I spent 50-years as a real estate consultant. I sold my company at the end of 2012 but still serve on the board and do a little review and consulting work. Gena and I sold our home of 22-years in Montpelier (Hanover County) and moved in December to a wonderful apartment at Richmond Westminster Canterbury and plan to continue our traveling, birding and photography adventures. I have been involved with photography since the 1980’s and was heavily involved in landscape and nature photography. As a result I was taking a lot of bird photographs, but I did not know much about the birds in my pictures. A member of my camera club belonged to RAS and suggested I check it out. At my first meeting I found a small but very dedicated group of birders from all walks of life. I joined and went on every field trip I could. Before joining I would not go into the field without my camera, then I got to the point were I would not go without my binoculars, today I take both. I keep a life list (still trying to get to 600 ABA species, maybe this year), state and year list. In Virginia I also keep a city/county as well as a yard list. I find listing to be a very important part of bird watching. It tells me where and when I saw the bird and helps in planning birding trips. I use Bird Brain software to track my sightings. Birding has provided both Gena and me with many fond memories and many new friends. We don’t take a trip anywhere that we are not birding at some level. I am still an active member of the Focus Group Camera Club currently serving on the newsletter committee. I also serve on the board LHSA-The International Leica Society and serve on their newsletter, membership and regional meetings committees. Other memberships include the Rotary Club of Innsbrook and the Richmond Insiders Club. After serving on many RAS’s committees and the board I am a less active member today, but I have always been amazed how much RAS gets done with very few resources other than a core group of very dedicated volunteers and I am very proud to say that I am a member.
President’s Message

Lewis Barnett

Random Thoughts while waiting for Spring

I like cold winters. They seem to push good ducks into the city. This year, White-winged Scoter, Canvasback, Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye.

Arun Bose found 170 species within the city limits of Richmond in 2013. Just more evidence that we live in an extraordinary place for birds. And that we have some extraordinary birders here, too.

The herons are back on the island at the Pipeline Walk. Come on out for one of the walks that RAS, Virginia Audubon Council and the James River Park System are running in March and April.

We had another great year of Bluebird box building workshops at Chesterfield County Libraries. Thanks to Betsy and Ben Saunders for organizing the kits, and to Virginia Master Naturalists for helping out with the presentation of the workshops.

Spring is coming, and that means Bird-a-thon! Get together two or three friends and form a team!
January and February Programs

Caroline Coe, Program Chair
Cccoe@verizon.net - 804-276-1397

Thursday, March 20, 2014

The Coes’ Grand Adventure to Alaska

Join John and Caroline Coe for a program about their 101-Day Grand Adventure to Alaska last summer. Long-time Auduboners, John and Caroline packed up their camper, their maps and binoculars and headed west, then north, and then more west. There are miles of stories and pictures. We’ll share a large map so we can hear from many of you who have done parts of this trek, too.

Join us at 6:30 pm for pre-meeting coffee, cookies and conversations. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm.

Wednesday, April 16, 2014

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE TO 3rd WEDNESDAY FOR THIS MEETING

“A Junior Big Year” with Gabriel Mapel

This Augusta County native and member of the Monticello Bird Club will share the adventures and birds of his 2011 Junior Big Year. Gabriel, at the age of 12, recorded 437 species of birds that year and is the first to complete such a feat. He is also the author of “Oh, NO, Gertrude: The True Story of a Not-so Naughtly Black Bear.”

Please join us in April to welcome Gabriel Mapel.

At 6:30 pm we meet for pre-meeting coffee, cookies and conversations. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm.

Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration

As a chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology, Richmond Audubon will be participating in the 2014 Rusty Blackbird Spring Migration Blitz. During the month of March, we’ll be on the lookout for Rusties on all our field trips, and reporting sightings in eBird using the Rusty Blackbird Blitz protocol. Individual birders are also welcome to submit Rusty sightings to eBird.

Rusty Blackbirds like wet forests, have some distinctive visual differences from Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles, and can be identified reliably by voice. More information about the blitz and identifying Rusty Blackbirds can be found at http://rustyblackbird.org.
Continued from page 1

Bob Coles’ Favorite Photos

American Kestrel, Curles Neck, Henrico

Eastern Meadow lark, Everglades NWR

Magnolia Warbler, Magee Marsh, OH

Purple Gallinule, Everglades NWR
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

All photos taken in Chesterfield County by Naseem Reza

Quick Facts

- Winter guest in Central Virginia
- Easily overlooked due to its similarity to Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers. Larger than Downy but smaller than Hairy
- Feeds on sap by drilling a series of horizontal holes on the trunk of trees such as maple, oak and hickory
- Also feeds on insects drawn to the flowing sap. Other birds including hummingbirds come to the sap wells to feed
- White line along the wing is diagnostic
- Best time to see it is in early spring. Locate the sap holes on a tree trunk and watch for the sapsucker’s return
- Can also be located by its distinctive call
- Will come to suet feeder
- Yellow belly is a subtle yellowish wash
Field Trips

Ellison Orcutt

These are all the RAS trips that have been submitted as of the publication date. Check the RAS listserv (if you don’t subscribe the archives are at www.freelists.org/archive/va-richmond-general/) or the RAS website for any late breaking news about field trips (www.richmondaudubon.org/ActivFieldTrip.html).

March 2nd Sunday, April 6th Sunday
Bryan Park with Sue Ridd - 270-5365
Start time: ½ hour after sunrise
Meeting location: Shelter 1, Joseph Bryan Park

March 8th, 22nd

April 5th, 12th 26th
Saturdays
Heron Rookery with Richmond Audubon
Time: 10 am -12 pm (3:00 pm start on April 26th)
Join Richmond Audubon, Virginia Audubon and Friends of James River Park (JRP) to explore this little treasure of downtown Richmond. A small $5.00 fee will be collected to benefit Virginia Audubon and Friends of JRP. Meet in the grassy area just west of 14th Street. director@virginiaauduboncouncil.org.

March 9th, Sunday
Curles Neck with Ellison Orcutt - (804) 339-6976
Start time: 7:30 am.
One of our favorite birding locations, Curles Neck Farm in Henrico County, is excellent in any season. Please register beforehand as space is limited. Please call or email at fieldtrips@richmondaudubon.org to register or for questions. A $5 fee per person will be collected for this trip to benefit RAS.

March 12th, Wednesday
Dutch Gap/Henricus with John Coe - (804) 276-1397
Meet John at 8:00 am at the first pull-off overlooking the marsh. Call or contact him at johnwcoe@verizon.net

March 15th Saturday
Dutch Gap with Lewis Barnett
Meet Lewis Barnett, at 8:00 am at the entrance to Dutch Gap Conservation area. For more information, contact Lewis at president@richmondaudubon.org.

March 29th Saturday
Crewe’s Channel with Tyler Turpin - 804-317-9478
Join Tyler, for some inland shorebirding. Crewe’s Channel has the shallow waters and mudflats that can attract shorebirds during spring migration. Meet Tyler between 1:45 and 2:00 pm at the Malvern Hill unit of Richmond National Battlefield Park.

April 9th, Wednesday
Robious Landing Park with John Coe-276-1397
This location is one of the best in the area to find Red-headed Woodpeckers. Call or email John for the start time and for more information: johnwcoe@verizon.net

April 12th, Field Day at the Presquile NWR
More information can be found at: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/presquile/

April 19th, Saturday
Start time: 8:00 am
Dutch Gap with Lewis Barnett
See March 15th trip for more info.

April 20th, Sunday
Start Time: 7:00 am
Tucker Park with Robert McLemore - 804-556-2757
Join Robert in a new area park to see what visits this rural park in the spring. Tucker Park is just north of the James River and west of the Maiden’s Bridge on Rt. 522 in Goochland, VA.
Contact Robert at grousek9@yahoo.com for details.

April 26th Saturday
Ashland Trolley Line with Bob and Linda Cole.
Meet at 7:00 am in the Luck Chevrolet parking lot. The walk is usually about 3-4 hours. Contact Bob or Linda Cole at (804) 798-6618 with questions or directions. No reservations are needed. Luck Chevrolet (516 S. Washington Hwy, Ashland, VA) is at the Intersection of Rt. 1 and Ashcake Rd. Please park in the dirt parking lot to the left and do not park among the new or used cars in the paved lot.

May 4th Saturday
42nd St. with Arun Bose
Start time: 7:00 am
Warblers! Join Arun Bose to explore one of the best city limits locations for enjoying the spring warbler migration. This beautiful section of the James River Park has a treetop pedestrian bridge that can produce eye level views of hard to spot warblers and other migrants. Meet Arun at the 42nd st. lot off of Riverside Dr. A small $5.00 fee per person will be collected to benefit Richmond Audubon. For more information contact Arun at arun1bose@gmail.com.
From the Kitchen Window

John Coe

Sap rising, tree buds swelling – ground soft underfoot – winter losing its grip. The cardinal is singing his song at first light, earlier now...softened by the misty air. Woodpeckers – backup drummers of our bird orchestra – tap-tap tapping on things that sound good. Light is overtaking dark. Splashes of red have tipped the branches of the maples, and green leaves have lightened the southern edge of the woods; yellow heads of dandelions appear in my not-so-perfect lawn. Evening coming not so quickly – Birds are on the move to the rising chorus of spring peepers. March is a promise of April.

April is new life – sleeping flowers burst out of the forest carpet and greet the sun with colors of pink and white and yellow and red... and a bit of blue and even burgundy, and the trees are lush with fresh new green. Most of the birds of winter have flown away to their summer places, soon to be replaced by their feathered friends from down south – and new spring songs will join the lively chorus of our local birds.

And for a bit, the window will be left open....

The full moon in March is named the worm moon and occurs on the 16th. Move your clocks an hour forward for Daylight Savings time on March 9th. The Vernal Equinox is the 20th.

In April, the full Pink Moon occurs on the 15th, Easter is on the 20th and the hummingbirds will have arrived. Earth Day is April 22. CELEBRATE!!


Arun Bose, CBC Compiler

The Hopewell CBC reached a milestone for being the 75th year that the count has been held. 178 species have been recorded since 1929.

41 participants found 113 species, and 54,017 individual birds. Notable was a new high count of Canada Goose with 21,598 birds (previous HC 21,153 - 1988). 341 Gadwall passed the 2012 high count of 328 in 2012. Bufflehead achieved a new high count with 530 birds (previous HC 195 -- 2012).

At Westover a Pectoral Sandpiper was seen and well described. This was a new species to the count. Wilson's Snipe made a good showing with 40 birds (previous HC 64 -- 1976). Impressively numbers of Cedar Waxwings were found with a total of 1,743 (previous HC 3,808 -- 2002, 1,946 -- 2007). Orange-crowned Warblers seem to be found more frequently in recent years, with 3 found on the 2013 count. Yellow-breasted Chat was the other new count species. A single bird was photographed in Hopewell. Song Sparrows were present in numbers with 739 birds counted (previous HC 745 -- 2012).

As always my thanks goes to the observers who put the effort in and carefully counted. Richmond Audubon is grateful to the property owners who grant permission each year to access their land during the count. Also I would like to recognize Cyrus Brame of the USFWS for assisting with access to Presquile NWR, and Mark Batista of Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation for assisting with Dutch Gap. Lastly thanks to the Rice Center staff for allowing us to hold the post count tally there.
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Chapter Membership Application

Yes, please enroll me (us) as a new member(s) of both National and Richmond Audubon Societies at the address below, at the introductory rate. A subscription to the NAS magazine, Audubon is included.

☐ Individual/Family Member(s) $20 enclosed
☐ Student/Senior Member $15 enclosed

Name ____________________________________________
Address __________________________________________
City ____________________________ State____ ZIP ___________________
Phone __________________________
E-mail __________________________

Make check payable to National Audubon Society and write “C0ZX530Z” on the check. Send your check and application to:
Richmond Audubon Society,
P.O. Box 26648, Richmond, VA 23261

C0ZX530Z

MARCH/APRIL 2014 VOLUME 41, ISSUE 2

the Thrasher, Newsletter of the Richmond Audubon Society

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