We promote the enjoyment, understanding, and preservation of birds, other wildlife, and habitat through education, advocacy, and fellowship.

RAS ADOPTS A HIGHWAY!

It was a messy task, but RAS volunteers handled it with ease. In June, we held our inaugural clean-up of the roadways leading into Dutch Gap. RAS adopted that stretch of road this year in an effort to contribute in a meaningful way to one of the many great birding resources in our area. Volunteers collected about 10 bags of trash, the bulk of it leading down to the boat ramp area. We plan to have periodic clean-ups prior to field trips at Dutch Gap a few times each year. Our next one will likely be in October. Thank you to all the intrepid volunteers willing to get a little dirty for Dutch Gap!

DUNCAN MEMORIAL UMC NATURE CAMP 2018

A farm outside of Ashland was the setting for the Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church Nature Camp on June 25, 27 & 29, which is sponsored annually by the owners, Ann and Charlie Martin. This year, RAS members and Riverine Master Naturalists gave talks and organized fun activities focusing on local birds for about 50 kids each day. Bob Schamerhorn gave presentations with great photos on two of the days, and Jan Robertson, with Tom Robertson’s assistance in costume as a cardinal, bluebird, and owl, presented cool facts and ideas, including photos, about the importance of birds, and involved the kids in many hands-on tasks to help birds thrive. June Bohrer and Sandee Bailey helped the kids make seed cakes, and use common tools to pick up “food” to show the connection between birds’ beaks and what they eat. Each kid received Bob Schamerhorn’s beautiful coloring book and a box of crayons.

RAS MEMBER’S MEETINGS

WHEN: RAS membership meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM (except June, July, August and December). Come early for coffee, cookies and conversation beforehand starting at 6:30 PM.

WHERE: Held at St. Luke Lutheran Church • 7757 Chippenham Pkwy., Richmond, VA at the corner of Custis Road and Chippenham Parkway unless noted.

VISIT: www.RichmondAudubon.org for updates and additional information.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Hello birders!
Welcome back! September marks our return following a summer hiatus. We have a new board of directors leading RAS this year, and they have a lot of exciting things planned for the coming year.

We will continue some of the great community collaborations that we’ve enjoyed in the past, like the RVA Environmental Film Festival coming up in February. We also are excited to work with the Richmond Symphony on their Northside Big Tent Festival which is scheduled for Saturday, September 8th in Bryan Park. We will be leading field trips, and Adolph White will be giving talks on the purple martins in the park. Hope you can join us!

We have exciting plans for our slate of monthly programs this year. We are planning to continue a program we started last year to honor one of RAS’s founding members, Margaret O’Bryan, with a special speaker, and we may have a few other surprises as the year progresses.

We are excited about adding some new locations to our usual slate of field trips. Look for announcements, particularly in the spring. We also hope to sponsor some work on the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas, and provide scholarships to students doing important avian research.

One thing that will help us turn all of our great ideas into reality will be VOLUNTEERS! We would love to have committee members who can assist with all of these projects and more. As a committee member, you can be involved in helping RAS meet its goals of fostering the enjoyment, understanding, and preservation of birds, other wildlife and habitat through birding, education, advocacy, and fellowship. Please reach out to me at president@richmondaudubon.org or to any of our board members if you are interested in getting more involved.

Eileen R Geller - RAS President

RAS BOARD BRIEF

The RAS Board held their Annual Planning Retreat on July 7, 2018 at the VCU Rice Rivers Center. Eileen reviewed a summary of achievements for 2017-2018 and expressed appreciation of the Board members’ leadership and contributions to another great year! The Board reviewed information from the RAS Membership Engagement Project conducted by VCU. The information sparked lively discussions about the upcoming year. Ideas and suggestions included redesigning the bird-a-thon fundraising event to encourage newer birders to participate; offering fields trips targeted for families and children; using the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail guide for new places for field trips; continue expanding our outreach and presence in the community through participation and support in events such as the Northside Community Festival, RVA Environmental Film Festival, and The Great Big Green House; supporting educational experiences of our youth through sponsoring participation at Nature Camp; and offering more opportunities for fellowship among members.

Lori Schamerhorn - RAS Secretary

FROM THE EDITOR

By the time you read this, it will be onset of Fall migration in the Richmond area. Migrants can be broadly classified as those stopping briefly in our area on their journey South in the Fall (North in the Spring) and those that come South from their breeding grounds to spend their winters with us. In this issue we will cover the first group and save our winter guests for the November/December issue.

Many birders look forward to catching a glimpse of the colorful neotropical birds as they pass through Richmond on their way to Southern United States and much farther South to the tip of South America. So who are these neotropica. They include some of the brightest plumaged characters in the bird world. Wood warblers, tanagers, vireos, grosbeaks, kinglets and many more. It took me a while to figure out what the term neotropical meant. Loosely translated it means new (neo) world (western hemisphere) birds that either winter or are resident of the tropics.

Bob Schamerhorn & Naseem Rea - Co-Editors
UPCOMING MEMBERS MEETINGS

RAS Meetings held at St. Luke Lutheran Church, 7757 Chippenham Pkwy, Richmond, VA. The program begins at 7:00 pm, with coffee, cookies and conversation before, starting at 6:30 pm.

WELCOME BACK FROM SUMMER BREAK!

SEPTEMBER 13 • PROGRAM: “BIRDS IN ACTION”
PRESENTED BY: BOB SCHAMERHORN

This multimedia program demonstrates and discusses an array of bird activities including: flight, take-off, landing, feeding, bathing, drinking, preening, diving, nesting, and more. Plus, discussion of the reasons why birds are so active, the elements of their motivation and characteristics of activity including: migration, food gathering, and avoidance of danger. Moving objects are an especially difficult subject to photograph, both technically and physically. This program includes both basic photography techniques and then fine tuning the skills needed to capture sharp images of active animals. Learn how to improve your abilities, by optimizing your location, learning good motor-skill practices, using auto-focus, research, and proper shutter speed settings. Also a great program for non-photographers. Come witness the activity and diversity of our native birds and see what makes each species unique through its actions!

OCTOBER 19 • PROGRAM: “WILD BIRD REHABILITATION”
PRESENTED BY: BARBARA SLATCHER

You may know a lot about identifying birds, and you may know all sort of things about bird migration, or maybe you’re pretty good at attracting birds to your yard. But even experts can fall short of knowledge when it comes to rescuing and rehabilitating birds in need of help. Barbara Slatcher has been rehabbing birds in Richmond for years; she’ll show and tell us what she does and how she does it. She’ll explain what you can do to get involved, and why it makes a difference.

Barbara Slatcher was a career corporate marketer until a few years ago when she found out it was much more fun to get involved locally in conservation. Without any bird knowledge, she began volunteering as a wildlife rehabber and falcon cam operator for CCB. A few years ago she was taking care of a few ducklings, and now she brings hundreds of birds and raptors into her home facility. She also helps CCB with marketing and outreach and is the VP for Riverine Master Naturalists. She also lobbies for conservation with VCN. In her spare time, she hangs out with bird pros on the OBX.
FALL MIGRANTS

Below are images submitted by RAS members pertaining to migrating birds that pass through the Richmond area on their way to their wintering ground.

- Black and White Warbler by Bob Schamerhorn
- Yellow-rumped Warbler by Bob Schamerhorn
- Cooper’s Hawk (top) by Naseem Neza
- Common Yellowthroat by Naseem Neza

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY

The Dominion Energy Charity Classic is focused on making a positive impact within the Richmond community. Birdies for Charity presented by TowneBank is designed to give area charities an opportunity to generate contributions through flat donations or based on the number of “birdies” made by PGA TOUR Champions players during the Dominion Energy Charity Classic. Participating charities will receive all of the donations collected on their behalf, minus credit card fees. Additionally, donations will be bonused by an additional 10%!

More details on this worthwhile event can be found at:
RAS SPONSORS LOCAL KIDS ON DISCOVER THE JAMES TOURS

Dozens of Richmond kids got up-close looks at Bald Eagles and other wildlife along the banks of the James River thanks to grant funding Richmond Audubon Society received from the Outdoor Foundation. Mike Ostrander, of Discover The James, took small tour groups of students from Peter Paul Development Center, located in Richmond’s East End neighborhood, on boat tours where they got to see eagles, osprey, herons, and lots of other exciting wildlife. RAS would like to thank Mary Arginteanu for securing the grant funding and Mike Ostrander for discounting his rates in order to accommodate additional tour groups. Visit: www.DiscoverTheJames.com
RAS FIELD TRIPS - SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

Check the RAS Listserv or the RAS website for information and any late breaking news about field trips or join our MEET-UP GROUP: www.meetup.com/RAS-Meetup/

SEPTEMBER

September 8, 2018 - 8:00 AM - Saturday - Bryan Park - Meet Bob Beard at the Shelter One parking lot. Contact fieldtrips@richmondaudubon.org for more info.

September 15 at 8:15 AM • Saturday • Dutch Gap. Meet Lewis Barnett (please note new meeting place) at 8:15 in the Henricus Historical Park parking lot.”

September 22 at 9:00 AM • Saturday • Lickinghole Creek Brewery. Meet Lewis Barnett at Lickinghole Creek Brewery, 4100 Knolls Point Dr, Goochland, VA 23063. We will walk trails through agricultural fields and upland forest, hoping to catch some late fall migrants along with arriving wintering birds. Stick around after the walk for some tasty beer. Contact Lewis Barnett: blbarnett3@gmail.com • 804-920-4723 for more information.

September 29 at 8:00 AM • Saturday • Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Meet Tyler Turpin in the rotunda of the visitor center. Entry cost will be $7.00 for non-Ginter members, finish around 9:30-9:45 AM. Contact Tyler at (804) 317-9478 or email tylerturpin@earthlink.net to sign up. If 4 persons have not signed up by 8 PM on Wednesday the week of the trip, the event will be cancelled.”

October 6 at 8:00 AM • Saturday • Powhatan State Park. Meet Martha Hollowell at the canoe launch area at 8:00 AM. Powhatan State Park is only about 45 minutes west of Richmond. This is a joint field trip with the Margaret H. Watson Bird Club of Farmville, VA. Park entry fee is $4 paid in cash at the gate.”

October 13, 2018 - 8:00 AM - Saturday - Bryan Park - Meet Bob Beard at the Shelter One parking lot. Contact fieldtrips@richmondaudubon.org for more info.

October 20 at 8:00 AM • Saturday • Adopt-a-Highway Cleanup at Dutch Gap. Meet at 8:00 at the Dutch Gap Boat landing at the end of Coxendale Road.

FROM THE KITCHEN WINDOW

BY: JOHN COE

“The atmospheric conditions have been very unfavorable lately”, said Owl - From Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne

Out beyond the window glass the heat of summer casts a blue haze on all that’s green. The trees and shrubs are lush from many days of rain and the weeds are overtaking the lawn and garden. Closed windows and the hum of air conditioners shutter the sounds of nature, but even so I still hear the Barred Owls in the back woods down by the creek.

The last 30 or so years we have shared the sights and songs of our friends with feathers with our friends and family, those have been fun. But, “times they are a changin’”. Our resident birds are still around and the migrants of summer and winter still delight us with their song and color, but the corridor that guided the many warblers & vireos & tanagers & orioles & thrushes & fly catchers thru our yard has broken and over the years fewer and fewer of these very special birds visit our yard. The birds are telling us something.

In this YEAR OF THE BIRD, it’s why Audubon sent out campaign buttons that state: “YOU are what hope looks like to a bird.”

The full moon in September occurs on the 24th and is the Harvest Moon. The autumnal equinox happens at 9:54pm on the 22nd. Now, shorter, but perhaps cooler, days. The October full moon occurs on the 24th, called the Hunters Moon. Note that some traditional full moon names are being changed – due to climate change.
OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE RICHMOND AUDUBON SOCIETY

President Eileen Geller  president@richmondaudubon.org
First Vice President Ellison Orcutt  vicepresident1@richmondaudubon.org
Second Vice President Wes Teets  vicepresident2@richmondaudubon.org
Secretary Lori Schamerhorn  secretary@richmondaudubon.org
Treasurer Lewis Barnett  treasurer@richmondaudubon.org
Bird-a-Thon Chair Lewis Barnett  conservation@richmondaudubon.org
Conservation Chair Mary Elfner  cyberspace@richmondaudubon.org
Cyberspace Chair Lee Williams  development@richmondaudubon.org
Development Chair Abby Walter  education@richmondaudubon.org
Education Chair Jan Robertson & Kathy Warnkey  fieldtrips@richmondaudubon.org
Field Trips Chair Wes Teets  iba@richmondaudubon.org
Hospitality Chair VACANT - VOLUNTEER NEEDED  legislation@richmondaudubon.org
IBA/VAC Representative Len Smock  membership@richmondaudubon.org
Legislation Chair James Shelton  pastpresident@richmondaudubon.org
Membership Chair Mario and Gail Grasso  programs@richmondaudubon.org
Past President Lewis Barnett  publicity@richmondaudubon.org
Programs Chair Kim Harrell  thrasher@richmondaudubon.org
Publicity Chair vacant  RASkids@richmondaudubon.org
Thrasher Co-Editors Naseem Reza & Bob Schamerhorn  thrasher@richmondaudubon.org
Youth Chair Ellison Orcutt  thrasher@richmondaudubon.org

ABOUT THE RICHMOND AUDUBON SOCIETY
Richmond Audubon Society (RAS) is a chapter of The National Audubon Society (NAS), becoming a member of either Society, enrolls your membership in both (NAS and RAS by zip code). Renewals are processed through The National Audubon Society.

AFFILIATES: Chapter of the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO) and the Virginia Conservation Network (VCN).

MAILING ADDRESS: Richmond Audubon Society P.O. Box 26648 • Richmond, VA 23261
PHONE (Message Line): 804-601-4917
WEBSITE: www.RichmondAudubon.org
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/RichmondAudubon/
MEET-UP GROUP: www.meetup.com/RAS-Meetup/
TWITTER: www.twitter.com/@RichmondAudubon
LISTSERV: www.freelists.org/list/va-richmond-general

NONPROFIT: RAS is a registered nonprofit 501 (C) (3) charitable organization. Donations are tax deductible.

NEWSLETTER: “The Thrasher” is issued bimonthly (January, March, May, July, September, November.) Submissions due by the 10th of the month prior. The newsletter is available for download (PDF) from the RAS website or by special request for a hard copy.

RAS BOARD MEETINGS: Second Thursdays of January, March, May, July (annual strategic planning session), September, and November. Board Meeting start times and locations vary, members are welcome to attend, contact the President or Secretary in advance.

AUDUBON SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Yes, enroll me (us) as member(s) of both National Audubon and Richmond Audubon Societies at the address below, at the introductory rate of $20.00. A subscription to the NAS “Audubon” magazine is included.

Name__________________________________________________________
Address_______________________________________________________
City________________________ State_________ ZIP _____________________
Phone ______________________________
E-mail ______________________________

Enclose a $20.00 check payable to National Audubon Society for Individual/Family Membership and write “X53” as the memo. Send check and application to:
Richmond Audubon Society P.O. Box 26648, Richmond, VA 23261 X53
LONGTIME MEMBER - WILL BE MISSED

Larry Robinson died peacefully on September 2nd about 7 p.m. Mary Arginteanu, her daughter Judy and Son-in-law Dan were there by his bedside. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers. A memorial service in being planned for Sept. 22nd at Richmond Friends Meeting, 4500 Kensington Ave., tentatively set for 2 p.m.

THIS ISSUE FEATURES:

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY
NATURE CAMP
(See page 1)

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE
RAS BOARD BRIEF
(See page 2)

UPCOMING PROGRAMS
(See page 3)

FALL MIGRANTS
KIDS ON THE JAMES
(See pages 4 and 5)

FIELD TRIPS
(See page 6)