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Visit our website: roanokevalleybirdclub.com

October 2009 Newsletter

Celebrating 52 Years of Birding! 1957-2009

SEPT. MEETING

We watched the video *Dances with Hummingbirds*.

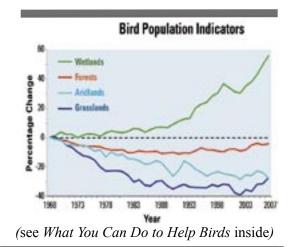
The State of the Birds 2009

This report, compiled by wildlife agencies and conservation groups, is a comprehensive analysis of the state of our nation's birds. The results are alarming-bird populations have seriously declined in the past 40 years. But the report isn't all bad news. Some species have responded well to conservation efforts and wetland species populations have steadily increased. In addition, a variety of species, such as the California Condor, Henslow's Sparrow, Bufflehead, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Merlin have benefited from conservation programs. However the report emphasizes that for many species aggressive conservation measures must be implemented. As you can see in the graph in the next column, Forest, Aridland, and Grassland bird populations have dramatically declined since 1968, with only wetland species showing increaseslargely due to strong waterfowl conservation management.

NEXT MEETING: October 12, 7:00 p.m. Grandin Court Baptist Church

2008 was the centennial year of the birth of Roger Tory Peterson. His story is a fascinating one. For the first half of our program we will view a *A Boy, A Book, A Legacy* and learn more about the man who helped make birding a national pastime. For the second half of our program, Bill Grant will update us on the *State of the Birds 2009*.

Please join us for dinner at 5;30 p.m. before the meeting at the Brambleton Deli at 3655 Brambleton Road.



RVBC Annual Seed Sale Fund Raiser November 7

Please complete the enclosed order form and mail with your check, payable to Roanoke Valley Bird Club, to: Eunice Hudgins, 870 Stonegate Ct., Salem, VA 24153.

Orders must be received by Monday, October 12. (*Please do not send RVBC dues to Eunice. RVBC dues should be mailed to Robin Austin, Treasurer.*)

The Seed Sale will take place on November 7 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Northwest True Value Hardware Company near Hollins on Route 11. The store is a half mile south of the entrance to Hollins College. 7650 Williamson Road • Roanoke, VA 24019 • (540) 362-2112

If you would like to volunteer to assist, please contact Alyce Quinn: twoquinns@yahoo.com or phone: 719-0109; or Eunice Hudgins: uvaau@aol.com or phone: 389-4056.

The order form is also available on the RVBC website home page.

2010 Annual Dues

It's time to renew your membership. Please complete the form on the back of the newsletter and send it and your check to our Treasurer, Robin Austin. Please do not send dues to Eunice Hudgins.

FIELD TRIPS

CHAIRMAN

Beth Griffin 265-4853

REMEMBER TO SHARE THE COST OF GAS WHEN YOU CARPOOL

October 11, All Day, The Big Sit!

Note that this is a SUNDAY event. Join us for this tail gate party for birders at Tim and Alyce Quinn's property in Wirtz. For more details, see write-up in the September newsletter or call the Quinns at 719-0109. *Please see map to the Quinn's on page four*.

October 17, 8:00 AM, Fenwick Mines

Meet leader Bill Hunley (774-2397) at the Hanging Rock Orange Market. From there we will carpool to Fenwick Mines and walk a level 1 mile loop through a wetland and other birdy habitats.

FIELD NOTES

Sept. 12, 8:00 AM, Peaks of Otter

Not many birds showed up on this sunny pleasant morning. Highlights: Blackburnian Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Philadelphia Vireo, Hooded Warbler, and Bluewinged Teal. Our paths were bordered with fall flowers: Crown Beard, White Snake Root, and Arrow-leaved Tearthumb to name a few. While we birded, Bill Hunley, the trip leader, and Scott and Laurie Spangler regaled us with really good working-in-a-zoo stories.

Sept. 19, 8:00 AM, Harvey's Knob

(milemarker 95.6 on the Blue Ridge Parkway) Club members and visitors birded along the road. Highlights: Black-throated Green, Blue-headed Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Indigo Bunting, Brown Thrasher, Northern Flicker, and Broad-winged Hawk. (A birder from the Lynchburg club saw Blackthroated Blue Warblers and a Black-and-white Warbler at Sunset Fields earlier that morning.)

Sightings

Aug. 29, Rocky Mount: Liz Cole saw 13 Common Nighthawks hunting overhead and finally heading south.

Aug. 30, Rt. 11 about 4 miles south of Buchanan in Botetourt Co.: At dusk Barry Kinzie saw about 60 Common Nighthawks.

Sept. 4, Daleville: Zach Thompson sighted 15 Nighthawks near his home in Daleville.

Sept. 6, Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center: Barry Kinzie saw 55 Common Nighthawks.

Sept. 7, Staunton: Barry Kinzie, Mike Smith, and Kent Davis went to see a Greater Sandplover near Staunton. *(see article on page 3 by Yulee Larner.)*

What You Can Do to Help Birds

The simple things you do every day, from the cup of coffee you drink in the morning to the lights you turn on at night, all have an effect on birds. Our everyday activities impact birds and their habitats. Human activity can deplete their food supplies, create new dangers for them to face, and present them with many challenges. If we want to protect the birds around us and preserve their future, we need to begin to conduct our lives with consciousness about how our actions affect the world around us-not only the people, but the wildlife, the air, the water, and the land. Below are a few things you can do to help ensure bird populations for future generations. Drink shade-grown coffee. Coffee produced from shadeloving varieties means wintering habitat can be preserved for key migrant species such as the Cerulean Warbler. Many coffee companies now provide a range of coffee products that are shade-grown and friendly for birds. Ask your local grocery or coffee shop to stock a shade-grown alternative.

Reduce your use of pesticides. Not only can they be toxic to birds, but they kill the insects that birds eat. Weed instead of spraying! If you must use pesticides, look for biopesticide alternatives. Prevent pests from entering your home by replacing worn weather stripping and screens, and filling in gaps in floors and around windows.

Keep your cat indoors. Even well-fed, cats kill birds. Keep cats inside. Not only will the birds be safer, your cat will be healthier and safer, too.

Plan your yard for diversity. Instead of a lawn with no benefit to wildlife, plant a mixture of native grasses, flowers, and shrubs. Use native species—birds like these best and they are best adapted to where you live. Your state or local native plant society can help you choose species that will work best for you.

Prevent window strikes. Hundreds of millions of birds die each year as a result of hitting windows on every type of building. To reduce night lighting that interferes with migration, ask your office or apartment building manager to turn off exterior and interior lights during spring and fall migration. Place bird feeders within three feet of your windows. Break up the reflections of habitat in your windows by covering the outside of them with taut screens or window film.

Donate your old binoculars to conservation. If you have any old birding equipment just lying around, not being used, you can help our long-distance migrants and rare Latin American endemics by donating your old gear to biologists across the hemisphere through the Birders Exchange program or the Optics for Tropics program. **Reduce your carbon footprint.** Do your part to help reduce our reliance on fossil fuels that cause global warming. Use an electric lawnmower; carpool, bicycle, or use public transport when possible; turn off lights when not in use; use low energy bulbs and Energy Star-rated



appliances; call your power company and ask if you can buy your energy from renewable sources. Help organizations purchase conservation areas and forests that provide valuable habitat for birds, and helps lower atmospheric CO² levels.

©Jim Stevenson

Take action for birds and familiarize yourself with contemporary bird conservation issues. Knowing the issues will help you let your elected officials know which policy and programs can help bird conservation.

Participate in volunteer monitoring activities that help to document the status and trends of bird populations. There are many opportunities in this area, depending on your level of interest, ability to commit time, and level of expertise in bird identification.

Join a bird conservation organization. As individuals, there is only so much we can do for birds. But as a part of an organization with the expertise, broad reach, and partnership capacity of organization, you can make

a difference for wild birds and their habitats locally, nationally, and internationally.

From: http://www.stateofthebirds.org/home-pagedocuments/what-you-can-do-to-help-birds

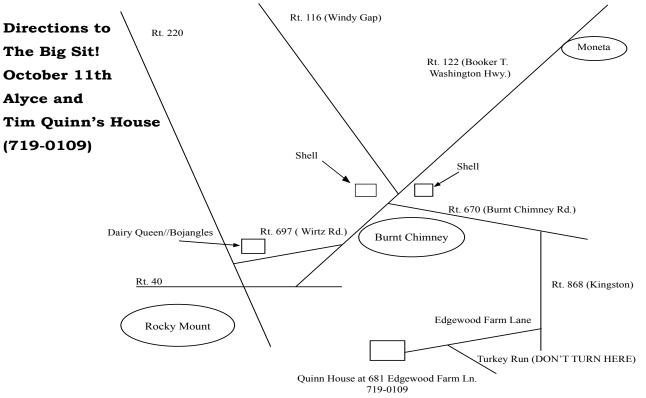
Rare Shorebird Found in Staunton

On September 6, Allen Larner, along with Ed and Nancy Lawler were looking for shorebirds in a pond on Bell's Lane. They noticed a strange bird along with several other shorebird species. After checking the book, *The Shorebirds of the World*, they decided that it was a sand-plover, but could not decide whether it was a Lesser or Greater Sandplover. There is still some debate, but photographs and documentation of Greater Sand-plover will be submitted to Virginia Rarities Committee.

After the sighting was posted on ShenValBirds, birders from around the state rushed to the site. It stayed only three days. At least 200 people from Virginia and ten other states came to see the bird. Eric Hirschfield of Sweden, who studied the greater sand- plover for five years, examined our photographs, and assured us that it is a greater sand-plover, a species that had been seen only twice in the Western Hemisphere: California and Florida. It breeds in Turkey and central Asia, winters in Africa, Australia, and the Mediterranean area, and is a vagrant in Great Britain and France.

How do birds from so far away find their way to the Western Hemisphere (and Staunton, Virginia)?

Yulee Larner Reprinted from the Staunton News Leader



SEEDS FOR A SONG

November 7, 2009

Roanoke Valley Bird Club Fund Raiser In Cooperation with Northwest True Value Hardware

We are having a seed sale to benefit both you and the community. By placing an order with us, you will get quality seed containing little or no waste, harvested this year, at reasonable prices. Proceeds from the sale will be used for community projects. The sale is open to the public, so please copy this form and distribute it to friends and neighbors. There will be a small supply of extra seed available the day of the sale for those unable to pre-order. Refreshments will be served, and experienced bird watchers/feeders will be on hand the day of pick-up to answer any questions.

Orders must be received by Monday, October 12 and picked up on Saturday, November 7, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., at:

Northwest True Value Hardware (in the Hollins area) 7650 Williamson Road, Roanoke VA 24019 (540)-362-2112

The store is about a half mile south of the entrance to Hollins College.

If you are unable to pick up your seed on November 7, please make arrangements for someone else to pick it up for you.

It's easy to order:

- 1. Complete the enclosed order form, being sure to include your name, phone number, and address along with your seed selections.
- 2. Calculate the total, which already includes Virginia sales tax.
- 3. Mail your completed form and check, payable to Roanoke Valley Bird Club, *in time for it to be received by October 12*, to: Eunice Hudgins, 870 Stonegate Ct., Salem, VA 24153. (Please do not include membership dues with your seed sale order. Membership dues should be mailed to Robin Austin, Treasurer.)

Seed Descriptions

Wild birdseed mixes attract ground-feeding birds such as mourning doves, juncos and sparrows:

- Gourmet Mix: contains millet, sunflower, safflower and thistle.
- Shell Free Mix: a waste-free mix of millet, sunflower chips, cracked corn, canary seed and peanut hearts.

Sunflower seed is the best all-around food, favored by a wide variety of birds:

- *Black Oil Sunflower*: smaller than the striped, with thinner shell, more kernel and higher oil content; preferred 2:1 over other seed by most feeder birds.
- Sunflower Chips: the heart of the seed, virtually no hull, no mess, and more meat per pound.
- *Striped Sunflower*: many common feeder birds, such as cardinals, jays, grosbeaks, titmice, chickadees, sparrows and finches, as well as squirrels, like this larger, thicker shelled seed.

Specialty seeds:

- *Nyjer (Thistle)*: especially good for goldfinches and pine siskins, this seed is rich in nourishing oil.
- *White Millet*: favored by ground feeding birds such as juncos, towhees, buntings and sparrows.
- *Safflower*: squirrels don't care for it, but many birds such as cardinals, grosbeaks and juncos do.
- *Peanuts:* a favorite of woodpeckers, titmice, chickadees, nuthatches and blue jays.

SEEDS FOR A SONG

November 7, 2009

Roanoke Valley Bird Club Fund Raiser

In Cooperation with Northwest True Value Hardware

| Name: | Phone: | | |
|----------|---------|----------|--|
| Address: | | | |
| City: | _State: | Zip Code | |

If you are not a club member, how did you learn about this sale?

| Description | Quantity | Size | Price/Each (includes tax) | Total |
|---------------------|----------|---------|---------------------------|-------|
| Gourmet Mix | | 40 lb. | 16.24 | |
| | | 20 lb. | 8.53 | |
| | | 4 lb. | 2.05 | |
| *Shell Free Mix | | 25 lb. | 14.53 | |
| Black Oil Sunflower | | 50 lb. | 18.20 | |
| | | 25 lb. | 9.42 | |
| | | 10 lb. | 5.29 | |
| Sunflower Chips | | 50 lb. | 57.30 | |
| | | 25 lb. | 30.23 | |
| Striped Sunflower | | 50 lb. | 32.34 | |
| Nyjer (Thistle) | | 50 lb. | 41.30 | |
| | | 20 lb. | 23.55 | |
| | | 10 lb. | 12.56 | |
| Millet | | 50 lb. | 14.91 | |
| | | 25 lb. | 8.25 | |
| Peanuts in Shell | | 25 lb. | 29.16 | |
| Safflower | | 50 lb. | 41.60 | |
| | | 25 lb. | 21.59 | |
| | | 4 lb. | 6.02 | |
| High Energy Suet | | Cake | 1.21 | |
| Ear Corn | | 6.5 lb. | 5.98 | |
| | | | Total | \$ |

*There may be a problem getting this seed on time because the supplier does not keep a lot on hand—it spoils quickly. If you order it, be aware that you may have to make a second trip to pick it up later.



| ROANOKE VALLEY BIRD CLUB 2009 OFFICERS | How did you hear about the club? |
|--|--|
| President: Elly Wefel 977-0636 VP (Programs) Bill Grant 389-3294 VP (Membership): Eleanor Dye 890-1627 Freasurer: Robin Austin 929-9071 Secretary: Connie Marsh 334-7094 Field Trips: Beth Griffin 265-4853 Directors at Large: Eunice Hudgins and Alyce Quinn Publications: Carol Siler 725-1609 Website: www.roanokevalleybirdclub.com | |
| 2010 Membership Dues | Dues |
| Name(s): Address: City: ST: Zip: Phone: Email: | Individual\$12Family\$20Student\$7Sustaining\$30Adopt-a-Bluebird\$15 |
| Mail To: Roanoke Valley Bird Club c/o Robin Austin, Treasurer 10513 Bottom Creek Road Bent Mountain, VA 24059-2311 | Additional Contribution \$ Total Submitted \$ |