

# Rockingham Bird Club Meeting Minutes

Meeting date: 01/08/2026

RBC President Mike Donaldson: Call to Order: The in-person January meeting of RBC will please come to order [7:02pm] 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.

## **New members/visitors:**

- Jennifer Runion was visiting from Bridgewater.
- Lara Sapp lives in Harrisonburg and this was her first meeting.
- Wendy Heeler was visiting.
- Lowell and Marlene Wenger have been members but this was their first meeting. They moved to VMRC last year.

## **Recent Bird Sightings:**

- Bill Benish spotted 3 Fox Sparrows on the way to the Club meeting.
- Anne Nielson shared that Sara Swank and Jon Kastendiek just came back from an Antarctica trip where they saw 6 different species of penguins.
- Chelsa Shank updated that December 18 was the last day she sighted the Inca Dove. She suspects a hawk got to it since the dove had such a regular schedule. They had around 175 visitors.
- The Sandhill Crane had still been sighted as recently as the morning of the Club meeting at Lake Shenandoah. Mike Smith shared that it flies out at 8am sharp.

## **Reports from Executive Committee:**

### **Mike Donaldson (President):**

- Mike Donaldson had nothing to report so passed things over to Kathy Byers.

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

- In February, Dave Wendelken will be presenting on his Amazon Adventures.
- Kathy gave a reminder that people are more than welcome to use the handicap parking spaces if needed, even if their vehicles don't have the markings to do so - you will not be towed.
- Kathy gave a reminder about the next Hillandale gathering on February 10.

**Matt Gingerich (Vice President of Field Trips):**

- Matt is continuing to look for new places to host field trips. He announced that the next trip is at VMRC farm at Willow Run at 8:30am rain or shine.
- January 24 Alex Capaldi is leading a trip to Crist Farm Walking Trails by Bridgewater Retirement Community.
- Randy Cline and Kathy Byers are leading a trip to Lost River February 21st to view Bald Eagles.
- A woodcock trip will be scheduled in March.
- A short-eared owl trip led by Robyn Puffenbarger is also upcoming.

**Allie Sawyer (Secretary):**

- Mike recognized Allie

**Audrey Shenk (Treasurer):**

- Nothing to report

**Art Fovargue (Club Historian):**

- Nothing to report

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

- Bill Benish gave an overview of some of the sightings and informed that he can send the more detailed breakdown to Club members upon request.
- There were 44 total participants in our range with 8 at feeders and 36 on foot.

- To Robyn's excitement, the Pine Warbler was accepted.
- We had 78 total species, 2 more than last year.
- 2,200 fewer individuals, mostly due to 1,700 fewer Brown-headed Cowbirds from a flock spotted the previous year.
- 15 Red-shouldered Hawks were sighted, 21 Hairy Woodpeckers, and 13 Winter Wren.
- Bill thanked everyone who participated.

**Denise Hoodock (Newsletter Editor):**

- Mike recognized her great work on the newsletter.

**Members at Large:**

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

**New Business/Announcements:**

- There being no new business or announcements, Mike closed the meeting with a reminder of the next Club meeting on February 12 at the same time and location.

Meeting Adjourned @ 7:18pm

Kathy Byers introduced the presentation on Birds of Arizona by Dick Rowe.

Total Participants: 52

Minutes recorder: Allie Sawyer

Date of Meeting: 1/8/2026