



October Newsletter

Next meeting Monday
Oct. 10th, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

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

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

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Vultures! - Program
A Bird Word
Field Trips
Trending
Seed Sale info/form (pages 3 & 4)
Club Events, Projects & News
Bird Sightings
Bird Tip - Kousa Dogwoods
A Wood Duck Story (part 2)
Membership Renewal Form

Deadline for submissions to be included in the next RVBC newsletter are due on the 20th of the month preceding the publication month. **Thank you!** Please send photos (in medium resolution or smaller) and written submissions or suggestions to Maureen Eiger, RVBC Newsletter Editor at 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.

Celebrating
59 Years of Birding!
1957-2016



Vultures! by Reese Barclay

What are those birds we see flying overhead, that we mostly ignore and some people think are so ugly? In this program we will review the origin and special qualities that only Vultures have. Learn about New vs Old World Vultures and specific details about Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures and also the California Condor. Learn why Vultures are important; some Vultures are now considered threatened and why Vultures are so disliked. Hopefully by the end of this program you will learn why you should love and appreciate Vultures.

Reese Barclay graduated from Randolph College with a B.A. in Psychology. Even though he is currently pursuing a professional career in IT, he has always loved and been passionate about wildlife. Reese has interned with several nature centers and zoological parks, including Mill Mountain Zoo. He also is a volunteer as a summer tour guide at the Montebello state fish cultural station for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. His favorite birds are Vultures.

This month's meeting refreshments will be graciously provided by
Mary Lou Barritt

Seeds for a Song will be held November 5 at the Northwest Hardware store in Hollins. We will sell fresh seed containing little or no waste at reasonable prices. The sale is open to the public, so tell your friends! The RVBC Seed Sale Fundraiser information and order form is on pages 3 & 4. You can just set your printer to print the order form on page 4 of this newsletter and mail it or hand it in with your payment to Alyce Quinn or Mary Ellen Belcher at the October meeting. Please consider buying even one bag of seed to help support the club's worthwhile community projects.

A Bird Word-Do you know what "**whiskers**" on a bird are? No, we are not talking catbirds, but some birds have whiskers. Do you know which specific bird species have them? What their **whiskers** are made of? Answer is on page 6.

Upcoming Field Trips

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



BIRDING "THE BEAVER POND" - SATURDAY, OCT. 1ST at 7:30 A.M.

Meet Eunice Hudgins (389-4056) and Linda Cory (580-5214) at the Orange Market in Hanging Rock at 7:30 A.M. to carpool to George and Betsy Barker's "Beaver Pond" in Craig County. Wear sturdy shoes; bring a jacket, a packed lunch and something to drink. You can choose to walk the farm and surrounding woods or just sit on the porch and enjoy birds at the Barker's many feeders. The property includes a beaver pond and regular pond as well as open cow pastures and woods. The Orange Market is located at the intersection of Rt 311 and Rt 419 (1823 Thompson Memorial Drive) Salem, VA.

THE BIG SIT! - SATURDAY, OCT. 8th starting at 7:30 A.M. (RAIN DATE, SUN. OCT 9th)

Join us at Tim and Alyce Quinn's house (312-6844) in Burnt Chimney for this stationary bird watching adventure. The Big Sit! is an annual, international, non-competitive birding event hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest, sponsored by Swarovski Optik and founded by the New Haven (CT) Bird Club. Every team that observes this year's "Golden Bird" has a chance to win \$500. The Golden Bird is selected in a random drawing from the total list of all species seen in North America. All of the circles that list that bird is put into another drawing from which the winning circle is selected. The event has been referred to as a tailgate party for birders. It works like this: You sit inside a 17-foot diameter circle and count all the bird species you see or hear within a 24-hour period. There are two circles at the Quinn's' house and we have fun comparing the birds we see from each one. Since the count goes on all day, you can come any time you want, but the earlier you come, the more birds you'll see. We'll have a potluck lunch around noon, so bring a dish to share.

The address is 681 Edgewood Farm Lane, Wirtz, VA 24184. From Rt. 220, take a left on Rt. 697 by the Dairy Queen/Bojangles (about 5 miles south of Boones Mill). When it ends, go left on Rt. 122. Go one mile and turn right onto 670 (Burnt Chimney Road). If you're coming from Rt. 116, when it ends at Rt. 122, make a right and then a quick left onto Rt. 670. When you are on Rt. 670, go another mile and turn right onto 868 (Kingston). Go about .8 miles and make a right onto Edgewood Farm Lane (at a bunch of mailboxes). Go half a mile down this gravel road. When the road makes a 90 degree left turn onto Turkey Run, you instead want to go straight. This is the beginning of their driveway, and there is a bluebird box here with the house number, 681, on it on the right of the driveway, and an old dilapidated trailer on the left. You can't see the house from here, but go a quarter mile down the driveway and you're there. If you get lost call Alyce's cell (312-6844).



SECOND WEDNESDAY BIRD WALK AT GREENFIELD - WEDNESDAY, OCT. 12TH at 8:30 A.M.

Join co-leaders Barry and Carol Whitt (309-4353) at 8:30 A.M. for a for an easy bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search of waterfowl and songbirds. The walk will be mostly flat walking for about 1 1/2 miles. There are benches along the trail for "birding from the bench". Other walking at the property MAY be limited to construction including the grassy area overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. Bring your spotting scopes! 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 the Greenfield Education and Training Center (across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation).

FENWICK MINES - SATURDAY, OCT. 29th at 8:00 A.M.

Meet Educator Bill Hunley (467-3477) at the Orange Market in Hanging Rock at 8:00 a.m. to carpool to Fenwick Mines and surrounds. A favorite of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club, this trip covers a wide range of habitats in a relatively small area. This includes open fields, a small pond, wetlands, a mountain stream and mixed pine and hardwood forests. The Fenwick Nature Trail is one mile of easy walking. You never know what gems you will see there, but we can always hope for red crossbills which were seen on a club field trip there in the fall of 2010. The Orange Market is located at the intersection of Rt 311 and Rt 419 (1823 Thompson Memorial Drive) Salem, VA.

TRENDING AROUND THE INTERNET- Here are some interesting internet links about birds, sent in by our members. To share your favorite web link of birding interest email it to rvbcnews@cox.net

Project Feeder Watch starts soon. The first day to count your backyard birds is Sat. Nov.12. For more information and to get your forms go to <http://feederwatch.org/> There is a fee to participate.

Hawk watching is best in the fall. Try this link with a list of favorite hawk watching places found around the USA <http://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/hotspots-near-you/>

SEEDS FOR A SONG

Saturday, November 5, 2016

Roanoke Valley Bird Club Fund Raiser

In Cooperation with Northwest True Value Hardware

We are having a seed sale to benefit you, the community and your backyard birds. By placing an order with us, you will get quality seed containing little or no waste, harvested this year, at reasonable prices. Proceeds from the sale will be used for community projects. The sale is open to the public, so please copy this form and distribute it to friends and neighbors. There will be a small supply of extra seed available the day of the sale for those unable to pre-order. Refreshments will be served, bird feeders and bluebird boxes will be available for purchase, and experienced birders will be on hand to answer questions.

Orders must be received by October 15 and picked up on Saturday, November 5, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., at:

Northwest True Value Hardware (about a half mile south of the entrance to Hollins College)
7650 Williamson Road, Roanoke VA 24019
(540)-362-2112

If you are unable to pick up your seed on November 5, please make arrangements for someone else to pick it up for you.

It's easy to order:

1. Complete the enclosed order form, being sure to include your name, phone number, and address along with your seed selections.
2. Calculate the total, which **already includes** Virginia sales tax.
3. Mail your completed form and check, payable to Roanoke Valley Bird Club, ***in time for it to be received by October 15***, to: Mary Ellen Belcher, 2221 Tannehill Drive, Roanoke, VA 24018.
(Please do not include membership dues with your seed sale order. Membership dues should be mailed to Eleanor Dye, Membership Secretary.)

Seed Descriptions

Wild birdseed mixes attract ground-feeding birds such as mourning doves, juncos and sparrows:

- Gourmet Mix*: contains millet, sunflower, safflower and thistle.
- Shell Free Mix*: a waste-free mix of millet, sunflower chips, cracked corn, canary seed and peanut hearts.

Sunflower seed is the best all-around food, favored by a wide variety of birds:

- Black Oil Sunflower*: smaller than the striped, with thinner shell, more kernel and higher oil content; preferred 2:1 over other seed by most feeder birds.
- Sunflower Chips*: the heart of the seed, virtually no hull, no mess, and more meat per pound.
- Striped Sunflower*: many common feeder birds, such as cardinals, jays, grosbeaks, titmice, chickadees, sparrows and finches, as well as squirrels, like this larger, thicker shelled seed.

Specialty seeds:

- Nyjer (Thistle)*: especially good for goldfinches and pine siskins, this seed is rich in nourishing oil.
- White Millet*: favored by ground feeding birds such as juncos, towhees, buntings and sparrows.
- Safflower*: squirrels don't care for it, but many birds such as cardinals, grosbeaks and juncos do.
- Peanuts*: a favorite of woodpeckers, titmice, chickadees, nuthatches and blue jays.

SEEDS FOR A SONG ORDER FORM

Saturday, November 5, 2016

Roanoke Valley Bird Club Fund Raiser - In Cooperation with Northwest True Value Hardware, Hollins Store

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code _____

Email (we will only use it to let you know about next year's Seeds for a Song): _____

If you are not a club member, how did you learn about this sale? Please check one:

Friend _____ TV _____ Newspaper _____ Website/Internet _____ Store's Big Sign _____ Sign in Store Window _____

Description	Quantity	Size	Price/Each (includes tax)	Total
Gourmet Mix		40 lb.	21.20	
		20 lb.	10.90	
Shell Free Mix		25 lb.	15.90	
Black Oil Sunflower		50 lb.	23.00	
		25 lb.	12.10	
Sunflower Chips		50 lb.	69.75	
		25 lb.	36.65	
Striped Sunflower		50 lb.	36.30	
Nyjer (Thistle)		50 lb.	84.40	
		20 lb.	34.20	
		8 lb.	14.05	
Millet		50 lb.	16.85	
		25 lb.	10.25	
Peanuts in Shell		25 lb.	34.90	
Safflower		50 lb.	43.35	
		25 lb.	23.45	
High Energy Suet		1 Cake	1.20	
Ear Corn		7 lb.	10.55	
			Total	\$

Events, Projects and Club News



Bluebird photo by Maureen Eiger

BLUEBIRD TRAIL STATS 2016

This was not a banner year for our local bluebirds. The number of birds that made it to fledging was down from our average on all the trails—by 25% on the Parkway (BRP), 9% at Hanging Rock (HR), and 11% at Botetourt (BGSC). Looking back at the records I have (20 years for the BRP, 17 years for HR and 13 years for BGSC), there was only one year when we fledged fewer bluebirds on the BRP trail and two years with fewer on the HR trail. We did have unusual weather patterns again this year, with periods of extended rain followed by unusually hot, dry spells.

<i>Blue Ridge Parkway</i>			<i>Hanging Rock Golf Course</i>			<i>Botetourt Golf and Swim Club</i>		
Species	Eggs	Fledged	Species	Eggs	Fledged	Species	Eggs	Fledged
Bluebird	149	104	Bluebird	136	106	Bluebird	108	93
Tree Swallow	47	30	Tree Swallow	22	4	Tree Swallow	36	27
Carolina Chickadee	17	6	Tufted Titmouse	4	0	Carolina Chickadee	21	15
						House Wren	5	5

A big thank you goes out to all the trail monitors: Ann Allen, Andy and Patty Arrington, Barbara Bricks, Caryl Connolly, Eleanor Dye, Lindsay Eades, Bill and Nancy Fabian, Carolyn Hamlett, Dick Hendrix, Alice Hylton, Deborah Ingram, Ardy Kidd, Elizabeth Knoebber, Sissy Logan, Carole and Bill Massart, Bob and Sherri Miller, Rita and Jerry O'Brien, Toni Pepin, Nancy Reid, Judy Repass, Laurie and Scott Spangler, Bill and Anne Tucker, Jennifer Walker and Pam and Elly Wefel. Thanks also to Eunice Hudgins for making reminder phone calls to the monitors and to Dick Hendrix for making boxes for the trails and for the club to sell.

This year the Botetourt trail was managed by Bill Fabian, and Sissy Logan and Judy Repass managed the Hanging Rock trail. Ann and Ray Allen, Eleanor Dye and Pam and Elly Wefel helped me out with the Parkway trail. So let's have a round of applause for all those folks who made my life as trail chairman much easier in 2016!

This was my 18th and final year as chairman. I couldn't have done all the work on the trails for so long by myself. For many years my husband Tim and the Wefels actually co-chaired the trails with me, doing much of the day-to-day grunt work like weed eating around the boxes and moving them when necessary. So I thank all of them for the much-appreciated help. Many other people have helped with upkeep through the years, and of course with the monitoring, so thank you to all of them also. If I neglected to thank anyone this year, or in previous years, I sincerely apologize.

I hope future chairmen enjoy the job as much as I did. Thank you for allowing me to serve the club for such a long time. --Alyce Quinn, Bluebird Trail Chairman

RVBC PARTICIPATES IN ROANOKE'S GO FEST! OCT. 14th - 16th at the RIVERS EDGE SPORTS COMPLEX

This year for the first time, the Bird Club will have a booth at the Roanoke GO Outside Festival October 14-16. This free festival is an annual celebration of healthy, active outside recreation with nearly 125 outdoors activities and events spread out over three days. The bird club is offering 3 birding trips led by Kent Davis aimed at adults called Birding Roanoke's Greenway and 3 "Bird Sleuth Adventure" outings for children aged 7-14 led by Mary Harshfeld. We'll also have a host of birding materials available and activities at our booth, still in the planning stage. For our club's event schedule see the Oct 15th and 16th dates at www.roanokegofest.com/schedule/ For general information visit www.roanokegofest.com.

We still need volunteers willing to take at least a 2 hours shift at our booth and to help with planning. This will be fun and you will definitely want to check out the entire amazing festival while you are there. To volunteer or for more information about the Club's GO Fest activities please email Maxine Fraade at maxinefr@aol.com.

There's free parking available and the coordinator assured me that for those volunteers who find it hard to walk to our site they'll be a golf cart available. The festival takes place at the Rivers Edge Sports Complex, 210 Reserve Ave, Roanoke.

SEEDS FOR A SONG SEED SALE – SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5th

Our club's main fundraiser, Seeds for a Song, will be held November 5 at the Northwest Hardware store in Hollins. We can use all kinds of help at the sale, so if you can spare some time that morning, please contact Alyce Quinn at twoquinns@yahoo.com or 540-719-0109.

BUY SOME SEED at the SALE SEED FOR REHAB BIRDS.

Injured adult birds come in all fall and winter and need seeds and other foods to recover. Please buy a small bag of millet, nyger, shelled sunflower chips (bluebirds actually eat them) sunflower seeds or suet cakes and help support the club and rehab birds too. Just put in a separate/additional seed sale order form with Help Wild Birds and your name on the form. You can help the club raise some money and save a bird too! Thank You. Maureen Eiger

SIGHTINGS

CLUB MEMBER SIGHTINGS:

- ✓ Barb Bricks saw a young Pileated Woodpecker with its parents in Roanoke County.
- ✓ Ed and Joan Kinser counted 1,757 Nighthawks on Tinsley Road from Aug. thru Sept. 12th and Pine Siskin.
- ✓ Kent Davis saw Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins at Woodpecker Ridge.
- ✓ Bill Farmer saw a Bald Eagle at Smith Mountain Lake State Park.
- ✓ Nathan Anderson saw Bald Eagles and a pair of Osprey while he was visiting Chincoteague.
- ✓ Barry Whitt saw a Red-Shouldered Hawk.
- ✓ Bill Fabian saw a Scarlet Tanager at his home.
- ✓ Maureen Eiger had a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in her yard for several days.
- ✓ Mary Lou and Sid Barritt saw two Greater Shearwaters at Ocracoke.
- ✓ Eileen Rowan saw a pair of Ravens in Christiansburg.
- ✓ Lourdes Paige saw a Great Egret near the Colorado Bridge in Salem.



(Photo by Sissy Logan at Greenfield)

FIELD TRIP SIGHTINGS:

9/10 – Woodpecker Ridge – An enthusiastic group joined Barry Kinzie who expressed his thanks for all the help at Woodpecker Ridge. Volunteers were treated to red-breasted nuthatches that are currently traveling through the valley.

9/14 – Greenfield Lake – Barry and Carol Whitt lead our first Second Wednesday Walk of the year around Greenfield Lake. We even had a guest from California! Although construction restricted some of their walking, the trail around the lake produced 40 species including good looks at wood ducks, blue-winged teal, pied billed grebe, eastern kingbird and warbling vireo.

WELCOME NEW RVBC MEMBERS: *Kathy Sink, Joe & Amy Dupuis, and Sharon Rippee*

BIRD TIP - Planting Kousa Dogwoods



kousas. Kousa seeds are easy to collect and plant. There are often seedlings under any of the trees old enough to bear fruit. - Ed Kinser (photo of Cape May warbler is by Joanie Kinser).

Dogwood trees are widely known for their delicate beauty, and the kousa variety adds a toughness that makes this species an excellent choice for home landscapes and urban areas. It blooms May–June, with distinctive white bracts surrounding small, greenish-yellow flowers. Other attributes are: it is a good choice for planting near utility lines, buildings or walls, it has dark green leaves that are 2–4" long and elliptic-ovate in shape and the trees have a beautiful form with horizontal branching and grow in a rounded shape. Even though it is a nonnative, it produces pinkish-red to red fruit that attracts songbirds. The fruits on our kousa dogwoods are heavy and ripe. The Cape May warblers seem to be camping out in the dogwoods and other birds seem to be feasting, too. Just this week we've had rose-breasted grosbeaks and orioles, along with robins, bluebirds, house finches, and scarlet tanagers. If you are into planting fruit-bearing trees for the birds, you might consider

A Bird Word – What are “whiskers”? Birds which catch insects in flight, such as flycatchers, also often have “whiskers,” which are actually modified feathers, at the corners of the mouth. These whiskers effectively widen the mouth opening, allowing more effective capture of prey.

“August” the Wood Duck (part 2)

- by Maureen Eiger, State & Federally Permitted Bird Rehabber



Last month I wrote about how “August” the wood duck came into rehab because she was injured, caught in fishing line on the Roanoke River. Now that August had successfully “grown up” I took her to RVBC member Carol Whiteside’s home to be released back into the wild in her pond. Carol had seen wood ducks there before. In fact there was a mother woodie and her family already there. This is the rest of the story of August’s adventures and her attempt at making new friends, narrated through Carol’s emails. It is nice to see that rehabbing injured wild birds does give them a second chance at life. So here is what happened...enjoy! - Maureen



8/7/16 - August and the group are happy this morning! Mom still keeps August about ten feet from the group but they travel the pond together foraging and exploring. So glad August is doing well, thanks to you for saving her life! - Carol

8/7/16 - Later today August made a friend! Two wood ducks flew in and as one flew out. August also took flight to follow across the pond but stopped before gaining altitude. The other duck stayed and they became friends swimming around the pond side by side.

8/8/16 - August and her friend were out and about early this morning. It's become quite comical to see Mom still a little worried about August, but pays no attention to her friend. So, August leads the party of seven - Mom,

five ducklings, and her friend all around the pond. Very often August mingles among the ducklings until Mom puts an end to the fun and they all follow the leader, August, who is motivated by Mom to keep moving. At times they disappear, I assume into the bushes on the ridge for R&R. Today was a great duck day being over-cast and drizzly; they were all over the pond having a great time with August confidentially leading the way!

8/11/16 - Yesterday, a group of five molting wood ducks joined the six residents (including August) of Bray Ridge pond. They had a great time socializing. I scattered corn on the dock August had no problem flying up for the tasty treats

8/12/16 - Today, we witnessed August crossing our dam; she had been to the overflow creek or perhaps to the smaller pond below ours, all by herself! Her confidence and maturity is remarkable.

Since wood ducks are quite shy and reclusive, I feel fortunate to observe these episodes from the comfort of our porch, being such a short distance from our pond.

8/14/16 - Today there were no visiting ducks, just Mom and her five ducklings, so August developed a game. She purposely swims with the ducklings so Mom will chase her in flight. August is trying out her wings from shore to shore! As soon as Mom gets her across the pond, then August follows back into the middle of the pack. Sometimes Mom gives up



and they all swim in a bunch, other times the flying game becomes like a tennis match, back and forth. They are all quite at home here and seem to have fun in all their antics.

8/22/16 - I thought August had gone, just didn't see her for several days, although once I spotted her at the smaller pond below us having a great time by herself.

9/6/16 - Hi Maureen, Much to my surprise, August came back home today around noon! She brought a dozen of her nearest and dearest friends. Finally, the pond has become colorful with six male wood ducks including three in their finest nuptial molt. I am now convinced that August is a developing female. -Carol



Photos -Upper left taken by Maureen Eiger when August first came in and at upper right of Carol Whiteside with August in her crate and about to be released. All other photos courtesy of Carol Whiteside.



Your dues are due. Please renew or this will be your last newsletter.

Use this form below and mail it or hand your payment and information to Eleanor Dye at the October RVBC meeting. Thank you!

Roanoke Valley Bird Club
c/o Eleanor Dye
P.O. Box 74
Vinton, Virginia 24179

2017 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