



THE DRUMMER

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RUSSELL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

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

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MEETING: Bob Riggs and Dave Worley did the February meeting. Dave showed a video and Bob showed slides from their Va. Beach area trip. They talked about the various birding spots in that area and what birds could be found.

Happenings: On Feb. 20th, Tom & Laverne Hunter, Bob & Jean Montgomery, Dave & Diana Worley and Bob & Diana Riggs birded in Burkes Garden in Tazewell County. They were entertained by one Bald Eagle, 4 Golden Eagles, 3 Rough-legged Hawks, 8 Red-tailed Hawks and 5 American Kestrels. The weather was good, even though snow was on the ground. A grand time was had by all.

March 6, a group consisting of Bob & Jean Montgomery, Janice & Ricky Martin, James & Sandy Chafin, Dave & Diana Worley and Bob Riggs went to a strip mine area looking for the Short-eared Owl. We did not see the owl, but did find Horned Larks, a Northern Harrier and a Snipe. We then went to Carbo looking for Woodcock.

Tom Hunter was honored at the last meeting. He was awarded Birder of the Year for 1998. His participation in trips and meetings, and his finding the Barnacle Goose and Ross` Geese put him at the top of the club. Congratulations to Tom on a great year.

Lots of ducks are passing through the local ponds, Elk Garden has had Northern Shovelors, Buffleheads, Woodducks, Black ducks, Green-winged Teal and Canada Geese.

Lots of Red-tailed Hawks and Kestrels passing by, even a Merlin and a Golden Eagle have been seen.

Bob & Jean Montgomery have found a fun little pond in Green Valley, I bet they would show you where if you just ask.

I hope all of you had a chance to watch your feeders during the recent snow storm. Dave & Diana Worley had over 100 birds Monday morning. We threw seed out the window to keep them feeding. We had 14 species. It was the first time Dave had seen a Junco hang upside down and eat suet. The highlight was two Fox Sparrows.

Presidents Corner: Have you been driving down the road and seen those red coverts of the Red-winged Blackbird flashing in the sun? I first noticed them one morning last week while I was driving to Castlewood. It didn't matter that the temperature was below freezing, those red coverts were proclaiming territory for females that may be interested.

The Song Sparrows are singing for the maids to put on the tea kettles, some of them need more practice, but still they sing from their exposed perches, trying to entice the females. It is hard to believe that spring is so near, but the birds are doing the mating game so it must be spring. I guess time just flies when you are having fun. We had a really great winter with the various trips and Christmas Bird Counts going on in the region. Now it is time to enjoy the neo-tropic migrants as they head north. Some will stop to nest as others stop for a brief rest before pushing on to northern areas to start raising their young.

We need to make an effort to preserve the habitats of these birds so we can continue to enjoy them in the years to come. **Bob Riggs**

Field Trip: 20 March to Elk Garden and Kents Ridge. We will be looking for shorebirds, field species and raptors. Bob Riggs and Dave Worley found an Upland Sandpiper one spring at Elk Garden. Meet at 8am at the Lebanon community room or join us at Elk Garden.

Meeting: The next meeting is March 23, where Tom Hunter will be showing a film about shorebirds.

Plan to attend the VSO annual meeting at Tyson Corner. See Bob Riggs for details and get ready for an exciting week-end of birding.

Please call in to Dave about your trips and sightings, I need them for the newsletter. Would it not be nice to see your name in the newsletter?

To report your findings for the newsletter, call Dave Worley at 880-1373 days or 880-1374 evenings.

Hope to see more of you at the next meeting. We always have a good time, but your presence would make it better.