



AUGUSTA  
BIRD  
C L U B

"A wise old owl sat on an oak;  
The more he saw the less he spoke;  
The less he spoke the more he heard;  
Why aren't we like that wise old bird?"

~ Edward Hersey  
Richards

### February Meeting

- Date:** Monday, February 9th, 7:00 PM
- Place:** AMC Lifetime Building/Blue Ridge Community College Education Center
- Program:** Birds of Paradise and adventures in New Guinea
- Speaker:** John Spahr

New Guinea is the world's largest tropical island and harbors a diverse array of cultures and a wealth of natural history. It is home to many unique species of plants and animals, many still undiscovered. Included in this wealth are over 700 species of birds, none more elaborate and bizarre than the birds of paradise. Thirty eight of the world's 43 species of birds of paradise live in New Guinea. John has been fortunate to have seen many of these in two recent trips to that special island. He has studied these birds in some depth and will share his knowledge in a very visual and informative presentation.



### Chirps From the President

Your Bird Club board met recently to prepare a budget for the coming year beginning June 1 when the new officers take over. As you know for a number of years we have provided scholarships for youth to attend nature camp. That has been a most important project for our club. This past year our club gave two full scholarships and two half scholarships to Nature camp. We plan to offer the same number of scholarships again this year. In the past we have had the funds for our scholarships due to the income we have received from our Bird Seed sales. Those sales have yielded a profit of \$3000 to \$4000 each year. This



past year we did not conduct a sale. As a result we will be funding the scholarships from our regular funds which come from our membership fees. These will not be sufficient to cover our normal expenses and the scholarships. Thus we need to either go back to selling seeds or find some other source of funds. Some of you did give an additional contribution this year for that purpose and we appreciate your generosity. Our Board will meet this summer and will need to make a decision about fund raising. There is some interest in resuming our seed sales but that will mean that we need to find someone to take on the task that Lisa Hamilton has performed so ably in the past. It will also mean that

you will need to support that effort by buying seeds from the club.

We ask you to think about what you would like for your club to do and share it with the officers.

Harry and Beth Lumadue have agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee for the coming year. If you have suggestions or self nominations for officers please share your suggestions with them.

-Grant Simmons

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### Field Trips

Special note -- Due to the inclement weather we routinely encounter this time of year Allen & Jo will not have any regularly scheduled local trips until March.

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### CRANE CREEK-MAGEE MARSH, OHIO MAY 17 - 21, 2009



Details of our planned field trip are now posted on the Augusta Bird Club's web site <http://www.augustabirdclub.org> under **Field Trips** and may be downloaded. If you are interested in this trip and do not have access to a computer, please get in touch with Beth or Harry Lumadue at [betharri@comcast.net](mailto:betharri@comcast.net) or 540-885-7129 and we will mail you a hard copy after February 16.

Please let us or Nancy and Walt Childs [wncchilds@verizon.net](mailto:wncchilds@verizon.net) 434-361-1626 know if you are planning to make the trip. We are looking forward to this unique experience and hope to see many of you there.

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### 2009 Nature Camp Scholarships

We are once again soliciting nominations for the Nature Camp Scholarships we will provide this year. Anyone with an interested child (grades 5 to 12) should contact Linda Matkins ([linda.matkins@gmail.com](mailto:linda.matkins@gmail.com)) as soon as possible. Nature Camp is a private, non-profit, residential, co-ed summer camp in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Rockbridge County that specializes in natural history and environmental science education. It is one of the oldest camps of its kind in the country and an experience your child will never forget.

-Linda Matkins  
Nature Camp Scholarship Chairman

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### Mark Your Calendars for the Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz!

The Rusty Blackbird has been steeply declining with estimates of an 85-99% population drop over the past 40 years. The cause for this alarming decline is not known and the increasingly sparse and patchy winter distribution of the Rusty Blackbird is making it more difficult to learn more about distribution, abundance, and ecology as a basis for conservation efforts. Collaborating with Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's and National Audubon Society's e-Bird project, the Rusty Blackbird Technical Working Group (RBTWG) needs your help to find local, but predictable wintering concentrations of Rusty Blackbirds by participating in the Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz.

The Rusty Blackbird Hot Spot Blitz will occur, February 7-15, 2009, throughout the Rusty Blackbird winter range in over 20 midwestern and southeastern states.



Participants will simply be asked to visit locations where they have previously sighted or would expect to encounter Rusty Blackbirds and submit their observations via e-Bird. There are no datasheets or daily time restrictions. You can go wherever you like, whenever you like, and as often as you like anytime between the dates of February 7-15,

2009. We are simply seeking observations on the number of birds present at each location visited, along with very basic habitat information. If you are unfamiliar with areas which may support Rusty Blackbirds in your region, contact the Blitz coordinator for ideas. As a result of these efforts, the RBTWG is hoping to create maps of wintering Rusty Blackbird "hot spots" that will help direct research, monitoring and conservation attention.

If you don't use eBird regularly, please consider entering all your observations of Rusty Blackbirds (even outside the Blitz period). Your observations will be used by researchers currently studying their steep long-term population decline.

Additional instructions and information on identification, habitat preferences, etc., will soon be posted on the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center's Rusty Blackbird website:

[http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Research/Rusty\\_Blackbird/](http://nationalzoo.si.edu/ConservationAndScience/MigratoryBirds/Research/Rusty_Blackbird/)

Information and instructions will also be available on Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's e-Bird site:

<http://ebird.org>

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### Great Backyard Bird Count February 13-16, 2009

The Great Backyard Bird Count sponsored by the American Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology will be held four days – from February 13<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup> this year. If you have never participated in this count, I urge you to send in your checklists this year. Last year, birders in Staunton submitted 13 checklists, Waynesboro 21, and Harrisonburg 19. I would like to see more members of Augusta Bird Club participate. It is easy to do. Just count the birds at your feeders, or in a park, or anyplace you choose, and send in your count. To reach the website, click on [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) and follow the simple instructions. Last year 85,727 checklists were submitted, surpassing the 2007 CBBC by several thousand; 635 species were observed, and the number of individual birds totaled 9,805,216. I have enjoyed checking the website frequently during the four-day period, as it has a map showing the progress as checklists are submitted. So, come on, bird club members, let's have larger participation this year.

We are the "citizen scientists" who provide information for the professional scientists who are studying bird populations. If you need more information, contact me at [larnery@ntelos.net](mailto:larnery@ntelos.net).

-YuLee Lerner  
Records Committee Chair

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\*Bluebirds not included

### Bluebird Boxes For Sale

Don't forget, the club sells Bluebird boxes for \$10.00 each. Contact Pete Colby (540-949-5979) to purchase them. He usually has a few with him at the monthly meetings.

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### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

For those of you that have not already renewed your club membership for 2009, the Membership Renewal Form is included with this mailing for your convenience. Please take a moment to mail this form and your renewal dues to the club Treasurer at the address provided on the form.

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### Augusta Bird Club Minutes January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009

The Augusta Bird Club met at 7:00 p.m. on January 12, 2009 at Augusta Medical Center, Fishersville, Va. President Grant Simmons welcomed members and guests. Members reported seeing Pine Siskins, Bluebirds, a Short-eared Owl, Snow Bunting, and Lapland Longspurs, many of these birds were seen on the Christmas bird counts. A Townsend's Solitaire is currently being seen in Rockingham County.

Grant introduced Devon Charlier who thanked the club for sponsoring her to Nature Camp. Devon's study was in Botany and she expressed her gratitude for the scholarship as saying, "It truly was one of the greatest, most wonderful experiences of my entire life".

YuLee Lerner had her "Birds of Augusta County" third edition published in January 2008 for sale. YuLee explained that the other previous two books were published in 1988 and 1998 each ten years

apart. YuLee encouraged members to participate in the upcoming "Great Backyard Bird Count" sponsored by the National Audubon Society. The count will take place in February from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009. She would like to see many reports from the Staunton area that would reflect a large red dot on the map. Information on the count will appear in her Wednesday column in February.

Crista Cabe compiler of the Waynesboro Christmas Bird Count reported that she is nearly finished gathering information from field teams to have her data placed on the web site.

Andrew Clem illustrated the club's web site which he developed. It can be viewed at: [www.augustabirdclub.org](http://www.augustabirdclub.org)

Field trips were discussed. John Spahr will be leading the Highland County field trip on Saturday, January 17. He discussed details which can be found in the newsletter. Jo King announced that she will be leading trips to McCormick's Mill in Raphine, monthly beginning in mid-March.

John Spahr then introduced the program speaker Dr. Mercedes S. Foster, Research Biologist with the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. Dr. Foster presented her research on the Manakins of Peru in a very informative and interesting manner.

-Respectfully submitted,  
Jo King, substituting secretary

**Treasurer's Report**  
submitted by Ed Lawler  
12/01/2008 – 12/31/2008

**REGULAR OPERATING FUND**

BALANCE - 11/30/2008	\$ 3,700.24
INCOME	\$ 610.00
EXPENSES	\$ 86.83
<b>BALANCE - 12/31/2008</b>	<b>\$ 4,223.41</b>

**EDUCATION/CONSERVATION FUND**

BALANCE - 11/30/2008	\$ 5,698.82
INCOME	\$ 560.00
EXPENSES	\$ 195.00
<b>BALANCE - 12/31/2008</b>	<b>\$ 6,063.82</b>

<b>TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS - 12/31/2008</b>	<b>\$ 10,287.23</b>
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**The Extra Yard**

Many thanks to those of you that have renewed as Contributing or Sustaining Members. Your tax-deductible donations will be used to support wildlife education and conservation efforts in our area. 2009 Contributing and Sustaining Members as of this mailing are listed below.

**CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS**

- Catherine Allen & Alan Lane
- JoAnne Berg
- Melissa Druff
- Walter Flora
- Jay Gilliam & Anita Filson
- Dorothy Foss
- Dr. Maury Hanson
- Dorothy Mitchell
- Carolyn & Allen Hensley
- Catherine Kohus
- Linda Matkins & Michael Reynard
- Grant Simmons
- Sarah Splaun
- Penny Warren
- Mrs. C.K. Welliver
- Judy Wiegand
- Doug & Sylvia Woodworth



**SUSTAINING MEMBERS**

- Mary Ann & Wayne Angleberger
- Marietta Beverage
- Walt & Nancy Childs
- Katherine W Colston
- Bill & Nancy Corwin
- Janet Doerr
- Bruce Dorries
- James A Hulvey
- Yulee R Larner (Life Member)
- Keith Lovekamp
- Harry & Beth Lumadue
- James & Elizabeth Reed
- Jill & Gabe Templeton

**Virginia Society of Ornithology Website**

<http://virginiabirds.net>

**Augusta Bird Club Website**

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

**AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB  
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM**

Regular

Individual @ \$15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Couple @ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ (2 people at the same address)  
Family @ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ (3 or more people at the same address)

Contributing

Individual @ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_  
Couple @ \$35 \_\_\_\_\_ (2 people at the same address)  
Family @ \$40 \_\_\_\_\_ (3 or more people at the same address)

Sustaining

Individual @ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_  
Couple @ \$60 \_\_\_\_\_ (2 people at the same address)  
Family @ \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ (3 or more people at the same address)

Any amount contributed over regular dues is tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the extent allowed by law. The Augusta Bird Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Please return this form with a check payable to Augusta Bird Club.

**Mail to: *Augusta Bird Club*  
*Ed Lawler, Treasurer*  
*205 Rose Hill Circle*  
*Staunton, VA 24401***

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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Prefer to receive Bulletin by: USPS MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_