



# Roanoke Valley Bird Club



March 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 14<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.

## Feeding, Fighting, and Flocking on the Beach: Photographic Insights into Shorebird Natural History

Pete Myers, Presenter



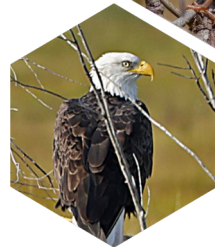
Pete Myers is founder and Chief Scientist of Environmental HealthSciences, a not-for-profit organization that promotes public understanding of advances inscientific research on environmental and human health.

Pete received a PhD from U.C. Berkeley in 1979 for research on migratory shorebirds. Much of this work was in central coastal California, but he traveled widely from the Arctic tundra in Alaska to the southern tip of South America. Much of his research focused on the ecology of shorebirds on sandy beaches, especially sanderling. During this work Myers realized the vulnerabilities of migratory

shorebirds to habitat abuses at different places along their migratory routes. In 1985 he founded the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network ([WHSRN.org](http://WHSRN.org)) which today collaboratively protects over 100 sites between Tierra del Fuego and Arctic Alaska/Canada, including almost 40 million acres.

While Myers is no longer involved in active shorebird research, he restores his soul as often as possible by visiting sandy beach sites around the world to photograph the natural history of shorebirds visiting those habitats.

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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)

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Pete is also a founder and board member of [Sudoc.com](http://Sudoc.com), a chemical company that makes catalysts that clean up bad stuff and also replace dangerous chemicals used as disinfectants and cleaners. He is Adjunct Professor of Chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University, and is on the boards of the Science Communication Network, the Food Packaging Forum of Zurich, and the Jenifer Altman Foundation. For a dozen years beginning in 1990, Pete served as Director of the W. Alton Jones Foundation in Charlottesville, Virginia. Along with co-authors Dr. Theo Colborn and Dianne Dumanoski, Myers wrote "Our Stolen Future," a best-selling book (1996) that explores the scientific basis of concern for how contamination threatens fetal development. Vice-President Al Gore wrote the foreword. Dr. Myers received a doctorate in the biological sciences from the University of California, Berkeley and a BA from Reed College. While he was born in the US while growing up he also lived in Mexico, Nicaragua, Colombia, Uruguay and Paraguay. His research led him to almost every country in Latin America. He has lectured about chemicals and health on all continents except Antarctica.

## 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

## 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.

- 2nd Wednesday Walk at Greenfield (Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, at 9am)

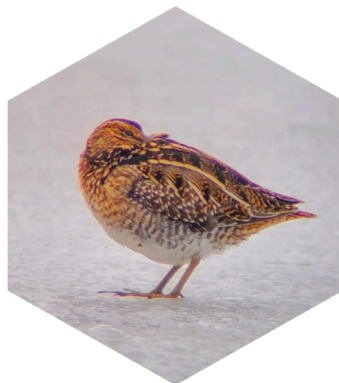
Join leader David Frye (248-459-6783) for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake and possibly to the pond beyond. The walk will be mostly flat walking for about 1 mile each way. Bring your spotting scope if you have one. Directions: Take Exit 150B on 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.

- Woodcock Walk on Bent Mountain (Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm)

Meet Robin Austin (540-676-0951) at the Bent Mountain Community Center for an evening walk of birding and Woodcock watching. We will visit the boardwalk at the community center (formerly Bent Mountain Elementary school) and then walk the surrounding area. The group will then carpool to a nearby area to observe the Woodcocks that start their courtship flight at sunset. Walking is level, but wear waterproof shoes as we will be walking on the grassy roadside. Directions: The Community Center is at 10148 Tinsley Lane, Bent Mountain VA 24059.

- Tinker Creek Greenway (Saturday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, at 9am)

Join leaders Mary Lou and Sid Barritt for a bird walk along the Tinker Creek Greenway. We should see lots of woodpeckers, songbirds, and some waterfowl. Our target birds are the Winter Wren and Brown Creeper. It is 3 miles of mostly even walking, but wear waterproof shoes in case you step off the paved walkway. Directions: Meet in the Fallon Park parking lots in SE Roanoke. Heading down Dale Ave away from downtown Roanoke, look for the park entrance on your left (just past Fallon Park Elementary School). Once you have entered the park, the parking lot will be on the right in a quarter mile. The address given is 2116 Dale Ave SE, Roanoke.



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



## Field Trip Reports

Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>: Notes from leader David Frye: A beautiful winter's morning was had by our group of 11 birders at Botetourt County's Greenfield recreation area (Where else would you rather be?). Immediately, the group had to wade through a seemingly endless stream of loudly chirping birds. It probably took 20 minutes of tallying before we could even leave the parking lot. A Red-shouldered Hawk flew to a tree just in front of us, flashing its beautifully banded tail. It was quite a nice way to begin our trek.

We found the lake largely ice-free with nearly completely open water. And yes, the geese and ducks were happy with that, too. Our normally expected route leading south from the lake was shortened by a crew of workers who had been ordered to clear away brush and lakeside foliage from the shoreline around the dam (What? That's important habitat, there! Oh, well ).

The group was able to log in 34 species with beautiful views of Common Merganser, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Bufflehead, Cedar Waxwing (heaps!) and a "swim-by" from a local River Otter!

Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> Owl Walk: Kirk Gardner led a group of 34 members and friends on an early evening walk through the Roanoke Mountain Day Use Area (former campground) looking for owls. Despite several attempts to call the owls in, on this night the owls didn't give a hoot. We learned where a Barred Owl had been seen 4 days earlier and where Great Horned Owls had been heard many times in recent weeks, and we all learned several kinds of owl calls. Kent Davis kept the ebird list which totaled 8 species.

Feb. 26: Tim Quinn and fifteen other birders showed up at Greenfield on a chilly morning to go a pond-hoppin'! We got our exercise after making a game-time decision to walk to the back pond at Greenfield rather than driving over to Murray's pond. We were rewarded with great looks at Northern Shovelers for the effort. We found eleven species of waterfowl and thirty-six species total. Highlights were Shoveler, Gadwall, Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead and Hooded Merganser. Non-waterfowl highlights were Ruby-crowned Kinglet and about 90 very cooperative Cedar Waxwings.



## Annual Raptor Count

The Annual Raptor Count was held Saturday February 12. We had 8 teams and 18 birders participating. For the second year in a row, Brian Hirt and Charlie Kahle are the winners. This year they had help from Rodney Davis. Congratulations guys, you win ... NOTHING !!!

Three 3 Barred Owls were reported, a high according to the records! The last time we had Barred Owls was the 2014 count. Way to go Tim, Alyce, Brian, Charlie and Rodney!! There were 16 Bald Eagles, which is the second highest count (record was 26 Eagles in 2004).

This is a great way to spend a winter day birding. Plan on joining us on the second Saturday of February.

### 2022 RAPTOR COUNT TALLY

SPECIES	TEAM A	TEAM B	TEAM C	TEAM D	TEAM E	TEAM F	TEAM G	TEAM H	TOTAL SPECIES
TURKEY VULTURE (***)	12	47	82	10	37	9	15	82	294
BLACK VULTURE (***)	102	4	40		31			10	187
RED-TAILED HAWK	3	2	9	4	8		3	3	32
AMERICAN KESTREL	3	3	2	2	6				16
COMMON RAVEN	1	10	1		9	1			22
EASTERN SCREECH-OWL (***)			2						2
GREAT HORNED OWL									0
COOPER'S HAWK				2					2
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK									0
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	2				1	1	1		5
BARRED OWL			2				1		3
NORTHERN HARRIER			1						1
BALD EAGLE		4	1		11				16
GOLDEN EAGLE									0
UNIDENTIFIED RAPTOR					1				1
TOTAL BIRDS	123	70	140	18	104	12	19	95	581
TOTAL POINTS	187	395	375	90	862	84	60	85	2138
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\*\*\* RECEIVED 10 BONUS POINTS FOR PEAK COUNTS

TEAM A - Robin & Allen Austin, Mary Ellen Belcher - Bent Mtn, Floyd County, Montgomery County

TEAM B - Jim & Judy Phillips - Giles & Craig Counties

TEAM C - Bob Epperson, Mark Johnson - southern Bedford County

TEAM D - Betty & Butch Kelly - Roanoke, Botetourt & Montgomery Counties

TEAM E - Brian Hirt, Charlie Kahle, Rodney Davis - Alleghany, Summers, Monroe & Greenbrier Counties

TEAM F - Alyce & Tim Quinn - Franklin County, around Burnt Chimney

TEAM G - Don & Maggie Aldridge - Summit Business Park in Franklin County

TEAM H - Bill & Anne Tucker - Franklin, Pittsylvania & Bedford Counties (around Smith Mountain Lake)

## Nature Talk

Saturday, March 19, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Bent Mountain Community Center

Join speakers Carol Whiteside, [Protecting the Eastern Bluebird and other Native Cavity Nesters](#), and Sissy Logan, [A Day in the Life of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird](#) for these programs in the Center's auditorium. Weather permitting, after the programs we will visit the boardwalk behind the community center so wear appropriate clothes and footwear for birding. Bluebird boxes and setups will be available for sale. The Community Center (formerly Bent Mountain Elementary school) is located on 10148 Tinsley Lane, Bent Mountain, VA 24059.

## Meet a Member: Lucy Rowe

I met Lucy (Lucinda) Rowe at an outdoor holiday craft fair in December and was immediately impressed by her beautiful nature and bird themed art. After buying some cards I asked her if she knew about the bird club and learned she's already a member!

Lucy is the daughter of Dick Rowe, a "big birder" and professor of ornithology and animal behavior at VMI who focuses especially on the birds of Rockbridge County, so Lucy grew up doing some serious birding. After majoring in art at Guilford College, Lucy worked as a field technician banding birds in California and Costa Rica which helped her appreciate the small details in each species. Finally settling in Roanoke, Lucy launched her career as a nature artist doing a downtown window mural in 2020. Starr Hill Brewery in Roanoke saw the window, hired her to do a large indoor mural at the brewery highlighting our region - to which she added birds, of course!

Lucy now has an Etsy shop and sells her art in local galleries and shops including the Natural Bridge and Explore Park Visitor Centers, Allegheny Highlands Art and Crafts Center, Second Helping Gallery on Williamson Road and The Little Gallery on Market St, among others. As a birder Lucy continues to participate in the Christmas bird count each year, and studies two routes for the breeding bird survey each June.

You can find Lucy's bird and nature themed art on her website, [LucindaRoweArt.com](http://LucindaRoweArt.com), at [etsy.com/shop/LucindaRoweArt](https://etsy.com/shop/LucindaRoweArt), or for more information email her at [lucindarowart@gmail.com](mailto:lucindarowart@gmail.com).

Submitted by Maxine Fraade





Roanoke Valley Bird Club  
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Roanoke, VA 24018  
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 \_\_\_\_\_