



The Thrasher

Richmond Audubon Society

The next *Thrasher* will be the July/August issue

RAS Meeting in May 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 May 21: : "To Hawaii by Car". Join RAS members Lou and Naseem Reza as they slowly make their way to Hawaii by the way of West Texas and Southeast Arizona. Both took plenty of photographs to document the journey. Lou took pictures of scenery while Naseem focused on the birds. Most of the slideshow is of Hawaiian birds consisting of endemics, indigenous and aliens. Join us on May 21, 2009 for these and a few other unusual species encountered along the way.

This is also the Annual Meeting for RAS. See Page 3. Dessert will be available after the meetings.

Sandy Wynne, Program Chair

The Pre-meeting dinner will start at 5:30 p.m. There is a nominal fee of \$5.00. Email or call me by the Monday of the week of the meeting, and no later than the day before the meeting, if you plan to be there for the dinner so that we can arrange to provide plenty of food. 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

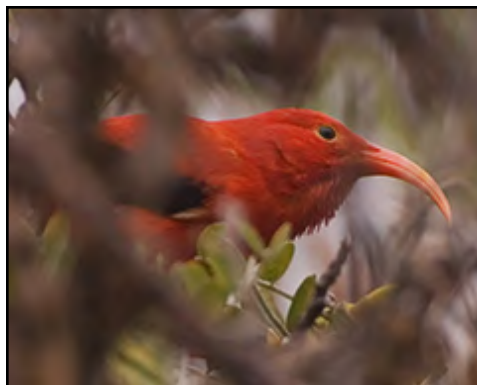
after the evening of the day before the meeting.

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



This photo of a 'I'iwi (a native Hawaiian bird) is just one example from Naseem and Lou's program.

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Future Programs & Trips

The RAS Picnic will be on June 20. See Page 4 for details and directions. And DON'T MISS IT!

No more membership meetings until September!

President's Message: May / June 2009

Most of us have a collection of snapshots somewhere, displayed in frames on furniture around the house or office, organized in plastic pages bound in a book, or in a box located, we're not sure where. Or maybe they are on a disc, a portable drive, in a folder on our computer or stored on a website like Flickr where others can also view them. I have even seen tiny digital picture frames designed for key chains that are capable of holding 20 pictures.

We may not look at these snapshots often, but when we do we are always surprised to see what things looked like in another time or place. Wherever we keep them and however we access them, these images represent our history, our preserved memories. They are how we measure what has transpired while time was silently passing.

I've been recalling some of my favorite memory snapshots connected with Richmond Audubon Society activities:

-smiling faces of RAS kids on an outing.

-the James River fish ladder built in 1999 at Boscher Dam enabling fish to swim upstream and spawn just as they did before the dam was built in 1823.

-a map of the Lower James River IBA.

-the interpretive signage RAS helped create at James River Park and Swan Lake at Byrd Park.

-birds flapping away into the woods after being banded at Westview, Powhatan, Dutch Gap and Kiptopeke.

-standing room only at our annual fundraising auctions.

-action shots of volunteers on work days at Presquile.

-Black labs jumping off the pier into the lake at the annual RAS picnic hosted each year by Buzz and Nelda Snyder.

-the Heron rookery at Henricus on my first field trip with RAS almost two decades ago; this was before the observation platform was built or the road we drive on now was paved; there was no Visitor's Center, reconstructed Citie of Henricus, or stairs down to the boardwalk-in fact there was no boardwalk.

I could go on, but you get the idea. I hope you have your own collection of memory snapshots connected to RAS. If you don't it's never too late to start that album. All you have to do is show up to a bird walk, a volunteer opportunity, a fundraiser, a monthly meeting or an outing in one of our adopted parks. Be a part of the fun, be a part of the history. And don't forget to look back occasionally to savor those moments. They are history in the making.

Pam Dummitt

Current Status of *The Thrasher*

Since the last issue a lot has happened. We will have a new editor for *The Thrasher* starting with the July/August issue. That individual is Arun Bose, who is well know to many of you because of his expert bird sightings as seen on the RAS Listserv, and as the Hopewell CBC Coordinator for the last couple of years. He will be redesigning the newsletter format gradually, or maybe not so gradually. Arun is in the graphic arts business and is well versed in all the techniques, software, and equipment needed for this position. The future of *The Thrasher* is in good hands.

The job of maintaining the mailing list, which I have been doing along with the job of editor, will now be handed off to another new person, Ben Griffon, who is also in the Graphic Arts field, and is very capable of handling the management of the mailing list and mailing *The Thrasher*. That means that we will be back where we were before as far as the mailing list is concerned. If you previously indicated that you want to receive *The Thrasher* in the mail, that will

still happen until you say otherwise, or your membership in National Audubon lapses.

New members who are added to our list from NAS will still get one copy of *The Thrasher* in the mail, with the back-page notice that they need to respond if they want the newsletter to continue to their mailbox.

The notices you send via e-mail will go to Ben Griffon for the mailing list, but if you want to send an article for the newsletter, you will have to send it to Arun Bose at the Thrasher@richmondaudubon.org address.

If you need to send me an email about something, send it to warfield101@comcast.net. I know this will all take a little time to get fully operational, but it will work out fine after a month or two. I enjoyed my term as editor, and hope you enjoyed reading *The Thrasher* for these 8 years. See you at the meetings and/or field trips!

Al Warfield

RAS Field Trips: May - June, 2009

Friday, May 1. "Wetlands before Work" with Mary and Larry. Meet at the entrance to the Wetlands of James River Park off Landria Drive at 7 a.m. Questions? Call Mary at 320-0138.

May 1-3, VSO Annual Meeting in Fredericksburg - see <http://virginiabirdsnet.umwblogs.org/>

Saturday, May 2. James River Park. Join Lewis Barnett at 7:00 a.m. at one of the premier spots for migrating songbirds in the Richmond area. Parking is on Riverside Drive opposite the 42nd Street entrance to the park. For more information call 320-7898 or email lbarnett@richmond.edu.

Sunday, May 3. Bryan Park with Sue Ridd. Join Sue for an early walk in Bryan Park. The trip meets at 6:45 a.m. at Shelter #1. Call Sue with any questions, at 270-5365.

Friday, May 8. "Wetlands before Work" with Mary and Larry. Meet at the entrance to the Wetlands of James River Park off Landria Drive at 7 a.m. Questions? Call Mary at 320-0138. The Second Wednesday Walk in May will be on the 13th at 42nd St. on the James River Park. Call John for details; 276-1397.

Saturday May 16 - Look for spring migrants in the James River Park,

with Richmond Audubon Society and Hampton Roads Bird Club. Arun Bose will lead the trip. Meet time is 7 a.m. at the 42nd Street Parking lot. Call Arun with any questions, (804) 335-8813. Hope you can join us.

Saturday, May 16, The Varina Lions Canoeathon. See the article in the March/April Thrasher, and contact Buz Snyder at (804) 795-1446 to participate in the 12-mile canoe/kayak trip for sight.

Saturday, June 6, VSO trip to Piney Grove - see <http://www.virginiabirds.net/>

Sunday, June 7, Bryan Park with Sue Ridd. The trip meets at 6:30 a.m. at Shelter #1. Call Sue with any questions, at 270-5365.

Wednesday, June 10, 2nd Wednesday Walk with John Coe: John will be out of town on the 2nd Wed in June - but don't just stay home! Take a walk anyway, anywhere.

June 12-17, VSO foray to Greenville and Sussex Counties (In Search of Bachman's Sparrow) See http://www.virginiabirds.net/pdf/VSONwsltr_SP09.pdf.

Saturday, June 13 - Henricus/Dutch Gap Conservation Area - Join Lewis Barnett at 8:00 a.m.

at the Visitor Center parking lot for our monthly visit to Dutch Gap. Migration will be winding down, but we'll be on the lookout for stragglers and all our local nesters. For more information call 320-7898 or email lbarnett@richmond.edu.

The RAS Picnic is June 20. See *the article on Page 4*.

Saturday, June 27. Join Tyler Turpin for a walk on the trails at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. Meet in the rotunda of the visitor center at 8:00 a.m. Cost will be \$6.00 for non-Ginter members, finish around 9:30 - 9:45 a.m. Contact: Tyler Turpin at (804) 317- 9478 or tylerturpin@earthlink.net to sign up. Trip will be cancelled unless at least 4 persons have signed up by 9 p.m. of the Wednesday before.

Sunday, July 5. Bryan Park with Sue Ridd. The trip meets at 6:30 a.m. at Shelter #1. Call Sue with any questions, at 270-5365.

Be sure to check the RAS website and the RAS listserv for any trips that were not available when this list was put together, or for changes.

Compiled by
Al Warfield



Postage Takes a Day at the Beach

A Vesper Sparrow peers out from the grasses while a Spotted Sandpiper shows off his namesake breast. A Piping Plover bursts into flight; its nestlings blend into the sand of the dunes. Merlin and Ring-billed Gulls patrol the shoreline where a Common Merganser pair floats by an inlet on the lakeshore. These birds are beautifully depicted on a new U.S. Postal



Service stamp pane. Great Lakes Dunes is the tenth stamp pane in the Nature of America series.

The stamps portray summertime at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. Artist John D. Dawson illustrated 27 different species of plants, birds, mammals and insects. A numbered key to the painting appears on the back of the stamp pane, along with a list of common and scientific names and a description of the dune ecosystem.

Dawson's attention to detail beautifully illustrates the complexity and diversity of life at the dunes. The pane contains 10 stamps and is available on usps.com.

Leeanna Pletcher

RAS Nominating Committee and Elections

The Elections for Officers and Board members will be held at the Annual meeting of RAS at St. Luke Church on May 21, 2009. VP Lewis Barnett will chair the Nominating Committee this year. The other members of the committee include Caroline Coe and Al Warfield.

The openings for Board positions are: President, Secretary, Conservation, Youth (RAS Kids), Education, Newsletter/Circulation, and Field Trips. Bob Schamerhorn has been nominated for Cyberspace, Peter Walker for Secretary, Arun Bose for Newsletter/Circulation, Kim Harrell for Education, and Faye Taylor-Hyder for Conservation. Some other possibilities are being worked on. Two other positions that are not Board positions are available, and these are also extremely vital to the success of our organization: Auction Chair and Birdathon Chair. Any member can nominate any other member for any one of these positions. You can even nominate yourself. Contact Lewis at vicepresident1@richmondaudubon.org to nominate someone for a position.

Volunteer Opportunity With Kids

Can you volunteer with RAS kids summer activities with Charity Family Life Youngsters? It's fun; it's interesting and it's easy. Here's the schedule. All events are scheduled for mornings from approximately 9 to noon.

July

Friday, 7/3 James River Park Nature Center
 Friday, 7/10 Tree Climbing/hiking at Pony Pasture
 Thursday, 7/16 Kayaking at Dutch Gap
 Friday, 7/24 Ropes Course in Church Hill
 Thursday, 7/30 Kayaking at Dutch Gap

August

Friday, 8/7 Ropes Course in Church Hill
 Friday, 8/14 Tree Climbing/hiking
 Thursday, 8/20 Fishing/Water exploration with Anne Wright at Fish Hatchery

Contact Donna Cottingham for more information or to volunteer: 804-794-9202 or carolina_donna@yahoo.com

The Moon In June – Nightjar Survey: Volunteers Needed

The Center for Conservation Biology in Williamsburg is looking for volunteers to conduct annual surveys of nightjars—whip-poor-wills, chuck-will's-widows, and common nighthawks in our area. There is concern that this enigmatic group of birds is in decline, and data collected from the surveys will help biologists formulate a conservation plan. Because the nocturnal behaviors of nightjars are strongly influenced by moonlight, the 2009 survey window has been set for May 31 through June 15—one week before and one week after the full moon.

Please go to www.ccb-wm.org/nightjars.htm for more information and complete instructions on how you can help CCB help the birds—and have some fun on a moonlit night in June.

Article received from *Joyce Caldwell*

Annual RAS Picnic in Varina

Mark your calendars for Saturday, June 20. (Rain date Sunday June 21.) That's when Buz and Nelda Snyder will host our annual picnic at their lovely home in Varina. For those of you who haven't been there, their home overlooks a private lake with a small beach with a shallow area, swim raft, boats, picnic area, and even a cabin with changing rooms and half-bath. Come by 8:00 a.m. for the morning bird walk. Bring your own meat to cook on the grills and a dish to share (four or more servings). We will eat around noon. RAS will provide drinks, ice, and utensils. The Snyders will provide charcoal, picnic tables and chairs, and condiments. Children are welcome, but please leave your pets at home. Besides your food and binoculars, be sure to bring fishing gear and your swimsuit.

From Richmond: Go east on Main Street, which becomes Route 5. At the Y-intersection of Rt 5 and Osborne Turnpike, bear right onto Osborne Tpk. After 8 miles, Osborne becomes Kingsland Rd. at a 90° left bend. Proceed on Kingsland for 0.9 mi to Arrahattek Trail, a gravel road on the right. Take this road past the house to the end of the road at the lake. Travel time 18 minutes from Capital Square.

From I-295: Take the Varina exit, (Exit 22), Rt. 5, west toward Richmond. Proceed west on Rt. 5 to 1st traffic light, Strath Road. Turn left on Strath to the dead end at Kingsland Rd. and turn right. Go past intersections at Varina Road and Hoke-Bradley Rd. About one block (0.1 mi) on the left, turn onto Arrahattek Trail, and proceed as above. 10 minutes from Exit 22.

From Chippenham Parkway: At the end of Chippenham South keep straight on I-895 east (Pocahontas Parkway-\$2.50 toll). Take the first exit, Rt 5, stay in left lane and turn left at Laburnum Ave sign. At dead end turn left onto Osborne Tpk and proceed as above from Richmond. 30 minutes from Stony Point Fashion Park.

Wakodahatchee and Green Cay Wetlands, Delray Beach, FL

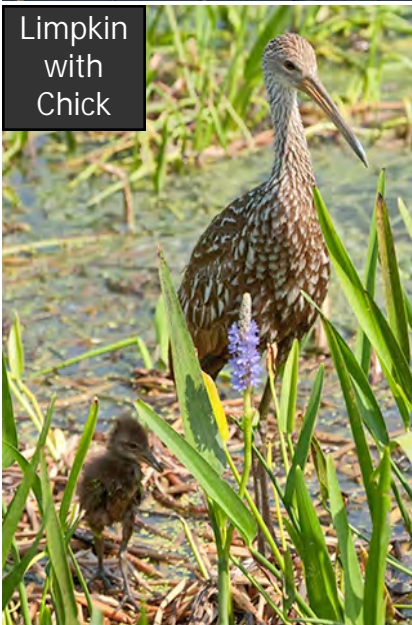
These huge and fantastic wetlands were created by the local water utilities department of Delray Beach, with help from the parks department. Both wetlands have extensive boardwalks with hammocks for birds to nest. Numerous species were seen and photographed by Linda & Al Warfield in early April 2009. Here are a few of the images. Other locations were visited as well, and some great birds were seen and photographed there, but these two places, only about 2 miles apart, are the best we have seen anywhere. If you go to Florida, don't miss them. *Linda & Al*



Just a small section at Green Cay Wetlands



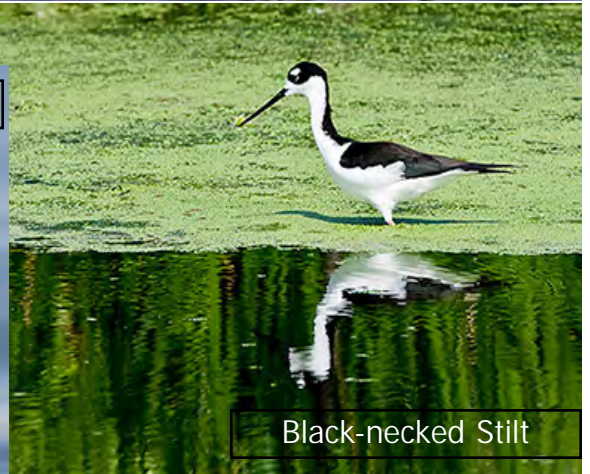
Common Moorhen



Limpkin with Chick



Anhinga with Fish



Black-necked Stilt



Sora



Great Blue Heron Chick



Great Egret in Breeding Plumage



Anhinga Chicks

Effect of Global Warming on Virginia

If global warming is not curbed, the Chesapeake Bay could rise two to five feet, flooding buildings, roads, ports, military installations and beaches. Virginia could have more storm surges, more hurricanes, more heat waves and more vector-borne diseases. Because of its latitude, Virginia is at particular peril, concluded Governor Tim Kaine's Commission on Climate Change, finding that, "The Virginia Beach-Norfolk Metropolitan Statistical Area ranks 10th in the world in value of assets exposed to increased flooding from sea level rise," commissioners stressed.

Commissioners asked Congress to address global warming, and now Congress is poised to act. An October 2008 poll, sponsored by the Miller Center at the University of Virginia, reported that Virginians think global warming is a serious problem, and 72% said it requires immediate government action. Auduboners should ask for action now.

To meet the greenhouse gas reduction target endorsed by scientists, a bill should include these elements:

- *Reduce total U.S. global warming pollution by at least 80% by cutting emissions from carbon-based fuels like coal and oil.
- *Move to clean electricity from sources such as wind, solar, geothermal sustainable biomass and enact a renewable electricity standard.
- *Enhance energy efficiency; cut oil dependence. We must use energy more efficiently in every sector and make new investments in infrastructure, rail and public transit to lessen dependence on cars. Virginia can reduce electricity use by 19% through steps like tougher building codes, says the American Council on an Energy Efficient Economy.
- *Create five million new clean energy jobs. We must retrofit millions of buildings and homes, to save energy and money, create new jobs, stimulate economic recovery and cut greenhouse gases.

Urge your Members of Congress to support strong climate change legislation. (To find your congressman, check the district map on each Web site below, or visit <http://www.nationalatlas.gov/printable/congress.html#va>.)

The Honorable Bobby Scott (D-3), <http://bobbyscott.house.gov/>

The Honorable Eric Cantor (R-7), <http://cantor.house.gov/>

The Honorable Randy Forbes (R-4), <http://forbes.house.gov/>

You can write to all representatives at U. S. House of Representatives, Washington, D. C. 20515.

The Honorable James Webb (<http://webb.senate.gov/>) and Mark Warner (<http://warner.senate.gov/>); U. S. Senate, Washington, D. C. 20510.

Glenda C. Booth
gbooth123@aol.com
Virginia Outreach Coordinator
National Audubon Society

For fact sheets on global warming, visit
<http://www.audubon.org/globalWarming/GetTheFacts.php>
Auduboners can sign up for action alerts from National at
<http://audubonaction.org/audubon/home.html>.

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
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Field Trips	vacant		
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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 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

For 2009 *The Thrasher* will be issued in Jan/Feb., Mar/Apr., May/Jun. Other issues to be determined.

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 August. 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: May - June 2009

"How many times must a man look up before he can see the sky?
And how many times can a man turn his head and pretend that he just doesn't see?
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind,
The answer is blowing in the wind."

Bob Dylan

My grandson visited the other day. The wind was blowing. He is only 2 ½ and he said, "The wind is god." Someone at daycare told him this.

I reflected on this as I sat on our deck next to the kitchen window as the winds were whipping through the yard? There is something magical, inspirational, and perhaps spiritual, certainly dynamic, about the wind. I watched as the last remaining leaves from the beech tree blew into the wind and at each gust of wind the birds feeding on the ground would flush for cover. The last remaining seed-wings from the tulip poplar come spiraling to earth and then the calm would come, and the birds came back to the ground.

Our birds are nervous and skittish when the winds blow. They depend so much on their senses of sight and hearing to detect danger so that when the winds blow they lose their touch. Yet in flight and especially in migration they depend on the winds to direct them and show them the way.

I listen to the wind. The sound can be very soothing – in the pines it can be quite different than in the bare oaks or in the leafed out maples or in the grasses.

The full moon in May occurs on the 8th and is named the Flower Moon. The full moon in June occurs on the 7th and is named the Hot Moon.



For New Members of Richmond Audubon Society

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 12-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., 000123456789, or whatever is listed at the top of your label; *you can leave out the leading zeros.*)
- *Whether you want to receive *The Thrasher* by mail or only read it online

*What RAS activities you enjoy: Read *The Thrasher* only, 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.

If you are not a new member: if you got this issue you don't need to send a response. You will continue to receive *The Thrasher* unless you send a response indicating otherwise, or your subscription lapses. Please stay abreast of your expiration date and keep your membership current. This is shown on your Audubon Magazine label.

Richmond Audubon Society
P.O. Box 26648
Richmond, VA 23261



Audubon

Non-Profit Organization
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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 address: _____

Make check payable to **National Audubon Society** and write **"C9ZX530Z"** on the check).

Send your check and application to:

Richmond Audubon Society
c/o Membership Chair, Lori Rutledge
P.O. Box 363
Richmond, VA 23218-0363

C9ZX530Z



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.