



# Monticello Bird Club

January 2011

Volume 27, Number 5

## Comments From the President

By the time the next Club meeting is held, both of the Christmas counts in which I have been privileged to participate will have once again come and gone. Tramping around frozen fields under leaden skies or peering into cold damp ravines on the off chance that a winter wren might be lurking below would not rank high on most people's list of favorite things to do. Now I would be the first to concede that one could not know the difference between white-crowned, swamp, and song sparrows and still lead a perfectly useful life. Nevertheless, such subtle distinctions and the knowledge that some small sacrifice of creature comforts has been made are just the sort of things that so enrich a birder's life. Humankind needs rituals of some sort and this one--providing at least a temporary reminder of our kinship with the wilder world outside our cozier abodes--provides just that and more. In addition, it has recently been discovered that the proper antidote for the cold feet that inevitably result is the hot tub at ACAC.

A childhood intoxication with the Middle Ages, one I hope never to outgrow, introduced me to Frederick II, 13th century Holy Roman Emperor who somehow preferred sunny Sicily to the colder and gloomier German lands where most of his predecessors had dwelt. Go figure. Frederick was obsessed with falconry and the labor of love he left posterity was a colossal book entitled *Ars Venandi cum Avibus* (The Art of Hunting with Birds). Even while a student of slender means long years ago, I toyed with the idea of ordering one, even though the price was extremely stiff. Thanks to Alan Hale's Buteo Books, which had a second hand copy in stock, it has been sitting nobly on my shelf some fifteen years now. It was a great investment that continues to give hours of reading pleasure. I think of it often when a kestrel wheels overhead.

And finally, thanks should go out again to Priscilla and Ron Kingston for the work that they put into the Christmas Party but also for their underappreciated work in making our monthly meetings such warm occasions. Many thanks to them both.  
Lou Tanner

## January Meeting Program

### Barn Owls

Raptor biologists Jill and Lance Morrow will present a program on Barn Owls at the January 13, 2011 meeting of the Monticello Bird Club. The Morrows will discuss Barn Owl diet, nesting, suitable habitat and other aspects of their natural history.

Jill, a native of Colorado, has done raptor work in Wyoming and Texas. Lance has worked under raptor expert Bill Clark, and later worked on Harris' Hawk projects in Texas.

The Morrows, who live in the New Market area, have established and now operate the New Market Gap Raptor Research Station and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Barn Owl Project. Don't miss this outstanding program.

## Upcoming Meeting Topics

### January 13th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Barn Owls

### February 10th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Bluebirds, a love story

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## Dinner at La Cocina del Sol

As most of you know, we are now dining with the speaker at 5:30 PM on club meeting nights at La Cocina del Sol restaurant, at Commonwealth and Hydraulic Roads in Charlottesville. This restaurant was the idea of Janet Paisley and Ann Dunn.

I'm not a restaurant reviewer by any stretch but I would say the six of us who dined at La Cocina del Sol with the speaker and his wife December 9th were pleased with the fare, service and atmosphere. I had the baja pasta, which was tasty and fairly priced at around \$12.00. Ellie had the cali-burger, at around \$8.75, and pronounced it as delicious. The fish and other types of tacos others had met with approbation. The fajitas seemed a little pricey at \$16.00. I would encourage you to come, and think you will find something on the menu to meet your price and palate requirements. Hope to see you there January 13th.

## Monticello Bird Club

### Ivy Creek Natural Area Events

Most birders are also interested in other things going on in the natural world. For those of us who are not members of the ICNA Foundation, here is some information that may be of interest:

#### Winter Natural History Walk at Ivy Creek

Sunday January 9, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.

Join Mary Jane Epps as we search out the plants, fungi, insects, and animals that are still visible in the winter. Learn about their life histories, traditional uses and how they are adapted to survival under winter conditions. Meet at the kiosk next to the parking lot at the Ivy Creek Natural Area.

#### Clouds, Wind and Storms

Saturday January 15, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.

Learn from W. Mitchell Sams about the role clouds play in foretelling and creating weather. As part of this lecture we'll explore the origin of winds and how they determine both short and long-term weather patterns. Please register in advance as space is limited. Use this email address: [programs@ivycreekfoundation.org](mailto:programs@ivycreekfoundation.org). The deadline for registration is January 13, 2011. Free of charge.

#### Tracking and the Earth

Saturday January 22, 2011 at 9:00 a.m.

Join Hub Knott outdoors to search for signs of wildlife activity. Learn how to read the stories of animal life in the landscape of Ivy Creek. Meet at the Barn. Co-sponsored with the Living Earth School.

#### Streamwatch Training Workshop

Saturday January 29, 2011 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Learn the fundamentals of benthic invertebrate sampling to gauge water quality and stream health. To register, contact Rose Brown at [rose@streamwatch.org](mailto:rose@streamwatch.org). Meet in the Education Building at Ivy Creek NA.

## Bird Club Information

The Monticello Bird Club meets on the second Thursday of each month, September through June, at the Education Building of the Ivy Creek Natural Area on Earlsyville 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 8:00 a.m. January 22.** Please email information to Doug Rogers at [MBCNEWS@embarqmail.com](mailto:MBCNEWS@embarqmail.com) or send to 1065 Weybridge Ct. # 304, Charlottesville, VA 22911.

**Monticello Bird Club**  
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[www.monticellobirdclub.org](http://www.monticellobirdclub.org)

## Monticello Bird Club Board Members

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| <b>Birdseed Sale</b>  | Jim Hill           | <a href="mailto:jimcarhill@comcast.net">jimcarhill@comcast.net</a>                 | 975-6523     |

### Augusta County Trip

Meet at the Giant parking lot, Rte 29N, at 7:45am on January 29, 2011.  
 Join Allen Lerner for this trip to see wintering birds in Augusta County.  
 Target birds will be Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, waterfowl if any are around, Barn Owl, and Horned Larks & Longspurs if we get really lucky. Meet Dave Hogg at the Giant parking lot at 7:45 am, and we will carpool over to meet Allen.  
 Those who want to go directly to Augusta County should take I64 west to exit 91. Proceed to light, turn left at Goose Creek Rd. & follow to second right to Augusta Health. Go to stop sign & turn left & follow to hospital's Emergency Room ambulance entrance. There you will see a 7-garage door building on left with a parking lot to the side of building .  
 Meet at this parking lot at 8:30am .  
 Please call the Charlottesville coordinator Dave Hogg at 434-974-7592 for more details.

### Southern Albemarle County

Please join Stauffer Miller at 9:00am on January 22, 2011 in an exploration of a number of areas in the Albemarle County along the James River.  
 The meeting spot is the veterinary office in Keene, across Rte 20 from the little convenience store. Please call Stauffer at 434-296-5505 for additional details.

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

On the first Saturday of each month, the Monticello Bird Club offers a bird walk at Ivy Creek Natural Area at 7:30 a.m.  
 Some of the walks stay near the main building and parking lot, others go out on the peninsula. Each month has a different leader. Some outstanding birds have been seen on the walks.  
 The walk for January will be delayed one week, because of the holiday. Please join Jim Nix on January 8, 2011 for the first walk of the new year.  
 Please join Leigh Surdukowski on February 5, 2011 for the chance to observe our wintering birds.

### WARREN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - JANUARY 2, 2011

"The Warren, Virginia Christmas Bird Count will be conducted on Sunday, January 2, 2011. The center of the 15- mile diameter of the Warren CBC circle is at Keene in southern Albemarle County and includes portions of Buckingham and Fluvanna Counties. This count was first conducted by C.E. (Mo) Stevens, Jr. during the 48th CBC (1947/1948). Your compiler remembers vividly his first participation on this count with Mo on December 31, 1967 when a Great Blue Heron flew past us in falling snow.  
 Please contact Allen Hale, Compiler, at [434-760-1218](tel:434-760-1218) (C) or [super@buteobooks.com](mailto:super@buteobooks.com), if you're interested in participating."

### PANAMA BIRDING TRIP TO CHUCANTI

Allen Hale has organized a birding adventure to Panama to visit Cerro Chucanti in western Darien Province with Panamanian guide Guido Berguido. The dates for this exploratory trip are 3-10 April 2011. Guido's company, Advantage Panama, has its base in Gamboa near the entrance to the famous Pipeline Road where we will stay the first two nights. Then we'll travel the Pan American Highway to Bayano-Torti where the group will proceed by horseback to the foothills of the Serrania Maje and his field station in the primary rainforest, our base for three nights. A hike to the cloud forest at nearly 5000 feet elevation will likely produce many Darien specialties. Bird watching lowland Darien at the San Francisco Reserve may well give us looks at species such as Black-headed Tody-Flycatcher, Speckled Mourner, Great Jacamar, Royal Flycatcher, and the elusive Black-crowned Antpitta. The cost of this trip excluding airfare to Panama (about \$440) is \$1500. Limited to six participants, only two spaces are available. Contact Allen at [434-263-8671](tel:434-263-8671) for details."



Photo by Diane Lepkowski

## Monticello Bird Club Meeting Minutes, 9 December 2010

Stauffer Miller filled in for Lou Tanner and opened the meeting by welcoming two newcomers: Marjorie Hill and Bridget Archer. The meeting attendance was 52.

Treasurer Henry Konat reported an income of \$9,915; expenses were \$9,445.88 for a net gain of \$469.12. Membership renewals remain down at less than 60%.

Field Trip organizer Dave Hogg reported the sighting of a nice group of Pine Siskins during the Dec 8<sup>th</sup> trip to Key West, VA. The upcoming Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> trip to Chris Greene Lake promised eight kinds of waterfowl. On Jan 29<sup>th</sup> Allen Hale will lead a trip to Augusta Co where there may be Barn Owl sightings.

Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) in the Region: Jenny Gaden offered more details about the Charlottesville CBC on Sunday Dec 19<sup>th</sup>; which will conclude with a pot-luck supper at the home of Nancy O'Brien and Francis Fife. Stauffer talked about the revival of the Big Flat CBC, which was once led by Mo Stevens and took in parts of the Blue Ridge from the Greene Co line down Skyline Drive to Calf Mt. This year Tom Wieboldt will be leading this count sometime after Christmas, the date is still TBD. Stauffer also is offering to host an evening gathering at the end of the Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> Warren/So Albemarle/No Buckingham County CBC.

Annotated Checklist: Jenny urged members to add new bird sightings to the checklist database and to keep the book in mind for Christmas gifts.

Upcoming Speakers: Stauffer reported that, for the January meeting, Lance and Jill Morrow from the Shenandoah Valley will give a program on their Raptor studies. In February, Gretchen Gehrett will talk about Bluebirds.

Leaders for the First Saturday at Ivy Creek bird walks are still needed for June, August, and November. Leigh Surdukowski passed a sign-up sheet request for volunteers.

Recent Bird Sightings: Three adult and two juvenile Tundra Swans were seen out Earlysville Rd. What appeared to be a female Ruby Throated Hummingbird has been seen still visiting a feeder in Earlysville. The identity of the Hummingbird is uncertain. There was discussion about possibly having someone catch and band the bird. Peter Brask saw a Cape May Warbler at his house in Batesville

Submitted by Peggy Cornett, secretary