



September '18 Newsletter

Celebrating 61 Years of Birding
1957-2018

NEXT MEETING

Monday, September 10th at 7PM
Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs Building
3640 Colonial Avenue Roanoke, VA 24018

THE BIRDS & WILDLIFE OF ROCKY KNOB & ROCK CASTLE GORGE

by speaker Tom Davis
Natural Resource Specialist for the National Park Service

The Rocky Knob Recreation Area provides some of the best birding opportunities in the long stretch of the Blue Ridge Parkway between the Peaks of Otter and Doughton Park. The 3,800 acre recreation area is located along the edge of the Blue Ridge Plateau and extends down into Rock Castle Gorge—named for its unique rock formations of crystalline quartz which resemble the turrets of old castles. The Gorge provides habitat for a variety of mid and low elevation birds including cerulean and Swainson's warbler! Tom will discuss some of the unique habitats found in and around the Rocky Knob area and the birds and other wildlife that call the Gorge home.

Tom has worked for the National Park Service for 30+ years, 23 as a biologist with the Blue Ridge Parkway. His responsibilities at the Blue Ridge include wildlife management and overseeing the Parkway's Agricultural Leasing Program. On any given day Tom can be found knee deep in the muck and mud of an Appalachian bog looking for bog turtles, chasing a bear out of a picnic area, helping a farmer to develop best management practices and doing breeding bird surveys. Tom is an avid birder and photographer. He assists with the Blacksburg Christmas Bird Count and the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas project. He lives with his wife Kathy and two sons Alex and Zach in Blacksburg, Virginia.



CLUB NEWS

NEW MEETING LOCATION

We'd like to thank Grandin Court Baptist Church for the opportunity to use their facilities for our monthly meetings. We are excited to announce a new meeting location that has added advantages that we can all enjoy. Our meeting place starting in September will be Roanoke Council of Garden Clubs Building at 3640 Colonial Avenue, same time of 7PM. Our meetings will still take place the second Monday of each month, September through May. The new building has easy access from the parking lot and the meeting room is 10 steps from the main entrance. Also, there are added amenities such as a built-in sound system for easier hearing. A table will be set up at the back of the room for refreshments to be shared at the end of the meeting. Drinks (non-alcoholic, of course) will be provided to toast our NEW meeting place. Please consider bringing a dessert to share." We will still meet at the Brambleton Deli at 5:30pm ahead of time.



SEEKING SUBMISSIONS FOR THE 2019 CALENDAR

Dear Club Members, Once again, our club is preparing a club calendar and this is your opportunity to submit your photos! These are photos of birds that you have taken. Photos will be chosen on clarity, artistic quality and seasonality. The deadline for your photo submission is the night of the September meeting (9/10/18).

This year, photos will be submitted electronically. There is no need to supply a printed copy of your photos! To submit your photos: 1) Either email the pdf or jpg of your photo(s) to Jack French at frenchcreation@comcast.net. In the body of your email, please state the bird species, your name and phone number, where the photo was taken and any other pertinent information. Or 2) bring your photo files (JPG or PDF) on a thumbdrive, CD or memory card to the September meeting. Put the item in an envelope with a note with the same information as option 1. We especially need this so that we can return your device back to you.



The selection process is unbiased. Jack will receive and compile the photo submissions and an independent committee will make the final selection. You can start submitting your photos today using step one or wait until the September meeting. The price of the calendar will remain at \$12 each and a prototype will be at the October and November meetings for pre-orders. We will also have them for sale at our annual seed sale. **Good luck!**



Bird Club at the Roanoke Go Outdoors Festival – GO FEST 2018

The Roanoke Go Fest is FUN, it's FREE and it's once again RVBC will be there. For those who missed this great event in previous years, the Roanoke GO OUTDOORS Festival is a celebration of all the great outdoor activities here in the Roanoke Valley. Over 125 clubs, organizations, and vendors offering activities, exhibits, and merchandise over three days, October 12, 13, and 14 at Rivers Edge Sports Complex on Reserve Ave near Carillion (formerly the Victory Stadium). What's the Bird Club doing this year? Keeping it simple. We'll have an information booth with handouts about birding and offer the super-popular Name That Bird game which was a huge success last year. But we need YOU to make this happen. We need volunteers in all time slots to talk to attendees, explain what birding is about and share our handouts and expertise. Name that Bird attracted lots of adults, teens, college students, and kids and was fun and easy to do. Thanks to all those who staffed our booth in previous years. Please volunteer again. And if you haven't before, even a couple of hours are welcome! You'll love walking around the festival after! We need coverage Friday afternoon for set-up, and Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday all day. There will be signup sheets at the September and October meetings or email Maxine Fraade at maxinefr@aol.com. Let's spread the word that birding is a great activity for all ages. For more information about the festival see <http://www.roanokegofest.com/>



Seeds for a Song Seed Sale

Our club's main fundraiser, Seeds for a Song, is scheduled for Saturday, November 10, at the Northwest Hardware store in Hollins from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We sell fresh seed containing little or no waste at reasonable prices. The sale is open to the public, so tell your friends! Prices and order forms will be in the October newsletter. It's best to pre-order but we will have a small supply of extra seed at the sale for those who forget. Hopefully this year you'll be able to order electronically through the club's website if you prefer not to have to mail your order form and check. Please consider buying even one small bag of seed to help support the club's

worthwhile community projects. There are lots of things you can do to help make the sale a success. 1) Help the day of the sale--greeting people, loading bags, keeping up with orders, etc. 2) Make goodies for us to have available both for workers and customers. 3) Volunteer your expertise with Excel spreadsheets to help with a mailing to nonmembers in late September/early October, as most of our orders actually come from nonmembers. Please contact Alyce Quinn at two-quinns@yahoo.com, 540-719-0109, or 540-312-6844 if you can help in any way or need more information.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

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

September 1st, Saturday, 7PM

Nighthawk Watch on Bent Mountain

(Rain date Sunday, September 2nd)

Our club president, Kent Davis (355-6388) is leading our first walk of the birdwatching season to look for migrating Common Nighthawks. We will meet at the Bent Mountain Community Center starting our walk by visiting the boardwalk and paths. Walking is level, but wear waterproof shoes just in case. The group will then carpool to a nearby area to observe the Nighthawks at dusk.

Directions: From the intersection of Brambleton Ave and Electric Rd, take Brambleton Ave (Rt 221) heading South (away from Roanoke) for 11 miles. Brambleton Ave will change names to Bent Mountain Rd. Take a right at Mill Creek Rd and then a right onto Tinsley Lane. The Community Center is at 10148 Tinsley Lane, Bent Mountain VA 24059.

September 12th, Wednesday, 8AM

Second Wednesday Bird Walk at Greenfield

Join Barry Whitt (309-4353) for a bird walk on the Cherry Blossom Trail at Greenfield. We will walk around Greenfield Lake in search for waterfowl and songbirds. The walk will be mostly flat walking for about 1 mile. Other walking at the property may include the grassy area overlooking the lake or the trail down to the lower pond. Bring your spotting scopes! Some folks may want to visit Ballast Point brewery at 11AM for lunch after the walk. They have a veranda that overlooks the lake.

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. This trip will be repeated on October 10th.

September 14th-16th

VSO Trip to Chincoteague

As a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, many of our members enjoy this annual trip which has gone on since the 1970's. It is a free event with the exception of your hotel and travel expenses. Sign up ASAP for hotel registration to get the VSO rate. In addition to the walks being offered, early registration is required for an optional boat trip as well as the bus trip to the wash flats. To sign up and get more details, visit For more information, visit

www.virginiabirds.org/events/field-trip-announcements/06142018-chincoteague-va



September 22nd, Saturday, ALL DAY

Hawkwatching on Harvey's Knob

(Rain date Sunday, September 22nd)

From September to November, our club and the Lynchburg club report data on the hawk migration at Harvey's Knob on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Located at milepost 95.6, all are welcome to join our resident hawkwatchers to see how it is done. Bring a lawn chair, food and drink, binoculars, and a spirit of adventure for learning about the annual hawk migration. For this field trip, you can arrive and leave when you like and even though you may not be ready to ID each hawk as it passes, extra eyes are ALWAYS needed. You can also sign up for time slots to help collect data. To volunteer or learn more call Bill and Katie James at 798-3030 and visit <https://sites.google.com/site/bijame/home>

October 13th, Saturday, 7:30AM

Birding at Beaver Pond

Meet Eunice Hudgins (389-4056) and Linda Cory (580-5214) at the Orange Market at Hanging Rock at 7:30AM to carpool to George and Betsy Barker's "Beaver Pond" in Craig County. Wear sturdy shoes, warm clothes and bring a packed lunch/drink. You can choose to walk around the farm and woods area or do some porch birding overlooking the Barker's many feeders. This property includes a beaver pond, wetland area, open pastures as well as woodland trails. In the past, we have been treated to Rose-breasted Grosbeak a resident albino Red-Tailed Hawk, Snipe and several butterfly species.

Directions: The Hanging Rock Orange Market is at 1823 Thompson Memorial Drive, Roanoke (just off of the I-81 at either Exits 140 or 141).

FIELD TRIPS REPORTS

May 6th Little Spring Day - Despite dire predictions of a rainy morning, seven members enjoyed a beautiful day of birding with only a light sprinkle. By the end of lunch, we had a nice list of 50 species. We got some great looks at pewee, brown thrasher, orchard oriole, scarlet tanager, rough-winged and barn swallows, red-eyed vireo, chestnut-sided warbler, parula, prairie warbler, redstart and chat. Birds heard but not seen included great crested flycatcher, common yellowthroat, ovenbird, yellow-throated and white-eyed vireo and grasshopper sparrow.

May 9th 2nd Wednesday at Greenfield - A dozen birders enjoyed a beautiful day with 60 species reported. Highlights were 7 wood ducklings, double-crested cormorants, green herons, 1 Bald Eagle, spotted and solitary sandpiper, hairy woodpecker, willow flycatcher, eastern kingbird, blue-headed and warbling vireo, Louisiana waterthrush, blackpoll, rose-breasted and blue and orchard and Baltimore orioles (on the nest).

May 12th Warbler Road - The annual Warbler Road trip produced 62 species including common merganser, Acadian and great-crested flycatchers, white-eyed, yellow-throated, blue-headed, red-eyed and warbling vireos, raven, veery, wood thrush and, of course, warblers: ovenbird, worm-eating, Louisiana waterthrush, redstart, hooded, cerulean, parula, chestnut-sided, black-throated green and blue.

May 19th VSO Annual Meeting –

There were many trips to take and many bird species were seen at this year's meeting in Harrisonburg. The highlight for many was Reddish Knob where red crossbills were seen. At 4,400 foot elevation, it is off of route 924 in Augusta county on the border of Virginia and West Virginia.



June 9th Mount Rogers and White Top - 14 club members enjoyed the annual foray to this special birding spot at 4-5,000 foot elevation.

Nesting juncos summer there as well as least flycatchers, a variety of warblers including good looks at a Blackburnian. Although the crossbills were not seen this year, a good time was had by all.

August 4th Austin's Open House - A group of 17 enjoyed a beautiful day birding around the Bent Mountain Community Center, Tinsley Lane, Poor Mountain and the Austin property. Seen were ravens, green heron, barred owl, scarlet tanager, Acadian flycatcher, and chestnut-sided warbler. The crowning touch was the 40+ ruby-throated hummingbirds buzzing around their many feeders and flowering plants.

Club Outreach

There are many ways that our club members serve the community regarding ornithology. We have been involved in activities that spread our mission of habitat conservation for birds and/or education on bird watching. Some examples are Maxine Fraade organizing our participation at GoFest and Radical Reels and Mary Harshfield for Earth Day and Spring Fling at Mill Mountain Zoo.

In July, Linda Cory and Ashley Peel lead morning bird walks at FloydFest.

In May, Mary Harshfield and Linda Cory lead 24 elementary students on a walk around the school's forest trail.

In April, Toni Pepin and Linda Cory gave ornithological talks to two different Master Naturalist classes.

Also, Sissy Logan has lead bird walks for local clubs to Harvey's Knob and other locations.

Apologies to those that may have volunteered for events that are not mentioned here. Please email us to let us know and thank you for all that you do! RVBC2015@outlook.com

Big Spring Day

51 birding volunteers from the Lynchburg and Roanoke Valley bird clubs participated in this year's Big Spring Day resulting in 121 species. Highlights were 1 northern bobwhite, 20 turkey, woodcocks, osprey and harrier, bald eagle, screech, great-horned and barred owls, 14 whip-poor-wills, 20 ravens, 1 cliff swallow, winter wren, veery, hermit thrush, early white-throated sparrows and juncos and 20 bobolinks. Since this is higher elevation birding, many warblers were found including: ovenbird, worm-eating warbler, Louisiana and northern waterthrush, black-and-white, Kentucky, common yellowthroat and hooded warblers, redstart, Cape May, cerulean, parula, magnolia, bary-breasted, Blackburnian, yellow, chestnut-sided, black-throated blue and green, palm, pine, yellow-rumped, prairie, Canada, Wilson's warblers and yellow-breasted chat.

Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas Project

We need your input.

Although you may not have signed up to be a reporter for this project, your observations are still needed. Examples would be seeing baby birds in the nest or fledglings on the ground. These are considered "incidental atlas observations" and are ALL welcomed. Here are the instructions on entering this valuable data. For further help, email RVBC2015@outlook.com.



- ✓ Go to the VA Atlas eBird portal at <https://ebird.org/content/atlasva/>
- ✓ Log in with your existing eBird account or create one if you are a first-time eBird user. If you are an existing eBird user, please do not create a new eBird account just for atlasing!
- ✓ Click "Submit Observations" at top.
- ✓ Enter and then select the block or county name in the field under "Find it on a Map".
- ✓ Zoom in as far as possible and precisely plot the point of your observation, giving the location whatever name you wish. Click Continue.
- ✓ Enter the date of observation and select "Incidental" as the observation type, assuming you are reporting only the eagles and not a complete list of other birds seen on the same outing. Click Continue.
- ✓ Enter the number of birds seen (in this case, 2 Bald Eagles) and then click "Add Breeding Code or Details" to choose the correct breeding code (in this case, ON Confirmed – Occupied Nest). Add comments or links to photos in the Details field when available. Click Submit.
- ✓ Review your submission for accuracy and make edits as needed. Otherwise, that's it!



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



2018—2019 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	_____
<p>Make check payable to the Roanoke Valley Bird Club c/o Eleanor Dye Box 74 Vinton, VA 24179</p>	