



# Monticello Bird Club

April 2012

Volume 26 Issue 8

## Comments from The President

Lou Tanner

Though many will doubt that the winter of 2011-2012 ever even arrived, most of us who live in this part of the world at least can now feel sure that spring has come. Daffodils galore and relentlessly cheerful mockingbirds are already at work letting us know it is time to shift gears yet again.

People reckon time in different ways, however, and yesterday represented a classic example. Iranians, Kurds, and some Afghans, who prefer to think of spring as the actual beginning of the annual cycle, celebrated Nowruz or Persian New Year. A trip last summer to the always fascinating Sackler Gallery, that part of the Smithsonian that specializes in Asian Art, turned up an exquisite Nowruz card at the gift shop. As Persians were besotted with gardens and birds, the card, its subject matter taken from some ancient painting, was far too beautiful to part with and so it sits, a constant reminder that what some consider ends are just beginnings to others.

Rooted in every religious tradition or poetry or just plain common sense is the idea that things are always changing and yet are forever the same. Birds, flowers, and nature in general all follow this mysterious rhythm, and nowhere can that be seen more clearly than in what is happening all around us and—even more—what will be happening in weeks to come as the warblers begin their annual trek north. Happy Nowruz.

*Hello all MBC Members!*

*I am the new Membership Chairperson. In this position I will solicit your ideas on how to attract new members to our club—especially younger members. We need them to carry on the conservation efforts that all of us have started, and to ensure that MBC continues to thrive in the future.*

*In addition, I will play a role in getting the MBC Newsletter to you each month. Since the cost of the printed and mailed newsletter is a significant budget item, we have been watching it closely. We are aware that some of our members do not have email, and we are happy to mail the newsletter to all of you who do not have a way to receive it electronically.*

*In an effort to conserve MBC's funds for our projects and the support of other like-minded organizations, we ask all members who are able to receive the newsletter electronically to please do so—starting with next month's issue! If you currently receive both an electronic and a mailed copy, please consider printing your own.*

*If you would like to change your newsletter option from snail mail to email, please write me at [lessliecrowell@aol.com](mailto:lessliecrowell@aol.com). Thank you for considering this option.*

*Lesslie Crowell*

## Bees is the Topic of Bird Club Program on Thursday, April 12th, 2012 at 7:00pm

Stauffer Miller, Programs



The next program of the bird club, April 12th, will deviate from birds to a topic just as relevant to the natural world, bees. Ann Harman, who lives in the mountains outside Sperryville in Rappahannock County, will be our speaker. She will relate how bees can assist birds and what birders can do to help bees.

Ann has worked as a research chemist, head of a school science department and volunteered teaching beekeeping in many third world countries. She writes a monthly article for Bee Culture magazine and is co-author of Bee Craft America. Get in on the buzz. Come hear, learn and “bee” entertained about bumble bees, carpenter bees, wasps, yellow jackets as well as honey bees on April 12th at 7:00pm.

Consider having dinner with the speaker before the meeting. We dine at Brick Oven Restaurant, Rio Hill Plaza, at 5:30pm. The food is simple but tasty, and not expensive. And don't forget members night May 10th. We need participation from our membership to make this work. Let us see a few slides of your latest trip or exploit.

## Monticello Bird Club

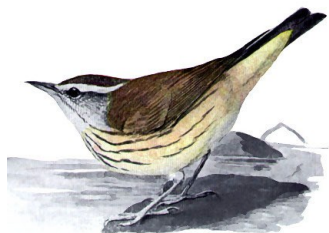
### Club Activities

Organized By Dave Hogg

#### First Saturday Bird Walk

**Saturday, April 7, 7:30am**

Join Janet Paisley on April 7th at 7:30am in the parking lot of Ivy Creek for the 1st Saturday Ivy Creek Walk. Gnatcatchers, Louisiana Waterthrushes, Tree Swallows, and Pine Warblers are some of the early spring migrants that may be seen on this walk. As an added bonus, Janet is also wildflower expert. Beginners are welcomed on this walk.



#### Plants and Birds

**Saturday, April 28, 2012  
Tufton Farm**

There will be a Saturdays in the Garden Spring Bird Walk at Tufton Farm (7am-10am) led by Jerry Therrien and Peggy Cornett. Pre-registration is required: fee \$15.

Following the bird walk, there will be an Open House at the Tufton Farm nursery of the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants, from 9am-3pm. Gabriel Mapel, Mary Mapel, and Stauffer Miller will host an information table oriented towards birds and birding. The Open House is free and no reservations are required.

For more information, call 434-984-9880 or visit: [www.monticello.org](http://www.monticello.org)

#### Stony Point

**Saturday, April 14, 8:00am**

Field Trip in Stony Point area of Albemarle County: Meet at 8:00am April 14th at the Stony Point School (about six miles north of Charlottesville, right side of Route 20, in little community of Stony Point). From there, we'll venture onto various back roads to see what we can find. Trip of about two to two and 1/2 hours. There are no restroom or food facilities, unless I'm able to locate them. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 434-296-5505, [stauffer@seepub.com](mailto:stauffer@seepub.com)

#### Pen Park to Dunlora on the Rivanna Trail

**Saturday, April 21, 7:00am**

Meet Leigh Surdkowski in the parking lot for the Pen Park picnic shelters at 7:00am on April 21. We will follow the RTF Trail to Dunlora. This 2 mile walk along the Rivanna River passes through several habitats. Kingfishers, Gnatcatchers, Louisiana Waterthrushes, and many other migrants should be seen. A Yellow-throated Warbler is occasionally spotted in this area.

#### Birding Before Work

We will continue the program of 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 25 and May 2, to Observatory Hill; and on April 27 and May 1, to Secluded Farm. All trips will begin at 7:00 am, and will end by 8:30 am.

Meeting Places:

**Ivy Creek 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 Route 20 North, just north of the intersection with Route 53 and across from the entrance to PVCC.

Week One

April 23 ICNA. Leader: Peter Brask  
April 24 ICNA. Leader: Dave Hogg  
April 25 Observatory Hill. Leader: Dave Hogg  
April 26 ICNA. Leader: Leigh Surdukowski  
April 27 Secluded Farm. Leader: Stauffer Miller

Week Two

April 30 ICNA. Leader: Janet Paisley  
May 1 Secluded Farm. Leader: Jim Nix  
May 2 Observatory Hill. Leader: Mark Adams  
May 3 ICNA. Leader: Stauffer Miller  
May 4 ICNA. Leader: Leigh Surdukowski



## Virginia Working Landscapes' Bird Survey

Supported By Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute

Virginia Working Landscapes is seeking citizen scientists for its Grassland Surveys. After a successful 2011 season, we are recruiting citizen scientists to assist with plant, bird and pollinator surveys throughout the northern Virginia and Piedmont region for spring and summer 2012. The surveys are part of a study of working landscapes that examines species diversity at various stages of warm season grass restoration. See <http://www.vaworkinglandscapes.org> for more details. Training and surveys are supported by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI) in Front Royal.

There is no need to be an expert naturalist to participate in the surveys (although both the plant and bird surveys demand a working knowledge of local flora and birds), you just need to be interested in learning and have sufficient time to dedicate to the project. Each survey will have a mandatory introductory meeting that will cover important information such as survey protocols, identification skills and site assignments. Please join us for one or more of the survey projects.

**Bird survey:** Introductory training will be held on April 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and will include a brief overview of project goals, survey protocols, data collection and site assignments. A second training session will be held May 12th from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00a.m. (location TBA) and will focus on point count techniques. Knowledge of local bird species is essential. Survey season begins May 18 and runs until June 30. Point counts are carried out within 4-5 hours of sunrise and take approximately 45-60 minutes per site (three 10-minute counts). Time commitment is a minimum of 6 survey sessions plus training (estimated 15 hrs not including travel). You will need personal binoculars and a field guide, all other survey supplies provided.



For more information, or to register for specific surveys contact: [scbiecology@si.edu](mailto:scbiecology@si.edu). Please provide your name, cell and/or home phone numbers, email, city of residence, survey you are interested in and a short description of your relevant skills.

## Monticello Bird Club Meeting Minutes, March 8, 2012

Submitted by Peggy Cornett, Secretary

President Lou Tanner opened by welcoming 42 members and newcomers to the meeting. He also thanked Jenny Gaden for recommending the purchase of bird stamps, which can be used for free admission into a number of parks and reserves. Lou and Stephanie recently went birding along the Eastern Shore of Maryland and visited Bombay Hook in Delaware at no cost.

Doug Rogers gave the treasurer's report as follows: check book balance on 1 July 2011 was \$10,609.79; receipts to date: +\$10,783.50; disbursements to date: (-\$11,091.18); check book balance on 8 March: \$10,302.11; excess of disbursements over receipts: \$307.68. Receipts through the end of our fiscal year will be minimal. We project that we will finish the fiscal year with an excess of disbursements over receipts of approximately \$700, due to the non-budgeted expenditure of \$1,000 for the Ivy Creek Foundation Project approved at the last meeting.

Dave Hogg reported on field trips. Dave is scheduled to lead a walk at Whitehall to see Woodcocks. They have been reported at Humpback Mountain. Lickinghole Creek has had a very good year for birds. In April MBC will hold the "Birding before Work" walks on five consecutive weekdays, from 7:00-8:30 am. This year Stauffer Miller will lead a trip to a new location. On April 21, 2:00-4:00 pm. the Ivy Creek Barn is re-opening to the public.

Interesting bird sightings this month were reported. Gabriel Mapel saw 908 American Robins at New Hope and a murder of Crows along I-64. He also saw two Woodcocks at Ivy Creek when he arrived at the meeting. Nancy Newman heard Horned Larks singing near Target. Jerry Therrien reported several Pine Warblers in loblolly pines at Esmont.

We were reminded that the Friends of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library are holding their annual book sale through Easter Weekend. The sale always has great books on birds and birding.



## Monticello Bird Club

### Treasurer's Report

By Doug Rogers

I thought it might be time for an update on the status of the Club's application for non-profit status with the Feds and the State.

First, I need to note that any phone call to the Fed requires a time commitment of at least 45 minutes to an hour. When I call the Fed, I simply put my phone on "speaker" and do other things while I listen to "elevator music." Finally some nice young person will come on the phone and identify him/herself with their name and employer ID number. After that, they will do their research on their computer and give the news. The latest is that our application will require even more information and it is in a queue to be processed. The information needed will not be known to us until after we make it through the queue. They are currently processing applications that were received in the latter part of July of 2011. Our application was filed in the first week of November.

I am confident that we will be approved by both the Fed and the State. However, all we can do now is wait. If anyone has any questions, please contact me at [doug5996@gmail.com](mailto:doug5996@gmail.com).



### With Deepest Sympathy

Elmer Gaden

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Jenny Gaden on the recent loss of Elmer, her husband of almost five decades. Anyone who spends time around teenagers knows how utterly overused is the word 'awesome.' I can think of no other word, however, that would begin to describe Elmer Gaden's professional accomplishments and the extraordinary range of his interests. Yet as impressive as all these were, it is his obvious warmth as a person that stands out in the numerous tributes that have appeared.

We in the Monticello Bird Club know full well just what great company Jenny is on field trips and how vital has been her service in countless capacities, not least being as a former President. I can only imagine that hers and Elmer's must have been one of the great pairings. Trips to obscure historical sites that must have appealed to Elmer for that reason might have meant different possibilities for Jenny, ones of a more feathered variety, and all in all it must have made for a wonderful sort of harmony, precisely the sort that can make marriages last as long as theirs did.

At a time like this or at any time for that matter, birds just might be the greatest healers of all. We are grateful for what we knew of Elmer and for Jenny's continued presence. We will look forward to seeing Jenny again soon, back in her beloved element, tramping through wet grass and peering into hedgerows. No doubt that thought would have made Elmer happy.

—Lou Tanner on behalf of the Monticello Bird Club

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. Membership is \$15 per year for individuals, \$25 for a family. Membership year is July 1—June 30. The editor of the MBC Newsletter welcomes submissions including articles, photographs and notices. **DEADLINE for each issue is 9:00AM on the 4th Thursday of the month.**



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Please visit our website at  
[www.monticellobirdclub.org](http://www.monticellobirdclub.org)

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