



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 2

MEETING: The December meeting will be held at the Bonanza restaurant in Lebanon on December 27th at 6:00 PM.

HAPPENINGS: The big news this time of year is the CBC, Christmas Bird Counts. There are always plenty of counts and never enough birders. If you would like to do some cold weather birding in different habitats join the following groups for a fun day of birding.

Dickenson & Buchanan County CBC

Breaks Interstate Park December 20th

Russell County the Blackford CBC December 27th

Bristol Area the Bristol CBC December 28th

Sightings: Jerry Thornhill saw a Peregrine Falcon in the Elk Garden area in November. Good find.

Bob Riggs saw an American Bittern on a strip job in Dumps Creek area.

This has been an excellent fall for raptors. Bob Riggs was sitting in the very cold air last week on a ridge top watching the Golden Eagles hunt and cruise the high meadows. When he was stunned by a beautiful adult Red-tailed hawk soaring into the sky. The sunlight shining on the rufous tail and brown head illuminated the hawk. The big buteo slowing ascending into the sky was breath taking. A moment that will be remembered forever in the mind of a hawkwatcher.

While a friend was telling Bob about some hawks he saw Bob thought they sounded like *Circus* and had to make a trip to be sure. He found three Northern Harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) two adult males and one subadult Basic 1 male. The Harriers seemed to be playing more than hunting. Diving and chasing each other. It was almost like the two females were fusing over the male to see which one would gain his favor.

Lots of Purple finches and sparrows around the county. People say their feeders have been busy lately with lots of bird activity.

Remember to we need a lot of help with the CBC. Come out and help a little or a lot. Every year we have a surprise turn up. I can't wait to see what shows up this year.

Birding Grand Cayman, Mexico and Belize with the Worleys

Diana and myself recently took a cruise to the above places, so we could checkout the local birds. On Grand Cayman, Tuesday November 18th, we spent 4 hours looking for them. We got two lifers, a Loggerhead Kingbird and a Tropical Mockingbird. We saw 8 Magnificent Frigatebirds, hundreds of Ruddy Turnstones, 9 Smoothbilled Ani, 4 Black-necked Stilts, a Green Heron and a mystery warbler like bird. We visited a turtle farm and went to Hell. Wednesday, we were in Costa Maya, Mexico where we only got one species, Palm Warblers. Thursday we went to the Isle of Cozumel, Mexico, where we picked up some good lifers. We birded in Channaab Park, where we got a few lifers; Stripe-headed Tanager, Black Catbird, Melodious Blackbird, Caribbean Elaenia and a Tropical Kingbird. We also saw Magnolia Warbler, Mangrove Cuckoo, Tropical Mockingbird, Bananaquit, Great-tailed Grackle, Grey Catbird and Royal Terns.

Friday, we took a trip into the interior of Belize, to bird around Windy Hill Lodge. We got a few lifers, White Hawk, Common Blackhawk, Roadside Hawk, Rufous Mourner, Social Flycatcher, and Chestnut-headed Oropendola. We saw numerous other species that we had seen earlier on the trip or in the USA. I will mention the Brown Jay, the most common bird we saw in Belize. We hoped to see trogons, parrots and toucans, but were told that they were deep in the jungle this time of year. We saw some hummingbirds, but were unable to get on them long enough to ID them. They never landed or even hesitated long enough to get a good look. We had a great time birding and on the cruise. I will tell you later about visting Hell.

Dave Worley

Sounds like Dave and Diana had a great trip. That Hell story sounds interesting. Can't wait to hear the details I wonder if Hell had a Red-eyed Vireo constantly singing, "Here am I, Where are you, Here am I, Where are you"

This has not been much of a year for waterfowl around the county. Our neighboring counties has turned up a few interesting birds. A Ross' Goose was spotted in Buchanan County by David Raines and Ed Talbott and one was spotted in Washington County by Bob Riggs. There is a concern by the USFW about having two many geese. Afraid the geese will destroy their nesting grounds with two much overeating.