



Roanoke Valley Bird Club



September 2021

Next Meeting

Due to the continued presence of COVID-19 and its variants, we will continue to meet via Zoom. The board will reevaluate at the end of year to determine what is the best meeting options beginning in January. Our next meeting via Zoom will be Monday, September 13th at 7pm. Please be on the look out for the Zoom link in your email the weekend before. Stay well, and happy birding.

The Wonders of Hawk Migration



Dan Russell, PhD, Emeritus Professor and lifelong birdwatcher will speak on hawks and hawk migration. Bird migration is a wonderful natural phenomenon. Each migrating species has its own strategies and tactics for maximizing its survival and reproduction. Hawk migration has a special interest because of their size and visibility. Dan will talk about the highly variable ways that species of hawks migrate in the Eastern US, their different routes, timing, flight strategies and ways to identify them.

Dr. Dan Russell is a retired social science professor from Springfield College in Massachusetts. His passion is birdwatching which includes spotting and identifying hawks. He enjoys giving talks, leading bird-walks and, of course, hawk-watching. He currently lives in

Central Massachusetts where he enjoys volunteering at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary and giving talks to local bird clubs including online workshops on hawk-watching.

At the end of the talk, volunteer hawk-watchers, who monitor their migration at Harveys Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway, will be available to answer questions on how you can get involved locally.

Facebook

If you enjoy social media, we would love to have you engage with the Roanoke Valley Bird Club on Facebook. After finding our page, click the like button, and our posts will show up in your timeline. Do you have a great article to share, photos to show off, or a question to ask? Click the create a post button within the Bird Club page. Creat and share your post. Your post will be seen by all those who have liked the page. And if you like the page you can comment on any of the posts.



Clockwise from top: Green Heron (Nathan Anderson); Chestnut-sided Warbler (Garland Kitts); Eastern Screech Owl (Mary Lou Barritt); White-winged Dove (Kent Davis); Pileated Woodpecker (Bob Crawford); Painted Bunting (Kirk Gardner)

Dues Increase September 2021

The Roanoke Valley Bird Club has not increased its dues for many years. In fact, no one remembers when! We continue to have a strong tradition of club members volunteering their time, talents, and expertise for the benefit of the club. But many other things have changed, for one, we no longer do our major fundraiser, the bird seed sale. Our sole fundraiser is the club calendar.

We have new expenses, like monthly zoom fees which has allowed us to keep meeting during covid and bring in amazing speakers, and fees to PayPal so members can pay dues online.

We have increased operational expenses: speaker fees, space rental at the garden center, paper copies of the newsletter for those without computers, mailbox rental, etc.

One of our most important expenditures is making financial contributions to causes that are in alignment with our mission like the American Bird Conservancy, SW Virginia Wildlife Center, Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas, Blue Ridge Land Conservancy, supporting a deserving youth to go to Nature Camp, and more.

As of September 1, 2021, our new dues will be: Individual \$15, Families \$25, Students \$10. You can mail your check and membership form to the address on the back page of this newsletter. Or you can pay via credit/debit card or with PayPal on our webpage www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com/Membership Memberships paid before Sept 13 will be honored at the old rates.

We appreciate all our members and will continue promoting interest in wild birds and bird conservation, and bringing you great speakers and opportunities to bird with our trip leaders. Good Birding Everyone! Hope to see you at our next zoom meeting September 13, 7:00 PM!

- By Maxine Fraade

Opportunities to Get Involved

The RVBC Board: Except for last year, elections traditionally take place in November. Because we won't be meeting in person, elections will be done via email (details to follow in the November newsletter). In preparation for that, we ask for any member that would like to be on the Nominating Committee to please let us know. More importantly, also let us know if you would like to serve on the club Board. This is your opportunity to share your ideas with the club!

Club Calendar Committee: Volunteers are needed to help with our calendar. This includes design, promotion, distribution and more. Details for submitting photos will be available soon via email.

Speakers' Bureau: Our club has a presence in our community and we are often asked to speak at other clubs and organizations. Please let us know if you enjoy talking about birds, the environment and other related topics.

We would love to hear from you regarding the above. Please respond by September 13th by emailing RVBC2015@outlook.com

Field Trips

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.

- 2nd Wednesday Walk at Greenfield (Wednesday, September 8th at 8 am)

Join leader Bill Hunley (540-467-3477) 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 walking for 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 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.

- Hawk Watching on Harvey's Knob (Sunday, September 19th, from 9 to 4pm)

From September through November, our club and the Lynchburg club report data on the hawk migration at Harvey's Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Located at milepost 95.6, all are welcome to join our resident hawk watchers to see how it is done. Bring a lawn chair, binoculars, and a spirit of adventure for learning about the annual hawk migration. Although you are welcome to show up any day, Sept. 19th will be special day for meeting up with old and new friends from the two bird clubs. For this field trip, you can arrive and leave when you like and even though you may not be ready to ID each hawk as it passes, extra eyes are ALWAYS needed. As an added incentive, club member Barry Kinzie has offered to serve "breakfast sausage gravy" starting in the morning until supplies last.

Additional info: The best time to observe the broad-winged hawk migration from that overlook is from around Sept. 15th-Sept. 26th although there are many other raptors that you may spot at other times.

- Sewage Treatment Plant (Sunday, October 3rd, at 8am)

Join leader Kent Davis (540-355-6388) 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 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 St 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 a few minutes early.

- VSO Trip (September 10-12, 2021)

The Virginia Society of Ornithology is sponsoring a field trip to Chincoteague, VA. For more information, see www.virginiabirds.org.



Roanoke Valley Bird Club
 PO Box 20405
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Editor: Nathan Anderson

Field Trip Reports

On Warbler Road on May 8th, twelve club members and one gentleman who spotted us in Arcadia and asked to tag along enjoyed a wonderful day on Warbler Road. With the help of all in attendance, we found 53 species, including scarlet tanager, wood thrush, tree and rough-winged swallows, Baltimore and orchard orioles, 4 vireo species and 12 warbler species. Highlights of the day included a couple of Louisiana waterthrushes feeding on the ground in a yard near Solitude, and the much-sought-after cerulean and Canada warblers.

August 7th, Birding at Robin and Allen Austin's on Bent Mountain. Robin led a group of 14 on a lovely walk around their property and down Bottom Creek Road. We observed 32 species, including Alder Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-breasted Chat, Common Yellowthroat, Great Blue Heron, and Yellow-bellied Cuckoo. Robin also shared her extensive knowledge of wildflowers and other vegetation as we walked.

Meet A Member

Bill Hunley was dreading taking a bird course while studying Wildlife Management at Dabney Lancaster Community College in Clifton Force in 1970. Their first field trip was to Chincoteague and ... the rest is history. He was hooked for life.



By the time Bill joined the Bird Club in 1979, he had been birding for a while. He then got into the field with Barry Kinzie which was, in his own words, a "humbling experience." Since then Bill has served as the Field Trip Coordinator and still leads fields trips for us. So probably many a member now feels the same way when out birding with Bill. He is an amazing source of information! Thank you, Bill!

Bill retired from teaching science and math at the Community School last year and still does plenty of birding. His favorite bird is a swallow-tailed kite. There are none in this area, but Bill has seen this striking bird in Florida and Costa Rica. Bill recounted how he once saw was a group of 80 swooping over a field of sugar cane in Florida. A memorable experience.

- By Maxine Fraade



Canvasback (Bob Crawford); Swallowtail Kite (Garland Kitts); Common Yellowthroat (Kirk Gardner)

2021-2022 Roanoke Valley Membership Form

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Make check payable: Roanoke Valley Bird Club PO Box 20405 Roanoke, VA 24018

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