



February '20 Newsletter

Celebrating 63 Years of Birding
1957-2020

NEXT MEETING

Monday, February 10th at 7PM

**Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs Building
3640 Colonial Avenue Roanoke, VA 24018**

Join fellow club members for dinner at 5:30pm at the Brambleton Deli, 3655 Brambleton Ave.

Protecting the Eastern Bluebird and other Native Cavity Nesters

Presented by Carol Whiteside

Carol will explore what is involved with identifying, attracting and protecting our bluebird box nesters, and will present the bluebirds' history, housing requirements, monitoring updates, and more. Carol has been a RVBC member since the early 1980's, and she has been a birder for most of her life with a special interest in bird behavior. For over fifteen years Carol studied and bred Gouldian Finches (a caged bird native to the tropics of Australia). This led to her fascination with bluebirds also being box nesters – wild, yet easily approached and observed. She has always maintained a bluebird trail on her farm, and monitored the Blue Ridge Parkway 33-box bluebird trail prior to accepting the volunteer position of BRP trail chairman, a natural pairing since she leases adjoining parkway land for pasture.



CLUB NEWS

ANNUAL RAPTOR COUNT

Plan to spend a few hours driving away the winter blues on Saturday February 8, 2020. 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 unwanted event of inclement weather, an alternate date of Sunday February 9 has been set. Contact Anne Tucker (540) 721-1573 if you have any questions. The tally sheet can be emailed to billt3256@gmail.com or mailed to 3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta VA 24121.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Did you know that the Roanoke Valley Bird Club has the designation of 501(c)3? That means if you give a financial gift to the club, perhaps in honor or in memory of someone, we can provide you a receipt to reduce your tax liability. So keep that in mind as you look for organizations to support with your charitable giving. We want to thank Bill and Katie James for their donation in memory of Mike Purdy and Forest Park Academy for their donation in memory of James Stover (Linda Barker's father).

CLUB 133

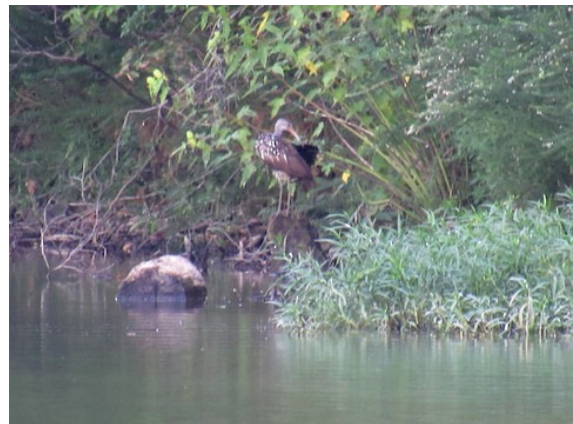
No it's not a bar or dance venue. Nor is it a restaurant or a hip new company hawking a new generation of product. Rather it is an exclusive club with just a few members. In fact it is so exclusive you can only find hints of it when you plug it into your computer's search engine. Club 133 boast only 13 members and you are only allowed into the private Facebook group via an invitation.

To attain membership in Club 133, a birder must bird and log in eBird sightings in all 133 counties and municipalities in the state of Virginia. The newest member of this dedicated group of birders is our very own Annie Downing. Congratulations Annie. With such significant time dedicated to birding in the Commonwealth of Virginia, she no doubt has some wonderful stories to tell. One of the most memorable involved a Limpkin, Kent Davis, and multiple watercrafts.

A report came in that there was a Limpkin sighted at Fountainhead Regional Park in Fairfax, Virginia. Annie called Kent, and they dropped everything to make the drive from Roanoke to Fairfax. They rented a lopsided canoe, forgot their life jackets, and set out to find this elusive bird, but to no avail.

They made their way back to Roanoke disappointed.

However, reports were still coming in the next day. The bird was still there. So Annie and Kent made the drive back up to Fairfax and rented another questionable water vessel. Before they could launch, another birder said you could walk up the road and see it in the cove. So running frantically and slipping down a muddy bank, Annie and Kent were rewarded with a great sighting.





Volunteering is good for your mind and body. Volunteering provides many benefits to both mental and physical health.

Volunteering helps counteract the effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. The social contact aspect of helping and working with others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being. Nothing relieves stress better than a meaningful connection to another person.

Volunteering combats depression. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn protects you against depression.

Volunteering makes you happy. By measuring hormones and brain activity, researchers have discovered that being helpful to others delivers immense pleasure. Human beings are hard-wired to give to others. The more we give, the happier we feel.

Volunteering increases self-confidence. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. Your role as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity. And the better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life and future goals.

Volunteering provides a sense of purpose. Older adults, especially those who have retired or lost a spouse, can find new meaning and direction in their lives by helping others. Whatever your age or life situation, volunteering can help take your mind off your own worries, keep you mentally stimulated, and add more zest to your life.

Volunteering helps you stay physically healthy. Studies have found that those who volunteer have a lower mortality rate than those who do not. Older volunteers tend to walk more, find it easier to cope with everyday tasks, are less likely to develop high blood pressure, and have better thinking skills. Volunteering can also lessen symptoms of chronic pain and reduce the risk of heart disease.

**Ready to volunteer with the Bird Club?
We could use your help!
Please see Kent Davis, club president,
or another board member for opportunities to get involved.**

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

New Year's Day Bird Lists for 2020 - The number of members that sent in New Year's Day bird lists was down from previous years. But thanks to those that did. It's always a great way to start your birding year, even if it's just birding from the living room window with a cup of hot tea (or other beverage). Reports came in from 7 club members with 28 species total. What we lacked in quantity, we had in quality including Ring-billed Gulls, Great-blue Heron, Ravens, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Black-capped Chickadee, Purple Finch, a plethora of Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chipping Sparrow, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and White-crowned Sparrows. All reports were from the Roanoke and Botetourt area.

Highland County Trip (Jan. 25th) - Thirteen birders bundled up for a great day of birding in Highland county. 32 species were observed. What we lacked in quantity of bird species was made up by quality including both Bald and Golden Eagles, Greater White-fronted Geese, American Wigeon, Hooded and Common Mergansers, Bufflehead, Wood Duck, Ravens, Kestrels, Northern Harrier, and Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks. The first two birds seen on the trip were two soaring Bald Eagles. Later that day we saw two additional Bald Eagles in the process of adding large sticks to their nest. This has now been reported to the breeding bird survey via eBird. On the way home, some were treated to a Pileated Woodpecker, a rafter of Wild Turkey and Fish Crows.



Greater White-Fronted Goose
Mary Lou Barritt



Kestrel
Dick Grubb

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

For additional information or if you have suggestions for trips you would like to lead, contact Mary Harshfield at 540-309-8277 or RVBC2015@outlook.com

JANUARY 31ST – FEBRUARY 2ND, VSO TRIP TO OUTER BANKS

Make plans to join the annual Virginia Society of Ornithology field trip to the Outer Banks. There are always great waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors, along with a wide assortment of land birds. Leaders include Bill Akers, Jerry Via, Lee Adams and Meredith Bell. The headquarters for the weekend is at the Comfort Inn, South Oceanfront in Nags Head. This is a wonderful trip and a long, long time tradition for the Virginia Society of Ornithology. Our club is a chapter of the VSO and there are always some RVBC members on this favorite trip. Registration details are on the VSO website: <https://www.virginiabirds.org/events/upcoming-field-trips-index>

FEBRUARY 12TH , 9AM, 2ND WEDNESDAY WALK AT GREENFIELD Join Barry Whitt (309-4353) and Annie Downing (520-6027) for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search for waterfowl and songbirds. Wear water-proof shoes for this 1.5 mile walk and bring your spotting scopes! Directions: Take Exit 150B on I81 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 the right.

FEBRUARY 23RD, SUNDAY, 8 AM – SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

Meet co-leaders Kent Davis (355-6388) and Linda Cory (580-5214) at the Greenway parking lot on Bennington St next to the bridge over the Roanoke River. After a short scan of the Roanoke River, we will walk over to the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). Entrance to the STP is by special permit and only on Sundays, and trip participants must all enter at the same time and stay together as a group. This site is one of the best spots for viewing shorebirds in the Roanoke Valley. The property includes impoundments, sludge ponds, mudflats, riparian habitat and woodlands. Besides shorebirds, we can expect to see resident hawks and possibly ravens and fish crows. The walking is mostly flat with a short steep trail. Sturdy waterproof boots are recommended as it often muddy.

Directions: From downtown Roanoke at the intersection of Williamson Road and Elm St, go east on Elm (it changes names 3 times) about a mile and take a right on 13th St SE. As soon as you go over the bridge over the Roanoke River, the STP will be on your left. At that point, the street name changes to Bennington and the Greenway parking lot will be on your left. The street has a divider, so you will have to go a little further and do a U-turn to enter the lot. (If you are coming from Riverland Road, take the round-about and exit onto Bennington. The parking lot will be on the right in about a mile.)

WINTER RAPTOR COUNT

February 8, 2020

Participants _____

Time Started _____ Time Completed _____

Location _____

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
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			

POINT TOTAL _____

* Maximum of 50 Points

Be sure to keep your totals! There is a 10-point bonus

** Maximum of 100 Points

for peak counts of these three species.

RULES: Teams must be at least 2 people. Teams may bird any area within a 100-mile radius of Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center. Birds must be seen or heard by at least 2 team members. Count period cannot exceed a total of 12 hours.

Completed forms can be emailed to billt3256@gmail.com or mailed to Anne Tucker

3256 Lakewood Forest Rd. Moneta VA 24121. Call Anne at 540-721-1573 with any questions.



Roanoke Valley Bird Club
c/o Diane Malpass
3703 Forest Rd. SW
Roanoke, VA 24015



2019—2020 Roanoke Valley Bird Club Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Memberships expire August 31st.

Annual Dues	
Individual \$12	_____
Family \$20	_____
Student \$7	_____
Sustaining \$30	_____
Adopt a Bluebird \$15	_____
Additional Contribution	_____
Total Payment	_____
Make check payable to the Roanoke Valley Bird Club c/o Diane Malpass 3703 Forest Rd. SW Roanoke, VA 24015	