



# THE DRUMMER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE  
RUSSELL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

MEETINGS ARE THE 4<sup>TH</sup> TUESDAY  
AT THE LEBANON COMMUNITY ROOM  
AT 7:30 PM

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**MEETING:** Bob Riggs gave the January program on sparrows. He had a great video and some good slides. Good job, Bob.

**HAPPENINGS:** Bob Riggs and Dave Worley recently went to Abingdon to check out an albino Northern Cardinal. It had red wings and red top-notch, the rest was completely white. It is a regular visitor to the home of Susan Ryan.

Bob Riggs and Dave Worley left this area on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> at 4am. At 10:45 they were birding on Craney Island in Portsmouth. Dave picked up 2 life birds, Canvasback and Red-necked Grebe in the first 5 minutes. We birded there until 3 pm, when they closed. Also saw Bald Eagle, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Northern Shovelers, Green-winged Teal and many more species.

Friday morning found us on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel bright and early. We picked up many different species, including all 3 scoters. We moved around to Oyster, where we saw about 5,000 Snow Geese in a large field. We messed around all day on the Shore, where we picked up a new life bird for Bob and several new Va. Birds for both. Marbled Godwit and Short-billed Dowitcher were numerous at Willis Wharf. We went back to CBBT just before dark and started seeing other birders. Several of them were scheduled for the Pelagic trip for Saturday. 5 am found us at the dock ready for the trip. A total of 30 were booked and everyone showed. It took 4 hours to get out to Norfolk Canyon. Our trip out showed loons, gulls and Northern Gannets. Finally we found a Black-legged Kittiwake, then Manx Shearwater, Northern Fulmar, Atlantic Puffin, Great Skua and a Black-browed Albatross. Most of the people aboard were looking for the Skua for a life bird, but got 2 when the albatross showed up. This is believed to be the first documented Black-browed in North American waters. Dave has video to show at the meeting. Sunday, we went back to the CBBT then on to Chincoteague for the day. We got many, many species for the day, with Greater White-fronted Goose being a 1<sup>st</sup> Va. record for Bob and Dave. Monday morning we hit Ft. Story and then Ft. Monroe as we were coming home. Ft. Monroe had thousands of Bonaparte Gulls and 3 Little Gulls. It was truly an experience and trip we will never forget.

**Presidents Corner:** The joy of birding! I often wonder what it is that makes someone get up early in the morning or stay out late at night to see a bird. The excitement of the search, the fun of watching a bundle of feathers blurring by in its daily drive for survival, the thrill of seeing a big raptor like a Golden Eagle or Red-tailed Hawk doing acrobatic dives. It is not one thing, but a bunch of sensations all working to drive the desire to see just one more bird before dark. A mad dash after work just to see the woodcock do its courting flight. I recently saw this in action, while Dave and I were birding on the Eastern Shore. The area was full of birds and surprises. Virginia, what a great place to bird, from the highlands of the southwest to the deep waters of the Norfolk Canyon. Dave will be talking about this at the next meeting, hope to see you there. In the meanwhile, get out there and experience the excitement.

Bob Riggs

**Code of Birding Ethics:**

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.
2. Respect the Law and the rights of others.
3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures and other artificial bird environments are safe.
4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

**Field Trips:**Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>, Burkes Garden. Meet at the Lebanon Community Room at 8 am. Bring warm clothes. Be prepared to see some great birds of prey.

Our next meeting will be Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 at the Lebanon Community Room. Bob and Dave will show video and pictures of their recent trip. Please join us for a great time.

We always need material for our newsletter. So please let Dave Worley, 880-1373 or 1374, know what you have done. We are interested in anything you see, anywhere you go or just what you think about birding. The newsletter is nothing if it does not cover everybody in the club, not just a few.

Hope to see you at the next meeting, we will be presenting the award for **Birder of the Year** for 1998. Better be there, it could be you.