



THE DRUMMER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
RUSSELL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Editor-Diana Riggs

MEETINGS ARE THE 4TH TUESDAY
AT THE LEBANON COMMUNITY ROOM
AT 7:30 PM

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 3

MEETING: The annual Eagle Watch Picnic at Laurel Bed Lake. Meet at the dam at 3:00 PM August 23rd for a great time of friendly chatter and some good eats. If the eagles show up be ready for some exciting fun. Last year we were entertained by a small furry mammal that had a few people wondering if it was a mink feeding in the rocks. Bob Riggs still thinks it might have been a young Big Foot or possible a pigmy black painter. Sadly Bob Riggs has been called to Richmond that weekend for a homeland security thing and will not be able to lead the wood walk for warblers.

HAPPENINGS:

September 13th Roger and Linda have invited everyone to their yard for fall warbler migration don't miss it arrive at 8:00 AM. Contact Roger if you need directions.

September 20th Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail Open Celebration, Natural Tunnel State Park, Scott County. Bird Walk and Hawk Watch starts at 7:30 AM, Programs start at 10:00 AM, Backyard Habitat, Houses, Birding. Speaker David Whitehurst, Director Wildlife Diversity at 12:00, Loop tours at 1:00 PM.

A lot of long legged waders have appeared around the county. There has been a Great Egret at Stuart's Pond almost every day since our bird club meeting. The rivers are full of Great Blue Herons and Green Herons.

The fall feeder flocks have formed. Roger and Linda's yard is starting to get full of fall migrates. Roger has reported flocks formed and feeding at his feeders.

Michelle and Ed have been to sea with Brian looking for pelagic birds. Both were excited about seeing a Red-billed Tropic Bird.

Bob Riggs has reported seeing Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted, and Solitary Sandpipers in the county so far this summer. The swallows are passing through our area. There must have been one thousand or more at Laurel Bed Lake one day. Dropped out of the sky, fed for about three hours around the lake then took off. Check those flocks and look close it is not unusual to see Bank and others with the Barns, Trees, and Northern Rough-winged Swallows.

Travelers Corner:

Jane and Jerry's Trip West

Our first outing was to the Kelly's Slough National Wildlife Refuge which is just outside Grand Forks, ND. We got information about birding this site at <http://www.geocities.com/grandcitiesbirdclub/Kellys.html>

This is a very nice area to bird because there is an abundance of waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders as well as a lot of birds that like tall grasses. Among our sightings were American avocet, American White Pelican, Double-crested Cormorant, Greater Yellowlegs, and Franklin's Gull along with Gray Partridge, Western Kingbird, Yellow Warbler, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. As new birders, all of these were "firsts" for us.

The second outing was a spontaneous side trip to the Neal Smith NWR which we found near I-80 as we were driving back through Iowa. This NWR contains over 5,000 acres. It is the largest reconstruction of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem in the entire U.S. This includes native animals and birds as well as the grasses and trees that were prevalent then. They have a very nice two mile asphalt trail though the tall grass environment. We hadn't gone 100 yards before a female Ring-necked Pheasant flushed from almost under our feet. We also spotted a Dickcissel, a Savannah Sparrow, and a Black-capped Chickadee along with a number of more familiar species. See the web site at <http://www.tallgrass.org/> for more information.

Possibly the best bird of the trip was a Black-throated Sparrow that we saw at the home of friends we visited. This bird is a western desert resident which is only accidental in the east. We saw this bird several times and were able to eliminate any other possibility.

Regards,

Jerry

What a great trip says Diana!

Be sure to report your bird sightings for the newsletter. It makes it tough to write a letter if I do not hear from you about your sightings. The publishing date will be the 15th of each month.