



AUGUSTA
BIRD
C L U B

"The natural function of the wing is to soar upwards and carry that which is heavy up to the place where dwells the race of gods.

More than any other thing that pertains to the body it partakes of the nature of the divine."

~ Plato

IMPORTANT!!

New Bird Club Meeting Location

Starting in January 2012, the Augusta Bird Club will hold its meetings in the Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2001 North Coalter St., in Staunton. This is where N. Coalter and N. Augusta St's come together north of the city center. The meetings will start at 7PM, as usual, in the Fellowship Hall.

New Dinner Location

In order to be close to the new bird club meeting place, the pre-meeting dinner will be held at Ma & Pa's Pizza in the Comcast Plaza at 2303 N Augusta St. The dinner is open to all and starts at 5:30. Please email (nebelpk@yahoo.com) or call (540-942-0946) Peter Nebel before noon of the meeting day.



December Meeting

Date: Monday, January 12th, 7:00 PM
Place: Covenant Presbyterian Church
2001 North Coalter St., Staunton

Program: Birds of Colombia
Speaker: Jim Nix

Colombia is considered one of the most beautiful and interesting countries in South America. In recent years it has been able to shed its image as a place to avoid. Jim Nix from the Monticello Bird Club will show us why it is one of the most sought after destinations for birders traveling to Latin America. Colombia is host to over 1,880 species of birds. That's nearly 20% of all species in the world! Through his pictures, Jim will tell us about a trip he took to Colombia and why it is often considered an "altar to nature".



Field Trips

Monday, January 2nd: Waynesboro Christmas Bird Count

Coordinator: Crista Cabe ccabe@mbc.edu or 540-234-9155

Tally dinner: to be announced

Sunday, January 21st: Highland County
Meeting Place & Time: Woodrow Wilson Parkway
Holiday Inn (exit 225 off I-81) lower parking lot,
8:00 AM

For **Coordinator:** Patty Reum & Brenda Tekin
(434) 962-4936 or brenda@birdsofvirginia.com
Highland County - Saturday, January 21 (Snow/rain
date: Sunday, January 22)

Join Patti Reum and Brenda Tekin for an all-day adventure to this unique part of Virginia with its high mountain valleys, vast woodlands, and sheep and cattle grazing farms in search of wintering specialties that include Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, finches and crossbills. Put on your woollies and plan on a warm lunch in a Monterey diner. Bring snacks and beverage.



This will be a combined trip with the Augusta and Monticello Bird Clubs. Carpooling is strongly encouraged as we will be traveling back roads with several narrow passages with limited pull over areas.

For anyone who may want to extend their visit to this unique area, Patti's Eagle Annie's Cottage, located in the heart of the Blue Grass Valley, is available for short or long term rental. For more info go to www.eagleanniescottage.com.

The President's Perch *A Helping Hand*

Happy New Year everyone! I hope everyone had a wonderful CBC day, a very Merry Christmas and delightful holiday season. As old man winter approaches, I thought I would highlight some 'helping hand tips' that I gleaned from various sources for our feathered friends.



What food to offer in the colder months

Black oil sunflower seeds are by far the best to offer in any season and they can be offered in various manners such as platforms, tubes or hoppers. You can offer sunflower hearts or chips to avoid a buildup of discarded shells that can be buried under snow and can damage new grass in the spring.

Suet is one of the best because of the high caloric content and it holds up well in winter making it a superb winter food. Or make your own suet cakes!

Peanuts ... another high calorie, fat-rich nut and they don't freeze so it's perfect for winter-feeding. Don't forget you can also smear peanut butter on bark or offer in small dishes.



Nyger is another oily seed offering a lot of calories and helping birds store the fat they need to keep warm.

Fruit is a favorite of many birds during the winter and dried fruit can be offered or added to suet mixes.

Millet is a starchy grain and easily offered being tossed on the ground or placed in a variety of feeders. Also, it can be mixed with the black oil sunflower seeds.

Bad weather suggestions



Make a windbreak.... During times of snow with blowing wind, drifts can get very high and possibly bury feeders depending on what type and location of feeders you have. One suggestion is to take your Christmas tree, any remains of a brush pile and place the tree on its side near the brush pile and create a barrier to reduce the wind and provide a protected area.

Scatter seed in sheltered places.... Some species will skulk in thickets, brambles and other secure places so don't forget to scatter seed in these areas if they are part of the habitat area.

Furnish your bird houses Consider layering several inches of dry grass or wood shavings for the birds to snuggle in for the night. Don't use sawdust as it can retain moisture and once wet, it will not help with keeping the birds warm.

Provide fresh water Birds need water to drink when it is cold. If you can add a heating element to a bird bath that would be beneficial. Of course, the bird bath needs to be kept fresh and cleaned to avoid spreading illness.

The same goes for feeders, don't rely on extreme cold to prevent disease organisms from forming in your feeder. Be sure to clean feeders frequently and it is advisable to rake underneath feeders to clean up seed hulls and waste.

Happy viewing from your windows... and beyond!

-Penny Warren, President

The Wide, Wild & Weird World of Birds and Birding

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at University of Virginia is offering the following course that might interest members.

Course # A66: *The Wide, Wild & Weird World of Birds and Birding*

Time: 10 AM - Noon

Dates: Feb 9, 16, 23; Mar 1, 8

Location: R.R. Smith Center
20 S. New Street, Staunton, VA

Instructor: John Spahr

See <http://pages.shanti.virginia.edu/olliuva/> for online catalog and course registration.



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. Thanks for any help you can provide.

-Peter Nebel

A NOTE OF THANKS

December 12, 2011

Thanks to everyone for making the holiday dinner a success. A special thanks to Marietta Beverage for preparing the meat and iced tea and to Nancy Childs for helping with the decorations. Also thanks to Starke Smith and Penny Warren for donating special handmade door prizes. And, of course, thanks to all who attended and brought the wonderful selection of delicious food. It was a good night of food and fellowship. Happy New Year!

- Linda Matkins

Virginia Society of Ornithology Website

virginiabirds.net

Augusta Bird Club Website

www.augustabirdclub.org

Bird Quiz!

Can you identify the bird below?



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

Last Month: Willow Ptarmigan (*Lagopus lagopus*)

REMINDER!

Membership renewals were due Jan. 1st

Please return yours as soon as possible if you have not done so already!

