

**Williamsburg Bird Club**  
**September 18, 2024**

Hybrid meeting; conducted in person at Quarterpath Rec Center, Room 2, Quarterpath Rd, Williamsburg  
and via Zoom hosted by Ann Carpenter at 6:30 pm

**Attendance:** 21 in person; 32 via Zoom.

**President's Remarks:** President Nancy Barnhart greeted everyone present and on Zoom. She hoped that more members would attend in person at 6 am for refreshments and a chance to socialize with fellow birders before the meeting started. Nancy reported that there would be a brief business meeting after the presentation followed by a free raffle.

**Program:** Patty Maloney, Vice President, Programs, introduced Joe Piotrowski, MD, a longtime WBC member and former programs VP, as well as a highly regarded Riverside vascular surgeon. Joe added a new dimension to our September presentation of the *Birds of Mexico* by formatting his presentation as a quiz. As pens and paper were handed out, we were reassured that our scores would be kept personal.

For the first time ever, Joe had set himself the challenge to document the Mexican birds he saw by videotaping instead of photographing. He used a 100–400 mm lens and a mirrorless Canon EOS R5 camera featuring eye-controlled automatic focus that makes tracking animals and birds easier.

Via *Caravanas de Mexico*, a Mexican travel agency that organizes RV caravan tours of Mexico, Joe and his wife joined 10 other tourists, 7 dogs, and a Mexican guide for a 3-month tour starting January 15<sup>th</sup> to April. They met in Mission, TX and traversed the east coast of Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula, and up the west coast ending in Durango MX to witness a perfect solar eclipse on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

This was a cultural tour, where the caravan was met on their travels by local guides and vans to take them to pyramids and many other exciting treasures of Mexico. Alas, no focus on birds, so Joe was on his own to find birds and videotape them. Some were familiar birds that we see on our Virginia coastline, which boosted our scores in his quiz. His videotapes captured a lot of charming avian behavior and interactions that is a lot more difficult to capture via still photographs.

Here is a YouTube link to the presentation for your enjoyment. <https://youtu.be/OuMrNseVZys> See how many of the birds you can identify correctly?

**Announcements:**

**Bird Walks – Scott Hemler:**

- **Saturday, September 28:** Scott will be leading a bird walk at NQP at 8 am. He hopes attendees will get to see some of the new winter migrants.

**Field Trips – George Martin, Field Trip Coordinator:** George was absent. Nancy reported the following:

- **Saturday, Sept 29:** Casual birding at 8am at Jamestown Beach with Babbs as recorder.
- **Saturday, Oct. 19:** Eastern Shore with Deborah Humphries as leader.

**The Flyer:** Nancy reported for Mary Ellen that the deadline for the October newsletter is September 26<sup>th</sup>. She welcomed announcements about upcoming events, photos, a short article or essay related to birds or birding, etc.

**Christmas Bird Count:** Nancy, reporting for the Shirley Devan who is coordinating this year's CBC, announced that we should put Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> on our calendars.

**Programs – Patty Maloney, Vice President (Programs)** reported the following:

- **October 23:** Rexanne Bruno will report on her birding in Ecuador
- **November 20:** James Abbott about his research in Belize.

**Project Feeder Watch:** Deborah Humphries urged members to sign up for Project Feeder Watch that starts November 1<sup>st</sup>. She reported a trend for the last decade of a significant decline of yard birds across the board that didn't relate to any specific reason. She noted the importance of any data we collect is therefore very useful. Nancy noted that we should clean our feeders as often as possible. A solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water once a week is recommended. Also, if you note a sick bird (i.e. conjunctivitis) on your feeder, it is extra important to clean your feeder. Whether to remove your feeder for a while to prevent illness spreading is controversial as the sick bird may move to other feeders. There will be a link to Feeder Watch in the upcoming newsletter. Nancy said experienced members, like herself, will be glad to help beginners.

**The Birds of Virginia's Historic Triangle by Bill Williams:** Nancy was excited to report that the new edition, a 12-year update from the original publication will be available September 30<sup>th</sup>. 250 copies at \$20 each have been printed and bird club members will have first access. Eventually, it will be available on our club's website and then made available to the public.

**End of the Meeting:** A free raffle was held as well as continued refreshments organized by Cathy Flanagan. Cathy Flanagan passed around a sign-up sheet for refreshment volunteers. During the raffles, Nancy reported that she'd had a Philadelphia Vireo at her feeder for the first time. She also shared that there's been a first for breeding in Virginia: a pair of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks on the Eastern Shore!

Nancy Barnhart adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cathy Millar, Secretary Williamsburg Bird Club  
September 24, 2024