



Monticello Bird Club

June 2015 Newsletter

Website: www.monticellobirdclub.org

Volume 29

Issue 10

Facebook: [Monticello Bird Club](#)

MBC Monthly Meeting— No June Meeting. See you in September!

Comments from the President

Doug Rogers



The End of another Birding Year (Almost!)

What a year it has been! So, what have we done?

Our Treasurer, Maynard Davis, fought the good fight with the Virginia Department of Taxation and won approval for the Club to actively solicit donations. Also, with his guidance, we now have a “Donate” button on our web site to receive donations on-line.

Our year started with preparations for our only fundraiser, the annual Bird Seed Sale. We asked for and got a great team of volunteers. Thanks again to these folks who organized, advertised, tracked and analyzed data, made calls and did the “heavy lifting” of loading the vehicles on pick up day. The result was one of the more successful Bird Seed Sales in the Club’s history!

Gabriel Mapel and a tribe of cohorts faithfully manned the Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch during the hawk migration. In addition Gabriel served as Field Trips Chair and has organized new and interesting field trips for every month. These field trips are enjoyed by folks new to birding as well as those more accomplished in this passion (some would call it an obsession!).

At Christmas time, Jenny Gaden organized the annual Christmas Bird Count.

Ten volunteers from the Club have led first Saturday Bird Walks at Ivy Creek Natural Area. These are typically attended by twelve to twenty people of all levels of birding skills.

Monthly Field Trips and Birding Before Work trips during spring migration were led by more than a dozen Club volunteers. The participants find that these trips start their work day with a good boost.

Articles, photos, and links for our monthly newsletter column, “The Joy of Birding” were submitted by quite a few of our membership. We love these personal stories and photos! The Newsletter now includes monthly columns entitled “Birding Tidbits” by Jenny Gaden and “Gardening for Wildlife” by Bill Leaning, and we look forward to reading them when each new issue arrives.

Our V.P. Kathy Sudduth guided the website modifications and served as back up for the President. Club Secretary, Peggy Cornett is the “glue” that holds it all together. She records meeting minutes and serves the “attest” function that makes the decisions of the MBC board legal. Our Speakers Chair, Stauffer Miller, produced great speakers at every meeting. Hospitality Chair, Priscilla Kingston (along with husband, Ron) is the “oil” that makes every meeting run smoothly. The chairs are in place and refreshments are always available thanks to her efforts. Newsletter Editor, Joanne Bricker has received lots of accolades for her efforts with the Club’s Newsletter. Membership Chair, Lesslie Crowell, has increased Club membership to 160!

We have had a very good year. I have been privileged to serve with this group of wonderful people. Good birding!

Speaker of the Month: Neither meeting nor speaker in June, but...

Here’s a sneak preview of what’s to come in September. Retiring Speakers Chair, Stauffer Miller, emailed me with a suggestion after our May club meeting. He said Pete Myers might be willing to do a presentation on eBird and gently prod the less technologically adept of us to overcome our anxiety and become acquainted with the ease of use and benefits of reporting our sightings. Because Pete was unable to meet with interested members on June 10th, we decided to cancel the June meeting. But Pete has graciously accepted the invitation of our new Speaker Chair, Lou Tanner, to be the presenting speaker at our first meeting in the fall, September 10. Pete will assemble a Team of current eBird aficionados and charm and educate us about incorporating technology into our birding experience so that we may all become better citizen scientists. Lou will tell us more in the September newsletter. Stay tuned!



Birding Tidbits about a bird you might find on the Bird Walk at Ivy Creek in June
by Jenny Gaden

First Saturday Bird Walk
June 6 at 7:30am

Great-crested Flycatcher

There is a sound of weeping in the woods these days, but not for sorrow. The song of the Great-crested Flycatcher is a rising “we-eeep” and we hear it all summer. It is the first signal in late April or early May that the migratory flycatcher has returned from its winter headquarters in Mexico, Central America or northern South America. There are variations of the song in the form of a burry “preep”, and even a vocalization that sounds like a non-threatening policeman’s whistle. This flycatcher is easily distinguished from other members of its family that spend the summer with us, the Eastern Phoebe and Eastern Wood-Pewee, by its larger size, brown back, rust colors in the wings and tail, gray head, and a lemon-yellow belly. And, yes, a jaunty crest tops the head. The nest,



Great-crested Flycatcher
Photo by wildreturn
Wikimedia Commons

contains an assortment of materials including grasses, hair, feathers, strands of rope, pieces of onion skin, plastic trash, and snake skins. On hot summer afternoons the Great-crested Flycatcher sometimes takes a dust bath in my garden – belly to the ground, wings spread to each side—utter contentment baking in the sun.

On the first Saturday of each month, 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

Apr. 4... Gabriel Mapel

May 2... Jim Nix

June 6 ... Leigh Surdukowski

July 4 ... Doug Rogers

Aug. 1 ... Jenny Gaden

Sept. 5 ... Tom Jones

For information about opportunities and events at Ivy Creek Natural Area, follow this link to the [Ivy Creek Foundation Public Program Calendar](#).



Field Trips

Organized by Gabriel Mapel



*Field Trips will resume in September.
Good Birding! Gabriel*

Mark your Calendar

Here’s a reminder from Ron Kingston that the **21st Annual Purple Martin Field Day** will take place on **Saturday, June 27th**. If you are interested in establishing or expanding a Purple Martin colony, this is the event for you! It starts at **10AM** at the farm of Merle and Lance Wood in Louisa County, Virginia (located between Richmond and Charlottesville).

Enjoy watching hundreds of these beautiful birds soaring and feeding their young while an expert tells you all about them. A nestbox trail tour to view bluebirds and Tree Swallows will begin at noon.

No registration is necessary. The event is free, but donations are appreciated to help cover expenses. Bring lawn chairs, binoculars, notepad, camera, and a picnic lunch to enjoy on the grounds. Drinks and snacks are provided.

For information and directions, visit the Purple Martin Field Day website,

www.purplemartinfieldday.org



Purple Martin
JJ Cadiz
Wikimedia Commons



Editor’s Note: Coincidentally, Janet Paisley sent along this great link to a [YouTube video entitled “Purple Martins.”](#) If you want to prep for the Field Day or just be informed, have a look.

Purple Martin Colony
Photo by Kathy Laine

Treasurer's Notes

by Maynard K. Davis



We currently have a surplus of \$500+ for the year. We just beat our budget goal for membership dues (\$3,180 vs. \$3,177). Our biggest expense last month was to update our website. Call me with any questions. Thanks to everyone for all the support this year.

Maynard

Membership Notes

by Lesslie Crowell



MBC extends a warm welcome to new members Bonnie Russman and Larry Engle. The club as of now has 160 members. Dues for the 2015-16 season are payable July 1; however, if you joined as a new member after March 1, you are covered for next year. Thank you to everyone for supporting MBC through your new and renewed memberships!

Lesslie

MBC Minutes, May 14, 2015

Submitted by Joanne Bricker & Lesslie Crowell for Secretary, Peggy Cornett



-President **Doug Rogers** opened the meeting with 28 in attendance and asked for **recent bird sightings**. **Carol Hill** was pleased to see a **Pileated Woodpecker** near her home. **Linda Lester**, while visiting in Illinois, got to see young **Barred Owls** fledge. **Peggy Cornett** reported seeing a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** at her bird feeder and hearing **bluebird song** in Belmont—both unexpected and welcome avian events in the city. She also reported on May 11 that at the **eagle's nest** at Tufton Farm she saw a juvenile at the edge of the nest and a parent nearby. **Doug Rogers and Joanne Bricker** saw two **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** at their (hummer) feeder on Pantops. **Susan Babineau** has been viewing **Orchard Orioles** in her Earlysville yard. **Lou Tanner** witnessed a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** duking it out with **two pigeons**. **Jim Nix** has heard a **Whippoorwill** calling inside the city limits. **Myrlene Staten** has been hearing **Northern Bobwhite** calls on her property in Madison.

-**Newcomers** included **Bonnie Russman**, and **Nancy Carley**. Also in attendance to support his patient, our esteemed speaker Bill Leaning, was **Dr. Preston Grice**.

Doug reminded everyone of the upcoming Pocosin Field Trip on Saturday, May 16, led by Field Trips Coordinator **Gabriel Mapel**. Doug also announced that the **website has been updated** so that it is now user-friendly for mobile phones. He reminded members of the **MBC Facebook page** and encouraged all to explore and participate.

-Doug opened a discussion about the June MBC meeting which has been a picnic potluck. Because it has been poorly attended for the past few years, members felt that it should be cancelled. A final decision was tabled, but members were encouraged to email the newsletter editor with possible alternatives. A final decision will be announced in the June newsletter.

-**Treasurer Maynard Davis** reported that our finances are fine. Recent expenses were \$200 to Abe Nelson for his website update and a donation of \$50 to the Roosevelt Pine Knot Foundation in appreciation of our recent field trip there. Maynard offered kudos to Lesslie Crowell, who sold bird houses and spread word of our fall bird seed sale while promoting MBC at Tufton Farm and during Historic Garden Week, and to Jeannie Holden for donating profits from the sale of her beautiful nature photographs at these events.

-**Membership Chair Lesslie Crowell** welcomed our newest member, Bonnie Russman, and thanked the Holdens and all the volunteers who took on publicity table shifts at recent events.

-**Doug recognized Stauffer Miller** for his many years of service as Programs Chair. Members heartily applauded Stauffer's efforts and showed how much they have enjoyed the excellence and wide range of programs and speakers he has procured for our club. "He'll be a hard act to follow," lauded Doug.

-**Stauffer** then introduced our speaker **Bill Leaning** who entertained us with his beautiful and informative "Birding in Thailand" presentation.



Secretarial Skills Solicited — Can You Help?

Peggy Cornett does a great job as MBC Secretary taking the meeting minutes for us and submitting them to the monthly newsletter. However, there are times when Peggy is unable to attend a meeting and would like to be able to call on a "volunteer secretary" to serve duty on those occasions when she has to be away. If you would be willing to be that person, please contact Peggy or the Newsletter Editor. Thanks!

(Contact info is on the final page of this newsletter.)

ALC Copies Inc.

1170 Emmet St.
295-2679

[A Local Choice](#)

orders@alccopies.com



ALC Copies Inc., a locally owned small business, generously supports our MBC Bird Club by printing our newsletters at no cost to us.

For your personal printing needs, please choose ALC!

Birders Needed...

Clyde Kessler, Metadata & Authority Control Specialist at Virginia Tech, is volunteering as coordinator of the **VSO Breeding Bird Foray for 2015**. This year's Foray will be in **Franklin County** from **June 6-14**. Evening gatherings will be at Ferrum College. Birders are needed to survey the area to "contribute to a better understanding of nesting birds" in this relatively under-studied Virginia county.

Mr. Kessler writes, "Some of the target species are Summer Tanager, Blue-headed Vireo (there are low elevation and high elevation populations in summer there), Brown-headed Nuthatch, Cerulean Warbler, Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. I hope participants can also find out more on the status of other species such as Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Whippoorwill, Chuck-will's-widow, and species in early successional habitat such as White-eyed Vireo, Prairie Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat and maybe even Golden-winged Warbler."

If you are interested in participating in this important event, here's a link to the [2015 Foray web page](#).



Catching up with the Blue Ridge Young Birders (Better Put on your Running Shoes!)

by Mary Mapel



The Blue Ridge Young Birders continue to be captivated by birds and learning all they can about them. Along with numerous field trips, our young birders also participated in several spring festivals this year by hosting a discovery table at Kidvention and the Ecofair in Charlottesville, as well as the Earth Day Kites and Kritters Festival in Staunton. Their Bluebird Trail monitoring efforts are well underway, both at PVCC and in the valley, with chicks having already fledged from some boxes. Our valley trail had an interesting predator when a Black Bear pulled apart and ripped down one of the nest boxes. Until this happened, we did not know that bears were considered bluebird nest box predators. Hopefully, this was a one time only occurrence.

The young birders are also active in other citizen science projects including this spring's Rusty Blackbird Blitz and the upcoming Nightjar Survey. We are thrilled to commence working on the Chimney Swift Tower at Ivy Creek. It will be a fun and educational conservation effort. We look forward to monitoring the swifts in their nesting and migratory flights and would like to thank all those that contributed to our fundraising efforts to make this project possible.

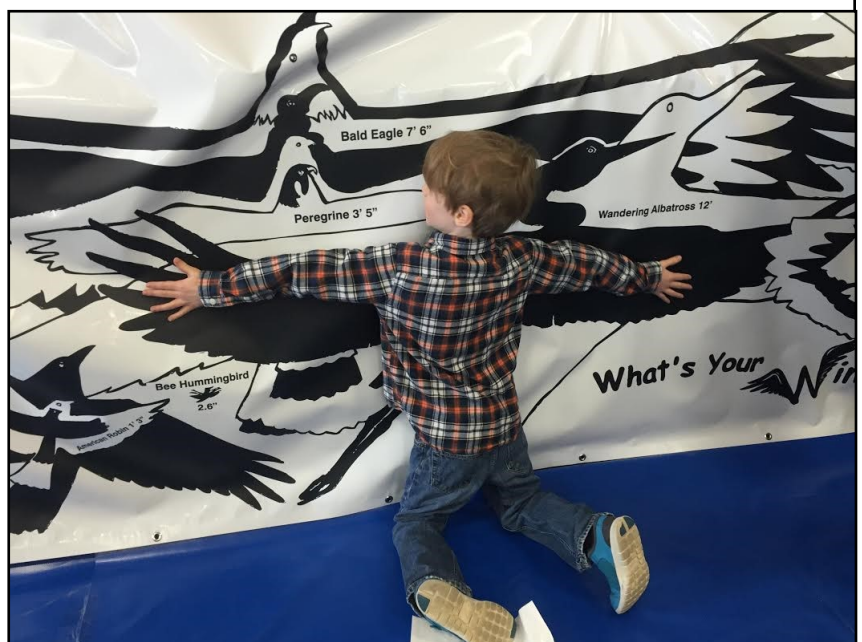
Our roving photo and art exhibit was very well-received in both Scottsdale and Fishersville this spring, and we will also be travelling to the Charlottesville downtown Central Library. We invite all MBC members, family and friends to a special First Friday Art Exhibit Open House on Friday, June 5th, 5-7pm, 3rd floor, Central Library, 201 E. Market Street. Come meet some of the young birders and view their artistic and photographic exhibit of birds they have seen. The exhibit will be on display the entire months of June and July.

In conjunction with the Young Birders exhibit, Central Library is hosting a movie night, Thursday, July 16, at 7pm. The film entitled "A Young Birders Guide to Everything" is a coming of age comedy about teenage birders. All ages are welcome to attend.

Three of our young birders are heading to the teen bird camp at Hog Island in Maine, and one of our young birders received a scholarship from the Augusta Bird Club to attend Nature Camp in Vesuvius, VA. We thank both MBC and ABC in the many ways that you continue to support our club.

Happy Summer and Good Birding to All!

The Young Birders' awesome new festival and exhibit banner (at right) gives prospective birding enthusiasts the opportunity to compare their own wingspans to life-size wingspans of various birds. (Know that's got to be a real crowd-pleaser!)



The Cornus Species—Part 2

Pagoda Dogwood *Cornus alternifolia*



Somewhat of a curiosity in the dogwood family, the Pagoda is one of the few specimens that is alternately branched. This species can develop into a large multi-stemmed shrub, although single-stemmed specimens are common. You can prune out any vertical suckers, thus enhancing the natural tendency of the branches to emerge in tiered whorls, creating a distinct pagoda-like structure. Young stems are green at first, changing to a deep purplish brown. The older stems and trunk turn gray. Airy cream-colored flowers in 2 to 3 inch clusters form above the foliage. Pagoda Dogwood blooms a little later than its cousin, the Flowering Dogwood.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Pagoda Dogwood, there are seven specimens growing at the Thomas Jefferson Parkway Arboretum which flower in late April/early May. The bird-friendly purplish black fruit ripen in July, a couple of months before its cousin.

Like most dogwoods, moist, acid, well-drained soils and partial shade are ideal. It is reported to do quite well in full sun with little or none of the leaf scalding or bleaching, sometimes, seen on *C. florida*. It is also resistant to Dogwood Anthracnose. Although rare in the nursery trade, I think it is a wonderful, small, native tree well worth including in a wildlife landscape. We obtained our specimen from the Marck McVicker Nursery in Scottsville.



Silky Dogwood *Cornus amomum*

I have not searched for this member of the dogwood family in nurseries as we have it growing, naturally, at Omanu. Although considered native, it was, actually, introduced in 1658. It is “native” in low woods, along streams (where our specimens are) and borders of swamps over much of the eastern United States. It prefers moist, partially-shaded situations. Creamy flowers similar to those of the Pagoda Dogwood appear in May-June. The berries, almost porcelain blue, ripen in August but persist for only a very short time, for the birds (and the squirrels) quickly harvest the fruits. Silky Dogwood is adaptable to extremes of soil, in sun or shade. It would be great for a shrub border or for mass planting and naturalizing.

Bloodtwig Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*

The Bloodtwig or Redtwig Dogwood like the previous species, generally, labors in landscape obscurity. This cousin of the Silky Dogwood serves similar landscape purposes. The younger stems are blood red where exposed to the sun; older branches are greenish gray. If you, really, want red winter stem color to contrast against the snow, cut each bush to the ground in late winter to encourage long shoot extensions. The late May/early June flowering leads to shining purplish black fruit in August/September. They are almost unnoticeable (except to the birds) as they blend with the dark, green foliage.

Garden cultivars include “Midwinter Fire” and “Winter Flame” and they can grow 8 to 10 feet high. I only have one specimen (inside the deer fence!) at Omanu. It is the compact Redtwig Dogwood “Isanti”.

Cornelian Cherry *Cornus mas*



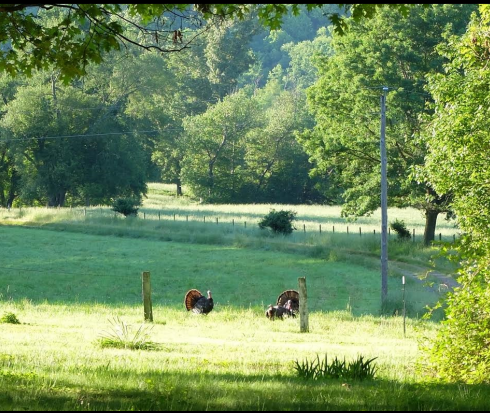
Few dogwoods are as durable as this under-utilized yellow-flowered, red-fruited species. The yellow blossoms on naked gray branches rival witch hazel in beauty and, in March, they are the only show in town. The flowers last for three weeks or longer. Cornelian Cherry is usually described as a large multi-stemmed shrub or small tree, branching to the ground. I have kept the suckers pruned out and removed the lower branches of the specimens at Omanu. The results are small attractive trees. Bright cherry red pear-shaped fruit about ¾ of an inch

long ripen in June and July. If not snacked on by the birds (and squirrels!), they make great preserves.

In the fall, Cornelian Cherry has similar autumn color to the more popular native Flowering Dogwood. The specimens in the Omanu landscape are “Golden Glory”, an upright form with abundant flowers. If it is colorful foliage you desire “Aurea” has yellow leaves, “Elegantissima” pink shading on young leaves, maturing to a green center with a yellow border and, finally, “Variegata”, also, has green centered, white bordered foliage.



Here are some photos from the places we frequent in May, seeking glimpses of our returned feathered friends.



While having breakfast, **Mary Lee Epps** watched "two gobblers displaying for a hen." Mary Lee apologizes for the lack of a good zoom lens on her camera, but no need. We can imagine your delight and relish your lush spring view!

...Yet another beautiful photo from **Bill Leaning** of a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** enjoying the environs of Omanu.



While the morning on **Heards Mountain** was a bit cloudy, there was enough light for **Doug Rogers** to capture the blue in this **Indigo Bunting**.

Janet Paisley has once again shared a gem of a find. This time it's a short You Tube video called

[How Wolves Change Rivers.](#)

This documentary clearly and concisely depicts the wide-ranging ramifications resulting from the reintroduction of an apex predator into its natural ecosystem. Take a few moments to savor this uplifting reminder of how we are all part of a Greater Whole.




The new green of spring on **Pocosin Fire Road** afforded **Nancy Newman** a clear view of this **Chestnut-sided Warbler**.



Eve Gaige found this perky **Prairie Warbler** in **Scottsville**.



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

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 Earlsyville 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.

President	Doug Rogers	doug5996@gmail.com	434-409-8156
Vice President	Kathy Sudduth	kas3m2@embarqmail.com	434-973-0690
Secretary	Peggy Cornett	pcornett@monticello.org	434-984-9816
Treasurer	Maynard K. Davis	davismk@sbcglobal.net	434-205-4268
Field Trips	Gabriel Mapel	birdmangabriel@yahoo.com	540-363-5035
Speakers	Stauffer Miller Lou Tanner	stauffer@seepub.com lmtannerxiv@gmail.com	434-296-5505 434-979-1722
Publicity	VACANT		
Hospitality	Priscilla Kingston	kingston@cstone.net	434-293-5173
Newsletter	Joanne Bricker	mbcnleditor@gmail.com	434-825-2676
Membership	Lesslie Crowell	lessliecrowell@aol.com	434-295-1395
Birdseed Sale	VACANT		