

50 Years of the Bulletin!



THE AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Vol. 50, No.1
September 2015

*"Spring passes and one remembers one's innocence.
Summer passes and one remembers one's exuberance."*

~ Yoko Ono

September Meeting

Date: Monday, September 14th, 7:00 PM

Place: Covenant Presbyterian Church
2001 North Coalter St., Staunton

Program: *Seal Island*

Speaker: Gabriel Mapel

Please joins us as Gabriel fills us in on his summer learning adventure at Seal Island, Maine. His presentation on the conservation work he participated in is sure to bring us interesting tales and pictures of birds rarely seen in Virginia.



The pre-meeting dinner will be at Ma and Pa's Piz-za, 2303 N August St (Comcast Plaza), in Staunton, at 5:30PM. Please email or phone Peter Nebel (nebelpk@yahoo.com) or 540-942-0946) before

1PM on the day of the meeting if you wish to attend the dinner.

Field Trips

Monday, September 7th: Bell's Lane

Meeting Place & Time: Bell's Lane, entrance near the VDOT headquarters, 8:00 a.m.

Coordinator: Penny Warren penny@staunton.com

Join Penny from 8-10:30 (approx.) on Bell's Lane and see what fall migration might bring to the area.

Saturday, September 12th: Blue Ridge Parkway & Rte. 610

Meeting Place & Time: Parking lot at the Afton Inn at 07:30 am

Coordinator: Allen Lerner birder-gonewild@yahoo.com

Join Allen Lerner on this adventure to look for migrating Warblers, Flycatchers, and Thrushes along this the Parkway and Rte. 610. This will be at least a three hour field trip. Once we have finished we can go back to the Hawk Watch to see what is coming through. Bring snacks and dress for the weather of the day. The trip will go rain or shine.



Friday, September 18th: Augusta Springs Wetlands

Meeting Place & Time: 8:00 AM, Big Lots parking lot, on W. Beverley St, Staunton (at Grubert Ave. intersection; meet near Tony's Pizza & Italian Restaurant)

Coordinator: Dan Perkuchin, email: perk-bird@yahoo.com; cell phone: 540-421-3412

Augusta Springs is a beautiful spring fed wetlands area, which features a boardwalk across the low-lying parts. We expect to see a fair number of warblers and vireos on their way south, plus herons and other water birds, and there is a good chance we'll see some early-arriving winter birds (such as White-throated sparrows and kinglets) as well. In the woods, we expect to see various woodpeckers and hope to see tanagers.



Two optional alternative paths are available to extend the hike into the woods, leading up the ridge and circling back to the main trail near the wetland's active spring and restroom areas.

The standard wetland trip is approximately 2 miles of easy walking. Going into the woods would be extra. Duration can be 1.5 to 2 hrs, depending upon the bird activity. Attendees can drive separately and leave at their leisure. Bathroom facilities are available. Rain that morning will cancel this trip.

For more information, see the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail, description at the following internet website URL: (Site MFT03: Augusta Springs Wetlands Trail)

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/vbwt/site.asp?trail=2&lo op=MFT&site=MFT03>

September 18th to 20th: Eastern Shore & Chincoteague

Meeting Place & Time: 7:00am at the Days Inn, 7020 Maddox Blvd. Chincoteague, VA (757-336-1900)

Coordinator: Allen Larner at birder-gonewild@yahoo.com

Join Allen Larner on this weekend adventure to the Eastern Shore & Chincoteague where we will be looking for migrating Terns, Gulls, Shorebirds, Warblers, Hawks, and whatever else we can find during this weekend of fun. On Saturday we will meet up at the Days Inn parking lot at 07:00am and car pool to the Causeway that leads into the Refuge to try for some Rails. On Sunday we will head home and bird back down the Eastern Shore.



Wednesday, September 30th: McCormick's Mill
Meeting Place & Time: McDonald's Parking Lot at the Staunton Mall at 8:30AM or at the Mill at 9:00AM

Coordinator: Jo King kingbird10@yahoo.com or 540-430-0186

Join Jo King on this fall walk around the Marl Creek Trail on McCormick's Farm where she hopes to find many returning fall birds and maybe a late migrant. Waterfowl, sparrows, chickadees, kinglets and bluebirds are likely to be identified. Dress for the weather and bring a snack of your liking. Field trip should conclude by 11:30 AM.



Saturday, October 3rd: Swoope & Augusta Wetlands

Meeting Place & Time: Big Lots lower parking lot at 7 am.

Coordinator: Allen Lerner at birder-gonewild@yahoo.com

Join Allen Lerner on this half day adventure where we will be looking for late migrating Warblers, and any Waterfowl or Sparrows that are migrating through. We will travel through the back roads of Swoope in the open fields looking for White-throated, White-crowned, Swamp, Savannah and, Chipping Sparrows to name a few. We will then end the tour at the Augusta Wetlands to see if we can find such birds like Yellow-rumped Warblers, nuthatches, chickadees, and more sparrows. Dress for the weather that day and bring snacks.



Monday, October 5th: Licking Hole Creek, Crozet
Meeting Place & Time: Afton Mtn., Hawk Watch parking lot, 8:00 a.m.

Coordinator: Penny Warren penny@staunton.com

Join Penny for our fall trip to Licking Hole Creek where we will look for waterfowl, sparrows, hawks, etc. We will stop at the MudHouse for a nosh and then continue on to Old Trail and King Family Vineyards and check the ponds and surrounding habitat. Back to Afton Mountain by 12:30.

Saturday, December 19th: Augusta Bird Club's Christmas Bird Count

More info will follow later as the time gets closer. Contact Allen Lerner at birder-gonewild@yahoo.com

THE PRESIDENT'S PERCH

Box #9 ... Where are you?

First and foremost, a hearty welcome back to the fall happenings of the Augusta Bird Club! I trust everyone had wonderful summers.



This past spring saw the installation of new, predator guard equipped, nesting boxes on Bell's Lane. A big thank you to the Virginia Bluebird Society for their generous grant to purchase 16 boxes, to Clark Walter for the construction, and to Darrell and his team who installed the boxes.

It took some of the box-dwelling birds, both Tree Swallows and Bluebirds, a little bit of time to adjust to the Noel guards at the entrance of the box. Once they overcame whatever was causing a bit of anxiety, they went to town building their nests. The parents eventually often used the Noel guard as a place to hang out and to keep watch.

We lost two clutches of Bluebird babies to blowfly larvae invasion and one clutch to unknown reasons, possibly heat? All in all, we had 18 Tree Swallows and 16 Bluebirds fledge. A handful of boxes were never used at all by any bird ... some wasps and bumble bees tried to make them a home. We will have to review the placement and possibly move some boxes around for the following spring.

One strange incident that occurred in early to mid-July was the disappearance of Box #9. When I was monitoring the boxes and I went from #8 to #10. I thought I wasn't paying attention and had gone right by the box. I triple checked myself and box #9 was definitely missing in action! What?!?!?

Who and why? Given that the boxes are protected under federal and state laws, I contacted the local police. They took down the information and said they would send a squad car to Bell's for the next few days/evenings and keep their eye out for any other incidents. I also contacted DGIF's Wildlife Crime department and they, too, took down the information and said they would keep their eye out for the box in their travels.

The chalk board kiosk that was installed has been widely used and appreciated by many and by all accounts, a great success. From sightings of various wildlife, to birds, to flowers, to lost and found, to general messages, it has served a vast array of purposes. Some one left or lost a little 'milagro' (a religious folk charm often used in Hispanic countries) of St. Christopher. It remained in the corner of the kiosk for more than a week or so and then disappeared...had it been lost and discovered by its owner...or did someone just take it?

I look forward to our first meeting and catching up with everyone!

-Penny Warren, President

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Christmas Bird Counts

The Augusta CBC will be held on Saturday, December 19th. Tish Folsom has generously offered to host the tally dinner at her home at Springdale Water Gardens. Thank you Tish!!!! More details to follow as the date approaches.

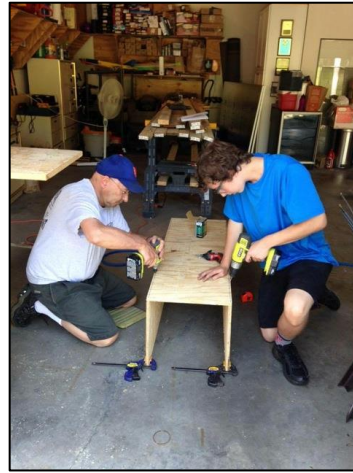
The Waynesboro CBC will be held either on Saturday, Jan. 2nd or Sunday, Jan. 3rd. Stay tuned for the selected date!

BLUE RIDGE YOUNG BIRDERS CLUB NEWS

Chimney Swift Tower Completed

This has been an exciting year for the Blue Ridge Young Birders Club. Our membership has grown to over 30 young birders, we expanded our bluebird monitoring efforts by establishing a new trail near Verona, and we launched our traveling photo exhibit which will be on Display at the Waynesboro library in September.

Our most exciting project of the year began with a successful fundraising campaign to build a Chimney Swift Tower. Thanks to the VSO and the sup-



port of The Augusta Bird Club and Monticello Bird Club members we raised the needed funds to implement this exciting conservation project. This summer young birders gathered with adult mentors on three separate weekends and learned to measure, cut, hammer, and nail as they worked together to

build and install the trail at Ivy Creek Natural Area, near Charlottesville. Chimney Swifts.org became our go to resource from which we obtained construction plans, and educational information to guide us along our construction path.

With the tower now complete, a special committee has formed to establish a monitoring protocol for the fall roost site and we eagerly await our first sighting of swifts swooping through the skies in the evening hours and inhabiting our tower. Results will be reported to A Swift Night Out, a continent-wide effort to monitor the swifts. This exciting citizen science project gives great pride to our young birders, knowing they have created a migratory stop over for the swifts and in so doing, have contributed towards the conservation of this aerial acrobat.



-Mary Mapel

WANTED

Volunteers for ABC Board and Committees

Many of the board members and committee chairs have served for many years and would like to step down from the positions, President and Vice President in particular. Paul Callo is willing to continue as newsletter editor but a new volunteer in that capacity would be most welcomed. We are encouraging other club members to come forward to volunteer. There are only two board meetings per year and some positions do require on-going monthly activities, but in general, it is not too daunt-

ing. Don't be surprised if a board member approaches you to ask you to consider to serve.

ROCKFISH GAP HAWK WATCH INVITATION



Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch
Est. 1976

Our 40th season at the Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch started on August 15th and 5 days in we have tallied 62 raptors including impressive early season showings of Red-shouldered Hawks and Osprey, and our season's first Bald Eagle. Brenda Tekin and I will be posting daily hawk watch reports on the Monticello Bird Alert.

Our season will run through November 30th and we always welcome visitors to come up, learn, and help us spot some raptors, but we'd especially like to invite you to our annual "Where the Raptors Soar--A Day at the Hawk Watch" event on September 12th from 10:00am-3:00pm!

On September 12th for this special event we will have a falconer on site with a live bird-of-prey, free food and drinks, and people on site eager to help teach you!

On behalf of the Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch crew, we hope to see you at the watch this fall!

OPEN HOUSE EVENT

Saturday, September 12, 2015 - 10am - 2pm

This year's event will include:

- Book signing by local author Andy Straka from 10-11am
- Andrew and Eva King with a live bird-of-prey from 11am-2pm

- Educational displays, owl pellet dissection, free food and drinks.
- Experts will be on site to help with raptor identification.

This is a family event. Bring chairs or a blanket. Hat, sunscreen and binoculars recommended.

Please, no pets as there will be live-birds-of-prey.

Rain or shine. Severe weather will cancel event.

-Brenda Tekin

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Hawk Watch Open House Saturday, September 12th 10 am – 2pm

We have a full slate of activities planned for this years open house and are looking for volunteers to assist with everything from setup and take down, helping cook and serve hotdogs, teaching people about how to use binoculars, spot and identify birds, watching over our specimen table and giving talks about the hawk watch and raptors. Please contact Mary Mapel mary@wildearth.com or [540-363-5035](tel:540-363-5035) if you are able to help for part or all of the day.

AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

August 16, 2015

The Augusta Bird Club Executive Committee met at the home of President Penny Warren at 2:00 with the following members present: Penny Warren, Walt Childs, Peter Nebel, Lisa Hamilton, Grant Simmons, Linda Matkins, Brenda Walters, Paul Callo, Andrew Clem, Dan Perkuchin, Jo King, and Allen Larnar.

Penny called the meeting to order asking Peter to share upcoming programs; September Gabriel Mapel – Camp Experience, October Andrew Clem - Arizona, November, Ed Lawler-Patagonia.

Penny then asked our preference for a pre-dinner meeting place for our member meetings with the possibilities of: Little Maria's, Staunton

Abbey and Ma and Pa's Pizza. It was decided to choose Little Maria's with Linda checking to see if they can accommodate our group.

Penny commented on the letter regarding the progress of the Young Birders Club noting that they have completed the construction of a Chimney Swift Tower at the Ivy Creek area in Charlottesville.

President Warren then asked for suggestions of possible field trips for the fall and winter. Jo King stated she would be planning the usual trips to McCormick's. Walt noted that the Rock Fish trail is now limited due to a land purchase which restricts our passage. Allen announced he wants to lead a field trip to Chincoteague September 19. Walt suggested a Matthews Loop trip on Northern Neck and the Bay Bridge was also suggested as a possibility, possibly by boat. Andrew mentioned chimney Hollow and Switzer's Dam was brought up as a good birding location for September. Penny will contact Diane in the Rockingham club to follow up on the suggestion.

Penny noted that the Hawk Watch is now in operation with Gabriel and a few others doing the tabulations. More volunteers to assist are needed. September 12th is to be their open house and they are seeking contributions for refreshments from the participating clubs.

The fall seed sale was the next topic for discussion with Grant agreeing to contact Crista to see if she would be available to work with the sale as she has previously. He will also contact our supplier to see the earliest date we can obtain fresh



seed. Grant mentioned they have some new mixes and Allen suggested we get some samples. Also it was stated that our Mix has included some Red Millet which we do not want. The dates of October 17th and 24th are possible Pick Up dates which Linda will check to see if the facility is available.

Penny mentioned the possibility of a fall picnic at the facility on Bells Lane which is heavily booked. No decision was made.

Attention was called to the Saw Whet Owl banding by Clair Mellinger with the suggestion that those interested in going contact him and make their own arrangements. Walt will provide a contact number for Clair. Late October is the time that he does the banding.

Allen announced that the Christmas Bird Count for Augusta County on Saturday December 19th. Tish Folsom has offered to have the tally dinner at her house at Springdale Gardens.

Brenda Walters, the Membership Chairman introduced herself and questioned about the possibility of using PayPal for payment. She offered to talk to Crista about our PayPal membership.



Lisa distributed a Treasurer's report and stated that of the \$1000 we had given to as startup money for the VSO meeting at Wintergreen over \$900 would be returned to the club. Walt agreed to serve as head of a Nominating Committee to obtain nominations for Officers next year. Penny stated that she and Peter want to be replaced. Paul chimed in that he too could use relief.

Linda asked if we will be having our usual December dinner and that was confirmed.

Linda raised the issue of doing a Breeding Bird Census as we had done some years ago under Yulee's leadership. She suggested we consider it as a possibility for next summer.

With that thanks were expressed to Penny for hosting the meeting and we adjourned.

Submitted by
Grant Simmons, Secretary

Bird Quiz!

Can you identify this bird?



The answer will be revealed next month.
Happy guessing!

If you would like to “nominate” a photo for the newsletter, please contact the editor, Paul Callo at pcallo@mbc.edu

Treasurer's Report

submitted by Lisa Hamilton

4/01/2015 – 7/31/2015

REGULAR OPERATING FUND		
BALANCE – 4/01/2015	\$5,255.30	
INCOME	\$28.79	
EXPENSES	\$331.63	
BALANCE – 7/31/2016		\$4,952.46
EDUCATION/CONSERVATION FUND		
BALANCE – 4/01/2015	\$17,585.40	
INCOME	\$130.00	
EXPENSES	\$1650.49	
BALANCE - 7/31/2015		\$16,064.91
TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS - 7/31/2015		\$21,017.37

Virginia Society of Ornithology Website

virginiabirds.net

Augusta Bird Club Website

www.augustabirdclub.org

Birding Maps

Augusta County: <http://g.co/maps/49rjq>

Rockingham County: <http://g.co/maps/3xutb>

Albemarle County: <http://g.co/maps/7t6f4>