

Roanoke Valley Bird Club



Celebrating
66 Years of Birding
1957-2023

Next Meeting:
December 11, 7:00 pm
Roanoke Council of
Garden Clubs

www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com

RVBC NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

Happy Holidays



PHOTOGRAPHER
CAROL WHITESIDE

NORTHERN CARDINAL *Cardinalis cardinalis*

DREW'S BIRD OF THE MONTH

The male Northern Cardinal is perhaps responsible for getting more people to open up a field guide than any other bird. They're a perfect combination of familiarity, conspicuousness, and style: a shade of red you can't take your eyes off. Even the brown females sport a sharp crest and warm red accents. Cardinals don't migrate and they don't molt into a dull plumage, so they're still breathtaking in winter's snowy backyards. In summer, their sweet whistles are one of the first sounds of the morning. The cardinal is the state bird of Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio and West Virginia.

~ The Cornell Lab



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Carla Barrell
Kathleen Frye
Jennifer Murdock
Allison Campbell
Carolyn Miller

Christopher Bolton
Gael Chaney & Family
Jane Fenton & Family
Alex Slusher & Family
Victoria Hanson & Family

Next Meeting:

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 7:00 PM

Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24018

CLUB MEMBERS SHARING NIGHT

December is members sharing night. Please bring a holiday snack and join us as we share your favorite photos, videos and stories of your birding adventures. If you have a digital presentation, please bring it on a zip drive and Nathan will run it for you. Feel free to share a birding story or an exciting item to show the club. Email questions to:

nathan.anderson77@live.com

This will be a fun evening of sharing our love of birds and wildlife!

During the November 13, 2023, membership meeting, the club membership elected the Board of Directors for the 2024 term. There were no changes to the Officers and Directors. Thank you for continuing to serve on the Board.

Holiday Market Salem, Virginia

November 26, 2023

Caryl Connolly and
Linda Cory promoting
The RVBC Calendars
for sale

Photographer:
Jason Davis

See page 6 for details



CONTACT US!



ROANOKE VALLEY BIRD CLUB

P.O. Box 20405
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24018

Email: rvbc2015@outlook.com
www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS:

President
Drew Daniels
Vice President, programs
David Frye
Vice President, memberships
Mary Harshfield
Secretary
Betty Burke
Treasurer
Carol Whitt

DIRECTORS:

Nathan Anderson, Robin Austin, Mary Lou Barritt, Linda Cory, Kent Davis, Maxine Fraade, Sissy Logan

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

Bluebird Trails
Carol Whiteside
Field Trips
David Frye
Meeting Refreshments
Mary Lou Barritt
Newsletter Editor
Carol Whiteside
RVBC/BRWS Annual Picnic
Carol Whiteside
Website:
Carol Siler

The RVBC Newsletter is published monthly **September through May** with the deadline for each issue on the **20th of the month** prior to that publication. Photos and articles are gladly accepted for publication as room allows, and may be sent electronically.

Thank you!
Carol Whiteside
Newsletter Editor
540.774.2143
whitesidemules@yahoo.com



President's Musings

As we start to wind down 2023, Thanksgiving is over and the scales run from you as you approach, it's time to start thinking about the Holidays and more food over an extended period. Remember, what we put on the last two months of the year, we spend countless dollars and hours of sweat trying to get rid of it in the first half of the New Year!! The sad part is, "We never learn!" Considering we are educated people, you would think we would have the fortitude to push back from the table or not have that second plate of food/dessert! But alas, it's "rinse and repeat" all over again!

I had to get a little jab in over the amount of food we consume over the Holidays, but that's not my musing for December. The Holidays are supposed to be a joyous time of the year when we are spending quality time with family and friends. A time as parents and grandparents to catch up on the growing families, growing grandchildren, new significant others and to count our blessings. The Holidays are also a time to spread love and good tidings to friends, family, and to those less fortunate.

It is difficult to celebrate the Holidays when we look around us and all we see is hate the world over. Hate is so pervasive and is spewed with such vitriol over the internet, and at any microphone that is available for someone to step up to - it's sickening, and it has to stop. We see the world over, hate spewed in the name of religion. Where in any religion does it preach hate? Rinse and Repeat!!

At this joyous time of the year, let's hope that cooler heads will prevail, and peace can be on the horizon. Enjoy your families, count your blessings, and be glad we are fortunate to live in this Great Country!

My wish to each of you is Happy Holidays and the most Prosperous New Year! Be safe!

President Drew Daniels
ddaniels2627@cox.net
540.314.6069



Female and male Cardinal photos by Carol Whiteside

Drew's Bird of the Month

Northern Cardinal

Cardinalis cardinalis

"Fairly abundant permanent resident," from Barry Kinzie's *Birds and Birding of the Roanoke Valley*.



The Northern Cardinal is a fairly large, long-tailed songbird with a short, very thick bill and a prominent crest. Cardinals often sit with a hunched-over posture and with the tail pointed straight down. Male cardinals are brilliant red all over, with a reddish bill and black face immediately around the bill. Females are pale brown overall with warm reddish tinges in the wings, tail, and crest. They have the same black face and red-orange bill.

Look for Cardinals in dense shrubby areas such as forest edges, overgrown fields, hedgerows, backyards and ornamental landscapes. Cardinals nest in dense foliage and look for conspicuous, fairly high perches for singing.

Nests tend to be wedged into a fork of small branches in a sapling, shrub, or vine tangle, 1-15 feet high and hidden in dense foliage. Males sometimes bring nest material to the female, who does most of the building. She crushes twigs with her beak until they're pliable, then turns in the nest to bend the twigs around her body and push them into a cup shape with her feet. The nest typically takes 3 to 9 days to build; the finished product is 2-3 inches tall, 4 inches across, with an inner diameter of about 3 inches. She will lay 2-5 buffy white speckled eggs.

Northern Cardinals hop through low branches and forage on or near the ground. They commonly sing and preen from a high branch of a shrub. The distinctive crest can be raised and pointed when agitated or lowered and barely visible while resting. You typically see cardinals moving around in pairs during the breeding season, but in fall and winter they can form fairly large flocks of a dozen to several dozen birds, and even join other species. During foraging, young birds give way to adults, and females tend to give way to males. They fly somewhat reluctantly on their short, round wings, taking short trips between thickets while foraging. Pairs may stay together throughout winter, but up to 20 percent of pairs split up by the next season.

~The Cornell Lab



Calendar of Events

David Frye, Vice President Programs, Field Trip Chairman, 248-459-6783

American Kestrel, Photographer Garland Kitts

Note: if inclement weather necessitates a cancellation, an e-mail notification will be sent out. You may also call or text the leader. Please do not call any of the trip leaders after 8 pm the night before the field trip, in consideration of having to get up early the next day to lead the field trip.

Thank you.



DECEMBER 2023

- 11 **RVBC MEETING, Monday 7:00 pm.** Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24018. **Members Sharing Night**, photos and videos presented by club members. Please bring a holiday snack.
- 13 **Second Wednesday Walk at Greenfield, 9:00 am. Leader: David Frye 248-459-6783.**
Join us for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake and possibly to the pond beyond. The walk will be mostly flat walking for about 1 mile each way. Bring your spotting scope if you have one.
Directions: Take Exit 150B on I-81 and follow signs to Route 220N. Go about 4 miles and turn left at the entrance to the Greenfield Education and Training Center, across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation. Park in the second lot on right.
- 16 **Saturday Roanoke Christmas Bird Count, Coordinator/Compiler Bill Hunley 540-467-3477, wjhunley@gmail.com**
After the Roanoke count, please return your results to the Bill to be included in the tally.
- 17 **Sunday Fincastle Christmas Bird Count, Coordinators Andrew Newcomb, (compiler) anewco15@gmail.com and Barry Kinzie 540-580-0059, peckerridge@lumos.net,** After the Fincastle count, please return your results to the full-time compiler **Andrew Newcomb anewco15@gmail.com** to be included in the tally.

JANUARY 2024

- 1 **Monday New Year's Day Bird Count** - Start the year 2024 right by making a New Year's Day Bird List at the place of your choosing. This is not a group field trip or a competition, just a great way to start your birding year. If you haven't participated before, maybe this will be the start of a new tradition for you! Make a note of all bird species seen and/or heard between midnight of New Year's Eve and 11:59 pm on January 1. Email your resulting bird list with the location to rvbc2015@outlook.com. Highlights from your lists will go in the February newsletter. Everyone is encouraged to make a great start to 2024 by getting out and logging some New Year's Day birds! What else would you rather be doing?
- 8 **RVBC MEETING, Monday 7:00 pm.** Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24018. Program TBA.
- 10 **Second Wednesday Walk at Greenfield, 9:00am. Leader: Dave Frye 248-459-6783.** Join us for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search for migrants and incoming waterfowl. The walk will be mostly flat, about 2 miles. We will also cover the grassy area overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. Bring your spotting scopes.
Directions: Take Exit 150B on I-81 and follow signs to Route 220N. Go about 4 miles and turn left at the entrance to the Greenfield Education and Training Center, across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation. Park in the second lot on the right.
- 13 **Roanoke Sewage Treatment Plant, Saturday 9:00am, Leaders: Kent Davis 540-353-6388 and Linda Cory 540-580-5214.**
Join us for a walk around the Sewage Treatment Plant. Entrance to the STP is by special permit and trip participants must all enter at the same time and stay together with our leader. This site is one of the best spots for viewing shorebirds in the Roanoke Valley. The property includes impoundments, sludge ponds, mudflats, riparian habitat and woodlands. Besides shorebirds, we can expect to see resident hawks and possibly ravens and fish crows. The walking is mostly flat with a short steep trail. Sturdy waterproof boots are recommended as it often is muddy.
Directions: Meet at the Greenway parking lot off of Bennington Street near the bridge over the Roanoke River; the entrance to the parking area is between the bridge and Brownlee Avenue. Note that Thirteenth Street SE changes names to Bennington Street at the bridge over the Roanoke River. After the group has gathered, we will caravan or walk the short distance to the STP, so please arrive minutes early.
- 27 **Pond Hopping in Botetourt County, Saturday 9:00am, Leaders: Tim 540-537-1831 and Alyce Quinn 540-312-6844.**
Join our co-leaders at Greenfield Lake, park in the second parking lot on right. We will spend the morning visiting local ponds in search of wintering waterfowl and other avian life. Carpooling is required due to the limited space at some pull-off areas. Bring your scope.
Directions: Take Exit 150B on I-81 and follow signs to Route 220N. Go about 4 miles and turn left at the entrance to the Greenfield Education and Training Center, across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation. Park in the second lot on the right.

Field Trip Reports

These photos are all from the Tinker Creek Greenway bird walk.

Photographer: Mary Lou Barritt ▶



11/4/23 Tinker Creek Greenway Bird Walk, Leaders Mary Lou and Sid Barritt - Sixteen hardy folks enjoyed a beautiful, sunny fall morning on the Tinker Creek Greenway. We spotted 32 species including Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and a Hermit Thrush. It was interesting that the age range spanned from teenager to 80's, proving that birding is fun for all.

11/8/23 Greenfield Lake and Environs, Leader: Dave Frye - Well, we couldn't have imagined a nicer morning for walking through our favorite birdy area! What a great stretch of weather we've been having. Four participants (plus a couple "early birds" stalking the grounds ahead of us) wound up seeing 37 species. The highlight birds included both Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe and a pair of Wilson's Snipes.



▲ Eastern Bluebirds. Photographer: Bob Crawford
▶ Tim Quinn, Betty Burke, and Sid Barritt. Photographer: Mary Harshfield



▲ Photographer: Betty Burke



Roanoke Valley Bird Club 2024 Calendars

We are excited to offer the Roanoke Valley Bird Club 2024 Calendar with 25 amazing photos taken by and voted by our members, for only \$16. We accept cash, check or credit card. The "Calendar Sneak Peak" photos and order form are on our website. The calendars may be ordered or purchased in three convenient ways:

1. **In person** at the RVBC meeting on December 11. There will be a "pick up day" at the Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility on December 2, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
2. **Online** at www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com. To order without postage, click on the yellow "Add to Cart" button. If you want to have your calendar mailed, click on the down arrow in the box for more options.
3. **Mail** with check, the completed form below to: R.V.B.C., P.O. Box 20405, Roanoke, VA 24018.



If you are ordering more than 4 calendars, please email rvbc2015@outlook.com to get the more accurate (and lower) shipping cost.



2024 CALENDAR ORDER FORM

R.V.B.C., P.O. Box 20405, Roanoke, VA 24018



of Calendars _____ X \$16.00 if picking up = \$ _____

of Calendars _____ X \$18.50 if shipping = \$ _____

If being mailed, send calendars to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

A reminder ~

Bluebird Boxes make wonderful Holiday Gifts!



\$25 Nest box

Additional:

\$78 Mounting Pole and Predator Guard

Includes easy installation directions and hardware

Or

\$87 with RVBC Membership (\$16 discount)

For complete set-up that includes:

Box, pole, predator guard and hardware

Built to specifications as recommended by:

Virginia Bluebird Society www.virginiabluebirds.org

***Post Driver** available for installation

Free one week rental with returnable deposit



Contact: Carol Whiteside 540-774-2143

Available for purchase at the December 11 membership meeting

Attracts these federally protected cavity nesters

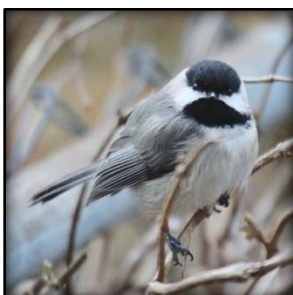


◀ Eastern Bluebird



Tree Swallow ▶

Carolina Chickadee



House Wren



Carolina Wren



Tufted Titmouse





Roanoke Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 20405
Roanoke, VA 24018



Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Memberships expire on August 31, each year

2023 - 2024

(Current Year)

Annual Dues are as follows:

- Individual \$15
- Family \$25
- Student under 18 - No Charge

Additional Contribution \$ _____

Adopt a Bluebird \$ _____

Total Payment \$ _____

Make check payable to:
Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Mail To:
Roanoke Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 20405
Roanoke, VA 24018

www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com

Please print

Name(s) _____

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