



# The SISKIN

Newsletter of the Northern Virginia Bird Club

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April 2021

[www.nvabc.org](http://www.nvabc.org)

## Inside

- Calendar of NVBC field trips April 14 - June 19, 2021
- Favorite Spring Birding Spot - Monticello Park
- Birding and Photography: Applying photography skills to birding

## Osprey Killing a Crow In Alexandria, Virginia

Carol Stalun, who is a skilled and talented nature photographer, took photos of an Osprey killing a crow. This is probably the first incident, documented with photographs, of an Osprey killing a wild bird.

On Saturday, March 6, 2021, Stalun saw an Osprey along the Potomac River in Old Town Alexandria. Stalun was in an area where there is an Osprey nest from previous years on a platform on pilings in the river. She had seen a male Osprey in the same area the previous day (the first one she had seen in 2021), and she was checking to see if he was still there.

At 8:33 am, Stalun saw a male Osprey on a piling not far from the platform with the nest. At first, she thought the Osprey had a fish in his talons. When she looked more closely, she saw that the Osprey had a crow. Fish Crows were mobbing the Osprey, and Stalun assumed from the vocalizations of the other crows and the location on the river that the Osprey's victim was also a Fish Crow. After being harassed by the other crows, the Osprey flew off with the crow in his talons, did a circle, and returned to the

NVBC GENERAL MEETING—Thursday, April 15, 8 PM

## Colonial Waterbird Conservation

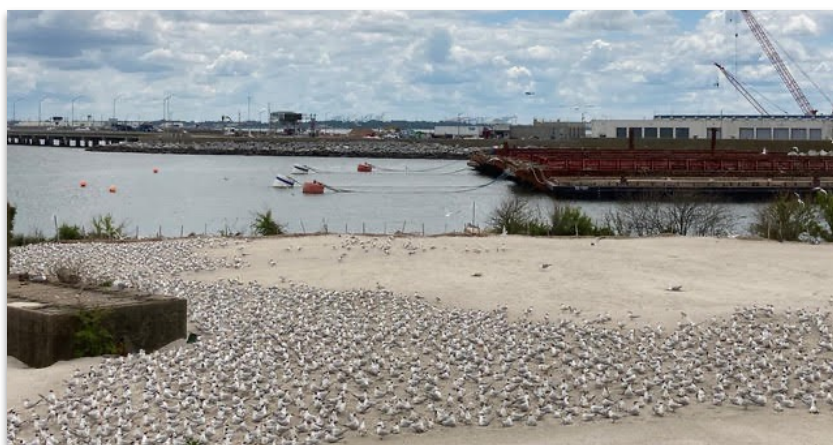
### In the Hampton Roads:

Reflections on birds, bridges, politics, journalism and environmental activism

*Speaker: Dr. Sarah Karpanty*

**D**r. Karpanty is a Professor of Fish and Wildlife Conservation at Virginia Tech. She will speak to us about the history of colonial waterbirds nesting on the South Island of the Hampton Roads Bridge tunnel, their temporary re-homing to Fort Wool/Rip-Rap Island and barges, and what the future may hold. She will also emphasize the important role that bird conservation groups played in the successful interim resolution and hopefully will play in the successful long-term resolution. She has also been studying shorebirds on the Eastern Shore barrier islands since 2005 so would be happy to talk about that as well and field any questions that arise!

The April virtual meeting will be held using Zoom starting as early as 7:30 pm with the featured speaker at 8 pm. Please register in advance by clicking on the registration link found at the upper right at the Northern Virginia Bird Club website ([nvabc.org](http://nvabc.org)). Upon registering, an email automatically will be sent with a link to click on to join the meeting. There will be ample time to take questions from the audience.



*Waterbirds in Hampton Roads, Virginia photographed by Sarah Karpanty*

## Presidential Peentings

Spring is in the air and so are migrating birds. The Northern Virginia Bird Club walks have been on hiatus since the fall, but we are returning to the field just in time for spring migration and the return of many of our local breeding birds. I truly appreciate the enthusiasm and curiosity of the birders who attend our field trips. I would also say that our bird walk leaders, some of the best birders in the area, exhibit admirable knowledge and even more importantly, extraordinary kindness and patience. I always say that our walks are a team effort and together we usually compile a decent list of the birds that we see.

While trying to see a lot of birds in a morning is rewarding in its own way, it's also worthwhile to slow

down and watch the birds as they interact with each other and as they go about their daily lives. When I was atlasing for the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2 during the past five years, I learned to focus much more on what the birds were doing and not just on what species they happened to be. I feel that this really helped me gain a deeper understanding of them. Spring is the perfect time to both see a wide variety of birds and to observe the most interesting avian behaviors such as singing, courting, nest building, feeding young and defending territories. I hope that many of you can join us in the field for the spectacle of spring.

—Larry Meade



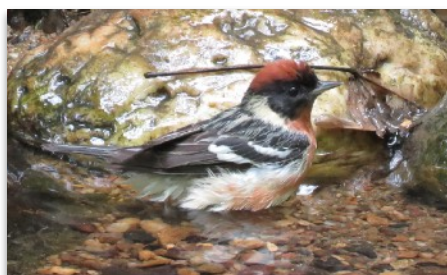
*Magnolia Warbler at Hillandale Park, Harrisonburg photographed by Larry Meade*

## Favorite Spring Birding Spot in Northern Virginia: Monticello Park

My favorite birding hotspot in northern Virginia is Monticello Park in Alexandria. It is at its best in spring migration, especially in May. This is the best place to see up close and photograph the beautiful avian jewels of North America -- the American Wood Warblers. If you're not an early bird, you'll be happy to know it is not necessary to be there at dawn. Wait until 8 or 9 a.m. when the sun is high enough over the ravine to put heat on the trees and raise the insect activity. Climb up the small trails high enough on the edges of the park to look across the park and into the trees to see the warblers as they feed high in the trees. Look for multiple species of thrushes along the fence line on the east side of the park. In the middle of the park along the western fence line, stand near the ravine that goes up beyond the fence and in between the houses; this is an excellent location to find the more skulking species of warblers. By late morning to noonish, the birds start to come down to the stream to bathe and drink. Either at the north end of the park (the Beverley Drive entrance) or at mid-park, you can find an opening in the trees where the sun now casts its beams onto the stream. This is where the birds tend to gather and take baths, giving you the ideal combination of conditions

to see and photograph the warblers in their finest spring plumage.

—Elton Morel

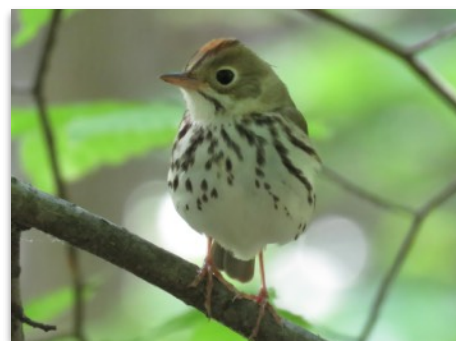


*Photographs taken at Monticello Park by Elton Morel from top left:*

*Gray-cheeked Thrush, May 11, 2019*  
*Rose-breasted Grosbeak, April 30, 2018*

*Bay-breasted Warbler, May 4, 2019*

*Below:*  
*Ovenbird, April 28, 2019*



### Occoquan Bay National Wildlife Refuge Bird Banding Station

Due to the pandemic, the bird banding site will not be open to visitors this season (late March to late May), but plan to visit in 2022.

## Osprey killing Crow *continued from p. 1*

piling. He continued to peck at the crow, who was still alive. The Osprey pecked at the crow a bit longer before flying with it to the platform with the nest, dunking the crow in the river along the way. At 8:45 a.m., the Osprey arrived at the nest and dropped the crow into it. Because the nest is deep, the crow was no longer visible after the Osprey dropped it. Stalun had not seen the Osprey initially grab the crow.

The incident is exceptionally unusual for many reasons.

- According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Birds of the World, almost every published account says that 99 percent of the diet of Ospreys consists of live fish, with a wide variety of fish species taken. Fish captured generally measure 25–35 centimeters (10–14 inches) and weigh 150–300 grams (5–10 ounces), although fish up to 2,000 grams (4.4 pounds) have been reported. According to The Sibley Guide to Birds (2nd edition), a Fish Crow weighs 280 grams (about 10 ounces), so it is in the normal weight range of fish Ospreys normally catch. A Fish Crow measures 38 centimeters (15 inches), so its body is only slightly above the size range of normal Osprey prey.
- Ospreys are one of the most widely-distributed birds in the world. They are found on all continents except Antarctica. Unlike most bird species who conceal their nests, Ospreys build huge nests, usually in open areas. The nests are easy to monitor and study. Some nests are equipped with webcams so that researchers can see exactly what prey is being captured. There is believed to be no documented evidence of an Osprey bringing bird prey to its nest.
- According to Birds of the World, there are anecdotal observations of Ospreys catching non-fish prey, including birds, snakes, voles, squirrels, muskrats, salamanders, mollusks, and even a small alligator. There is a documented report of an Osprey attacking a lure pigeon used by hawk banders at Cape May, New Jersey. A lure bird is placed in a small harness, and its flapping induces hawks or falcons to fly into a nearby net. The lures are captive birds who are not wild.
- An Osprey usually will not bother other birds unless it feels threatened. I spent many hours shooting footage of an Osprey nest at the Belle Haven Marina in Alexandria for my videos Osprey Love Nest and Osprey Love Nest 2: Feeding and Fledging. The Belle Haven nest was on a piling in the river, near a boat ramp. The Ospreys at that nest were not bothered when ducks, geese, and grebes swam directly under the nest, and they never showed any interest in attacking these birds. The Ospreys also paid no notice to House Sparrows who built a nest among the sticks of the Osprey nest. Only large birds flying above the nest caused the Ospreys to become alarmed.
- The crow was not scavenged, because it was clearly alive in some of Stalun's photos. Had it been injured and flapping around in the water, it is unlikely that the Osprey would go after it. Ospreys often see uninjured birds swimming and flapping in the water, and they

normally leave them alone. I don't know if a certain type of thrashing in the water might trigger a different response than an uninjured bird swimming. I am unaware of any reports of this happening.

- Crows do not often attack Ospreys. The corvid expert Dr. John Marzluff, from the University of Washington, sent me an article that he co-authored about the mobbing of Ospreys by American Crows. The article said that American Crows aggressively mob a variety of natural predators and learn to recognize unique threats. Because mobbing is a costly and risky behavior, Marzluff and the other authors hypothesized that crows would selectively ignore benign members of other species that look similar to predators, perhaps even learning to do so. Through a series of natural observations and experiments, they found that American Crows were more likely to mob Red-tailed Hawks and Bald Eagles than Ospreys. Mobbing intensity was higher toward a taxidermic mount of a Red-tailed Hawk than toward a mount of an Osprey, indicating that mobbing increases with the risk posed by the predator. However, the authors also found that Ospreys were more likely to be mobbed in locations where they rarely occur, suggesting that crow populations that frequently encounter Ospreys habituate to this benign raptor. For the incident that Stalun witnessed, the Osprey was in a location where it regularly occurs, and it is possible that the mobbing behavior by the Fish Crows began only after the Osprey had seized its victim.
- An Osprey expert with whom I communicated suggested that the crow might have been trying to get at a fish the Osprey had caught. This is improbable, because had the Osprey been flying with the fish, the crow would not have been able to carry it, even had the Osprey let go of it. Also, it is unlikely that an Osprey with a fish (its normal food) would drop it and grab a crow (not its normal food).
- The most likely explanation might be that a Fish Crow was harassing the Osprey and got a bit too close. Smaller birds tend to attack a larger bird in groups rather than as individuals because there is safety in numbers, and the larger bird will have more difficulty grabbing any one of them. Ospreys have very strong legs and feet, and if the one Stalun saw managed to grab the crow's back, the crow would not have had much of a chance to escape. When the Osprey took the crow to the piling, it pecked at it, perhaps to kill it and make it easier to carry. It is not known whether the Osprey ever ate the crow.

Photographs of the Osprey with the crow can be seen at Stalun's website at <https://www.caroljeanstalun.com/Osprey-Crow/>. The 60 photographs show the encounter in chronological order, starting with the Osprey holding the crow on the first piling and ending with the Osprey dropping the crow into the nest. Stalun's photographic documentation of this event is an example of how citizen science can produce an important contribution to ornithological research.

—William Young

*Photographs on p.7*



## 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/updated-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
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <b>Trip Leaders</b>             Jeremy Beck      703-517-1816            Larry Cartwright    703-941-3142            Kurt Gaskill        703-768-2172            Toby Hardwick      703-201-1517            Ken Hunt            319-354-1079            Larry Meade        571-275-2523            Tom Nardone        703-946-7738            Elton Morel         703-907-9951            Phil Silas            703-987-0817         </div>			<b>April 14</b> 8:30 AM <b>Burke Lake</b> Phil Silas	<b>15</b> <b>NVBC</b> <b>Meeting</b> <b>8 PM</b>		<b>17</b> 7:30 AM <b>Occoquan Bay NWR</b> Phil Silas Larry Cartwright
			<b>21</b> 8:30AM <b>Meadowood</b> <b>Recreation Area</b> Larry Cartwright			<b>24</b> 7:30 AM <b>Huntley Meadows</b> <b>Hike/Bike Trail</b> Ken Hunt Larry Meade
						<b>May 1</b> 7:30 AM <b>Leesylvania SP</b> Phil Silas Ken Hunt
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <b>Bird Walks at Local Parks</b>   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, second Saturdays, 8 am.</b> Meet at the parking lot. Visit the Loudoun Wildlife web site, <a href="http://www.loudounwildlife.org/events/">www.loudounwildlife.org/events/</a></li> <li>• <b>Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, fourth Saturday, 8 am</b> Meet at Education Center. <a href="http://www.loudounwildlife.org/events/">www.loudounwildlife.org/events/</a></li> <li>• <b>Dyke Marsh, Sundays, 8 am</b> Visit the Friends of Dyke Marsh web site, <a href="http://www.fodm.org">www.fodm.org</a></li> <li>• <b>Eakin Park, Mondays, 7:30 am</b> Meet at Prosperity Ave parking lot. Leader: Carolyn Williams</li> <li>• <b>Great Falls National Park, Sundays, 8 am</b> Meet in the main parking lot, closest to the Park Visitor Center.</li> <li>• <b>Huntley Meadows Park, Mondays, 7 am (Apr-Sep) 8 am (Oct-Mar)</b> Meet in parking lot. Leader: Harry Glasgow</li> <li>• <b>Merrimac Farm, last Sunday, 8 am</b> Meet at Merrimac Farm Stone House. <a href="http://www.pwconserve.org/eventsindex.html#birds">www.pwconserve.org/eventsindex.html#birds</a></li> <li>• <b>Riverbend Park, first and third Fridays, 8 am, March 6-October 2.</b> Meet at Nature Center parking lot. No charge but call Riverbend Park to register at 703-759-9018.</li> </ul> </div>			<b>28</b> 8:30 AM <b>Fort C.F. Smith</b> Tom Nardone Jeremy Beck			
			<b>5</b> 8:30 AM <b>Long Branch</b> Elton Morel			<b>8</b> 7:30 AM <b>Trillium Trail</b> Elton Morel Ken Hunt
			<b>12</b> 8:30 AM <b>Fort C. F. Smith</b> Jeremy Beck			<b>15</b> 7:30 AM <b>Aquia Landing</b> <b>Beach Park</b> Kurt Gaskill Larry Meade
			<b>19</b> 8:30 AM <b>Meadowood</b> <b>Recreation Area</b> Larry Cartwright			<b>22</b> 7:30 AM <b>Occoquan Bay NWR</b> Ken Hunt Phil Silas
				<b>27</b> 8:30 AM <b>Laurel Hill</b> <b>Equestrian</b> <b>Center</b> Phil Silas		<b>29</b> 7:30 AM <b>Conway-Robinson</b> <b>State Forest</b> Toby Hardwick Larry Meade
			<b>June 2</b> 8:30 AM <b>Long Branch</b> Tom Nardone Jeremy Beck			<b>5</b> 7:30 AM <b>Bristow Station</b> <b>Battlefield Park</b> Toby Hardwick Phil Silas

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b><u>June</u></b>						<b>12</b> <b>7:30 AM</b> <b>Leopold's Preserve</b> Toby Hardwick Phil Silas
						<b>19</b> <b>8 AM</b> <b>Bluebird Trail</b> Larry Meade

## DIRECTIONS

### **Aquia Landing Beach Park (5/15)**

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.

**Bluebird Trail (6/19)** From I-495, exit onto Chain Bridge Rd (Rt 123) toward Vienna. Continue on Maple Avenue (still Rt 123) in Vienna, turn onto Beulah Rd. Continue for about 1 mile until left turn onto Clark's Crossing Road. Continue to the end of Clark's Crossing and park at the parking lot overlooking the W&OD Trail.

**Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park (6/5)** 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 mi. 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.

**Burke Lake Park (4/14)** 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 (5/29)** 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.

**Fort C. F. Smith (4/28, 5/12)** 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 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 (4/24)** 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).

**Laurel Hill Equestrian Centre (5/27)** 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 (5/1)** 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 (6/12)** 6283 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 (5/5, 6/2)** 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.

**Meadowood Recreation Area (4/21, 5/19)** 10406 Gunston Rd, Lorton 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 (4/17, 5/22)** 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 at the parking lot.

*Continued at bottom of p. 7*

## Birding and Photography: *Applying photography skills to birding*

When I was taking a walk back in 2014, I encountered the Monday morning bird walk at Eakin Park. They invited me to join them (birders are the friendliest group!), and I've been birding ever since. For me, photography has been a tool to learn about birds, both from the standpoint of identification and behaviors. I took the adage of "shoot first and ask questions later" and started to photograph birds and then look them up in field guides and later online sources. In the process of looking through a book to ID one bird, I learned about other birds in that family. Also, on birdwalks, by taking photos of a distant or uncooperative bird I would not only be able to aid the group in identification, but would learn about field marks at the same time.

I have been photographing since grade school, mostly natural landscapes. I started out using a Pentax, (film of course), primarily black and white, which I developed and printed myself. Some of those prints still hang on my walls. Later I started using a view camera, and took my time composing the photograph, sometimes 15 minutes getting the angle and light just so. That, by the way, is one of the most important things to be mindful of when photographing: light. I personally prefer softer light, as one has on a partly cloudy day, as opposed to a cloudless day. Harsh light gives harsh shadows. One must consider the direction of the light, and if possible, move to a vantage point that has even illumination. One does not often get a choice about those factors, of course. If I can get to a vantage point without disturbing the bird, the natural surroundings or other birders, I will shift position to get a better photo.

As film became nearly obsolete, I switched to digital. When I discovered birds, I was on my second digital camera, which I am still using, a Nikon 1 V2. It was and still is an adjustment for me to be quick about taking the photograph, but I've adapted. As it happens, the V2 was a lucky choice: I'd gotten it because it was small and light. As it turns out, it's great for birding, because its small sensor

multiplies the magnification of the lens by a factor of 2.7X. With a lens that goes to 600mm, I have an effective magnification of 32X. This allows me to get visually close without being physically close, which is great for seeing and photographing sensitive species. (It's also great if a smaller bird is farther off.) It's far from the finest camera now that things have advanced in terms of resolution (14 megapixels, versus the newer cameras with 60), but a number of times I have been glad of the reach it has. I was, for example, able to photograph a Snowy Owl at Fowler's Beach during the irruption three years ago without disturbing it. It was just resting on the dunes, half asleep. (Photograph on the right column) Sadly, some other people got too close, and it flew off and hid, (giving me a flight photo, but it would have been much better if it had stayed undisturbed). I try very hard to be respectful and keep my distance, and this camera allows me to do that.

I rarely set my camera to take multiple photos per second, instead paying attention to what the bird is doing or is about to do. Frequently a bird will "telegraph" what it is about to do, such as taking flight, and I think my not just taking bursts has improved my observational skills.

On occasion I capture a moment of competition, courtship/mating or feeding that's both fun and an eyeopener. For example, there's something many have seen; competition that results in nobody getting the food item, in this case a seed neither of these two Carolina Chickadees got to eat.



*Photographs from the top: Snowy Owl at rest and in flight at Fowler's Beach*

*Red-headed Woodpecker in flight photographed at Sky Meadows State Park*

*Carolina Chickadees photographed at Great Falls Park, Virginia*

*Continued on p. 7*



**Birding and Photography** *continued from p.6*

Another revelation (impossible without the photograph and careful study of it afterwards) was when I photographed a Hooded Merganser eating an acorn at the Ashby Pond Conservancy in Fairfax City. I thought she had a small fish, but on examining the photo saw it was an acorn. I had to look it up to read that they do consume vegetable matter.

One of my favorite observations was the courtship ritual of a pair of Least Terns at Chincoteague. I watched as the male attempted to interest the

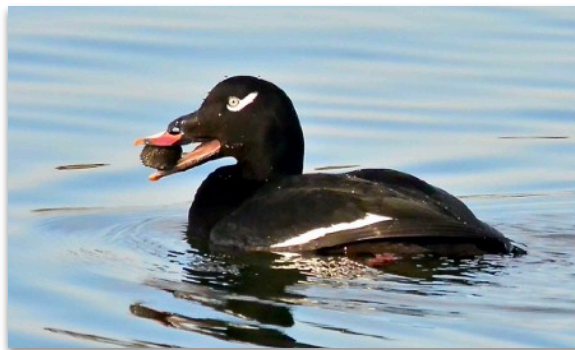
shell fragments underwater! It was swallowed very quickly; I might not have realized just what he was eating without the photo. Yes, I could have looked it up in a book or online, but to me the photograph led to knowledge, rather than someone telling me about it. To me, that discovery is one of the rewards of photographing birds, plus preserving my memories.

—Seth Honig  
*Author and Photographer*



female in a nuptial gift of a small fish. He waggled it in front of her for six minutes before she accepted it, and immediately mated with her:

Sometimes photographing will lead to knowledge about the bird; as an example, at Kiptopeke we were watching Black and White-winged Scoters. Astonishing to me was learning that Scoters swallow shellfish whole, grind up the shell in their gizzards and spit out the



*Photographs from top:  
Hooded Merganser photographed  
at Ashby Pond Conservancy,  
Fairfax*

*Least Terns photographed at  
Chincoteague*

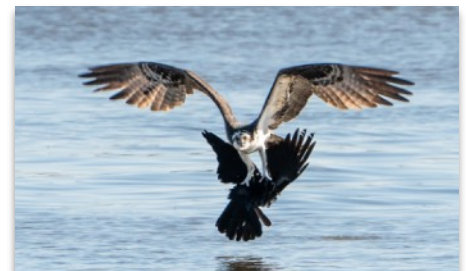
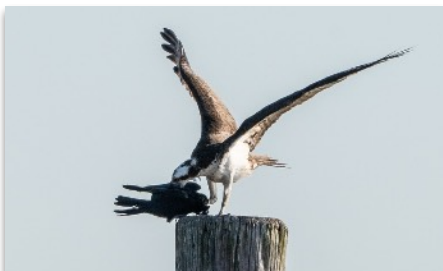
*White-winged Scoter  
photographed at Kiptopeke State  
Park, Cape Charles*

**Directions** *continued from p. 5*

**Trillium Trail-G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area (5/8)** (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:** participant must have an **access permit** issued by VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, [www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov), 1-866-721-6911.



*3 out of 60-Series Photographs of Osprey Killing Crow in Alexandria, Virginia by Carol Stalun*

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MATERIAL**

## JOIN THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA BIRD CLUB

Northern Virginia Bird Club dues for 2021 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, <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](mailto: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](http://www.nvabc.org).

If you have information or pictures you would like to see on the website,

please email the webmaster, Jeremy Beck at [jghyll+nvabc@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:nvbc-exchange@googlegroups.com). The list is for NVBC members' use only.

**General Meeting Dates:** April 15, September (tbd), and November (tbd), 2021.

**Next Board Meeting:** Thursday, June 3, 2021, 7:30 pm. To join the Zoom board meeting or to have items put on the agenda, please email [lgmeade@gmail.com](mailto:lgmeade@gmail.com).

**Thanks to the mailing crew: Many thanks to the February mail out crew:** Elizabeth Fenton and Joanna Taylor.

**Deadline for next issue of *The Siskin*:** The August issue will include

activities through October 2021. Please send items for publication by **July 1, 2021** to the editors at [nvbciskineditor@gmail.com](mailto:nvbciskineditor@gmail.com).

## CLUB CONTACTS

**President:** Larry Meade, 571-275-2523  
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**Secretary:** Diane Marton, 703-527-7360

**Treasurer:** Jean Tatalias, 703-281-6099

**Directors:** Jeremy Beck, 703-517-1816  
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**Directors Emeritus:** Len Alfredson, Charlotte Friend, Don Wiesnet

**Membership:** Elizabeth Fenton, 703-533-0851

**Webmaster, [www.nvabc.org](http://www.nvabc.org):** Jeremy Beck, [jghyll+nvabc@gmail.com](mailto:jghyll+nvabc@gmail.com)

**Editors, *The Siskin*:** Pat and Neal Gause, 703-476-3903

**Administrator, NVBC Facebook Group:** Allie Guidry (please contact through Facebook page)

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