



# November '17 Newsletter

Celebrating 60 Years of Birding  
1957-2017

## NEXT MEETING

Monday, November 13th at 7PM  
Grandin Court Baptist Church  
2660 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, VA 24015

(Join fellow club members for dinner at 5:30PM at Brambleton Deli; 3655 Brambleton Ave.)

## Birding, Rehab, and Research

Presented by Haley Olson-Hodges

Haley Olsen-Hodges is a birder, Virginia Master Naturalist, and has done wildlife rehabilitation at centers on the coasts of Florida, the prairies of Iowa, the lakes of Wisconsin, and now the mountains of Virginia at Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke. Currently writing a book on standardized rehabilitation protocol for all birds in Virginia, she will be discussing interesting tidbits and oddities of the life histories of our native songbird species, using rehab data to aid in the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2, and how wildlife scientists, rehabilitators, and the birding community can work together to build a better future for birds across the world. Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke is a state and federally licensed rehabilitation facility, and has been operating legally as a veterinary hospital since 2000. The center cares for nearly 2,000 patients a year, most of which are birds, and is the one of the few places that can care for endangered species and eagles.



## UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

(For any additional information please contact Linda Cory at 540-580-5214 or RVBC2015@outlook.com)

### **November 8, Wednesday, 8AM, Second Wednesday Bird Walk at Greenfield**

Join co-leaders Barry Whitt (309-4353) and Kent Davis (355-6388) for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search for waterfowl and songbirds. The walk will be about 1 1/2 miles. There are benches along the trail for "birding from the bench". Other walking may be through damp grass to the field overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. Bring your spotting scopes! For those that want to eat after the walk, Ballast Point Brewery is now open at 11AM for lunch. Meet at the second parking lot at Greenfield on the right across the road from the lake. Greenfield is located on Route 220 in Botetourt County. Directions: Take Exit 150B on I81 and then a right onto Route 11 for a quarter mile. Take a right onto Route 220N. Go 3.8 miles and take a left at the entrance to Greenfield.

### **November 12, Sunday, 2-4PM, Fred Cramer Studio Tour**

Long-time member Fred Cramer Club member has invited the club to tour his studio where he creates wood carvings of birds and other wildlife. He also enjoys painting and shooting nature photos. From the News Messenger, "Vinton artist Fred Cramer creates finely detailed wood carvings of birds and mammals based on extensive research and observation in nature." This is an opportunity to view his works-in-progress and finished pieces. For nearly 40 years, Fred has been involved in the Roanoke Valley Bird Club as a past-president, field trip leader, Bluebird box monitor and program presenter. Fred also designed the first Roanoke Valley Bird Club logo of the cardinal. It is suggested that you email RVBC2015@outlook.com or leave a message at 580-5214 if you plan to attend to give us an idea of numbers to expect. Space in the studio is limited, so we will be taking turns and, if there is a wait, visiting with fellow club members or birding outside. His studio is at his home at 2147 Feather Road, Vinton.

### **November 19, Sunday, 11:30AM Lunch and Claytor Lake Birding**

Meet Linda Cory (580-5214) at 11:30AM at the Hanging Rock Orange Market, 1823 Thompson Memorial Dr, Roanoke, VA. We will carpool to meet the New River Valley Club at Sal Jr's in Fairlawn, VA around 12:30PM. After eating, we will proceed to Claytor Lake. For club members that want to skip lunch, you can meet the group at 2 pm by the restored historical Howe House at the lake, 6620 Ben H Bolen Drive, Dublin, VA. There we will search for loons, grebes, coots and other recently arrived waterfowl. We will up the species count with woodland species on trails around the lake. Dress warmly as it is exposed and often windy. Bring your scopes!

### **December 1-3, VSO Annual Birding Trip to Virginia Beach**

With the closing of all of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel islands, this trip gives us an excellent opportunity to bird this area with the Virginia Society of Ornithology (we are invited as a chapter of the VSO). This is a free weekend event for VSO members or \$20 for non. Lodging and food are on our own and there is a small charge if you elect to take the tram and/or boat ride. For more information, visit [www.virginiabirds.org](http://www.virginiabirds.org) or email Lee Adams at [leeloudenslageradams@gmail.com](mailto:leeloudenslageradams@gmail.com).

## **December 9, 8AM, Virginia Beach, Smith Mountain Lake State Park**

Meet Bob Epperson (871-3471) at the Bedford Welcome Center (816 Burks Hill Rd, Bedford) at the intersection of Route 460 and 122. From there we will car pool south to the state park stopping at some local ponds along SR122 before we reach the state park. Target birds are Common Loon, Horned Grebe and other waterfowl as well as the Brown-headed Nuthatch which is a year-round resident at the state park. Bring water and a snack for this half day trip. Wear sturdy shoes for walking about one mile of trails. A spotting scope would be useful for viewing waterfowl on the lake. There are multiple restrooms and covered picnic areas available. Directions to the Bedford Welcome Center: From Roanoke at the intersection of Orange Avenue and Williamson Road, go 25.5 miles east on 460 and take a left on Burks Hill Rd (AKA122). There may be a fee to park your car at the state park, so bring a few dollars just in case.

## **Sightings & Field Trip Reports**

9/30 Montvale Park – 20 birders from the Roanoke and Lynchburg clubs met on a beautiful fall day to enjoy passing warblers and other migrating birds. Our first bird was the Kingfisher, starting our trip out successfully. Cedar Waxwings were ever-present (see Bird of the Month in this newsletter). Several Common Yellowthroats were heard singing in the brush along the creek. Migrating warblers noted during the walk included Ovenbird, American Redstart, Cape May, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped and Palm Warblers. Two Swainson's Thrushes were seen while a Gray-cheeked Thrush was heard calling. We also observed Red-tailed Hawks and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. In all, 43 species were seen.

2nd Wednesday Walk: 36 species were seen with the following finds: Great Egret, Northern Shoveler, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Double-Crested Cormorant, Cooper's Hawk, Kestrel, Swamp, Song and Savannah Sparrows, Palm Warbler and American Pipit.

Fenwick Mines Recreation Area, Craig, Virginia, US

Oct 28, 2017 8:45 AM - 10:55 AM 14 people

Comments: Roanoke Valley Bird Club Field Trip lead by Bill Hunley. Partly cloudy, cool, low 40's to low 50's F, calm.

30 species: The highlights were Sharp-shinned Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Black-capped Chickadee, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Juncos



10/7 Craig County Beaver Pond – Although the day started out misty, 14 RVBC members had a great day birding at the Beaver Ponds. 40 species were seen including Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Hairy Woodpecker, Kestrel, Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawks, one which was leucisitic (partially albino). Other treats were both species of Kinglets, Ravens and a Black-capped Chickadee. On the way back, 3 birds were treated to a Kingfisher perched at a pond.



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### **Second annual MBC Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Islands Birding Boat Trip is set for January 13, 2018.**

The boat will leave the dock at 3311 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach, VA at 9:00 a.m. and return at 1:00 p.m. - weather permitting. I will be watching the wind and weather closely and give updates on a timely basis. I will need everyone's email and cell phone numbers so I can reach you with last minute updates. What to bring: Food, drinks and warm clothes. Layering is the best way to go.

Cost: \$35.00 per person. A tip for the mate is included in your \$35.00 fee. Please make all checks payable to Monticello Bird Club. P.O. Box 4362 Charlottesville, VA 22905. To reserve your spot on the boat, please make your reservation now. I will need to have your money by Monday January 8, 2018. I will be able to give refunds for last-minute cancellations up until Thursday January 11, 2018. Space is limited so please make your reservation early. To register, please contact me at: [doug5996@gmail.com](mailto:doug5996@gmail.com) or the Club email at: [birders@monticellobirdclub.org](mailto:birders@monticellobirdclub.org). Or call me at: 434.409.8156. We had a great time on the trip this past January! Please join us!

### **Bird Dispatches from the Hurricane Front Lines**

It has been an exhausting few weeks for many of BirdsCaribbean's partners across the region. The hurricane season is not over for another two months, but Caribbean conservationists are hoping for a break. BirdsCaribbean and its wonderful supporters across the region are doing their best to keep up with a variety of urgent needs, from shipping hummingbird feeders for starving birds to organizing assessments and surveys. There is a lot of work to be done, but teamwork and partnerships are making the difference. Check out more at <http://www.birdscaribbean.org/>

## CLUB NEWS

### **BIRD OF THE MONTH - Cedar Waxwing**

On many bird walks, I have heard people say “Oh, it’s beautiful!” when viewing this bird close-up. They are speaking about the Cedar Waxwing. This species is elegantly adorned with silky feathers of soft browns and yellows, with accents of facial mask, brilliant dabs of red on the tips of the secondary wing feathers, and a bright yellow terminus tail band. Almost always found in flocks, they are easily identified by their high-pitched trill as well as a silhouette of a sleek body and crown feathers.



Cedar Waxwings eat berries, cherries and other succulent sweet fruit. When I was young, our family had a large holly tree next to a window on our stairs and was introduced to Waxwings by watching hungry flocks eat the red berries. I perceived a pattern as they would rotate through the tree from the top branches down to the outer branches, then start again at the top. They would strip the tree bare in assembly line fashion, swallowing them whole. My present home has Pagoda trees with juicy pods that the Waxwings love. They also known to eat insects on the wing.

Although we can see Cedar Waxwings here every month of the year, some spend the winter in Central America and Mexico, and they don’t return to their breeding grounds until later than many migrants, probably because they must wait until more fruit is available again. Cedar Waxwings feed their nestlings a lot of fruit. This ideal diet for baby waxwings doesn’t have nearly enough protein for growing cowbirds. When a cowbird does lay its egg in a waxwing nest, the young cowbird usually dies within several days from malnutrition (per Cornell). Although it is not known 100% if mated pairs stay together, the courtship is interesting to observe with them passing a berry back and forth to each other. No, You keep it - no, You keep it, etc.

Linda Cory

**They get their name by the red tips of the secondary tail feathers, resembling red sealing wax.**

**The red found on the wings is actually a waxy secretion.**

**Adults have 2–9 red tips per wing. Males average more, but in both sexes, the number increases as birds get older.**

**The sleek Waxwing can fly 25 MPH.**

**Waxwings are known to get intoxicated on fermented berries.**

**A collection of Waxwings is an “earful of Waxwings” probably due to their collective high-pitched trill.**

## 2018 RVBC Calendars

The beautiful 2018 RVBC calendars are here and ready for your purchasing, both as gifts and personal use. The cost of each remains the same as last year at \$12. Each features gorgeous photos taken by our members which you don't want to miss seeing. The calendars will be available for purchase at the seed sale on November 4th as well as the club meetings in November and December. Many thanks to Eunice Hudgins, Robin Austin, and Pat Johnson (our selection committee) who took time out from their day to review all thirty-eight images in order to select twenty-four. And many thanks to those nine members who submitted their best work for this competition. We have some great photographers among us!

### Christmas Bird Count



A census of birds in the Western Hemisphere performed in a "count circle" with a diameter of 15 miles, have been conducted every December since 1900. Observers count every bird seen in assigned areas. All counts are forwarded to the National Audubon Society for use in conservation biology. The Roanoke Valley Bird Club does three counts:

Roanoke – Saturday, December 16

Contact Bill Hunley (wjhunley@gmail.com) or 774-2397

Fincastle – Sunday, December 17

Contact Eunice Hudgins (uvaau@aol.com) or 389-4056

Peaks of Otter – Tuesday, December 19

Contact Kent Davis (kedjr@cox.net) or 344-8377

You may, and we encourage you to, participate in all three counts. Contact the above leaders to be assigned a territory. New birders or first-time counters will be placed with experienced birders. We drive most of our territories stopping often and getting out of the car to look, listen and count the birds. It's a fun day to join fellow birders and maybe discover a new birding territory. Most areas are covered in about four hours. There will be sign-up sheets at the November meeting. Please join us – we need your help.

Following the Fincastle count, we will meet at Woodpecker Ridge at noon for a bowl of Barry Kinzie's soup and a tally of all the birds.

### VBS Fall Conference, November 18

Come join us Saturday, November 18 in Charlottesville for our Virginia Bluebird Society Biennial Conference from 9:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M. Every other year, VBS holds a statewide conference to connect with all our members. We are excited to have Bob Schamerhorn returning to talk about "Gardening for Birds." We will also hear from Pattie Reum and the Kestrel box project. This is a great way to network with other bluebirders and meet your VBS Officers and Board members. The registration fee of \$25/person includes continental breakfast and lunch. You do not need to be a member to attend. Register early; space is limited. (The club is NOT organizing a group to go.)



Roanoke Valley Bird Club  
c/o Eleanor Dye  
PO Box 74  
Vinton, VA 24179

2017 Roanoke Valley Bird Club Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Memberships expire August 31st.

Annual Dues	
Individual \$12	_____
Family \$20	_____
Student \$7	_____
Sustaining \$30	_____
Adopt a Bluebird \$15	_____
Additional Contribution	_____
Total Payment	_____
Make check payable to the Roanoke Valley Bird Club c/o Eleanor Dye Box 74 Vinton, VA 24179	