Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Next Meeting:
November 9, 7:00 pm
Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility

Celebrating
69 Years of Birding
1957-2026
"Leave Only Footprints"

www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com | RVBC Newsletter | November 2026



Photographer
Kent Davis

Drew's Bird of the Month

Brown Creeper *Certhia americana*

Brown Creepers are tiny woodland birds with an affinity for the biggest trees they can find. Look for these little, long-tailed scraps of brown and white spiraling up stout trunks and main branches, sometimes passing downward-facing nuthatches along the way. They probe into crevices and pick at loose bark with their slender, downcurved bills, and build their hammock-shaped nests behind peeling flakes of bark. Their piercing calls can make it much easier to find this hard-to-see but common species. The naturalist W.M. Tyler, writing in 1948, captured this species' energy and fragility in a memorable description, "The Brown Creeper, as he hitches along the bole of a tree, looks like a fragment of detached bark that is defying the law of gravitation by moving upward over the trunk, and as he flies off to another tree he resembles a little dry leaf blown about by the wind." (More on page 3.)

~The Cornell Lab

Welcome New Members!



Tom Markwood
Sarah Rourke
Sylvia Powell
Katie Lintz & Family
Danielle Fradet
Doug Kidd & Family

Next meeting:

Monday, November 9, 7:00 PM.

Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs facility
3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24018

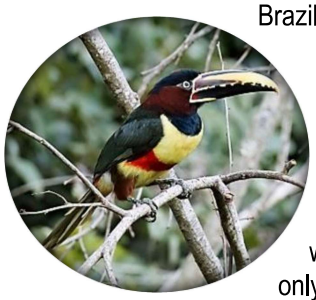
Featured program:

Birding in Brazil

with Jeff Stacey

World Traveler, Photographer, Bird Enthusiast

Jeff Stacey will speak to us about his birding experiences during several visits to Brazil. He says that Brazil has become his favorite place to visit, especially for the birds - *mostly because* of the birds. He adds that it is a completely different experience than birding in the U.S. In addition to the birds (and mammals), the food, the scenery, and especially Guarana (a local soda) are also memorable. His presentation will cover the Atlantic Forest, South Pantanal, southern Amazonia, and will feature lots of beautiful bird photos that many of us can only dream about seeing in the wild.



Jeff accidentally became a birder while trying to learn how to become a better photographer. He quickly noticed just how many kinds of birds there were in his home state of Michigan and decided to try to catalog as many of them as possible. What started in a northern suburb of Detroit has now become a national and international passion for him. Jeff has served as Field Trip Chairman for the Audubon Club of Oakland County for many years. He comes to us fresh off another Brazilian birding trip exploring northern Amazonia.

Reminder: Please consider bringing a snack to share, or a small drawing gift for the meeting, Thank you!

Veterans, thank you for your service.

Last Reminder:

Dues Are Due!

Memberships expired on August 31
Individual $15, Family $25, Student No Charge
(Always include membership form on last page)
*Mail checks to:
Roanoke Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 20405, Roanoke, VA 24018
*Or bring to the November 9, meeting
*Or online: www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com

Contact Us!

Roanoke Valley Bird Club

P.O. Box 20405
Roanoke, Virginia 24018
Nonprofit 501(c) (3)

Email: **rvbc2015@outlook.com**
www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com

2026 Board of Directors

Officers:

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Vice President, programs
David Frye
Vice President, memberships
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Karen Frye
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Bluebird Trails **Carol Whiteside**
Field Trips **David Frye**
Meeting Refreshments **Mary Lou Barritt**
Newsletter Editor **Carol Whiteside**
RVBC/BRWS Annual Picnic **Carol Whiteside**
Web Manager: **Andrea Boone**

The RVBC Newsletter is published monthly **September through May** with the deadline for each issue on the **20th of the month** prior to that publication. Links should be copy/paste into your browser. **Photography is provided by membership with member names in bold type.** Photos and articles are gladly accepted for publication as room allows (may be edited) and sent electronically in JPEG or word docx.

Thank you!
Carol Whiteside
Newsletter Editor
540.774.2143
whitesidemules@yahoo.com



President's Musings

President Drew Daniels
ddaniels2627@cox.net
540.314.6069

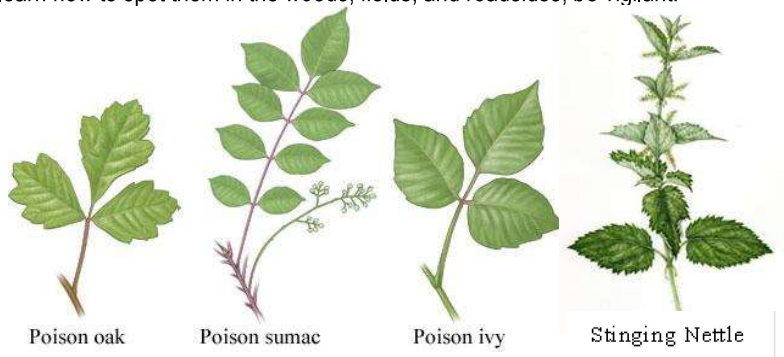
Back in the late 1950's when I started birding, I remember how few accessories I had. The all-encompassing, Herbert Zim *Pocket Guide to Birds*, which fit in my back pocket, completed my desire to find and identify birds. There were no manufactured bird feeders or suet feeders. I spent hours with wood scraps building feeders. The meat cutter at Safeway would save beef tallow for me that I would hang up until I found that Starlings would tear it out of the trees. I found a piece of hardware cloth and made a pocket to hold the tallow; it worked well. With my newspaper money I bought seed from the farm supply store. My yard was prepared and I was in business. Then I was ready to branch out into the woods. I put on my new Sears & Roebuck boots, grabbed my field guide and notepad, and was off. Notice, I didn't have a pair of binoculars, simply eyesight! That's how I started birding.

Now fast forward sixty-eight years and look what birders just starting out have at their fingertips. There are cell phones that connect to eBird, Merlin, and the Macauley Library, which can be accessed for identification, sounds, and hotspots where birds have been seen. Big business has capitalized on the boom in birding and offers birders a plethora of feeders, bird houses, seed mixtures for different species, binoculars of all different sizes and strengths, clothing, and wow-boots! My, how things have changed over the years! We are very fortunate that we lived during this time and can look back and reminisce on what was and what is.

Drew's Birding Tip of the Month:

Know your Surroundings

Knowing your Surroundings is very simple - just common sense. Can you identify Poison Ivy and Oak, Poison Sumac, Stinging Nettle? These are all plants that you will become intimately involved with once you return home from birding; the effects will remain with you for days. Another is ticks. Please make sure you check yourself for ticks when you get home. Folding your pant legs inside your socks will help keep ticks from getting under your pants to skin. You can also spray your boots and pant legs, or have your clothes treated. Identify them all; learn how to spot them in the woods, fields, and roadsides; be vigilant!



Drew's Bird of the Month

Brown Creeper

Certhia americana

"Status: Uncommon spring and fall transient and winter resident.."
~Barry Kinzie's *Birds and Birding of the Roanoke Valley*



Ed Kile, Photographer

Brown Creepers are well camouflaged and inconspicuous against tree bark in a shady forest, but if you keep your eyes peeled for movement, you may find a creeper zigzagging upward as it gleans insects from the trunk, or see the small shape of one dropping from high on a trunk to the base of a close tree.

Though they eat mostly insects, in winter Brown Creepers will eat suet and peanut butter, and occasionally sunflower seeds, pine seeds, grass seeds, and corn. By eating a single spider, a creeper gains enough energy to climb nearly 200 feet vertically. You're more likely to see them if there are large, old trees nearby.

The Brown Creeper builds a hammock-like nest behind a loosened flap of bark on a dead or dying tree. It wasn't until 1879 that naturalists discovered this unique nesting strategy. Sometimes creepers build nests in unusual places, such as behind window shutters, in or under roofs, inside fenceposts, or inside concrete blocks. One brought up a family in a specially constructed box made of pieces of Douglas-fir bark.

Once learned, their high, insistent call note can alert you to the presence of these birds. Look for Brown Creepers in mature woods, if possible, though you can also find them in parks and suburban areas in the winter. *~The Cornell Lab*



Kent Davis, Photographer



Calendar of Events

Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Dave Frye, Vice President Programs, Field Trip Chairman, 248-459-6783

American kestrel, Photographer **Garland Kitts**



Note: if inclement weather necessitates a cancellation, an e-mail notification will be sent. You may also call or text the leader. Please do not call any of the trip leaders after 8 pm. the night before the field trip, in consideration of having to get up early the next day to lead the field trip. ***Morning Field Trips begin at 8:00 am. and December through March begin at 9:00 am.. unless otherwise announced*** *Thank you!*

November 2026

Hawk Watching – Harveys Knob Overlook, milepost 95.3 on the Blue Ridge Parkway

From September through November, the Roanoke Valley Bird Club with the Lynchburg Bird Club collect data at Harveys Knob hawk watching and report results to the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMA). 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. You are welcome to show up any day, arrive and leave when you like, and even though you may feel you might not be ready to ID each hawk as it passes, extra eyes are ***always*** needed and appreciated!

07 **Bent Mountain Center, Saturday 8:30 am. Leader: Robin Austin (540-676-0951)** Join us for an autumn morning of birding on Bent Mountain. Robin will escort the group to several birdy areas in and around the Bent Mountain Center (formerly Bent Mountain Elementary School) and walk the surrounding areas. The walk is level, but wear waterproof shoes as we will skirt the grassy roadside. Please note the specific start time, 8:30 am, being aware of the time change from daylight saving time. **Directions: Bent Mountain Community Center, 10148 Tinsley Lane, Bent Mountain, VA 24059.**

09 **Membership Meeting, Monday 7:00 pm.** Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs, 3640 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA 24018. Program**: Birding in Brazil** Speaker: **Jeff Stacey, World Traveler, Photographer, Bird Enthusiast** (Details on page 2).

11 **Second Wednesday Midweek Walk, Botetourt Center at Greenfield, 8:30 am. Leader: David Frye (248-459-6783)** Join us for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake and possibly to the pond beyond. The walk will be mostly flat for about 1 mile each way. Bring your spotting scope if you have one. **Directions: Greenfield Education and Training Center, 57 S Center Drive, Daleville, VA 24083** Take Exit 150B on 1-81 and follow signs to Route 220N toward Daleville. Go 3.5 miles and turn left at the entrance onto International Parkway and the Greenfield Education and Training Center, across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation. Park in the second lot on right.

28 **Starkey Wetlands Bird Walk, Saturday, 8:00 am. Leader: David Frye (248-459-6783) This trip would be an excellent local trip for new birders!** We will visit a trail that leads from the back of the South County Library facility going across a boardwalk that traverses a cattail marsh. We will continue on to an adjoining sports field complex and walk the woodsy perimeter edges there. **Directions: South County Library, 6303 Merriman Road, Roanoke, VA 24018.** We will meet in the parking area on the east side of the South County Library,

December 2026 A Quick Look Ahead

09 Garst Mill Park Bird Walk, Wednesday 9:00 am. Leader: David Frye (248-459-6783)
14 Membership Meeting, Monday 7:00 pm. "Members Share Night of photos, videos, and food!"
19 Annual RVBC Christmas Bird Count, Saturday. Compiler: Bill Hunley (540-467-3477)
27 Sewage Treatment Plant, Sunday, 9:00 am. Leader: Kent Davis (540-355-6388)

Photographer Kent Davis ▼

November 1, 2026
Happy 100th Birthday!
Eunice Hudgins

Eunice now lives near her son, Jim, in Colorado. She still enjoys **RVBC Lifetime Membership** by keeping updated through the *RVBC Newsletter* and her many birding friends.

You are encouraged to send Eunice a fun celebration card:
Eunice Hudgins c/o Jim Godfrey
1005 Big Valley Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80919



October Highlights

October Meeting Notes

Monday, October 12, 2026

Secretary Karen Frye reports there were 70 present including members and 5 guests. Dave introduced the night's guest speaker, Kacie Amstutz, Assistant Director, Blue Ridge Land Conservancy (BRLC). She spoke on conserving natural landscapes and other work of Blue Ridge Land Conservancy. Kacie provided some insight into their conservation success history. She is also hoping to pair with RVBC for grants through Conservation for the Birds from Cornell University. The grants require a partnership with a local group to help with surveys on properties. Virginia offers a land conservation tax credit for property owners. BRLC wants input from the bird club regarding birds to prioritize for study and protection. A suggestion was made for grassland birds. Expect more interaction with the club from BRLC. The BRLC is going to Ecuador in August 2027 for 15 days. Our club members are invited to join. The trip starts in Qito and travels across the Andes to the Pacific coast.

Nominating Committee Chairman Robin Austin gave the Nominating Committee report and presented the following slate of officers and directors up for election during the November meeting:

Officers:

President: **Drew Daniels**
Vice President of Programs: **David Frye**
Vice President of Membership: **Brenda Johnson**
Secretary: **Karen Frye**
Treasurer: **Carol Whitt**

Directors:

Nathan Anderson, Robin Austin,
Jessica Arnold Mary Lou Barritt,
Betty Burke, Linda Cory,
Maxine Fraade, Sissy Logan

September ~ October Field Trip Reports



September 11-13, Virginia Society of Ornithology Chincoteague Annual Field Trip is an annual birding weekend hosted in 2026 on Virginia's Eastern Shore, which featured guided coastal bird walks, boat trips, and species tallies.

Katherine Clemo, Photographer ►

September 26, Falling Creek Park, Leader: Kirk Gardner. Under clear skies and temperatures in the upper 40s, 15 members of the Lynchburg and Roanoke Valley Bird Clubs logged 42 species along 1.74 miles of brushy edge and mature woodland at Falling Creek Park. The morning's highlights were Cape May Warblers, four Magnolia Warblers, and an immature Black-throated Blue Warbler.



October 10, Montvale Park, Leader: Kirk Gardner. This joint field trip with 13 members of the Roanoke Valley and Lynchburg Bird Clubs recorded 42 species through a slightly drizzly 1.2 miles at Montvale Park. The walk traversed brushy edge habitat and mature woods before making a creek crossing into a wetland section, yielding a rich mix of late insectivores and incoming winter arrivals. The standout sighting of the morning was a drab Orange-crowned Warbler, which gave the group extended views just before ending their walk. Other high points included good looks at a Tennessee Warbler, a Lincoln's Sparrow, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (our first of the autumn/winter season?), a Least Flycatcher, and response calls from an Eastern Screech Owl that, apparently, did not detect that Kirk's owl call was not a real owl.

Montvale Park Wetlands, Dave Frye, Photographer ►

October 14, Oak Grove Park, Leader: Dave Frye. A small group of birders made good use of a crisp, sunny morning at this local park. The park is fairly small but features access to a nice trail that circles away into the woods at the back of the grounds. The group logged 16 species with American Crows, White-breasted Nuthatches, and Blue Jays dominating the scene. One surprise was a Red-breasted Nuthatch that was registered by Merlin, but otherwise stayed out of sight.

Roanoke Valley Bird Club
2027 Calendar

We are excited to offer the Roanoke Valley Bird Club 2027 Calendar featuring 24 amazing photos taken by and voted on by our own members. It is our 32nd year and is still offered for only $16. We accept cash, check, or credit card. Calendars may be ordered or purchased in three convenient ways:

1. **In person** at the RVBC meetings on November 9, and December 14. Other dates and locations will be announced later.

2. **Online** at http://roanokevalleybirdclub.com/ and click on "Buy a Calendar" link.

3. **Mail** with check and the completed form below to:
   RVBC, PO Box 20405, Roanoke VA 24018
   If you are ordering more than four calendars, please email us at RVBC2015@outlook.com to get a more accurate and lower shipping cost.



2027 cover photo
Great Crested Flycatcher by **Barbara Kyle**

2027 Calendar Order Form

R.V.B.C., P.O. Box 20405, Roanoke, VA 24018



# of Calendars _____ X $16.00 if picking up = $_____

# of Calendars _____ X $19.50 if shipping = $ _____

If being mailed, send calendars to:

Name

Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone Email

West Coast Hummingbird Travels East ~ Ed Kinser



Photographers:

Ed Kinser ▲

Garland Kitts ▼

A Selasphorus hummingbird was identified October 20, 2026, on Fortune Ridge in Bent Mountain, Virginia. A hummingbird had been seen feeding on honeysuckle for four consecutive days prior to this date, but it was not observed closely enough for identification. This bird shows the classic rufous color associated with the Selasphorus hummingbirds. Clear photos have been taken by several individuals.

Because the bird is either a female or young of the year, it can only be identified to genus. It is likely a Rufous Hummingbird, since that is the most commonly seen species in the East, occurring rarely but predictably; however, female and young Allen's Hummingbirds cannot be separated from the Rufous except by measurement of the tail feathers. Allen's Hummingbirds have rarely been reported in the East. Both the Rufous and Allen's Hummingbirds are typically found in the Rockies and west to the coast. A few Rufous Hummingbirds winter along the Gulf Coast.

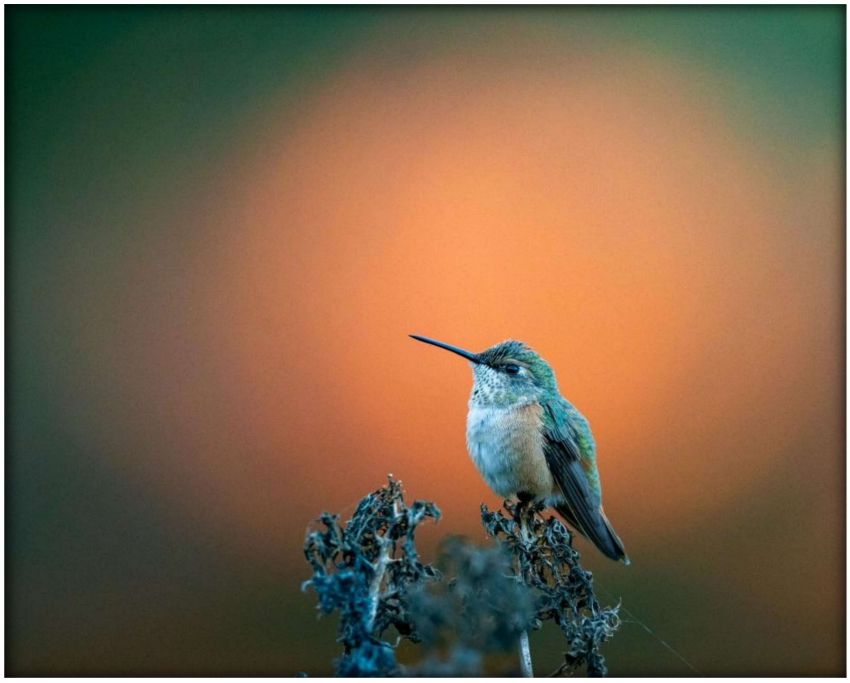
The bird has only been seen at a nectar feeder once as of this writing (October 29, 2026). It has been feeding from pineapple sage, lion's mane, zinnias, Mexican sunflower, native honeysuckle and butterfly bush. It has also been seen to seemingly fly-catch among the leaves of black birch and Japanese maple. (continued)







Selasphorus (Rufous?) Hummingbird



◄ ▲
Photographer:
Glen Mitchell

Photographer:
Kent Davis
▼





Roanoke Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 20405
Roanoke, VA 24018

Happy Thanksgiving

Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Memberships expire on August 31, each year

2027
(Current Year)

Please print

Name(s) _____

_____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

*Email _____

*Required to receive newsletters and communications

Annual Dues are as follows:

- ☐ Individual $15
- ☐ Family $25
- ☐ Student under 18 - No Charge

Additional Contribution $_____

Adopt a Bluebird $_____

Total Payment $_____

Make check payable to:
Roanoke Valley Bird Club

Mail To:
Roanoke Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 20405
Roanoke, VA 24018

www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com