



The Thrasher

Richmond Audubon Society

The next *Thrasher* will be the March/April issue

RAS Meetings in Jan. and Feb. 2009

The meetings will be held at St. Luke Lutheran Church, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. The church is located at the intersection of Chippenham Parkway and Custis Road in South Richmond. The intersection is at a traffic light just east of the Huguenot Rd. exit.

Program for January 15: Time for the annual RAS Legislative meeting. Dan Holmes, Director of State Policy for the Piedmont Environmental Council, will fill us in on upcoming environmental legislation in the VA General Assembly. Of particular emphasis is the possibility that uranium mining will be allowed in Virginia, and Dan will discuss the implications of what many perceive to be the extreme dangers of uranium mining to the population - that's you and me. (*The Piedmont Environmental Council is a very effective environmental group based in Northern VA.*) Last year over 100 letters were written at the RAS legislative meeting, and they made a big difference, so be prepared to write at least one letter. Stationary and stamps will be provided. All you have to do is write the letters.

Program for February 19: Local conservation practices start at home! Learn effective methods of enhancing your property by planting varied and colorful native plants to create and offer more green space for wildlife habitat. *The Nature of Change* handbook provides plant and wildlife checklists, garden plans and successful examples pollinator, rain, and butterfly gardens as well as native meadows. Kevin Munroe, Manager of Huntley Meadows Park and Board Member of Audubon at Home in Northern Virginia, will present how this program is flourishing throughout the region and how it can be applied statewide.

Dessert will be available after the meetings.

Sandy Wynne, Program Chair

The Pre-meeting dinner for each meeting will start at 5:30 p.m. There is a nominal fee of \$5.00. Call or e-mail me by the day before the meeting if you plan to be there for the dinner.

Note: if you want to come but are unsure you can make it, get your name on the list. Too much food is better than not enough! (If you can't make it, you will not be responsible for the cost.) Reservations will not be accepted after the evening of the day before the meeting.

Entrée items for the pre-meeting dinners are provided by some of the attendees by pre-arrangement. You don't have to bring any food, but you are welcome to share one of your favorite dishes with our group. Keep all your receipts for any food you bring. Those who bring food are reimbursed for their expenses at the meeting if they provide receipts, and all who partake pay the \$5.00 fee whether or not they bring food. (We don't try to make a profit on the dinners.) Call or e-mail by the Sunday before the Thursday meeting to let me know what you plan to provide. This allows time to coordinate the dinner. Bon Appetit!

Jan Robertson, Hospitality Chair

hospitality@richmondaudubon.org, or 804-272-6674

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New RAS Publicity Chair

Diane Jadowski, one of our newest members, has agreed to serve as Publicity Chair for RAS. Diane recently moved here from Nevada, where she served in the same capacity for the Las Vegas Valley Audubon Society. If you are registered for the RAS Listserv you have seen her plugs for the RAS Auction. Already she is vigorously doing the job for RAS. Please welcome Diane if you see her at a meeting or field trip.

President's Message: January / February 2009

One of the questions I often get when I tell people I am a birdwatcher is, "How did you get into it?" So I tell them about Mrs. Taylor, my fourth grade teacher. I grew up in the Mid-west. Winters there are bleak. You've probably heard about "Great Lakes effect". The Great Lakes cause weather patterns that make moisture stagnate. Clouds cover the whole entire area for much of the winter. (I recall being amazed when I moved to the South in 1965. You could see blue sky almost every day, even in January!) So it was a special event when, one day in early spring, we donned coats and hats and left our classroom for a walk outside. Mrs. Taylor led us to a large oak tree just around the block from the school entrance. She called our attention to the tree's crown. There were Robins, Cardinals, and Sparrows. Their colors formed fantastic relief against the soupy gray sky.

Then she taught us a new word – ornithology. It had a special ring to it, though I confess to not really understanding what it meant. I got that somewhere out there in the wide-wide world there were people who worked seriously to understand the connection between this tree, those birds and that never-ending cloud that obscured the sky for half of every year.

Fast-forward three decades plus some. I lived in a log cabin. It sat in the middle of half a dozen unimproved lots

in a rural lake community an hour north of Richmond. One day in early spring, I looked out the window. Trees were just beginning to sprout leaves. There, flitting through the branches was a bird I'd never seen before – red with black wings. It was abstractly beautiful. It wasn't a Cardinal. I bought Roger Tory Petersen's field guide. My mystery bird was, of course, a Scarlet Tanager. And just like that, the magic that is birdwatching began a learning process that continues to this day.

Eventually, I saw an announcement in the paper for a bird walk. I met wonderful people who didn't mind that I had just discovered the Scarlet Tanager and had not been on a bird walk since fourth grade. Ornithology is more important than that fourth-grader standing under a tree full of birds could ever have imagined. And now I understand why people want to know how I got into birdwatching.

Over the years, I have heard many stories about how one birder or another got into it. It's one of my favorite questions to ask others, too. So now I will pose the question to you, dear readers. How did you get interested in birds? Share your introduction-to-birds story with me. Grab me at the next meeting or send an email to pamdummitt@yahoo.com.

Happy Birding,

Pam

2009 VCN Lobby Day, Monday, January 19, 2009

Where? Centenary United Methodist Church, 411 East Grace Street, Richmond, VA 23219.

Participants in VCN's Citizen Lobby Day learn about legislation affecting all areas of our environment and take that message to their representatives. Find your Senator and Delegate: online by visiting <http://legis.state.va.us/> and clicking "who's my legislator" Set up appointments with your Senator and Delegate: Arrange an appointment prior to Lobby Day January 19, 2009. Times: Meet with your legislator between 10:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. or after 2:00 p.m.

Work through the your lead legislative contact member to schedule the appointment.

Questions? Contact Suzanne Ankrum at 804-644-0283 or Matt Zogby at 804-225-1902

More Information on Legislative Contact Teams: www.vcnva.org

Zeiss Optical: Lead Sponsor of the RAS Auction

For the 2008 RAS auction, Carl Zeiss Optics, the manufacturer of superior binoculars and spotting scopes, was the lead sponsor for this, the major RAS fund-raising event. Michael Kurze, Zeiss' Marketing Manager who attended the auction, was upbeat about the opportunity to help make the fund-raiser successful. "We are very much in tune with Audubon's projects and goals and look for ways to strengthen our ties to Richmond Audubon", Kurze said. "You know, our motto is 'We Make it Visible' and we hope that by supporting RAS our mutual appreciation for conservation and community education will grow stronger and gain a wider audience. "

Zeiss, a major maker of sports and medical research optics that has a North American marketing distribution plant in Chester with a staff of 20, has supported a number of RAS programs in the past. The company sponsored RAS' Birdathon Team and participated in Audubon's Important

Bird Area tree planting at Presquile National Wildlife Refuge. Zeiss staff visited RAS' MAPS station to witness firsthand the bird-banding research station. The company has been a consistent auction donor and provided speakers for monthly programs.

Kurze noted that the optics company aims to raise Richmond's community awareness and appreciation of birding and wants to make binoculars and scopes available at the 2009 Purple Martin Festival in Shockoe Bottom. In the future, Zeiss would also like to sponsor a Virginia team for a future World Series of Birding held each year in Cape May, New Jersey.

For its ongoing and sustained support of the Richmond Audubon Society's annual auction, conservation and education programs, Zeiss has certainly earned our gratitude and support.

Jerry Uhlman

RAS Field Trips: January - February, 2009

Sunday January 4 – Bryan Park with Sue Ridd: Check out the resident and wintering birds. Meet at 7:30 a.m. For more information, call Sue at 270-5365.

Sunday, January 11 – Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield County: Join Lewis Barnett to see what winter ducks are there. Meet 8:00 a.m. at the first observation platform, 804 -320 -7898 or lbarnett@richmond.edu for more info.

Saturday, January 17 – RAS James River Winter Count, Richmond: Survey James River Park for winter residents. Start at sunrise and finish at home of Mary Arg and Larry Robinson, Landria Drive, 10:30 a.m. for potluck breakfast and tally. Entrance requirements are a breakfast food/beverage and one suet cake per participant. Call Julie Kacmarcik 530-3660 / juliekazz@comcast.net to be assigned to a group.

Wednesday, January 14 – 2nd Wednesday walk with John Coe will be at Three Lakes Park: Call John (276-1397) for details.

Sunday February 1: Bryan Park with Sue Ridd: See what cool winter species we can find. Meet at 7:15 a.m.

For more information, call Sue at 270-5365. There is a Bryan Park trip on the first Sunday of each month, starting about 1/2 hour after sunrise.

Saturday, February 7 – George Washington's Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland County: To carpool we depart 7 a.m. from Glenside Drive Park-and-Ride lot. Admission fee \$4 to some areas. Contact Tyler Turpin (804) 317- 9478 or tylerturpin@earthlink.net for more information or to sign up. Make up day if cancelled due to weather is

Saturday, February 28. Directions: I - 95 N to Carmel Church, 301 N. Right on SR 3 East and then Popes Creek Road to park entrance. Fee: \$3

Wednesday, February 11 – 2nd Wednesday walk with John Coe: The walk will be at Shirley Plantation. Call John (276-1397) for details.

Friday through Monday, February 13-16 – The 12th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. Check out <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/> and join in the count from home, your favorite park or other location.

Saturday, February 14 - Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens and sections of James River Park - Great

Backyard Bird Count: Join Tyler Turpin for the Great Backyard Bird Count, starting at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens visitor center at 8:00 a.m. Cost \$6.00 for non Ginter members. Next, meet at the parking lot next to Tredegar Ironworks at 10:10 a.m. to count birds at Brown's Island. Pony Pasture Parking lot on Riverside Drive around 11:30 a.m. Counters also needed for 42nd Street and other south river bank areas. Return to Pony Pasture 12:45 p.m. for tally. Check the lake at the office park behind Stony Point Shopping Center and end at 1:30 p.m. Call (804) 317-9478 or tylerturpin@earthlink.net to sign up.

Saturday, February 15 – Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield County: Join Lewis Barnett check late winter birds and early migrants. Meet 8:00 a.m. at the first observation platform, 804 -320 -7898 or lbarnett@richmond.edu for more info.



RAS Listserv: a Valuable Resource

If you have been to the RAS website, you can always download the latest *Thrasher* PDF in color, as well as the *Thrasher* archives back to 2006. But there is another way to keep up with all the latest information in the birding world in our area. You will benefit greatly by subscribing to the RAS Listserv. Instructions are on the RAS website: http://www.richmond-audubon.org/LinksMain.html#anchor_listserv.

Scroll down to "Freelists" and follow the directions. If you don't have a computer or are not able to get Internet access, you may have to go to a friend's house or a local library. But if you have been putting off getting a computer, or Internet access, now is the time.

What advantages do you get by subscribing? You get a notice by E-mail when the next issue of *The Thrasher* is online. You get notified of changes in scheduled events due to inclement weather or other problems. You also get the latest news on what birds are being seen in the area.

Sometimes people post bird-related questions on the listserv. This is a good way to get answers, because there are lots or pairs of eyes out there with years of experience. This can be about bird feeding, birds with an injury or other problem, bird identification questions, who to contact for questions on conservation easements or other bird or wildlife-related things. Lastly, you can post your bird sightings, and ask for solutions to bird-related questions like what to plant to attract birds to your yard, etc. By participating in the RAS Listserv a discourse is created between RAS mem-

bers that may not happen otherwise. It's a way into the inner workings of Richmond Audubon and the local birding community. If there are posts in which you have no interest, you can simply delete them.

There is a real possibility that, in the future, you may have to be registered with the listserv or go to the RAS website if you want to stay up with RAS activities at all. Times when we can just rely on a printed publication for this type of information are gone forever. The society is in constant state of change, and publications with hard and fast deadlines well in advance of the publication date, as well as limited space for articles, are unable to keep up with that flux. So go to the RAS website and register for the RAS Listserv if you are not there already. Give it a try!

Al Warfield

Richmond Audubon's "It's For The Birds" 2008 Annual Auction

The preliminary numbers indicate that we will exceed last year's record numbers in dollars raised and attendance. It would not have been possible without your support. Our thanks go out to everyone who helped make it such a great event. In this economy, we are quite pleased with this result.

Sponsorships

This year we introduced the Richmond Audubon sponsorship program. We want thank each of the 17-sponsors for their support of Richmond Audubon.

Bald Eagle, \$2,000 & beyond

Zeiss

Peregrine Falcon, \$1,000-\$1999

The Preston Harrison Foundation

Great Blue Heron, \$500 to \$999

Anonymous

Gardener & Robertson

Molly and Paul Hood

Red-headed Woodpecker \$250- \$499

Mary & Wayne Alfred

Donna Brodd

Robert B. Giles, Davenport & Co.

Vulcan Materials Company-Royal

Stone Quarry

Wild Birds Unlimited

Northern Cardinal \$125 to \$249

Ben Greaner Conservation Area

Ed and Joy Fuhr

Integra Realty Resources

Pam Dummitt

Select Financial Partners

Sinclair & Associates

Thompson McMullan

Special thanks to our wonderful Chefs: Margaret O'Bryan, Meredith Bass and Doug Sinclair. They created a wonderful feast that was enjoyed by all. Also thanks to Ben Saunders for his wine expertise.

Thanks to our Auctioneer, Doug Sinclair and Cashier, Sandra Sinclair. Doug Sinclair, CAI, AARE is a professional auctioneer and holds the industries' highest professional designations. He lives with his wife Sandra on Old Gun Road in Chesterfield County and they have called the bid for the Audubon auction almost every year since its inception in the early to mid 90's! Sandra M. Sinclair, CLTC is a long-term care insurance specialist and would be pleased to assist any Audubon member or guest in evaluating their current coverage. She can be reached at: (804) 794-5220.

Credits. We would like to thank the following businesses: Wild Birds Unlimited, BirdWatchers, and the Wild Bird Center for providing drop-off locations for donations.

Thanks to all the members of the auction committee and to all our hard-working volunteers, to everyone who secured donations, and to the businesses and individuals who made donations. You are responsible for the success of the RAS Annual Auction. And, of course, thank you to all who came out and supported the auction and bid to win that special item!

All proceeds support RAS and its conservation activities including education, citizen science, and habitat restoration.

Business Donors - Please patronize these organizations

Appomattox River Co. Inc
Baxter Perkinson, Artist
Beverly A. Lockwood, Artist
Birdwatchers
Blue Ridge Mountain Sports
Bobbie's B&B
Boulevard Flower Gardens
Boychiks Deli
Brio Tuscan Grille
California Pizza Kitchen
Cape Charles House
Capital Ale House
Chipotle Mexican Grill
Custom Frames Made Easy

Eagle Optics
Five Guys Burgers & Fries
Franklin Covey
Fresh Market
Garden Club of Virginia
Home Depot
Home Team Grill
Hondos
iPhotoBirds.com
James River Fishing School
James River Park
James Taylor, Singer
John Tobin Photography
Kim Harrell Illustration

Nature's Image Photo
Workshops
Lewis Ginter Botanical
Garden
Lynda Richardson
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P. F Chang's
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Science Museum of Virginia
Segway of Richmond
Silver Diner
SouthEast Expeditions

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Starbucks
The Cheesecake Factory
Trader Joe's
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Virginia Department of Game
and Inland Fisheries
Virginia Diner
Virginia Department of
Highways
West Marine
Wild Birds Unlimited
Wild Bird Center
Zeiss

Continued on next page

Individual Donors - Please thank these folks

Allen, Mary	Echols, Rachel	Mills, Sally	Spencer, Mary Randolph
Arginteanu, Mary	Green, Randal L.	Miranian, Ann	Strandberg, Adrienne
Bailes, Lynn	Hackett, Mundy	O'Bryan, Margaret & Wayne	Suttle, Grace
Baker, Dennis	Harrell, Kim	Reilly, Bob	Terry, Claire
Brodd, Donna	Hayden, John	Rider, Bill	Warfield, Al & Linda
Brooks, Mike & Ann	Hugo, Nancy Ross	Roberts, John	Weldon, Aimee
Campbell, Gloria	Jones, Bob & Dian	Robertson, Tom & Jan	White, Ralph
Coe, John & Caroline	Kleopfer, JD	Robinson, Larry	Wynne, Bob & Sandy
Cole, Bob & Linda	Knuth, Spike	Rosapepe, Sunta	Yates, Mr. & Mrs. Dan
Cook, Kim	Landers, Audrey	Shultz, Rita	
Cordle, Joan	Lyon, Suzette	Simms, Essie	
Dummitt, Pam	Mazza, Joan	Snyder, Nelda & Buz	

Auction Planning Committee

Donna Brodd	John Coe	Lori Rutledge	Hal Tyler
Ann Brooks	Bob Coles, Co-chair	Doug Sinclair	Jerry Uhlman
Caroline Coe, Co-chair	Anne Dunnburg	Sandra Sinclair	Linda Warfield

Attacking Climate Change on Two Fronts

Thanks to the hard work of many conservation-minded Virginians, Governor Tim Kaine's Commission on Climate Change has sent the governor a report recommending a number of steps to address one of the most serious environmental challenges of all time – global climate change.

The Commission recommends –

- reducing emissions by 80 percent below current levels (The scientific International Panel on Climate Change recommended an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels.);
- a mandatory energy efficiency standard to reduce electricity consumption 19 percent by 2025 and more energy-efficient building codes;
- more funding for public transit;
- coordinating land use and transportation planning and accounting for greenhouse gas emissions in those decisions; and
- no net loss of natural carbons sinks, like forests and wetlands.

The 2009 General Assembly will consider several bills to implement these recommendations. To get involved contact me and visit the Virginia Conservation Network's website, www.vcnva.org. Be sure to join VCN and other conservationists on January 19 to visit with General Assembly members.

To learn more about the Commission's recommendations, visit <http://www.deq.virginia.gov/info/climatechange.html>.

Also in the good news category, a new Congress and a new President will begin work in January. Climate change will be a priority, say many observers.

As we go to press, specific bills have not been introduced, but many will be as Congress works its will over the next year or two. Auduboners should urge Virginia's members of Congress (who have a mixed record on this issue) to support strong climate change legislation. Visit <http://www.audubon.org/globalwarming/> to learn more about Audubon's efforts and to find out what you can do.

Ratings of Virginia's Delegation: Here are the 2008 conservation ratings for Virginia's members of Congress who will also serve in 2009-2010, based on their votes (representatives' districts are in parenthesis): Senator Jim Webb, 91%; Rep. Rob Witten (1), 23%; Rep. Bobby Scott (3), 100%; Rep. Randy Forbes (4), 0%; Rep. Goodlatte (6), 0%; Rep. Eric Cantor (7), 8%; Rep. Jim Moran (8), 100%; Rep. Rick Boucher (9), 77%; Rep. Frank Wolf (10), 31%.

Source: www.lcv.org/scorecard

Climate Change Town Hall: The Virginia Climate Campaign will hold a town meeting in Richmond with speakers discussing the threats that climate change pose to our state. For date and time, and more information, contact the Sierra Club at Tel 804 225 0113 x105.

<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/>.

"There is mounting scientific evidence that global warming is already having profound effects on birds, broader biodiversity, wildlife habitat and ecosystems." – National Audubon Society

"Global warming could lead to a net decrease in neotropical migrant species present in the contiguous United States." – American Bird Conservancy

Glenda C. Booth
Virginia Outreach Coordinator
(gbooth123@aol.com)

A Spidery Halloween

"When you can't take the kids out into nature, you have to bring nature indoors to the kids," said Mary Arginteanu, Riverine Master Naturalist and Richmond Audubon Society member. For an indoor Halloween program, children in Charity Family Life's after school program were treated to a



spidery Halloween event, sponsored by the Richmond Audubon Society. Wade Harrell brought numerous live arachnids, from his personal collection of about 100, to share with the wide-eyed children. The specimen included a black widow and her egg sac, a few

orbs, a house spider, a wolf spider, scorpions, a Malaysian trap door spider, and an assortment of African and North American tarantulas. Harrell is president of the American Tarantula Society and animal specialist for Three Lakes Nature Center in Henrico County.

"They don't require much day to day care," said Harrell, who feeds most of his arachnids weekly on a diet of cockroaches, which he raises, and crickets, which he buys in bulk. Of his impressive collection of scorpions, only the tiny Carolina Bark Scorpion is native to Virginia. It measures less than two inches long and can be found in the far western mountain regions of Virginia and the Carolinas.

Harrell explained several interesting facts to his audience. For example, all arachnids have eight legs, no antennae and an outside skeleton because they have no bones. All spiders can produce silk but not all spiders weave webs. Some, such as tarantulas, use silk to line their holes in the ground. The trap door spider uses silk and organic material to create a "door" to

his den, complete with trap lines to help detect unsuspecting prey. Many arachnids are long-lived. Some tarantulas can live 20 to 30 years and some scorpions up to 10 years. Large



scorpions will capture and eat frogs and lizards. A fishing spider can capture small fish.

The visit from spider man Wade Harrell ended with Halloween snacks and chocolate spider cakes made by Donna Cottingham. Donna Cottingham, Mary Arginteanu and Holly Walker are volunteers who planned and supervised the event.

Written by *Donna Cottingham*
Photos by *Bob Schamerhorn*

Attracting Warblers to your Backyard

During spring migration, you can attract beautiful warblers in breeding plumage, to your backyard by creating a habitat that warblers find irresistible. No need to redo your entire landscape, plant exotic berry bushes or offer fancy food like live meal worms. All you need are: A bird bath that you may already possess, an empty 2-liter plastic soda container with cap (I like the green container used for 7 Up or Sprite), and a plant hanger or bird feeder pole. Make a very small hole at the bottom of the container. It is better to make it too small than too large because the former can be enlarged. Fill the bird bath and container with water. Hang the filled container by the neck, with the cap screwed on tight. As you gently loosen the cap, the water in the container will start to drip onto the bird bath. You can adjust the drip so that it will last all day.

There you have it. A low cost warbler magnet that is sure to give you years of pleasure during the migration season and beyond. I put together this arrangement last spring and how well did it work? Well the proof is in the pictures. One bird (a female Black &



White Warbler) is shown here, but if

you want to see all the birds we attracted to our setup, please go to <http://picasaweb.google.com/vabirder/WarblerMagnet#>

In case you are unable to go to the web for them, the birds were a Common Yellowthroat, Black & White Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Gray Catbird, Eastern Towhee, and Summer Tanager. As you can see, it's not just the warblers that are attracted by the sound of the dripping water.



Naseem Reza

Officers / Committee Chairs and Co-chairs for 2008-9

President	Pam Dummitt	president@richmondaudubon.org	353-3571
1st VP	Lewis Barnett	vicepresident1@richmondaudubon.org	320-7898
2nd VP	Caroline Coe	vicepresident2@richmondaudubon.org	276-1397
Secretary	Russell Deane	secretary@richmondaudubon.org	
Treasurer	Donna Brodd	treasurer@richmondaudubon.org	262-7040
Past President	Al Warfield		
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Education	Bob Schamerhorn	education@richmondaudubon.org	658-0871
Hospitality	Jan Robertson	hospitality@richmondaudubon.org	272-6674
Conservation	vacant		
Legislation	Margaret O'Bryan	legislation@richmondaudubon.org	746-5599
Field Trips	Penny Reynolds	fieldtrips@richmondaudubon.org	828-4911
Membership	Lori Rutledge	membership@richmondaudubon.org	310-9014
Cyberspace	Robin Ruth	cyberspace@richmondaudubon.org	231-5949
Programs	Sandy Wynne	programs@richmondaudubon.org	276-5520
Publicity	Diane Jadowski	Publicity@richmondaudubon.org	702-308-1953
Youth	Robin Ruth Mary Arginteanu	RASkids@richmondaudubon.org	231-5949 320-0138
IBA /VAC Rep	Lewis Barnett	IBA@richmondaudubon.org	320-7898

Important Notices

Richmond Audubon Society is a registered non-profit organization

For 2008 *The Thrasher* is issued in Jan/Feb., Mar/Apr., May/June, Jul/Aug, Sept/Oct, Nov/Dec.

Submit articles no later than the 15th of the month before each issue.
E-mail: thrasher@richmondaudubon.org

RAS membership meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of the month except June, July and Aug. Meetings held at St. Luke Lutheran Church at Custis Rd. and Chippenham Parkway unless notified.

RAS Board Meetings held on the 2nd Thursday on alternate months starting in Jan; RAS members welcome to attend, but contact a Board member to obtain location and time.

Thanks to these Thrasher Volunteers:
Linda Warfield: Labels & proofreading
Patrick Hickey & Jean Adams: Mailing

Richmond Audubon Society is also a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology and the Virginia Conservation Network.

The Thrasher is printed on recycled paper

From The Kitchen Window: January – February, 2009

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that endure as long as life lasts."
Rachael Carson

Winter – though the leaves have fallen to the ground and flowers are now seeds hanging on bare stalks – has beauty.

Sunrise, even on an icy morning, warms your face. The bare branches of the oak trees glow orange, and House Finches fly there to warm up, their red breasts glowing in the morning sunlight.

In the winter the air is purer than other seasons, and on a clear day a single tree, its bare branches a definition of the species, is a thing of beauty.

I look often at the big sycamore tree down by the creek. Its bright white limbs are so striking with the dark forest behind, and, even as night comes, the glow of the tree remains.

And when the stars come out, the night sky in winter can take your breath away. So many stars – so many light years away.

And when the full moon comes up, it looks so big; the brightness is almost like day, with tree-shadows everywhere.

Sunrises; Sunsets; Moonrise; Star rise; Snowfall; Morning Frost; and the call of the Owl on a cold winter night. There is beauty in winter.

Our birds of winter, and those who live here all year, wish all of you a **Happy New Year.**

The Full Moon of January occurs on the eleventh, and is named the Wolf Moon.

The Full Moon of February happens on the ninth, about a week after Groundhog Day, and is called the Snow Moon.

John Coe



Phone: (804) 257-0813

On the Web at: www.richmondaudubon.org

Important notice for NEW members of RAS - Action Required!

NEW MEMBERS who joined through National Audubon and not via a direct application to RAS: If this is your first issue of The Thrasher, you need to send a response by one of the methods below in order to keep it coming to your mailbox.

1. Online: (www.richmondaudubon.org/forms/FormE-ThrasherDelivery.html)
2. Written response to: RAS, PO Box 26648, Richmond, VA 23261 (See *Information to Include*).
3. Call the RAS phone number (804) 257-0813 and leave a message with your information (see below).

Information to Include:

- *Your name (From your *Thrasher* label)
- *Your address (with 9-digit zip)
- *Phone # and e-mail addresses so we can contact you
- *The 10-digit account number or other code at the top of your mailing label located on the newsletter that is currently sent to you (e.g., 0000000001, NLO, COMP, COA, or WOL)
- *Whether you want to receive *The Thrasher* by mail or only read it online

*What RAS activities you enjoy: Read *The Thrasher*, Field Trips, Meetings, Workdays, Auction, Projects, other (specify) (This information is optional for you but useful to us.)

We want you to get your *Thrasher* in the mail if you want to receive it. Please respond, even if you intend to read it online. We need to know which of our many NAS members are really interested in RAS. We also want to reduce our costs, but not at the expense of your enjoyment.

New members coming to RAS through National Audubon will get at least one issue of *The Thrasher* so they will have a chance to see it before making their decision. If you come through RAS directly we will send *The Thrasher* automatically if you requested that on your application.

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The Thrasher

the newsletter of the Richmond Audubon Society.

The Richmond Audubon society promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and preservation of birds, other wildlife, and habitat through education, advocacy, and fellowship.