

# Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 02/09/2023

- RBC President Mike Donaldson: Call to Order: The in person February meeting of RBC will please come to order, using a gavel. (Time: 7:00pm) at the Park View Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall.

Mike started off by stating that 24 years ago in Feb. 1999, the first edition of the *Birds of Rockingham County* book debuted. He mentioned it to honor the premiere of the second edition on sale in the back.

He asked to dispense with the reading of last meeting minutes with no objections. Mike mentioned that there is a copy available on the RBC website.

Any new members/visitors?

Dee Rosenberg stood up to say that she has lived in area for four years. She loves birds, but a terrible birder. Dee just wanted to check out the club.

- **Old Business:** none
- **Recent Bird Sightings**

Mike Donaldson: At Hillandale Park, he looked up in sky to spot an adult Bald Eagle, which is rare to see in the city.

Jim and Kathy Kaeli: They went to Nags Head and together they saw 130-140 different species over course of trip.

Herb Myers: He spotted a Hermit Thrush, drinking from his bird bath the past few days.

- **Reports from Executive Committee**

Mike (President): He started off with much appreciation for the hard work of the new edition of the book. It looks spectacular and it's very exciting to celebrate the debut of this book, which is the product of years of hard work from Robyn Puffenbarger, Dave Wendelken, and Clair Mellinger. In organizing and ordering the data, technical details of formatting and much more. An additional thanks to each one wrote sections of the book with their countless hours of generating data. He specifically thanked Bill Benish, Bob Eggleston, William Leigh, Diane Lepkowski, and Greg Moyers. Mike also thanked Debbie Harrison, the former RBC president, who oversaw much of the process in her tenure.

Mike called the three editors up to the front to present each of them a copy of the new edition of the book. He said that the book is a remarkable achievement and expressed deep appreciation of their efforts. Diane took a picture of them and Mike read an important proclamation:

“On behalf of the Rockingham Bird Club and by authority of its Executive Committee, in honor of your work on the second edition of *Birds of Rockingham County Virginia*, and, in particular,

- your countless hours of painstaking work to track down, assemble, and organize truly vast amounts of bird sighting data;
- your commitment to accuracy and thoroughness;
- your generous sharing of your knowledge, experience, and talents; and
- your persistence in seeing the job through; all of which combined to produce a work of remarkable quality
  - that is beautiful to regard and a pleasure to read;
  - that will aid birders from near and far in finding local birds and the best spots to find them;

- that is a noble and tangible testament to the longstanding strong local interest in birds and birding;
- that will long remain a source of pride for members of this Club;

for all this, and for going above and beyond the call in service of the Rockingham Bird Club, I confer upon Robyn Puffenbarger, Dave Wendelken, and Clair Mellinger the award of Lifetime Membership.”

Kathy Byers (Vice President of Programs): Nothing to report as she is out of town.

Diane Lepkowski (Vice President of Field Trips): She started off by commenting on the tremendous effort of creating the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Birds of Rockingham County book.; Specifically, she thanked Robyn about getting the ball rolling by starting up the committee. In addition, Diane thanked Greg Moyers, who went through lots of old newsletters to cover gaps in bird sightings.

On next Thursday February 16<sup>th</sup>, there will be a field trip to Hillandale Park, meeting at 8:30am at the main shelter. Kathy Byers will be hosting members at her place for bagels afterwards at 10am.

Diane asked for a little more help for the Raptor/Waterfowl Count on Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup>. Specifically, she needs a leader for the southwest section so if anyone is interested see her after the meeting or email her.

She also mentioned some information about the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO). They do conservation work with some field trips across state several times a year. It's a fun group of people, and Diane recommends joining it.

Audrey Shenk (Treasurer): She mentioned the highlight in the RBC newsletter of the Executive Committee meeting and specifically how we would spend bird seed money. Also, she sent donations to various organizations that are listed in newsletter.

Art Fovargue (Club Historian): It took 38 months of work to archive RBC history. He has taken the first big step in delivering part one of the collection to the JMU Director of Special Collections last weekend. This part included ten scrapbooks (which contain newsletters, bird sightings, other communications of the club, & articles of local interest from the newspaper from 1978 to 1998), all newsletters since 1998 (some electronic and some hard copy), General meeting minutes and minutes of Executive Committee meetings. Art mentioned that the director is especially excited about the scrapbooks. These archives will be available to the public as soon as they get them categorized. Once they will be available; he will put something in an upcoming newsletter on how to access it.

Bill Benish (Christmas Bird Count Coordinator): Bill shared the stats from the bird count with 74 total species and 10,000 individual birds. These stats are close numbers to previous year's Christmas Bird Counts. Bill send out a PDF summary of detailed stats out of folks to participant's email addresses. He said to feel free to email him if you want a copy as well as thanking everyone who participated in it.

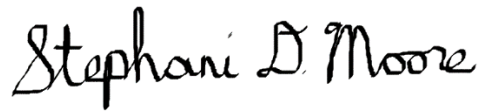
Susan Beachy: She said a few words as a plug for the book, *Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard* by Douglas Tallamy. The author describes the decline that we are having past few decades for both bird and insect numbers. He makes a good case of how we can reverse it by what we can do in our backyard. She placed a copy on the back table for people to view it. Susan also mentioned that the author has many good webinars on YouTube.

- **Announcements?**
  - Our next in person meeting is Thursday March 9th at 7:00pm;
- Anything else to come before the meeting? No

- Adjourn (If there is no objection and no further business to come before the meeting tonight, the meeting will be adjourned.)
- Meeting Adjourned @ 7:21 pm

Robyn Puffenbarger introduced our Speaker for this meeting: Sarah Swank presenting “Birding in Brazil and Argentina.”

Total Participants: 49

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephani D. Moore". The script is cursive and fluid.

Stephani D. Moore  
February 12, 2023