



Northern Neck Audubon News

The Northern Neck of Virginia Chapter of the National Audubon Society

P.O. Box 991, Kilmarnock, Virginia 22482

www.northernneckaudubon.org

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Eastern Wood Pewee
Photo by Paul Servis

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

September 12 - NNAS Picnic

5:00 PM Picnic Area #1, Belle Isle State Park

September 12 - Bird Walk

About 6:30 PM (following the NNAS annual picnic), Belle Isle State Park

Led by Frank Schaff

(804-462-0084)

October 3 - Monthly Meeting

7:00 PM, Grace Episcopal Church, Kilmarnock (watch newspapers for program information)

October 10 - Bird Walk

7:45 AM

Dameron Marsh

Led by Frank Schaff

President's Message

In case you missed the annual meeting on June 6th, let me introduce myself as the newly elected Chapter President. Previously I served as Chapter Treasurer, a position that came easily to me as a former CPA and accountant. Serving as President may also come somewhat easily to me as I am opinionated, organized and as the eldest of ten siblings, used to being a leader. However, leading an organization is a somewhat more daunting task, and since the organization is a volunteer effort, the leader is very dependent on the members!

For example, each meeting usually features refreshments. A volunteer coordinates the monthly volunteers who make the coffee, bring the goodies and clean up. If this feature of the monthly meeting is to continue, I need a Coordinator immediately.

The Chapter owns a tent, AKA a booth, that is taken each first Saturday during the season to the Irvington Farmers' Market. The Chapter receives great exposure and offers outreach education at this public event. The tent and the exhibits are entrusted to a Farmers' Market Volunteer who is the caretaker and does the set-up, take down and storage of materials. This volunteer solicits volunteer manpower in shifts for the time of the Market, 8 AM to noon. I need a Coordinator (or team) for this endeavor beginning in 2012.

Other than myself as President, your new officers and board members are: Past President, Jim Wagner; Vice President, Ron Feldman; Secretary, Nancy Garvey; Treasurer, Trudy Quinto; and BOD Term Ending 2012, Brenda Knupp and Term Ending 2013, Mike Andrews. On behalf of the Chapter membership I welcome the new leadership members and thank them, as well as the continuing BOD members, for volunteering and leading. We are setting the example for others to follow. Please give us your support.

Respectfully, Paula Boundy



Paula Boundy, President of NNAS for the term
June 1, 2011 - May 31, 2012

In Memory of Les Innskeep

George Esler "Les" Innskeep, 92, of Kilmarnock passed away June 8, 2011. He was a lifelong birder and volunteer for NNAS. His other volunteer activities included the Exploring Program of the Boy Scouts, and service to Historic Christ Church. He was a member of Wicomico Parish Church (where he served as Treasurer), the Society of Sigma XL, American Chemical Society, Sons of the American Revolution and Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club.

Memorials may be made to the Boy Scouts of America, Heart of Virginia Council, P. O. Box 6809, Richmond 23230-0809 or Wicomico Parish Church, P.O. Box 70, Wicomico Church 22579.

Bluebird Monitoring

One of the Bluebird trails regularly monitored by NNAS volunteer Tom Teeples is located at the King Carter Golf Course (KCGC), which is just south of Kilmarnock off of Irvington Road. Some people asked Tom about the flag that adorns the golf cart he uses as he monitors the trail.

The picture below is of the flag and two members of the regular KCGC monitoring crew. Tom distributes his monitoring reports on the NNAS hotline.

If you haven't signed up for the hotline, you're missing a lot of great birding news. To join, go to <http://www.freelists.org/list/nnasnet> and follow the directions there.



Mac Green and Earline Walker display the flag that adorns the golf cart used to monitor the King Carter Golf Course Bluebird Trail. Photo by Tom Teeples

Report on the NNAS Annual Meeting

(Editor's note: Each year, NNAS holds an annual meeting to elect officers and directors for the chapter. Following is a report of the June 6 meeting, submitted by Jessica Servis, NNAS Secretary at the time of the meeting.)

The NNAS annual meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by James Wagner. There were 54 people present. Refreshments, which were available, had been provided by Jenny Saam and Jessica Servis and coordinated by Charlotte Schmidt.

Ida Hall presented some information about a proposed development in Northumberland County at Bluff Point. There was a petition for Northumberland County residents or landowners to sign to oppose the projects.

Walt Hoagman donated carvings and carving blanks as door prizes.

Paula Boundy announced information regarding a Wildlife Mapping Skills course scheduled for June 21.

Jim Wagner presented the following slate of officers for the term June 1, 2011 through May 31, 2012:

President: Paula Boundy
 Vice President: Ron Feldman
 Secretary: Nancy Garvey
 Treasurer: Trudy Quinto
 Board of Directors:
 Term Ending 2012 - Brenda Knupp
 Term Ending 2013 - Mike Andrews

The slate was elected unanimously.

Tom Saunders presented a short presentation on birds that are seen in our area at this time.

Dave Bryan, a Private Lands Biologist for USDA gave a talk on the "Quail Action Plan."

Door prizes were won by: Frank Schaff, David Collins and Bill Walker.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40.

Two Articles on Virginia IBAs

Virginia Important Bird Areas Conservation News Focus on Team Warbler, the Atlantic Flyway Initiative and Saltmarsh Habitat and Avian Research Project (SHARP)

Audubon in Virginia has several conservation projects to highlight during this season: one of our most exciting is an international partnership between the Richmond Audubon Society, Panama Audubon Society National Audubon Society and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) called "Team Warbler -- From Chesapeake Bay to Panama Bay and Back -- Cross Cultural Connections Supporting Sustainable Communities." Working under a Community Engagement grant from VCU, championed by Cathy Viverette, VCU Life Sciences Research Associate, this project seeks to connect students, researchers and Richmond Audubon in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to Panama Audubon in the Panama Bay watershed in order to raise awareness of and better understand the Prothonotary Warbler. Here is an account from Dr. Lesley Bulluck, VCU Biology Professor, who led a team of VCU students and associated researchers to Panama in early January: "The VCU college class arrived on the afternoon of January 6 and drove to Gamboa where we would stay for the entire trip. The house we stayed in was owned by our guide Guido Berguido and was tucked nicely up to the rainforest edge. This prime location allowed us to wake that first morning to see numerous new tropical bird and mammal species at the feeders – red-legged honeycreepers, blue-crowned motmot, and tamarind monkeys were just a few highlights. We spent most of the day on January 7 training the students on field methods and visiting two of our

field sites. On January 8 and through January 13 we collected data in each of these six sites twice; we split up into two groups and the students alternated each day between banding in the mangroves and taking data on density and foraging rates in the mudflats of Panama Bay. On January 12, a group of middle school students from San Carlos came to our banding station in Playa Bonita to observe and learn about what we were doing. They were an enthusiastic group who were ready to get muddy and make observations of birds and mammals during the long trek to the station. In the mangroves, we captured a total of 160 individual birds of 25 different species and banded most of individuals that are Nearctic-Neotropical migrants. We conducted most of our 2 minute foraging observations on 6 species and ~280 individuals across the three mudflat sites. We were happy to catch 26 of our target species, the Prothonotary Warbler, which we have been studying long-term here in Virginia."

by Mary Elfner, Virginia IBA Coordinator

Audubon Important Bird Area Lower Rappahannock River (IBA-RR)

The Northern Neck Chapter of the National Audubon Society (NNAS) is the local Audubon club responsible for this global effort based on our adoption in 2009. Its focus is on species at risk such as the Bald Eagle, Coastal Swamp Sparrow, Barn Owl, Least Bittern, American Woodcock, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Bobwhite, Eastern Meadowlark, and others.

The IBA-RR covers Essex, Richmond, Caroline, King George, and Westmoreland Counties. During the last fiscal year that ended May 31, 2011, the Board on behalf of NNAS joined the Friends of the

IBA-RR (*continued from page 4*)

Rappahannock River, an organization headquartered in Fredericksburg, but with a new and enthusiastic staff member, Richard Moncure, Jr., River Steward, who is coordinating efforts in the IBA-RR and Northern Neck area. You may have seen advertisements for his water quality workshops in the local papers this summer. Our membership and donation will benefit the IBA-RR as Richard's efforts bring advocacy, awareness and volunteers to projects in its area that will enhance and promote conservation.

On a personal note, as a member of NNAS' eagle lovers, I share this observation. On Thursday, August 11th, I was excited to notice a very large bird on the 13th fairway, visible from my house's rear windows. Upon closer inspection and binoculars' verification, the bird was identified as an eagle. It was on the ground, busily tearing up something. My brother happened to be visiting and between the binocs and his 'eagle' eyes, he determined that the eagle's lunch was a rabbit. It continued to eat its prey until we watched it fly majestically away at the approach of some golfers. Later I noticed some turkey vultures visiting the site of the catch to finish off the remains.

For more information about this and other IBAs in Virginia please visit the website at: <http://www.audubon.org/bird/iba/virginia/> Or contact Mary Elfner, the Virginia IBA Coordinator, at: melfner@audubon.org or 804-788-7660.

by Paula Boundy, President NNAS



Virginia Audubon Council

Now more than ever it is important that we build a stronger Audubon presence in Virginia, and the Virginia Audubon Council (VAC) is the best way to do that.

VAC is a coalition of the 6 Audubon Chapters in Virginia. Three times a year, in January, June and October, VAC meets at locations around the state. Currently VAC is focusing on Virginia's Important Bird Area Program and providing a platform for sharing Chapter successes and best practices.

Under the leadership of new CEO David Yarnold, National Audubon is undergoing the process of strategic planning for Audubon. Of great significance, David Yarnold has included Chapter leaders in the vision and planning process, and he truly understands the importance of Chapters and grassroots strength to Audubon. Your Chapter can help VAC consider how to best expand Audubon's wingspan in Virginia. (Note: the following link will provide more information on Audubon's strategic planning process: <http://chapterservices.audubon.org/news-announcements>)

VAC will next meet on Saturday, October 22 at the VCU Rice Center. Mary Elfner, Virginia's Important Bird Area Coordinator, will share with VAC Audubon's vision and will help us find ways to implement it here.

And if you haven't been to the Rice Center, it is an amazing facility on the James River in the Lower James River Important Bird Area. The building is Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified at the Platinum Level – the highest rating. The bird life is superb. You can find out more about the Rice Center at <http://www.vcu.edu/rice/>.

Need more information? Talk to your Chapter VAC representative or contact VAC President John Coe, johnwcoe@verizon.net, to learn more about the

Virginia Audubon Council

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Council and the upcoming meeting and how you might get involved.

VAC Chapter Contacts:

- Audubon Society of Northern VA: Bill Brown, billbr50@msn.com
- Cape Henry Audubon Society: Candi Delnore, candie.delnore@cox.net
- N. Neck Audubon S: Rick Skelton or Maggie Gerdts, maggiurbanna@hotmail.com
- Northern Shenandoah Audubon Society: Diane Greco, dianasours@yahoo.com
- Richmond Audubon Society: Margaret O'Bryan, catbird329@comcast.net
- VA Beach Audubon: Steve Coari, sp1nner@cox.net

by Caroline Coe, Richmond Audubon Society

Past Events

June Program on Northern Bobwhite Quail

David Bryan, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, was the speaker for the June 2011 NNAS monthly meeting. His talk was entitled "Early Successional Habitat Management: The Key to Recovery for the Northern Bobwhite Quail and So Many Other Species". David outlined five goals that the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) have set as part of its Quail Action Plan. The goals are:

- 1.Generate new funding mechanisms to support quail restoration.
- 2.Educate the public on the status of Quail and other early succession wildlife species.
- 3.Improve Quail populations in their primary range in Virginia.
- 4.Establish Quail and early succession wildlife focus areas.
- 5.Increase statewide recreation related to Quail.

David explained why the Northern Bobwhite is the focus of DGIF efforts. Bobwhite are easily recognizable, and everyone from birders to farmers love them. However, they are the Number 1 common species that is in decline; from 1967 to 2007 their population declined 82%. The primary reason for this is the loss of favorable habitat caused by changes in agricultural practices, fewer family farms and suburban sprawl. These factors have also resulted in declining

populations of Prairie Warblers, Indigo Buntings, Eastern Kingbirds, Field Sparrows, Grasshopper Sparrows, Gray Catbirds, Eastern Towhees, and Eastern Meadowlarks, all species that thrive in the same habitat as the Bobwhite.

So, what kind of habitat do these species need?

- Early succession vegetation for brooding and nesting, consisting of grass, weeds, forbs and legumes, which



Bobwhite Quail image from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources

provide insects - the most important food item for nesting hens and chicks,

- Woody areas for coveys of Quail to use for protection, consisting of woody shrubs, low-growing trees, downed trees, and a feathered edge, and
- Some bare ground for foraging and ease of movement, but with enough cover to protect the Quail from predators.

All three types of cover need to be as close to each other as possible.

The Virginia DGIF Quail project is encouraging landowners to create field borders, leave some land idle, convert fescue stands to more favorable grasses, and do prescribed burns, among other things. But even after these things have been done, the land needs to be regularly managed to maintain the quality of the habitat. Such management will provide grass, forb and legume food groups as well as ensure that there will be enough bare ground to enable the Quail to forage. Planned disturbances such as prescribed burning and light disking will provide plant diversity and, consequently, insect diversity.

David ended his talk by encouraging those who are interested in the program he described to contact him. There is some funding available through DGIF and DCR to help people who have enough land (as little as 2 acres) to participate in creating good Quail habitat. For more information, contact David at David.Bryan@va.usda.gov or 540-899-9492, ext. 101.



Shanna Minarik monitors a Brown-headed Nuthatch Trail, one of the projects partially funded by NNAS.

Photograph by Paul Servis

Upcoming Events

NNAS Annual Picnic September 12

The NNAS Annual Picnic will take place at Picnic Area #1 (Humphrey Site), Belle Isle State Park, on Monday, September 12. Supper is scheduled for 5:00 PM and will be followed by a bird walk led by Frank Schaff.

The Chapter will pay the \$3.00 per car parking fee and will also provide soft drinks, paper products, and utensils. Attendees should bring a covered dish to share.

Belle Isle State Park is located in Lancaster County on the Rappahannock River. From Warsaw, take State Route 3 East to SR 354. Turn right and follow for three miles. Turn right onto SR 683 near Litwalton to the park entrance. From Kilmarnock, take Route 3 West to Lively, then left on SR 201 for three miles, then right on SR 354 for three miles and left onto 683 to the park entrance.

Please come and share in the fun!

Upcoming Bird Walks

Frank Schaff, our intrepid bird walk leader, has provided the schedule of NNAS bird walks for the rest of 2011. All trips except the September bird walk will leave Grace Episcopal Church in Kilmarnock at 7:15 AM for those who want to carpool. Otherwise, meet at the times and locations as listed below:

September 12: 6:30 PM (after the annual picnic supper), Picnic Area #1, Belle Isle State Park

October 10: 7:45 AM, Dameron Marsh

November 14: 7:45 AM, Belle Isle State Park

December 12: 8:15 AM, Popes Creek, George Washington Birthplace National Monument

For more information call Frank at 804-462-0084.

New Members

Please welcome these new members to our chapter. Give them a special 'Hello' when you see them at our meetings and walks.

- Robert Berry
- Marcia Clark
- Shirley Davenport
- Laura and Bill Erne
- Ida Hall
- Elizabeth Johnston
- Anne and Steve Reed
- Suzy Roberts
- Virginia Ruddell
- Florence Swink
- Joseph Thompson
- Sharon Timm
- William Walker

INJURED BIRDS

Diana O' Conner - 804-313-2240

INJURED ANIMALS

Nancy Johnston - 804-435-3040



Application for Membership in NNAS - Chapter Code X50, 7XCH

- Local Chapter Only Membership - \$15.00 annually, renewable in June; includes local newsletter and directory.
- National & Local Membership - \$20.00 introductory (\$35.00 after), as above, plus glossy National Audubon Magazine.
 Make checks payable to "Audubon Society".

Name _____ Phone _____ - _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Northern Neck Audubon Society Resources

Officers	Committee Chairs	Media
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Or Current Resident

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