



THE DRUMMER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
RUSSELL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Editor-Dave Worley
MEETINGS ARE THE 4TH TUESDAY
AT THE LEBANON COMMUNITY ROOM
AT 7:30 PM
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CHRISTMAS PARTY: We had a large turn out for the party at the home of Ken & Cindy Hale. As usual the food and entertainment was excellent. Ken and his daughters played the fiddle for us, and Wallace Coffey added the comedy. Santa Claus made sure everyone received a gift and there were even some special awards. The Russell County group was represented by Wallace, Carolyn & Janet Coffey, Bob & Jean Montgomery, Dean, Nina & Sean Gates, Shawn, Beth & Emilee Rogers and their friend Amber, James & Sandy Chafin, Dave & Diana Worley, Fred, Janice & Ricky Martin and Larry McDaniel. Everyone else missed out on a fabulous time. Even had fireworks!

HAPPENINGS: The 23 youngsters from the Centennial Hgts. housing project send a great big "THANKS" to the club for the gifts. They got 3 binoculars and 3 guide books which they are using to compile some good Dickenson County records.

Bob Riggs will be glad to bird with anyone if they just give him a call. 889-5007.

American Pipits are being seen on Rich Mountain.

Red Shouldered Hawks are showing up in large numbers.

An immature Red-tailed Hawk has been hanging around on the wires near Rosedale, it has been observed by Bob Riggs, Nina Gates, Judy Seattle and Dave Worley.

Dave Worley & Bob Riggs made a trip together looking for eagles recently, no eagles found, but other birds were plentiful. We found 4 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, 8 Red-bellied, 6 Downy, 1 Hairy and 1 Pileated Woodpeckers, 8 Red-tailed Hawks, 100+ American Robins, White-breasted Nuthatches, Tufted Titmice and even a Kingfisher.

If you get WILDBIRD magazine, Dave Worley would appreciate your vote for Birder of the Year. His June Birder of the Month puts him in the running to win a trip to Florida, a pair of binoculars, and a scope.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

PRESIDENTS' CORNER: I went to Rich Mountain the other day to watch Golden Eagles. I sat on the highest knoll for six hours and enjoyed the big birds as they soared above the wooded ridges of both Beartown and Rich Mountains hunting for prey. One of the adults suddenly stooped from its soar onto a ground hog, quickly killing and eating it. Once the crop was full the eagle flew to a tree branch on top of Beartown. It sat there with bulging crop just looking out over Corn Valley, where two immature eagles were hunting. One of them suddenly flew down and landed on an open knoll and flew back up with a furry bundle in its talons. Once the eagle gained some altitude it released the bundle, a rabbit, then stooped down and caught the rabbit in the air. It repeated this action several times before flying east over the mountain. I am not sure if it was playing or practicing for the next hunt. One other interesting behavior I observed was when two immature eagles were joined by two Ravens as they soared over Beartown Mountain. Each eagle took off after a raven as they soared higher and higher, then the eagle dove at the raven. When the raven avoided the eagle, they would soar up and then repeat this action, for over twenty minutes. Needless to say, I really enjoyed the show. I saw a total of six different eagles before leaving.

Sometimes we get caught up in seeing lots of different species or turning out large day lists, when some of the best birding can be found by sitting and studying the species right where we are. Go find you a bird and just enjoy the show. **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

Bob Riggs

DUES: Year 2000 dues should be sent to Diana Worley at PO Box 153, Rosedale, Va. 24280. Dues are \$8.00. You will receive a membership card when your dues are paid.

MEETING: There is no meeting in December.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: January 2, 2000. We will meet at the Lebanon Community Room at 5:00 a. m. to go owling before spending the day on the count. We will meet at Bonanza at 7 p.m. to tally the count while we enjoy dinner.

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**