bluebird populations increased between 1966 and 2015, according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. Partners in Flight estimates a global breeding population of 22 million, with 86% spending at least some part of the

year in the U.S., 22% in Mexico, and 1% breeding in Canada. The species rates a 7 out of 20 on the Continental Concern Score, and is not on the [2016 State of North America's Birds' Watch List](#). Eastern Bluebird populations fell in the early twentieth century. Between the 1920's and the 1970's, the bluebird population declined by an estimated 90% as aggressive introduced species such as European Starlings and House Sparrows made available nest holes increasingly difficult for bluebirds to hold on to. In the 1960s and 1970s establishment of bluebird trails and other nest box campaigns alleviated much of this competition, especially after people began using nest boxes designed to keep out the larger European Starling. Eastern Bluebird numbers have been recovering since."

### **TRUST IN A BIRD CALLED HOPE**

I end with a few quotes:

*"Wherever there are birds, there is hope."*

— Mehmet Murat Ildan

*"If you want to see birds, you must have birds in your heart."*

— John Burroughs

*"Faith is the bird that feels the light when the dawn is still dark."*

— Rabindranath Tagore

*"Unclose your mind. You are not a prisoner. You are a bird in flight, searching the skies for dreams."*

— Haruki Murakami 🐦

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## OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Cheryl J. Jacobson



*Eastern Meadowlark in VA.  
Photo by Cheryl Jacobson.*

### **Conservation Ranching**

You may remember that I wrote an article for this newsletter about the population decline of the Eastern Meadowlark. Because this is not the only grassland species that is declining, the National Audubon Society has begun a new initiative to address this concern. You received a listserv email from me regarding a webinar about how Audubon's bird-friendly ranching certification has already started

to reverse the decline of grassland bird populations. In case you missed the webinar, check out the recording by clicking on this [link](#). (Note that the program starts at one and a half minutes into the download.) After watching the webinar, I immediately tried a box of burgers from Blue Nest Beef and found them superb.

### **Rare Birds**

As noted in an earlier newsletter, Nancy Barnhart is now WBC Records Chairperson. Thank you Nancy for accepting this assignment. Her location for report-  
(Continued on Page 4)



## Other News, Continued from Page 3

ing is James City County, York County, Williamsburg, and Hog Island WMA in Surry Co. I will try to fill in by noting rare birds seen near us now and in the past but not in her assigned area. For example, she is reporting the sighting of a Ruff in her location. It is important to understand that Ruffs have been seen elsewhere in Virginia and reported on eBird at seven various locations. For example, a Ruff was reported by Jason Strickland in 2016, which I got a chance to see at Burgh Westra Lane, Gloucester Courthouse. That eBird report contains a good photo by Jason.

### **Second Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas**

If you are like me, your mail contains numerous requests for contributions. Many of these are from bird/nature organizations that have goals that we support. For many, our financial situations are being impacted by COVID-19, so we must make careful decisions. Perhaps you prefer to donate to a local organization.

Because some of us have worked many hours on the Second Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas (VABBA2), I do want to provide you with this update. VABBA2 is wrapping up its final year of field data collection. More than 1,400 volunteers and scientists have reported on the breeding activity of over 200 bird species throughout Virginia! The Atlas project will soon enter its next phase: data analysis and compilation into readily usable information. Although its final form is still being determined, the VABBA2 will provide accessible, science-based information on avian population and habitat distributions, species maps and accounts, and a range of other topics. This data will support positive environmental regulation and species conservation, rural land preservation, public lands acquisition and management, climate change actions, and much more. Any contribution you can afford will help make this next phase possible. You can donate at [www.virginiabirds.org](http://www.virginiabirds.org). 🐦

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## THE KIPTOPEKE CHALLENGE IS A GO FOR 2020

*By Shirley Devan*



The pandemic has not cancelled the Kiptopeke Challenge, the annual fundraiser for the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (CVWO). In a year when so many

things are uncertain, the Kiptopeke Challenge will go on September 26, with a few modifications to protect participants in this COVID-19 era.

The **Gulls Gone Wild** will participate again, but we will be a “Special Venue Team” this year. Instead of riding together and chancing a hotel stay in Chincoteague, we’ve chosen to “bird the heck” out of our backyard: the Colonial Historical National Park (Jamestown Island, Colonial Parkway, and Yorktown Battlefield). We’ll be wearing masks, social distancing, not carpooling, and not sharing equipment.

Nancy Barnhart, Joyce Lowry, Jan Lockwood and I — all WBC members — will be looking for migrating warblers and raptors in the woods and along the James and York Rivers. We’ll be competing against other “Special Venue” teams for the greatest number of species and collecting valuable data for the local wildlife resources staff at the National Park Service. Another WBC member, Brian Taber, will be a team of one. That’s OK this year! He’ll be a **Solitary Vireo** and will survey on the Eastern Shore.

As in years past, CVWO has hired three biologists to staff the hawkwatch platform at Kiptopeke State Park near the tip of the Eastern Shore of Virginia from September 1 to November 30. CVWO’s financial obligations for this unusual year are new and different as we work hard to protect our staff and the platform visitors. Be sure to visit Kiptopeke State Park this fall and meet Karl Bardon, hawkwatcher; Bridgett Brunea, hawkwatch intern and educator; and Ashley Hansen, our Monarch biologist. We’ll be abiding by the park’s guidelines for safety in the park and on the platform.

The funds CVWO raises are critical for a successful 2020 hawkwatch season. We hope you will sponsor the **Gulls Gone Wild** as so many of you have done in the past. All donations go to CVWO. Please pledge whatever you like. We, and CVWO, will be grateful for whatever you donate. If you would like a target for making a flat donation, we suggest \$25. All who donate at the \$25 level or higher will become CVWO donors and enjoy updates, monthly eNewsletters, and news about CVWO projects. CVWO is a 501(c)(3) organization; donations are tax deductible.

To support the GULLS, please make your check payable to CVWO, and mail to Shirley Devan, 6227 Tucker Landing, Wmsbg, VA 23188. Note “Gulls Gone Wild” (Continued on Page 5)

## Kiptopeke Challenge, Continued from Page 4

on the check. To support Brian Taber, again, make your check payable to CVWO, and mail to Brian Taber, 103 Exeter Court, Wmsbg, VA 23185. Note "Solitary Vireo" on the check. You also can donate safely and quickly with your credit/debit card or your PayPal account at CVWO's web site where each team is listed: <https://vawildliferesearch.org/kiptopeke-challenge>.

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## OFF TO BRAZIL!

By Cathy Millar

*Editor's Note: This is the third and final installment of Cathy's chronicle in The Flyer about the birds which have occupied her Purple Martin house this summer.*



*Four young martins huddled on a lamp-post near the house after fledging earlier in the day. Photo by Cathy Millar.*

A silver lining to the COVID-19 cloud has been having more time to observe the social life of 'my' Purple Martins, consisting of one active nest with subadult parents on the west side of my martin house, one active nest with adult parents on the east side, and 5 subadults without mates. On August 2, I recognized a common parental behavior practiced worldwide when a subadult parent tried to tempt its youngsters out of their box by holding a big dragonfly just within reach of them and then flying away with it. That very day, 3 of the 4 nestlings fledged: two in the morning and one in the afternoon. The following day, the fourth nestling sat on the front porch for a while watching its siblings flying before stepping up onto the railing, leaning forward, opening its wings, and taking off. I confess to having a lump in my throat witnessing such a leap of faith. The next day I laughed when I saw the male parent return to the empty nest box with a juicy dragonfly, presumably out of force of habit, hesitate, and then promptly eat the dragonfly himself.

Mornings were especially noisy when the colony arose for breakfast. I spent one blissful morning watching the martins wheeling and swooping overhead with their distinctive flutter and glide pattern while listening to someone playing on a French horn in nearby Cedar Grove Cemetery the haunting "Going Home" movement from Dvořák's *New World Symphony*.

Click on the team you want to support, and your donation automatically goes to the right team. After the "Challenge," we will let you know the results and send you an account of the birds and adventures. CVWO greatly values your support. Thank you in advance. We already know who the winner will be . . . **CVWO!** 🐦

As youngsters everywhere, the young martins were prone to getting into trouble. On the very day of fledging, one juvenile decided to pop into the neighboring box containing House Sparrow nestlings. I wasn't going to miss seeing what happened when a sparrow parent returned, so I waited for about 15 minutes. What a hullabaloo ensued as a disheveled but unharmed young martin beat a very hasty retreat! The following day, a juvenile landed hanging awkwardly on the railing in front of the sparrow box and a sibling momentarily tried to land on its back, whereupon a parent sparrow piled on top of both of them!

I noted the five subadult martins that had no family commitments appeared to spend the nights in nearby tall hackberry and sycamore trees. I saw them for the last time on August 5<sup>th</sup> when, presumably, they moved on to join a big communal roosting spot somewhere before migrating to Brazil. After fledging, the four juveniles, while absent for most of the day, continued to return to their nest box, initially with their subadult parents and then on their own for the next 21 days. They finally left on August 23. My best guess is that they were spending the daytime at nearby College Creek where dragonflies and other flying insects are more plentiful. Their parents presumably left to join a communal roost before their offspring did.

There were five nestlings from the adult pair, which included the female who appeared to delay nesting after having her tail yanked hard by a House Sparrow earlier in the summer. These nestlings finally fledged on August 16 and spent most of the first day huddled in the light rain on top of the neighboring lamppost. They, too, left with their parents for most of each day and returned every evening to their old nest box. After the youngsters had bedded down, I'd almost always see their parents perched side by side on top of the lamppost or in front of the nest box for a  
(Continued on Page 6)

## Off to Brazil, Continued from Page 5

few minutes before they joined the youngsters, the male always entering last. I continued to see the male occasionally feeding the young until August 22. The last time I saw the parents return was August 25, with 4 youngsters. The next night, although I saw 9 martins in the evening sky, only 3 popped into their natal nest box. Then there were 4 with only 2 spending the night in their box, and on August 28<sup>th</sup>, only 2 youngsters appeared. They were last seen entering their box the evening of the 29th. The martin house has been empty since then.

During this time, I had gotten into the pleasant habit of pouring a glass of wine at 7:30 each evening and positioning myself to watch for the arrival of the martins. Like a squadron, they'd fly in together and swoop amidst Chimney Swifts and bats for a bedtime snack before settling in. My garden feels empty without their boisterous throaty chirps, rattles and clicking, and I'm discovering that the folks whose daily walks take them past our home are missing them, too. 'My' martins will be off to Brazil soon and I'm already looking forward to their return in April 2021. 🐦

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## BOOK REVIEW

by Judy Jones

### VULTURE: THE PRIVATE LIFE OF AN UNLOVED BIRD by Katie Fallon



Adult Turkey Vulture. Photo by Judy Jones.

Have you ever wondered where vultures nest; what their young look like; how they feed their chicks; how vulnerable they might be to environmental changes; or even thought about the evolution of the species? And do you love books with new facts, great writing, interesting lore, information about ecological impacts, and personal anecdotes? Then **Vulture:**

**The Private Life of an Unloved Bird** is a great choice for your fall reading.

This book, by Katie Fallon, is a dynamic tribute to one of the world's most overlooked birds: the turkey vulture. Part environmental study, part travel blog, part scientific information, and part love story, this book examines the roles turkey vultures—and all vultures—play in healthy ecosystems. You explore the species with Katie as she travels to India, and then back to the US, to Arizona, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and her own backyard in her quest to study, care for, and observe this often unloved though vitally important (and uniquely beautiful!) bird.

When you read this book, you will understand not only why I recommend it but why I think it is a vital



Young Turkey Vulture. Photo by Katie Fallon.

read: these birds are unappreciated . . . but oh so important. They are not only critical ecologically but are also among the most imperiled avian groups on the planet. Katie has written an entertaining, well-researched book that not only shares concerns for the familiar turkey vulture but also incorporates up-to-date information on condors and vultures worldwide. She has an

engaging and entertaining writing style and can easily convince you that not only are vultures valuable, critical, and important but also that they are beautiful! She shares her enthusiasm and expertise in a way that makes us want to read on and learn more. I am a convert—now a true Vulture Groupie—and would love you to become one too.

So, get your hands on this title and then reserve your weekend, because once you begin reading, you won't want to put the book down. (NOTE: This book is about to be reissued by Brandeis University Press! The new version has a redesigned cover and full-color photographs.) 🐦



## REPORT FROM THE RECORDS COMMITTEE

By Nancy Barnhart, Committee Chairperson



*Ruff, photographed by Nancy Barnhart at Hogg Island, July 23, 2018 (2nd record)*

Since 1977, the WBC's Records Committee has maintained a database for every bird species verified within the Colonial Historic Triangle, encompassing Williamsburg, James City County, York County, and Hogg Island Wildlife Management Area in Surry

County. Records are kept on sightings of "rare" birds, early and late arrivals and departures, early and late breeding, and peak counts. Recent records of interest include the following:

- July 21, 2020, only the 3rd record of a **Ruff**, a rare visitor from Eurasia, was recorded at Hog Is-

land. This bird was found by Andrew Baldelli. At the same location that day, Andrew also found only the 9th record of a **Long-billed Dowitcher**.

- August 4, 2020, a **Black Tern** was spotted at Archer's Hope on the Colonial Parkway by Brian Taber and Bill Williams. This was likely a "storm bird" pushed west by Hurricane Isaias.
- August 8, 2020, Jason Strickland found 8 **Sandwich Terns**, in Seaford, York County. This is a new peak count for the Colonial Historic Triangle.

If you make an observation that you think should be included in the Colonial Historic Triangle records, please send your information to Nancy Barnhart, [barnhartnt@gmail.com](mailto:barnhartnt@gmail.com). You can read more about the role of the Records Committee in the April/May 2020 issue of *The Flyer*, Page 3. 🐦

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## PLANT CONSERVATION IS FOR THE BIRDS

By Cathy Millar



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird sipping nectar from Jewelweed. Photo by Inge Curtis.*

WBC's August program was presented by Matt Bright, Conservation Manager at Earth Sangha, a nonprofit program founded in 1977 to preserve and propagate native plants and support local conservation efforts, primarily in Fairfax

County. Earth Sangha's volunteer-operated wild plant nursery grows 300 local species from responsibly-collected seeds, and it distributes over 49,000 plants per year to help restore native plant communities. In 2006, Earth Sangha also joined an international project in the Dominican Republic where it focuses exclusively on tree production, distributing about 12,000 trees annually, including native trees for restoration projects and crop trees for low-impact agroforestry.

Matt is a certified horticulturist and an Arlington Regional Master Naturalist, and his presentation, "Plant Conservation is for the Birds," made a very strong case for planting native. He stressed that native

plants that have been in the nursery trade for a while are not likely to have the same value to wildlife as native plants grown from seeds collected with permission in the wild. The latter plants have coevolved with their surroundings, resulting in greater genetic diversity and better suitability to the diverse needs of the local wildlife. Matt emphasized that herbivory (consumption of plant materials by animals) is the most important consideration in developing an ecological landscape. Insect herbivory is especially important because 90% of insects require a specific native plant host. The remaining 10% are generalists, yet will struggle to eat non-native vegetation. Research has shown that not a single larva of those generalist insects survive from feeding on only non-native invasive plants such as oriental bittersweet, English ivy, privet, Japanese honeysuckle, and multiflora rose!

Gardening for greater insect diversity is so important because 96% of bird species eat insects at some stage in their lives (especially as nestlings). Fruiting shrubs should also be selected carefully with birds in mind. Many Asian shrubs have evolved in areas that are not in a migratory corridor, and their fruit has  
(Continued on Page 8)

## Plant Conservation, Continued from Page 7



*White-eyed Vireo with caterpillar. Photo by Carol Annis.*

high sugar content but low fats. In contrast, our native shrubs produce fat-rich fruits that are important to fuel our birds' long migratory flights.

In response to the steadily accelerating decline of flying insects and the loss of habitat and diversity of plants resulting in a 25-30% loss among our bird species, the best each of us can do is to create resilient natural areas and foster gardens that create meaningful habitat for insects. Matt recommended protecting existing habitat first; removing invasive species from our yards; planting natives; and stopping the use of unnecessary pesticides. He noted that land that has not been totally degraded by heavy machinery, soil scraping, etc. has an amazing ability of natural regeneration. Removing stressors like untenable land use, deer over-abundance, and big stands of invasive plants give surviving native plant communities, dormant native seeds, fungi, and other living components in the soil a chance.

Matt also noted the importance of corridors connecting habitats. He said that more home, school, business and public gardens, green roofs, balcony gardens, and native landscaping help serve this purpose. Studies have shown that connected sites support diversity with 14% more species noted, and overall habitat recovery progressed two years faster than at disconnected sites. Because many smaller songbirds prefer nesting 5 – 15 feet off the forest floor, he noted the value of removing non-native vegetation and replacing it with native shrubs and understory trees.

Matt recommended the Virginia Department Conservation and Recreation's Natural Heritage [website](#) as a detailed, useful resource for information about every natural plant community that occurs in our state as well as local invasive plants. Matt avoided suggesting plant lists but recommended looking around to see what works and is doing well in one's area. He concluded that whether one gets involved in large-scale restoration or rehabbing a pollinator garden at a school, it need not be perfect. Anything done will be an improvement that will last to some degree, even if abandoned.

In the question and answer period that followed Matt's prepared presentation, he noted that a 2019 study showed that most native plant sources in the marketplace are cultivars that are unsuitable for ecological restoration efforts aimed at reestablishing diverse, self-sustaining populations. Nearly 25% of cultivars of native species that had floral or leaf traits that differed from the wild one (such as purple leaf from the species green one) are compromised in their ability to support pollinators and other wildlife. Only 3% of cultivars received high suitability scores. Pollinators differentiate between cultivars even when they appear similar to the wild type and visit the cultivars significantly less frequently. Cultivar and wild coreopsis were used as an example. We were also urged to buy plants that have not been sprayed with neonicotinoids or other persistent pesticides. Matt cited Douglas Tallamy's books, *Bringing Nature Home* and *Nature's Best Hope* as further excellent resources. In closing, Matt said he can be contacted at [mbright@earthsangha.org](mailto:mbright@earthsangha.org) for further information.



*Yellow-billed Cuckoo with flying insect. Photo by Barbara Houston.*



## PROUD OF OUR HISTORY — ESTABLISHMENT OF BLUEBIRD TRAILS IN OUR AREA

By Cheryl J. Jacobson



Eastern Bluebird nest box photographed by Shirley Devan, April 28, 2020, in the Williamsburg Botanical Garden.

History becomes lost to us, but thankfully we have people who remember as well as newsletters that document information. In the early 1980's the Williamsburg Bird Club took the lead to establish bluebird trails in our area. The April 1978 newsletter was the first under *The Williamsburg Flier* marquis. That month, Homer Jones took the lead on the WBC Bluebird Committee. In 1982, Jewel Thomas, the club's Bluebird Committee chair, was given a letter of

commendation by the Williamsburg Garden Club Council for her tireless attention and diligence with maintaining the local bluebird trails. During that summer the Williamsburg Country Club bluebird trail produced 48 young while the Carter's Grove trail produced 27.

In 1983 and 1984, Bluebird Committee chair, Leigh Jones, teamed with Bob Morris to initiate a bluebird box building campaign through an innovative partnership with the residents of the Veterans Hospital in Hampton. Many of our bird club members helped assemble the boxes. Over the two-year period the Bluebird Committee erected 230 nest boxes along 19 area trails, including trails at Cheatham Annex, St. George's Farm (now Drummond's Field), New Quarter Park, and Eastern State Hospital, not to mention the hundreds of nest boxes they assembled and sold throughout the community. At one point, Leigh sold 100 nest boxes in two days! For her work Leigh was nominated for the 1984 North American Bluebird Society's Roger Foy Newcomer's Award.

Joe Doyle became the Bluebird Committee Chairman in 1985, assuming responsibility for the community's 230 boxes along its 19 trails. During that summer an astounding 623 young were fledged from these bird club facilities! 🐦



**RECENT SIGHTINGS:** On August 2, **Keith Kennedy** captured the photo on the left (at 1/2,4400 sec!) of a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** working a begonia in his yard. **Rose Ryan** had two **Baltimore Orioles** (right photo) visit her yard the morning of August 22. Rose first observed the birds drinking from her hummingbird feeders.



**Williamsburg Bird Club**  
**PO Box 1085**  
**Williamsburg, VA 23187**

### **ANNUAL DONATIONS FROM OUR LOCALLY-OWNED BIRD STORES**

The Williamsburg Bird Club wishes to express our gratitude to our locally-owned Bird Stores, Wild Birds Unlimited and Backyard Birder Seed & Supply, for their generous donations each year to the Club. Their contributions help sustain WBC's annual commitment to provide funds for the Ornithology Research Grants given annually to graduate students at the College of William and Mary as well as support other Club projects and activities.

#### **PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OUR LOCALLY-OWNED BIRD STORES & FELLOW WBC MEMBERS**

Backyard Birder



**Backyard Birder Seed & Supply** (located in Williamsburg at the Quarterpath Shopping Center near the Kingsmill Harris Teeter) supports the WBC through donations and a 10% discount on purchases for WBC members. For your discount in-store, please inform them you are a WBC member during checkout.

<https://www.backyardbirder.org/>



**Wild Birds Unlimited** (located in Williamsburg at Settler's Market in New Town) supports the WBC by donating to the club an amount equal to 5% of the pre-tax amount spent in the store by WBC members each year. Please inform them you are a WBC member during checkout. <https://williamsburg.wbu.com/>