



# February '21 Newsletter

Celebrating 64 Years of Birding

## NEXT MEETING

**Our meeting will NOT be in person, rather we'll meet using the technology of Zoom. Our meeting will be 7PM, Monday, February 8th. You'll receive a link in your inbox a few days before the meeting. Stay well and happy birding.**

Becoming a Better Composer —

## How to Create Compelling Wildlife Images

Brian Murphy lives on a 67-acre farm in Craig County, where he and his wife Martha have converted their entire property to wildlife habitat. They have planted thousands of fruit and seed-bearing shrubs and trees, and many acres of native grasses and wildflowers that now support their honeybee apiary. The wide variety of habitat on the farm has brought more than 140 species of birds to the property in the past decade. Brian serves as Professor Emeritus of Fisheries Science with the Department of Fish & Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech, after retiring in 2019. While his specialty is fisheries management, he is an avid birder. His fisheries research has taken him around the world, where he has always taken advantage of local birding in places like Alaska, Central and South America, Cuba, Australia, and across much of China (including Tibet). An amateur photographer, he taught a special-studies course at Virginia Tech titled, "Photography for Naturalists." In that course he sought to help students apply the basic principles of good photography to their work in natural resources. With the RVBC he will explore principles of good photographic composition for nature photography.



## **CLUB NEWS**

### **New Year's Birding Report**

Eleven club members submitted their New Year's Day list for 2021. This year, all observations were from our area. Tim and Alyce Quinn in Franklin County reported a Barred Owl and Purple Finches. Linda Cory spotted two Ravens flying in their usual acrobatic pattern. Nancy Reid reported from Axton with a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Junco. Maxine Fraade and George Blonar had a Hairy Woodpecker and White-crowned Sparrows as did Kent Davis who also saw American Pipits. Jason Davis reported a Sharp-shinned hawk, Robert Clemo reported a Peregrine Falcon and Kathy Clemo reported a Red-shouldered Hawk.

### **Audubon's Great Backyard Bird Count**

The 24th annual GBBC will be held Friday, February 12th, through Monday, February 15th. Details are available at <https://www.birdcount.org/participate/>. The Great Backyard Bird Count is a free, fun, and easy event that engages bird watchers to create a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for a minimum of 15 minutes on at least one of the four days and report their sightings online at birdcount.org. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from beginning bird watchers to experts, and you can participate from your backyard, or anywhere in the world. Each checklist submitted during the GBBC helps researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society learn more about bird populations and how to protect them and the environment we share.

### **Annual Raptor Count**

Spend a few hours driving away the winter blues on Saturday February 13, 2021. The annual Raptor Count is a great excuse to get out of the house and do some winter birding with your birding buddies!! No skill is required, just a little time and effort. Plan on a leisurely drive around your area, counting all the hawks you see. Points are awarded for each hawk, although this is not a serious competition. The winner gets bragging rights!! We compile the results from everyone's efforts and keep an eye on trends in hawk populations. In the unwanted event of inclement weather, an alternate date of Sunday February 14 has been set. Contact Anne Tucker (540) 721-1573 if you have any questions. The tally sheet can be emailed to [billt3256@gmail.com](mailto:billt3256@gmail.com) or mailed to 3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta VA 24121.

WINTER RAPTOR COUNT

February 13, 2021

Participants \_\_\_\_\_

Time Started \_\_\_\_\_ Time Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Turkey Vulture	*1			
Black Vulture	*2			
Red-tailed Hawk	5			
American Kestrel	10			
Common Raven	10			
Eastern Screech Owl	**10			
Cooper's Hawk	20			
Sharp-shinned Hawk	20			
Great Horned Owl	30			
Red-shouldered Hawk	30			
Barred Owl	35			
Northern Harrier	40			
Bald Eagle	50			
Barn Owl	50			
Loggerhead Shrike	50			
Merlin	75			
Peregrine Falcon	75			
Rough-legged Hawk	75			
Short-eared Owl	75			
Golden Eagle	100			
Northern Goshawk	100			
Long-eared Owl	125			
Northern Saw-whet Owl	125			
Northern Shrike	150			
Unidentified Raptor	5			

POINT TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

- \* Maximum of 50 Points
  - \*\* Maximum of 100 Points
- Be sure to keep your totals! There is a 10-point bonus for peak counts of these three species.

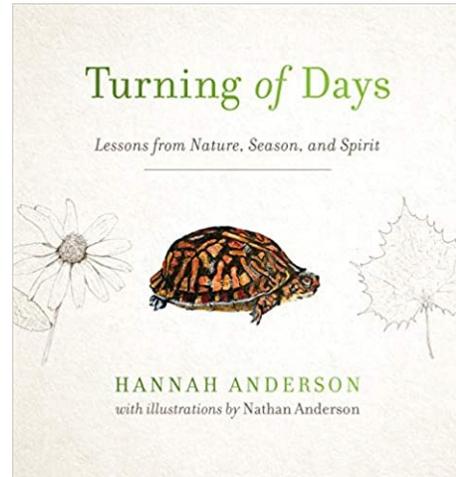
**RULES:** Teams must be at least 2 people. Teams may bird any area within a 100-mile radius of Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center. Birds must be seen or heard by at least 2 team members. Count period cannot exceed a total of 12 hours.

Completed forms can be emailed to [bilt3256@gmail.com](mailto:bilt3256@gmail.com) or mailed to Anne Tucker  
 3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta VA 24121. Call Anne at 540-721-1573 with any questions.

## ***Turning of Days: Lessons in Nature, Season and Spirit***

From the beginning, Scripture tells of a God who created the heavens and earth. It tells how he made the sea and land, the rosebud and beetle. But what might the heavens and earth tell us were we to listen to them? What wonders might the birds and flowers share? What might we discover of order, chaos, beauty, and unabashed grace?

Turning of Days beckons you to a world of tree frogs and peach blossoms, mountain springs and dark winter nights—all in search of nature's God. All in harmony with Scripture. Join Hannah Anderson, the author of *Humble Roots*, as she journeys through the four seasons searching out the spiritual and theological truths woven deep within the natural world. This collection of devotional essays and illustrations will feed your soul, guiding you into a life of observation and awe, a life that sees His glory everywhere. (Nathan Anderson, a RVBC member, illustrated the book and thanked the Bird Club in the acknowledgments.)



Available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or wherever you purchase books.

## **Thank you Eunice Hudgins!**

The board voted to honor Eunice Hudgins with the title Director Emeritus. We are truly grateful for her many years of support, friendship, and work.

Eunice joined the bird club in 1976 and always tried to support the club by attending the monthly meetings, going on field trips and volunteering whenever possible. She served as Treasurer and a Director. She helped revise "How to Get There" (a guide to area birding spots) and have helped with the seed sale since 1999. At Barry Kinzie's request, she took over the organization of Big Spring Day in 2000 and the Fincastle Christmas Bird Count in 2004. She and her late husband, John, drove the count areas and wrote up instructions for birding each territory.

Birding is a big part of her life. Birds are such interesting and beautiful little creatures. A great aunt introduced her to an Oriole building its nest when she was about 7 years old. Birding never gets old to her and she love to see birds she has never seen before. She has been very fortunate to bird many areas of our country (including Hawaii and Alaska) and other parts of the world, such as Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean. Her life list is 1,584 and ABA list is 602. If you'd like to drop her a note of appreciation, her address is 870 Stonegate Ct. Salem, VA 24153. Thank you Eunice for all you do!

## **Board News**

Sissy Logan stepped down from being treasurer and will stay on the board as a Director. Thank you Sissy for all your hard work. Per the by-laws, the board voted to accept Carol Whitt as the new treasurer. Carol makes a great addition to the board. We also voted, on Carol's recommendation, to rent a PO Box for the club. So the new address will be PO Box 20405 Roanoke, VA 24018.

Please consider making a donation to the Roanoke Valley Bird Club in memory or in honor of someone. We are a 501-3c non-profit organization and your contribution may be tax deductible.

## **Field Trip Reports:**

Jan. 9th: Pond Hopping with Alyce and Tim Quinn. The seven birders observed 28 species at Greenfield, including Red-tailed Hawk, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglet, a blue-gray gnatcatcher (close-range for several minutes), and several waterfowl, the most prevalent being the Ring-necked Duck. Others included Bufflehead, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, and Great Blue Herons.

They observed 11 species at Murray's Pond, including Hooded Merganser, abundant Gadwall and Canada Geese, a Kingfisher and Northern Flicker.

Jan. 13th, 2nd Wednesday walk at Greenfield: Leaders Kathy and George Clemo led a group of 8 other birders on a bright sunny day. They observed 30 species, including a few not seen on the 9th at that location: Belted Kingfisher, Canada Geese, and Red-bellied Woodpecker.

## **Field Trips cont.**

Note that if inclement weather necessitates a cancellation, an e-mail notification will be sent out. You can also call or text the leader or Mary Harshfield at 540-309-8277. When birding with a group, please wear a mask and social distance.

February 10th, 9:00 AM, 2nd Wednesday walk at Greenfield

Join leader Mary Harshfield in a walk around Greenfield Lake in search for migrants and waterfowl. The walk will be mostly flat walking for about 2 miles. We will also cover the grassy area overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. Bring a spotting scope if you have one.

Directions: Take Exit 150B on I-81 and follow signs to Route 220N. Go about 4 miles and take a 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.

February 21st, 8 AM, Sewage Treatment Plant

Join leaders Kent Davis and Linda Cory 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 their 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 muddy.

Directions: Meet at the greenway parking lot off of Bennington St next to the bridge over the Roanoke River and we will walk over to the STP. Thirteenth Street SE changes names to Bennington St at the bridge over the Roanoke River which is in front of the STP. Questions: call Linda at 540-580-5214.

## Meet a Member: Melissa Friedman

*With this issue we are reviving this feature which dropped off the newsletter sometime around 2017. Hope you enjoy getting to know some of our members.*

Meet RVBC's newest member, joining us in mid-January 2021, Melissa Friedman! Melissa lives in the Grandin Road area with her husband Frank. She was a practicing lawyer, and they're empty nesters with three grown children and two grandsons.

Melissa always liked birds and grew up knowing some of the common ones but the push to join our club and learn more came from her friendship with club members Betty Burke and Kathy Clemo (yay Betty and Kathy!). She's looking to develop a hobby and get outdoors more while hanging out with her friends and with the birds. First on her list: buy binoculars! Next: a bird book and some birding apps. Welcome and looking forward to seeing you birding, Melissa!



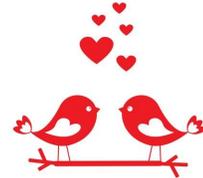
American Wigeon: Mary Lou Barritt



Red-Shouldered Hawk: Bob Crawford



Roanoke Valley Bird Club  
PO Box 20405  
Roanoke, VA 24018



2020—2021 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 PO Box 20405 Roanoke, VA 24018	