

Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

10/10/2024

RBC President Mike Donaldson:

Call to Order: The in-person June meeting of RBC will please come to order. (Time: 7:05 pm) at the Park View Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall.

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

Old Business:

- None

New members/visitors:

- Rob Alexander, a neighbor of Kathy Byers
- Craig Zook, of Broadway, started birding in Finger Lakes a couple of months ago and ran into Diane Lepkowski at Lake Shenandoah who invited him to come to the club meeting.
- Mary Drury, a new resident of VMRC, longtime birder and veteran of Magee Marsh.
- Joel Stauffer, transplant from Lansdale, PA.

Interesting birds

- Eva Getman: Lake Shenandoah, two **Osprey** sitting in the trees and “cooing at each other.”
- Robyn Puffenbarger: **Winter Wren** in the garden in Bridgewater, “a Song Sparrow that sounds funny.”
- Mike Donaldson saw a **Winter Wren** and **Swamp Sparrow** at Lake Shenandoah.
- Herb Myers saw a **White-throated Sparrow** at Lake Shenandoah and a hummingbird at the feeder in Keezletown. He was at Rocky Mountain National Park and held a **Boreal Owl**.

- Mary Drury asked if folks thought the hummingbirds have left. Consensus is that if you leave a feeder out they will come.
- Joel Stauffer: migrating warblers—**Black-throated Blue, Northern Parula, Tennessee**—and **kinglets** galore at Madison Run.
- Rosie Myers: **Prairie Warbler** at undisclosed location.
- Pete Myers: north of Crozet, **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** heard and seen (only two in 30 years). One **hummingbird** yesterday.

Reports from Executive Committee:

Mike Donaldson (President):

- no report

Kathy Byers (Vice President of Programs):

- Upcoming programs: Jeff Cooper from DWR presenting on Golden Eagles of West Virginia in November and Raptor Hill Falconry in December.
 - Door prize winner for the feeder that came with bird seed sale materials: Doug Ruby
 - Bird Seed Sale
Information and order forms were sent out at the end of September for our annual sale. Fortunately, prices did not increase this year and some were even reduced. This seed is freshly harvested and high quality. We are excited to also offer Goldfinch Jubilee merchandise at this time in honor of our 50th anniversary (samples on the back table) The funds help pay for our wonderful programs AND the financial support of several education and conservation programs. Kathy challenged club members to take an order form to a neighbor, someone you haven't met and/or who feeds birds. Orders are due October 28.

–Thanks to Annie, Karen and Everett Shank for their continued willingness to provide the ever-popular homemade suet cakes. Please keep in mind that they donate ingredients and a great deal of time to make the cakes and we would like to keep the number to about 300.

–Thanks also to Audrey who works magic with our order forms and the online store, and to Denise for all work on the Jubilee merchandise.

–Orders are due Oct. 28.

–Pick Up Day is Saturday, Nov. 16, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. at the Rockingham Fairgrounds. If you'd like to help at Pick Up Day, there is a sign-up sheet at the back table.

- Seventeen folks have signed up for Saturday's field trip to Wildlife Center of Virginia in Waynesboro. Meet at 9:45 a.m. Please remember to dress for the weather and to bring \$5 in cash or a check made out to the club. Carpooling is encouraged. You also might want to stop by the Hawk Watch on your way home!
- Tuesday, Nov. 12 is the next Hillandale walk. Shelter 12, 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday's walk was "very nice," expecting more warblers than were seen, but still a nice time.

Diane Lepkowski (Vice President of Field Trips):

- not present
 - Tentative field trip: Friday, Nov. 8 (rain date following Sunday): Trip to Highland Retreat, Northern Saw-whet Owl banding. Carpool from Broadway. (Mike shares this.)

Allie Sawyer (Secretary):

- Mike recognized Lauren Jefferson, stepping in for Allie.

Audrey Shenk (Treasurer):

- Dues need to be in by Nov. 1.

Art Fovargue (Club Historian):

- Art introduced the “Best Bird Initiative” as part of the Goldfinch Jubilee. Club members can submit their best bird sighting or encounter. Three rules: 1) has to be since January 1975 (last 50 years), 2) the sighting or encounter must be in Rockingham County, and 3) must be a single bird or a single species. Submit what, when, where, why– you define “best bird” as the rarest, the first, the most unusual, a special encounter. Two-three sentences via online or printed form. The submissions will be compiled and shared with the club as well as submitted to JMU Archives.

Bill Benish (Christmas Bird Count Coordinator):

- Saturday, Dec. 14 is designated for the CBC 2024 (weather delay possible). Allen Lerner is compiler for Augusta circle, pushed his date forward to Sunday. The Saturday date increases our participation. Please let him know if you are interested in participating.

Denise Hoodock (Newsletter Editor):

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

Andrew Troyer and Herb Myers (Members at Large):

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

New Business/Announcements:

- Thanks to Joy and Wayne Beaman who handle the name tags. Joy also runs the monitoring of the bluebird trail at Rockingham County Fairgrounds. Volunteers are welcome.
- Our next in-person Club meeting is at 7 pm on Thursday, Nov. 14, at this same time and location.

Meeting Adjourned @ 7:41 pm

Kathy Byers introduced speaker Pete Myers, of Crozet, presenting “Bedlam on the Beach” featuring shorebirds of Point Reyes, California.

Pete moved from Baltimore, Maryland, to Veracruz, Mexico, at age 12 and became enthralled with the abundant tropical bird population. His family also lived in Nicaragua, Columbia, Uruguay and Paraguay. Pete earned a BA at Reed College and then a Ph.D. at U.C. Berkeley, studying and photographing birds in Argentina, coastal California and the Alaskan North Slope. After seven years as a research ornithologist at Philadelphia’s Academy of Natural Sciences and three years as Senior Vice President for Science at National Audubon, his research focus shifted in the late 1980s from birds to environmental health challenges, but he continued to photograph birds, especially shorebirds. Moving to the Charlottesville area in 1990, Pete balanced his impressive work in science with the joy he found in photographing birds and celebrating their beauty.

Total Participants: 51

Minutes recorder: Lauren Jefferson

October 10, 2024