



Monticello Bird Club

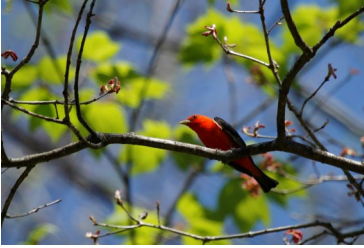
May 2015 Newsletter
Website: www.monticellobirdclub.org

Volume 29
Facebook: [Monticello Bird Club](https://www.facebook.com/MonticelloBirdClub)

MBC Monthly Meeting—Thursday, May 14th at 7:00pm

Comments from the President

Doug Rogers



Scarlet Tanager
Photo by Doug Rogers

The Virginia Society of Ornithology's Annual Meeting — A Premier Birding Event!

The 2015 Annual Meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology is a not-to-be-missed event. The headquarters will be in beautiful Wintergreen from May 8-10. For those who are new to birding this will be a huge opportunity to advance your birding knowledge and skills geometrically. For everyone, it will be a great birding event at which to see old friends, make new ones, and enjoy the special camaraderie of birding.

There will be multiple field trips. These will include trips to the breeding territories of several warbler species in the mountains; field trips to see migrants; field trips to see the breeding territories of the lowland birds, and more.

Marshall Faintich's presentation on Friday night (May 8) will be an excellent opportunity to further enhance your bird ID skills. Marshall's presentations often include photos of the male, female, and juvenile of a given species, as well as spring and fall plumages of that species. Our keynote speaker on Saturday night (May 9), Scott Weidensaul, is well known in the birding world as an author, researcher, and eloquent speaker. His presentation will inform and inspire his listeners. As of this writing, reservations are still available. For further details and registration information about the [2015 VSO Annual Meeting](#), follow the link.

At our last two MBC meetings, I asked for and got volunteers to help with this event. **THANK YOU** to those who signed up and will participate!!

See you in Wintergreen on May 8!

Speaker of the Month: Bill Leaning - Birding in Thailand

Stauffer Miller

Our own Bill Leaning will provide the program of May 14th to the bird club. He will present his newest program, Birding in Thailand, based on photographs taken of birds and other wildlife seen there during visits of 2007 and 2009 with family living in Bangkok. Although he saw 287 bird species in his two visits, that total is but a quarter of the 925 species recorded in the country. Interspersed through the talk are glimpses of the extraordinary people of the country, its fascinating architecture, and anything unusual Bill felt like photographing.

Originally from New Zealand, Bill is a retired veterinarian and enthusiastic nature photographer who has traveled to some forty-four countries. Bill and his wife Clare live in Earlysville on their seventeen-acre property "Omanu," a Maori word for "place of birds." Since moving there in 1998, they have planted extensively so as to attract birds, and readers of this newsletter have been enjoying the revival of Bill's "Gardening for Wildlife" series of informative articles and pictures about the Eden he has created at Omanu. Bill has been a serious photographer since 1991, and in 2004, after several years of procrastination, he changed from film to digital photography and has enjoyed that new medium ever since. As usual, we take our speakers to dinner at the Brick Oven Restaurant, so hope to see you there at 5:30 pm on May 14th.

After seven years of coordinating programs for the bird club, I am turning the job over to Lou Tanner. I took the coordinator position around 2008 from Pat Wilczek, who had done a great job but needed some relief from its duties. It has been a pleasure overseeing programs. I thank all who have supplied me with ideas and have willingly (or not so willingly) yielded to my arm-twisting and presented a program. As I hand off the baton to Lou, I hope all will support him as you have me.



Photo Collage by Bill Leaning

Birding Tidbits about a bird you might find on the Bird Walk at Ivy Creek in May
by Jenny Gaden

First Saturday Bird Walk
May 2 at 7:30am



Eastern Bluebird

One spring day shortly after sunrise, a neighbor of mine was enjoying morning coffee on her porch. A Barred Owl sat quietly on a branch of a poplar tree at the edge of the woods that surrounded her garden. My friend wondered when there would be occupants in her bluebird house. A streak of blue flew by, with another close behind. The first bluebird rested for a moment on a branch but the second (both males) made a close flyby and drove him off. The chase of the little thrushes resumed around the periphery of the garden, until suddenly they collided in midair, grappled with their feet, and fell to the ground. My friend and the owl watched with great interest. Amongst flashes of blue wings, the two rivals tussled, one on its back while the other pecked violently at its head. Then the positions reversed and the other became the victim of stabbing attacks. The owl, seeing a fine opportunity, floated down and departed - a bundle of blue in each foot. And what have we learned about the "bluebird of happiness"? It is also a vicious defender of its turf, sometimes at its peril.

Watercolor Images
by Charlottesville artist, **Mark Collins**
www.MarkCollinsFineArt.com



On the first Saturday of each month, the Monticello Bird Club offers a bird walk, led by a Club member, at Ivy Creek Natural Area. Participants gather in the parking lot at 7:30am. Birders of all levels are welcome.

Walk Leaders

- Apr. 4... Gabriel Mapel
- May 2... Jim Nix**
- June 6... Doug Rogers
- July 4 ... Leigh Surdukowski
- Aug. 1 ... Jenny Gaden
- Sept. 5 ... Tom Jones

For information about opportunities and events at Ivy Creek Natural Area, follow this link to the [Ivy Creek Foundation Public Program Calendar](#).

Field Trips
Organized by Gabriel Mapel



Because of the First Saturday Bird Walk, the Birding Before Work walks, and the May 8-10 VSO Weekend, I scheduled only one additional field trip this month.
Good Birding! Gabriel

Birding Before Work: Weekday Mornings 7:00-8:30am, April 27—May 1 & May 4—May 8

Join us on any or all of these **short, early morning walks** at birding hotspots in and around town, as we **welcome migrants** to Charlottesville, before heading off to the rest of your day!

Meeting Places & Directions:

ICNA: Ivy Creek Natural Area
Gather in the parking lot.

O-Hill: Observatory Hill
Meet in the parking lot of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, 520 Edgemont Road, at the northeast base of O-Hill.

RP: Riverview Park
The park is at the eastern terminus of Chesapeake Street, past Riverview Cemetery. Where the road ends, turn left into the park. Or, you can go east on East Market Street and turn left just after passing Woolen Mills Church. Proceed one block into the park at the "confluence" of Chesapeake and the park.



Date	Site	Leader
April 27	ICNA	Janet Paisley
April 28	O-Hill	Joanne Bricker
April 29	ICNA	Jim Nix
April 30	RP	Jenny Gaden
May 1	O-Hill	Leigh Surdukowski

Date	Site	Leader
May 4	O-Hill	Joanne Bricker
May 5	ICNA	Tom Jones
May 6	RP	David While
May 7	ICNA	Teresa Shaner
May 8	O-Hill	Janet Paisley

Pocosin Cabin
Shenandoah National Park

Date: Saturday, May 16
Meeting Place & Time: 7:30am at milepost 59 1/2
On Eastern Side of Skyline Drive
Leader: Gabriel Mapel
birdmangabriel@yahoo.com
540-363-5035

Gabriel will lead our walk at this favorite spot for hearing and viewing spring migrants and returning residents.
Directions: Driving time from Pantops Mountain is about an hour. The best way to go is Route 29 North to Ruckersville. Turn left onto Route 33 and take it to Skyline Drive. (you'll be entering at milepost 65.5) and turn left, heading North. As soon as your reach milepost 60 (about a 14 minute drive from the entrance), watch for the fire road on your right (as the Drive makes a gentle rightward swing). Turn in, and park in the pull off ahead and to the left.

Treasurer's Notes

by Maynard K. Davis

Our bank balance is just over \$11,500. Receipts so far this year top \$13,000, and we have a year-to-date surplus, net of expenses, of \$509. We expect to break even for the year, with the biggest remaining expense for the upgrade of our website. Contact me with any questions.

Maynard



Membership Notes

by Lesslie Crowell

I am very grateful to Joanne Bricker, John and Jeanie Holden, Nancy Newman, Eve Schwartz, and Eileen Stephens for assisting with MBC publicity in April. A special thank you goes to Jeannie Holden for generously donating some of her beautiful photographs for sale at our MBC table during Garden Week.

Doug Rogers and I led 9 new members on a bird walk along Preddy Creek on April 11. The weather was cooperative and we saw or heard 22 species, among them a Louisiana Waterthrush, two Northern Parulas, numerous Blue-grey Gnatcatchers, and a possible Winter Wren.

We are happy to welcome Harold Blick, Kevin Cwalina, Jane Lawton, and Anne & Jean Lorber as new members of MBC. And, a big thanks goes out to Marilyn and Art Aho for donating stamps for our mailings. *Lesslie*



MBC Minutes, April 9, 2015

Submitted by Peggy Cornett, Secretary

- President Doug Rogers welcomed 30 in attendance and asked for interesting bird sightings. Nancy Newman reported seeing a Cooper's Hawk attacking and drowning a Blue Jay. Apparently this does happen. A Snowy Egret was observed at Lake Hollymead. There also were sightings of a Common Loon, tern, Double-crested Cormorant, and a Red-headed Woodpecker. Maynard Davis spotted Bald Eagles at Lickinghole Creek and Peggy Cornett has been monitoring the pair of eagles on the Tufton Farm nest.
- Board nominations for 2015-16 were approved by the members present. Returning board members include: Doug Rogers (president), Kathy Sudduth (vice president), Maynard Davis (treasurer), Peggy Cornett (secretary), Gabriel Mapel (field trips), Joanne Bricker (newsletter), Priscilla Kingston (hospitality), and Lesslie Crowell (membership). Lou Tanner will become program chair and John Holden will take on the Bird Seed Sale, but not as a board member. Publicity chair remains vacant.
- The board is exploring ways to make the MBC website user-friendly for mobile devices. Members are also encouraged to use the MBC members-only Facebook page.
- Doug passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers to help with the upcoming VSO meeting at Wintergreen in May.
- Maynard Davis reported that the club's finances are sound and to-date we have a \$753 surplus. He projects a surplus of \$4 by the end of the fiscal year. The club has surpassed its goal of 150 memberships by six, including a record number of new members, thanks to Lesslie's dedicated work.
- Gabriel Mapel reported on field trips during March, including the woodcock trip with Jenny Gaden on March 20. Thirty-eight species were reported on Peter Brask's trip to Lickinghole Creek on March 28, including three Bald Eagles, five Wood Ducks, a Eastern Phoebe, and a Belted Kingfisher. The April 11 trip to Preddy Creek is especially aimed for new members. Gabriel will lead the April 18 walk on the Rockfish Valley Trail. Jim Nix will be our guide on a trip to Pine Knot (Teddy Roosevelt's retreat) in Southern Albemarle County on April 25. The "Birding Before Work" walks will be offered April 27-May 1 and May 4-8 and are scheduled for Observatory Hill, Ivy Creek Natural Area, and Riverview Park.



Eve Gaige shared her photo of this uncharacteristically bold **American Woodcock**, cooperatively posing along the Sky-line Drive roadside.

On a darker note, while enjoying remote wilderness areas, be safe, informed and alert to some of the sadder realities of our times.

Janet Paisley sent us a link to an important USDA notice about

[3 methamphetamine lab hazards in remote areas of Virginia.](#)

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Guess Hoos Here? Catch a Lark for The Arc VII

by David White



Going Cuckoo: *The Arc of the Piedmont and the Albemarle Spring Bird Count*

If not *you*, then *Hooo*? Yes, **Lark VII**: the 7th Annual **Lark for The Arc** will be upon us come the **2nd of May**. That is the day locally designated to do an avian census to add to the local repository of bird lore, a form of “citizen science” which does have scientific merit, in fact.

So, while I sweat it out in the weeds for science I also ask you to consider contributing to another passion, also of merit...and that is the people with intellectual disabilities (ID) and developmental disabilities (DD) who are supported at **The Arc of the Piedmont**, a 60+ year-old 501-c-3 charitable organization that is home and family to people with ID and DD who are among our most vulnerable citizens and neighbors.

As each species of bird has its unique characteristics so, too, do the people we support at **The Arc** have their own unique characteristics which identify each of them as a person and a personality. Birds have the Audubon Society, et al, to represent them; the people whom **The Arc** represents have many needs but few advocates working on their behalf. **The Arc** is the nation’s leading agency doing this work, providing direct services and doing advocacy work at every level. Funding, as always, is precarious and we depend on public support to augment our efforts.

So I ask that YOU consider making a tax-deductible donation to **The Arc** based on my efforts:

- \$1 or any amount per species. Examples: \$1 for 75 species identified on Count Day = \$75; \$1.50 for 80 species = \$120; 50cents for 78 species + \$30
- Of course, a donation of any size is extremely helpful and is very much appreciated and you don’t have to wait for the count to be completed!
- Or, see below to participate in this year’s special Cuckoo Challenge.

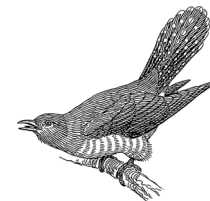
New for Lark VII: The Cuckoo Challenge

Yes, put your creative side to work so that I have to work even harder.

Offer special bonus \$\$ to challenge me to test my organizational skills as well as my avian acuity.

Here are some examples to get your juices flowing:

- ◆ *How about an extra \$25 if you can count 10 warblers;*
- ◆ *Here’s an extra \$10 for each heron species you find;*
- ◆ *If you get three swallow species, I’ll swallow my checkbook for an extra \$20;*
- ◆ *Two oriole species + a tanager + a grosbeak = an extra \$15*
- ◆ *A Bald Eagle gets you a \$25 bonus.*



You get the gist; just have some (extra) fun at my tick-picking, snake kicking expense! Your *total* gift is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

Dan Bieker, another Arc volunteer, and I will be trekking o’er hill and dale, counting for a cause. Knowing that we have your support will be our antidote to the spiders and snakes, rain, rabid wombats, lightning and hail, and other assorted obstacles that we are sure to encounter. *Please take pleasure from our discomfort; that way you can actually enjoy making your gift knowing that we are “suffering” for our friends at The Arc.*

If you would like to participate in Lark VII, please email me at dwhite@arcpva.org, and after the count (and after I pick the last tick), I will circulate the species list for the day. To make your donation, please send a check made out to “The Arc” and mailed to *The Arc of the Piedmont, 509 Park Street, Charlottesville, Virginia 22092* (please include your *name, address, and email*); or use a credit card to make a secure on-line donation via PayPal at our website www.arcpva.org. Please specify “Lark” in the comments section.

All donations received, before or after the count day, will be gratefully acknowledged. I personally thank you for considering this request and important cause! *David*

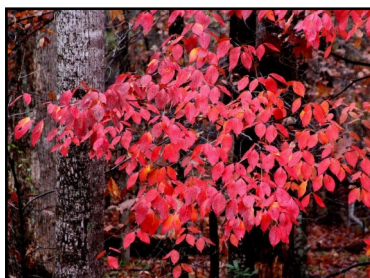
The Cornus Species—Part 1



What more appropriate start to this article than the Virginia State Tree and the State Flower—

Cornus florida – the Flowering Dogwood

What a spectacular, small, flowering and fruiting tree. Normally, when grown as a single specimen, it is a low-branched tree with a rounded crown and strong



horizontal branching. However, when growing naturally as part of a mixed hardwood forest, as is the case in our wild garden at Omanu, the shape suits the available space. The spectacular white flowers of the native species open in April and May, usually, before the leaves, and what a show they put on.

The flowering dogwood, also, provides excellent red to reddish purple fall color. Red fruit ripens in September and October, and, is a particular favorite of Bluebirds. In the fall, the dogwood “berries” will be harvested by Bluebirds, American Robins, Tufted Titmice and, yes, Pileated and Red-bellied Woodpeckers and Northern Flickers. The bark on older trees develops a very distinctive alligator-hide appearance, attractive in the winter landscape. If

provided with evenly moist, acid, well-drained soil and partial shade, the Flowering Dogwood should prove a long-lived small tree.

There are several garden cultivars available from nurseries. White flowered forms include “Cherokee Princess” and “Cloud Nine” and yes, there is a double-flowered white called “Pluribractea.” Clare enjoys the pink Flowering Dogwood so we have planted two specimens of “Cherokee Chief,” a garden-tested, deep red-bracted form.



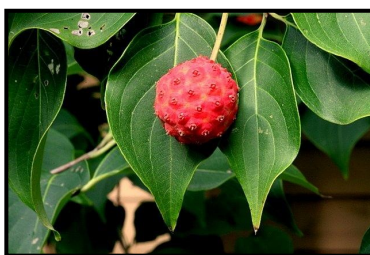
Cornus florida has suffered over the past 20 years or so in the East from cold and drought cycles which predisposed this handsome native tree to insect damage and diseases. The major scourge is the organism causing dogwood Anthracnose. When we lived in New Jersey, we, sadly, observed all our native dogwoods succumb to the devastating effects of anthracnose. Dr. Elwin Orton of Rutgers University developed hybrids of the Korean dogwood, *Cornus kousa* and *Cornus florida* that are resistant to *Discula* spp., the Anthracnose organism. The hybrid trees exhibit characteristics intermediate between those of the parents.



We have planted a Rutgers’ hybrid called *Cornus* “Constellation”, a white-flowering form. Others include “Aurora”, “Celestial”, “Ruth Ellen”, “Star Dust”, and, also, a pink variety called “Stellar Pink”.

Cornus kousa

The Kousa Dogwood is native to Japan, Korea and China and it is, naturally, resistant to Anthracnose. When I started losing my native dogwoods in my New Jersey landscaping, some 20 years ago, it was hard to find Kousa Dogwoods. Today, it is a different picture and they are readily available. It is a most elegant dogwood (albeit it is not *Cornus florida*) but, where you are having problems with the native Flowering Dogwood, it is a very viable alternative. One of the first trees planted in 1998 when we started our landscaping at Omanu was a Kousa Dogwood and it is, now, well-established. We have, subsequently, added several more specimens over recent years.



The young Kousa dogwood appears rather stiffly upright but, with age, it becomes rounded to broad-spreading with distinct horizontal branching. The leaves are slightly smaller than those of our native dogwood and the creamy white flowers are composed of four long-pointed bracts that open about three weeks later than *C. florida*. Large, edible raspberry-shaped red fruit appear in September and October. The Kousa dogwood prefers moist, acid well-drained soils, in sun or partial shade and is, probably, more adaptable to soil extremes than *C. florida*. It is a great addition to the landscape as a choice specimen tree or incorporated into a border, and, if space permits, as a grouping.



Nancy Newman shared these spring-time photos. At left, this **Eastern Towhee** posed and serenaded the birders on Gabriel's Rockfish Valley Trail field trip.

Above, Nancy took this photo of a **Broad-winged Hawk** with nesting material during a recent Skyline Drive excursion.

Seeking to Broaden your Birding Horizons?



New MBC member, **Mary Maher**, sent along news from the [Rivanna Rowing Club](#) (RRC), about their free [Learn to Row Day](#) on **Saturday, May 9**. Mary thought that other MBC'ers might enjoy taking up rowing to enhance their lives and their birding experience, as well. She writes of "the amazing variety of birds that rowers will see while rowing on the Rivanna" and notes "the incredible range of bird behaviors and habitats we've observed out there over the years, especially in the upstream coves and inlets that are inaccessible except by boat."

Rowing and birding — sounds like an unbeatable combination! Check it out.

In the space of one half hour in early April, **Doug Rogers** captured an Eastern Bluebird, a Tree Swallow, and a Carolina Chickadee checking out the same local real estate.



When he returned several days later to monitor the same box, he discovered indisputable evidence confirming which of the prospective residents had sealed the deal.



The thick layer of moss lined with plant fiber will make a soft and cozy first home for.....
Chickadees!



Monticello Bird Club

P.O. Box 4362
Charlottesville, Virginia 22905

Visit our website at
www.monticellobirdclub.org
for club and membership information.

The **Club meets** on the **second Thursday** of each month, September through June, at the **Education Building of the Ivy Creek Natural Area** on Earlsyville Rd, 1/2 mile north of Hydraulic Rd.

The editor of the **MBC Newsletter** welcome submissions, including articles, photographs and notices. **DEADLINE** for each issue is **9:00AM on the 20th** of the month.

President	Doug Rogers	doug5996@gmail.com	434-409-8156
Vice President	Kathy Sudduth	kas3m2@embarqmail.com	434-973-0690
Secretary	Peggy Cornett	pcornett@monticello.org	434-984-9816
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