



THE DRUMMER

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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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MEETING: Our meeting last month was our annual Burkes Garden trip.

HAPPENINGS: Bob Riggs, Tom Hunter, Allen Boynton and Dave Worley birded Florida from Feb. 22 until March 3rd. Around the Kissimmee Area they got Sandhill Cranes, Whooping Cranes, Snail and Swallow-tailed Kites. In West Palm Beach they got Limpkin and another Snail Kite. Miami payed off with Spot-breasted Oriole, Monk Parakeet and several other non-countable parakeets. The keys gave us numerous lifers and we did even better on the Dry Tortugas. On Ft. Jefferson we got Sooty Tern, Brown Noddy, Brown Booby, Masked Booby and Tom & Bob got a Black Noddy. Just as we got back on the mainland, just on the edge of the Everglades, we got a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher. In the Everglades Park we got Short-tailed Hawk-5, Swallow-tailed Kite-9, Common Nighthawk-3 and lots of other great birds. We hit Sanibel Island and Fort Meyers area, picking up 2 Burrowing Owls in Ft. Meyers. Sarasota area gave us Florida Scrub Jay and Green Parakeet. We finished out on Merritt Island. We had a total species count of 165. Tom got 20 lifers, Allen 18, Dave 13 and Bob 11. We had a fabulous trip.

Saturday, March 16th, Roger & Lynda Mayhorn saw their first Chipping Sparrow of the season.

Sunday, March 17th, Ed & Michelle Talbott birded around Breaks Interstate Park, They had 42 Ring-billed Gulls, over 50 Robins, 9 Wood Ducks, 3 Rusty blackbirds, 2 Eastern Bluebirds, 22 Lesser Scaup, 14 Ring-necked Ducks, 3 Hooded Mergansers, 17 Wild Turkey, 1 Red-shouldered and 2 Red-tailed Hawks and lots of other great birds.

PRESIDENTS` CORNER: My favorite sign of spring is the Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*). Driving along Rt. 19 in Rosedale the other day I counted six males perched along the highway between Stuarts` pond and the traffic light. The males were displaying their red wing patches, trying to claim a territory. Each male will try and maintain his own small space in the world. But when it comes to Red-winged Blackbirds it could include more than one breeding female, depending on availability. The brighter the patch the more relations a male could have with the females. It takes a lot of energy to defend his territory and females from other males, so life is very hard for dominant males. The males are very aggressive when defending their territory, driving other birds away with a fierce pecking and harassing that is really quite a sight. When I hear the conk-a-ree of the Red-winged Blackbird around the marshy areas I know that spring is here and the other migrants are not far behind.

Hey, get out there and enjoy the action. See you in the field.

Bob Riggs

MEETING: Our meeting is March 26th at 7:30 at the usual place. Dave Worley will do a demonstration of the CD, Birds of North America and Birders Diary.

HAPPENINGS: March 15th, Bob Riggs and Allen Boynton birded Russell County. They found lots of Red-shouldered Hawks on the north side of the county and a single Tree swallow in the Carbo area.

Plenty of Wood Ducks have been seen moving thru the area. Seven were seen on a small pond in Glade Hollow.

Keep you eyes peeled for shorebirds near Elk Garden, the Mud hole is ready for them.