

Williamsburg Bird Club

October 23, 2024

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

Attendance: 31 in person; 13 via Zoom

President's Remarks: Nancy welcomed everyone present and on Zoom. She reported that there would be a brief business meeting at the end followed by a raffle.

Program: Patty Maloney, VP Programs, introduced the evening's speaker. Our October meeting was a visual and informative treat with the expertise of Rexanne Bruno guiding us through her 11-day March 2024 birding trip in the cloud forest ecosystem of the eastern and western slopes 2,000 to 13,000 feet high in the northwestern Andes. Rexanne has been birding for over 50 years, as well as having been a past board member and president of the VSO. Currently, she is heavily involved in bringing Virginia's 2nd Breeding Bird Atlas to fruition.

Rexanne was one of a small group of five, organized by Road Scholar. In all, she recorded 267 species, of which 182 were life birds. She was thrilled to see many of her two favorite families of birds: hummingbirds and tanagers. A good part of the trip was spent at two lodges, Guango and San Isidro, that catered to birders and photographers. Some of the birding was made easier by tempting them with food. Many were hummingbird feeders and logs into which bananas had been discreetly tucked; a back-lit white sheet to attract insects that always brought in Black-banded Owls, who savor moths; and offerings of worms to some birds that have been trained to respond to a specific call.

Fifty-one species of hummingbirds were spotted, including the brilliant Great Sapphire-wing that, due to its large size, has one of the slowest wingbeats, and the shimmering blue-and-green Long-tailed Sylph, which, including its splendid forked tail, is 8 inches long.

Thirty-three species of tanagers were seen, including the exuberantly multi-colored Paradise Tanager and the stunning neon-like green of the Glistening-green Tanager.

A sample of other fascinating birds seen was the Lyre-tailed Nightjar, that has to find a roost during the day that will accommodate its 24-inch-long tail. Rexanne was thrilled to see some target birds she'd hoped to see: the Andean Gull found on high mountain meadows; the Ecuadorian national bird with 11 foot wingspan, the Andean Condor, of which only 150 are left in the country; and the boldly patterned black & white White-caped Dipper, which like our western American Dipper is seen diving into fast moving water; and the strange looking Andean Cock-of-the-Rock with a brilliant red large fan-like crest that almost hides its bill.

Along with the many photos of spectacular birds, Rexanne shared great identification info as well as the habitats where they can be found. It is well worth the time to watch or rewatch her presentation via YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/kjEVKHkq0PO>

Announcements

Bird Walks -Scott Hemler: Nancy reported that there will be the usual 4th Saturday bird walk at New Quarter Park for October, November, and December.

November 30th, NQP is sponsoring an Owl Prowl. If interested, register with NQP

Field Trips – George Martin: George was absent. Nancy recognized George and Deborah for organizing/leading a wonderful trip to the Eastern Shore where 70 some species were identified.

Upcoming field trips are:

Saturday, November 16th: Nancy will lead a field trip at Grandview Nature Preserve.

Saturday, January 18th 2025: Dutch Gap with details to be determined.

The Flyer – Mary Ellen Hodges: Nancy reported that the deadline for the November newsletter is Saturday 26th. This is the last newsletter of the year so, anyone wanting notice of events in December or early January to be included, should do so now. Bird sightings, articles, photos are always welcome.

Christmas Bird Count – Shirley Devan: Shirley reported that she has taken over from Jim Corliss as the compiler of the clubs' bird counts. This year's count will be held on Sunday, December 22nd and will be our 48th count. The first one was held in 1977 when the club was founded. For the new members, Shirley explained how the CBC is done. Last year, we had about 50 recording folks in the field and 50 feeder watchers. Last year we recorded about 120 species. She invited everyone to participate.

Bird & Birder Show – Shirley Devan: January 1st at 1-3pm at Chickahominy Riverfront Park. This is a social event and an opportunity to start one's 2025 birding list.

2nd Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas: Shirley gave a shout-out of appreciation to Rexanne Bruno for the major role she has been playing in bringing the breeding bird atlas to fruition.

Programs – Patty Maloney, VP (Programs): Nancy reported that our last meeting of the year will be:
November 20th: James Abbott, James River Assoc. educator, will present his graduate research project and birding in Belize.

Nominees for 2025 Board Members: Deborah Humphries, who along with Patty Maloney and George Martin were on the nominating committee, read out the slate of nominees. All the officers of 2024 had agreed to serve in 2025. They are:

- 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
- Past President: Cheryl Jacobson

CVWO Hawkwatch: Nancy reported that they are just 319 birds shy of 30,000 birds with 5 weeks to go. This is the largest number since 1999!

Nancy also reported having seen a Black-chinned Hummingbird at Kiptopeke.

Birds of Virginia's Colonial Historic Triangle by Bill Williams: Nancy reported that she had copies for sale for \$20. She emphasized that our club gets the proceeds after the cost of publishing has been paid. Bill claims nothing for his labor of love.

A free raffle was held at the end of the meeting.

Nancy Barnhart adjourned the meeting at 7:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Millar, Secretary Williamsburg Bird Club
October 27, 2024

