



# Monticello Bird Club

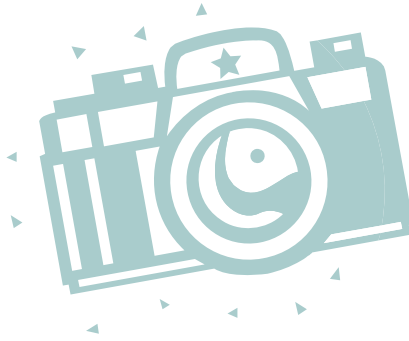
May 2008

Volume 22, Number 9

## May Meeting Topic: Members' Night: Share Your Photos!

Our May meeting is the traditional Members' Night. Anyone who would like to share pictures of birds or birding experiences is welcome to do so. There will be a slide projector and a digital projector and laptop for Power-Point presentations.

In addition, we will be treated to a short report from Venable Elementary School second grade students. MBC provided these students with materials for a bird feeding station for the first time this school year, and the children will tell us what they have learned from the experience.



## Annual Potluck June 12th

Mark your calendars and join us for the MBC annual potluck supper at the Ivy Creek Natural Area's Education Building. Please bring a dish to share. More details to follow in next month's newsletter.



## A Note of Thanks...

Our sincerest appreciation for the opportunity you afforded Liz and I on April 10 to share some of our birding experiences in Kenya, and for the warm reception that we received at both the dinner and meeting. We are so impressed by your leadership, publicity, and enthusiastic participation in the furtherance of birdwatching and conservation. The honorarium will be put to good use as we prepare to return to Togo, West Africa on May 25. Hopefully this will not be the last time we and your excellent club will get together!

Warm regards, Sam and Liz Williams

## Comments From the President

We are what we eat, so I've heard. Well, our migratory birds are what we eat also, and I'm not referring to exotic avian fare on the menu. The choices we make when we go to the supermarket have serious ramifications for the health and survival of many of our migratory birds. Making the right choices is one way that we can act for bird conservation.

A New York Times article this past March described how birds that we know and love have been poisoned by highly toxic chemicals that they ingest on their wintering grounds. Since the 1980s the amount of pesticides used in Latin America has increased fivefold in order to produce the large amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables that North American and European consumers enjoy during the winter months. Chemicals banned in the US are used extensively in Central and South America

to boost production. Songbirds such as Bobolinks, Barn Swallows and Eastern Kingbirds have been found with serious neurological disorders after feeding in fields sprayed with these toxic materials, and these birds are experiencing severe population declines. Pesticides may be a major reason why.

So here's what you might consider putting in your shopping cart: melons, green beans, tomatoes, bell peppers and strawberries provided they are not imported from Latin America. Organic bananas only please. These are one of the worst crops for "pesticide loads". And wash that banana down with shade grown coffee – naturally. This is one way we can think globally and act locally. If we are what we eat, choose carefully and be a friend to the birds. The birds will thank you and reward us with their presence in the lives of our grandchildren.

-Jenny Gaden

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# BIRDING THE HOLY LAND

BY ROB CAPON

During our recent trip to Kibbutz Lotan in Southern Israel, my wife Rose thoughtfully arranged for me to enjoy three days of birding with a guide. It was a fabulous experience. The kibbutz arranged one of Israel's leading guides to lead the tour at the height of the bird migration from Africa through Israel to Europe and Asia. During the three-day trip, I saw over 100 life-species, and photographed approximately 80 new species. Habitats included salt-settling ponds from the Red Sea, sewage treatment plants, date plantations, farms and dessert wadis.



I've included photographs of some of the species that we saw: Chukar, Great Grey



Shrike and the very exotic Hoopoe of biblical fame (my favorite bird of the trip.)



By chance, a British banding team was staying at the Kibbutz during a 10-day banding project. The banders set up



nets and traps to catch the birds so that they could be banded. The banders skillfully handled the birds to collect measurements and band the birds. A photo of Blackcap is shown.

The highlight of the trip for me was birding the wadis, dry river beds in the desert. These seemingly desolate strips of green vegetation and Acacia in the middle of the Negev serve to concentrate a wonderful range of dessert species and migrants.

Israel is a major migration flyway, and is a wonderful birding destination during the Spring and Autumn.

## 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 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 June issue is May 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  
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Please visit our website at  
[www.monticellobirdclub.org](http://www.monticellobirdclub.org)

## Monticello Bird Club Board Members

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<b>Vice President</b>	Jim Hill	<a href="mailto:jimcarhill@comcast.net">jimcarhill@comcast.net</a>	975-6523
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<b>Field Trips</b>	John Zimmerman	<a href="mailto:jozimmva@embarqmail.com">jozimmva@embarqmail.com</a>	974-9293
<b>Speakers</b>	Pat Wilczek	<a href="mailto:pat.wilczek@comcast.net">pat.wilczek@comcast.net</a>	985-4444
<b>Publicity</b>	Ellen Dudley	<a href="mailto:emdudley@nexet.net">emdudley@nexet.net</a>	244-2688
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<b>Newsletter</b>	Amy Gilmer	<a href="mailto:akgilmer@comcast.net">akgilmer@comcast.net</a>	825-2170
<b>Membership</b>	Jim Nix	<a href="mailto:jim-nix@comcast.net">jim-nix@comcast.net</a>	973-7366
<b>Birdseed Sale</b>	Jim Hill	<a href="mailto:jimcarhill@comcast.net">jimcarhill@comcast.net</a>	975-6523

## Upcoming Field Trips

### Albemarle Spring Count Saturday, May 3

Contact Jim Childress at 434-823-4462 or [jim.childress@odcm.com](mailto:jim.childress@odcm.com) for details.

### Birding Before Work Ivy Creek Natural Area May 5 - 9

Enjoy the Spring migrants each morning before work on a bird walk at Ivy Creek Natural Area 7-8 am. **Meet in the ICNA parking lot at 7 am.** Leaders include May 5 - John Zimmerman, May 6 - Dave Hogg, May 7 - Teresa Shaner, May 8 - Stauffer Miller, and May 9 - Jim Nix. Questions? Contact John at 434-974-9293 or [jozimmva@embarqmail.com](mailto:jozimmva@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. 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. Join Peter Brask on the May 3rd walk.

### Southern Albemarle County Saturday, May 10

Join Stauffer Miller at the Crossroads Store, North Garden, at the intersection of Route 29 south and Plank Rd. at 7:30 am. We'll carpool over Sharon and Old Green Mountain roads, two of the better warbler roads in the county, and once there implement car shuttles so that we can walk, mostly downhill, stretches of these very pleasant roads. After finishing that, we may visit a few other areas, planning on returning to the store about noon. The Crossroads Store has restrooms, breakfast, and lunch food, and a diverse coffee selection. This should be a pleasant, non-rigorous outing. Questions? Contact Stauffer Miller, 434-296-5505 or [stauffer@seepub.com](mailto:stauffer@seepub.com)

### Rt. 610 and Cowbane Prairie Saturday, May 17

John Zimmerman will lead this trip along Rt. 610 and to Cowbane Prairie. **Meet in the Giant parking lot, Seminole Square at 6:15 am.** We will stop in the Afton Inn parking lot at 6:45 am (Rockfish Gap) if you would like to meet us there. Short, easy walks wherever we stop along the road. Rest stop in Stuarts Draft will be included. Then onto Cowbane which hopefully could be wet. Questions? Contact John at 434-974-9293 or [jozimmva@embarqmail.com](mailto:jozimmva@embarqmail.com)

### VSO Annual Meeting and Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival May 16-18, 2008 Giles County, Virginia

Register now for this year's annual Virginia Society of Ornithology meeting, held in conjunction with the Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival in Giles County, Virginia at the Mountain Lake Hotel. This weekend promises to be an exciting experience.

The keynote speaker will be Ian Sinclair, who will provide a view from the Eastern Hemisphere with his presentation "The Lighter Side of Birding Darkest Africa". Also, Bill Hilton, Jr. will provide a view from the Western Hemisphere with a review of his continuing work banding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds on both their breeding grounds in the United States and on their wintering grounds in Costa Rica.

There will be a rich variety of field trips and workshops to attend. All will be lead by birders or naturalists that are knowledgeable about their subject and enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge. Also scheduled are guided rafting trips on the historic New River offering unique bird sightings. In addition to the many hikes and workshops around the Mountain Lake Hotel and Jefferson National Forest, there will be activities for children in the conservancy at Mountain Lake.

Registration for field trips will be in advance. To make certain that everyone has an equal opportunity to sign up for the trips of their choice, the trips and their descriptions are posted on the festival website: [www.mountainlakebirding.com](http://www.mountainlakebirding.com).

Those wishing to receive information by mail may call Peggy Opengari at 540 921-4340 or email at [gramby@pentel.net](mailto:gramby@pentel.net). Registration can be done online or by mail.

## MBC Minutes for April 10, 2008

President Jenny Gaden welcomed newcomers. 46 individuals were present.

**Treasurer's Report:** Konat reported the club's income at \$10,529 to date for 2008, \$9,347 spent, leaving a NET income of \$1,182, with \$15,237 in the bank.

**Field Trips:** John Zimmerman mentioned several upcoming bird trips and events. Sunday April 13th the trip to the James River Wildlife Management Area was scheduled to be led by Stauffer Miller. A trip on April 26th to Secluded Farm was scheduled to be led by Dave Hogg and Jim Nix. In May 'Birding Before Work' will take place on May 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 at Ivy Creek from 7am to 8 am. This is an opportunity to see migrating warblers.

**Announcements:** One or two people are needed to organize the Bluebird trails and nesting boxes, originally organized by Bob Hammond. Tasks include supervising maintenance, repairs and replacement of boxes and communication with the trail monitors who are assigned to each trail. A CD from the Hampton Roads Bird Club about establishing trails and Bluebird houses is available. Contact Jenny Gaden if you are interested in borrowing the CD to learn more about this and/or if you would like to help out with this project.

The annual VSO Annual Meeting will take place on May 16-18, 2008 at Mountain Lake in Giles County. The Birding Festival and Bluebird Society meeting are overlapping with this.

**Bird Sightings:** Due to numerous sightings, the following is not complete. Bill Leaning observed Purple

Martins who were harassed by Tree Swallows. A Cooper's Hawk then took the martins out. He has had Red-breasted Nuthatches and a hermit thrush also. Nancy Newman reported seeing a female Red-breasted Grosbeak at Darden Towle Park. She also spotted a crow carrying a white plastic bag in an attempt to masquerade as an eagle. One club member reported that a black bear took down all of his bird feeders. Stauffer Miller reported the rescue of a lost American Coot by Joe and Betty Mooney at the downtown parking garage. Another person saw a Barred Owl. John Zimmerman saw Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Ducks and Buffleheads on Old Trail Lake. Peter Dutnell saw a Peregrine Falcon. Mark Gottlob reported building and putting up a bird house which almost immediately was occupied and now has 3 eggs in it. A Common Loon in breeding plumage was seen at Ragged Mountain Reservoir.

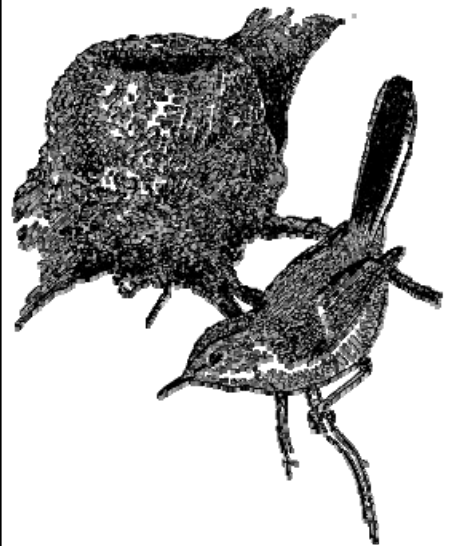
**Presentation:** Speakers Sam and Liz Williams were introduced and gave a fascinating presentation of photos, commentary and some music, created from their recent time in Kenya, much of which was spent at Kijab, a mission compound there. Sam reported that he has recently transitioned to a digital camera, a Nikon D200. His photos were an impressive display of what can be done using this camera.

*Submitted by Phyllis Binder*

## ELECTION 2008

It is time to select our Monticello Bird Club leadership for the upcoming year. During our May meeting we will be voting for a new slate of officers.

President--Stauffer Miller  
Vice-President--Jim Hill  
Treasurer--Henry Konat  
Secretary--Peggy Cornett



*Image from Missouri Dept. of Conservation:  
<http://mdc.mo.gov/nathis/>*

While working in the garden in mid-April I watched a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher pecking at a tent caterpillar nest in a nearby cherry tree. I am suspicious that the bird was not after the caterpillars but instead was collecting the silk from the caterpillar nest to construct its own nest.

Jenny Gaden