



The Flyer

Newsletter of the Williamsburg Bird Club

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October 2023

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Nancy Barnhart



Autumn greetings! Fall weather is upon us and perfect for getting out and enjoying our upcoming WBC events and all that Virginia has to offer. Our October 18 meeting featuring award-winning photographer Barbara Houston will inspire us to grab our cameras and take advantage of

fall's birds, beautiful colors, and textures. Our popular annual field trip to the Eastern Shore will be on October 21 and will include a stop at the Kiptopeke Hawkwatch among other hotspots. More details will follow in this newsletter and in upcoming email. The October 28 bird walk at New Quarter Park will include a group from Cape Henry Audubon as guests. We have a lot to look forward to!

October is a great time to explore the regions of Virginia and the state's excellent avian diversity. According to eBird there are 492 species of birds that have been recorded in the state. These include residents, migrants, and vagrants, some being just "one-day wonders". Virginia's habitat diversity supports our breeding birds as well as wandering birds, those here even for a short stopover. The latest addition to the list of birds seen in Virginia is the American Flamingo. This September, this species famously appeared in a number of states from South Carolina to Pennsylvania, Texas to Kentucky, and even on the shores of Lake Michigan in Wisconsin. In Virginia, a pair was observed by a "non-birder" who was kayaking around Plum Tree Island and spotted them on the shore. Happily, that kayaker knew they were looking at something special and took a couple of photos. Despite a concerted effort by quite a few Virginia birders, they were not seen again in the state. The closest viewing opportunity for many of us who wanted to see one of these spectacular birds was at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. We discovered an almost
(Continued on Page 2)

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

By Patty Maloney

October 18, 6:00 p.m. (In-person at the Williamsburg Library Theater and via Zoom): Barbara Houston, "Close to Home."

Join us on Wednesday, October 18 at 6:00 pm as Barbara Houston, a local award-winning photographer/birder, shares her love for the outdoors with us in a presentation entitled "Close to Home." Join her as she travels through ten of her favorite local places: where to go, when to go, and what to see on your next bird outing.

Save the Date: November 15. Christmas is coming! Rexanne Bruno will get us excited about participating in the Williamsburg Christmas Bird Count! She will also provide an analysis of our sightings from prior years. 🐦



Brown Pelican photographed by Barbara Houston.

BIRD WALK ON OCTOBER 28

By Scott Hemler

Unfortunately, Tropical Storm Ophelia forced us to cancel our September 23 bird walk. Nancy Barnhart will lead our next walk at New Quarter Park on October 28. As usual, we'll meet in the parking lot by the park office at 8:00 a.m. 🐦

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Golden-crowned Sparrow.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER, Continued from Page 1

three-hour drive can go by in a snap when the payoff is 11 flamingos out in the bay. Quite a sight and such a treat!

While the "Historic Triangle" cannot boast a flamingo sighting, a number of "local firsts" have been added in the last couple of years. In James City County, a Western Meadowlark was recorded in December 2020, then a Heerman's Gull was seen in August 2021 from the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry. Another "pink bird", this time a Roseate Spoonbill, was seen at Chickahominy Riverfront Park also in 2021. A couple of "firsts" for York County include a Black Tern and a Swallow-tailed Kite in 2020, another Roseate Spoonbill seen at Beaverdam Creek in September of this year, and a Western Grebe seen in the York River in 2022. In the City of Williamsburg, a Clay-colored Sparrow and an Anhinga were both spotted in the spring of this year. And at Hog Island, Carlisle Tract, Surry County, a Least Flycatcher appeared in September 2022 for a first county record.

While watching your feeders or birding in your favorite locations, keep your eyes open for those species you "don't remember seeing there before". With erratic weather events and overall climate change we are likely to see increases in our ever-expanding avian diversity. You might be the one to find the next new Virginia or Historic Triangle record! It can take some careful viewing, bird-by-bird. I've got my eye out for a Golden-crowned Sparrow. Never before seen in Virginia, this is a western species that has skirted our state. Not a likely find perhaps, but going into late fall I will be looking at every bird in the flocks of White-throated and White-crowned sparrows I see! Stay tuned!

Happy Birding! 🐦

FIELD TRIP REPORT

By George Martin

Saturday, September 16 – Jamestown Beach Event Park

Eight birders participated in the Club's season-opening, casual-birding field trip at Jamestown Beach Event Park on September 16. The gulls and terns did not disappoint! A Bald Eagle made an appearance, along with the usual flock of Black Vultures. Here's the link to the checklist for the day, compiled courtesy of Rexanne Bruno: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S150048658>.



Field trip to Jamestown Beach Event Park. From left: Jan Lockwood, Gary Carpenter, Babs Giffin, Bill Williams, Ann Carpenter, Rexanne Bruno, Ginny Wycoff. Photo by Shirley Devan.

Saturday, October 21 – Eastern Shore

Next up on our trip list is the Eastern Shore on Saturday, October 21. Deborah Humphries will lead our group that day, with several stops and usually a great variety of birds. Last year, the count was 74 species! Expected stops are:

- The overlook at the north side of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (CCBT)
- Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge (ESVANWR)
- Kiptopeke State Park, both the Hawkwatch site and a trail.

We'll gather at the overlook, our first stop, around 8:30 a.m. That's usually a pretty quick stop, depending on how many gulls and cormorants we have to count. But we should be at the ESVANWR Visitor Center by 9:00 a.m. or a little after. Times after that depend on how good the birding is. And, if a rarity has been reported on the southern Eastern Shore, we may add a stop to look for that bird. All that birding will make a lot of us hungry, so lunch at Cape Charles Brewing Company should be the final stop. Lunchers can expect to return to Williamsburg in the range of 3:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Those interested in carpooling should let me know they'd like to carpool and meet at the Colony Square Shopping Center shortly after 7:00 a.m. Departure from there is at 7:15 a.m. If you are willing to drive a carpool, please let me know that as well. My email is grm0803@gmail.com. Also let me know if you want to stay for lunch!

If you have a State Park Annual Pass, please bring that with you. Without a pass, the entry fee for Kiptopeke is \$7 per vehicle. And drivers should remember their EZ Pass transponder for the CBBT tolls.

Saturday, November 18 – Grandview Nature Preserve

Mark your calendars for the November field trip to Grandview Nature Preserve in Hampton. I expect we'll meet at the entrance to the Preserve at 8:00 a.m. that day. More details to follow! 🦅

2023 BOOK DONATION TO WRL

By Cathy Flanagan, Library Liaison

The Williamsburg Regional Library purchased the following new books for its collection this year using funds donated by the WBC:

- *100 Plants to Feed the Birds*, by Laura Erickson
- *The Beginner's Guide to Photographing Birds*, by Rosl Rössner
- *Better Living Through Birding*, by Christian Cooper

- *The Bird Name Book*, by Susan Myers
- *Birdgirl*, by Mya-Rose Craig
- *Conversations With Birds*, by Priyanka Kumar
- *In the Footsteps of Audubon*, by Denis Chavreul
- *National Geographic Birding Basics*, by Noah Strycker
- *What an Owl Knows*, by Jennifer Ackerman
- *A Wing and a Prayer*, by Anders Gyllenhaal
- *Woman, Watching: Louise de Kiriline Lawrence and the Songbirds of Pimisi Bay*, by Marilyn Simonds
- *Ospreys: The Revival of a Global Raptor*, by Alan Forsyth Poole. 🦅

WBC MEMBERSHIP

Please welcome new member Dana Emmett!

At our November 15 meeting WBC members will elect the officers who, along with our immediate past president, will constitute our Executive Board for 2024. A Nominating Committee consisting of Shirley Devan, Jeanette Navia, and Cheryl Jacobson has proposed the following slate of nominees for consideration by the membership:

- President: Nancy Barnhart
- Vice President, Programs: Patty Maloney
- Vice President, Newsletter: Mary Ellen Hodges
- Treasurer: Ann Carpenter
- Secretary: Cathy Millar
- Member at Large: Donna Benson
- Member at Large: Deborah Humphries

The purpose of the Williamsburg Bird Club is to promote interest in the study of wild birds, protect birds and their habitats, and share the joy of birding with others. To join our club or renew your membership, please go to <https://williamsburgbirdclub.org/membership>, where you can either complete a membership form online or download a form for printing and submitting by mail. Scheduled club activities can always be found on our calendar at <https://williamsburgbirdclub.org/90-2/>. 🐦

SAVE THE DATE
Christmas Bird Count
December 17

BIRDING THE JAMES RIVER AND ITS WATERSHED

Summary by Cathy Millar

Driving past the sign for the James River Association (JRA) near the Jamestown end of the Colonial Parkway, have you ever wondered, like me, what goes on there? James Abbott, JRA's Lower James River Senior Environmental Educator, provided some answers to that question in his presentation at WBC's meeting on September 20. Founded in 1976, JRA is the oldest and largest river conservation group in Virginia, and the only organization solely dedicated to protecting and restoring America's Founding River. As the river's guardian, JRA's two major goals are fully implementing the cleanup plans for the James River under the Chesapeake Bay Cleanup effort and educating communities to realize the benefits of a healthy James River and to support and help protect it.

We learned from Abbott that the James River is 340 miles long and is fed by 25,000 miles of tributaries, which makes it one of the longest rivers in America that begins and ends in the same state. The James River watershed encompasses approximately 10,000 square miles (almost 25% of the state) and provides a wide variety of habitat for birds. Four hundred ninety-two species of birds have been recorded in Virginia and 66% of those have been recorded in the James River watershed. Eighty-three percent of Virginia species can be found in the Coastal Plain, and 29% are completely or mostly confined to water or water-associated habitats.

Abbott described the tidal fresh water portion of the James, like at Dutch Gap, as being one of the most important waterfowl over-wintering areas on the East Coast. Submerged aquatic vegetation feeds millions of ducks, geese, and swans all winter long. Other places Abbott recommended for winter birdwatching were Hog Island, the loop drive on Jamestown Island (especially Stop 6 where you can walk to Black Point, from which there is a panoramic view of the river), and Highland County. He noted that one can find similar Important Bird Areas (IBA) listed on the [Audubon](#) web site.

In the spring, there is a massive northward push of neotropical migrants—songbirds, raptors, and shorebirds—across the James, especially at pinch points in the river, like the one created by Hog Island. Abbott suggested looking up into mature hardwood trees that catch the early morning sun that activates insects for hungry migrants. A favorite spot of his is a group of tulip poplars next to the Glass House near Jamestown Island where he's seen Scarlet Tanagers and Cape May Warblers. He also recommended visiting in April the colony of Yellow-crowned Night Herons who nest in the live oaks in Fort Monroe. He highly recommended birding along "[Warbler Road](#)," which traverses 13 miles of a series of connected country roads. The route starts at Sunset Overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway and descends a total of 2,700
(Continued on Page 5)

BIRDING THE JAMES, Cont. from Page 4

feet to Warbler Road's end at the James River. The variation of habitat and elevation provides great birding opportunities.

During the summer, the James provides critical food supply for nesting families. Our state's largest seabird nesting colony of around 15,000 is at the mouth of the James River on Fort Wool and adjacent anchored barges. This is a temporary solution dating from 2019 when the seabirds were displaced from the South Island of the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel by construction improvements to the facility. The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies to create a new permanent 10-acre island nearby from dredged material. Many of the Royal Terns that we see on the pilings at the Scotland Ferry are foraging adults from Fort Wool. Abbott also noted that the Central Piedmont region in the upper watershed around Charlottesville has been recently designated as an IBA. Nesting Common Mergansers are being observed, and on the farmlands, isolated pockets of imperiled grassland species like Bobolinks, Dickcissel, and Grasshopper Sparrows are breeding.

For autumn birding, Abbott recommended visiting [Rockfish Gap Hawkwatch](#) near the intersection of I-64, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and Skyline Drive at Afton. He noted that fall migration for shorebirds surprisingly begins in August, while it is still hot here.

Mainland Farm, which is visible from Greensprings Interpretive Trail, was reported as often being a good place to spot Snipe between the rows of corn in damp areas. Craney Island, Portsmouth is one of the premier resting spots for migratory birds but access is restricted. However, there is often a spillover to nearby [Hoffler Creek Wildlife Preserve](#) where one can often see the lovely Eurasian Wigeon among our native American Wigeons.

When Abbott was discussing the future of birds in the James River Watershed, he noted that Virginia is an interesting state where 14% of Virginia's bird species reach their northern or southern range limit. Since 1950, change in land use and climate change has created an overwhelmingly south to north shift of ranges resulting in colonization in Virginia of such species as Painted Bunting and Anhinga.

Abbott concluded by describing the projects the JRA leads. One of them is the James River Leadership Academy in which high school students learn about the river by paddling and camping on it and getting involved in improving suitable habitat, for example, by building and installing kestrel nest boxes at Westover Plantation. To learn more about where to see unusual species like Ravens, Alder Flycatchers, Red Crossbills, and Golden-winged Warblers, watch Abbott's full presentation on YouTube at the following link: https://youtu.be/W2y_Wihnbo. His complete slide show without audio can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/YwQJCK7clWQ>. 🐦

BIRDING AND BANDING IN SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA

By Gary Carpenter

In late July and August my wife, Ann, and I took a long road trip out west and had a most wonderful birding experience. All in all, we drove over six thousand miles and went from home, here in Williamsburg, to central Maryland, western Pennsylvania, the breadth of Kentucky, most of southern Arizona, and the Black Hills of South Dakota. One of the main reasons for the trip was to join a birding tour led by Naturalist Journeys in southeastern Arizona. This was the third tour we have taken with Naturalist Journeys and the third with one of their exceptional guides, Bryan Calk. We had been with Bryan on a previous Arizona tour (February 2022) and in Belize (March 2023). We had a second guide, Robert Gallardo, who is a world-renowned butterfly expert. This article describes mostly only one aspect of our wonderful week with Naturalist Journeys: our observing and, in a very minor way, participating in a hummingbird banding session.

So, briefly, Ann and I added nineteen birds to our Life List even though this was the sixth or seventh birding trip we have taken to southeastern Arizona. I won't list all the species, but some of the Life birds for us included: Five-striped Sparrow; Rose-throated Becard; Lucifer, Calliope, Plain-capped Starthroat, and Berylline hummingbirds; Chihuahuan Meadowlark; Montezuma Quail; and Whiskered Screech Owl. This experience certainly demonstrates the benefits of having the assistance of knowledgeable guides. From our start in Tucson, we went first to Wilcox, a small town with a large golf course pond that attracts a myriad of shore birds. Next, we spent two full days birding in Cave Creek Canyon, very near the Arizona-New Mexico border. After birding in several spots in the Chiricahua Mountains, our next stop was the wonderful Casa de San Pedro in Hereford, which is just south of the
(Continued on Page 6)

BIRDING ARIZONA, Cont. from Page 5

Huachuca Mountains in south central Arizona. This is probably our very favorite birding destination in the entire country and I have written about "The Casa" in previous articles. We spent three nights at The Casa de San Pedro and it was here that we took part in the hummingbird banding. From the San Pedro river area we next went to Green Valley, stopping enroute and birding at the well-known Paton's Feeders (now the Tucson Audubon's Paton Center for Hummingbirds) and Patagonia Lake State Park. From Green Valley we birded in and around the Tubac, Arizona area including the rather well-known Madera and Box Canyons. On the tour's last morning we birded Sentinel Mountain Park in Tucson.

After dinner on one of our evenings at The Casa, we were given a talk by Elissa Fazio, an employee of Naturalist Journeys. While currently on the management staff, Elissa was previously a Master Hummingbird Bander with many years of experience throughout the west. Her fascinating talk detailed the intricacies of banding hummingbirds in contrast to the banding of other birds that a number of us have experienced. While similar in many respects, the capture, handling, banding, and release aspects of hummingbirds is a bit different. The really fun thing was that a hummingbird banding session was held at The Casa the very next afternoon.

The banding sessions at The Casa are held once a week and are conducted by volunteers from the Southeastern Arizona Birding Observatory (SABO). The Master Bander for the session in which we participated was Sheri L. Williamson, who is the author of *A Peterson Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America*. While she was in the midst of conducting the session Sheri was gracious enough to sign a copy of that book for us.

I asked Patrick Dome and Karl Schmitt, our most gracious innkeepers, about the history of hummingbird banding at The Casa de San Pedro. They contacted SABO for the particulars and they replied "... we began banding at Casa regularly in 2011. Banding for 2 hours every Friday from the last weekend in March to the first weekend in October, we've banded over 2600 birds of 11 species. Black-chinned Hummingbirds make up 70% of captures followed by Broad-billed (11%), Rufous (7%), and Anna's (7%). Other species include Lucifer, Rivoli's, Violet-crowned, Allen's, and Calliope. In general, about 20% of birds captured are recaptures so we've actually caught over 3000 birds. The returnees teach us a lot about the birds that have chosen to make The

Casa their breeding season home." Patrick added: "... the experience for guests, especially those experiencing it the first time, is a real thrill."



Sheri Williamson banding hummingbirds at Casa de San Pedro in Hereford, AZ. Photo by Gary Carpenter.

On the afternoon after Elissa's talk, Ann and I witnessed the entire hummingbird banding process firsthand. Instead of mist nets the birds were captured in a trap made up of a cylindrical fine-mesh net that drops over a feeder to which the birds have been lured. The Casa has, at a guess, nearly a dozen hummingbird feeders on its grounds. On banding day all but one of the feeders are put away. Then all the birds that were attracted to those feeders are now limited to the one remaining feeder. A "floor" of some light material is placed just under the feeder and the rolled-up net is hung just above the feeder. When the birds are drinking from the feeder, the bander's assistants can push a button and the rolled-up net drops over the feeders, capturing any birds within its confines. Well-trained handlers then simply reach under the net and hand capture the birds and take them to the bander. This process appears to minimize the stress on the birds. Some studies suggest the hummers take the handling in stride, even reentering the trap within minutes of release. Once in the hands of the Master Bander the bird is fitted with a lightweight aluminum band imprinted with a unique number assigned by the Bird Banding Laboratories of the U.S. Department of the Interior. As you might imagine, these bands are incredibly tiny. When asked how she could possibly read the numbers on the bands Ms. Williamson said she was wearing reading glasses rated at plus 6. The rating of reading glasses one can purchase over-the-counter stops at plus 3. The bander identifies species, age, sex, length of wing, bill, and tail. General health, plumage conditions, signs of breeding, disease, and parasites
(Continued on Page 7)

BIRDING ARIZONA, Cont. from Page 6

are noted. Pollen samples and feathers may also be collected for future study. The records generated through this process provide invaluable information on life expectancy, survivorship, and migration patterns, routes, and timing.

Prior to release, handlers offer each bird a drink of sugared water to compensate them for lost feeding time. The bird's bills are slipped into sugar-nectar feeders and most of the birds take eager advantage of the free meal. Finally the hummingbirds are released, and this is when Ann and I got to play our small part. The birds were placed gently in our open hands and we could feel their warmth and the vibration of their tiny bodies. We were told that this was their respiration process and not their heart beats. The largest of the hummers (Blue-throated Mountain Gem) have about the same weight as three pennies and the smallest (Calliope) about the weight of one penny. We each got to release at least two birds and in no case did they seem terribly anxious to take off. One stayed in Ann's hand for about three minutes and one stayed in my hand for nearly five

minutes. And then, in less than the blink of an eye, they were gone. Ann has put a Power Point presentation with some other photos and video of our experience at the following link on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/Rr9KqGS9Gbw>. 🦋



Rufous Hummingbird resting in Ann Carpenter's hand after being banded. Photo by Gary Carpenter.

RECENT SIGHTINGS



Judy Jones captured the remarkable photo above on a trip to the Grand Tetons in Wyoming in September. Judy said the **Great Gray Owl** is a bird she's wanted

to photograph for several years, "so finding one in good light eating a mouse/vole was a real treat. The Great Gray is the world's largest owl, when measuring length. It does not have ear tufts but does have a huge facial disk. It has a white collar "bowtie", but you can't really see it in this photo as the mouse/vole is in the way. The owl's length is about 31 inches for females and 27 inches for males. With a wingspan of nearly five feet and a weight of about three pounds, this is a beauty of an owl and a wonderful photo opportunity."

Cathy Flanagan shared the following description and photos of some late summer birding: "I enjoyed some time during the last week of August observing the juvenile **Osprey** at the Queen's Lake marina. She is the only chick the pair had this year and is quite grown. My photo catches her in mid call—and call she did for most of the time I was there. I only wish I knew what she was trying to say. I was mostly alone at the marina, and happy to be joined by a beautiful **Great Egret** that landed in a perfectly picturesque setting, pausing just long enough for me to take a shot. Later I observed him walking ever so very slowly around the gazebo when suddenly and surprisingly a small fish jumped high out of the wet marshy grass below the egret's foot and was caught instantly. It was as if the (Continued on Page 8)

RECENT SIGHTINGS, Cont. from Page 7

egret had planned it all along. Meanwhile, two **Killdeer** were scurrying quickly in the gravel off the parking lot. What long legs and striking patterns of browns, tans, black, and white! I never knew they had such beautiful red eyes! Ah, the lazy days of summer!”



Late summer birding at the Queen's Lake Marina. Clockwise from upper left: Young Osprey, Killdeer, and two views of a Great Egret. All photos by Cathy Flanagan.

NATURE CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Lee Schuster recently received the following messages (edited a bit for length) from the three students who attended one of Nature Camp's 2023 summer sessions on scholarships provided by our club. Nature Camp, located in Vesuvius, Virginia, is a private, non-profit, residential, co-ed summer camp specializing in natural history and environmental science education. The scholarship application for the 2024 summer season is currently on the [WBC website](#). Completed applications must be received no later than October 31.

Will Dabney, 7th grade, James Blair Middle School – Bill Williams Scholarship



Thank you so much for awarding me a scholarship to attend Nature Camp. My two weeks at Nature Camp were the highlight of my summer! During those two weeks I chose to take Entomology class. Learning about insects was way more fun than I had ever imagined! The Minor classes were all fun in their own ways too! When we weren't having classes, I enjoyed free time with my new friends playing tether ball and playing in the creek.

On Sunday hikes, I got to go on the old hotel hike which was really fun. I'm hoping for the chance to go back to Nature Camp again next year. It was an experience I'll never forget. Thank you again to everyone in the Bird Club. I appreciate the scholarship and the opportunity to go to Nature Camp this year.

Lydia Rauschenberger, 7th grade, Queens Lake Middle School – Bill Williams Scholarship

I am so thankful to have gotten your scholarship. To me, Nature Camp meant freedom, fun hikes, making friends, and learning so many new things. My military family moved to Williamsburg last summer. When my neighbor recommended Nature Camp, I was curious to learn more about it but had mixed feelings about being away from my family for two weeks. I decided to take a risk and I'm so happy I did.

On the Sunday I was at camp, we went on a Sunday Hike. Sunday Hike is when all the campers take an all-day hike. I did December Ridge, which is one of the hardest hikes. While we took breaks, the counselors had interesting, little riddles for us to solve about each camper on the hike. The view at the top was amazing, even when it started raining. Then it started down-pouring and thundering. I got excited and a little scared. Luckily, we didn't have to slide down on our bottoms to get down quickly, like another group did. We also didn't end up lost, like a different group did.

My major during camp was Ecology. I learned about abiotic (dead) and biotic (living) things. I also learned about keystone species that are key living things that help define

an ecosystem, like the wolves of Yellowstone. I liked learning about the different relationships between organisms, like how a mushroom helps a tree and the tree helps the mushroom. If I return to Nature Camp, I hope to learn more about Astronomy as my field trip to look at the stars was so cool!

The closing ceremony touched my heart. We all lit each other's candles as a sign of passing knowledge to each other. Then the campers stood around the pool and let our candles float away in the water. Thank you so much for those wonderful two weeks. They were the best part of my summer and I miss it already.

Delaney Rantz, 11th grade, James Wood High School in Fredericksburg – Millin Scholarship

My major during camp was limnology. I studied freshwater ecosystems, and focused on fish specifically. The George Washington National Forest was a great place to do that. At one point, we took a field trip to a river to catch (and release) fish with nets, and go snorkeling. A highlight was when we saw a hybrid fish (a dace hybrid) that my instructor had never seen before. He got so excited! I'm so glad I got to study limnology. The teachers were wonderful. They made it fun, and I learned a lot.

There were two awards given out at the end of camp (to only two campers). I had the honor of receiving one of those awards (for being especially active and immersed in limnology class).

Outside of studying limnology, hikes were a highlight during my time at camp. An especially interesting hike was a "sound hike", which explored all the sounds in the environment around us. Also, a small group of us had a "Sunday hike" day, where we hiked to a beautiful natural pool and waterfall. I also attended one optional spirituality and religion class, where campers got to share about their various beliefs and religions. It sparked some good discussions (in a nice way), and made me want to learn more.

The best part of camp were the friendships and connections that I made among fellow campers and the counselors. Everyone was so kind and inclusive. Also, the Director, Mr. Coulling, and the caretaker, Mr. Smith, take pride in the camp and work really hard to make Nature Camp a great place. There's a saying that goes, "the people make the place," and because of that, if I could go anywhere in the world next summer, I would go back to Nature Camp! 🐦



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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 5% 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/>