



Monticello Bird Club

April 2011

Volume 27, Number 8

Comments From the President

This time of year, as classes are nearing the First World War, a teacher of European History finds it hard to avoid quoting Sir Edward Grey for his exquisitely sad observation in August 1914 that “the lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time.” What is less well known about the then British Foreign Secretary is that he was also a devoted watcher of birds who even wrote a book on the subject entitled *The Charm of Birds* as well as one on fly-fishing. So enthusiastic a watcher was he in fact that when President Theodore Roosevelt was in Great Britain in 1910 and was hoping to be shown some birds by a local expert, Grey himself jumped at the chance and volunteered to lead Keene's favorite birder on a walk near his estate in southern England even though tensions were already on the rise in Europe. The details of the six mile hike were never posted on any web-site but it is a safe bet that few people alive could have enjoyed that day in June more than did these two great lovers of nature. The walk was re-enacted for the centennial this past year but those who are interested for reasons ornithological or historical can take it themselves whenever the fancy strikes them. One of these days . . .

Meanwhile, tree swallows are back at Walnut Creek. Out there in the world of nature something is stirring once again and Licking Hole Creek beckons. As Lord Grey and TR will not be able to make it in the morning, those planning to be there will just have to be content with Peter Brask and the rest of the MBC cast. Good enough for me.

Lou Tanner

April Meeting Program

Long-time Monticello Bird Club member Jim Nix will speak at its April 14th meeting. In 2010, Jim had the unusual opportunity to visit the bird-rich country of Colombia, through the auspices of the Pro-Aves group. In his tour, Jim saw some of the world's most threatened bird species, in some quite out-of-the-way parts of that South American country.

Travelling mostly in the highlands, the group visited many Pro-Aves reserves established to preserve the last remnants of key habitat home to extremely rare species. A few of the locations had previously been visited by only a few birding groups. The diversity of birds in Colombia is hard to believe. The group saw just over 500 species while in gorgeous Andean scenery. Believe it or not, two of the species seen were named for former members of the Monticello Bird Club!

Opportunities to hear about Colombia and its bird life don't come along very often, especially from a speaker as engaging as Jim. Do not miss this program. Also, join us for dinner before hand at 5:30 PM at La Cocina del Sol Restaurant, Hydraulic and Commonwealth, in Charlottesville.

Stauffer Miller

Upcoming Meeting Topics

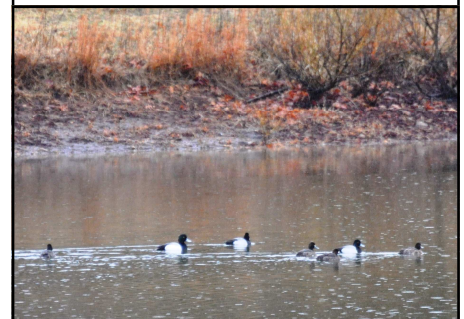
April 14th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
Birding in Colombia

May 12th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.
TBA

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Photo of Greater Scaup in the Old Trail pond. We are told that this is the first sighting since 1959.



We have been birding at Old Trail recently and seen some of the newest arrivals for spring.

Photo by Rob Capon.

Monticello Bird Club Business Meeting Minutes

Monticello Bird Club Minutes, 10 March 2011

Lou Tanner convened the meeting by welcoming newcomers Estelle Phillips from Charlottesville and Mark Simons, a sophomore at Western Albemarle High School. The attendance was 39. Dave Hogg reported on upcoming fieldtrips including the Woodcock watch with Jenny Gaden; the walk at Tufton Farm, led by Jim Nix and Peggy Cornett; and the trip to Licking Hole Creek with leaders Stauffer Miller and Peter Brask. Jenny Gaden gave more details about the logistics for the Woodcock watch. The place and time would be determined on the day of the walk and would depend on the presence of Woodcocks. Jenny planned to assess Saturday morning and email those interested with her decision. The preferred location is in Albemarle County near Whitehall, but if she didn't hear them during her scouting mission, the location would change to either Hump Back Rock or Beagle Gap on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Theresa Shaner reported that she received seven bird lists of Charlottesville and Albemarle County for last year (2010). There were 202-203 species and highlights included Horned Grebe, Northern Goshawk, Yellow Rail, Connecticut Warbler, Mourning Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler. She is happy to email the complete list upon request. Notable bird sightings during the past month were reported. Bill Leaning had Fox Sparrows all week at his Earlysville home. He also photographed a Cooper's Hawk. Teresa Shaner saw Red-breasted Nuthatches last weekend and she heard Woodcocks when she drove into the Ivy Creek Natural Area parking lot prior to the meeting. Jenny Gaden watched a Red-shouldered Hawk at her suet feeder, which she was able to photograph. Lou Tanner received a phone message from a person in Mint Springs who thought they had seen a Golden Eagle at a pond. Stauffer Miller saw a Greater Scaup, a rare duck that hasn't been reported since the time of President Eisenhower.

Submitted by Peggy Cornett, secretary

Bird Club Information

The Monticello Bird Club meets 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 May issue is 8:00 a.m. April 23.** Please email information to Doug Rogers at MBCNEWS@embarqmail.com or send to 1065 Weybridge Ct. # 304, Charlottesville, VA 22911.

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Trip to Panorama Farm, Sunday April 3

Meet at 8:00 AM at the Ivy Creek Parking Lot to car pool the short distance to Panorama Farm. I'd like to minimize the number of cars at Panorama, so carpooling is encouraged. Equipment operation at the farm restricts visits to Sunday. Vesper Sparrow is a possibility. I may go to other places if I can think of any. Trip length perhaps three hours. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 434-296-5505, stauffer@seepub.com.

Secluded Farm Saturday, April 23

Join Jim Nix and Dave Hogg as they explore Secluded Farm. This spring walk had had much success in past years. The hike is mainly on level ground along a good trail and will last about two hours. We will meet at 7:00am in the overflow parking lot for the Thomas Jefferson Parkway (Monticello Trail); the entrance is off Rte 20 North, just north of the intersection with Rte 53 and across from the entrance to PVCC. Questions? Contact Jim at his cell phone 434-987-3321 or jim-nix@comcast.net

Birding Before Work

We will again have short trips to see migrants during the last week of April and the first week of May. Most of the trips will be at the Ivy Creek Natural Area(ICNA).Special trips will be on April 27, to Observatory Hill; April 29, to Secluded Farm; and on May 5, to the Ragged Mountain Natural Area RMNA). All trips will begin at 7:00 am, and will end by 8:30 am.

Meeting Places.

- Ivy Creek Natural Area. Parking Lot
- Ragged Mountain Natural Area. Parking Lot
- Observatory Hill. Parking lot of the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, 520 Edgemont Road, at the northeast base of O-Hill. It is reached by taking McCormick Road west from its intersection with Alderman Road.
- Secluded Farm. Meet at the overflow parking lot for the Thomas Jefferson Parkway (Monticello Trail); the entrance is off Rte 20 North, just north of the intersection with Rte 53 and across from the entrance to PVCC.

Week One

April 25 ICNA
Leader Dave Hogg
April 26 ICNA
Leader Jim Nix
April 27 Observatory Hill
Leader Mark Adams
April 28 ICNA
Leader Janet Paisley
April 29 Secluded Farm
Leader Stauffer Miller

Week Two

May 2 ICNA
Leader Leigh Surdukowski
May 3 ICNA
Leader Peter Brask
May 4 ICNA
Leader Peter Dutnell
May 5 RMNA
Leader Dave Hogg
May 6 ICNA
Leader Jenny Gaden

First Saturday Bird Walks

April 2 and May 7, 2011 at 7:30 a.m.

On the first Saturday of each month, the Monticello Bird Club offers a bird walk at the Ivy Creek Natural Area. The spring migration will soon be in full swing, and ICNA has traditionally been an excellent place to see a good selection of these migrants.

Please join Janet Paisley on April 2, and Stauffer Miller on May 7, to find out how this season is shaping up. Meet at the parking lot of the Natural Area at 7:30am.

A special thank you to Joanne Bricker and Karen Anderson who helped edit this Newsletter!

2011 Ivy Creek Bird Walks

First Saturday Bird Walks at Ivy Creek

2011 marks the 16th year of the popular 1st Saturday Bird Walk at IVY Creek. Rain or shine, bitter cold or intense heat; novice birders as well as veteran birders turn out for these walks. Although we have a strong cadre of walk leaders, the success of these walks is greatly enhanced by other club members on the walk generously sharing their bird knowledge and helping novice birders. Many thanks to the following people who agreed to lead the Ivy Creek walks this year: Janet Paisley, Jim Nix, Leigh Surdukowski, Lou Tanner, Stauffer Miller, Jenny Gaden, Dave Hogg, Peter Dutnell and Teresa Shaner. Many of our leaders have led these walks for over 15 years and their dedication is greatly appreciated. Contact Leigh Surdukowski (295-8241) if you are interested in leading a 1st Saturday bird walk.

Summary of the 2010 Tally of Albemarle County Birds Species

The 2010 tally of the Albemarle County checklists showed an increase of 14 bird species over last year's tally. This year a total of 203 species were reported, compared to 189 species last year. Missing from the 2010 composite list were Ruffed Grouse and Gray-cheeked Thrush which have been found in previous years. There were eight new birds added to the cumulative total, including Golden Eagle, Yellow Rail, Virginia Rail, Upland Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Sedge Wren and Common Redpoll. The Selasphorus hummingbird that was seen last fall in Earlysville departed before it could be definitively identified as either a Rufous or Allen's Hummingbird. The bird was included in the 2010 list as a Selasphorus hummingbird.

Other interesting species seen in 2010 included Horned Grebe, Northern Goshawk, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Connecticut and Mourning Warblers, Clay-colored Sparrow and Dickcissel.

Stauffer Miller had 195 species, while Dave Hogg reported an impressive 94 birds at his Ivy Farms home last year. Many thanks to Stauffer, Dave, Peter Brask, Tim Hodge, Pete Myers, Teresa Shaner, Leigh Surdukowski and Dave West for their reports.

Members are encouraged to keep a record of birds observed in the county. You may be the only person who saw a Ruffed Grouse, Bobwhite or Barn Owl in the county that year. For a complete listing, email Teresa Shaner at twshaner@embarqmail.com, or phone 434-964-9420.

A Regular Winter Visitor in Earlysville

We have seen an adult Cooper's Hawk near our bird feeding station on several occasions throughout the winter. Most times, it was a swooping flyby as it tried to capture one of the small birds at or near the feeder.

Pictures of the perched hawk were hard to get but the most recent visit was to a tree close to the house. I forgot that the lens set up on the tripod was a fixed 800 mm and the hawk was too close. There was one chance at a head shot before the bird flew. That piercing orange eye looked straight at the camera. A very handsome bird, indeed.

Bill Leaning



VSO Annual Meeting Harrisonburg, Virginia May 13–15, 2011

The annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology will be held May 13 – 15, in Harrisonburg, located in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. Hosted by the Rockingham Bird Club and headquartered at the Holiday Inn, the meeting will feature a banquet, field trips, exhibits, vendors, a technical paper session, and the VSO's annual business meeting. The banquet speaker will be Dan Cristol, Professor of Biology at the College of William and Mary.

Rockingham County lies astride the Shenandoah Valley, extending from Shenandoah Mountain in the west to the Blue Ridge in the east. Both mountain ranges are flyways for spring migrants, as well as breeding grounds for numerous

species, and should offer abundant opportunities for excellent birding along the ridge tops and in the foothills. Farmed lowlands in the valley provide good habitat for grassland birds and feature numerous stock ponds that attract a variety of shorebirds. Lake Shenandoah, just east of Harrisonburg, is a popular year-round birding spot.

The Holiday Inn at 1400 East Market Street will be the meeting headquarters (540-433-2523; www.holidayinn.com). A block of rooms has been reserved at a special rate of \$84, plus tax. Reservations must be made by May 1, using the code "RBC", to obtain the special rate. Other lodging options include the Jameson Inn (540-442-1515) and the Sleep Inn (540-433-7100).

All meals, other than the banquet, are on your own. A list of conveniently located restaurants will be provided at

registration.

To register for the meeting and the banquet, use the registration form on page 7 of the VSO newsletter or download the form from the Rockingham Bird Club website, www.rockinghambirdclub.com.

The registration deadline is May 1, 2011. Upon arrival registration packets can be picked up at the VSO table located in the Tropical Court at the motel. Participants may also sign up for field trips at that time. Direct questions to Elizabeth Ihle, 540-234-8296 or eliza51@aol.com.

http://www.vabirds.org/VSO_PDFs/VSO_Nwsltr_WI2010_2011.pdf