

50 Years of the Bulletin!



# THE AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

Vol. 50, No.7  
March 2016

*“Spring won't let me stay in this house any longer!  
I must get out and breathe the air deeply again.”*

~ Gustav Mahler

## MARCH MEETING

Date: Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM

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

**Program:** Attracting Wildlife to Your Backyard  
**Speaker:** Robert C. Jennings

Robert Jennings is a Grassroots Field Specialist advocating for clean water with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. His experience includes managing deer populations in order to restore native plant communities, exotic plant species management, and control of invasive plant species.



He will talk about attracting wildlife such as birds and butterflies by landscaping with native plant. The designs which he presents will not only attract wildlife, they will also prevent runoff to nearby creeks and will produce a beautiful native landscape.



The pre-meeting dinner will be at Little Maria's, 1555 Commerce Rd (Rt 11), just north of Technology Drive on the east side of the highway. Dinner will be at 5:30pm. Please email or phone Peter Nebel ([nebelpk@yahoo.com](mailto:nebelpk@yahoo.com) or 540-942-0946) before 1pm on the day of the meeting if you are planning to be there.

## FIELD TRIPS

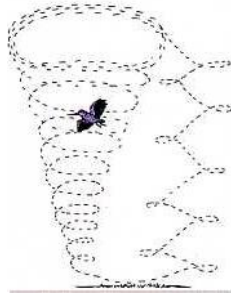
**Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>** : Humpback Rocks - Dance of the Woodcocks

**Meeting Time & Place:** Half hour before sunset (about 5:50pm) at the Humpback Rocks Parking Area (just past the Visitors Center on the left as you head south)

**Coordinator:** Allen Lerner  
([birdergonewild@yahoo.com](mailto:birdergonewild@yahoo.com))

Join Allen Larner for this annual treat. The spectacular mating dance of the American Wood cock is one you will not soon forget. Also when it gets dark enough we will listen out for Owls.

Be sure to check the forecast and dress for the weather that evening



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**Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup>** : Lake Moomaw  
**Meeting Time & Place:** 7am Food Lion lower parking lot North Coalter St. for carpooling  
**Coordinator:** Allen Larner  
([birdergonewild@yahoo.com](mailto:birdergonewild@yahoo.com))

Join Allen Larner on this adventure to Bath County in search of migrating waterfowl. Target waterfowl Mergansers, Common Goldeneye, Horned Grebe, Common Loon, and any Gulls that may be around. Ruffed Grouse, various species of Sparrows, Pine Warblers, Winter Wrens are also a possibility.

Dress for the weather, bring snacks & lunch.

Freezing rain or snow will cancel the trip.



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## PRESIDENT S PERCH

### It's a Wrap! .... The Great Backy

Not all of the figures and data are in but as of February 25 GBBC checklists that have been submitted surpassed 158,000 and more than 5,500 species were reported, topping 50% of the world's birds from more than 130 countries. The collective spirit of such an event provides an impressive weekend of tallying birds around the world. The US submitted 128,000+, Can-

ada 13,000+ and India placed third with 7,200+!!!!

As I reviewed the local data, I was impressed by Bell's Lane being ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in Hotspots in Virginia!!!! The private pond on Bell's, one of the few ponds not completely covered with ice,



gave us a good variety of waterfowl and helped push the species count to 40. And then my curiosity was piqued with all of the participants both in Staunton and Augusta County and not knowing a lot of the names. I wish we could bring them into the fold of the club, field trips, etc. Any ideas?

It was a fun weekend and the snow on Monday added an extra layer of fun for me. While the snow was falling, I took a beautiful walk throughout my neighborhood and over to the VSDB soccer field and picked up a few more species for my list of GBBC birds. A great ending to the Great Backy!

Looking forward to spring and spring bird counts!!!

Penny Warren  
President

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## DON'T FORGET ...

EARTH DAY 2016

Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>  
9 A.M. - noon

Sunspots Studios, downtown Staunton



## AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB MINUTES January 11, 2016

President Penny Warren called the meeting to order at 7:00 meeting in the Covenant Presbyterian Church. After welcoming the members she noted that this is the 50<sup>th</sup> year of Bird Club and asked Grant Simmons to share some thoughts concerning that beginning as he is the only living charter member. Grant then shared that he had been a member of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club before moving to Stuarts Draft. The following year he spotted a notice in the Newspaper stating that anyone interested in forming a bird club in Augusta County was invited to a meeting at the home of Dr. Mehner, a professor at Mary Baldwin. He went to the meeting where about 8 or 9 people were gathered. YuLee Lerner was one of those, the only one he knew, who was a friend of his mother. Also present was Ruth Snyder, Isabel Obenschain and Moselle Hinkle along with Dr. Mehner. YuLee and Isabel had taken Dr. Mehner's course in Ornithology and that created an interest in birding and the desire to share that interest by starting a birding club. That was the beginning and at first Dr. Mehner planned all the programs and the group met in the Mary Baldwin auditorium. Grant stated he remembered one particular family that brought their four kids with them to the meetings, one on those kids being Crista Cabe.

At first Dr. Mehner served as President alternating with YuLee from year to year. Later Julie Russell served as President for a period of time as did Crista Cabe. Grant expressed gratitude for those who had served as leaders down through the years and commended those present for being a part of the Club.

Penny welcomed Steve Hill who was attending the club for the first time. Peg Sheridan who is our speaker reported she had an albino Robin in her yard and shared a picture of it. Penny thanked Trish Folsom for hosting both tally dinners of the Christmas Bird Counts. Also she gave special thanks to Paul Callo who served as Newsletter editor from 2006 until December of 2015. Bill Funk has accepted that task and the club welcomes him.

Brenda Walters sent word that dues are due. Penny announced that she is inviting interested members to get together on Wednesday night at 6:00 for Birds and Brews, Wings and Wine+fellowship at the Yelping Dog downtown. Penny also shared an interesting bit of news informing us that Chickadees brains enlarge in the winter time.

Peter Nebel then introduced the speaker, Peg Sheridan, who demonstrated her art of water color painting by sharing various stages of painting an

owl. Not only does she paint owls but she also calls owls having worked as a Wildlife Biologist in the Northwest when the controversy regarding the Spotted Owl was taking place. We were impressed when her demonstration of painting and also with her calling the Spotted Owl.

Respectfully submitted  
Grant Simmons, Secretary

In addition to the charter members Jo King was an early member of the club (joining in 1970) who transported Dr. Mehner on bird counts. She states she has participated in 44 Christmas bird counts.

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## AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB MINUTES February 8, 2016

Meeting at the Covenant Presbyterian Church the meeting was called to order by President Penny Warren at 7:00 PM.

She asked for bird sightings and Stan Heatwole who was just back from Nags Head and the VSO outing reported that 120 attendees had identified 15 species. The Razor Bill was seen just off the beach which was special. Alan has reported identifying the Greater White Fronted Geese among other geese on his travels.

It was announced that Darrell will present a program on the Great Backyard Bird Count (February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>) Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> at the Library. Other Announcements: Birds and Brews will meet Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 pm at the Yelping Dog, on Beverly Street. Kites and Critters will be held April 17<sup>th</sup> (rain date April 24<sup>th</sup>) and Riverfest will be held on April 30. Allen Lerner will plan for a Big Spring day. In observance of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Paul Callo will open his department to display bird skins. Another project would be walks in Montgomery Park in honor of YuLee.

The May Brunch will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup> at Grand Caverns Park in Grottoes. Nominations for officers for next year will be presented next month. A member announced that an Art Exhibit of bird paintings should be coming to our area soon. Also the Young Birders display of bird pictures will be coming to Staunton soon.

John Spahr spoke of Margaret O'Brien of Highland County where Golden Winged Warblers have been seen for several decades. He noted that she welcomed birders from across the state to her property to view the warblers which are only found in a few locations in our area. He shared that she was a special individual who wanted her property to remain open for future birders seeking the Golden Winged Warblers. Her uniqueness was displayed

with a bumper sticker that read, %love moonlight nights, walks on the beach and poking dead things with a stick.+ In her honor our club has donated \$150 to Keeping Virginia Beautiful.

Dan shared about his work continuing the record keeping that YuLee started having collected records since 2011.

Peter Nebel than introduced our speaker, Bill Leaning, a longtime member and superb photographer who showed pictures of birding in Thailand where he identified 237 species with 189 life birds.

Grant Simmons, Secretary

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**AUGUSTA BIRD CLUB**  
**Executive Committee Minutes**  
**February 7, 2016**  
**2:00 P.M. Penny Warrens home**

Members present: Peter Nebel, Walt Childs, Lisa Hamilton, Linda Matkins, Brenda Walters, Darryl Schwalm, Peter Van Acker, Jo King, Andrew Clem, Penny Warren, and Grant Simmons.

Penny began the meeting by welcoming Peter Van Acker who has been nominated to serve as President for the next year.

She then asked for suggestions for celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year as a bird club.

Suggestions were: A banner at various events announcing our 50<sup>th</sup> year, a display in Gypsy Hill Park at Christmas time, Bird Walks in Montgomery Park in honor of YuLee a charter member, article in the VSO Newsletter, conducting a Breeding Bird survey.

Grant noted we need to find the various articles regarding our history including the Charter members who were honored at the 25<sup>th</sup> celebration at Mary Baldwin College.

Brenda, Membership Chair reported there are 31 members from last year who have not renewed. She will send out a reminder to them.

Peter shared coming programs: Chesapeake Bay in March, Virginia Museum in April.

Suggestions were heard for the May picnic meeting with the choice of Grand Caverns park as the location on May 14<sup>th</sup>. Penny will contact the Park for a reservation and fees.

Penny reported we have 8 youth applying for scholarships to Nature Camp. It was decided to split the scholarships in memory of YuLee and John Mehner between 4 campers and offer \$250 to the other four youth. The cost this year is \$890 for the two week session (total \$2780). We have a total income of \$3380 for scholarships.

Youth receiving scholarships are: Haley Campbell (\$445), Lindsey Reno (\$445), Liam Carr (\$445), Margaret Carbajal (\$445), Jenna Benzing (\$250), Margot Flanders (\$250), Lucie Oechslin (\$250) and Nora Oechslin (\$250).

It was agreed to give Gabriel a \$400 scholarship to attend the Audubon camp at Hogs Island and the Young Birders \$200 for their programs. (Total \$3380).

Dan noted that another bridge is needed for walkers in Coyner Springs Park and also one would be useful for Cowbane Nature preserve. It was suggested he pursue the issue with the proper authorities.

Linda reported that the local Game and Fisheries organization is building and installing Duck houses.

Lisa presented the Conservation and Education Fund Budget for an evaluation of our various contributions. The consensus was to add Cornell and Project Snowstorm for \$100 each, eliminate Outreach Projects, reduce Bells Lane Sign to \$100 (accepted Darryl's suggestion to make alterations and add a Brass plaque stating ABC donated the sign) add a \$200 donation to Covenant church for the use of their facilities for our meetings. All other contributions remain the same.

Darryl announced that he will present a program at the Library on the Great Back Yard Bird Count on Wednesday, February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Also it was noted that Earth Day is April 16, Kites and Critters April 17<sup>th</sup> (rain date April 17<sup>th</sup>) and Riverfest April 30<sup>th</sup>. Allen will be planning a Big Spring Day this year and also a Breeding Bird Blitz. Walt mentioned that he has a slate of nominees for the March meeting. He noted that other than the Newsletter Editor (Bill Funk) President (Peter Van Aker) and Vice-President (Andrew Clem) all other officers will continue.

Dan shared regarding the work he has been doing on the records. He would like several volunteers to help him with the paper work. It was suggested that he try to find some graduate students or perhaps a young birder member to assist him. He will pursue those suggestions.

Grant noted that anyone viewing birds at the quarry is required to have a permit. Penny will check into it. He also suggested that we get approval for any of our club members to have permission to bird areas without restrictions.

Respectfully submitted  
Grant Simmons, Secretary



**TREASURER S REPORT**  
 submitted by Lisa Hamilton  
 1/01/2016 . 1/31/2016

<b>REGULAR OPERATING FUND</b>		
BALANCE . 1/01/2016	\$6,732.28	
INCOME	\$286.09	
EXPENSES	\$192.75	
<b>BALANCE - 1/31/2016</b>		\$6,825.62
<b>EDUCATION/CONSERVATION FUND</b>		
BALANCE . 1/01/2016	\$18,656.13	
INCOME	\$105.00	
EXPENSES	\$0.00	
<b>BALANCE - 1/31/2016</b>		\$18,761.13
<b>TOTAL BALANCE ALL FUNDS - 1/31/2016</b>		\$25,586.75



**BIRD QUIZ!**  
 Can you identify this bird?



The answer will be revealed next month.  
 Happy guessing!

~  
 Last Month:  
 Cinnamon Woodpecker  
 (*Cealeus loricatus*)

Virginia Society of Ornithology  
[www.viriniabirds.net](http://www.viriniabirds.net)

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