



# Monticello Bird Club

January 2008

Volume 22, Number 5

## January Meeting Topic:

# Borneo and Peninsula Malaysia: Land Below the Wind

Peggy Opengari, an exceptional birder and naturalist, will be our speaker for the January 10th meeting. She is a retired businesswoman, former owner of "For the Birds", a nature/birding store with locations in Blacksburg and Roanoke. Peggy is now volunteering her time working on the Important Bird Areas Technical Committee, serving as Field Trip Chairman for the New River Valley Bird Club and Field Trip Co-Chair for the Virginia Society of Ornithology. She resides in Pearisburg, Virginia with her husband Bill, who is also an exceptional birder.

Retirement has given Peggy the opportunity to travel to some of the world's most exciting birding spots. This past July she spent three weeks in Borneo and a week in Peninsula Malaysia. She will share stories and beautiful photos of the birds she encountered on this trip. This should be an exciting evening not to be missed!

Please join MBC members and our speaker for dinner at Wild Greens Restaurant in the North Wing of Barracks Road Shopping Center on January 10th at 5:45 pm prior to the meeting.

## Upcoming Meeting Topics

**February 14:** Anne Little will present "Good Bluebird Stewardship"

**March 13:** Bob Anderson will present "Time Travel in Faulkner's Big Woods: Encounters with the Ivory-billed Woodpecker"



*Brown Creeper photographed by Rob Capon at Ivy Creek Natural Area, Albemarle County.*

## A Cautionary Tale...

During our last bird club meeting on the evening of December 13th, a locked car belonging to two of our members was broken into. The back window was broken and some belongings were stolen. Apparently this is the fourth time such an incident has occurred in the Ivy Creek Natural Area history. So, be warned. Lock your car and leave nothing in the car that could attract attention.

## Comments From the President

Have you ever wondered, while snuggled under your down comforter, what the birds are doing on a cold January night? They're doing what you are doing – using feathers to keep warm. Just as your comforter is big and fluffy and keeps your body heat from escaping, birds fluff their feathers capturing air which acts as an insulator trapping the birds' body heat. They do the same thing during the daytime, of course. You've probably seen birds sitting on a branch looking very puffy.

Birds have other mechanisms for keeping warm as well. One is huddling. On exceedingly cold or stormy

nights as many as twenty bluebirds will roost together in a cavity or tightly confined space such as your bluebird house. They are likely to assume the "inverted-cone" position with heads together and bodies pointing downward. This position presumably increases warmth and decreases the chance of suffocation. Bobwhites also huddle but in an entirely different configuration. A covey of up to fifteen birds roosts on the ground in a circle or "rosette", tails pointing inward, heads pointing out. In this way they conserve energy, share the warmth, and keep watch in all directions for predators such as a hungry fox.

*- Jennifer Gaden, president*

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**MBC Minutes for  
December 13, 2007**

President Jenny Gaden presided over the meeting and welcomed newcomers including Mary Lee Epps.

In a departure from the normal sequence, the guest speaker preceded the business meeting. Betty Mooney introduced Bruce Ingram who gave a fascinating presentation on the life cycle of the Wild Turkey answering numerous questions from members on this popular species.

**Treasurer's Report:** Henry Konat reported that the club's income for the past month was \$9559 with expenses of \$7465 leaving a net income of \$2094. These figures reflect the impact of the Birdseed sale which generated a net income of \$1558 on gross receipts of \$7294, a small increase over last year's seed sale. The bank balance as of the meeting date was \$15,804.

**Field Trips:** John Zimmerman reported that Stauffer Miller's field trip

to two farms in the Scottsville area on December 8th was very successful with sightings that included Wilson's Snipe and numerous Horned Larks. He noted that the Charlottesville Christmas Bird Count was to take place on December 16th and added that this would be his 60th consecutive year of participation in Christmas counts since 1947 when he was a high school sophomore. With enthusiasm undiminished, he forecast a cold day but a good one for the Charlottesville count because the birds would be hungry and thus remain active all day. He added that the Warren count, centered near Scottsville, would take place on December 30th and would be organized by Allen Hale. The Big Flats count in western Albemarle County, one of only two in the mountains of Virginia, is being organized by Tom Wiebolt and will take place between Christmas and New Years but the date has yet to be set. Both John and Jenny emphasized that participation by new people in the various counts is strongly encouraged.



*White-crowned Sparrow photographed by Stauffer Miller.*

**Bird Seed Sale:** Jenny Gaden announced that there are ten bags of thistle (niger) left over from the sale and these are available for \$10 each.

**Announcements and Reminders:** Jenny Gaden expressed her thanks to Jim Hill for organizing the recent bird seed sale and to all the others who worked to make the sale a success. She also thanked Jim for installing locks on the storage boxes beneath the window seats in the Ivy Creek education building. Ruth Douglas, president of the Ivy Creek Founda-

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**Bird Club Information**

The Monticello Bird Club meets at 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month, September through June, at the Education Building of the Ivy Creek Natural Area on Earlysville Road, 1/2 mile north of Hydraulic Road.

The editor of the MBC Newsletter welcomes submissions including articles, photographs and notices. **DEADLINE for the February issue is January 20.** Please email information to Amy Gilmer at [akgilmer@comcast.net](mailto:akgilmer@comcast.net) or send to 3166 Welsh Run Road, Ruckersville, VA 22968.

**Monticello Bird Club**  
P.O. Box 4362  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22905  
Please visit our website at  
[www.monticellobirdclub.org](http://www.monticellobirdclub.org)

**Monticello Bird Club Board Members**

<b>President</b>	Jennifer Gaden	jpgaden@embarqmail.com	293-6275
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<b>Hospitality</b>	Priscilla Kingston	kingston@cstone.net	293-5173
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<b>Membership</b>	Jim Nix	jim-nix@comcast.net	973-7366
<b>Birdseed Sale</b>	Jim Hill	jimcarhill@comcast.net	975-6523

## Upcoming Field Trips

### Chris Greene Lake and the Rivanna River Thursday, January 24

Meet at Starbuck's, Hollymead Town Center (next to Harris-Teeter) at 8:30 am. We will start at Chris Greene Lake and then go to Polo Grounds Road, walking the field and a farm, perhaps walking down to Powell Creek. Back by noon. Questions? Contact Stauffer Miller at 434-296-5505 or [stauffer@seepub.com](mailto:stauffer@seepub.com)

### Cowbane Pasture Saturday, January 26

We will visit Cowbane Pasture and search the back roads around Stuarts Draft for Horned Larks. Meet at Giant parking lot, Seminole Square at 7 am or Afton Inn parking lot at Rockfish Gap at 7:30 am. Questions? Contact John Zimmerman at 434-974-9293 or [jozim-mva@embarqmail.com](mailto:jozim-mva@embarqmail.com)

### First Saturday Bird Walks At Ivy Creek Natural Area

On the first Saturday of each month the Monticello Bird Club hosts a bird walk at Ivy Creek Natural Area (ICNA) at 7:30 am. The walks start in the parking lot of ICNA.

### VSO Winter Field Trip North Carolina Outer Banks February 15-17, 2008

Mark your calendars for the Virginia Society of Ornithology's annual North Carolina Outer Banks Field Trip. For more information visit <http://www.virginiabirds.net> or check back for details in the February issue.



## New Year's Resolution

Why not make a New Year's resolution to enjoy more Monticello Bird Club field trips in 2008? Not only will you get to see incredible birds, visit different parts of central Virginia and beyond, but you will also get to meet excellent birders, naturalists and just all-around great people!



*Birders on the Sparrow Road trip, Albemarle, County.*



*Birders on the Chincoteague trip.*

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tion, added her thanks to Jim for this enhancement to security at Ivy Creek.

Jenny also thanked Betty Mooney for organizing the binocular show at Ivy Creek on December 1st. In spite of her superb efforts to organize and publicize this event, however, the turn-out was rather small and it may not be held again next year.

Newsletter editor Amy Gilmer announced that she had brought a number of high-efficiency compact fluorescent bulbs for distribution to MBC members as part of an energy conservation program sponsored by the

Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy.

**Bird Sightings:** There were many including the following: Lou Tanner saw an immature Red-tailed Hawk capture a squirrel in Jackson Park in downtown Charlottesville and then spend the next three hours eating it. Meredith Bennett observed a similar event near UVA Hospital. Marge Guiliano reported that 15 Turkey Vultures have been spending hours pecking on the chimney of her house. Betty Mooney saw a male Baltimore Oriole at her house during the first

week in December and reported a visit, perhaps by the same bird, at George Loper's house. Ron Kingston has Pine Siskins at his feeder and Fox Sparrows feeding on scattered millet. He also reported a midnight raid by a bear on his feeder. Stauffer Miller saw a Bonaparte's Gull on the Rivanna Reservoir on December 13th.

The meeting closed with a Holiday Party. Priscilla Kingston, raffled door prizes donated by members as attendees enjoyed holiday treats and conversation.

- Jim Nix

# Monticello Bird Club

## Membership Form

**BECOME A MONTICELLO BIRD CLUB MEMBER FOR 2007-2008!**

*When you join MBC, you will receive ten issues of the MBC Newsletter full of information about field trips, speakers, bird sightings, and more. You will be sent a timely notification of our annual Birdseed Sale. You will know that you are supporting bird-friendly programs locally and regionally. And you will be among a group of warm, friendly, and sharing people who have a passion for birds and birding!*

**Yes, I want to join the Monticello Bird Club!**

- Individual (\$15)
- Family / Contributing (\$25)
- Sponsor (\$50)
- Additional Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send my newsletter:  by mail only  by e-mail only  by mail & e-mail.

*Please make check payable to Monticello Bird Club.*

*Mail form & check to: Monticello Bird Club, P.O. Box 4362, Charlottesville, VA 22905*