



# Goldfinch Gazette

## The Newsletter of the Rockingham Bird Club

<https://rockinghambirdclub.com>

Volume XLVIII

Number 10

June 2023

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**DATE:** Thursday, June 8, 2023

**PLACE:** Park View Mennonite Church, Fellowship Hall

### **POTLUCK AND A PROGRAM!**

We look forward to everyone joining us for our closing program of 2023. The evening will begin at **6:00 pm** with a Potluck Dinner. Please bring a dish to share. Beverages will be provided. ***Important Note: Park View Mennonite Church is a Nut-free facility. Be sure your food does not contain nuts.*** It will be helpful to have your name on all serving utensils and bowls.

The meeting and program will begin at **7:00 pm**.

**PROGRAM: Birding Rockingham County and Beyond, June 2019- May 2023** presented by Diane Lepkowski and Greg Moyers

Join birders/ photographers Diane Lepkowski and Greg Moyers as they share photos, adventures, and experiences of June 2019 through May 2023. The presentation will feature local area birding and include a few adventures outside the Valley. Diane and Greg will share not just photos but also their birding enthusiasm, along with site-specific highlights to help new birders and/or birders new to the locale enjoy and appreciate the birds that grace our area.

Diane is RBC's Vice President of Field Trips, Vice President (and President-elect) of The Virginia Society of Ornithology and teaches birding classes for James Madison University's Lifelong Learning Institute. She has offered birding presentations to organizations including the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum and Massanutten Regional Library.

Greg is an avid birder, a long-time RBC member, and a regular field trip leader. Greg keeps especially detailed records and was instrumental in editing "Birds of Rockingham County, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition." His extensive work on the species accounts included mining all historical Goldfinch Gazettes for sighting reports that were unavailable elsewhere.

We hope you can attend this special evening.

Please call Kathy Byers for questions or more information at 540-820-6517

## FIELD TRIPS – *Diane Lepkowski*

**Hillandale Spring to Summer Bird Walk, Wednesday, June 21:** We will meet at Shelter 12 at 9:30 AM. Contact Tom Mizell at [ztomvaz@cs.com](mailto:ztomvaz@cs.com) or 540-810-5898, or Kathy Byers at [kkbyers77@gmail.com](mailto:kkbyers77@gmail.com) or 540-820-6517 for questions or more info.

**Hillandale Summer Bird Walks, Second Thursday of the Month: June 8, July 13 and August 10:** We will meet at Shelter 12 at 8:30 AM. Contact Tom Mizell at [ztomvaz@cs.com](mailto:ztomvaz@cs.com) or 540-810-5898, or Kathy Byers at [kkbyers77@gmail.com](mailto:kkbyers77@gmail.com) or 540-820-6517 for questions or more info.

*\*Additional trips that may be scheduled will be announced via email to members.*

## TRIP REPORTS

### **May Hillandale Walk – Tom Mizell**

On Thursday, May 11, twenty visitors to Hillandale Park enjoyed over 55 species during a two-and-a-half-hour walk. Target species included Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Meadowlark, Baltimore Oriole, Eastern Kingbird, and “warbler”. It was a hazy morning, and the temperature was 52° as the walk began. We have been seriously talking and hoping for “warblers” the last two walks. It took us 10 species this morning to find the first warbler - Magnolia Warbler. Hurrah! The first 10 species included Blue Jay, Great-crested Flycatcher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood Pewee, Fish Crow, American Robin, European Starling and Cedar Waxwing.

By 9 AM we were in the northwest corner. The second warbler of the morning was a Northern Parula, spotted by Greg near the Red Screech Owl tree. We now had 18 species as we picked up Mallards, Canada Geese, Mourning Dove, Gray Catbird, Indigo Bunting, and Tufted Titmouse. We spent the next 20 minutes or so between the Owl tree and the slab. We had a great time as we enjoyed Palm Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, American Redstart, and Yellow-rumped Warbler in an outstanding 20-minute stretch. Eastern Towhee, Chimney Swift, Pileated Woodpecker and White-eyed Vireo joined the crowd. Between the slab and the bike trail we added Brown Thrasher, Field sparrow, Red-shouldered Hawk, Turkey Vulture, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, and House Sparrow.

We enjoyed an enthusiastically singing Baltimore Oriole just before we headed west on the bike trail. Ten of the original 20 birders continued towards the school and added Eastern Bluebird, White-breasted Nuthatch, Song sparrow, Red-tailed Hawk, American Goldfinch, Eastern Meadowlark, Bald Eagle, and Greg spotted a Canada Warbler.

That wrapped up our warbler treat. Other species enjoyed this morning include Killdeer, Great Blue Heron, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Carolina Chickadee, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, House Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Grasshopper Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak and Double-crested Cormorant.

We found 5 of the 6 target birds. Will you help find the Yellow-billed Cuckoo next time? Look forward to seeing you the second Thursdays in June, July, and August. Join our Spring to Summer walk on 21 June beginning at 9:30 AM.

## BIRD SIGHTINGS

Mike Smith reported a **Baltimore Oriole**, a **Scarlet Tanager**, and a calling **Eastern Whip-Poor-Will** at his place east of Elkton on April 30. He added a **White-eyed Vireo** on May 9, **Blackpoll** and **Cape May Warblers** on May 16, **Magnolia** and **Pine Warblers**, **American Redstart**, **Louisiana Water-thrush**, and **Bald Eagle** on May 18, and **Cedar Waxwings** building a nest on May 26. Mike also has **Chimney Swifts** nesting in his chimney.

Randy Cline reported **Blue-Winged Teal** on the Heritage Oaks golf course pond on May 4.

Mike Smith found a **Yellow-throated Vireo** and a **Kentucky Warbler** at the Shenandoah National Park's western boundary off Rt. 33 on May 4.

A **Great Egret** spent the morning of May 1 at Lake Shenandoah.

Greg Moyers reported a **Bank Swallow** at the Broadway Wastewater Plant on May 3.

Diane Lepkowski reported **Great Egret**, **Willow Flycatcher**, and **Palm Warbler** at Lake Shenandoah on May 4.

Herb Myers reported a **Red-headed Woodpecker** at his place near Keezletown on May 5, his first at Tangly Woods.

Greg Moyers and Diane Lepkowski reported a **Blue-winged Warbler** at Paul State Forest on May 7.

William Leigh reported a **Sora** at the Nazarene Church Rd Wetland on May 7.

Allen Larner found a **Semipalmated Plover** at Leonard's Pond on May 7.

Bob Eggleston found two female **Wilson's Phalaropes** in breeding plumage at the Oakwood Drive farm pond on May 7. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was reported there as well.

Mike Smith found 10 species of warblers, including a **Tennessee Warbler**, as well as **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Barred Owl**, and **White-eyed Vireo** along Skyline Drive on May 7. On May 9, Mike reported **Pectoral**, **Spotted**, and **Solitary Sandpipers**, as well as **Orchard Oriole** and **Yellow Warbler** at Leonard's Pond. Mike also spotted a bird that may have been a **White-rumped Sandpiper**.

Mike Donaldson reported a **Mourning Warbler** at Cook's Creek Arboretum in Bridgewater on May 10. Greg Moyers reported a **Wilson's Warbler** at the same location later that day.

Diane Lepkowski reported two **Red-headed Woodpeckers** at the intersection of Osceola Springs Rd and Pleasant Valley Rd on May 12.

Greg Moyers and Diane Lepkowski reported a **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Paul State Forest on May 14. Greg had another **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Hillandale Park on May 15.

Herb Myers reported **Bobolinks** at Grist Mill Rd on May 15 and added **Savannah Sparrow** and **Willow Flycatcher** on Acker Lane.

Diane Lepkowski reported eight warblers, including a **Wilson's Warbler** and a **Bay-breasted Warbler**, at her place near Harrisonburg on May 15.

Greg Moyers reported a **Willow Flycatcher** at Cook's Creek Arboretum on May 15.

Ken Ranck reported **Bobolinks** on Goods Mill Rd and found a female **Red-necked Phalarope** at Leonard's Pond on May 16.

Mike Smith reported an adult **Great Blue Heron** feeding three young in the nest in the Merck swamp on May 17. Mike also had **Orchard Oriole** and **Red-headed Woodpecker** at the same location.

Greg Moyers reported a **Northern Waterthrush** at Wildwood Park on May 18 and another at Cook's Creek Arboretum on May 19.

Mike Smith reported **Common Mergansers, Warbling Vireo, Northern Waterthrush,** and both **Orioles** at Riverside Park in Elkton on May 18.

Diane Lepkowski reported a **Common Loon** at Lake Shenandoah on May 20.

Cory Taylor reported a **Black-bellied Plover** and a **Semipalmated Plover** at the Broadway Wastewater Plant on May 21.

Ken Ranck reported a **Mourning Warbler** and a **Canada Warbler** at Reddish Knob on May 23. The Mourning Warbler was still being seen as of May 27.

Ken Ranck reported another **Red-necked Phalarope** at Leonard's Pond on May 26.

Doug Ruby heard a **Kentucky Warbler** on Briery Branch Rd on May 27.

Greg Moyers reported a late **Merlin** on Briery Branch Rd on May 29. The same day, Greg reported at least 10 **Dunlins** and three **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at the Oakwood Drive farm pond.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Celebration of the Life of Charles "Zig" Ziegenfus:** a gathering to celebrate Zig's life will be held on Saturday July 15, 2 – 4 PM, at Dolly and Bibb Frazier's farm in Port Republic. Details to be announced – *Diane Lepkowski*

### Secretary Needed

Our current Secretary, Stephani Moore, is stepping down, and a replacement is needed as soon as possible. The duties of the Secretary are primarily to take notes and transcribe the minutes of our Club meetings and Executive Committee meetings (3 per year). As an officer of the Club, the secretary is a voting member of the Executive Committee and thus helps shape Club activities, policies, and initiatives.

Please let Mike Donaldson ([mike.donaldson@outlook.com](mailto:mike.donaldson@outlook.com)) or any of our Executive Committee members know if you are interested or know someone who may be interested in helping the club in this important role.

### Election Results

At the May 2023 Club meeting, members voted unanimously to approve the election slate put forth by the Nominating Committee, chaired by immediate past President Debbie Harrison. By virtue of this vote, Andrew Troyer became the one newly elected official, filling the Member-at-large position vacated by Kathy Fovargue. The other elected officials were reelected, with the exception of Secretary

Stephani Moore, who stepped down due to scheduling difficulties. RBC elected officials for the coming fiscal year (beginning July 1) will thus be as follows:

Mike Donaldson, President  
Kathy Byers, First Vice President of Programs  
Diane Lepkowski, Second Vice President of Field Trips  
Secretary, vacant  
Treasurer, Audrey Shenk  
Member-at-Large, Herb Myers (second year of first two-year term)  
Member-at-Large, Andrew Troyer (first year of first two-year term)

The Club, of course, hopes that someone will step up to fill the critical role of Secretary. We are indebted to Kathy Fovargue and Stephani Moore for their fine and dedicated service, and we welcome and look forward to working with Andrew Troyer and appreciate his willingness to serve.

### **Name Tags – help needed!**

Thank you to Bill and Martha Faw who have been creating much appreciated name tags for club members. They will be stepping back from this important function at the end of the program year. Therefore, the club needs someone to take over making them (and delivering them to and from meetings,) starting in September. If this sounds like a job for YOU, please let one of the club officers know. Bill and Martha will be happy to provide training. Thanks in advance for your consideration.

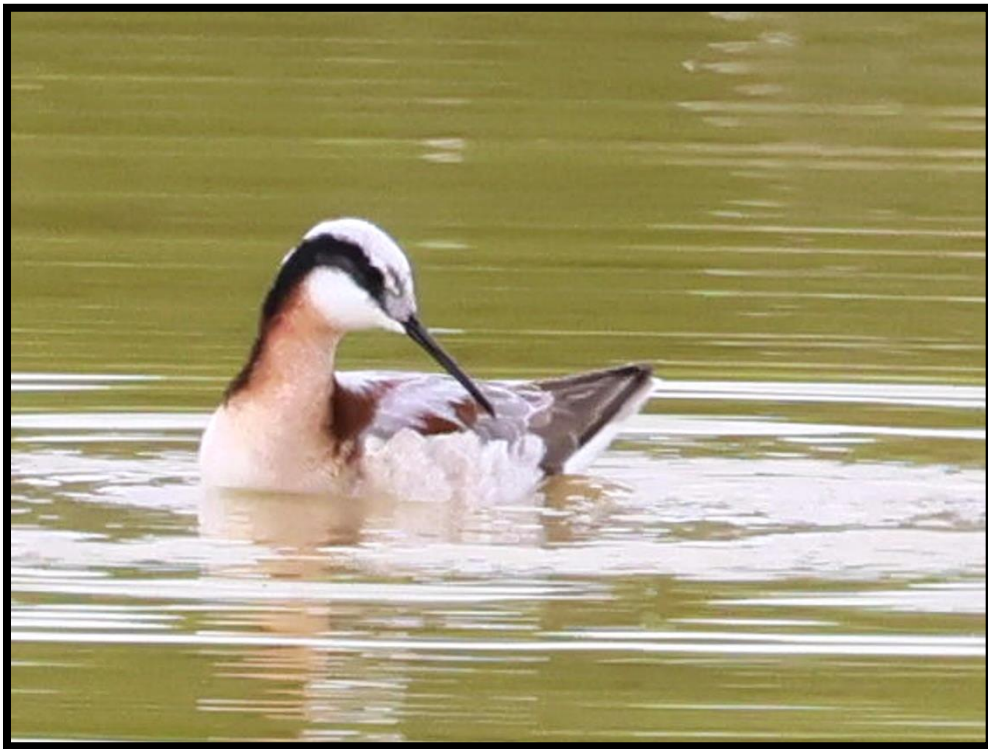
### **TREASURER'S REPORT – *Audrey Shenk***

The Bird Club has had another successful year financially. Our current balances stand at \$4,897.70 in checking, \$106.05 in savings, and \$5,224.30 in a Certificate of Deposit. Our club membership stands at 122 members broken down as follows: 5 free memberships (those who purchased over \$300 in seed at the annual bird seed sale), 6 lifetime members, 38 family memberships, 72 individual memberships, and 1 student membership. Our total membership has returned to the level we maintained prior to Covid-19. We were able to donate \$2,825 to 13 different organizations that are dedicated to bird or wildlife conservation. Enjoy a wonderful summer of birding and hope to see you again in September!



Red Crossbill – Briery Branch/Bother Knob Area, May 3, 2023

Photo credit: Richard Whelden



Wilson's Phalarope, Oakwood Farm Pond

Photo credit: Diane Lepkowski



Bluebird nestlings in RBC Box #10 at the Rockingham Fairgrounds –  
May 14, 2023

Photo credit: Tamera Helms

Rockingham Bird Club  
9 Louise Drive  
Bridgewater, VA 22812



**PRESIDENT: Mike Donaldson**

**VICE PRESIDENT: PROGRAMS – Kathy Byers**

**VICE PRESIDENT: FIELD TRIPS – Diane Lepkowski**

**SECRETARY: Stephani Moore**

**TREASURER: Audrey Shenk**

**MEMBERS AT LARGE: Kathy Fovargue, Herb Myers**

**GOLDFINCH GAZETTE – Denise Hoodock**

**HISTORIAN: Art Fovargue**

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**ON THE WEB: <https://rockinghambirdclub.com>**

