



AUGUSTA  
BIRD  
C L U B

"Summer gathers up her robes of glory,  
and like a dream of beauty glides away"

~ Sarah Helen Whitman

### September Meeting

**Could you please put in bold lettering in the September newsletter that the Sept. 12th club meeting will be located in the ACC building (across the street from the Fitness Center) in conference rooms 1 & 2**

**Date:** Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

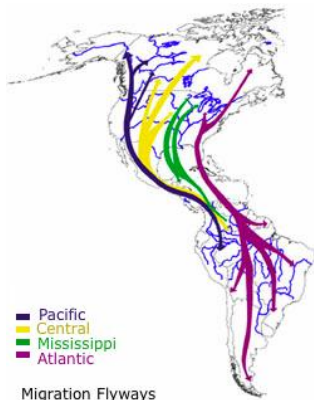
**Place:** Augusta Community Care Building,  
Conference Rooms #1 & #2

#### **THIS IS A CHANGE OF LOCATION**

**Program:** The Seasons of Migration  
– Rockfish Gap

**Speaker:** Breda Tekin

Triggered by the changing length of day, cooler temps, and prevailing winds, the built-in biological clocks signal fall migration, a time when the birds of prey and other bird species begin their southward journey. As data collected over the years reveals, different species of raptors migrate according to different schedules. For example, the movement of Broad-winged Hawks peaks in September and average peak flights of Red-tailed Hawks through our region falls between the end of October to mid-November.



Join Brenda for an engaging program, "Seasons of Fall Migration," a visual presenta-

tion of migrating raptors and other visitors to an internationally (Yes, we've gone global!) recognized premiere hawk watching site that's right in our own back yard.

### Field Trips

**Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup>:** Rockfish Valley, Route 610 & the Blue Ridge Parkway

**Meeting Place & Time:** Afton Inn Parking lot at 8:00 AM

**Coordinator:** Allen Larner at  
[larnersky@mindspring.com](mailto:larnersky@mindspring.com)

It is warbler time again. Join Allen Larner on this half day adventure where we will be looking for migrating Warblers, Flycatchers, Vireos and many more. Rain or shine -- bring snacks & dress for the weather .



**Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>:** Birding Nelson County  
**Meeting Place & Time:** Woodrow Wilson Parkway  
Holiday Inn (exit 225 off I-81) lower parking lot,  
8:00 AM.

**Coordinator:** Allen Larner at [larneysky@mindspring.com](mailto:larneysky@mindspring.com) or 886-1416

Join Allen Larner for this full day adventure over in Nelson County where we will be looking for migrating Warblers, Flycatchers, Vireos, Hawks, plus anything else we can find. Bring snacks & dress for the day.

Rain will cancel with a make up date of Sunday, September 11th.



**September 9th -11th:** "A Swift Night Out"  
**Meeting place & Time:** sidewalk on Fillmore Street between W. Frederick and Baldwin Streets at 7:30 PM

**Coordinator:** Jo King at [kingbird10@yahoo.com](mailto:kingbird10@yahoo.com) or 886-3022 or 430-0186

This is the eleventh year, the Driftwood Wildlife Association will be hosting this spectacular event. Jo King and members of the Augusta Bird Club will be counting these fascinating aerial acrobats as they begin to congregate in communal roosts on their journey to the Amazon Basin of South America. Our estimated count numbers will be submitted to Paul and Georgean Kyle of Austin, Texas. Be prepared for an exhilarating experience. Bring a chair for your comfort. For further details call Jo.

**Wednesday, Sept 14<sup>th</sup>:** McCormick's Mill  
**Meeting place & Time:** McDonalds Parking lot at the Staunton Mall at 8:30 AM

**Coordinator:** Jo King at [kingbird10@yahoo.com](mailto:kingbird10@yahoo.com) or 886-3022 or 430-0186

Enjoy an early fall morning with Jo King to this beautiful place in the southern corner of Augusta County in hopes of finding many migrating and resident birds. We will be looking for waterfowl, warblers and sparrows. Come along for the half day. Dress for the weather and bring a snack.

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## The President's Perch

### *Life in a Box*

Hello members and welcome to another Bird Club Season! You will recall that efforts were underway in the spring to refurbish and install new Bluebird boxes on Bell's Lane with Darrell Schwalm doing the yeoman's share of building, rehabbing and installing the boxes with able assistance from Andrew Clem, Grant Simmons and myself. All of this led to the installation of 22 boxes. I decided to take on the task of monitoring the boxes from late April to August. I had never monitored boxes before and I was looking forward to the experience.

Box #1 started off immediately with a Chickadee building a nest. My reference material says that it is the female who builds the nest and she did a stellar job with about a 3 ½" dense base of beautiful green moss (how far did she have to go to find the moss?) and topped with about 1 ½" of a fluffy layer of the blackest cow hair. It was beautiful!



My friends and I who walk Bell's Lane frequently all decided that the nest was so inviting that we wanted to move in with her and her family! Lovely spotted and dotted eggs were laid and within a week there were gone ... no trace. And shortly after, the nest was destroyed. The female made another attempt but the nest was destroyed again before

completion. That was it for Box #1, no other bird tried again for the summer and thus began my monitoring experience.

From there, Chickadees started to build in several other boxes but House Wrens took over the boxes. I was surprised by the 'house swapping' that went on among the birds. A Bluebird would build and sometimes successfully have fledglings and then the House Wren took over. Toward the middle of the summer, the opposite happened. The House Wren had built several dummy nests but at one point a Bluebird decided to try their luck in several of the House Wren nests. Eggs were laid but later destroyed. Further down the lane, there was a lot of activity with Tree Swallows and Bluebirds. One Chickadee started a nest in a box where a Tree Swallow had laid a foundation of a nest but the door had been left open (by whom, I don't know) and the next time I checked, a field mouse was in the box. I showed him the door (!! ) and nothing else took place in that box. There were several instances of Bluebirds taking over a Tree Swallow nest. Wasps took over one Tree Swallow box, various boxes had eggs disappear and I believe the severe heat during July took its toll through abandoned nests with eggs and one juvenile bluebird that I found dead in a box.

All in all, there were more eggs lost than making it as fledglings. A quick tally looks like 17 House Wrens, 12 Bluebirds and 17 Tree Swallows fledged. I have submitted a detailed account to Jo King who will compile our club's information and submit it to the Virginia Bluebird Society.

-Penny Warren, President

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## 17th Annual Kiptopeke Challenge

**Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

The Kiptopeke Challenge is an important fundraiser for the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (CVWO). It helps to ensure that research and educational programs like Songbird Banding, Monarch Butterfly Tagging and the Hawk Watch continue at First Landing State Park, Kiptopeke State Park and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Na-



tional Wildlife Refuge. Through your previous participation and fundraising in the KC, you helped to ensure the continuing success of the CVWO and its steadfast commitment to avian research, habitat conservation and public education.

Once again the Augusta Bald Eagles will be taking part in this year's 24 hour birding challenge for the Kiptopeke Challenge. Last year our team took first place with a total of 125 species of birds & 18 hours of hard birding. This year we will try to defend it so that it will come back to the Mountains and Valley area. Your pledges are tax deductible and we need sponsors to help out the CVWO so that they can continue with educating the public and children about habitats and wildlife for the future. For more information on the Kiptopeke Challenge go to [www.cvwo.org](http://www.cvwo.org)

- Allen Larner



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## Augusta Bird Club Records Committee

As most club members know, YuLee Larner has been chair of the Augusta Bird Club Records Committee for the past thirty years. YuLee has recently decided to relinquish these important responsibility. Dan Perkuchin is the new Chair of the Records Committee Dan will be responsible for submitting significant seasonal records to Mark Adams, the co-editor of North American Birds Magazine (Middle Atlantic Region) published by the American Birding Association.

The Augusta Bird Club keeps record of all the birds that "break the book" in every season and Dan will

maintain the permanent computerized files of Augusta County bird records..

YuLee will continue to be on the Records Committee and will act as Dan's assistant to help ease the transition. YuLee asks that you please welcome Dan and help him as much as you can with the important task of maintaining and cataloging the club's records.

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### **Bird Quiz!**

Can you identify the bird below?



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

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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)

