



# February Newsletter

Next meeting Monday  
Feb. 9th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

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

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

Celebrating 58 Years  
of Birding!  
1957-2015

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**Deadline for submissions  
to be included in the next  
RVBC newsletter is before  
Feb. 20, 2015. Thank you!**

Please send photos (in medium  
resolution or smaller) and  
submissions or suggestions to:  
[rvcnews@cox.net](mailto:rvcnews@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.

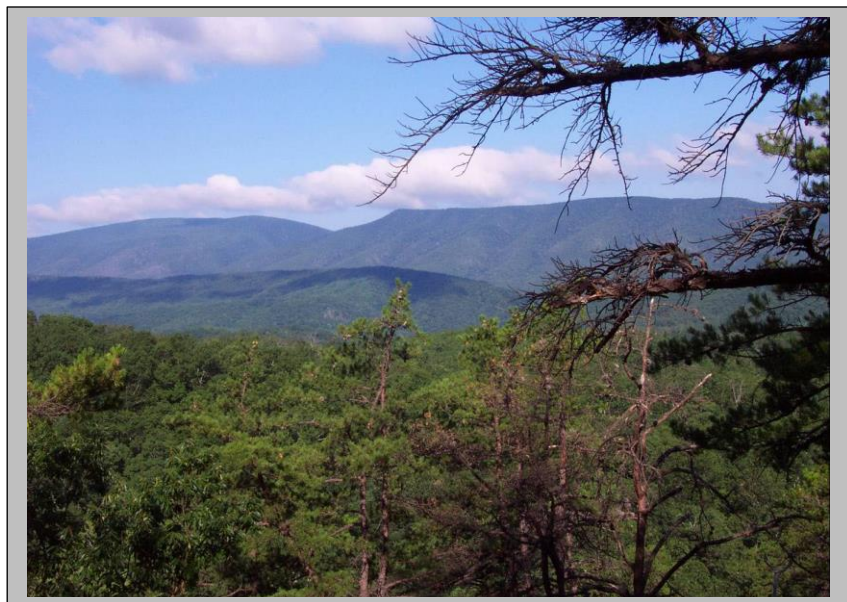
Visit our web page for past  
newsletters and current  
information at:

<http://www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com>

**NEW!** - Visit and "like" the  
Roanoke Valley Bird Club's  
Facebook page.

## Priority Bird Species and Associated Habitats in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests

By Dr. Carol Croy



The George Washington and Jefferson National Forests encompasses 1.8 million acres across a large part of western Virginia, as well as part of eastern West Virginia. From spruce-fir forests and high elevation grasslands on Mt. Rogers to vast Oak-Hickory-Pine Forests to Riverine Riparian Forests along the Shenandoah River, many high priority bird species can be found on the two National Forests. Dr. Carol Croy, Forest Wildlife Biologist, will give a pictorial tour of the various habitats and bird species that can be found on the GW/Jeff, and how habitats for some of our rarest birds are being conserved and restored.

This month's meeting refreshments will be graciously provided by  
**ALICE HYLTON AND ARDY KIDD**

**The RVBC ANNUAL RAPTOR COUNT FORM is on page 3 in this  
newsletter. Please use this form for your sightings.**

**A Bird Word**-Do you know what is **COSMETIC COLORATION**?

Hint - It could be what a bird does that gives it an advantage when finding a good mate. Answer is on page 4.

## Field Trips

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



**VSO Winter Field Trip North Carolina Outer Banks February 6-8<sup>th</sup>** Make plans to join trip leaders Bill Akers, Jerry Via, Lee Adams and Meredith Bell at the Outer Banks of North Carolina for the VSO's Winter field trip. We always have great waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors, along with a wide assortment of land birds. We're offering the optional Friday trip to Lake Mattamuskeet, led by VSO field trip co-chairs Lee Adams and Meredith Bell. Come prepared for variable weather, lots of birds and a good time. If you have any questions, contact field trip coordinator Meredith Bell at 804-824-4958 or email [merandle@gmail.com](mailto:merandle@gmail.com).

**The Annual Raptor Count - Saturday, February 14<sup>th</sup>** Want an unusual way to spend Valentine's Day? Plan to spend a few hours driving away the winter blues on Saturday February 14, 2015. The annual Raptor Count is a great excuse to get out of the house and do some winter birding with your birding buddies!! No skill is required, just a little time and effort. Plan on a leisurely drive around your area, counting all the hawks you see. Points are awarded for each hawk, although this is not a serious competition. The winner gets bragging rights! We compile the results from everyone's efforts and keep an eye on trends in hawk populations. In the unlikely event of inclement weather, an alternate date of Sunday February 15 has been set. Contact Anne Tucker (540) 721-1573 if you have any questions. The tally sheet, found on page 3 can be emailed to [billt3256@gmail.com](mailto:billt3256@gmail.com) or mailed to 3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta VA 24121.



**STP and More - Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00 AM** Join Linda Cory at 8AM at the Lower Level Towers Parking lot next to Sun Trust Bank. We will caravan to the Roanoke Sewage Treatment Plant first. This walk is on Sunday because



that is the only day that construction will not be taking place at the facility. Entrance to the STP is by special permit only and we must enter as a group. Please RSVP to Linda at (540-580-5214) before 9PM on 2/19/14 so we can give a head count to the STP office. After the STP, we will bird at the end of Rutrough Road on the Roanoke River. We may also bird Smith Park on Wiley Drive if time permits.

**Pond Hopping Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM** Meet leaders Tim and Alyce Quinn (540-719-0109) at Botetourt Commons (Bojangles) at 9:30 am. We will carpool to various ponds in the area in search of winter waterfowl. It will be an easy day, with hardly any walking at all. Bring your scope if you have one.



**Evening Woodcock Walk - Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM** Meet up with Linda Cory (580-5214) at the South County Library on Merriman Road for a walk around the lower level boardwalk. Wear sturdy shoes for walking from the parking lot to the boardwalk below. The boardwalk is a 1/2 mile of level walking. Towards dusk, we will return to the parking lot which overlooks the marsh area to look and listen for woodcocks.

**Trending around the Internet:** Ever see a bird with a band? You can report a banded bird to <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/bblretrv/index.cfm> When you submit a report, the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory will provide to you the details about when and where the bird was originally marked. Your report will be added to their database. If you find a good web site or article to share, send a link to [rvbcnews@cox.net](mailto:rvbcnews@cox.net)



## The Annual Raptor Count Form

Plan on a leisurely drive around your area, counting all the hawks you see. Points are awarded for each hawk, although this is not a serious competition, the winner gets bragging rights! We compile the results from everyone's efforts and keep an eye on trends in hawk populations. In the unlikely event of inclement weather, an alternate date of Sunday February 15 has been set. Contact Anne Tucker (540) 721-1573 if you have any questions.

WINTER RAPTOR COUNT						
February 14, 2015						
Participants _____						
Time Started _____		Time Completed _____				
Location _____						
SPECIES	POINTS	QUANTITY	NOTES			TOTAL
Turkey Vulture	*1					
Black Vulture	*2					
Red-tailed Hawk	5					
American Kestrel	10					
Common Raven	10					
Eastern Screech Owl	**10					
Cooper's Hawk	20					
Sharp-shinned Hawk	20					
Great Horned Owl	30					
Red-shouldered Hawk	30					
Barred Owl	35					
Northern Harrier	40					
Bald Eagle	50					
Barn Owl	50					
Loggerhead Shrike	50					
Merlin	75					
Peregrine Falcon	75					
Rough-legged Hawk	75					
Short-eared Owl	75					
Golden Eagle	100					
Northern Goshawk	100					
Long-eared Owl	125					
Northern Saw-whet Owl	125					
Northern Shrike	150					
Unidentified Raptor	5					
<u>POINT TOTAL</u>						
* Maximum of 50 Points		However, keep your totals! There is a 10-point bonus				
** Maximum of 100 Points		for peak counts of these three species!				
<b>RULES :</b> Teams may bird any area within a 100-mile radius of Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center.                 Birds must be seen or heard by at 50% (a minimum of 2 people) of team members. Count                 period is not to exceed a total of 12 hours.						

**When finished counting please send form via email to - [billt3256@gmail.com](mailto:billt3256@gmail.com)  
or by mail to - The Winter Raptor Count, 3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta, VA 24121**

## Sightings

Sorry we missed your name - from the CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FINCASTLE, VA – DEC.14th, 2014. Pam Ogden also discovered at the pond on Steven's Road, some Canvasbacks and a Snow Goose.

### ✓ MENTIONED BY RVBC MEMBERS ATTENDING THE OCTOBER MEETING

- ✓ Elly and Pam Wefel had about 35 Pine Siskins at their feeders.
- ✓ Robin Jordan saw 3 Hooded Mergansers.
- ✓ Mary Lou Barritt saw a Winter Wren at Greenfield.
- ✓ Rita O'Brien had a Pileated Woodpecker at her suet feeder.
- ✓ Heidi Keller has Bluebirds checking out her new Bluebird Box, thanks to Larry Covington.
- ✓ Liz Williams has Fox Sparrows in her yard.
- ✓ Kent Davis was at Fishersville Quarry and saw 8 Ross' Geese, 4-5 Cackling Geese, a Snow Goose and a Blue-Phase Goose.

### FIELD TRIPS

#### New Year's Day Bird Lists – A Great Way to Start 2015

As mentioned in the December newsletter and club meeting, it was suggested that we all begin the year off right by starting our 2015 bird list. We had 18 club members send in their New Year's bird list totaling 56 species. The instructions were to "bird at the place of your choosing." Although most club members birded at home, we did hear from Carl and Linda Boast in Florida who picked up a nice variety including Wood Stork, Sandhill Crane, White Ibis, Anhinga and the prize of a Limpkin! Mary Lou and Sid Barritt reported from North Carolina with a nice list of 26 birds from the Eno River Greenway. The furthest bird list was received by Dick Hendrix who spotted the following birds in Maui: Common Myna, Zebra Dove, Spotted Dove and Brown Booby. He also saw the following in Maui; Northern Cardinal, House Finch and House Sparrow – they're everywhere!

Closer to home, both Joanne Derryberry and Linda Cory's list included a Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker. Gloria Parry reported a Black Capped Chickadee. Nancy Young reported in as well as Bill and Anne Tucker who had a Pied-Billed Grebe and an immature Red-Headed Woodpecker. Kent Davis also spotted a Red-Headed Woodpecker in Botetourt County. Butch and Betty Kelly sent in their list that included Golden-Crowned Kinglets and Eastern Bluebirds.

The most special local bird seen was by Kent Davis and Mike Smith who reported the Ross's Goose at Greenfield. They also completed our local list with a list of shore birds and ducks totaling 48 birds including both Kinglets, Northern Pintail and Horned Grebe. Last but not least they reported the obligatory Belted Kingfisher. Another special bird reported was a male Rufous Hummingbird positively identified by bander Bruce Peterjohn for Kathy Clemo in Roanoke County -reported by Linda Cory.

**Highland County Field Trip** - There were eight cars and 20+ people on the Highland Field Trip. The day started out cold but warmed up nicely with a beautiful blue sky.

Best birds in Highland - Bald Eagle, Ruffed Grouse and Red-shouldered Hawk.

Best birds in Bath - Ducks were seen a pond on Rt. 220, Bath Pump Station (Back Creek Reservoir) and Lake Moomaw.

Black Duck,, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Bald Eagle (1) Red-shouldered Hawk (1) Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch, Barred Owl

On the way back, a Barred Owl was seen on a fence post beside the road in Alleghany County - reported by Kent Davis.

#### **Have you seen our logo bird?** Yellow- Crowned Night Heron sightings

We have in Salem, a large colony of yellow crowned night herons along the creek on Shank Street in the Cameron Court area. Last spring I spotted at least four active nests. There are more along the Roanoke River by the Greenway as well. It may not be such a unique bird anymore in our area but a good logo for our club nevertheless – reported by Pam Ogden.

**A BIRD WORD ANSWER – COSMETIC COLORATION** is a mechanism that male birds use to try to attract a mate. For example, the brightening of a male bird's feathers makes the male more attractive to females. Cosmetic coloration has two different types. The first is a type is when substances are produced by the bird itself, such as the bird's uropygial gland secretions, skin secretions, and powder down. The second kind is when the bird uses an external substance to color a bird's feathers and is acquired from the environment. For example, male Bearded Vultures, will bath in mud and the degree to which the mud stains the feathers is seen as a sign of dominance. This sign of dominance could then affect mate choice by the female.



There are several different types of bands used on wild birds in North America. Each type of band is made in many different sizes so that every bird has a suitable size band available for use by banders. Bands provided by the Bird Banding Laboratory are made of aluminum and inscribed CALL 1-800-327 BAND and WWW.REPORTBAND.GOV followed by a unique 8 or 9 digit number. The older bird bands had the legend WRITE BIRD BAND LAUREL MD 20708 USA or AVISE BIRD BAND WASH DC. These bands are from the same agency as the new bands and can be reported at [www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov). There are 25 standard size bands and 5 specially sized bands made to accommodate the smallest hummingbird to the large Trumpeter Swan. In addition there are 4 common types of bands which include the standard butt-end band, the lock-on bands used on hawks and owls, rivet bands used on eagles, and hard metal bands for use on birds that would otherwise outlive their bands or are in harsh environments like salt water that may wear the regular bands too quickly.

Many researchers use additional markers to allow them to identify an individual bird at a distance. Researchers who want to use auxiliary markers on wild birds need to have federal banding permits and auxiliary marking authorization as well as any state permits that may be required. There are additional permits required to work on endangered or threatened species. Auxiliary markers include plastic cylinders or cone-shaped collars on geese, nasal markers on ducks, dyes and colored plastic leg bands on many species of birds. Radio transmitters are also used to track birds from a distance, sometimes across huge areas. These auxiliary markers are all attached at the time of banding. Some are designed to be lost with time, and others are more permanent markers.

For some types of markers there are agreements about the size, shape, color, and/or style of the markers. These agreements are called protocols, and they help to keep many different projects coordinated so that all the researchers can identify all the individual birds.



Goose collars are used to study goose populations or track geese as part of a research project. Collars can be easily read from a distance with binoculars or a telescope. This allows researchers to identify an individual bird using the combination of collar color, code color, and the code on the collar.

Goose collars come in many different colors. It is possible to see several colors in one area, as color may indicate the flyway or a special project. Collars come in two shapes. Most collars that are used today are cylinders of hard plastic. On the east coast of the United States and Canada, bib-type collars are seen. These collars are cone-shaped and made of flexible vinyl. Collars may have 3 or 4 characters on them. It is important to report collars with characters facing two directions with care. Drawing the collars or stating "vertical 1 horizontal 2 3" both help to ensure that the codes are reported correctly. Small subspecies of Canada Geese have codes that are 3 characters, and the cone-shaped collars in the Atlantic Flyway are also only 3 characters. Most large Canada Geese have collars with four characters. Snow Goose, White-fronted Goose, and other species of geese have 3 or 4 characters on the collar. Codes may be vertical, horizontal, or some combination. The letters, numbers, and other symbols may be highly stylized to allow for easier separation of similar characters.



The Roanoke Valley Bird Club

C/o Eleanor Dye  
P.O. Box 74  
Vinton, Virginia 24179

## 2015 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