



AUGUSTA
BIRD
C L U B

"What they feel they can voice, as we try to; they court and nest, they battle with the elements, they are torn by two opposing impulses, a love of home and a passion for far places. Only with birds do we share so much emotion."

~ Donald Culross Peattie

April Meeting

Date: This month's meeting is at our usual location in the Lifetime building of AMC but on a **different date** than the usual 2nd Monday.

This month's date is TUESDAY, APRIL 8th at 7:00 PM.

Place: AMC Lifetime Building/Blue Ridge Community College Education Center

Program: Travels and Birding with Stauffer & Elinor Miller.

Speaker: Stauffer Miller, Charlottesville

Stauffer Miller (excellent birder, world traveler and accomplished photographer) and his wife Elinor (a.k.a. Bananaquit Ellie – birder, author, and collector of banana stickers), recently moved to form Cape Cod to Charlottesville where they have quickly learned the local avifauna and where Stauffer now leads frequent field trips for Monticello Bird Club. This program will include not only some local birds from Albemarle



County but also images and tales from their exotic travels in 2007.

Note: *The April meeting date has been changed to Tuesday, April 8 from our usual 2nd Monday schedule because of conflicts with hospital / medical meetings. This meeting will be in our usual location (rooms 215-216 in the Lifetime Education Building on the AMC campus).*

Mark Your Calendars for Birding, Food, & FUN!

Our annual birding and brunch meeting will be held on May 3rd starting at 8 AM at Montgomery Hall Park. Please bring one of your favorite breakfast/brunch food items to share with the group. Ideas include fruit, coffee cake, bagels and cream cheese, ham biscuits or whatever you desire to bring. The club will provide coffee, juice and paper products. We will divide into groups and go birding for about two hours and then will return to the pavilion to socialize and enjoy the brunch. Montgomery Hall Park is one of the best places to bird within the Staunton city limits. This time of year we can expect to find a number of summer resident species including warblers, flycatchers, and tanagers as well as a few late migrants. If the weather looks iffy that morning, call Linda Matkins at 383-8229 after 7 AM to see if we will still meet.

Directions: From West Beverly Street, take Montgomery Avenue about 0.5 miles, cross the rail-

road track and then turn right at the second entrance to the park. Turn left and go to the top of the hill straight ahead to the picnic shelter.

Chirps From the President

After a number of cold days, warmth comes and the grass turns green. The sounds of lawn mowers replace the sounds of snow blowers (well not much this past winter). Daffodils are blooming again and now the white bloom of the Bradford Pear dots the landscape and Forsythia is putting forth its yellow bloom. Azaleas are in bloom too and the Cherries are not far behind. The sounds of birds announcing their territories are in full swing with the best of birding on its way from the south. Soon the colors of the springtime flowers will be overshadowed (at least for me) with the black, white and yellows of the migrating spring warblers. Just as the leaves emerge on the trees those elusive warblers will be filling the treetops and even low lying shrubs, just hoping you will spot them and be enthralled with their beauty. Check out the Newsletter to make sure you don't miss out on the field trips by our superb leaders to fully appreciate how glorious spring can be.

-Grant Simmons

Field Trips

Special note -- All trips are subject to be cancelled due to heavy fog, rain, snow, or ice. The trip leader will let you know or call the trip leader to find out because YOUR safety is our main concern .

Friday, April 18th to Sunday, April 20th: Colonial Parkway & Jamestown Wildlife Loop, Eastern Shore weekend.

Meeting place / time: Woodrow Wilson Parkway
Holiday Inn (exit 225 off I-81) lower parking lot,
6:00 AM

R.S.V.P : Allen Lerner will be coordinating this trip and needs to know in advance who will be partici-

pating. Contact Allen at larneysky@mindspring.com or 280-3423 BEFORE the trip.

Join Allen Lerner as he leads a group to Jamestown to bird the Colonial Parkway and the Jamestown Wildlife Loop (a 5 mile driving loop of mixed wooded areas with brackish water swamps & sawgrass). Target birds for this part of the trip are Osprey, Bald Eagles, Gulls, Terns, Redheaded Woodpeckers, Yellow-throated Warblers plus many many more birds.

After this adventure Allen will be heading out & going to the Eastern Shore on Saturday. Participants for this portion of the trip should meet Allen at the toll booth at 8:00 AM. The first stop will be Island One on the CBBT. From there the group will make a stop at Ramp Road to check out the pond. The day will wind up at Chincoteague late in the afternoon or early evening. Saturday evening the group will go over to Saxis Marsh & listen for Rails. On Sunday morning after breakfast, all are welcome to bird the Eastern Shore with Allen back to the CBBT. Target birds on the Eastern Shore include: Waterfowl & Loons, hawks of any kind, Gulls, Terns, Shorebirds (e.g. Piping Plover), all Heron species, Brown-headed Nuthatch, any migrating song birds, plus many more.

Reasonably priced Inns near Chincoteague include:

Blue Heron Inn -- \$59 .95 to \$79. 95 per night. 1-800-615-6343

Refuge Inn -- \$70 to \$90 + per night. 1-888-257-0038

Sea Hawk Motel -- \$59 to \$90 per night. 1-757-336-6527

Special note: If you wish to avoid the early Staunton start you can depart the night before and meet up with Allen and the group at the Jamestown M^cDonald's on Rt. 60 (closest to the Pottery in Lightfoot) at approximately 8:15 AM on Friday morning. Also, if you wish to skip the Jamestown portion of the trip but want to go to the Eastern Shore you can leave whenever you want on Friday meet up with Allen and the group Saturday morning.

For more info contact Allen Lerner at larneysky@mindspring.com or call 280-3423.



Wednesday, April 23rd : M^cCormick's Mill Meeting
Place & Time: Colonial Mall Parking Lot behind McDonalds, 8:30 a.m.
Coordinator: Jo King at kingbird10@yahoo.com or 430-0186

Join Jo King for this half day trip to the far southern corner of Augusta County in hopes of finding some spring migrants and some late winter migrants that may still be hanging around. On this walk we can see at least 30 + species of birds. Dress for the day and bring a snack.

Saturday, April 26th: BIG SPRING DAY
Meeting Place & Time: Your Choice!
Coordinator: Allen Lerner at larnersky@mindspring.com or 280-3423

This is where you can team up with a birding friend or just go out on your own in your special birding place in Augusta County . You can start whenever you feel like it & bird as long as you like to . All you have to do is record what birds you see & how many of each species of birds you see. On past Big Spring Days we have had up to 130+ species of birds seen by all birding parties in one day . Also we have had many peak counts & early dates from this annual event . If you do not have a special place you can choose from one of these areas listed below. Please let Allen know what areas you want to cover to prevent crossovers. When you have finished for the day e-mail Allen (larnersky@mindspring.com) with you tallies. This event will take place rain or shine .

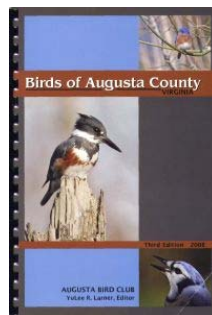
Augusta Wetlands & North Mt.
 Montgomery Hall Park
 Shenandoah Mt. & Elkhorn Lake
 Swoope area & Boy Scout Camp
 Weyers Cave area

Rt. 610 - Blue Ridge Parkway & Sherando Lake
 Mount Solon & Natural Chimney
 McCormick Mill
 Quillen's & Stuarts Draft areas
 Waynesboro areas
 Feeder watches

Saturday, May 3rd: The Yulee Lerner Birding Trail
Meeting place/time: Montgomery Hall Park (top right pavilion), Staunton, VA, 8:00 AM
Trip Leader: TBA, Contact Linda Matkins at linda.matkins@gmail.com for more information.

Come one and all to our last annual spring meeting in Montgomery Hall Park. First thing that morning we will have a field trip to look for Flycatchers, Warblers, and Tanagers to name a few. Bring a brunch item and after the walk we will do a tally and enjoy the good food and fellowship. More info will be disclosed about this annual event at the April meeting. This event will occur come rain or shine.

Birds of Augusta County 3rd Edition



Our goal is for every member of Augusta Bird Club to purchase a copy of the third edition of *Birds of Augusta County*. We bought a rather large number of books in order to sell them at a reasonable price. Books will be available before and after the April meeting, so please consider buying your copy at that time.

The cost is \$15.00 plus \$0.75 tax. If you pay by check, make it payable to "**Augusta Bird Club Book Account**". If you would prefer receiving your copy by mail, send your check for \$17.00 payable to "**Augusta Bird Club Book Account**" and mail to YuLee Lerner, 21 Woodlee Rd, Apt. 114, Staunton, VA 24401.

-YuLee Lerner
 Records Committee Chair

Birds and Botanicals

Stone Soup Books is hosting a signing for *Birds of Augusta County*. We have put together a spring

event to showcase the BAC as well as the beautiful botanicals created by ABC member Betty Gatewood. Her botanicals will grace the walls of Stone Soup Books for the month of April. The special day is April 12 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Together with the folks of Stone Soup Books, Betty, YuLee, and I have created this day of "Birds and Botanicals." Here is the list of events:

- 11:00 YuLee talks Bird Migration
- 11:30 Bird Migration Activity
- 12:30 Mary and the "Music of Birds"
- 1:00 Feathers – Art & Science
- 1:30 YuLee talks Bird Habitats
- 2:00 Paint a Wildflower with Betty

You are invited to join bird expert, YuLee Lerner, wildflower artist, Betty Gatewood, and author, Mary Vermeulen for a fun "hands on" afternoon. In between times, Editor YuLee will be available to sign *Birds of Augusta County*.

Folks of all ages are encouraged to register (943-0084) for the activities (space is limited). The Bird Migration Activity is for children. Mary Katharine, owner of Stone Soup Books, has created a beautiful poster featuring the cover of BAC and one of Betty's paintings of bluebells. We are hoping for a beautiful day for the activities of painting, science of feathers, migration game, and learning about birds and botanicals both inside and on the patio. You-all come!

-Mary Vermeulen

Help Track Rusty Blackbirds April 1-7

Populations of Rusty Blackbirds are declining. Their numbers have decreased by as much as 88-98% over the last few decades, according to data gathered from 1966 to 2006 by the North American Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count. Bird watchers across North America are being asked to help scientists at Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology track migrating Rusty Blackbirds

A century ago, the Rusty Blackbird was an incredibly abundant bird. Accounts from the period detail spectacular spring migrations between the species' wintering grounds in the bottomland for-



ests of the southeastern United States and its breeding grounds in the forested wetlands of North America's vast boreal forest. Reports of Rusty Blackbirds blackening the earth and clouding the sky in the spring stand in stark contrast to the situation today. Rusty Blackbird populations have suffered one of most significant population declines of any bird in North America.

Spring migration is an especially critical period in the life cycle of Rusty Blackbirds. At this time they congregate in large flocks and habitat losses, blackbird control programs, or other disturbances may make them particularly vulnerable.

The call is out for bird watchers to help in gaining a better understanding of the Rusty Blackbird's spring habitat requirements. Help fill this information gap by looking for Rusty Blackbirds migrating north April 1-7. The data collected and reported through eBird will help identify important migration stopover locations and habitats for conservation. It will help researchers examine whether long-term changes to key migration habitats are responsible for the species' decline. If you are interested in participating, please visit http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/RUBL_Survey.html for more information.

BAC Sales Returns \$\$\$ to ABC Treasury

Thanks to the wonderful support of Augusta Bird Club members, YuLee and I will present a check for \$1500 to the ABC at the April meeting in partial repayment of the \$5000 given to the BAC publication account. Sales have been brisk. To date we have sold 125 books. Help us keep it going. Tell your friends how the information contained this wonderful companion book to their field guides expands their knowledge of the birds that come to their backyard feeders or that they observe as they travel to the birding locations in Augusta County described in the BAC. *Birds of Augusta County* is available from YuLee or me as well as Stone Soup Books, The Bookstack, and Wilderness Adventure.

-Mary Vermeulen
ABC Historian, Co-chair of BAC Sales

**Augusta Bird Club Minutes
March 10th, 2008**

The Augusta Bird Club met at the Augusta Medical Center Community Care Building on March 10, 2008 at 7:00PM. Grant welcomed members and visitors of which there were several. Penny Warren introduced her son, Liam who is a recipient of a Nature Camp Scholarship. Towhees, Woodcocks, Fox Sparrows, Bald Eagles and Red-winged Blackbirds were mentioned as birds we are seeing.

A change in the usual order of the meeting led to having the speaker program next. Yulee introduced the speaker for the evening, Peggy Opengari. Peggy is a familiar face to most of us as she has presented programs in the past and is an active member of VSO and the New River Valley Club. She gave an interesting video presentation of her birding experience in Borneo and Peninsula Malaysia. After a question and answer period we proceeded with the meeting.

Harry Lumadue presented a slate of officers for the 2008-2009 year. They are Grant Simmons-president, John Spahr-vice president, Liz Reed-secretary, Ed Lawler-treasurer and Paul Callo-newsletter editor.

Eastern Shore Birding weekend is April 16-18, see complete details in the newsletter. Details on Big Spring Day, April 26, 2008 are also in the newsletter. Monthly McCormick's Mill field trips will resume April 23, 2008, led by Jo King.

Yulee reported 120 records books have been sold.

Lisa Hamilton encouraged all who have not paid dues to please do so.

Andrew Clem has completed the bird club web page. It can be found at www.augustabirdclub.org
Thank you Andrew.

The meeting adjourned around 8:45pm.

-Respectfully submitted,
Elizabeth Reed, secretary

Treasurer's Report
submitted by Lisa Hamilton

2/01/2008 – 2/29/2008

REGULAR OPERATING FUND		
BALANCE - 2/1/2008	\$ 2,533.29	
INCOME	\$ 234.29	
EXPENSES	\$ 277.03	
BALANCE - 2/29/2008		\$ 2,490.55
EDUCATION/CONSERVATION FUND		
BALANCE - 2/1/2008	\$ 8,494.82	
INCOME	\$ 252.00	
EXPENSES	\$ 225.00	
BALANCE - 2/29/2008		\$ 8,521.82
TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS - 2/29/2008		\$ 11,012.37

**Virginia Society of
Ornithology Website**

<http://virginiabirds.net>

Augusta Bird Club Website

www.augustabirdclub.org