



AUGUSTA  
BIRD  
C L U B

“A Turkey, tired of common food, forsook the barn, and sought the wood.

Behind her ran her infant train, collecting here and there a grain.

*‘Fear not, like me, with freedom eat; An Ant is most delightful meat.*

*How blessed, how envied were our life, Could we but ‘scape the poulterer’s knife!’*

~ John Gay

### November Meeting

**Date:** Monday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM  
**Place:** AMC Lifetime Building/Blue Ridge Community College Education Center

**Program:** Wilderness Sojourn in Svalbard  
**Speaker:** Ken & Marcelle Klotz

Ken Klotz and his wife Marcelle will take you on a trip to the Arctic archipelago of Svalbard where polar bears are found on the frozen sea ice even in late July, and the rocky cliffs are home to millions of nesting sea birds. Its largest island is Spitsbergen and their expedition cruise successfully circumnavigated the island over the course of 10 days, stopping for excursions on land and in rubber zodiacs to explore this amazing landscape. Located just 10 degrees latitude from the North Pole off the coast of Norway Svalbard is largely protected as a



nature reserve, covered 60% by glaciers, but offering wonderful opportunities to experience this fascinating world of the midnight sun and encounter the plants and animals that have adapted to survive in these harsh conditions including walrus,

reindeer, arctic fox, Guillemot, Ivory Gull, Little Auk, Pomarine Jaeger and nesting Arctic Tern.

### Field Trips

**November 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>:** Chincoteague & Eastern Shore

**Meeting Place & Time:** Staunton Holiday Inn Parking Lot, 5am

**Coordinator:** Allen Larner

[larnersky@mindspring.com](mailto:larnersky@mindspring.com) or 540-280-3423

We will be leaving Staunton at 5am on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> in order to cover the first Island of the CBBT and bird our way up the Eastern Shore to Chincoteague where we will stay at the Blue Heron Motel (Google for rates & rooms or stay where you are comfortable). If you desire you can leave Staunton at your own pace & we can meet up at the Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center at 8am on Saturday. Target birds will be the thousands of Snow Geese with a scattering of Ross's Goose, wintering ducks, herons, egrets, finches, etc. We will also be looking for any rarity that may be in the area. On Saturday evening we will select a local eatery for dinner and on Sunday you are free to bird your way home at your own pace. Dress for the weather rain or shine.

**Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup>:** Licking Hole Creek, Crozet

**Meeting Place & Time:** Afton Inn, 8:00 a.m.

**Coordinator:** Penny Warren

[penny@Staunton.com](mailto:penny@Staunton.com)

Who knows what an early December morning will bring us at Licking Hole Creek but join us while we return on a second venture to explore this wonderful, diversified habitat in search of some great wintering birds. We will spend a couple of hours exploring the birding area and then stop in Crozet at the Mudhouse for a hot cup of coffee and a nosh!

---

**December 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>:** The VSO'S annual field trip to Virginia Beach

**Coordinator:** Clark White, [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net) or 757-875-7649

An outstanding weekend is planned with a Friday afternoon field trip to the Whitehurst Tract for those arriving early. Field trips include a visit to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) on Saturday and a half day at Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park on Sunday. The possibilities are endless for these areas at this time of the year!

You do need to sign up in advance because two trips have limited space and require a nominal fee. See registration details below or on the VSO web site: <http://www.virginiabirds.net/index.html>

**FRIDAY AFTERNOON FIELD TRIP:** Friday afternoon's field trip will leave the hotel at 12:15 PM for the Whitehurst Tract, one of the many good birding areas in Virginia Beach.

#### **SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS**

1. Morning on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Fee is \$10 per person to cover the cost of the security guards. This trip is limited to 45 people. Register with Clark White ASAP so you can complete the security form and return it to him by November 11<sup>th</sup>.

2. Afternoon on the Eastern Shore. 12 noon - 4 pm. Meet at Kiptopeke State Park at noon to join the group coming from the CBBT trip.

#### **SUNDAY FIELD TRIPS**

1. Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park. 8 am. Trip limited to 25 people; fee is \$10 for tram transportation from Refuge Headquarters to False Cape State Park and Back.

2. First Landing State Park. 8 am.

#### **HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS**

The Country Inn and Suites at 1801 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, will be the host hotel. Oceanfront rooms with private balconies will be available at \$75 plus tax. All rooms have refrigerators, microwaves, and coffee makers. The hotel has an indoor pool and a free covered parking garage.

Check-in time is 4:00 PM and check-out is 11:00 AM. It will be necessary to check out on Sunday before leaving on the field trip. Those planning to stay at the hotel should make reservations by November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, specifying they are with the VSO. The hotel phone numbers are [\(757\) 437-9100](tel:7574379100) or [\(800\) 456-4000](tel:8004564000).

#### **REGISTER BY NOVEMBER 11<sup>th</sup>**

Register with the trip coordinator, Clark White, by US mail or e-mail by November 11<sup>th</sup>. Include your name, street or e-mail address and telephone number, the field trips you are requesting and a check for the cost of the trips (if applicable) payable to Clark White.

Send registration to:

Clark White,  
101 Brookstone Court  
Yorktown, VA 23693

or email to: [cwbirds@cox.net](mailto:cwbirds@cox.net)

---

**Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>:** Christmas Bird Count  
**Meeting Place & Time:** Staunton Big Lots parking lot, 8:00 AM

**Coordinator:** Allen Lerner

[larnersky@mindspring.com](mailto:larnersky@mindspring.com) or 540-280-3423

Contact Allen for an area to cover for this annual event!



## The President's Perch

### *Fledglings of a Different Kind*

*"As a child, one has that magical capacity to move among the many eras of the earth; to see the land as an animal does; to experience the sky from the perspective of a flower or a bee; to feel the earth quiver and breathe beneath us; to know a hundred different smells of mud and listen unselfconsciously to the souging of the trees."*

*-Valerie Andrews, A Passion for this Earth*

One desire I have for the bird club is to do more outreach with local youth. Several club members met in the spring and did some brainstorming and talked of on-going efforts related to Riverfest, Earth Day, and Nature Camp. Additional Earth Day efforts were jumpstarted last spring directed toward the Girl Scouts. After some initial contact between Darrell and Scout troop leaders and having a favorable response, I attended a troop leaders' meeting to talk about various activities and specifically Earth Day activities under consideration to be scheduled at MBC. Once we knew there was interest from the Girl Scouts, Darrell came up with several activities.

A great day at MBC was experienced by all with a drumming circle, making pine cone bird seed treats (thanks to Catherine for this activity), painting Bluebird boxes, and creating tetrahedral kites. Everything was a big success with the girls.



In early to mid summer through several emails with one of the troop leaders, I was asked if there was a bird-related project that the scouts could help with during October. I suggested that they join me in cleaning out all of the bird boxes on Bell's Lane.

This took place on a beautiful, sunny Sunday afternoon in mid-October. Twenty two (!! ) scouts plus a half dozen of parents participated. Fortunately,

Darrell had returned from Michigan and was willing to pitch in at the last minute. With such a large number, we split into two groups and Darrell started at one end of Bell's Lane and myself at the other.

In addition to cleaning out the nesting material, each group had a designated recorder of bird calls and sightings, some girls decorated the boxes with "home sweet home," 'love, peace, birds,' 'no place like home' themes and messages....very sweet touch! The girls were fascinated with the nests that were remaining and were very enthusiastic about seeing a few birds and all that we did. At the end of the event, I handed out a couple of bird-themed puzzles/games, the Augusta County list of birds encouraging them to start their backyard...and beyond... list and informed them of the Cornell's Great Backyard Bird Count and encouraged them to participate. The latter seemed to be of great interest to several parents and the troop leader.

Where do we go from here? First and foremost for helping with the local fledglings, the Bird Club needs an Education Chair. The description in the bylaws states that "education shall focus on providing opportunities for youth to gain knowledge in the natural science field especially through promoting and enlisting youth to attend nature camp." I think you would agree that this is one of the many important functions of the club. Recruitment efforts will need to be underway by early January. Will you please consider volunteering in this capacity?

Linda Matkins has been the coordinator for Nature Camp for a long time and we thank her for her years of service to this effort.

I welcome any and all suggestions for other youth outreach efforts. Let's continue be a part of helping others to fledge! Thank You!

-Penny Warren, President

---

## Serra dos Tucanos, Brazil

In late September, Walt Childs and the Lawler's spent a week at Serra dos Tucanos Lodge, situated in the Atlantic rain forest in southeast Brazil. Upon arriving at our lodge, all participants migrated to the feeders. And for the first hour, no one thought of going anywhere else.

It only took seconds to see my first target bird, the Black Jacobin, the most beautiful black hummer

with a pure white tail bordered in black. We had seven different species of hummingbirds competing at the feeders. Those included the Saw-billed Hermit, Brazilian Ruby and Swallow-tailed Hummingbird.

On the lodge's flat feeders, which were covered with fruit, bananas and oranges, and one with seed, were a variety of Tanagers -- Azure-shouldered, Golden-chevroned, Green-headed, Palm, Oliver-green, Ruby-crowned and the Black-goggled.

Other birds feeding with the tanagers were Blue Dacnis, Green Honeycreepers, Blue-naped Chlorophias, Orange-bellied Euponias, and an assortment of thrushes. As the group watched several Saffron Toucanets eat bananas, a Spot-billed Toucanet dropped in and everyone was more than excited at this point. We all thought birding could not get any better. And then my favorite bird of the trip appeared, a Blonde-crested Woodpecker -- first the female, then the male. Yes, Brazilian woodpeckers do eat bananas.



Many new species and new life birds were enjoyed throughout the remainder of the week, but it was tough to beat that first hour at the feeders. Some of the other special birds were: Bertoni's Antbird, Brown Tanager because our leader got soooo excited when he saw this bird and I just love it when your guide jumps with joy, Pin-tailed Manakin -- so beautiful, Hooded Berryeater, the Giant, Spot-backed, Large-tailed and Tufted Antshrikes, and the Black-and-gold, Gray-winged and Swallow-tailed Cotingas, The latter had a call that anyone could do. This cotinga does not sing or call. I guess he attracts his mate with looks alone.

For the week, my total number of trip birds was 268, with 101 of those being endemics. Of the 268 total, 192 were life birds for me.

We would start most days with breakfast at "quarter-to-six" -- not 5:45 am. Our guide, John

Rowlett of Charlottesville, thought that "quarter-to-six" sounded better. By 6:30, we were all loaded in the van and ready for our adventure for that day. The trails we worked ranged from a easy to hard.

One day, while watching the feeders after lunch, a member of our group announced she had a snake in the grass. We all gather around to check it out. It was the most beautiful snake I have ever seen in the wild. It was four to five feet long, bright green on top and brilliant yellow below, and had a ridge running down the top of its back. After checking the snake book, it was identified as a Rough-tailed Water Snake, a non-poisonous snake. We also saw a large toad, the body approximately the size of a softball. At times the butterflies would distract from the birdwatching due to their beauty.

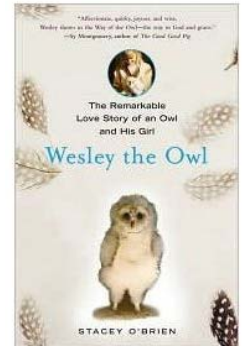
This was the first that Ed and I had been in Brazil, and we had a great trip. We are anxious to bird other sections of the country.

-Nancy Lawler

---

## The Naturalist's Book Nook

In light of Clair Mellinger's superb presentation on his Saw-whet Owl banding project, I thought I would write a small piece on "Wesley The Owl, The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl" by Stacey O'Brien. Although Wesley is a Barn Owl, Clair's talk reminded me of how much I enjoyed this book about an owl. I read "Wesley" several years ago and remain fascinated by the story.



O'Brien, a young, CalTech assistant in the owl laboratory, agrees to adopt Wesley who has suffered wing damage and can never live in the wild. Little did she know their relationship would last for an amazing 19 years. Not only does the book share the extremely deep bond that formed between the two of them but it offers interesting facts of Barn Owls such as how many rodents does the Barn Owl dad have to catch daily to feed a family of 6 (do you know?) as well as the author's sensitivity to details of the butterscotch scent of a Barn Owlet and the unique personality quirks that Wesley exhibited. I was deeply touched by the entire story and I highly recommend the book if you

are looking for perhaps a different, in some ways, love story.

Have you read a wonderful book that you would like to share in the club's newsletter?

- Penny Warren

---

## Nature Camp Thank You Notes

Dear Augusta Bird Club,

Thank you. I learned a lot here at Nature Camp. Some stuff that may not do with the exact classes that I took but also was very interesting. I had a wonderful time here making new friends and enjoying nature. Thanks again.

-Alex Kearney

To the Bird Club:

I had a wonderful time at Nature Camp. I majored in Astronomy and I learned a lot about stars, black holes and galaxies. All the minor classes were fantastic, I especially liked ornithology. We learned a lot about bird's anatomy and even learned some bird calls! Nature camp was a fantastic experience. Thank you so much for the scholarship!

Thanks,  
-Cady Van Assendelft



Dear ABC,

Thank you so much for sending me to camp again. This is one of the most amazing places for a kid to grow up. The friends that I have made here I will have for a life time. Thank you so much. It really is all thanks to you.

Thank you so much.  
-Love, Phoebe Shaw

Dear Bird Club,

I had a wonderful time at Nature Camp. My major was botany and like to consider myself a botany expert now. I also enjoyed all of the minor classes that I participated in. I made so many new friends that I will have for a long time. I cannot thank you enough for what you did for me. I know that after going to nature camp I am changed. I will work to protect my environment!

With much thanks,  
-Graham Louis McDowell

Thanks to everyone who supports the annual bird seed sale because it funds the scholarships to Nature Camp.

-Linda Matkins

---

## Dinner With the Speakers?

The board members of the bird club usually invite the night's speaker to dinner before the meeting. We would like to invite the general membership, as well. This is a pay-your-own-dinner event (with the exception of the speaker) at Tony's Pizza at 32 Windward Dr. in Fishersville, next to the Food Lion. The dinner starts at 5pm. Please let Peter Nebel know before noon the day of the meeting if you are going to be there. He can be reached at [nebelpk@yahoo.com](mailto:nebelpk@yahoo.com) or 540-942-0946.

---

## Ideas for Speaker Topics

The Augusta County Bird Club has a membership with highly diverse interests in birds and nature in general. As the person arranging programming, I would like input on what would be topics of interest to you. This will help me in a couple of ways: If there are numerous members who want the same sort of presentations, I'll work hard on getting speakers addressing that topic; and there may be topics or speakers out there that I simply haven't thought of. I'll welcome any and all ideas at [nebelpk@yahoo.com](mailto:nebelpk@yahoo.com). Thanks for any help you can provide.

-Peter Nebel

---

## AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB MINUTES

October 10<sup>th</sup> 2011

The meeting was called to order by President Penny Warren by asking if visitors were present. She then called for announcements. Jo reminded members of the walk at McCormick's Mill for Wednesday. Penny stated Lisa Hamilton would be leading a bird walk to Black Rock Springs on Saturday and Springdale Water Gardens would be the site of a walk on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

Allen announced that the Augusta County Christmas Count would be held on a Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. Christa stated that the Waynesboro count would take place on either the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> of January.

Penny reported that there was interest in a Birding Weekend at Fort Lewis and also McGee Marsh. She will be pursuing possible dates. She also noted that Seth Williamson an announcer on NPR radio had died. He often reported on items of interest in the Birding World.

Crista Cabe reported on the coming Bird Seed Sale handing out order blanks for those needing some. She urged members to share the information with their neighbors and gave an explanation about ordering through Google. She also stated that if anyone is interested in Safflower seed that we can secure it for them.

It was reported that the mystery bird in the Bulletin was a Northern Parula.

John Spahr who did a Big Year last year shared that a movie about the Big Year will be coming to the Visulite this coming week end and he would be Hosting the movie Sunday night and would take questions. He asked us to look for the Ohio State cap.

Report on the Hawk watch was that watchers had surpassed the previous record of Bald Eagles and that a Common Loon was also spotted. However more eyes are needed.

Peter Nebel, program chairman introduced Clair Mellinger who presented a program on banding Saw Whet owls. He described how at one time we did not even know that Saw Whets were so numerous in our area until he started netting them near the West Virginia border. Showing pictures he shared how the age and sexes were determined. His results from previously banded Owls were that our Owls come from throughout the northern US and especially a location in Eastern Canada.

The meeting adjoined with thanks to Clair who is a member of the Rockingham club.

- Grant Simmons, Secretary

---

### Bird Quiz!

Can you identify the bird below?



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

---

**Last Month: Magnolia Warbler (*Dendroica magnolia*)**



### We Want You!

For Membership Chair  
or  
Education Chair!

Contact Penny Warren for more information or to volunteer.

---

**Virginia Society of Ornithology Website**  
[virginiabirds.net](http://virginiabirds.net)

**Augusta Bird Club Website**  
[www.augustabirdclub.org](http://www.augustabirdclub.org)