



Monticello Bird Club

April 2014 Newsletter

Website: www.monticellobirdclub.org

Volume 28

Issue 8

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

MBC Monthly Meeting—Thursday, April 10th at 7:00pm

Comments from the President

Doug Rogers

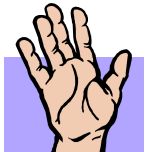


Within the last month or so, a representative of the VSO requested volunteers from both the Monticello Bird Club and the Augusta Bird Club. These volunteers would serve on a committee to plan the 2015 VSO Annual Meeting to be held in Wintergreen, and both clubs would jointly host the event. I immediately joined, as did three other MBC members, plus two more who agreed to serve, if needed. On March 16 we had the first planning meeting at the Rockfish Valley Foundation Natural History Center. We requested volunteers to be General Chairperson, and Committee Chairs for Programs, Finances, Registration, Arrangements, Field Trips, Hospitality and Exhibits. **Within minutes, we had volunteers to fill these positions!** How refreshing was that? How wonderful!

This year, the **MBC needs to fill three positions:** Bird Seed Sales, Field Trips, and Publicity. I already have a volunteer to be nominated to fill Field Trips; I need volunteers to be nominated to do Bird Seed Sales and Publicity. Here is the job description of the Publicity Chair:

"The Publicity Chair will work jointly with the Membership Chair to publicize the Club and increase membership. On a monthly basis, the Publicity Chair gets the monthly speaker announcements from the Programs Chair and sends that on to a list of newspapers, news stations, Radio stations, websites, etc (about 12 different places in total). On occasion the Publicity Chair represents the Club (sometimes along with the Membership Chair) at events such as Tufton Farm's open house, City Market, and C'Ville Eco Fair. This could also involve creating flyers and such to be used at these events and to be put up on local community boards."

If you would like to consider either of these positions and get to know more people in the Club, enjoy more of the Club's activities, and be part of the operation of this dynamic Club, please volunteer your services, and contact me ASAP.



Speaker of the Month: Doug Rogers

Stauffer Miller

Our speaker, Doug Rogers will not be wearing his Club president "hat" for the Thursday, April 10th meeting. Vice President, Kathy Sudduth, will officiate while Doug gets set up for his presentation, ***The Atlantic Puffin—More than a Life Bird.***

In June of 2013, Doug and Joanne enrolled in the weeklong "*Joy of Birding*" course at Audubon's Hog Island Camp in Bremen, Maine. Their goal was to see the Atlantic Puffin, a life bird, and enjoy the learning experiences and adventures the Camp had to offer. They got three life birds during the trip, and following the



Atlantic Puffin
Photo by Linda Widdop

trip, Doug was so intrigued with the puffins, he decided to learn much more about them and the special challenges the species faces in today's world.

Doug's thirty minute presentation of narrative and slides moves quickly between its three parts. Part 1 is interesting info about the Atlantic Puffin that you might not know; Part 2 is a brief look at the history of Audubon's *Project Puffin* on Hog Island, ME – an effort to restore a breeding population of Atlantic Puffins to the Maine coast; and Part 3 is a look at the birds, adventures and experiences in the "*Joy of Birding*" course.

As usual, we take our speakers to dinner before they present their programs. Please join us at the Brick Oven Restaurant at 5:30pm on April 10th to dine with our Club's President, Newsletter Editor, and Programs Chair.

First Saturday Bird Walk

April 5, 7:30am

On the first Saturday of each month (for twenty years!), 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 Winter-Spring 2014

Apr. 5...Janet Paisley

Jan. 4 Jim Nix
Feb. 1 Teresa Shaner
Mar. 1 Peter Dutnell
May 3 ... Stauffer Miller
June 7 ... David White

Birding Tidbits

...about a bird you might find on the Bird Walk at Ivy Creek in April
by Janet Dalton

Belted Kingfisher

These shaggy crested birds are powder-blue grey; males have one blue band across a white breast, while females have a blue and chestnut band. Belted Kingfishers feed near inland bodies of water and are often seen perched over calm water waiting for small fish to swim near the surface. With their loud, dry rattling call, they are more likely to be heard before they're seen.

In the spring, Belted Kingfishers nest in underground burrows, a trait shared by few North American birds. Both parents tend the checks who are fed diligently for about four weeks, at which point the parents cease to bring food so as to coax the young birds out of their burrow. The Belted Kingfisher is able to withstand cold temperatures as long as open water is available, so look for them all year long in our area!



Belted Kingfisher
Photo by "Mike" Michael L. Baird
Wikimedia Commons

Field Trips

Organized by John Davis

Great Blue Heron Rookery Richmond, Va

Saturday, April 19, 7:00am
Led by Doug Rogers



Doug will lead this trip to visit the natural wonder of a heron rookery, right in the midst of the City of Richmond! There you can observe Great Blue Herons courting, nest-building, and breeding in preparation for egg-laying and raising chicks.

Directions: Meet in time for a 7:00am carpooling departure in the parking lot at **Starbucks on Pantops**. If you want to meet us at the Heron Rookery, please contact Doug for specific driving instructions. (434-973-7634, doug5996@gmail.com)

Birding Before Work:

Weekday Mornings: 7:00-8:30am
April 28—May 2
May 5—May 9

Meeting Places and 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 Hollywood Cemetery. Where the road ends, turn left into the park. One can also go east on East Market Street, turn left just after passing Woolen Mills Church, and follow that road one block to the "confluence" of Chesapeake and the park. Go straight into the park.

Week One



Week Two

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!

Date	Site	Leader
April 28	ICNA	Dave Hogg
April 29	O-Hill	Janet Paisley
April 30	ICNA	Jim Nix
May 1	ICNA	Gabriel Mapel
May 2	RP	Stauffer Miller
Date	Site	Leader
May 5	O-Hill	Janet Paisley
May 6	ICNA	Peter Dutnell
May 7	RP	Joanne Bricker
May 8	ICNA	Lou Tanner
May 2	ICNA	Jenny Gaden

Rivanna Trails:
Pen Park to Dunlora
Saturday, April 26, 7:00am
Led by Dave Hogg

Dave will lead us a 2 mile walk on the RTF Trail from Pen Park to Dunlora. As we follow the Rivanna River through several varied habitats, we will be looking for kingfishers, gnatcatchers, Louisiana Waterthrushes, Yellow-throated Warblers and other migrants.

Directions: Meet at 7:00am at the Pen Park picnic shelters.

Notes from BRYBC

by Gabriel Mapel



The Young Birders Club had our outing up to Humpback Rocks on the Blue Ridge Parkway on March 15th to witness the mating display of the American Woodcocks. What started as an extremely windy event turned into a gorgeous, calm evening with 5-10 woodcocks displaying, and 9 young birders witnessing the event! It was a *life bird* for most of the young birders, and the 9 *young birders* was a "*peak count*" for one of our trips. Although we don't have any upcoming trips planned as of yet, we are planning on joining the Augusta Bird Club at Maple Flats and are going to have several spring migration warbler trips, a May meeting, and a June Highland County Field Trip. We are also in the process of completely redoing our website and are going to continue to monitor the Bluebird Trail at PVCC. So, we are going to be as active as ever. If you know of any young birders, please consider referring them to our club! More information can be found at our website www.blueridgeyoungbirders.org

Treasurer's Notes

by Maynard K. Davis

There's currently a budget surplus of about \$1000. The Board is considering project suggestions to make best use of these funds.



Membership Notes

by Lesslie Crowell

Please welcome our newest Club members, Roger & Carole Ingenthron and Joseph & Joanne Kopp.



MBC will have a publicity table at the Open House and plant sale sponsored by Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants at Tufton Farm from 9:00am to 3:00pm on Saturday, April 5th. Come on out to enjoy the gardens and informal workshops. And, don't forget to stop by the MBC table and say hello to me and my fellow MBC'ers.

MBC Minutes February 20, 2014

Peggy Cornett, Secretary



President Doug Rogers welcomed 61 members and guests. First time visitors included: Larry Ingles, Joe and Joanne Kopp, Linda Knapp, and Dan Meliza.

-Bird Sightings were shared. Gabriel Mapel saw two pairs of Red-necked Grebes and three Rudy Ducks during his recent outings. Jenny Gaden *heard* a Hermit Thrush and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Elinor Miller saw 16 Bald Eagles in her hometown and was informed that there are 1,400 Bald Eagles reported there.

-Nancy Newman showed photos of a leucistic American Robin. It is almost completely albino except for a black spot on its back. Joanne Bricker reported that, when cleaning out the Bluebird boxes near Martha Jefferson Hospital, she found brooding material and one French fry. John Holden saw three White-faced Ibis during a recent field trip.

-Maynard Davis gave the treasurer's report. The club currently has a surplus of \$1,100 and he is confident that using Pay Pal has been well worth the fee.

-Lesslie Crowell reported that we have 135 members. She will be manning a publicity table at the April 5 Center for Historic Plants Open House at Jefferson's Tufton Farm and twice at the City Market during April and May.

-John Davis gave the field trip updates. John Holden's trip to Dutch Gap was very productive. Leigh Surdukowski led the Northern Albemarle duck trip. The trip to York River State Park is scheduled for March 15; and a gathering to watch Woodcocks is set for March 21 at 6:30pm. Dave Hogg will lead the walk at Penn Park on April 26. Leaders are needed for additional April trips. James River Park is on May 4. The Pocasin Fire Road and Hog Island trip on May 17 will permit only 12 people. The "Birding Before Work" trips will take place April 28 – May 9 and will be held at Observatory-Hill, Riverview Park, and Ivy Creek Natural Area.

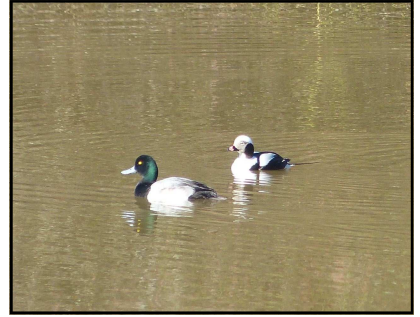
-Miscellaneous announcements: there are many bird books available at the Friends of the Library Book Sale.

-New and returning officers will be announced at the April meeting. John Davis is stepping down as field trip coordinator, and there is a need for volunteers to fill the Publicity and Bird Seed Sales positions.

Summary of Winter 2014 Albemarle County Birds

by Stauffer Miller

The arrival of spring 2014 makes an appropriate time to recapitulate the bird sightings of the highly interesting winter of 2014 in Albemarle County, a winter of interest both for its weather and birds. The much-publicized polar vortex arrived in early January and with it the freezing up of most ponds. The only Northern Pintail sighting of the winter occurred at this time, with several more sightings of probably the same individual at Lake Hollymead. On January 11th a flock of five Horned Grebes visited Chris Greene Lake. The first reports of Canvasbacks came on February 2nd when Tom Jones and Janet Paisley found several at the PVCC ponds. That same day, A. J. Parmeter found one at Lake Hollymead and Pete Myers one at Old Trail Pond.



*Greater Scaup and Long-tailed Duck
At Chris Greene Lake
Photo by Nancy Newman*



*Loggerhead Shrike
Langhorne Road
Photo by Janet Paisley*

On February 11th, two days before a fifteen-inch snowfall, Leigh Surdukowski found a striking male Long-tailed Duck at Chris Greene. Tom Jones took an equally striking photograph of it, and posted it on the Monticello Bird Alert. On February 16th Janet Paisley located a Loggerhead Shrike on utility wires along Langhorne Road, southern Albemarle. That same day, Jerry Therrien and Connie Arness found two Lapland Longspurs at the entrance to Greenfield Farm, same part of the county. The next day, Janet, Tom and I came upon the longspurs and enjoyed watching them feed at a corn-stubble, melting snow margin. With them were Horned Larks and American Pipits.

A Common Merganser pair was at Chris Greene Lake February 19th. With them was one Red-breasted Merganser and several Hooded Mergansers. A day later Teresa Shaner found, and Leigh Surdukowski posted, a report of a grebe that had puzzled Teresa, as it had a lot of white on the neck and yellow color on the bill. Tom Jones, Dave Hogg and Eve Gaige saw it under better lighting conditions later in the day and determined it was a Red-necked Grebe. Later on the 20th others studied the grebe, perplexed by the large amount of white on the neck. It was eventually concluded that the grebe was indeed a Red-necked in a plumage not depicted in the Sibley guide but well depicted in other field guides.

Meanwhile, numbers of Canvasbacks were growing, with a total of seventy seen by the author on three ponds March 2nd. Tundra Swans were in a few locations in the county that same day. A Merlin was seen a few times near the junction of Langhorne Road with Route 20, southern Albemarle. Two Red-necked Grebes were at Chris Greene on March 8th, as were two Common Goldeneyes, first found by Tom Jones. As the winter drew to its close, Cricket Barlow found an American Tree Sparrow at Lickinghole Creek on March 13th. The bird was still there the 14th and 15th. Finally, also on the fifteenth and also at Lickinghole Creek, Tom Jones, Leigh Surdukowski and Teresa Shaner saw four Sandhill Cranes. Thus concluded an extraordinary winter. The previously mentioned Monticello Bird Alert enabled rapid communication regarding sightings so that many of us could know about and see a bird or birds before it or they left our area. All of us who use the alert are most grateful to its founder, Rob Capon.

A Brief Preview of Spring at York River State Park

by Joanne Bricker

Sandwiched between two of our weekly snowstorms, the MBC Field Trip to York River State Park on March 15th was a breath of spring. Our group of sixteen birders plus co-leaders John Holden and Peter Dutnell were treated to warm sunshine and mild temperatures. Upon our arrival we saw rafts Ruddy Ducks and some Buffleheads on the York River. In the crystalline sunshine we had great views of several soaring Osprey and even spotted the gleaming white breasts of a couple brave Tree Swallows. Janet Paisley submitted a list of the 29 species observed throughout the day to eBird.



*Pine Warbler
York River State Park
Photo by Doug Rogers*

There were many great moments on this field trip (not cancelled by snow!), but the highlight for this participant was walking along the wooded trails, basking in the warmth and light of the day, and hearing the trill of Pine Warblers serenading us. Doug Rogers took the photo that documented the source of some of the welcome trills we were privileged to hear. Thanks, John and Peter, for a lovely day at this beautiful park.

2014 VSO Foray

by Susan Brown, Foray Coordinator

This is a call for participation in the 2014 VSO Foray, the annual breeding bird survey of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. The foray will take place between June 7-15 in Middlesex and King & Queen Counties. These counties border the beautiful Dragon Run, well-known as an "ecological gem". While we won't be able to kayak the run itself, as the water level will be too low by June, the area around it will be good for birding. These two counties are not heavily populated, so there's an abundance of woods and farmland. In addition, the Nature Conservancy has recently protected a large tract of forest. Along with the lands already protected by Friends of Dragon Run or the state, there are now over twenty thousand acres that are protected in the watershed. We will get together once or twice during the foray for a "tally" of how the foray is going if there's enough interest. If you think you might like to participate, please email Susan Brown at susanbb@umich.edu. If you want to participate but would prefer to do it together with another birder or two, let me know.



The Joy of Birding a personal sharing of stories and



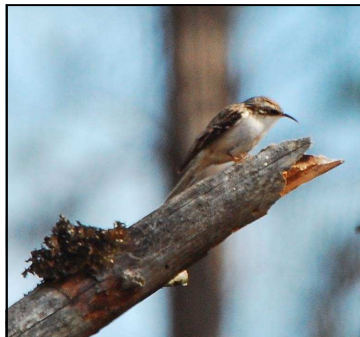
photos by



MBC members

Hopefully, our next newsletter will be full of words and pictures from **your springtime birding adventures**. Be sure to send them to your MBC Newsletter Editor, mbcnleditor@gmail.com, by April 20th for sharing in the May issue of MBC Newsletter.

Thank you,
Joanne



Little Visitor
Eve Gaige photographed this Brown Creeper enjoying the winter sunlight.



A male Northern Cardinal endures yet another winter snowstorm while waiting his turn at the busy feeding station on Doug Rogers' Pantops balcony.

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Monticello Bird Club

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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 Earlysville 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.

Also of note...

—The American Bird Conservancy offers useful information about how you can make a positive difference for migrating birds. Here's the link...

<http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/140320.html>

—To keep informed about the many local events of interest held at Ivy Creek Natural Area, check out their Public Program Calendar at

<http://ivycreekfoundation.org/education/>

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