

Corn Valley
January 17, 2009

The Russell County Bird Club and Buchanan County Bird Club participated in a field trip to Corn Valley and other parts of Russell County on Saturday, January 17, 2009. With temperatures near 0° F in the early morning, birders took their time and socialized over coffee at Hardees for an extended period. The trip started by driving up Big Cedar Creek, through the 40 Foot area and to the Mudhole. Of course, the ground and all still waters were frozen solid limiting the possibilities of waterfowl.

From there, we went to Mountain Road and birded through the Dry Branch area. This segment produced the highlight of the trip when birder Peggy Herbert spotted a red morph Eastern Screech-Owl in a hole in a locust tree.



Photo by Tom Hunter

We continued the trip around to Stuart's Pond and then on to Corn Valley. In spite of the many sharp eyes turned skyward, no Golden Eagles were spotted.



Photo by Diana Worley

After Corn Valley, the group went to the nearby home of Jane and Jerry Thornhill for a lunch of chicken and sausage gumbo and barbeque pork with several side dishes. Dessert was a birthday cake from a surprise birthday party for David Worley (number 65).



Photo by Linda Mayhorn



Photo by Linda Mayhorn



Photo by Linda Mayhorn

Citing other obligations, several birders left following lunch. They missed a second highlight for the day. “Hawk-eyed” birders, Janice Martin and Diana Worley, spotted a Red-shouldered Hawk perched in a snag a short distance across the road from the Thornhill’s. A scope provided fantastic views of the bird “eyeball to eyeball.” The bird flew a short distance and landed again this time providing great looks at its back.

Another trip up Corn Valley failed to produce Golden Eagles but did provide some great Common Raven aerobatics with more than twenty birds participating.

Finally, three couples braved the darkening skies for a quick run through the Clifton Farm area still trying to find eagles. We failed again, but we were treated to wonderful views of a beautifully colored American Kestrel perched on a snag eating its catch.

Trip participants: Dave Worley, Diana Worley, Fred Martin, Janice Martin, Ed Talbott II, Mary Talbott, Roger Mayhorn, Linda Mayhorn, Don Carrier, Bob Montgomery, Peggy Herbert, Jerry Thornhill, Jane Thornhill, Laverne Hunter, Tom Hunter

Species List

Great Blue Heron	Mallard
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Cooper's Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk	Red-tailed Hawk
American Kestrel	Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove	Eastern Screech-Owl
Belted Kingfisher	Red-bellied Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Downy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker	Loggerhead Shrike
Blue Jay	American Crow
Common Raven	Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse	Carolina Wren
White-breasted Nuthatch	Brown Creeper
Eastern Bluebird	Golden-crowned Kinglet
American Robin	Northern Mockingbird
European Starling	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Eastern Towhee	White-throated Sparrow
Song Sparrow	White-crowned Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco	Northern Cardinal
Purple Finch	House Finch
American Goldfinch	Pine Siskin
Eastern Meadowlark	House Sparrow
Total: 42 species	