



Monticello Bird Club

June 2008

Volume 22, Number 10

June Meeting Topic:

Annual Potluck Picnic June 12th

Join us for the last meeting of the season at our 22nd Annual Potluck Picnic. Members are invited to bring a dish to share. Please bring your own plates, utensils, and cups. The Monticello Bird Club will provide the drinks.

The meeting will start at **6:00 pm** with a short bird walk afterwards depending upon the weather.



The Results Are In!

After compiling submitted 2007 Albemarle County birding lists, the total reported was 206 species, compared with a modest 172 in 2006. Stauffer Miller led the way with 196 different birds, while Leigh Surdukowski had 158, followed by Jenny Gaden with 149 for the year. Waterfowl, shorebirds, two rare raptors and some unusual passerines were found in the county last year. Snow Goose, Tundra Swan, Canvasback, American Bittern, Sora, Marbled Godwit, Dunlin, Semipalmated Plover, Northern Goshawk, Bonaparte's and Herring gulls, Bank Swallow and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow were on Stauffer's list, while Peter Brask found Philadelphia

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Comments From the President

It is with mixed feelings that I step down as president of the Monticello Bird Club. The past four years have been very enjoyable for me. This is largely because of all the fine people with whom I have worked. Each member of the board of directors has had a specific job to do that has carried the club forward. All have been enthusiastic and more than competent, and this makes the job of the president a breeze. My heart-felt thanks to all of you. Many people have pitched in on a variety of other activities from leading field trips to helping develop an annotated checklist for our area. I am very appreciative of all the good people who give their time, energy and ideas.

I encourage individual members to participate in the field trips and other activities that the club sponsors. We do it for you, and believe that you will be happily rewarded. The club runs only on volunteer help and no

club can long survive by depending on the same old people year after year. We have had lots of new people jumping right in, in recent years, and that has been another gratifying part of being president.

If I had one request I would ask that everyone remember that the birds we love, whether in our back yard or in remote corners of the world, are under stress. They will be more so as the human population expands and the birds' world changes drastically. Whatever we can do to for bird conservation, small gestures or large, we owe. If we who particularly enjoy the birds don't act, who will?

This is not a goodbye message. I look forward to remaining active with the club. So enjoy the summer birds and see you in the fall.

-Jenny Gaden

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Wireless Video Camera Birdhouse

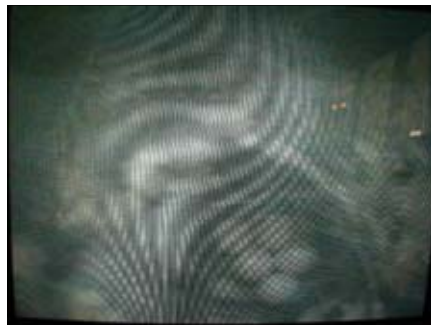
Have you ever wanted to see a bird nesting on her clutch of eggs, or feeding her new hatchlings? Well, now you can thanks to readily available technology using (the aptly named) "Spy-on-a-Bird" wireless video camera birdhouse. The product comes with a wireless video camera and microphone that enables you to observe the inside of the birdhouse on your television set.

It's very easy to set up. Simply plug birdhouse into an outside power socket and the transmitter begins to work. The birdhouse comes with a wireless receiver, which I attached to an inside window with Velcro. The

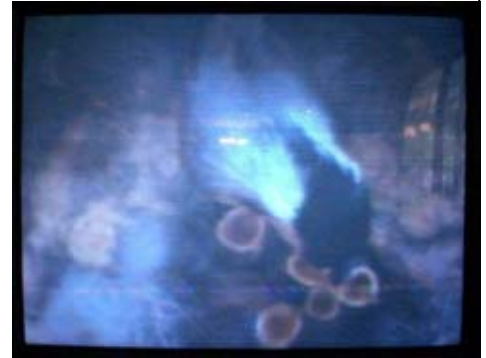


receiver comes with a cable that plugs into a television set, VCR or DVD.

The birdhouse enables you to observe complex bird behavior. This year, we have been treated to a Carolina Chickadee, who constructed her nest and laid a clutch of five beautiful spotted eggs. As of the writing of this article, the birds are a week old, and mother and babies are doing great.



With the video birdhouse, we have been able to observe complex bird



behavior, like the male feeding the female on the nest and the female feeding her hatchlings. By knowing what is happening inside of the nest, we are also better able to understand bird behavior outside of the nest, including why birds become so aggressive towards other birds roosting nearby (they're guarding a nest with baby birds against predators.)

The product can be purchased on the Internet for \$200. Here's the web link: <http://www.spyonabird.com/prod01.html>

-Rob Capon

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 September issue is August 20.** Please email information to Amy Gilmer at akgilmer@comcast.net or send to 2341 Highland Avenue, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

Monticello Bird Club
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Please visit our website at
www.monticellobirdclub.org

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Upcoming Field Trips

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. Each month a different walk leader takes groups on the trails to see the birds of ICNA. The walks start in the parking lot of ICNA.

Purple Martin Field Day

The 14th Annual Purple Martin Field Day is set for Saturday June 21 this year at the farm of Merle & Lance Wood in Louisa County. From 9:30 am until noon you can learn how to establish a colony of Purple Martins, including information on housing requirements and protection devices. There will also be a short nesting box trail tour, featuring nest boxes for different species of birds.

Directions: From Charlottesville, take I-64 East to Exit 136 (Zion Crossroads). Travel north on US 15 for 3.5 miles until it intersects with Route 640 (east). The farm is located near the intersection of US 15 and Route 640 and you will see signs directing you to the Purple Martin Field Day.

For more information, see <http://www.purplemartin.org/meetings/> and contact Ron & Priscilla Kingston at 434-293-5173 or kingston@cstone.net

Birding at the King Family Vineyards

As many birders know, the King Family Winery in Crozet is a fine place for birds and birders - and yes, wine. They have developed and manage a wet area that hosts waterfowl in the winter and shorebirds in the spring and fall. Carrington King, who manages the winery, has always been very welcoming to birders. He does have some requests, however, that all birders should be aware of and respect. He reminded me of these again when I met him there on May 13. They concern parking and viewing.

Parking: park only in the winery parking area that is reached by the paved road you take at the main entrance off Half Mile Branch Road. The sign for the winery indicates the paved road. Do not park anywhere on the public road or the side of the road or the property across the street from the pond.

Viewing: watch birds only from the paved road to the parking area or from the upper part of the grassy slope between it and the pond. Do not enter by car or foot or watch the birds from the gravel road that runs along side the pond and wooden fence.

If you are interested in doing some special photography and want to get closer to the birds contact Carrington at (434) 882-3734 or carringtonking@gmail.com. Please observe these modest restrictions so that all may continue to enjoy this wonderful birding resource.

Directions and information about the winery: kingfamilyvineyards.com

VSO High Knob Field Trip June 27-29, 2008 Wise County, Virginia

On June 27-29 the Virginia Society of Ornithology will have its mountain field trip to High Knob and vicinity. The headquarters will be located at the Inn in Norton, but there are also several campgrounds in the area. Target species include Swainson's Warblers, Black-throated Green Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, Blue-headed Vireos, Scarlet Tanagers, Canada Warblers, Magnolia Warblers, Veeries, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Winter Wren, Least Flycatchers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and many others.

Headquarters: The Inn in Norton: off of Highway 58, Norton: 276-679-7000. They have agreed to reserve 10 rooms for VSO until June 10, 2008 @ \$50 (\$54.50 including tax). Nearby motels: Super 8 Motel: 276-679-0893; Days Inn: 276-679-5340.

Nearby campgrounds: High Knob Campground, elevation 3520 ft., \$10 per day.

Cane Patch, elevation 1770 ft. \$12 a day without electric hookup; \$17 a day with hookup.

Bark Camp Lake, elevation 2780 ft. \$12 a day without electric hookup; \$17 with hookup.

Schedule:

Friday, June 27: Trip to High Knob. There we will carpool and drive up the mountain to High Knob and hike the Lake trail, then return to the Inn. Supper and other meals are on your own at local restaurants.

Saturday, June 28: Morning trips will meet in the parking lot of The Inn at 7 am. *Roaring Branch trip:*

-Jenny Gaden

MBC Minutes for May 8, 2008

The meeting opened at 7:30 pm with a presentation by the class of second graders from Venable School who received the bird club sponsored bird feeding kit. The students showed a video they produced and shared their thoughts and experiences over the course of the school year. The business meeting followed the student program; 35 in attendance.

Treasurer's Report: Henry Konat reported the club's finances for the period with an income of \$10,639 expenses were \$9,704, with a net of \$915 and with \$14,999 in the bank account. He and Jim Nix voiced concern that renewals are behind for the year by 57, which is 29% of the membership.

Field Trips: John Zimmerman reviewed the upcoming trips for May, which include the first Saturday at Ivy Creek, led by Jim Nix. There will be no trips in June.

Nominating Committee: Lou Tanner chaired a committee of one to select a slate of officers for 2008-2009. Returning board members are: Henry Konat at treasurer; Peggy Cornett, secretary; and Jim Hill, vice president. Jenny Gaden, who has served as president for four years, is stepping down, and Stauffer Miller was nominated to replace her. The membership voted and approved Stauffer as president and the returning board members. John Zimmerman thanked Jenny for her fine leadership on behalf of MBC.

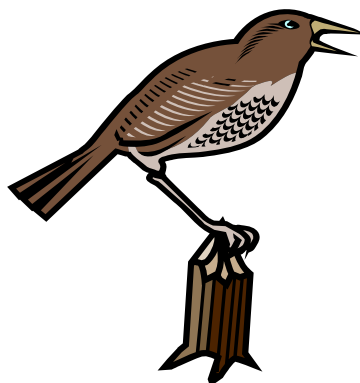
Announcements: After 10 years of research and record keeping, John Zimmerman has completed his book, *The Birds of Ivy Creek, 1998-2008*. The bird club funded the publication of this book and 1,000 copies were printed.

Three new volunteers have offered to help monitor Bob Hammond's Blue Bird Trail: Mary Janet Fowler, Ann Dunn, and Janet Paisley.

The season's final meeting takes place June 12 with a pot-luck party at Ivy Creek Natural Area beginning at 6:00 p.m. Priscilla and Ron Kingston encouraged members to bring their own plates and utensils.

Bird Sightings: There is a possible outbreak of conjunctivitis or salmonella among some populations of Goldfinch and Siskins, as reported by Vickie Boyle of Nelson County, who found a number of dead birds at her feeders. A discussion followed on the pros and cons of feeding birds through the summer. Brenda Tekin thinks we should continue because there is so much loss of habitat. Jim Nix cited a Cornell study that concluded that birds can generally find plenty of food in the summer. John Zimmerman noted that most winter seed feeders change to eating insects in the summer. Bill Leaning reported that bird feeding in summer is forbidden in New Zealand because of disease. Ron Kingston provides meal worms for the Blue Birds. Most people continue feeding for the enjoyment of watching the birds, especially during the mating season.

- Peggy Cornett, secretary



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Vireo, Mourning, Connecticut and Golden-winged warblers. Other elusive birds noted were Surf Scoter, Chuck-wills-widow, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Black-billed Cuckoo, a Lark Sparrow discovered last fall, and two Peregrine Falcons. The other birds that only Stauffer reported in 2007 were Ruffed Grouse, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Merlin, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Willow and Least Flycatchers, Marsh Wren, Prothonotary Warbler and Vesper Sparrow. Thank you to those who submitted their lists: Dede Austin, Peter Brask, Jenny Gaden, Dave Hogg, Stauffer Miller, Jim Nix, Leigh Surdukowski and John Zimmerman. Who knows what we'll find in 2008!

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drive to Appalachia and then hike up Roaring Branch.

Cane Patch trip: drive to Cane Patch campground and hike the trail upstream.

High Knob trip: a repeat of the Friday afternoon trip with some additions. Afternoon trips will begin at 3 pm will be arranged to additional spots where species of interest have been found. If there is sufficient interest, an evening owl prowling will be attempted after supper at 9 pm.

Sunday, June 29: Saturday's field trips will be repeated, but field trips will return to the Inn by 11:30 am.

For more information visit the VSO web site, <http://www.virginiabirds.net/> or call or email [Peggy Opengari](mailto:Peggy.Opengari)
Phone: 540- 921-4340
Email: gramby@pemtel.net