



# Roanoke Valley Bird Club



April 2022

## Next Meeting

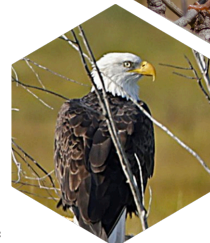
Due to the continued presence of COVID-19 and its variants, we will continue to meet via Zoom. Our next meeting via Zoom will be Monday, March 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Please be on the look out for the Zoom link in your email the weekend before. Stay well, and happy birding.

## Locating Owls and How I Photograph Them

Izzy Edwards, Presenter



Isabelle Edwards (Izzy) is an 19 year old photographer with a passion for owls and wildlife. She has devoted the past four years to locating, observing, and documenting America's 19 unique owl species. During this time she has contributed to conservation projects and shares and teaches about the lives of the owls she photographs. Izzy is an ardent networker and has met a dozen or more biologists and wildlife technicians who have introduced her to their world of wildlife and environmental conservation. These experiences have been eye opening for Izzy and she plans to follow the path of conservation as a career.



Clockwise from top: Purple Gallinule (Garland Kitts); Barred Owl (Nathan Anderson); Painted Bunting (Mary Lou Barritt); Common Tern (Nathan Anderson); Bald Eagle (Bob Crawford); Sedge Wren (Kirk Gardner)

## Big Spring Day 2022

It's a go – Big Spring Day returns on Saturday May 7th, 2022! This fun tradition is a count conducted jointly by the Lynchburg Bird Club and the Roanoke Valley Bird Club. About 15 groups of birders will cover designated areas within 7.5 miles of the Big Spring in the Peaks of Otter Picnic Area. This will be our 51st annual count.

Early May in the mountains of Virginia is a wonderful time for spring birding. Migrating birds are heading north from the tropics to their northern breeding grounds. Birds that spend the entire year here are setting up breeding territories and pairing up, which makes them more active, vocal, and easier to observe in their bright spring plumages.

Given last year's success, despite pandemic challenges, we can move forward with holding the count again this year. At the current time, it does not appear that there will be any governmental restrictions preventing our outing. As we did last year, please follow whatever CDC guidelines may be in place on count day regarding indoor (carpooling) and outdoor gatherings. Tally up plans, in-person versus via Zoom, will be determined closer to date.

Past Big Spring Day participants – please contact your group leader to confirm whether or not you are able to attend this year.

Never birded on Big Spring Day? Newcomers are always welcome! Please contact Donna at [mateski@bu.edu](mailto:mateski@bu.edu) or 434-546-3812 and she will match you up with a group looking for fresh eyes.

Submitted by Donna Mateski de Sanchez, Big Spring Day Coordinator/Compiler

Roanoke birders who want to sign up to participate, please contact Barry Whitt, [ttihwb@gmail.com](mailto:ttihwb@gmail.com) or 540-309-4353.

## Earth Day Celebration April 23rd:

On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Bird Club is having a table at the Earth Day Celebration in the Grandin Village from 10 AM to 3 PM. We could use a couple more volunteers in the afternoon to talk to adults and children about birding and hand out literature. Contact Mary Harshfield at [mary.harsh803@gmail.com](mailto:mary.harsh803@gmail.com) or 540-309-8277 if you are available. It's a lot of fun!



## 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.

- Catawba Greenway (April 9<sup>th</sup>, at 9am)

Meet leader Bill Hunley (540-467-3477) in the parking lot at the Catawba Sustainability Center. The trip will involve about a mile of walking on a mostly gravel road as well as small portions of some grassy fields. The target birds will be various species of sparrows ( savanna, vesper etc.) and other open country birds. We could get good looks at raptors like kestrel and red-tailed hawks. Directions: Take Rte. 311 towards Catawba 6.7 miles. Turn right onto Rte. 779 (Catawba Creek Road) and drive a half mile to the Catawba Sustainability Center. The group will meet in the parking lot.

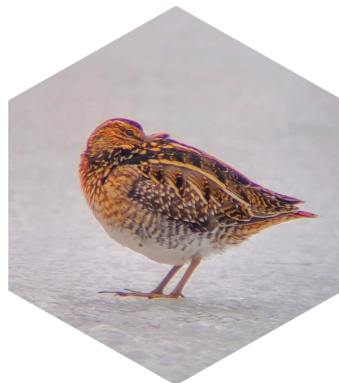
- 3rd Wednesday Walk at Greenfield (Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 8am)

\*\* NOTE change in date and time \*\*

Join leader David Frye (248-459-6783) 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 walking for about 1 mile each way. Bring your spotting scope if you have one. 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 right.

- Warbler Road Trip (April 30<sup>th</sup>, at 7:15am)

Join leaders Tim and Alyce Quinn for one of our favorite trips to see warblers. The group 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 well into the afternoon, so bring drinks, snacks and a lunch. Dress in layers. There is limited space for pulling off on Warbler Road, so we'll need to limit the number of people and carpool as much as possible. To reserve a space, call or e-mail Alyce at 540-312-6844 or [twoquinns@yahoo.com](mailto:twoquinns@yahoo.com) before April 23rd. Since there is limited space, we'll have to give priority to those who call first and are willing to carpool.



Fox Sparrow (Garland Kitts); Wilson's Snipe(George Clemo); Red-shouldered Hawk(Mary Lou Barritt)

## Field Trip Reports

### March 16th Greenfield Walk

Report from Dave Frye: Partly sunny skies and mostly birdy conditions welcomed our party of 10 members on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. The group cheered at the sight of the Rock Pigeon that pushed the morning's tally to 56 species! We also heard a rooster crow, but decided not to count it.

Of note on that day were sightings of a Blue-winged Teal, Ruddy Duck, Winter Wren, Northern Harrier, and Fish Crow. The group was happy to see the return of Eastern Meadowlarks and grumbled at the sighting of the Brown-headed Cowbird.

Overall, it was a really nice morning. And where on earth would we have rather been that day?

### March 19th Woodcock Walk

Report from Robin Austin: We had 19 birders come out on a bit of a windy evening to search for our target bird, the American Woodcock. We started with a walk around the Bent Mountain Center with sightings of some spring arrivals including Tree Swallow, Eastern Phoebe, Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Red-Winged Blackbird.

Then on to search for Woodcock. The wind had picked up at our site for the birds which made it challenging to see or hear the Woodcock. A few lucky folks did hear Woodcock but none were seen. Alas, the challenge for finding Woodcock as one birder said, is the fun of the chase. A total of 25 species was recorded by our lister Tim Quinn.



## Birding Backpacks

Roanoke Valley Bird Club has a new initiative, and we want you to be part of it!

All over North America, bird clubs have partnered with local libraries to bring birding to new audiences through highly successful Birding Backpacks programs. This is an exciting new chapter in RVBC's outreach. We feel certain it will reap great rewards in opening wider access to birding tools and information in the Roanoke community.

RVBC is creating and donating the Birding Backpacks which will then be checked out like any other media such as books, CD's, DVD's, etc. We will be starting with the county library system and intend to expand to the city and other areas soon.

The Birding Backpack will contain a padded backpack, guidebook, binoculars with case, straps, and lens cleaning cloth, a foldout guide to backyard birds, as well as information about getting started in birding, how to use binoculars, local birding hotspots, birding apps, and other basics.

This is a major undertaking! We have received partial funding from the Roanoke County Friends of the Library and the Roanoke Valley Bird Club. The rest is up to us, our RVBC members. We need member's support for this project to go forward.

Please considering sponsoring an entire Birding Backpack. Or you can sponsor part of one, from the list below. Or make a contribution of any amount to the general backpack fund. We hope to start placing backpacks in libraries by summer. We need your help to make this happen!

The cost of one Birding Backpack is \$200 (all numbers are rounded off). It includes Vortex Crossfire 8x42 binoculars \$140, National Geographic Birds of Eastern North American \$16.00, a padded book bag imprinted with the club and library logo \$25, Sibley's Backyard Birds of the Mid-Atlantic laminated fold-out \$8, and miscellaneous items like laminated handouts \$15.

You can contribute in two ways:

Send a check to: Roanoke Valley Bird Club, P.O. Box 20405, Roanoke, VA 24018. Please indicate on the check that this is for Birding Backpacks and whether you're sponsoring an entire backpack, specific items, or contributing to the "Birding Backpack Fund".

OR contribute online at [roanokevalleybirdclub.com](http://roanokevalleybirdclub.com). Click on Membership/Donate from the menu on the left on the home page and after the page opens click on yellow Donate button. Paypal.com will automatically open to "Donate to Roanoke Valley Bird Club" and a box for Birding Backpack Fund will be in the center of the page. Enter the amount you want to donate above the box and choose whether donating through PayPal or a debit or credit card. The next page that opens has a space at the top for "Write a note (optional)". Enter here what you want the donation to be used for. Then enter credit or debit card information. If you click instead on PayPal it will ask your username and password and open up to the "Write a note (optional)" page. Finally, click to complete your donation.

Please join us in funding this project and help support the future of birding! Any questions contact Maxine Fraade, Birding Backpack Committee chair at [maxinefr@aol.com](mailto:maxinefr@aol.com).



## Revised Raptor Report

I accidentally omitted Laurie and Scott Spangler for last month's tally of the Raptor Count. They spotted a Golden Eagle while roaming around Botetourt County. That makes 20 participants!! Please join us next year, second Saturday of February!

## Meet a Member: David & Karen Frye

David and Karen Frye moved to Roanoke in mid-2021 from the Detroit area and lost no time in getting involved with RVBC. David previously served as membership chair of the Detroit area Audubon Club and here in Roanoke has already stepped into leading club walks at Greenfields every second Wednesday!

David and Karen both worked for General Motors, which took them to Australia 2003-2006. They enjoyed seeing unique Australian birds like the wedge tailed eagle, kookaburra and tawny frogmouths - nightbirds which look a lot like tree bark (I checked them out)! Already a birder, David connected seriously with birding after the 2010 Detroit Christmas bird count with Karen close behind.

When retirement beckoned, David and Karen downsized and considered relocating. The more they visited Roanoke where their daughter and son-in-law live, "the nicer it seemed," and they were especially attracted to the area's natural beauty. Having a son nearby in D.C. sealed the deal. We are glad they made the choice and look forward to many more Wednesday field trips with them.

Submitted by Maxine Fraade





Roanoke Valley Bird Club  
PO Box 20405  
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Editor: Nathan Anderson

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### 2021-2022 Roanoke Valley Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

Individual \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Family \$25 \_\_\_\_\_

Student \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

Adopt a Bluebird \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Contribution \_\_\_\_\_

Total Payment \_\_\_\_\_