



Goldfinch Gazette
The Newsletter of the Rockingham Bird Club
<https://rockinghambirdclub.com>

Volume XLVI

Number 4

Dec 2020

CLUB POSITIONS STILL NEED TO BE FILLED:
SECRETARY

VICE PRESIDENT for PROGRAMS

Please contact Debbie Harrison at **540-856-3058** or woodshar@aol.com for more information and/or if you are willing to help the club in either of these roles.

VIRTUAL CLUB MEETING via ZOOM

DATE: Thursday, December 3rd, 2020

TIME: 7:00 PM

PLACE: VIRTUAL via ZOOM

PROGRAM: *Bay 101: How we got here, where do we go, and great signs of hope for the Bay and the entire watershed* by Robert Jennings

The largest estuary in the United States, the Chesapeake Bay, is a polluted watershed. This presentation will go over what caused/is causing the pollution, realistic hope for the future, plus a portion to talk about WIP's (Watershed Implementation Plans) that each state in the Bay watershed creates themselves, including our Commonwealth.

Robert received a bachelor's in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Pennsylvania State University. He was a grassroots field specialist for eight years with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation in the Valley, Blue Ridge, and Piedmont Region of Virginia. He now works for the Rockfish Valley Foundation in his Nelson County watershed.

Join us via Zoom:

<https://bridgewatercollege.zoom.us/j/94125053951?pwd=eW5QRHdCWHU4L2ZlZ1d1RhUC9QOWtZQT09>

Meeting ID: **941 2505 3951** Passcode: **447877**

One tap mobile

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If you know how to Zoom and just want to pop in, please do! It will be nice to see faces again! If you have never used Zoom, take a few minutes to check out this information from Zoom:
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-meeting>

FIELD TRIPS - Diane Lepkowski

**** Field trips have been postponed due to concerns regarding the pandemic.**

BIRD SIGHTINGS

Be on the lookout for **Evening Grosbeaks!** They are making a big push south this Fall. Large numbers of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** are also being reported.

Mike Smith had **Purple Finches**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, and over 30 **White-throated Sparrows** at his place near Elkton on Oct. 25. Mike also had **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** and a flyover **Bald Eagle** on Oct. 28, a **Tennessee Warbler** on Oct. 29, 23 **Pine Siskins** on Nov. 7, and a **Hermit Thrush** on Nov. 17.

Tom Mizell reported two **Buffleheads** at Silver Lake on Oct. 26.

Diane Holsinger's yard list over the past month has included a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** on Oct. 29 and a **Chipping Sparrow** on Nov. 23.

Greg Moyers reported a **Dunlin** at the Broadway Wastewater Treatment Plant on Oct. 28.

Don Perkuchin reported a **Canvasback** at Silver Lake on Oct. 30. Bob Eggleston also reported the **Canvasback**, along with **Northern Shovelers**, **Buffleheads**, **Hooded Merganser**, and six **Pied-billed Grebes** on the same date.

Herb and Sarah Myers hosted a **Rufous Hummingbird** at their place in Keezletown beginning Oct. 30.

Bob Eggleston reported an **American Golden-Plover** and a **Dunlin** at the Oakwood Drive farm pond near Mt. Crawford on Oct. 31.

William Leigh reported a **Dunlin** at Leonard's Pond on Oct. 31.

Sharon Landis reported an **Evening Grosbeak** on Nov. 2. The bird was seen at her brother's feeder in Linville. Her brother reported that 18 **Purple Finches** visited the feeder after Sharon left. On Nov. 7, Sharon reported **Evening Grosbeaks** at her place in Linville.

Robyn Puffenbarger reported **Evening Grosbeaks** visiting College Street in Bridgewater on Nov. 2 and Nov. 3.

Diane Holsinger reported a **Common Goldeneye** at Lake Shenandoah on Nov. 3.

Mike Smith reported three **Ruddy Ducks**, **Killdeer**, a **Pied-billed Grebe**, and 120 **Fish Crows** at Lake Shenandoah on Nov. 5.

Mae Houff reported a flock of 12 **Evening Grosbeaks** at the Island Ford boat launch on Nov. 6.

Karen, Everette, and Annie Shank began seeing **Evening Grosbeaks** at their feeders west of Bridgewater on Nov. 7. They've had as many as 30 birds visiting the feeders since.

Mike Smith reported two **Bald Eagles**, a **Northern Harrier**, and a **Purple Finch** on Captain Yancey Rd and added 50 **Cedar Waxwings** and a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at Island Ford on Nov. 7.

Herb Myers reported a flock of **Dark-eyed Juncos** at his place and **Eastern Meadowlarks** along Happy Valley Rd on Nov. 8.

Mike and Evelyn Shank reported their first **Dark-eyed Juncos** of the season in Spring Creek on Nov. 8.

Sharon and Jay Landis reported at least 11 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** and a **Brown Creeper** on Long Run Rd on Nov. 8.

There was a large movement of **Tundra Swans** over the area on Nov. 12. Matt Gingerich reported 121 **Tundra Swans** and a **Snow Goose** flying over his place in Linville, Mike and Evelyn Shank had at least 40 flying over their place in Spring Creek, Crista Cabe saw an estimated 35-40 flying over Dayton, and Dave Wendelken reported 90 flying over his place near Harrisonburg.

Cory Taylor reported a pair of **Surf Scoters** at the Broadway Wastewater Treatment Plant on Nov. 12. Later the same day, Diane Holsinger reported the continuing scoters along with 41 **Franklin's Gulls, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Northern Shovelers, Ruddy Ducks, Ring-necked Ducks, Green-winged Teal, Hooded Mergansers**, and a flyover **Tundra Swan**.

Mike Smith reported a **Bald Eagle** on Captain Yancey Rd and an **American Kestrel, Cedar Waxwings, Eastern Towhee, Purple Finches**, and a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** on Ore Wash Rd near Elkton on Nov. 12. On Nov. 17, Mike flushed an **American Woodcock** on the Hightop Mtn trail off Skyline Drive.

Upon returning home on Nov. 17, Diane Lepkowski was greeted by a red **Eastern Screech-Owl** which flew in and perched in a front yard tree.

Greg Moyers reported at least 38 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** plus **Brown Creepers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Fox Sparrows, Pine Siskins**, and **Red Crossbills** at Switzer Dam on Nov. 22.

Diane Lepkowski reports another (or the same?) **Peregrine Falcon** roosting again this year near the County office building in Harrisonburg as of Nov.23.

The **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banding station at Highland Retreat Camp is open again this year. Clair Mellinger helped set up the nets and get things running and Charles Ziegenfus has been up a number of evenings and is handling the paperwork, but the day-to-day (night-to-night) operations are being run by Chris Lehman, Ben Spory, Jake Myers, and Matt Gingerich with some help from Vic Buckwalter and Bridgett Brunea. It has been an above-average year (much better than recent years) with at least 111 new owls banded thus far and 7 foreign retraps (birds that we caught that had already been banded at other stations). Because of the covid-19 virus, we are continuing to discourage any visitors at the station. Thank you.

Clair Mellinger had a **Fox Sparrow** at his feeder on Nov. 19 and Nov. 21.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE NOTE: THE JANUARY 2021 VIRTUAL CLUB MEETING IS CANCELLED

Christmas Bird Count - 121st Season

We plan to hold our count on **Saturday, December 19, 2020**. Our participation options are more limited this year due to logistics related to the pandemic. Fortunately, we anticipate having enough leaders to cover the sectors. Most of our leaders will not be able to accommodate extra participants afield this year. Feeder watching could be especially helpful if you live within the circle area which radiates 7.5 miles from the center at the junction of routes 613, 257, & 742 in Ottobine near Paul State Forest. If you think you may be able to participate in any way, please reach out to Bill Benish as soon as you can.

Important: CBC administrative pandemic restrictions are in effect, so we must be socially distanced and compliant with local government rules. Social distancing and/or masking are required at all times in the field. Carpooling may only occur within existing familiar or social “pod” groups. We will have no in-person compilation gathering. Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

Please contact **Bill Benish** at wcbenish@gmail.com or **540-908-7336** with any questions. .



Evening Grosbeak – November 2020 – Spring Creek Rd

Photo credit: Greg Moyers



rufous Eastern Screech-Owl – November 2020 – Harrisonburg

Photo credit: Diane Lepkowski

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VICE PRESIDENT: PROGRAMS – Robyn Puffenbarger

VICE PRESIDENT: FIELD TRIPS – Diane Lepkowski

SECRETARY: VACANT

TREASURER: Audrey Shenk

MEMBERS AT LARGE: Kathy Fovargue, Martha Faw

GOLDFINCH GAZETTE – Denise Hoodock

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Rockingham Bird Club

On the Web: <https://rockinghambirdclub.com>