

# Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 1/11/2024

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RBC President Mike Donaldson: Call to Order: The in-person January meeting of RBC will please come to order. (Time: 7:02 pm) at the Park View Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall.

There being no objections, they dispensed with the reading of the minutes. A copy is available on our website.

### Old Business:

- None

### New members/visitors:

- Mindy Capaldi visited out of curiosity. She and her family moved to Bridgewater recently from Alexandria.
- Jay Martin is a prospective member who recently moved from southwestern VA and has worked for the Forest Service.
- Bonnie Burchfield is a long-time local renewing her membership. She lives in Dayton.

### Recent Bird Sightings:

- Herb Myers: Keeps observing a common feud between Downy Woodpeckers and bluebirds in Keezletown. The woodpeckers keep drilling holes in the sides of the bluebird boxes.
- Zack Perdue: Saw a Hooded Merganser hanging out with the Mallards at Hillandale in the golf course pond.

### Reports from Executive Committee:

#### Mike Donaldson (President):

- No announcements

#### Kathy Byers (Vice President of Programs):

- No program announcements.
- For February's meeting, Mark Adams will present "Butterflies and How to Attract Them" to kick us into spring.
- The club is in need of lard for suet cakes because the old source is no longer available. It needs to be rendered. Five gallons would be ideal. Reach out to Kathy with any lard leads.

**Diane Lepkowski (Vice President of Field Trips):**

- Hillandale field trip rescheduled to Tuesday, January 16, at Shelter 12 (main shelter) at 8:30 a.m. due to bad weather. This field trip will be great for new members and will also be helpful to learn tips for the annual raptor and waterfowl count. An email will go out to club members with a reminder or updates.
- Randy Cline offered to lead the Lost River trip. That trip is a great opportunity to see Bald Eagles.
- Saturday, February 10 is the annual raptor and waterfowl count. The count tries to cover the entire county. Go to the newsletter and email Diane Lepkowski if interested. The following Saturday (February 17) is the reschedule date if needed.

**Audrey Shenk (Treasurer):**

- Nothing to report

**Art Fovargue (Club Historian):**

- This month marks the beginning of the club's 50th year. Stay tuned for various anniversary announcements.

**Bill Benish (Christmas Bird Count Coordinator):**

- The Christmas Count had 11 parties afield that were made up of 1 leader per team and a varying number of helpers. This year's species count tied last year's count, with a total of 74. There were 10 "missed" species. For a comprehensive summary of the count, email Bill but a few highlights are listed below.
  - 68 Downy Woodpeckers and 24 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were spotted, which are both 4 more than previous records.
  - There were 10 species with only 1 individual counted.
  - There are 6 main areas with 11 subsectors. Each area had at least one bird unique to that area.
  - Greg Moyers saw a Black-crowned Night Heron that fell outside of count parameters but is an Honorable Mention.
- He also gave a huge thanks to everyone who helped and participated.

**Denise Hoodock (Newsletter Editor):**

- Nothing to report
- Mike recognized her great work on the newsletter.

**Members at Large:**

- Herb Myers and Andrew Troyer
- Good people to talk to if you have questions or concerns

**New Business:**

- Mike announced a grant opportunity at the request of club member and Virginia Society of Ornithology board member Chris Bolgiano. There are VSO Outreach Grants of up to \$1000 with the goal of making birding and nature conservation more accessible to historically underserved communities. The ultimate goal is to bring all voices together for nature conservation that benefits us all. Physical fliers were available at the meeting, and additional information is available on the VSO website. The deadline is May 1st.

**Announcements:**

- Mike announced that the next in-person Club meeting is at 7 p.m. on Thursday, February 8, at the same location.
- There were no other announcements.

Meeting Adjourned @ 7:20 pm

Kathy Byers introduced our speaker for this meeting: Robyn Puffenbarger, presenting “Gardening for Birds and Wildlife (Landscaping for Birds).” Robyn is a long-time member and professor at Bridgewater College.

Total Participants: 53

Minutes recorder: Allie Sawyer

January 11, 2024