

Celebrating 57
Years of Birding!
1957-2014

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**Deadline for submissions
to be included in the next
RVBC newsletter is before
Dec. 20, 2014. Thank you!**

Please send photos (in medium
resolution or smaller) and
submissions or suggestions to:
rvbcnews@cox.net

Hyperlinks have now been
added. You can click on the
underlined link and it should
take you there. Use it for
sending email or to get
internet and website
information.

Visit our web page for past
newsletters and current
information at:
<http://www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com>

**NEW! - Visit and "like" the
Roanoke Valley Bird Club's
Facebook page.**

December Newsletter

Next meeting Monday
Dec. 8th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Grandin Court Baptist Church
2660 Brambleton Ave SW. Roanoke, VA 24015

Before the meeting please join fellow club members at 5:30 p.m.
for dinner at the Brambleton Deli, 3655 Brambleton Ave.

"Member Night"



GOOD FOOD AND FESTIVITIES

It is Member Night. It is time to show off to your fellow members your best birding photos. Please bring them on your laptop or thumb drive. Also notify Butch Kelly (540)384-7429 of what you will need or what you would like to present so that arrangements can be made to show your program.



This is our "potluck" meeting so bring your favorite dish to share.

This month's meeting refreshments will be graciously provided by
CLUB MEMBERS!

The RVBC 2015 Calendar will still be available for sale at the meeting. The perfect gift for a bird loving friend.

A Bird Word-Do you know what is a **Pectinate Toenail**? What does it look like? What does it do? Here's a hint- These toenails are found on Common Nighthawks and some herons. Answer is on page 3.

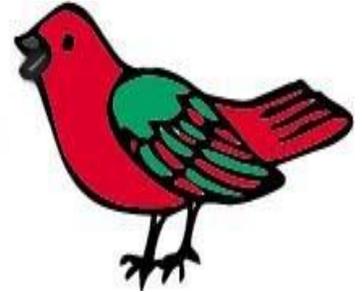
Field Trips

Field Trips Chairman, Linda Cory (540) 580- 5214

The 2014 VSO Annual Virginia Beach Trip – December 5-7th

The VSO annual field trip to Virginia Beach will be held Friday, December 5th through Sunday, December 7th. Friday afternoon will be a driving trip through the Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge, which will also be open on Saturday 12/6 and Sunday 12/7 for Open Roads Days. Other field trips include a visit to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) on Saturday morning and a tram ride at Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park on Sunday morning. Registration deadline for field trips is Nov. 15th. For more information go to: <http://www.virginiabirds.net/>

Christmas Bird Counts are conducted from December 14th to January 5th every year on and are held nationwide. The data collected by CBC participants over the past century has become one of only two large pools of information, informing ornithologists and conservation biologists how the birds of the Americas are faring over time. Participate in as many counts as you wish. There is a specific methodology to the CBC, so please make arrangements to participate in advance with the circle compiler. Each count takes place in an established 15-mile wide diameter circle, and is organized by the count compiler. Anyone can participate. If you are a beginning birder, you will be able to join a group that includes at least one experienced birdwatcher. Volunteers are still needed! To participate, please contact one of the following compilers:



FINCASTLE (Sunday, December 14th) - Eunice Hudgins - uvaau@aol.com or 389-4056

ROANOKE (Saturday, December 20th) - Bill Hunley - wjhunley@gmail.com or 774-2397

PEAKS OF OTTER (Sunday, December 21st) - Eunice Hudgins - uvaau@aol.com or 389-4056
Or Kent Davis (kedjr@cox.net or 344-8377)

The Franklin County Winter Bird Count - Sunday December 7th. If interested in participating contact Clyde Kessler at ckessler@vt.edu . E-mail him so he can know what areas of Franklin County you'd like to cover.



Fox Sparrow by Maureen Eiger

New Year's Day Bird Count – Place of YOUR choosing on Thursday, January 1st from 12AM to 11:59PM Start your 2015 out right by making a New Year's Day Bird List at the place of our choosing. This is not a group field trip and is not a competition. Also, this is not a national organized count and there is no fee. Some of our members for years have made it a personal tradition to start their year by listing the birds seen/heard on the first day of the year. Maybe this will be the start of a new tradition for you, too! Make a note of all bird species seen and/or heard beginning midnight of New Year's Eve (which would officially be January 1st) and ending 11:59PM of January 1st. You may bird anywhere you would like (even Florida). Email your resulting list with where you birded, the time of day and all participant names to: Linda Cory at LCORY50@JUNO.COM Highlights from your lists will go in the February newsletter. Good Luck everyone and Happy New Year!

Highland County Trip – January 17th at 7:30AM at Botetourt Commons in Daleville (snow date January 24th) Meet Fred Cramer (890-8026) and Rupert Cutler (345-7653) for this exciting day of birding in Highland County (mostly). The target bird is the golden eagle which has been seen on this trip in the past. We should also see bald eagles and a good variety of waterfowl. We will start by traveling north on 220, bird the Blue Grass area near Monterey and bird Lake Moomaw and surrounds. This is a full day event, so please bring lunch, snacks and drinks. Wear warm clothes and sturdy shoes. We will carpool (the fewer the cars, the better) from Bojangles at Botetourt Commons (on 220N from I-81 exit 150B).

Save the date – Saturday February 14, 2015 There was a good turnout for the 2014 Raptor Count last February, so let's do it again! More details in the January newsletter.

Events, Projects and Club News

2014 Seeds for a Song - update from Alyce Quinn, Chairman, Seeds for a Song

I'd like to thank everyone who participated in this year's Seeds for a Song fundraiser. Whether you purchased birdseed, books, or feeders, brought homemade goodies to share, loaded bags (over 12,000 pounds worth!), collected money, or chatted with customers, I appreciate all your efforts making the sale a success. It is definitely a group effort, with everyone playing a vital role. With all your hard work, the club sold over \$7800 worth of seed, making a profit of just over \$1000. The RVBC Board will soon meet to discuss how we should use the money we made, so if you have any thoughts about worthy projects, please let one of the Board members know.

A special thank you goes to Eunice Hudgins for handling the money for all the pre-sales and the on-site orders. Others who helped in one way or another the day of the sale and deserve a special mention are: Robin and Allen Austin, Sid and Mary Lou Barritt, George Blonar, Carl and Linda Boast, Kent Davis, Joanne Derryberry, Annie Downing, Maureen Eiger, Norris Ford, Dick Hendrix, Sissy Logan, Rita and Jerry O'Brien, Tim Quinn, Pam and Elly Wefel, and Liz Williams. If I forgot anyone, I apologize! It was a hectic but successful day, and I hope to see everyone again next year. - Alyce



Drawings at the Seed Sale –

Congratulations go to Kathy Mills whose name was drawn for a feeder.

Also to S. Ferrell whose name was drawn for a free RVBC membership for a year. Welcome!

New Officers and Directors were elected at the November meeting. They will take office on Jan 1, 2015. Their names and positions are:

Officers:

President – Kent Davis
VP (Membership) – Eleanor Dye
VP (Programs) – Maureen Eiger
Secretary – Candy Andrzejewski
Treasurer – Robin Austin

Directors:

Linda Barker
Mary Lou Barritt
Mary Ellen Belcher
Linda Cory
Bill Fabian
Maxine Fraade
Eunice Hudgins
Edie Manuel



Hermit Thrush by Maureen Eiger

BIRD WORD ANSWER – A Pectinate Toenail is a longish toenail that has serrated edges. It looks like a comb. It is believed to be used by the bird to clean the bird's feathers. Often it is found on the middle toe, as shown in this photo of a Common Nighthawk's toes.



Sightings

✓ MENTIONED BY RVBC MEMBERS ATTENDING THE OCTOBER MEETING

- ✓ **Joanne Derryberry** saw a Brown-headed Nuthatch in Roanoke County.
- ✓ **Pat Johnson** saw a Bald Eagle in Wasena Park.
- ✓ **Kent Davis** saw a Cattle Egret, Rusty Blackbirds and an Ash-throated Flycatcher at the Roanoke Sewage Treatment Plant.
- ✓ **Barry Kenzie** saw the Ash-throated Flycatcher as well.
- ✓ **Linda Cory** reports the Selasphorus Hummingbird is still in the Cave Spring area.
- ✓ **Rita O'Brien** saw a Pileated Woodpecker in her yard.
- ✓ **Kent Davis** found a Snow Goose at the Ashley Plantation Pond

Meet a RVBC Member

Edie Manuel

I was born in Canada, but I spent most of my early years growing up in Japan. Then I lived most of my adult life in California. I have one son named Michael and I am a retired nurse. I also have a Quaker Parrot named Kelly who "owns" me. I moved to Virginia in 1999 and I love living here.

I have always been interested in wild birds and parrots. My awareness of their plight started when I was a member and the Treasurer of the Southwest Virginia Bird Club, a local pet bird club. I am very concerned about all the wild birds and the decline of populations of wild birds around the world. I enjoy bird watching and attending the Club meetings to learn more about birds. - Edie



Bird Tip - Pinecone Bird Feeders



The late fall and early winter is a great time to find pinecones in the woods. Gather them up and make some pinecone feeders.

Securely attach wire or sturdy string to the top of the pinecone. Thin, "floral wire" is available at local craft stores. Wire is more durable than string. String eventually shreds.

In the meat section, of your grocery store, find a chunk of tallow (beef fat). **About one pound of tallow will yield about six small/medium sized pinecone feeders.** Tallow is usually very inexpensive and one of the best forms of fats to feed to birds—it's a better option than Crisco, which is comprised of hydrogenated oils, and firmer than peanut butter (once it cools). If you do not see tallow amongst the cut meats, ask the butcher if they have tallow chunks in the back.

Slowly melt the tallow in a pan on low heat, you want the fat to melt so you can work with it. Do not overheat or overcook it. Otherwise, it might splatter and burn your skin.

In a large bowl or glass pan, pour in a thick layer of mixed birdseed, preferably one that your birds are used to feeding on. Once the tallow is melted, turn it off and let it cool. Wait a few minutes until the tallow starts to become more of a glue-like texture—not liquid and not solid. Then, pick-up your pinecone by the wire and drag it through the fat. Move the pine cone around so it is thoroughly coated, and some of the oil gets down into the scales.

Take the tallow-covered pine cone and do your best to submerge it in the bird seed. Sometimes it helps to pick-up seeds and sprinkle them over the pinecone, or push the seeds into the sticky crevices. Do this before the tallow hardens. You may have to reheat the tallow a couple of times to keep the softer texture, if you are doing multiple pinecone feeders. Before taking the pinecone out of the seed pan, lightly shake or spin it to release loose seeds.

When you are finished covering the pinecone with seeds, place it on a piece of wax-paper. Let it firm-up on the wax paper, then transfer it to a tree where you frequently see birds feeding or perching. You can wrap them in the wax paper, then giftwrap and give to your birding friends as gifts. Your friends and their birds will love these homemade presents.

Bird Topic - Hawk vs Falcon

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A HAWK AND A FALCON

A falcon is a bird of prey that belongs to the Genus falco. There are various species of these raptor birds in the genus falco. They are characterized by their long wings and powerful beaks that are adapted to the way the birds hunt for prey, by strongly clawing and then tearing the flesh of the captured animal. Falcons, when fully mature typically fly at very high speeds and easily alter directions because their wings are tapered and thin. For the young falcons, their longer flight feathers are typical of any other flying bird but they make it easy for the young birds to learn superior prey hunting skills that will make them acquainted with effective hunting skills when they are grown. Falcons are known for their super-fast flying speeds and the peregrine falcon is recorded as the fastest flying bird as well as fastest moving creature on earth with a diving speed of 322km/hr. other known falcons are the Lanner, Merlin, gyrfalcon and the hobbies which are small with wings that are long and narrow. Like many birds of prey, falcons have a very superior sense of vision, more than twice that of humans.



Peregrine Falcon

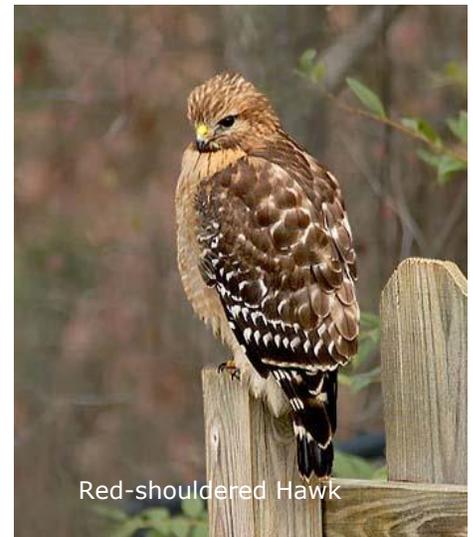
The hawk on the other hand is a term referring to the bird species belonging to the Accipitrinae subfamily. There are several genera in this subfamily including the Accipiter, Micronisus, Melierax and Megatriorchis with the Accipiter genus being the largest and has the most common hawk birds. In this genus there are sparrowhawks, goshawks the sharp shinned hawk and many more. The hawks in this genus basically stay in woodlands and are very visually astute. They hunt their prey by unexpected dashes from a hidden perch. A long tail is characteristic of these birds. Sometimes, the word hawk may be used generally to mean any bird of prey other than owls. Although the hawk and falcon are similar in characteristics, there are several features where the two birds differ.

Falcons generally have an angular bend on their beaks that allows them to easily break their prey's neck while hawks generally have smoother beaks with a simple curve as they mainly use their talons to snatch and kill their prey. Falcons are very fast in flight especially the peregrine falcon whereas hawks are much slower in flight and would basically just glide on a descent. Falcons are smaller birds than hawks which are generally large but with shorter wings compared to falcons.

Summary:

1. Falcons belong to the same genus while hawks fall into several genera.
2. Falcons have a notch on their beaks while hawks have a simple curve on the beak.
3. Falcons grab their prey with the beaks while hawks use talons on the feet to kill prey.
4. Hawks are generally larger birds than falcons.

Photos from All about Birds, Cornell Lab



Red-shouldered Hawk

AROUND THE WEB – Find out the secret of how birds may handle air turbulence. Click on the link below for a short video.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/20/science/on-eagles-wings-a-revelation-about-flight.html>

WILD BIRDS REHAB NEEDS HELP

Need a tax write off? Want to give orphaned or injured birds a second chance? The Wild Bird Rehab fund needs your help. Call Maureen Eiger at 342-4890 for more information. Here is a partial list of some of the items needed;

Bring to a club meeting - tissues (birds poop!) & paper towels

Money for bird medicine

Money can be also be called in to be credited to Maureen's wild bird rehab account for wild bird medicine at her Vet sponsor, Avian and Exotic Pet Clinic of Roanoke.

Call them at (540) 989-4464 (please also let Maureen know)

Rolls of fiberglass screen and caging materials (sand and pea gravel)

Cat or dog carriers

Wooden dowels





The Roanoke Valley Bird Club

C/o Eleanor Dye
P.O. Box 74
Vinton, Virginia 24179

2015 Roanoke Valley Bird Club Membership Application Form

Please print

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

ST: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Memberships expire on August 31 each year

Annual Dues are as follows:

- Individual \$12
- Family \$20
- Student \$7
- Sustaining \$30
- Adopt a Bluebird \$15

Additional Contribution \$ _____

Total Submitted _____

Make check payable to
Roanoke Valley Bird Club
Mail To: Roanoke Valley Bird Club
c/o Eleanor Dye
P.O. Box 74
Vinton, VA 24179-0074