



The SISKIN

Newsletter of the Northern Virginia Bird Club

Vol. 63, No. 3

August 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



Pink-headed Warbler photographed by John Cahill

Donations for the Val Kitchens Memorial Educational Grant Program

There was much enthusiasm and affirmation of approval at our last club meeting, when Vice President David Farner announced that the 2018 Val Kitchens Memorial Educational Grant had been awarded to the Community Cloud Forest Conservation in Guatemala to support their "Kids and Birds" program. As reported in the April *Siskin*, this program focuses on schools within two Important Bird Areas in the cloud forest region of the

continued on p. 2

NVBC GENERAL MEETING—WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 8 PM

Birds, Birding and Conservation in Guatemala

Speaker: Robert Cahill

Although less frequently visited by birders than other Central American countries, Guatemala is rich in diversity with over 730 species. Nearly one-third of the country is designated Important Bird Areas. Rob Cahill will introduce us to the birds of Guatemala with a special focus on regional endemic species. Rob will also share information about community-based conservation projects that both help at-risk communities and preserve and restore habitat for birds. His organization, Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC), believes that holistic human and community development through education and capacity-building is the key to conservation and development in Guatemala's central highlands. CCFC instructs students in grades one through nine in their "Kids and Birds" environmental education program.

Rob Cahill is a founding director of Community Cloud Forest Conservation. Rob and his wife Tara went to Guatemala in 2001 and have specialized in environmental education and agroecology in the Q'eqchi' Maya context. Rob and his son John Cahill are the eBird editors for the country of Guatemala. The Cahills have led Virginia Society of Ornithology birding trips in Guatemala for the last 3 years.

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.

Guatemalan kids birding photographed by Bob Keener



Presidential Peentings

Members of the Northern Virginia Bird Club have enjoyed many memorable field trips over the years. Field trips are really at the heart of what we do. We do local trips to places like Huntley Meadows, Long Branch Nature Center, Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge and many others. The club also runs weekend trips to Chincoteague, Highland County, and Cape May. For the past few years we have also organized what we call "X-trips" which is short for "extreme trips." These are one day trips where we go to a location a bit more outside our regular range and bird for most of the day. As of now, our X-trips are to the Northern Neck, Bombay Hook, and Shenandoah National Park. The Northern Neck trip is held in the winter if it's not weathered out. The main focus is waterfowl and we always find a nice variety of ducks on this trip. Bombay Hook is in August and is all about shorebirds migrating through. In June we go to the Limberlost Trail in Shenandoah National Park in search of warblers and other higher altitude breeders. One

highlight of X-trips is always the lunch destination. For example, it's pretty much a requirement that we eat at Sambo's Tavern in Leipsic for seafood after we bird Bombay Hook. I hope you can join us on one of these trips. Also, if you have any suggestions for future X-trips, we will gladly consider them.

—Larry Meade



American Avocets at Bombay Hook. Photo by Larry Meade

Donations *from p.1*

Guatemalan central highlands. Kids and Birds uses Cornell's BirdSleuth curriculum to introduce kids to conservation biology, citizen science and ecology through birds. Our grant of \$500 funds the costs for a class of sixth graders to participate in the program.

We hope to be able to continue such grants in the future to encourage the preservation or restoration of habitat and the education of young people about birds and their ecology. In light of this, the Board has decided that any donations made to the Club in fiscal year 2018-2019 will be designated for our Educational Grant and Scholarship program. Making an online donation is easy. On the Club website, under the "Join" tab, you will find a button labelled "Donate" to make a contribution via PayPal. Or you can make a contribution by check. Please note on the check if you want to specify it as a donation as opposed to dues. Send to the Club PO address.

We hope to continue to provide educational opportunities on both local and broader levels. If you know of a potential candidate for the young birder scholarship or a worthy conservation program of the Americas that should be considered

for a grant, please provide that information to David Farner.

—Jean Tatalias

New Webmaster

NVBC would like to welcome Jeremy Beck as our new webmaster. He will also be joining our board as a director.

We would like to thank Ghazali Raheem for his work as our previous webmaster. As always, we welcome new content and photos from our members to be included on our website. The webmaster's email address has changed to jghyll+nvabc@gmail.com.

Highland County Spring Weekend Trip

Eighteen members visited Highland County, Virginia the weekend of June 1-3, identifying 84 species (with 4 of those being heard only). The trip started Friday, the 1st at 3 pm, at the Highland Inn in Monterey, Virginia with a singing Orchard Oriole seen from the Inn's back parking area, and proceeded to the Bluegrass Valley area with stops at a Trout Farm and the Forks of Water Road. Highlights were a pair of Baltimore Orioles at the Forks of Water and Bobolinks, Ravens, Eastern Meadowlarks, three species

of swallows (Barn, Bank and Cliff) and a Pileated Woodpecker along the Bluegrass Valley Roads.

The next morning following breakfast the group went to Paddy's Knob where the constant rain contributed to a lack of seeing or hearing a Mourning Warbler and made views of all the birds difficult. However, a Scarlet Tanager, Black-and-White, Yellow and Chestnut-sided Warblers and American Redstarts were seen. In the afternoon we returned to Bluegrass Valley where a Red-headed Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler were among the species seen. No Golden-winged Warblers were seen or heard during our stop at the usual spot on Wilmer Mountain Road. However, on Sunday morning, the 3rd, instead of returning to the Bluegrass Valley, we drove south to the Bolar area and found a wet and preening Golden-winged Warbler on Big Valley Road that most participants saw, with several getting a scope view. Other highlights in the Bolar area were sightings of Cedar Waxwings, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Brown Thrashers at the Jackson River Bridge, and Field Sparrows and two soaring, immature, Red-Tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks along Big Valley Road.

—Marv Rubin

Spring Weekend Trip: Chincoteague



Members of the Northern Virginia Bird Club went on our annual spring trip to Chincoteague on the weekend of May 18 to 20. Despite the forecasts for rain over the weekend, the weather turned out to be better than expected, helping us collectively find 102 species over the weekend.

Friday afternoon started with high winds making for a slow start to our birding weekend. The drive around the Wildlife Loop at the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge was not very productive, but we did manage to find Cattle Egrets dressed in their apricot breeding colors, a flyover Glossy Ibis and a Least Sandpiper amongst the Semipalmated and Spotted Sandpipers. We followed that up with a drive out Beach Road to the north beach parking lot where we observed a pair of Piping Plovers hunkered down in a protective cage trying to stay out of the winds.

Our evening trip to find the Chuck-will's-widow at sunset on Friday night was very successful. We heard a couple of "Chucks" around the Wildlife Loop parking lot. We decided to walk across the entrance road in pursuit of one singing near the road. With a bit of patience and luck, we managed to see the bird fly around and briefly land on a log, giving most of us excellent views of the bird.

Saturday delivered a fine day of birding while back home Northern Virginia got hammered with thunderstorms. We started birding by walking to the boardwalk near the hotel, where we had excellent views of Clapper Rails and Nelson's Sparrows in the marsh, and a Least Sandpiper in the short grass next to the road. A very lucky flyover of a flock of Brant was a nice addition. Our trip out to Tom's Cove and the beach parking lots netted us

the usual cast of finds - Piping Plovers, Least Terns, Royal Terns, Black Skimmers and hundreds each of Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlins, and Semipalmated Plovers. Our best finds were a single Western Sandpiper, Whimbrels, a flock of Red Knots, and a couple of Marbled Godwits.

In the afternoon, we started at the Chincoteague Island Nature Trail and found a good selection of migrants - Blackpoll, Black-throated Green and Magnolia Warblers plus a female Scarlet Tanager. Queen Sound Flats produced the usual breeding colonies of Black-necked Stilts and Common Terns. A drive down Main Street netted us a flock of White Ibis in a neighborhood back yard.

Sunday morning brought us even better weather for our boat trip out on Chincoteague Inlet provided to us by Daisey's Island Cruises. Our route was across the channel opposite Mariner's Point, then out to the far end of the point off Tom's Cove, back to Assateague Point, up into Black Point Landing and finally back to Mariner's Point. Highlights of the trip were a dozen Red Knots -- several of which were in breeding plumage, another flock of White Ibis, and up-close looks at Whimbrels feeding on the exposed mud flats.

--Elton Morel

NVBC birders (above) photographed by Toby Hardwick

Marc Ribauda photographed the Clapper Rail and Nelson's Sparrow



Plants support tremendous biodiversity and complex food webs, including food for insect-eating birds and other wildlife. On September 12, entomologist Dr. Desiree Narango will share her research comparing how well native and nonnative trees provide food for the Carolina

How Plants Support Wildlife September 12

Chickadee, other insectivorous birds and other wildlife.

This free, public program is sponsored by the Friends of Dyke

Marsh, the Northern Virginia Bird Club, Plant NoVa Natives and the Virginia Native Plant Society, Potowmack Chapter. It will be at 7:30 pm, Huntley Meadows Park Visitor Center, 3701 Lockheed Boulevard, Alexandria, VA 22306.

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: Breaking News or Field Trips.
- 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 |
|--|--------|---------|--|----------|---|--|
| <u>August</u> | | | | | | 11 8 AM Bombay Hook X-Trip Members only/ Registration Required Larry Meade Gerco Hoogeweg |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Trip Leaders Larry Cartwright 703-941-3142 David Farner 443-643-6141 Gerco Hoogeweg 540-822-5857 Toby Hardwick 703-201-1517 Ken Hunt 319-354-1079 David Ledwith 703-933-9477 Larry Meade 703-206-9030 Elton Morel 703-907-9951 Tom Nardone 703-946-7738 Stacia Novy 618-960-2945 Rick Purvis 703-300-7619 Marc Ribauda 703-498-8962 Phil Silas 703-590-7286 Dixie Sommers 703-969-7931 Jean Tatalias 571-447-7977 Joanna Taylor 703-243-5989 </div> | | | | | | 18 |
| | | | | | | 25 7:30 AM Huntley Meadows Larry Meade |
| | | | | | | <u>September</u> |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 7:30 AM Huntley Meadows - Hike & Bike Trail Stacia Novy Larry Meade |
| | | | | | | 8 7:30 AM Leesylvania SP Marc Ribauda Ken Hunt |
| 2 7 PM Swift/Nighthawk Watch Joanna Taylor Stacia Novy <u>Call leader for meeting</u> <u>place and directions</u> | | | 5 8:30 AM Long Branch Tom Nardone | | | |
| | | | 12 8:30 AM Dyke Marsh Tom Nardone | | 15-17 VSO Chincoteague Weekend | 15 7:30 AM Conway Robinson State Forest Elton Morel Toby Hardwick |
| | | | 19 8:30 AM Fort CF Smith David Farner NVBC Meeting 8 PM | | | 22 7:30 AM Occoquan Bay NWR Marc Ribauda Phil Silas |
| | | | 26 8:30 AM Huntley Meadows - Hike & Bike Trail Dixie Sommers Larry Cartwright | | | 29 7:30 AM Silver Lake SP Toby Hardwick Phil Silas |

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------|---------|---|------------------------|--------|--|
| <u>October</u> | | | 3 8:30 AM Long Branch Dixie Sommers | | | 6 8 AM Aquia Landing Park Elton Morel David Ledwith |
| 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 the snack bar/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 | | | 10 8:30 AM Bles Park Rick Purvis Jean Tatalias | | | 13 8 AM Leopold's Preserve Elton Morel Toby Hardwick |
| | | | 17 8:30 AM Dyke Marsh Dixie Sommers Larry Cartwright | | | 20 8 AM Sky Meadows SP Marc Ribaud Ken Hunt |
| | | | 24 8:30 AM Laurel Hill Equestrian Center Marc Ribaud Phil Silas | | | 27 8 AM Bristoe Station Battlefield Park Toby Hardwick Larry Meade |
| | | | 31 8:30 AM Meadowood Recreation Area Larry Cartwright | <u>November</u> | | 3 8 AM Occoquan Bay NWR Marc Ribaud David Ledwith |
| | | | 7 8:30 AM Long Branch Tom Nardone | | | |

DIRECTIONS

NVBC Meeting (9/19) 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 (10/6) 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 (10/10) 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.

Bombay Hook X-trip (8/11) Take Rt 50 across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Go north 34 mi. on Rt 301. Turn right at Rt 300. Go 15 mi. to Kenton, Delaware. At the traffic light, turn right on Rt 42 to Leipsic. From there go left on Rt 9 for 1.5 mi. to the entrance of the refuge. Meet at the Visitor Center parking lot.

Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park (10/27) 10708 Bristow Rd, Bristow, VA 20136. From I-95: Take Rt 234 north (exit 152B), travel 7.5 mi. and make a left onto Independent Hill Dr. Then make immediate right onto Rt 619 (Bristow Rd). Travel 7 mi. and turn left onto Iron Brigade Unit Ave. The parking lot is located on the left at the traffic circle. From I-66: Take Rt 234 south (Exit 44). Travel 4.5 miles and turn right onto Rt 28

(Nokesville Rd). Travel 1.5 mi. and turn left onto Rt 619 (Bristow Rd). Travel 0.25 mi., turn right onto Iron Brigade Unit Ave and continue to parking lot. Meet in parking lot.

Conway Robinson State Forest (9/15) 12816 Lee Hwy, Gainesville 20155 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.

Dyke Marsh (9/12, 10/17) 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.

Fort C F Smith (9/19) 2411 24th St N, Arlington 22207 From I-66 east, take exit 72 (Spout Run Pkwy). At traffic light, turn right on Lee Hwy. At successive traffic lights, turn left onto

Trip Directions *from page 5*

Spout Run Pkwy, then left onto Lorcom Ln, then right onto Fillmore St. Go one block on Fillmore, turn right onto N. 24th St (watch for speed humps), and continue to park on left. Meet in parking lot at east end of park.

Huntley Meadows Hike and Bike Trail (9/1, 9/26) 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 (8/25) 3701 Lockheed Blvd, Alexandria 22306 From I-495, take Rt 1 south 3 mi. to Lockheed Blvd. Right on Lockheed; go 0.5 mi. to Harrison Ln, park entrance on left. Meet in parking lot.

Laurel Hill Equestrian Center (10/24) Lorton From I-495, take I-95 south about 13 mi. to exit 163 (Lorton Rd). Continue 1.4 mi. west on Rt 642/ Lorton Rd, then turn left on Rt 611/ Furnace Rd then an immediate right onto Dairy Rd. Proceed to and meet in the parking lot.

Leesylvania State Park (9/8) 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 (10/13) 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.

At Occoquan Bay NWR Banding Station

Orchard Orioles: adult male, female and second year male

Photographed by Mary Scala

Long Branch Nature Area (9/5, 10/3, 11/7) 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.

Meadowood Recreation Area (10/31) 10406 Gunston Rd, Lorton, VA 22079 From I-495, take I-95 south 7 mi. to Lorton exit. Left on Rt 642. Immediately after passing under railroad tracks (0.25 mi.) turn right on Lorton Market Rd, which soon becomes Gunston Cove Rd. After crossing Rt 1, road becomes Gunston Rd. Go 1.8 miles to Meadowood on right. (BLM, Lower Potomac Station Office). Park on right next to horse barns just before field station building.

Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge (9/22, 11/3) 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.

Silver Lake Park (9/29) 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 mi. to Rt 55. Turn right onto Rt 55 and go 0.9 miles to Antioch Rd. Turn right onto Antioch and go 1.3 mi. to Silver Lake Rd. Turn right and proceed to park entrance and continue to parking lot next to the lake. Meet in parking lot.

Sky Meadows State Park (10/20) 11012 Edmonds Ln, Delaplane 20144 From I-495, take I-66 west 42 mi. to exit for Rt 17 north (Delaplane/Paris). North on Rt 17 6.5 mi. to Rt 710. Turn left into park and proceed 1 mi. to Visitor Center parking lot. State fee area.

Virginia Society of Ornithology Chincoteague Weekend (7/15-17) For information, visit www.virginiabirds.org.

Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge Bird Banding 2018

The banding program at the Occoquan Bay spring migration station was surprisingly successful despite the weather. We lost a lot of banding time due to rain and wind but managed to band 703 birds. This was our fifth best year since opening in 2001. Our average annual bird banding total is 540 birds. The number of species banded this year totaled 57 compared to the yearly average of 56 species. We added two new species to our list of birds banded: Least Flycatcher and Yellow-throated Warbler for an overall station total of 102 species.

This year we banded a record-breaking 158 Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers, after a complete dearth of this species for the past nine years. The second most common bird was the Common Yellowthroat at 130, then 79 Gray Catbirds but only 54 White-throated Sparrows, normally the most numerous. A Ruby-crowned Kinglet has the distinction of being the 9,000th bird banded at the station.

We did very well on recaptures including the absolutely amazing recapture of a male Common Yellowthroat which I banded on May 18, 2007 as a second year bird. This makes him officially 11 years and 10 months old which will probably set a new longevity record for this species! Other notable recaptures include a Red-bellied Woodpecker banded in April 2013, a Carolina Wren banded in May 2014, and a Great Crested Flycatcher banded in May 2015.

Our banding season starts the last week of March and runs till Memorial Day. We are open to visitors Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 7:00 am till 11:00 am weather permitting. We are located near the gazebo on Deephole Point Road overlooking Marumsco Creek.

—Joanna Taylor



If you have been birding for a while, you might have a nemesis bird. It's that bird which lots of your birding friends have seen, but you just can't manage to find no matter how hard you try. For me, my nemesis has been the Connecticut Warbler. These birds are large yellow warblers which can be identified by their gray hoods and prominent eye-rings. I have chased them many times over the years, sometimes missing the bird by a day and sometimes by minutes. In the East, they only migrate through for a couple of weeks in the fall, so there is only a small window of time in which you can see them. To make finding them even more challenging, Connecticut Warblers are uncommon and tend to stay out of sight as they skulk around on the ground and in bushes. It's really not surprising that this is the last bird that I have wanted to see that regularly occurs in the East. Sometimes I think that the bird does not really exist and that it's all just a conspiracy by other birders to trick me into looking for it in vain.

Often, I have felt like I am channeling Captain Ahab in my quest for a Connecticut Warbler, but instead of a great white whale, I have been pursuing a little yellow bird. "I'll chase him round Virginia, and round Maryland, and round the Boreal Forest, and round perdition's flames before I give him up." I recently realized that the only way to slay this nemesis was to seek it in its lair. The only solution was to travel to the bogs of Minnesota and seek the bird out on its breeding grounds. This would be my best opportunity to see a Connecticut Warbler and fill the gaping hole in my life list.

On the first day of my quest, my trusty guide, John Richardson, and I set out from Duluth for the Sax-Zim Bog. John is a local who has found

Nemesis



Connecticut Warbler Photo by Alan Schmierer

Connecticut Warblers many times in the bog over the years and he knows the best places to find them. I had hired him for two days. Luckily, both days turned out to have perfect weather with low humidity with temperatures in the high seventies. The plan was to listen until we found a spot where a Connecticut Warbler was singing. Then we would put on long wading boots and head out into the bog to find the bird and try to get a look at it. We first searched at Admiral Road, a historically reliable spot for the birds. Unfortunately, there was no Connecticut Warbler vocalizing when we were there. We did manage to hear our target bird singing on Wolf Avenue, another road in Sax-Zim. The problem was that this bird was not close and was singing from private land which meant that we could not enter it to look for the bird. I had at least heard the bird, but for me to count it on my list, I had to see it.

On day two we set out with a sense of purpose and cautious optimism. We went straight to Admiral Road, but there was still no sign of a Connecticut Warbler there. I was starting to resign myself to the possibility that my nemesis would continue to elude me. We decided to head back to Wolfe Road since that was the only place where we had

heard anything promising. When we got there, the bird was singing from the same area. This was good news. Even better, the warbler seemed to be closer to the road where we were positioned than it had been the day before. Maybe there was hope after all! John provided a bit of aural prompting, but the bird got quiet. We left and drove around a corner and down another road to see if we could hear the bird from a different angle. We had no luck there, so we went back to the original spot. The bird was singing again and was closer than ever!

A bit more aural enticement brought the Connecticut Warbler closer and closer. My senses felt heightened as I scanned the trees and bushes for a glimpse of the bird. Suddenly a yellow streak blasted across the road. It was indeed the warbler and it started to sing from our side of the road. True to form though, it stayed out of sight in the foliage until it flew back across the road and back into the bog. I had clearly heard the bird singing and I saw it fly across the road, so I had seen enough to count it. My thinking at this point was that it would have to be a BVD bird which is short for "Better View Desired". The Connecticut Warbler was not done though. Much to my surprise and delight, it decided to fly in and perch out in the open at eye level no more than thirty feet away from me. I clearly saw the gray hood and especially the prominent eye-ring. My nemesis was conquered! An added bonus was that I didn't even have to get my feet wet to see it. John and I shook hands and congratulated each other on a job well done. This was the defining moment of my trip and the end of a decade long quest. Now I suppose I need a new nemesis. Any suggestions?

—Larry Meade

NVBC Announcement: There will not be a club-sponsored trip to Cape May this fall



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

NORTHERN VIRGINIA BIRD CLUB
P.O. BOX 5812
ARLINGTON, VA 22205-0812

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**DATED
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 website at <http://www.nvabc.org/join/>.

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, at jghyll+nvabc@gmail.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 Date: September 19, and November 28, 2018.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 11, 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 dsgm42@gmail.com.

Thanks to the mailing crew: Many thanks to the April mail out crew: Diane Marton, Robbie Ross, Maxine Sorenson, Emily Taylor, Joanna Taylor, and Tom Taylor.

Deadline for next issue of *The Siskin*: The November issue will include activities through January

2019. Please send items for publication by **October 1, 2018** to the editors at siskineditor@verizon.net.

CLUB CONTACTS

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