



Monticello Bird Club

October 2008

Volume 23, Number 2

October Meeting Topic: Northern Saw-whet Owls in northwestern Virginia

Our speaker this month, Clair Mellinger, will present a Power Point presentation highlighting some of his current research on Northern Saw-whet Owls. In October and November he spends many night ours banding these birds at Highland Retreat Camp.



Dr. Mellinger tagging an owl.
<http://www.emu.edu/news/index.php/555>

Dr. Mellinger is a Professor Emeritus with Eastern Mennonite University where he taught ecology, botany, and field biology courses (including ornithology) for over 35 years. He is an active member of the Rockingham Bird Club and currently serves as the Records Committee Chair. In that capacity he edited and wrote a small book called the *Birds of Rockingham County*. He has also served the VSO as President, Murray

Award Committee Chair, and in other capacities.

Please join MBC members and our speaker for dinner at Wild Greens Restaurant in the North Wing of Barracks Road Shopping Center on October 9th at 5:45 pm prior to the meeting.

Upcoming Meeting Topics

November 13th: Teta Kain will present "Antarctic Ice—The Ultimate Adventure"

2008 Bird Seed Sale



Fall is here, and it is time for our Annual Bird Seed Sale. We

not only need your orders, but those of your friends and neighbors. Order forms are due October 31, 2008.

Comments From the President

Chances to hear about our smallest owl, the Northern Saw-whet, don't come along very often. With that in mind, I hope you'll make it to our October meeting and program. This little owl has been at the center of my actions and activities on several occasions. Back in 1991, when Ellie and I were living in Frederick County, Maryland, I was heavily into birding my county, as I am now with Albemarle. The Saw-whet was a bird I much wanted to see in Frederick County, but which to that point had eluded me.

One day in early March, knowing the date was about right for their migration and knowing of a habitat which seemed suitable, I set out to look for one. I walked about in a small cedar

thicket, looking for clues, and finally found what I was looking for, white-wash on branches. I approached carefully and there was the owl, peering back at me. We put our local bird club's telephone tree into hot operation and on the next day, a Sunday, about twenty people followed me to the spot and enjoyed a nice look at the owl. One of these people, a good friend named Kathy Calvert, was very pregnant, possibly a day or two beyond her due date. But she wanted to see that owl, so she made the twisting uphill walk along with the others. Her child was born a day or so later. We often laugh about this outing. It certainly makes an easy way for me to remember the birthday of this child, now a seventeen-year-old teenager.

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Monticello Bird Club

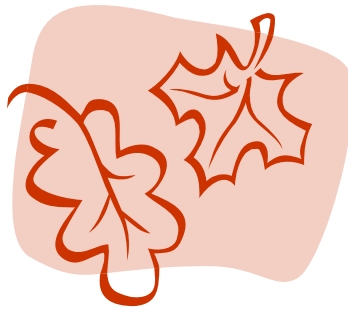
(Comments from the president continued from page 1)

When we were living on Cape Cod, possibly about the year 2000, Ellie, who was cyber-aware many years before me, learned through something she read on her computer of a Saw-whet banding station in Freeport, Maine. Since this sounded interesting and wasn't too far from the Cape, it was decided that I would offer it to our bird club as an overnight field trip. Seven or eight people signed up, and we went up there over the Columbus Day weekend. Freeport of course is the home of L. L. Bean and a myriad of outlet stores. I remember releasing my group for a few hours of afternoon shopping, since the banding station opened well after dark.

I also recall trying to negotiate winding Maine back roads after dark to find the banding site and the great relief when I finally did. Also to my relief, on the first net run to check for any netted owls, one had been caught. The bander brought the owl into his kitchen, and each member of our

group got to hold the owl, and in a few cases, get photographed with it. It was a night to remember for all who were there. On our way home, we stopped in Saco, Maine for some reason, got lost and in getting ourselves un-lost, found a place called Mike's which had excellent lobster rolls at a quite reasonable price. So great was the acclaim over them, they practically replaced the owl as the centerpiece of the trip. You would think we had come to Saco from Virginia where the lobster roll would be a rarity, rather than Cape Cod where they are common. No lobster rolls on October 9th but plenty of information about *Aegolius acadicus*. See you there.

-Stauffer Miller



Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch 2008

The 2008 Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch is well underway at the Inn at Afton, located on the southern side of Rockfish Gap. The migrating raptors are counted by volunteer birders. The count was recently featured on National Public Radio station, WVTF (to listen to the story visit http://www.wvtf.org/news_and_notes/index.php). Visitors are encouraged to stop by to see hawks, eagles and falcons fly over on their way south to their wintering grounds. The peak of the Broad-winged Hawk migration may have passed, but there are still many other exciting species passing through central Virginia. The count continues until November 23, 2008. For more information and directions, visit http://home.ntelos.net/~btkin/rockfish_gap_hawk_watch/

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

Monticello Bird Club
P.O. Box 4362
Charlottesville, Virginia 22905
Please visit our website at
www.monticellobirdclub.org

Monticello Bird Club Board Members

President	Stauffer Miller	stauffer@secpub.com	296-5505
Vice President	Jim Hill	jimcarhill@comcast.net	975-6523
Secretary	Peggy Cornett	pcornett@monticello.org	984-9816
Treasurer	Henry Konat	henryk54@verizon.net	540-948-4771
Field Trips	John Zimmerman	jozimmva@embarqmail.com	974-9293
Speakers	Pat Wilczek	pat.wilczek@comcast.net	985-4444
Publicity	Ellen Dudley	emdudley@nexet.net	244-2688
Hospitality	Priscilla Kingston	kingston@cstone.net	293-5173
Newsletter	Amy Gilmer	akgilmer@comcast.net	825-2170
Membership	Jim Nix	jim-nix@comcast.net	973-7366
Birdseed Sale	Jim Hill	jimcarhill@comcast.net	975-6523

Upcoming Field Trips

Secluded Farm Saturday, October 11

Meet in parking lot off northbound Hwy. 20 just north of the Hwy. 53 junction at 7:30 am. Easy hike. We'll be back by noon. Leaders: Dave Hogg and Jim Nix. Questions? Contact Jim at (434) 973-7366 or jim-nix@comcast.net

First Saturday Bird Walks At Ivy Creek Natural Area

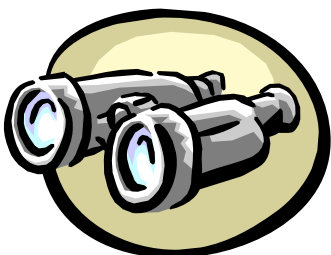
On the first Saturday of each month the Monticello Bird Club hosts a bird walk at Ivy Creek Natural Area (ICNA) at 7:30 am. Each month a different walk leader takes groups on the trails to see the birds of ICNA. The walks start in the parking lot of ICNA.

Western Lakes Saturday, October 18

Join us for an exciting trip to Beaver Creek Reservoir, Old Trail, and King's Vineyard. Meet in the parking lot at Seminole Square in front of Giant at 7:15 am. Folks can also meet the group at Beaver Creek around 7:30 am. Leader: John Zimmerman 434-974-9293 or jozimmva@embarqmail.com

Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 14

Mark your calendars now! The 2008 Charlottesville Christmas Bird Count will be held on December 14th.



Chincoteague NWR & Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel November 21-23

Join field trip leader, John Zimmerman on a visit to this birding hot-spot. Meet at south end CBBT in administration parking lot at 9:45 am on Friday, November 21st. The visit to CBBT islands limited to 15 persons with prior submission of information sheet for security clearance. Information sheet can be downloaded from the www.cbbt.com/birding.html or can be obtained from John Zimmerman at the October meeting (or request by phone or e-mail), but must be returned to John by November 7th to be mailed to the CBBT. Depending upon the number of participants there will be a fee of around \$10/person payable at time of trip to the CBBT. You must also present a picture ID (e.g. driver's license) to the security officer. If you do not choose to do the CBBT, meet at Visitors Center, Eastern Shore National Wildlife Refuge between 12:30 - 1 pm. Reservations for Chincoteague for the nights of November 21 and 22 can be made at the Island Motor Inn (757-336-3141), mention you are with the Monticello Bird Club for the group rate of \$88/ night. 3 day prior cancellation limit.

DUES FOR 2008-2009

Monticello Bird Club dues for Fiscal Year 2008-2009 are due. Dues become "overdue" on November 30, 2008, when we may terminate your newsletter subscription. Membership categories are:

*Individual Member \$15,
Family/Contributing Member \$25
Sponsor \$50.*

A membership form is included in this newsletter, or can be downloaded from the MBC website, www.monticellobirdclub.org

Please send your check, payable to the Monticello Bird Club to:

**Monticello Bird Club
P.O. Box 4362
Charlottesville, VA 22905**

Please indicate your newsletter format preference, if you have not previously done so, for receiving the MBC Newsletter. This can be either electronic (via Email), paper, or both. *Electronic only is the preferred format* in that it is environmentally friendly. Either mark your format preference on the membership form when sending in your 2008-2009 dues, or Email your preference to either:

Jim Nix (Membership Chairman) at jim-nix@comcast.net, or

Henry Konat (Treasurer) at henryk54@verizon.net.

MBC Minutes for September 11, 2008

Stauffer Miller presided over his first meeting as MBC president and welcomed 43 people to the first meeting of the fall season. Included were newcomers: Worthy Martin and his friend Steve Carrier, Dean Joyner (mother of Ivy Creek executive director Karen Joyner), and Brian Morrison.

Treasurer's Report: Henry Konat reported he made a large purchase for the club of envelopes to mail the newsletter but that should be covered soon when dues start arriving. Income \$405; expenses \$1003; net loss \$598. The club has \$13,284 in the bank.

Newsletter: Amy Gilmer urged members to submit photos or other items to share to the newsletter. Deadline for submissions is the 20th of every month. She also encouraged MBC members to become VSO members.

Birdseed Sale: Jim Hill reminded the group the birdseed order form will be in the next newsletter. This sale is our only fundraiser. Pick up will be Saturday November 8th at the Virginia Department of Forestry warehouse, as usual. Cedar bluebird nesting boxes will also be on sale.

Programs: Stauffer praised Pat and Frank Wilczek for their heroic efforts in finding speakers for our monthly meetings. Speakers have been lined up through April.

Field Trips: John Zimmerman suggested birders might want to bring their umbrellas to the Sept 13th Scogo Lake field trip but, despite possible rain, predicted good edge habitat for warblers and "odds & ends." Stauffer Miller will lead a trip to Southern Albemarle County on Sept 20th—nice gravel roads, scrub habitat, anything is possible! Jim Nix &

Dave Hogg will take a trip to Secluded Farm on Oct 11th. The annual trip to the CBBT and Chincoteague will take place Nov 21 & 22 this year. Reduced motel rate is \$88/night. This is always a really good trip. Contact John Zimmerman for info.

Recent Bird Sightings: Lou & Stephanie Tanner saw Wedge-tailed Eagles in Australia and other magnificent things in Tasmania, including the laughing Kookaburra. Nancy Newman passed around a photo of the Red Crossbills she saw at Cranberry Glades in West Vir-

ginia. Jim Hill reported the Red-tailed Hawks that regularly nest in his neighborhood didn't this year and he wonders if a particularly aggressive Rough-legged Hawk might have deterred them. Charles O'Brian brought a 1935 recording of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker from Cornell to the meeting and played it for the group. Stauffer reported a Black-chinned Hummingbird had been visiting a local feeder for two weeks but very few found out about it until after the bird had left. *Drat!*

-Nancy King
for Peggy Cornett

Monticello Bird Club

Membership Form

BECOME A MONTICELLO BIRD CLUB MEMBER FOR 2008-2009!

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!

Renewal New Member

Individual (\$15)

Family / Contributing (\$25)

Sponsor (\$50)

Additional Donation \$ _____



Name _____

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City _____

State _____ Zip _____

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Email _____

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

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Please make check payable to Monticello Bird Club.

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