



The SISKIN

Newsletter of the Northern Virginia Bird Club

Vol. 63, No. 1

February 2018

www.nvabc.org

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To see the newsletter photographs in color, go to www.nvabc.org and click on *The Siskin* icon

A reminder to pay your 2018 dues

If not paid, this will be the last issue you receive. *The Siskin* mailing label shows the year through which your dues are current or "CO" for complimentary. **Thanks!**

Chincoteague Spring Weekend Trip

The Chincoteague Spring Weekend club trip is scheduled for May 18-20 (Friday-Sunday). The trip is limited to 28 people and usually fills up very fast. NVBC membership is required. Registration will open on March 28, 2018. To sign up for this trip, email Elton Morel at eltonlmorel@verizon.net on that date. When signing up, please indicate whether you are interested in the boat trip (fee) on Sunday morning and a Saturday evening group dinner. If the trip is full, your name can be put on a waiting list.

continued on p. 2

NVBC GENERAL MEETING—WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 8 PM

Checking in with Virginia's Breeding Birds Thirty Years Later

Speaker: Dr. Ashley Peele

In the mid- to late-1980s, Virginia conducted its first breeding bird atlas (BBA) project to assess the status and distribution of breeding bird populations. This year (2018), we will dive into the third year of the second Virginia BBA project. Since the inception of the second BBA project, the Virginia birding community has contributed thousands of birding hours. The resulting data has already provided a revealing look into how breeding bird populations have changed over the last thirty years. State Atlas Coordinator, Dr. Ashley Peele, will highlight some of these changes, share interesting species and volunteer highlights, and discuss important needs for the remaining three years of this project. Join us to learn more about this exciting conservation project and how you can get involved.



Acadian Flycatcher at nest photographed by Bob Schamerhorn

Dr. Peele is an avian ecologist, who became interested in studying wildlife biology after a childhood spent running around the biodiverse lakes and swamps of Florida. Her mentor at Ohio Wesleyan University introduced her to the world of field ornithology and she learned to mist-net, band, and sample the plumage of wild birds. This experience set her on a lifelong path of study and research on avian ecology and conservation. In 2015, she completed her doctorate in avian ecology, after spending five years studying population dynamics of Neotropical

migratory songbirds in Jamaica. She currently is State Director of the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas Project and a research associate at Virginia Tech's Conservation Management Institute.

Early bird refreshments start at 7:30 pm. Any contributions of food or beverage will be most gratefully received. There will be a drawing for door prizes. Northern Virginia Bird Club pins will be available for members who would like to buy them (\$5 each).

MEETING PLACE: St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Lane, Arlington, 22207. Directions are on page 5.

Presidential Peenting

I am writing this during the holiday season and I thought this would be a nice opportunity to thank everyone who makes the Northern Virginia Bird Club a fun and educational organization to be a part of. Field trips are the heart of what we do and Elton Morel does an extraordinary job in arranging field trips, including to some new places, and finding leaders for them. Jean Tatalias is our treasurer and does a professional job of keeping our finances organized and also projecting into the future. David Farner arranges our programs and does a stellar job of finding interesting speakers who might be anyone from ornithologists sharing important research to club members who have been on exciting trips. Diane Marton, our secretary, keeps comprehensive minutes and also hosts our board meetings. Ghazali Raheem is also on the board and runs the website and the youth scholarship program. Joanna Taylor, another board member, is a repository of the club's institutional knowledge. Phil Silas and Tom Nardone are new board members who have really stepped up as leaders of our field trips. Elizabeth Fenton is our membership person and also has been invaluable in

helping out with editing. Pat Gause, along with her husband Neal, does a fine job with The Siskin. Allie Guidry ably administers our Facebook page. I also want to thank the mailing crew and everyone who leads walks, writes articles and contributes photographs. Finally, I want to show my appreciation for everyone who is an NVBC member. I am constantly learning from all of you and I hope we can keep this thing going for a long time to come.

—Larry Meade



NVBC birders at Trillium Trail photographed by Neal Gause

Chincoteague Spring Trip *from p. 1*

Mid-May is an excellent time to visit the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Spring shorebird migration is in full swing with most birds in breeding plumage. Most trips tally about 100 species including such Eastern Shore specialties as Black-necked Stilts, American Oystercatchers, Piping Plovers, Whimbrels, Marbled Godwits, Little Blue Herons, Tricolored Herons, Cattle Egrets, Glossy Ibis, Least, Royal, Gull-billed and Common Terns, Black Skimmers, Clapper Rails, Seaside Sparrows, Chuck-will's-widows, Brown-headed Nuthatches and Boat-tailed Grackles.

Plans for the weekend include birding the Chincoteague NWR on Friday afternoon starting at 3:15 p.m. (optional) or on Saturday starting at 7:30 a.m. Activities on Saturday morning include birding along Beach Road, Swan Cove and Tom's Cove and a walk along the Woodland Trail looking for land bird migrants. We will also visit the Queens Sound Flats, the Chincoteague City mudflats and Mariner's Point. On Sunday morning, we will board a boat and travel along Chincoteague Inlet and Tom's Cove looking mostly for shorebirds along the mudflats. The cost of the boat trip will be about \$35 per person. The trip concludes at noon on Sunday.

We have obtained a special rate of \$89.00 per night, including tax, on twenty rooms for Friday and Saturday nights at the Best Western Chincoteague Island Hotel on Maddox Boulevard. A two-night stay is usually required. Hotel reservations must be made by April 20 to get this special group rate. Participants should make their own reservations by calling 800-553-6117 and be sure to say you are with the Northern Virginia Bird Club. Check-in time is 3 pm on Friday, May 18, and a 48-hour cancellation notice is required. Chincoteague NWR is a U.S. fee area.

—Elton Morel

Introducing New Web Site: Monticello Park

MPNature.com is a new website created by Ashley Bradford and Bill Young to provide information about the natural history of Monticello Park in Alexandria. Monticello is one of the best places in the Washington Metro Area to see migrating songbirds during the spring. The site will feature detailed species accounts of the birds and plants at the park. It will also include a virtual tour of Monticello, lists of resources in more than a dozen subject areas, natural history articles by Eric Dinerstein, and more. A unique feature will be daily bird checklists for April and May, showing which species you are likely to see on each date. The site is scheduled to go online during the first quarter of 2018, and Bill will give a brief presentation to introduce you to it at our February meeting.

Evolution's Subtle Signs in Marsh Wrens

Dr. Sarah Luttrell will talk about her work on evolution and speciation in the marsh wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) on February 25, 2 pm, Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria 22306.

The basic processes of evolution are happening in every species but they are almost impossible to observe. They are typically slow and subtle. Dr. Luttrell studies how evolution works by studying subspecies of birds. She will examine how comparing multiple traits like plumage color, size and shape, vocal behavior, and genetics in marsh wrens has revealed an exciting pattern of evolution in this bird.

This program is sponsored by the Friends of Dyke Marsh, Audubon Society of Northern Virginia, the Audubon Society of the District of Columbia, the Northern Virginia Bird Club, and the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

Cape May Fall Weekend Trip



Our 2017 truncated Cape May Fall weekend trip was attended by over 25 members. For several of us, the trip started with the 11:15 am ferry ride from Lewes to Cape May. This year's crossing was pleasant (aka not too choppy) and we saw several Parasitic Jaegers, Bonaparte's Gulls, as well as Common, Forster's and Royal Terns. As we arrived early, some of the group went for a beach walk and were delighted by a large group of Black Skimmers and Forster's Terns on the beach. A few Sanderlings were observed running around as well.

Our official first trip stop was Cape May State Park and the hawk watch platform. Migration was slow, but we did see a late Osprey and a Northern Harrier. Ducks were present, and we got nice views of American Black Ducks, Green-winged Teals, Northern Pintails and a few Pied-billed Grebes. Next up was The Meadows, a Nature Conservancy property. It was rumored that Sora and Black Rail were in the area, so we set out to find these birds. After some searching, the Sora came out of the reeds and showed itself nicely to the group. Many photos were taken of this cooperative bird.

On Saturday morning we went to Higbee Beach and the Morning Flight area. Morning Flight was a tad slow, but we still saw several good birds including Bald Eagles, Northern Gannets, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Tree Swallows, Brown Thrashers, Eastern Towhees and Swamp Sparrows. Overall, Higbee was somewhat quiet this year.

After lunch and a few logistical challenges, we stopped at 2-mile Marina and found three Ospreys and a large group of Double-crested Cormorants showing off their synchronized swimming capabilities. At Hereford Lighthouse several of the group found a Red-breasted Nuthatch, both Kinglets,

Blackpoll, Palm and Pine Warblers as well as a female Purple Finch. Our beach walk was truly excellent with many shorebirds still present. We saw plenty of Northern Gannets too. Along Stone Harbor Inlet we found a sandbar with lots of birds including Black Skimmers, Black-backed Gulls, Black-bellied Plover and Western Sandpipers. Our last stop of the day was Stone Point Harbor. This was likely our best stop. With the sun to our backs, we were able to easily scan the ocean and beach. On the beach we found several American Oystercatchers, Sanderlings and Ruddy Turnstones. The true show, however, was on the water, or just above it. Many hundreds, if not thousands, of Scoters flew by in long strings. In flight it was easy to see the difference between the species, but we only saw a few White-winged Scoters among the multitude of Black and Surf. Yet another Parasitic Jaeger was seen as well as a few Common and Red-throated Loons. Further out, the bright white Northern Gannets were easy to spot.

Our Sunday morning walk from the hotel to the pavilion on the beach was quiet and we did not add any new species to our list. With the incoming rain, most of us left early. The ferry ride back yielded more Northern Gannets, a few Black Scoters and the fifth or sixth Parasitic Jaeger of the trip. We ended up with 97 species which is a bit below our normal tally for this fall trip.

—Gerco Hoogeweg
and Larry Meade



Photographs:
Black and Surf Scoters in
flight and Sora by Seth Honig
Yellow-rumped Warbler by
Philip Mitchell
Royal Terns and Laughing
Gulls on the Beach by Larry
Meade

Upcoming Trips and Events

Compiled by Elton Morel

Note:

- Beginning birders are welcome on all trips.
- When reservations are required, please call one of the trip leaders. Phone numbers are below.
- If in doubt about a trip because of weather, please call one of the leaders.
- Check the NVBC website for updated information about trips: <http://www.nvabc.org/field-trips-this-month>.
- To receive email notices, join the NVBC eMail Exchange. For sign-up directions see back page of *The Siskin*.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																									
February																															
<p style="text-align: center;">Trip Leaders</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Larry Cartwright</td><td>703-941-3142</td></tr> <tr><td>David Farner</td><td>443-643-6141</td></tr> <tr><td>Ken Hunt</td><td>319-354-1079</td></tr> <tr><td>David Ledwith</td><td>703-933-9477</td></tr> <tr><td>Larry Meade</td><td>703-206-9030</td></tr> <tr><td>Paul Mocko</td><td>703-638-0408</td></tr> <tr><td>Elton Morel</td><td>703-553-4860</td></tr> <tr><td>Tom Nardone</td><td>703-946-7738</td></tr> <tr><td>Stacia Novy</td><td>618-960-2945</td></tr> <tr><td>Marc Ribaldo</td><td>703-680-1134</td></tr> <tr><td>Phil Silas</td><td>703-590-7286</td></tr> <tr><td>Dixie Sommers</td><td>703-969-7931</td></tr> <tr><td>Jean Tatalias</td><td>571-447-7977</td></tr> </table>		Larry Cartwright	703-941-3142	David Farner	443-643-6141	Ken Hunt	319-354-1079	David Ledwith	703-933-9477	Larry Meade	703-206-9030	Paul Mocko	703-638-0408	Elton Morel	703-553-4860	Tom Nardone	703-946-7738	Stacia Novy	618-960-2945	Marc Ribaldo	703-680-1134	Phil Silas	703-590-7286	Dixie Sommers	703-969-7931	Jean Tatalias	571-447-7977	<p>7 8:30 AM Long Branch Tom Nardone</p>			<p>10 8 AM Aquia Landing Beach Park Elton Morel David Ledwith</p>
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		<p>21 8:30 AM Dyke Marsh Tom Nardone NVBC Meeting 8 PM</p>				<p>24 8 AM Riverbend - Visitor Center Larry Meade Paul Mocko</p>																									
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		<p>28 8:30 AM Huntley Meadows Tom Nardone Dixie Sommers</p>				<p>3 8 AM Leesylvania SP Marc Ribaldo Ken Hunt</p>																									
<p>4 5:00 PM Woodcock Display at Dusk - Huntley Meadows Hike/Bike Trail Larry Cartwright</p>			<p>7 8:30 AM Long Branch David Farner</p>		<p>10 8 AM Occoquan Bay NWR Marc Ribaldo Phil Silas</p>																										
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 1			4 8:30 AM Long Branch Larry Cartwright			7 7:30 AM Silver Lake SP Larry Meade
Bird Walks at Local Parks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dyke Marsh, Sundays, 8 am See directions. Visit the Friends of Dyke Marsh web site, www.fodm.org • Eakin Park, Mondays, 7:30 am Meet at Prosperity Ave parking lot. Leader: Carolyn Williams • Great Falls National Park, Sundays, 8 am Meet in front of snack/concession stand at the Park Visitor Center • Huntley Meadows Park, Mondays, 7 am (Mar-Oct) 8 am (Nov-Feb) Meet in parking lot. Leader: Harry Glasgow 			11 8:30 AM Occoquan Bay NWR Marc Ribaud			14 7:30 AM Conway Robinson State Forest Elton Morel David Ledwith
			18 8:30 AM Cub Run Stream Valley Park Phil Silas NVBC Meeting 8 PM		21 7:30 AM Huntley Meadows Hike/Bike Trail Stacia Novy Larry Cartwright	
			25 8:30 AM Bles Park Jean Tatalias		28 7:30 AM Leesylvania SP Marc Ribaud	
			May			2 8:30 AM Long Branch Tom Nardone

DIRECTIONS

NVBC Meeting (2/21, 4/18) St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 4000 Lorcom Ln, Arlington 22207, at the intersection of Lorcom Ln and Military Rd. From the intersection of Spout Run Pkwy and Lorcom Ln, go about a half mile on Lorcom to the second traffic light. Turn left onto Military and enter the first driveway on the right. There is some parking near the Church's back entrance and a bigger lot up the driveway. There is on-street parking. Enter at the back door facing Military Rd which leads to the Undercroft where the meeting is held.

Aquia Landing Beach Park (2/10, 3/17) 2846 Brooke Rd, Stafford 22554 From southbound I-95 towards Stafford, take exit 140 to Stafford, then left (east) on Courthouse Rd (Rt 630), go 3.5 mi. and turn right on Andrew Chapel Rd (Rt 629), go 0.9 mi. and under the railroad bridge to a slight left onto Brooke Rd (Rt 608), go 4.4 mi. to the park entrance, continue past park entrance gate to the parking lot at the end of the road. Meet in the parking lot.

Bles Park (4/25) 44830 Riverside Pkwy., Ashburn 20147 Take Rt 7 west to Loudoun County Pkwy. Turn right onto Loudoun County Pkwy and proceed 0.2 mi. Turn right onto George Washington Blvd and go 0.8 mi. to Riverside Pkwy. Turn left and proceed 1.1 mi. to park entrance. Meet at parking lot.

Burke Lake Park (2/14, 3/21) 7315 Ox Rd, Fairfax Station 22039 From I-495, take exit 54 west (Braddock Rd). Stay in right lane of exit if you are coming from the north. On Braddock Rd, go 1.5 mi. and turn left onto Burke Lake Rd. Go 4.7 mi. and turn left onto Rt 123 (Ox Rd). Turn left at second traffic light (big park signs), and turn left immediately after the entrance booth. Park in the first lot on the right (by the mini-golf course).

Conway Robinson State Forest (4/14) 3622 Old Post Rd, Fairfax 22031 From I-495, take I-66 west 27.6 mi. to exit 43B, US-29 North in Gainesville. Continue on US-29 for .4 mi, turn left into access road to parking area. There is a small parking area adjacent Route 29-S which can accommodate approximately 10 cars. Additional parking is permitted along the entrance/exit road unless it restricts through traffic.

Cub Run Stream Valley Park (4/18) Between 15075 and 15077 Stillfield Pl, Centreville 20120 Take 1-66 west to exit 52, (Rte 29 to Centreville), right onto Rt 29. Drive 1.25 mi. and turn right on Pleasant Valley Rd. Proceed north on Pleasant Valley for about 0.75 mi. and turn right on Stillfield Pl. Proceed about 0.7 mi. to meeting place on right.

Dyke Marsh (2/21, 3/14) 6401 George Washington Memorial Pkwy, Alexandria 22307 (Belle Haven Park and Marina). From Alexandria, take George Washington Pkwy south. Cross I-495, continue 1.2 mi. to Belle Haven Park entrance on the left. Meet at south parking lot.

Huntley Meadows Hike and Bike Trail (3/4, 4/21) From I-495, take Rt 1 south 0.5 mi to Rt 633 (S. King Hwy). Turn right (west); go 2.5 miles to park entrance and lot on left (just before Telegraph Rd).

Huntley Meadows Park (2/28, 3/24) 3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria 22306 From I-495, take Rt 1 south 3 mi. to Lockheed Blvd. Turn right on Lockheed and go 0.5 mi. to Harrison Ln to park entrance on left. Meet in parking lot.

Youth Birding Scholarship Opportunity
Deadline: February 1, 2018

Please help spread the word about the Val Kitchens Memorial Young Birder Scholarship for 2018. The Club is seeking applicants from 13 to 18 years of age for a grant of up to \$500 to attend a birding activity. See all the information for applying on the website. For more information, contact David Farner at 443-643-6141 or Ghazali Raheem at 703-563-3810 or go to <http://www.nvabc.org/youth-birding-scholarship-opportunity>.

Photographs for the Club Image Gallery

We are working on improving the club's image galleries, so here is a chance for you to display your bird photographs. We invite all photographers—members and nonmembers—to send us recent photographs of birds taken in Virginia over the last two or three years. For guidelines click on the Birds by Type link.

—**Ghazali Raheem**



Juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk in Maryland photographed by Larry Meade

Directions.

Leesylvania State Park (3/3, 4/28) 2001 Daniel K Ludwig Dr, Woodbridge 22191 From I-495, take I-95 south about 14 mi. to exit 156 (Dale City/Rippon Landing/Rt 784). Following the posted highway signs for Leesylvania State Park, exit east on Rt 784. Proceed eastward 1.1 mi. to Rt 1. Turn right (south) on Rt 1 and go 0.9 mi. to Neabsco Rd. Immediately past the Wawa service station, turn left (east) on Neabsco Rd and proceed 2 mi. to park entrance on right. After passing through the park entrance gate, go 2.2 mi. to end of paved road and park in "Picnic Area" parking lot, immediately before turn-around circle at fishing pier. State fee area.

Leopold's Preserve (3/31) 16283 Thoroughfare Rd, Haymarket 20169 From I-66 west, take exit 40 to Rt 15 toward Haymarket/Leesburg. Turn left onto Rt 15 south. Turn right onto Rt 55 and go 1.7 mi. to Thoroughfare Rd. Turn left onto Thoroughfare and go 0.3 mi. There are parking lots on both sides of the road. Meet in the right hand (west) parking lot. The left hand (east) parking lot can be used for overflow parking.

Long Branch Nature Area (2/7, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2) 625 S Carlin Springs Rd, Arlington 22204 Take Rt 50, east from Fairfax or west from Rosslyn to Carlin Springs exit. Go south on Carlin Springs 0.5 mi. to Nature Center on left, just south of N. Va Community Hospital on left. Meet at Nature Center parking lot.

Mason Neck State Park (2/17) 7301 High Point Rd, Lorton 22079 From I-495, take I-95 south 7 mi. to Lorton exit. Left on Rt 642 to Rt 1. Right on

Rt 1 to Rt 242 (Gunston Rd). Left on Rt 242, go 4 mi. to Mason Neck Management Area. Turn right, follow paved road to end at Visitor Center. State fee area.

Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge (3/10, 4/11) 13950 Dawson Beach Rd, Woodbridge 22192 From I-495, take I-95 south 9 mi. to (left) exit 161 (Woodbridge). Go south on Rt 1 about 2 mi. to left turn onto Dawson Beach Rd. Continue on Dawson Beach 0.7 mi. to entrance gate. Meet in parking lot. US fee area.

Riverbend Park (Visitor Center) (2/24) 8700 Potomac Hills St, Great Falls 22066 From I-495, take Rt 193 west 5 mi. to Rt 603 (Riverbend Rd). Turn right onto Rt 603, go 2 mi. to Jeffery Rd. Turn right onto Jeffery and go 0.8 mi. to main park entrance sign on right. Turn right and continue 0.5 mi to Visitor Center parking lot. Meet in front of Visitor Center.

Royal Lake - Lakeside Park (3/28) 5216 Pommeroy Dr, Fairfax 22032 From I-495, take exit to VA-620 (Braddock Rd) and continue on Braddock Rd for 2.36 mi. Turn left onto Rt 651, Guinea Rd continue .64 mi. and stay straight at intersection onto Commonwealth Blvd (do not turn left to follow Guinea Rd) for .4 mi. Turn left on Pommeroy Dr and then turn right at the intersection with Bronte Dr to the entrance leading to the parking lot.

Silver Lake Park (4/7) 16198 Silver Lake Rd, Haymarket 20169 From I-495, take I-66 west 24 miles to exit 40 (Rt 15). Turn south onto Rt 15 (toward Haymarket) and go 0.3 miles to Rt 55. Turn right onto Rt 55 and go

0.9 miles to Antioch Rd. Turn right onto Antioch and go 1.3 miles to Silver Lake Rd. Turn right and proceed to park entrance and continue to parking lot next to the lake. Meet in parking lot.

Trillium Trail - G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area (5/5) (Fauquier Co) From I-495, take I-66 west 51 mi. to Linden exit (Rt 79). Go left (south) from exit ramp on Rt 79 approx. 1000 ft. to Rt 55. Turn left (east) onto Rt 55; go 1.2 mi. to Rt 638 (Freezeland Rd). Turn left (north) onto Rt 638. Follow Rt 638, as it bears right, 5.3 mi. to Trillium Trail Parking Area on right—look for sign on kiosk. (Parking Area is just before radio towers.) **Note:** participants must have **access permit** issued by VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, www.dgif.virginia.gov, 1-866-721-6911.



10% Birder Discount to NVBC members at Birdwatchers Seed and Supply Company.

Mention you are in the club at checkout.
Address: 396 Maple Avenue East
(corner of Beulah Rd) in Vienna
703-242-4565

My Grand Canyon Adventure



I have always wanted to visit the Grand Canyon and to see a California Condor. I was able to check both of these items off of my bucket list last June when I participated in a “Canyons and Condors” trip with the birding tour company, Field Guides. The tour was ably led by John Coons and included many birding hotspots in Northern Arizona in addition to the Grand Canyon.

We were based in Flagstaff and we traveled around in a large van to look for birds. The first place we went was the Kachina Wetlands which had some nice waterfowl and rails. It seems like rails in the west are not as secretive as the ones we are used to here in the east. I was finally able to photograph a Virginia Rail for my photo list. You might say it was a photo nemesis bird for me up until then.

The next day we drove around to different locations to find several excellent birds. A highlight for me was a lifer Lewis’s Woodpecker flying in and out of a nesting hole. This is one of the most colorful and charismatic woodpeckers in North America. We also saw many other birds that are only found in the west such as Clark’s Nutcracker, Williamson’s Sapsucker and Red-faced Warbler at the Hart Prairie and a Three-toed Woodpecker and Western Tanager at Oak Creek Canyon. That evening we were treated to a wonderful dinner on the deck at John’s house where we saw a Pinyon Jay come in for a drink. It was another life bird for me.

The next morning we headed out for the Grand Canyon. The view of this natural wonder definitely lived up to the hype. We looked in vain for a California Condor in the canyon, but we did manage to spot a Zone-tailed Hawk. We did not give up on the condors, however, since we had a backup plan. After several stops for more views of the Grand Canyon, lunch, and some roadside birding we made our way to the Navajo Bridge. We were not

disappointed as we found seven California Condors perched on a bridge not far from where we were standing. They had full crops, so they clearly were doing well in finding food to eat. We also were alerted to a condor nest inside a small cave. We got excellent scope views of an adult and a chick on a nest. On the way back we found Burrowing Owls and watched a Pronghorn come in close to us to get a drink of water.

The next day we birded other spots in the area including the Page Springs Fish Hatchery. Some highlights included a Common Black Hawk on its nest and various western woodpeckers, flycatchers and hummingbirds. I also enjoyed visiting Sedona with its interesting rock formations and mellow atmosphere. One formation is called Snoopy Rock because it looks just like Snoopy lying on his doghouse.

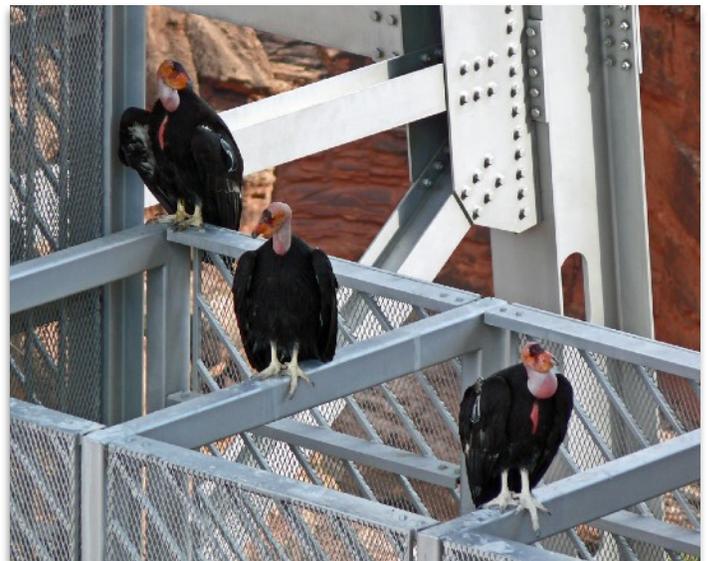
We visited the desert the next day which had different birds than we had seen previously. Gray Flycatcher, Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Juniper Titmouse were nice additions to our trip list. Later in

the day we headed back to Flagstaff and went to Mormon Lake in search of a mega-rarity Common Crane. After some searching, we found the bird far away, but were able to identify it through a scope. We finished our birding at Sawmill Park in Flagstaff where we saw a Lazuli Bunting and a rare for Arizona, Gray Catbird.

In addition to four life birds, I found several new butterflies for my life list along with some new and interesting reptiles and mammals. I also met some great fellow birders and experienced a new area of the country. If you have any questions about my trip or want to see my bird lists, please let me know. You can see my trip photos on my website at uberlarry.smugmug.com. Click on “Bird Trips”.

—Larry Meade

The Colorado River in the Grand Canyon (above) and California Condors (right) photographed by Larry Meade



NORTHERN VIRGINIA BIRD CLUB
P.O. BOX 5812
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MATERIAL**

JOIN THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA BIRD CLUB

Northern Virginia Bird Club dues for 2018 are \$10 for Individual and \$15 for Family Membership. Members receive our quarterly newsletter, *The Siskin*. Checks for dues should be sent to Northern Virginia Bird Club, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 5812, Arlington, VA 22205-0812. Or join or renew online at the club's web site.

If you miss an issue of *The Siskin* or need to report an address or ZIP Code change, please send an email message to lgmeade@gmail.com or leave a message for Elizabeth Fenton at 703-533-0851.

Please note: NVBC does not exchange, give away, or sell its membership lists.

NVBC ON THE WEB

Current information and special notices about NVBC meetings, field trips, and other activities, along with a printable membership form, are posted on the club's website, www.nvabc.org. If you have information or pictures you would like to see on the website, please email the webmaster, Ghazali Raheem, at WebmasterNVBC@gmail.com

.com.

NVBC eMail Exchange

By participating in the club's email exchange, you can get email notices of late updates to *The Siskin* and the field trip schedule. To join the exchange, send an email to lgmeade@gmail.com. Put "EXCHANGE" in the subject field and your full name in the message area. You will receive a response from nvbc-exchange@googlegroups.com. The list is for NVBC members' use only.

General Meeting Dates: February 21, April 18, September (tbd), and November (tbd), 2018.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 7, 2018, 7:30 pm, at Diane Marton's home. All club members are welcome at board meetings. For directions or to have items put on the agenda, please call or email Diane Marton at dsdm42@gmail.com.

Thanks to the mailing crew: Many thanks to the November mail out crew: Elizabeth Fenton, Catherine Kubo, Diane Marton, Dixie Sommers, Jean Tatalias and Joanna Taylor.

Deadline for next issue of *The Siskin*: The April issue will include activities through June 2018. Please send items for publication by **March 15, 2018** to the editors at siskineditor@verizon.net.

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