



Monticello Bird Club

September 2014 Newsletter
Website: www.monticellobirdclub.org

Volume 29 Issue 1
Facebook: [Monticello Bird Club](#)

MBC Monthly Meeting—Thursday, September 11th at 7:00pm

Comments from the President

Doug Rogers



The familiar Tufted Titmouse
with sunflower chip
Photo by Doug Rogers

With a new birding season about to begin, I find my thoughts turning to our Club. What challenges will we face? How many life birds will our members find this coming year? How many new birding friends will we make? What will we learn from each other as we share the camaraderie of birding? What will the birds teach us that will amuse, awe and inspire us?

A bird? Awe and inspire? Please.... some folks say. Well, how about this? We have hummingbirds that only stop at our feeders while they are migrating. Located in the urban Pantops area, we our are a small, rather unlikely stop on a hummingbird's journey of over a thousand miles. Yet, they find their way here every year. How do they do that?

We have titmice that know when we are going to put out our seed feeders. We only put them out during late summer and winter.

All summer, we don't see a single titmouse. Just last week, after hanging our small feeder for less than a day, they reappeared. How did they know it was time for our seed feeder to go up? We obliged them.

The son of a couple we are friends with is an avian researcher. He was stationed on a remote island just off the Alaska coast. He reported that, while on one of his counting trips, he saw a juvenile Red Phalarope being pursued by some Parasitic Jaegers. The phalarope noticed that when he flew near the researchers, the jaegers broke off the chase. The phalarope wheeled around and landed right between the two researchers and the jaegers went on to pursue easier prey. Awesome! How did that phalarope, with its young bird-brain, know it would be safe there between two humans?

The fall beckons and many new birding encounters lie ahead. Bird on!

Speaker of the Month: Fletcher Smith—Whimbrels

Stauffer Miller

The Whimbrel is a large, elegant shorebird that makes a long migration that scientists only recently have begun to monitor and understand. Fletcher Smith will be with us **September 11, 2014** to take us on the journey of the Whimbrel from wintering ground to migration to breeding ground and back to wintering ground. Conservation will be the primary focus of the talk. Smith will demonstrate through multi-media, maps, pictures and video the migration and movements of this species. Thirty-six Whimbrels have received solar powered satellite transmitters since 2006 in order to study their migration.

Fletcher Smith is with the Center for Conservation Biology at William and Mary. He works with a diversity of bird species, including Saw-whet Owls, when not doing his Whimbrel work. He is co-author of a number of scientific publications. This should be an exciting presentation on an avian species about which many of us know little.

As in the past, we will take our speaker to dinner at the Brick Oven Restaurant at the Rio Hill Shopping Plaza. The restaurant, located near the Kroger grocery store, has excellent food at moderate prices. All are welcome. Hope to see you there September 11th.



Editor's Note: Serendipitously, Janet Paisley forwarded us this link to Scott Weidensaul's article, "Unlocking Migration's Secrets" from Audubon Magazine, in which our speaker Fletcher Smith and his Whimbrel research is featured. To be well-prepared and "totally psyched" about this exciting topic, do read this article and come hear Fletcher Smith on September 11.

First Saturday Bird Walk

September 6 at 7:30am

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 Fall 2014

Sept 6....Tom Jones

Oct. 4 Leigh Surdukowski
Nov. 1 ... Stauffer Miller
Dec. 6 ... Dave Hogg

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

Birding Tidbits...about a bird you might find on the Bird Walk at Ivy Creek this month
by Jenny Gaden

Black-throated Blue Warbler (Setophaga caerulescens)

We've all heard of the confusing fall warblers. These are the warblers who, during fall migration, do not display the bright, diagnostic colors and markings that make identification during the spring much easier. This change of plumage is the result of molting, the replacement of old feathers for new. All birds undergo this process at least once a year, and many warblers, in so doing, become a little – well – duller in appearance in the fall. But be happy that there is one species (and there are others) whose new feathers look the same in the fall as they did in the spring – the Black-throated Blue Warbler. The male is stunning with a dark blue back, black face, throat and flanks, pale underparts, and the telltale white wing patch, sometimes known as the pocket-handkerchief. Though the female is quite unlike the male with her greenish gray back and wings, she, thankfully, still shows the pocket-handkerchief. (The first year female, however, which hatched this spring, probably won't give us that helpful clue. But look for white eye markings instead.) Any of the woods and edges of the Ivy Creek Natural Area would be excellent places to seek this unconfusing (relatively speaking) species.

Please note: the genus of this species has changed from Dendroica to Setophaga.



Black-throated Blue Warbler
Photo by cuatrok77
Wikimedia Commons

Hearde's Mountain, Scogo Lake, & Blandemar Pond

Date: Saturday, September 13th
Meeting Place & Time: 8am at the Crossroads Store in North Garden
Leader: Stauffer Miller
434-296-5505, stauffer@seepub.com

Heard's Mountain is near the meeting spot at the Crossroads Store. We'll make stops as dictated by bird activity as we ascend the mountain on a gravel road. We may walk a little at the summit. After a return to the store (which has restrooms), those who wish can continue to nearby Scogo Lake and Blandemar Pond. We should finish no later than 12:30.

Rockfish Valley Trail

Date: Saturday, September 20th
Meeting Place & Time: 8am at the parking lot for RVT by bridge (with kiosk) on west side of Rte 151
Leader: Janet Paisley
434-989-3857, janetpaisley@comcast.net

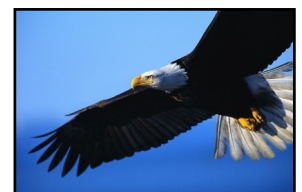
Janet will lead us on a tour of the Rockfish Valley Trail in Nelson County. This site has a great diversity of birds, and we will hope to find some migrating Warblers, Flycatchers, Sparrows, and more.

Directions: Take Route 250 West to Route 151 (Critzler Shop Road) South. Go 14 miles and pass through Nellysford. The trailhead is on the right by a bridge over a creek/river.

Lickinghole Creek

Date: Saturday, September 27th
Meeting Place & Time: 7:30am at the Crozet Great Valu, which is on Rte 240 just east of Crozet.
Leader: Peter Brask
434-823-2363, peterbrask@yahoo.com

Lickinghole Creek is an interesting birding area the the Club began visiting in 2010. The trail beside the pond offers a rich variety of habitat. Peter Brask will guide us around this area, as we sample the fall migrants.



Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch News & Special Invitation

August 15 through November

The 39th season of counting raptors at Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch began on August 15 and will run through the end of November. Daily postings of the count appear in the Monticello Bird Alert. You are welcome to join the official counters at the Hawk Watch any day of the season. Please take note of the following special **Open House Invitation** that hawk watch Co-Coordinator Brenda Tekin posted on the Monticello Bird Alert.

Where the Raptors Soar--A Day at the Hawk Watch

Sunday, September 14, 2014

11am - 3pm



- The event will include exhibits, educational materials, raptor prints, and a special raptor presentation by The Wildlife Center of Virginia at 1pm.
- Free food and drinks will be provided.
- We welcome visitors who wish to watch, learn and even help spot hawks in the sky. It's a beautiful venue where folks and their families can visit, bring a lawn chair and picnic and hang out.
- On behalf of all of our volunteer counters, we hope to see you at the hawk watch this fall!

Brenda

Brenda Tekin, Co-coordinator

Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch

Waynesboro, VA

www.rockfishgaphawkwatch.org

Editor's Note: To keep abreast of the Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch and all important local birding news and sightings, become part of Monticello Bird Alert. Directions for signing up can be found by following this link to our website. monticellobirdclub.org.

Dear Monticello Bird Club...

a letter from Gabriel Mapel

Thank you so much for your amazing support helping to send me on the experience of a lifetime, to Hog Island Audubon Camp, in Maine, this June. I hope you enjoy my report:

On Father's Day, Sunday, June 15th, I headed out on an adventure of a lifetime. I headed out on a flight, all by myself, for my very first time. I was headed from Washington Dulles Airport to Portland Maine, where Marilyn, a friend of Audubon, was going to pick me up, and take a group of us Teen Campers over to the Hog Island Audubon Camp.

There were about 7 of us teens from the airport that had flown in; another dozen or so had been driven to the camp. We arrived at about 5pm and the teens that were already there lugged all of our luggage to the Crow's Nest for us, where we would stay for the next 5 nights. We had an hour until dinner, and in that time, Sara Morris, one of the great instructors, and master bander, showed me a BLACK GUILLEMOT - my first life bird of the trip!

Before or during dinner we met our two awesome teen leaders, Laurie and Doug, who would be the only adults to stay with us in the Crow's Nest, and would accompany us at all times, and also the instructors, that included "Big Names" like Sara Morris, John Kricher, Tom Johnson, Steve Kress, and Scott Weidensaul.

As a vegan, I was concerned about the food situation, slightly, but it was amazing. They catered to my needs, and it was epic food that first dinner, as were all the other meals to follow over the next 5 days.

We had our first evening program, and Sara gave a wonderful presentation about Fall Warbler Identification. All the evening programs were wonderful, and included a talk about migration from Scott Weidensaul, and a talk about the Atlantic Puffin restoration project from Steve Kress.

The biggest highlight of the trip was getting to go to Eastern Egg Rock, one of 7 North American islands managed by ProjectPuffin, where Atlantic Puffins breed. We saw hundreds of ATLANTIC PUFFINS, my second life bird of the trip, including Puffins bringing fish into their nesting burrows just feet in front of me, when I was the only person sitting in a specific blind! We also saw Razorbills, and all kinds of Gulls and Terns, including ROSEATE TERNS, my third and final life bird of the trip! The Arctic and Common Terns were dive-bombing us; it really hurt a couple of times :). Once a Common Tern pecked my hat off and took a couple of good swipes at my head before I could get the hat back on!

Even more amazing than the birding experiences was getting to share the experience with 17 other teens, all truly die-hard birders, that share my passion. It was so great to make so many life-long friends. And I learned a heck of a lot too about all sorts of birding things. The instructors were 100% awesome!

I highly recommend the camp to any teens 14-17 years old that can attend. It is a life-changing, awesome experience. And, if you are an adult, they have adult camps too! Check it out: <http://hogisland.audubon.org/>

Thanks again to all of you at the Monticello Bird Club for helping to make this experience possible...



Hog Island, Maine

Treasurer's Notes

by Maynard K. Davis

Our final tally for last year showed a budget surplus of \$526. This number accounts for our start up funding donation of \$1000 to the VSO for their Annual Meeting that will be held at Wintergreen, May 8-10. It is expected that this money will be returned to the club in 2015.

MBC is now legally able to solicit donations. You will be able to donate to the club when you renew your membership or at any time during the year at our website. (See the link in Membership Notes *at right.*)



Best,
Maynard

Membership Notes

by Lesslie Crowell

MBC extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

Matt Holcombe
Chip and Hannah Case
Ari Sommer

Dues were payable as of July 1. Thank you to all who have renewed their memberships already. If you have not yet done so, you may pay by check or electronically (Paypal) by visiting our website.

www.monticellobirdclub.org/membership

If you are a new member who joined March 1 or later, you are covered for the 2014-15 season.


Looking forward to seeing you all again, and in the meantime,
Good birding,
Lesslie



The Joy of Birding a personal sharing of stories and photos by MBC members



Contributed by **Eileen Stephens**

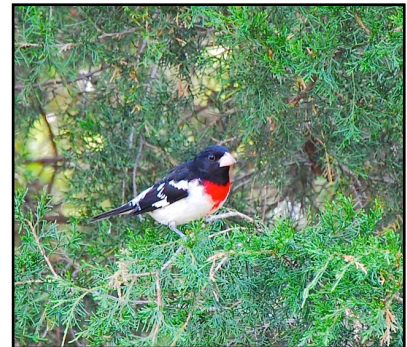
 Late last winter I spotted an ad in this newsletter describing an electronic device which enables a birder with a mild hearing impairment to hear high-pitched songs or calls that are otherwise inaccessible. I immediately responded to the ad and, rendezvousing in a parking lot, closed the deal with Doug Rogers. In return for a contribution of \$100 to the MBC, the Song Finder would be mine. A better deal was never made.

I knew that I no longer could hear, among others, the call of the Golden-crowned Kinglet nor the song of the Grasshopper Sparrow, but having been away from active birding for many years I was astonished at the chatter of chirps and calls that greeted me the first time I stepped outside by the winter feeder wearing the Song Finder. I had been missing so much! Soon after that I was surprised to hear an unfamiliar soft warble coming from cedar trees. It took me some time to realize that it was the Junco song—but at a pitch that I could hear.

Usually I use the setting which divides the frequency by two, bringing most bird sounds into my good hearing range of 3 kHz or lower, but occasionally I use one of the higher settings which brings even the call of Cedar Waxwings (10 kHz) into my range. Inevitably there are distortions, but one can learn them as bird “dialects”. If birding in a talkative group, the amplification of the “s” and “sh” sounds are particularly annoying. Those groups are best avoided in any case. There is a learning curve, but this device has revitalized my birding experience. It led me through a mountain fog into a clearing to see half a dozen Cerulean Warblers and later allowed me to stand in the dark woods of Highland County with Dan Biecker and his crew and listen to Blackburnian Warblers to my heart’s content.

A full description of the Song Finder can be found at www.hearbirdagain.com

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Broken Island, Palmyra



Eve Gaige has generously shared more beautiful photos taken on her spring and summer bird walks. Enjoy!



Cedar Waxwing
Rockfish Valley Trail

The Joy of Birding continues...

Max Czapanskiy, the son of MBC members Karen and Dana Czapanskiy, is an avian researcher who kindly sent us this exciting family adventure/sighting from the wilds of Montana (For two photos of their avian treasure find, click on the link at the end of the story.)



Adult Ferruginous Hawk
Photo by USFWS Pacific Southwest Region
Wikimedia Commons

This past summer I was hired to conduct point count surveys of breeding birds on the Charles M. Russell wildlife refuge in eastern Montana. If you ever get the chance to visit, I strongly recommend it. Sage and Sharp-tailed Grouse leks in the spring are followed by a diverse array of prairie birds in the summer, featuring Bobolinks doing their best R2-D2 impression and Sprague's Pipits spiraling aloft. The elk and prairie dogs are a nice touch, too.

But before I could start working on the refuge I went through a week of training in South Dakota's Black Hills. One of my fellow field techs, as we were birding a wide swath of sagebrush, pointed out a lone snag on a nearby berm. Keep an eye on those, he told me, as they're frequently used by Long-eared Owls for nests. Much of the prairie has less than 1% canopy cover, so nesting raptors are often easy to spot.

I had that anecdote in mind as I showed my visiting parents around the refuge a couple weeks later. Driving along a dirt road, with the Sawtooth Mountains behind us and scattering longspurs ahead, we passed a lone snag on our left. I pointed it out and repeated my colleague's advice. Sure enough, there was a raptor's nest in the tree, but the four fledglings didn't appear to be owls. Closer observation revealed enormous beaks, on par almost with eagles. Combined with the light underbelly on the adult circling overhead, my mind went to the Ferruginous Hawk. I was thrilled - a lifer! And our largest hawk, at that. But I was thrown by the almost rufous band across the fledglings' breasts. It didn't line up with any of the pictures in my Sibley's and I began to doubt my ID.

Later that day I was in the Lewistown, MT library scanning datasheets. My mom channeled her inner Gandalf and went to work on the collection of avian literature. There she found the following passage: "Immatures of the typical light morph resemble adults in having nearly white underparts (with a pale cinnamon blush on the breast of newly fledged juveniles)." We celebrated not only our lifer, but the satisfaction of good advice paying off.

[Ferruginous Hawk Fledglings Photo](#)

<p>ALC Copies Inc. 1170 Emmet St. 295-2679 A Local Choice orders@alccopies.com</p>		<p>Birdseed Sale News Mark your calendars... The pick-up date for this year's MBC Birdseed Sale is Saturday, November 1, 2014. Doug Rogers is assembling this year's team, and information about the sale and ordering instructions will be published in next month's MBC Newsletter. Stay tuned...</p>	
<p>ALC Copies Inc., a locally owned small business, generously supports our MBC Bird Club by printing our newsletters at no cost to us. <i>For your personal printing needs, please choose ALC!</i></p>			

<p>Monticello Bird Club P.O. Box 4362 Charlottesville, Virginia 22905</p> <p>Visit our website at www.monticellobirdclub.org for club and membership information.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The editor of the MBC Newsletter welcome submissions, including articles, photographs and notices. DEAD-LINE for each issue is 9:00AM on the 20th of the month.</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>President</td> <td>Doug Rogers</td> <td>doug5996@gmail.com</td> <td>434-409-8156</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice President</td> <td>Kathy Sudduth</td> <td>kas3m2@embarqmail.com</td> <td>434-973-0690</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secretary</td> <td>Peggy Cornett</td> <td>pcornett@monticello.org</td> <td>434-984-9816</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Treasurer</td> <td>Maynard K. Davis</td> <td>davismk@sbcglobal.net</td> <td>434-205-4268</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Field Trips</td> <td>Gabriel Mapel</td> <td>birdmangabriel@yahoo.com</td> <td>540-363-5035</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Speakers</td> <td>Stauffer Miller Lou Tanner</td> <td>stauffer@seepub.com lmtannerxiv@gmail.com</td> <td>434-296-5505 434-979-1722</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Publicity</td> <td>VACANT</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hospitality</td> <td>Priscilla Kingston</td> <td>kingston@cstone.net</td> <td>434-293-5173</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Newsletter</td> <td>Joanne Bricker</td> <td>mbcnleditor@gmail.com</td> <td>434-825-2676</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Membership</td> <td>Lesslie Crowell</td> <td>lessliecrowell@aol.com</td> <td>434-295-1395</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birdseed Sale</td> <td>VACANT</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>			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		
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