



AUGUSTA  
**BIRD**  
 CLUB

*"My favorite weather is bird-chirping weather."*

~ Loire Hartwoud

### December Meeting

**Date:** Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM  
**Place:** AMC Lifetime Building/Blue Ridge Community College Education Center  
**Program:** Friends of Shenandoah Mountain  
**Speaker:** Lynn Cameron, Rockingham County

Lynn will join us to discuss efforts by the "Friends of Shenandoah Mountain" organization to provide additional protection for the Shenandoah Mountain region in Augusta, Rockingham and Highland Counties by having it designated as a National Scenic Area. The group is also attempting to gain protective designations for two additional areas: Kelley Mountain-Big Levels on the Blue Ridge side of Augusta County as a National Scenic Area and the Laurel Fork area in Highland County as a Wilderness Area. She will give a PowerPoint presentation about the regions that would be affected, the degree of protection that would be provided by each of these designa-



tions, and the process required to reach these goals. See you there!



### Field Trips

**Saturday January 30<sup>th</sup>:** Highland County  
**Meeting place / time:** Woodrow Wilson Parkway  
 Holiday Inn (exit 225 off I-81) lower parking lot,  
 8:00 AM

**Coordinator:** Allen Lerner at [larnesky@mind-spring.com](mailto:larnesky@mind-spring.com)

Allen Lerner will lead a field trip to beautiful Highland County on this Saturday at the end of January. In case of inclement weather, trip will be postponed to Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Allen by e-mail!

## TROPICAL BIRDING

**February 10-18, 2009:** Costa Rica Birding Trip

Coordinator: Diane Holsinger

[dhworkout@yahoo.com](mailto:dhworkout@yahoo.com) or 540-896-7132

Come see the beautiful birds of Costa Rica on this week-long field trip. To lodges like Punta Leona on the beach and Carara National Park for owling in the evening. We will also take a boat ride on the Rio Tarcoles with Mangrove Birding Tours.

Then it's on to Rincon Bridge for special birds like the Blue-tailed Goldenthrout and the Yellow-billed Cotinga. We will then travel to San Vito and stay two nights at the Las Cruces Field Station near the Wilson Botanical Gardens

If you have never been to the tropics or Costa Rica, you won't be disappointed. If you are worried about finding or identifying birds, a bird guide will be with us throughout our trip.

Call or email Diane for price & more information.

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## WINGBEATS

### 2009 Reflections

I feel very fortunate to have had a terrific 2009 birding year, perhaps not to be matched again, and I would like to share with you some of the highlights.

The first trip was in March to Panama with visits to the Canopy Lodge and the Canopy Tower with 307 species seen, including a 3 ½ year old Harpy Eagle. It was one of the captive bred birds of the Peregrine Fund designated to be sent to Belize to help re-establish the species there. Also seen were 20 species of hummingbirds, 6 trogons, 3 motmots, 4 puffbirds as well as some hard to find birds such as: White-throated Crake, Mangrove Cuckoo, Pheasant Cuckoo, Band-tailed Barbthroat, Spot-crowned Barbet, White-headed Wren, Golden-collared Manakin, Green Shrike-Vireo, Blue Cotinga and Rosy Thrush-Tanager. This is a great leisurely and easy trip which I highly recommend.

Then on to the Augusta Bird Club's trip to Magee Marsh and foray to Michigan in May, which was a huge success. Nineteen club members saw over 157 species, 32 species of warblers including the Kirtland's. Also seen were a Ruff and a Red-necked Phalarope, both are considered rare for the area.

As an add-on excursion to the above trip, Nancy and I were invited to our friend's remote cabin in

Ontario. Previously it could only be reached by canoeing in or flying in by pontoon plane, but now it is reached by a logging road. The fishing and birding were great and the highlight was 5 Goshawks seen over three days.

Next on the agenda was Brazil in June and July with 447 species seen. On this trip we visited Christalino Jungle Lodge in the Amazon basin and the Northern Pantanal, the world's largest freshwater wetlands. Noteworthy birds were: Crested Eagle, Harpy Eagles (one chick was about to fledge with the parent nearby, and another adult flying at and over our heads at only 30 feet!), Bare-eyed Antbird, Hyacinth Macaw, some 28 parrots, 19 hummingbirds, 17 woodcreepers, 34 antbirds and 7 manakins plus many other species. This tour was wonderful, but required long days - up and out before dawn and returning to the lodge after dark.

Another highlight was the discovery in August by the Augusta Bird Club of a yet to be fully identified Sand-Plover. The issue is: "Is it a Greater or Lesser" - and is under review by VARCOM..

The last and best highlight during 2009 will be birding with our AZ grandchildren over the Christmas Holidays. Both are very enthusiastic and seem to absorb everything.

The very best birding in 2010 with exciting discoveries and trips for all!

-Walt Childs, President



**Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory  
Cuba Bird Survey  
March 18 -29, 2010**

CVWO is endorsing its second U.S. led and managed birding program to Cuba. Only a few vacancies remain for this exclusive trip coordinated by the Caribbean Conservation Trust (CCT), based in Connecticut. CCT, under license from the U.S. Treasury Department, has a 15-year history of managing bird surveys in Cuba. The trip will be led by John Spahr of CVWO and Dr. William Suarez, a bilingual Cuban ornithologist from the Cuban Museum of Natural History. Cuba hosts nearly 30 endemic species, including the world's smallest bird, as well as many of the same neotropical migrants that visit us in the warmer months, including over 30 warblers. It is a fascinating country to visit. For more information and a detailed itinerary contact John Spahr, [jspahr@yahoo.com](mailto:jspahr@yahoo.com) or 540-887-2345.



**ABC Meeting Minutes  
14<sup>th</sup> December 2009**

The December meeting convened at 7:10 pm. There were no guests or new members.

Alan reported on numerous sightings in the Swope area, including gulls, Tundra Swans and Hooded Mergansers.

Jo reported sighting many vultures.

Walt reported his experiences participating for a second time in the Saw-Whet Owl banding project. John Spar added that this year 40% were 1st-yr. birds, as compared to only 7% last year.

Last month's mystery bird was the Violet-Green Swallow, a western species.

Alan and Crista gave updates on planning for this year's Christmas Bird Counts.

We were reminded that everyone's membership expires 12/31, and that renewal forms can be found at the website.

After an enjoyable slide program on Costa Rica, we adjourned for the annual Holiday Party.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessie Shaw, Secretary



**Treasurer's Report**  
submitted by Catherine Kohus  
11/01/2009 – 11/30/2009

<b>REGULAR OPERATING FUND</b>		
BALANCE - 11/01/2009	\$ 4,380.49	
INCOME	\$ 45.00	
EXPENSES	\$ 54.77	
<b>BALANCE - 11/30/2009</b>		<b>\$ 4,370.72</b>
<b>EDUCATION/CONSERVATION FUND</b>		
BALANCE - 11/01/2009	\$ 7,557.91	
INCOME	\$ 65.86	
EXPENSES	\$ 569.14	
<b>BALANCE - 11/30/2009</b>		<b>\$ 7,054.63</b>
<b>TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS - 11/30/2009</b>		<b>\$ 11,425.35</b>

## Bird Quiz!

Can you identify the bird below?



The answer will be revealed in next month's newsletter. Happy guessing!

Last Month: Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*)

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Send change of address to:

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Virginia Society of Ornithology Website

[virginiabirds.net](http://virginiabirds.net)

Augusta Bird Club Website

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