



# May '18 Newsletter

Celebrating 61 Years of Birding  
1957-2018

## NEXT MEETING

Monday, May 14th at 7PM  
Grandin Court Baptist Church  
2660 Brambleton Ave. Roanoke, VA 24015

(Join fellow club members for dinner at 5:30PM at Brambleton Deli; 3655 Brambleton Ave.)

## BIRDING MAGEE MARSH

Long-time club members, Sid and Mary Lou Barritt, will talk about the wonders of Magee Marsh where you can experience warblers and other species close-up. This will be a great refresher for the upcoming warbler season. Mary Lou is an excellent bird photographer and her photos can be seen in our annual bird calendars.

Magee Marsh, situated on the southern shore of Lake Erie, is a prime stop-over for migrating passerines, especially warblers. Known as an unforgettable spectacle of large songbird concentrations preparing to migrate across the great lake to their breeding grounds in the north. Many birders visit the Marsh year after year as well as visiting the Canadian side (Point Pelee) where the birds first meet land after their migration.



## **UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS**

(For any additional information please contact Linda Cory at 540-580-5214 or RVBC2015@outlook.com)

### **MAY 6th, SUNDAY, 7:30am - LITTLE SPRING DAY AT FINCA ALOHA**

If you're not birded out from Big Spring Day, join Tim and Alyce Quinn (312-6844) starting at 7:30 AM at their house in Burnt Chimney for a morning of looking for spring migrants and resident birds. They have a variety of habitats including woodland trails, a pond, scrub and open fields, and their property list includes over 130 species. Wear sturdy shoes as the footing is rather uneven. If you don't want to hike, there's a big deck and lots of chairs where you can relax and do some stationary birding. If you'd like to stay for lunch, bring a dish to share. Keep an eye out for Eurasian Collared Doves as you pass the Burnt Chimney Elementary School on your way.

Directions: The Quinns' address is 681 Edgewood Farm Lane, Wirtz, VA.

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. Whichever way you come, once you are on Rt. 670, go one 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, DON'T TURN. Instead you want to go straight. This is the beginning of their driveway, and there is a bluebird box here with their house number on it on the right of the driveway, and several old trailers on the left. You can't see the house from here, but go a quarter mile down the driveway and you're there. For those that want to carpool from Roanoke, call Linda Cory at 580-5214

### **MAY 9th, WEDNESDAY, 8am - 2nd WED. BIRD WALK at GREENFIELD**

Join co-leaders: Barry Whitt (309-4353) and Kent Davis (355-6388) for a walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. Bring your spotting scopes! We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search for waterfowl and songbirds. The walk will be mostly flat walk of about 2 miles. We will also cover the grassy area overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. For those that want to stay afterwards, we can lunch at Ballast Point Brewery overlooking the lake. Our next group trip to this location will be in September, but you are all encouraged to visit the lake over the summer.

Directions: Exit at 150B on I-81 and follow signs to 220 North. Go about four miles and take a left at the entrance to the Greenfield Education and Training Center (across from the entrance to Ashley Plantation).

**MAY 12th, SATURDAY, 7:30am – WARBLER ROAD BIRD TRIP**

Meet leaders Tim and Alyce Quinn (312-6844) next to the Bojangles at Botetourt Commons in Daleville. We will bird a series of forest service roads between the Blue Ridge Parkway and Arcadia in search of warblers and other neotropical migrants. This trip usually lasts into the afternoon so bring drinks, snacks and a lunch. Dress in layers and be prepared to carpool as pull-offs are limited.

Directions: Exit at 150B on I-81 and follow signs to 220 North. Go about one mile and take a left on Commons PKY (formerly Wesley Rd) and then a right on Kingston Rd into the Botetourt Commons shopping center and park at Bojangles.

**MAY 26th, SATURDAY, 7AM – BLAND COUNTY BIRDING AND FALLS OF THE DISMAL**

This all-day trip will be led by Butch and Betty Kelly (384-7429) who will be looking for Golden-winged Warblers and Loggerhead Shrike. Other target birds will be White-eyed Vireo, Louisiana Waterthrush and a variety of neo-tropicals. The terrain will include open forest, pastoral settings and a known breeding habitat for Shrikes and Golden-winged Warblers. We may be walking through briars and damp conditions, so wear suitable clothing and shoes. We will plan to picnic at the Falls of the Dismal on county route 671.

Directions: Meet at 7AM at the Orange Market at Hanging Rock (1823 Thompson Memorial Dr, Roanoke, VA).

**JUNE 9th, SATURDAY, 7AM - MOUNT ROGERS TO WHITE TOP**

Join Dr. Carol Croy, Forest Wildlife Biologist with the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests for a full day of birding in the Mount Rogers and White Top Mountain area. Mount Rogers is known for being the highest peak in the state of Virginia at 5,728 feet. Although we won't be hiking to the top, we will be visiting White Top Mountain which is known as the highest roadway in the state, over 5,000 feet. This area includes forests, open meadows and riparian habitat. We hope to see several species of warblers including: Canada, prairie, hooded, yellow-throated, black-and-white and Kentucky. Other species to look for are vesper sparrows, alder flycatchers and juncos that nest there in the summer. . Walking will be 1-2 miles, but the ground may be rocky, so wear sturdy shoes. Dress in layers and bring rain gear, just in case. We will stop at the ranger's station to see the displays and also have access to indoor plumbing. Bring a packed lunch and something to drink.

Directions: Meet at 7AM at the Salem Walmart recycle bins in the front/left parking lot at 1851 West Main Street.

**AUGUST 4th, SATURDAY, 8:30AM - ANNUAL SUMMER OPEN HOUSE AT THE AUSTIN'S ON BENT MOUNTAIN**

Join Robin and Allen Austin (929- 5222) at 8:30 AM for a walk around their property. Wear sturdy shoes for easy to moderate walking. At noon, we will have lunch with the hummingbirds that come to their numerous feeders - an amazing sight. Bring a dish to share and ride with a friend if you can as parking is limited.

Directions: From Cave Spring Corner (419/Electric Rd. and US 221/Bent Mountain Road), go south on US 221 for 10 miles to Bent Mountain. Turn right at Bent Mountain Bistro (Rt 612) and then left onto Tinsley Lane. In ¾ miles, turn right on Bottom Creek Rd and the Austin's are 1 mile on the left. The address is 10513 Bottom Creek Road, Bent Mountain, VA.

## **SIGHTINGS**

3/31 Woodcock Walk on Bent Mountain - For 14 club members, the evening was cold and windy but we did get a fleeting glimpse of one flying in and another was heard briefly. The walk prior around the Bent Mountain Community Center produced 25 species with great looks at Brown Thrasher, Tree Swallow, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Meadowlark and Chipping and Savannah Sparrow. The final treat was a full moon rising which was the second "blue" moon this year.

4/11 Second Wednesday Walk at Greenfield - 13 club members had a great day along the lake trail with 51 species seen. Highlights were Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks, Red-breasted Merganser, Osprey, the trifecta of Swallows (Tree, Barn and Northern Rough-winged), Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Northern Waterthrush, Swamp Sparrow and the Belted Kingfisher.

4/14 Claytor Nature Center - 25 bird watchers enjoyed a beautiful sunny day with 35 species seen. Highlights were: Blue-headed Vireo, Louisiana Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green Warbler and Eastern Meadowlark. Three of the party saw a Bald Eagle and Barn Swallow not far from the nature center.



## CLUB NEWS

### **Big Spring Day - Saturday, May 5, 2018**

Our Big Spring Day bird count is scheduled around late April and early May to coincide with the annual peak of bird activity. Migrating birds are passing through on their way north. Local birds are in the midst of breeding which makes them more active, vocal and easier to observe in their bright spring plumages.

Saturday, May 5th will be the 48th Big Spring Day bird count co-hosted by the Lynchburg and Roanoke Valley Bird Clubs. We will be out that day, rain or shine, to count birds in a 15-mile diameter circle centered on the Big Spring in the Peaks of Otter picnic area. Teams will count birds on their assigned routes all morning and meet at noon at the Peaks of Otter picnic area for the tally-up. Bring your picnic lunch and something to drink. After lunch, teams may go back and finish their territory, search for a reported rarity or just call it a day and head home. Jim Elder, the Lynchburg Coordinator, will compile and distribute the final report by email so please make sure he has your email address.

Please join us for a fun day of birding. It's an opportunity to meet new birders, discover new birding territories and, maybe, see a bird you have never seen before. We always hope to surpass the 143 species recorded in 1977!

To participate, contact Barry Whitt at 540-309-4353 or Carol Whitt at 540-632-6523 or you may email us at 540carolc@gmail.com . We will assign everyone to their territories and provide all of the information you will need for the day. If you participated in a team last year, your party leader will contact you in April to establish a meeting time and place.

### **VSO Annual meeting, May 18-20, 2018 in Harrisonburg, VA**

Start making plans to attend the 2018 Virginia Society of Ornithology Annual Meeting! This year's meeting and field trip locations will provide great opportunities to see unique high elevation breeding species AND help support the Second Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas (VABBA2). Saturday field trips will focus on Rockingham and Highland county and Sunday field trips will go to local birding. Register early by visiting <http://www.viriniabirds.org/events/annual-meeting/> and book your hotel room early to be assured of the special conference rates at the Hotel Madison.

**REMINDER THERE WILL BE NO MONTHLY MEETINGS DURING THE MONTHS OF JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST.** Newsletters will also resume in September. Happy birding over the summer!



## **YOUTH BIRDING**

Your Help Is Needed - Our Youth Birding Group is in need of adult volunteers. If interested, please email us at [RVBC2015@outlook.com](mailto:RVBC2015@outlook.com) or call Mary Harshfield at 309-8277.

### **Save the Date: Annual RVBC Club Picnic, August 11th**

We will be joining the Blue Ridge Wildflower Club for a picnic on Saturday, August 11th from 4pm to 6pm. The picnic will be at the Roanoke Church of Christ at 2606 Brambleton Avenue in Roanoke. As tradition has it, our club is providing fried chicken and the Wildflower Club is providing barbecue. Please bring your favorite side dish or dessert to share. Water and soft drinks will also be provided or you can bring your favorite non-alcoholic beverage. A reminder email will be sent out closer to the time of the picnic. See you there!

### **SUMMER VSO TRIP TO SOUTH BOSTON, June 15-17**

The Virginia Society of Ornithology is visiting a new exciting location in central Virginia. Attendance is free, but pre-registration is required by contacting Meredith Bell at [merandlee@gmail.com](mailto:merandlee@gmail.com) or 804-824-4958. Headquarters will be the Quality Inn (2001 Seymour Dr, South Boston). Rooms include a microwave, refrigerator, coffee and complimentary breakfast in the motel café. Reserve your room by May 15th to get the group rate by calling 434-572-4311. For more information, visit <http://www.virginiabirds.org/events/field-trip-announcements/06152018-south-boston>



## Bird of the Month

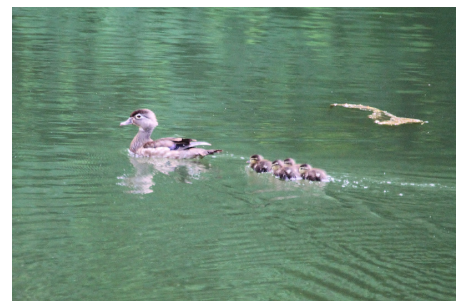
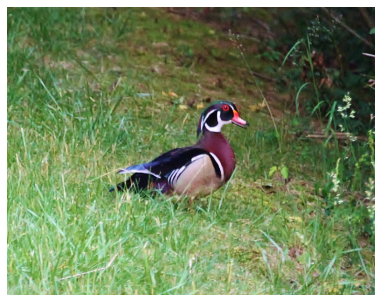
(For ALL members – Please consider writing a Bird of the Month article and send it to RVBC2015@outlook.com. Thank you!)

### Wood Duck

For those that went on the March field trip to Locher Tract led by Bill Hunley, they saw an amazing site of 38 Wood Ducks, mostly male. Likewise, Lourdes Page reported 26 of them on her New Year's Day bird list from Jekyll Island. Since the 1980's, Carol Whiteside has documented and provided a home on her fresh-water pond for waterfowl to raise their young including Wood Ducks. Through the years her wild Wood Duck population has grown to a 1-2 dozen with the larger numbers being seen in the mornings and evenings, except in winter when the water is frozen. Being frequent flyers, they are extremely shy and often hike the arboreal banks for the safety of the woods especially during mid-day in summertime; it's always a treat to see them in or out of the water. Easily observed from her house, Carol provides corn daily on the dock.

Known to have every color in it's feathers, the Wood Duck is one of the more brilliantly adorned ducks including its bright red eyes. Some years back, Jim Ayers and I were birding the Roanoke River near Roanoke Memorial and spotted a raft of Wood Ducks, but one of them looked like "a Wood Duck on steroids". I thought it was interesting that the Mandarin Duck was prone to flock with the Wood Ducks as it is a close genetic relative (closer than any US duck). It is an accidental to the US and this one had probably escaped from a zoo. Our native Wood Duck has also been sighted in Europe on rare occasion (maybe also escaped from a zoo!).

The Wood Duck is found throughout the US, living year-round on all coasts. It also summers in Canada and can be found in Mexico and Jamaica. It is also found year-round in Roanoke and nests here regularly. They readily nest in boxes if made to their specifications. For more information on that, visit [https://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Wildlife/duck\\_box\\_plans.ashx](https://www.nwf.org/~media/PDFs/Wildlife/duck_box_plans.ashx) .



### Wood Duck Facts:

- ✓ The eye of the Wood Duck is the largest of any waterfowl giving it the ability to navigate in low light.
- ✓ Wood ducks are the only North American waterfowl known to regularly raise two broods in one year. If nest cavities are scarce, they have been known to lay their eggs in communal nests, one reportedly having 50 eggs.
- ✓ Ducklings are born precocial, able to feed themselves and have been known to fledge by jumping from heights of over 60 feet without injury.
- ✓ They have been known to utilize previously used Pileated Woodpecker holes for their nests.
- ✓ They have strong sharp claws allowing them to perch on branches.
- ✓ The wood duck, known to have crossbred with as many as 20 other duck species, takes second place in the annals of waterfowl promiscuity.
- ✓ Early colonists called the Wood Duck the "summer duck", the "acorn duck" or the Carolina duck.
- ✓ Its scientific name, *Aix sponsa* means "water bird in bridal dress".



Roanoke Valley Bird Club  
c/o Eleanor Dye  
PO Box 74  
Vinton, VA 24179



### 2018 Roanoke Valley Bird Club Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Memberships expire August 31st.

<b>Annual Dues</b>	
Individual \$12	_____
Family \$20	_____
Student \$7	_____
Sustaining \$30	_____
Adopt a Bluebird \$15	_____
Additional Contribution	_____
<b>Total Payment</b>	_____
Make check payable to the Roanoke Valley Bird Club c/o Eleanor Dye Box 74 Vinton, VA 24179	