



Monticello Bird Club

April 2008

Volume 22, Number 8

April Meeting Topic: Backyard Birding in Kenya, East Africa

Please join Dr. Sam Williams and his wife, Liz Williams on April 10th as they provide a captivating presentation of their sightings and birding experiences during four visits to the lovely country of Kenya. Their topic alludes to how dramatically successful and fulfilling birding can be while confined to relatively limited geographic areas-- and without the aid of fancy tours. Typical of countries that straddle the equator, as Kenya does, there is a lot of bird variety. There are on the order of 1600 species there, compared to around 725 in all of North America.



maritan's Purse/World Medical Mission, volunteering their talents at Christian mission hospitals around the world - mainly in East and West Africa.

Please join MBC members and our speaker for dinner at Wild Greens Restaurant in the North Wing of Barracks Road Shopping Center on April 10th at 5:45 pm prior to the meeting.

Sam is a surgeon who practiced for 20+ years in the Roanoke Valley and who has been 'retired' for just over 7 years now. He enjoys photography and has made the 'leap' to digital within the last year. Liz is the real birder in the family. Growing up in Michigan, she got her introduction to birding at nearby Point Pelee. Sam and Liz have taken 15 assignments across the world since 1990 with Sa-

Comments From the President

In the middle of April I start watching and listening for the arrival of the Chimney Swifts. They are returning from their winter quarters in Peru, Chile and Brazil. In recent years their return is accompanied with a certain sadness because in the 11 years that I have been living in Albemarle County their numbers have dwindled. We used to see flocks of 15 or so birds flying over our house in the summer but now we are thankful for two or three. I know, however, that the numbers are far better in Charlottesville and other urban areas.

Chimney Swifts, sooty-brown above and pale below, are fast fliers, as their name implies. Their scimitar-shaped wings and tapered bodies give them the nickname of flying cigars. They spend the entire day on the wing high

Upcoming Meeting Topics

May 8th: Member's Night. MBC members share their favorite slides and photographs.



over woods and open areas foraging for aerial insects. When it is time to make a nest both birds fly by trees and snatch small twigs in their beak or feet - depending on who you read. (Watch them carefully and see if you can tell. It isn't easy.) With saliva they cement the sticks together and to the wall of a chimney to form their half saucer nest.

Before European settlement nest sites were hollow trees and possibly caves. Swifts, however, liked the open brick chimneys that that the Europeans built and consequently their numbers increased. Unfortunately chimney design has changed in recent times and many of the new ones are not well suited to swifts. This is one reason swift populations are declining. Many people who do still have suitable chimneys cap

(Continued on page 3)

Inside April 2008

MBC Minutes	2
Field Trips	3
Welcome New Members	4

**MBC Minutes for
March 13, 2008**

President Jenny Gaden welcomed newcomers. 52 individuals were present.

Treasurer's Report: Henry Konat reported the club's income at \$10,394; expenses: \$9,036; NET: \$1,358 and the club has \$15,413 in the bank.

Field Trips: John Zimmerman talked about the two upcoming trips to Penn Park and Dunlora on March 15 and Humpback Rocks on March 22. He noted that the trip to Secluded Farm, adjacent to the Thomas Jefferson Parkway, is scheduled for April 26 and will be led by Dave Hogg and Jim Nix, who have been conducting a bird survey of the property over the past year. Peggy Cornett mentioned that the current overflow parking at the Kemper Park trail head will be closing as of March 17 and visitors must begin using the new lot, which

is off Rt. 20 and is connected to the Parkway via a tunnel beneath Rt. 53. She also encouraged members to car pool if possible.

Nominating Committee: Jenny Gaden appointed Lou Tanner as chair of the nominating committee for next year's slate of officers.

Funding for students: The MBC board approved a donation for \$500 to the Albemarle County school system to fund a Chesapeake Bay Foundation educational field trip for 6th graders to study the watershed region.

Virginia Avian Records Update: MBC newsletter editor Amy Gilmer has been appointed the new secretary of the Virginia Avian Records Committee, which produces the Gold Book of official bird sightings

American Chestnut Foundation: The Virginia Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation is meeting at Ivy Creek March 15 and the public is invited.



Barn Owls photographed by Rob Capon in Albemarle County.

2nd Annual Eagle Nesting Search: Patti Reum has invited volunteers from MBC to help document Bald and Golden Eagle nesting sites in Highland County, March 20, 9 am to 4 pm. She needs a minimum of 10 people.

Exotic Birding Trips: Dave Hogg reported that former

(Continued on page 4)

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 May issue is April 20.** Please email information to Amy Gilmer at akgilmer@comcast.net or send to 3166 Welsh Run Road, Ruckersville, VA 22968.

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

Monticello Bird Club Board Members

President	Jennifer Gaden	kgaden@embarqmail.com	293-6275
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

James River Wildlife Management Area Sunday, April 13

Join Stauffer Miller on this Sunday trip to visit the James River Wildlife Management Area east of Howardsville. Who knows what might be seen at this infrequently visited and rather poorly known wetland and upland area along the James? So find out; join the trip! **Meet at the Corner Store, Rt. 29 south in North Garden at 8 am.** The store has restrooms, breakfast items, and a noteworthy coffee selection. Leader – Stauffer Miller, 434-296-5505 and stauffer@seepub.com

(Continued from page 1)

them in fear of possible disease – a totally unfounded concern. The chattering of birds in the chimney annoys some people too, so they call the chimney sweep and clean out the pests. All of this contributes to the current woes of these neotropical migrants.

We do not cap our chimney and each summer a pair of swifts nests there. For a few weeks we are treated to a different kind of music when we sit in the living room.

-Jenny Gaden

Amy Gilmer, editor of this newsletter, has accepted the position of secretary of VARCOM – Virginia Avian Records Committee, a committee of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. The committee reviews documentation of reports of unusual birds for inclusion in the state's ornithological records. Her responsibility will be to receive all reports and send them off to the people who review them. She will keep track of the records and encourage the reviewers to complete the work in a timely fashion. Congratulations to Amy for this honor and many thanks for her willingness to do the work.

Secluded Farm Saturday, April 26

Dave Hogg and Jim Nix are offering an excellent opportunity to see a variety of warblers and other migrants. Moderately easy walking. **Since the regular Kemper lot may be full, meet in the new Kemper Park overflow parking lot on the east side of Rt. 20 north, just north of the intersection with Rt. 53 at 7:00 am.** Questions? Contact Jim Nix 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. Join Stauffer Miller on the April 5th walk and Peter Brask on the May 3rd walk.

VSO Annual Meeting and Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival May 16-18, 2008 Giles County, Virginia

Register now for this year's annual Virginia Society of Ornithology meeting, held in conjunction with the Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival in Giles County, Virginia at the Mountain Lake Hotel. This weekend promises to be an exciting experience.

The keynote speaker will be Ian Sinclair, who will provide a view from the Eastern Hemisphere with his presentation "The Lighter Side of Birding Darkest Africa". Also, Bill Hilton, Jr. will provide a view from the Western Hemisphere with a review of his continuing work banding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds on both their breeding grounds in the United States and on their wintering grounds in Costa Rica.

There will be a rich variety of field trips and workshops to attend. All will be lead by birders or naturalists that are knowledgeable about their subject and enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge. Also scheduled are guided rafting trips on the historic New River offering unique bird sightings. In addition to the many hikes and workshops around the Mountain Lake Hotel and Jefferson National Forest, there will be activities for children in the conservancy at Mountain Lake.

Registration for field trips will be in advance. To make certain that everyone has an equal opportunity to sign up for the trips of their choice, the trips and their descriptions are posted on the festival website: www.mountainlakebirding.com.

Those wishing to receive information by mail may call Peggy Opengari at 540 921-4340 or email at gramby@pemtel.net. Registration can be done online or by mail.

(Continued from page 2)

MBC member Jan Hanson now lives in Chapel Hill, NC and leads birding trips to Mexico and other regions. He is currently organizing new excursions. For information, contact Dave.

Camp Albemarle project:

Nancy Newman asked for volunteers to help orchestrate projects for Middle School aged children attending a camp sponsored by the Department of Forestry and Virginia Department of Natural History. The environmental focus includes the study of watershed issues and the use of local farm produce. Projects might include making Blue Bird houses.

ICF Guides:

Bruce Gatling-Austin, education coordinator of the Ivy Creek Foundation, made an appeal for more ICF guides to lead children during the spring and fall seasons. Groups will number no more than 10 students. Weekly training sessions begin Tuesday, March 18, at 9:30 am.

The Lynchburg Bird Club celebrates its Golden Anniversary this year with a reception and dinner at Randolph College on April 9. Those interested in attending should contact Jenny Gaden for more details.

Bird Sightings:

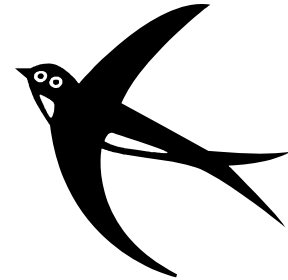
An adult Bald Eagle was seen at the Reservoir. Ron and Priscilla Kingston are enjoying very tame Pine Siskins at their bird feeder. Nancy Newman reported that a Baltimore Oriole was observed at Fran Boninti's house on Holkham Drive. Lou Tanner reported for a friend from White Hall who saw a Woodcock a few nights earlier. One of the Blue Bird boxes at River View Cemetery already has an egg. Peter Brask saw 10 Snipes at Scogo Lake and Stauffer Miller countered with a sighting of 20. Three Roughed Grouse and Fox Sparrows were seen on the Skyline Drive near the Rip Rap parking area.

-Peggy Cornett

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome our newest members to the Monticello Bird Club:

- William Bloom
- The Jay Eisenberg Family
- Mary Lee Epps
- Mark & Vickie Gottlob
- Jennifer Jowdy
- Gordon & Charlotte Malone
- Norma Mills
- Kelly Near
- Janet Paisley & Roger Frank
- Jerome & Beverly Wormuth



Monticello Bird Club

Membership Form

BECOME A MONTICELLO BIRD CLUB MEMBER!

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!

- Individual (\$15)
- Family / Contributing (\$25)
- Sponsor (\$50)
- Additional Donation \$ _____



Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

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

*Please make check payable to Monticello Bird Club.
 Mail form & check to: Monticello Bird Club, P.O. Box 4362,
 Charlottesville, VA 22905*