

VSO Newsletter

A publication of The Virginia Society of Ornithology



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Fall 2009

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Visit the VSO on line at
<http://www.virginiabirds.net>

Virginia eBird:
<http://ebird.org/content/va/>

Va-Bird Listserve
<http://mailman.listserve.com/listmanager/listinfo/va-bird>

Dates to Remember

DEC 4-9, 2009
VSO WINTER TRIP

TBA
OUTER BANKS TRIP N

APRIL 23 - 25, 2010
ANNUAL MEETING

VSO Virginia Beach Field Trip December 4-6, 2009

The Cape Henry Audubon Society, with support from the Hampton Roads Bird Club, and the Back Bay Bird Club, will host the VSO annual field trip to Virginia Beach Friday, December 4 – Sunday, December 6, 2009. An outstanding weekend is planned, with a Friday afternoon field trip to the Whitehurst Tract for those who arrive early. Featured field trips include a visit to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) on Saturday and a half day at Back Bay NWR and False Cape State Park on Sunday.

HEADQUARTERS

The Howard Johnson Hotel at 1601 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451 is the host hotel. Oceanfront rooms with private balconies will be available at \$45 plus tax. All rooms have refrigerators, microwaves, and coffee makers. The hotel has an indoor pool and a free covered parking garage. Check-in time is 4:00 PM. and check-out time is 11:00 AM. (It will be necessary to check out on Sunday before leaving on the field trip). Those planning to attend should make reservations by November 20, 2009, specifying that they are with the VSO. The hotel phone number is 757 437-9100 or 800 446-4656.

DIRECTIONS

To reach the Howard Johnson Hotel, take I-64 to I-264 East to Virginia Beach. Take I-264 to Atlantic Avenue and turn right. The hotel is on the ocean side of Atlantic Avenue. Directions to all field trips will be mailed to participants who sign up.

MEALS

There are a wide variety of restaurants in the area. The hotel has the 18th Street Cafe and the Lagoon Bar and Grill. The hotel restaurant will be open at 6:00 AM. on Saturday and Sunday for breakfast.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON

As a special enticement to get an early start on the weekend, a field trip will leave the hotel at 12:15 PM for the Whitehurst Tract, one of the many good birding areas in Vir-

ginia Beach. The Whitehurst Tract is a patchwork of marshes, weedy and cultivated fields, narrow freshwater impoundments, and pine woodland. This affords the possibility of a wide variety of bird species. Several sparrows, such as LeConte's, are possible as well as numerous waterfowl and raptors. The trip will return to the hotel by 6:00 PM.

FRIDAY EVENING

Again this year an evening is planned at the Atlantic Wildfowl Heritage Museum, hosted by Tom and Karen Beatty and members of the Back Bay Bird Club. Light refreshments will be served at 6:30 and there will be an

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Save the Date

VSO 2010 Annual Meeting April 23 - 25, 2010

The 2010 annual meeting will be held in Farmville April 23 - 25. Exciting field trips are planned to New High Bridge Trail State Park, Sandy River Reservoir, and other birding hotspots in "Southside" Virginia. The banquet will feature a presentation by Ted Floyd, editor of *Birding* magazine and author of the *Smithsonian Field Guide to Birds of North America*.

Due to the relatively early date of the meeting full details and registration information will be in the winter issue of this newsletter.

President's Message: Try Local Birding

Fall 2009



The Lynchburg Bird Club has been energized this year by a local big year contest. Members compete by counting species in Lynchburg and the surrounding three counties, Amherst, Bedford, and Campbell, the areas that are covered by the local annotated checklist, *The Birds of Lynchburg, Virginia and Vicinity*.

Skyrocketing gas prices in mid-2008 inspired the idea to bird locally and thus this competition. What started as a way to save money on gas turned into marathon birding, especially during spring migration and in late winter when ducks were moving through. The trio of lakes in Amherst County, Mill Creek, Stone House, and Thrasher Lakes, are a popular local destination. I have gone there at least six times already this year though I usually go once or twice. I know other competitors drive there more often than I do. I never birded along the Staunton River, around Long Island and Brookneal, in southern Campbell County before this year. But now I have been there birding more

than a half dozen times and may go even more times before the year is over. Although gas prices are about half of what they were at this time last year, the only reason I might be saving money on gas is that we usually carpool.

We planned several 2009 club field trips to locations in the three counties to promote birding locally and the competition. Because of the competition we have found some great new places to bird and have also rediscovered some forgotten ones. Before Spring 2009, only a few people knew about the Least Flycatchers between Hog Camp Gap and Salt Log Gap on the Appalachian Trail or the Scarlet Tanagers off Joshua Falls Road. Who thought that there were Horned Larks, American Pipits, Wilson's Snipe, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Mississippi Kites, or Dickcissels in southern Campbell County? We had long suspected that we weren't seeing all of the waterfowl passing through the area, but no one expected to find Northern Shoveler, Canvasback, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, and Common Merganser on area lakes and ponds or a Ross's Goose in the city of Lynchburg (in June, no less).

This is a friendly competition. We bird together on field trips and impromptu outings. We quickly share information on a new species with other competitors. Experienced birders help newer ones add to their big year lists. So everyone's lists are within ten or at most twenty species of the leaders. Updating the cumulative list of species seen and determining the members with the most species on their individual lists takes up some time at the beginning of every club meeting. But even members who aren't competing enjoy hearing about the new cumulative total and species found each month.

The club benefits from the competition as we are updating local species accounts. Several new extreme dates and high counts have been recorded. We have been surprised by the number of 'accidental' species seen already this year including fourteen Long-tailed Ducks, a Western Grebe, an Anhinga (actually the first for our area), and Mississippi Kites (more than one sighting). More birding during the hot, summer months has resulted in first summer records in the area for

Green-winged Teal and Hooded Merganser.

At least two members analyzed the local checklist in January to determine how many birds might be seen during the competition. One thought her chances were good to find 160 species. Another thought he needed to see 170 species to win. It is late July as I write this, most competitors have seen at least 160 species and the leader is close to 190! In our wildest dreams, none of us expected the entire group to record anywhere near 200 species by 31 December. But we had tallied 203 species cumulatively at mid-year. It is anyone's guess what number the group and the individual winner will reach by year's end.

This year I have birded around Lynchburg far more than I usually do and so has everyone else who is competing. Along the way I have discovered new places to bird in the counties surrounding Lynchburg, enjoyed the camaraderie of birding more frequently with friends, seen species that I never expected in our tri-county area, been out birding at night more times than I want to count, and learned exactly where the county lines are. I had no idea how much fun this would be when we started. I anticipate even more excitement as the year draws to a close and the competition to have the highest number becomes more intense.

So if you, or your club, want to make birding more interesting in 2010, do a local big year. Have fun birding again; we sure are in Lynchburg.

Rexanne

Conservation Corner



Fall 2009

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology NEWSLETTER

An Easy Way to Help Virginia Birds—Buy a Duck Stamp

In 1934, with the passage of the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act, an increasingly concerned nation took action to stop the destruction of migratory waterfowl and the wetlands so vital to their survival. Under this Act, all waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older must annually purchase and carry a Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, commonly known as the Duck Stamp.

Today, Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland conservation. Ninety-eight cents out of every dollar generated by the sales of Duck Stamps goes directly to purchase or lease wetland habitat for protection in the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission oversees the use of Duck Stamp funds. Since 1934, the sales of Federal Duck Stamps have generated more than \$700 million, which has been used to help conserve over 5.2 million acres of waterfowl habitat in the U.S. The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission also reviews the use of Duck Stamp dollars for the purchase of small natural wetlands and their associated uplands for preservation. Wetland habitat preservation benefits bird, mammals, fish, reptiles, and amphibian species as well as waterfowl. An estimated one-third of the Nation's endangered and threatened species find food or shelter in refuges established using Duck Stamp funds. People, too, benefit from the Duck Stamp program. Outdoor enthusiasts have places to hike, watch birds, and visit. Moreover, the protected wetlands help purify water supplies, store flood water, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, and provide spawning areas for fish important to sport and commercial fishermen.

The Federal Duck Stamp Program has been called one of the most successful conservation programs ever initiated and is a highly effective way to conserve America's natural resources. If the millions of birders in this country each purchased this moderately priced stamp at \$15 it would make the fund into a much more powerful conservation tool, especially in today's

Please Consider a Contribution to the VSO Small Grants Conservation Fund

The Small Grants Conservation Fund was established in 2007 to fund small-scale bird conservation projects in Virginia. To date, over \$4000 has been used in grants of \$500 to \$1000 to help support projects such as the Loudoun County Bird Atlas, an Important Bird Areas program, a research project on the barrier islands, and the printing of a pamphlet providing bird conservation information for landowners

The VSO Board, through its Conservation Committee, wants to support similar activities in the future and also assist local groups that adopt parks or become "friends" of wildlife refuges or Important Bird Areas.

We cannot do this without your help! Broad support by the membership is essential if we want to later attract additional funds from commercial sources and foundations. Widespread membership support for the fund would be demonstrated by a large number of even small contributions and indicate that our membership is committed to conservation activities within Virginia

Please make your check payable to the VSO and note at the bottom that the donation is intended for the Small Grants Conservation Fund (or SGCF). Mail your contribution to: VSO, 1230 Viewmont Drive, Evington, VA 24550.

~Stephen Eccles, Conservation Chair

climate of escalating real estate prices, population and development growth, and climate change. Landowners would also benefit from increased funds for conservation easements. Both Federal Duck Stamps (\$15) and Junior Duck Stamps (\$5) are sold in some post offices, and many sporting goods and outdoor stores, and can also be purchased on the internet.

How Duck Stamps are made is just as interesting as their conservation value. Duck Stamps are pictorial stamps produced by the Postal Service for the Fish & Wildlife Service. The very

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Evington, VA 24550-2006
jtdalmas@juno.com

Send submissions electronically via email whenever possible. Attach text as Word document or plain text file. Attach images as tifs; scan photos to 300 dpi and line art to 1000 dpi.

You may also mail your submission on a PC formatted diskette. Hard copy may be mailed, but must be received two weeks prior to deadline.

Submissions may be edited for style or length.

2009 – 2010 Submission Schedule

Issue	Copy Due
Winter 2009	Oct 30
Spring 2010	Jan 22
Summer 2010	May 14
Fall 2010	Aug 13
Winter 2010	Oct 29

Birds reported in this newsletter may not have been approved by VARCOM (The Virginia Avian Records Committee).

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Conservation Corner

Continued from Page 3

first Federal Duck Stamp was designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, a political cartoonist from Des Moines, Iowa, who was appointed by Franklin Roosevelt as Director of the Bureau of Biological Survey, the predecessor to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Each year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sponsors a stamp-design contest with wildlife artists from across the Nation submitting their work for judging by a panel of artists and wildlife experts. The winning art is used on the following year's stamp. After the winning design has been selected, the artwork is submitted to the U.S. Postal Service for production of the stamp. A designer at the Postal Service prepares a model, combining the artwork, title, and denomination. Service experts determine what areas of the stamp will be reproduced by the intaglio process (a type of engraving), how the colors of the remainder of the image will be separated, and what printing methods and equipment will yield the best reproduction of the artwork. Before printing, the Postal Service submits a stamp model to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for approval. Artwork for past stamps can be viewed here: <http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/federal/stamps/fedimages.htm> (free download).

A similar process is used for Junior Duck Stamps. Annually, thousands of students across the country enter artwork in their state's contest in one of four age brackets (K-3rd, 4th-6th, 7th-9th, and 10th-12th). State judges select a Best of Show piece from the first place winners in each age bracket to represent their state in the national contest. Judges in the national contest select a winner from the state entries.

Every year on July 1st a new Federal Duck Stamp and Junior Duck Stamp are released for sale to the public at a first day of sale ceremony held at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C. After the first day of sale, the stamps can be purchased at all national Duck Stamp retailers.

The Duck Stamp program offers tremendous help for conservation of wetlands for ducks and other birds, and opportunities for artists of all ages to proudly contribute their works for public enjoyment. Birders across the nation should make the relatively simple and inexpensive annual purchase of Duck Stamps a personal commitment.

~Sandy Spencer
VSO Conservation Committee

VSO Virginia Beach Field Trip

Continued from Page 1

opportunity to enjoy the wonderful displays at the museum. At 7:15 there will be a slide presentation on some of the birds that might be seen during the weekend field trips. The museum is located at 1113 Atlantic Avenue, Virginia Beach, just a few short blocks from the hotel.

SATURDAY FIELD TRIP

Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel

The Saturday field trip to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (CBBT) will leave promptly at 8:00 AM from the parking lot of the CBBT visitor center. Participants must check in at the CBBT office by 7:45. Those staying at the hotel may want to meet near the hotel entrance at 7:00 to form carpools. The trip should end about noon. Participants should bring spotting scopes, lunch, snacks and beverages and be prepared for winter weather.

Participation on this trip is limited to the first 45 people who sign up since there is a requirement to pay a security guard to accompany each group of 15. The cost is \$10 per person to defray the cost of the guard. A security information form will be mailed to each person who registers for the trip. The completed form must be returned to the trip coordinator no later than November 20, 2009.

SUNDAY FIELD TRIPS

Back Bay NWR/False Cape State Park

The tram trip at Back Bay will begin at 8:00 AM. Those staying at the hotel may want to meet near the front entrance at

6:45 to form carpools. This will be a half day trip. Participants should bring spotting scopes as well as lunch, snacks, and beverages. After a leisurely tram ride with many stops to view a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl a good amount of time will be spent birding and lunching at False Cape State Park. The tram will leave False Cape at 1:00 PM for a slow return back to the Back Bay NWR Visitor Center. Participants may want to stop at the beach in Sandbridge to check out the birds before returning to the hotel. Birds seen on this trip could include both swans, American Bittern, Common Snipe, and numerous waterfowl. This year the trip will be limited to the first 25 participants who register.

Alternate Field Trip

For those who do not go to Back Bay a trip to First Landing State Park in Virginia Beach will be available. This trip will meet at First Landing State Park at 8:00 AM. Directions will be provided to those who sign up.

TRIP REGISTRATION

It is important to register for the field trips as participation is limited. Contact the coordinator, Clark White, by mail or e-mail (addresses below) by November 13, 2009 providing your name, postal address or e-mail address, and telephone number. Indicate field trip preferences and whether you will be participating in the Friday evening museum event. Make field trips checks payable to Clark White.

Clark White, 101 Brookstone Court
Yorktown, Virginia 23693
757 875-7649
cwbirds@cox.net



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Report of the VSO Piney Grove Trip June 6, 2009

Fifteen participants, led by Mike Wilson of the Center for Conservation Biology, set off at 5:30 in the morning to visit Piney Grove Preserve near Wakefield, Virginia. Early morning is one of the best times to see Red-cockaded Woodpeckers as they exit their nest holes to forage.

Piney Grove Preserve is a wonderful tract of pine savannah owned by the Nature Conservatory and managed by the Center for Conservation Biology. It holds the most northern colony of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, which range south to Florida and west to eastern Texas.

Red-cockaded Woodpeckers bore their nest cavities into living pines. In the Deep South, the species uses the very prevalent longleaf pine. However, the loblolly and shortleaf pines of Piney Grove, actually give the residents an advantage in that they are softer and take much less time to excavate. The species is a communal nester; each nest is cared for by a dominant pair and several other "helper" birds.

Nest trees are demarcated by a ring of white paint around the trunk. The first cluster so marked did not disappoint. Participants enjoyed extended views of the adults carrying food back to their nests.

During the morning four of the six breeding clusters were visited and 15 adults, roughly half the Piney Grove population, were identified by band combination. Piney Grove's specialized habitat also provided the opportunity to observe other species including Northern Bobwhite, calling from multiple locations; Red-headed Woodpecker; Brown-headed Nuthatch; Yellow-throated, Pine, Prairie, and Hooded Warblers; Yellow-breasted Chat; Summer Tanager; and Blue Grosbeak.

The group was most fortunate to have the opportunity to access Piney Grove and its unique habitat. The VSO is grateful to Mike Wilson for leading the trip and sharing his important work with participants.

~ Will McPhail

Thanksgiving Day Window Watch 2008

Last year 154 people from 23 different states participated in the Thanksgiving Day Window Watch. A total of 71 different species were seen. The top five most often reported birds were Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, Carolina Chickadee, Mourning Dove, Dark-eyed Junco

Three hummingbirds were reported. A male colliope and a female rufous at feeders in Lynchburg, Virginia (both banded on 6 December), and a female Rufous in Sparta, Tennessee (also banded) that had returned for three years.

See Page 7 for 2009 Thanksgiving Window Watch instructions.

In Memoriam: Peggy Spiegel Opengari

In July Peggy Opengari died of pancreatic cancer. Peggy was a long time contributor to the VSO, most recently as Field Trip Co-Chair. She will be greatly missed.

Tribute to a Friend

~by Alyce Quinn

"Watch, observe, embrace life with courage and good sense, make friends wherever you find yourself, and teach others from a place of passion and insight...these are some of the principles we learned from life with Mom."

Thus began the beautiful eulogy for Peggy Spiegel Opengari, presented lovingly by her daughter, Phyllis. A dear friend and fellow club member, Peggy lost her short but courageous battle with pancreatic cancer in mid-July. Peggy will be remembered for many things—her work with the Girl Scouts when her own children were young; as owner of two wild bird stores called For the Birds; her tireless work promoting birding around the world by organizing field trips both locally and to many exotic destinations; as a much sought-after speaker at bird clubs and other organizations; her many years of dedicated service to the Virginia Society of Ornithology; and as the creator and driving force behind the Mountain Lake Migratory Bird Festival.

But most of all, Peggy will be remembered as a friend. During her mother's memorial service, Phyllis told us all that in the early days of Peggy's relationship with her husband Bill, he had finally asked, "Do you know all of these people you talk to?" after she had gotten into a conversation with someone in an elevator. He thought that everywhere they went she must be running into people she knew because she was always getting into conversations with people. That's just the way Peggy was. Minutes after you met her, you knew you had a new friend.

Shortly after Peggy passed away, a co-worker asked me if Peggy was a "good" friend of mine. That was a tough question to answer. We didn't call each other on the phone just to chat. We didn't go out for the evening together. In fact, we only saw each other a few times a year. But any time I knew our paths were about to cross, I took great delight in the fact that I was going to be able to spend time with her again. She was one of those people who could brighten up your day just by being in it. I cherish the times we spent together and wish there had been many more. I feel blessed to have known Peggy and honored to consider her a friend. My world will be a sadder place without her in it.

The Roanoke Valley Bird Club and the New River Valley Bird Club are working on establishing a memorial fund in Peggy's name. The idea is still in the planning stages, and further information will be provided as soon as we have the details worked out. Donations to the fund will be handled by the VSO.



New and Noteworthy

Call for Applications J. J. Murray Research Award

Deadline January 29, 2010

This annual \$1000 student research grant is one of the ways in which the VSO supports the study of Virginia avifauna. Up to two awards will again be granted in 2010 due to the generosity of the Northern Neck Audubon Society in funding a matching award.

Criteria and eligibility: The award is designed to promote graduate and undergraduate research, which must consist of current or projected field studies on Virginia birds. Proposals will be judged for their scientific merit and the likelihood that the work will make a meaningful contribution to our understanding of Virginia avifauna. Upon completion of the research, the recipient will be asked to present the results at a VSO annual meeting and are encouraged to publish the results in an appropriate journal. The recipient will also be awarded a one-year membership in the VSO.

Application procedures: Proposals should be of a reasonable length. If the proposal is longer than 15 pages it must include a summary of no more than two pages. Submissions will be evaluated by the VSO and must be received by January 29, 2010. If the research is part of a degree program, students should include the name of the institution and department, the degree they are working towards, and the name of their academic or research advisor. Each proposal should include a letter from the student's academic advisor verifying that the applicant is a student in good standing, and that he/she is receiving the advisor's support for this project. Both proposals and letters of reference should be submitted electronically as Word files, although they can be submitted separately. Applicants will be notified of the results by April 2, 2010.

Please send proposals or requests for information to:

Gene Sattler
gsattler@liberty.edu
Department of Biology & Chemistry
Liberty University
1971 University Blvd.
Lynchburg, VA 24502

New Members May 16, 2009–August 16, 2009

The VSO bids a warm welcome to the following new members:

Robert Abraham, Christiansburg
Bruce Blanton, Glen Allen
Martha Cook, Farmville
Charles F. Feldmayer, Alexandria

Edward Gomez, Arlington
Susan Haskew, Springfield
Ed & Nancy Lawler, Staunton
David Rice, Glen Allen
Michael Stoneham, Richmond
Patrick Toomey, Charlottesville
David Wendelken, Harrisonburg

Jethro Runco will be Missed at the Kiptopeke Songbird Banding Station

Jethro Runco began his tenure as the Kiptopeke Songbird Banding Coordinator in the Fall of 2001. He also ran the spring banding operations at First Landing State Park for a number of years. Jethro meticulously established a polished and highly professional songbird banding station. Noted for his indefatigable exuberance, expert devotion, and willingness to share, he educated thousands across the age spectra, served as a mentor to dozens, and created an enduring legacy. His almost daily folksy list-serve posts joined by the periodic commentaries of Harry Armistead and Ned Brinkley proved to be as exciting and anticipated as the birds they extol.

Jethro's long migration has him currently doing work in Alaska.

~Submitted by Bill Williams

VSO Archive Update

In 2001 the VSO board moved to establish an archive at the University of Virginia's Alderman Memorial Library, in Charlottesville. To date, materials deposited include the business records of the VSO, copies of VSO publications, the papers of Fred Scott, the records of the Marion Bird Club, and the bird records of Tony Decker, Woody Middleton, and Charles Vaughn. It is important to continue the preservation of important documents, field records, and other historical material relating to Virginia's bird life and those who have studied it. Towards that end the VSO continues to solicit appropriate materials to add to the archive. Such materials become the property of the University of Virginia, which will insure that the materials are preserved and made accessible to the general public.

To view what records are currently in the archive go to the University of Virginia Library website www.lib.virginia.edu. After using the link for the Virgo library catalog at the top of the page, type in "Virginia Society of Ornithology".

If you have or know of material that you believe should be considered for inclusion in the VSO archive, please contact Gene Sattler 434 582-2229, gsattler@liberty.edu, or any VSO officer or board member.



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Thanksgiving Window Watch Count

The Thanksgiving Window Watch Count will take place on November 26, 2009. Anyone can participate by watching for just one hour at any time on Thanksgiving Day, filling out the form at the right, and returning it to the address below. To participate select a circular area 15 feet in diameter preferably one which includes feeders, bird baths, or habitat which attracts birds. Imagine that the circle extends upward as a cylinder. Count the number of birds of each species, which come into this cylinder during the hour. Try to judge the actual number of birds not the number of visits, by counting the birds you see in the circle initially and adding others only if you know they are different individuals that have entered the circle. If you see birds in the circle which are not included on the list, please write their names under "others." If you wish to list birds seen outside the circle, list them under "outside."

Mail completed Window Watch form (and a self-addressed envelope if you want a report of the results) to:
 Thanksgiving Window Watch
 Thelma Dalmas
 1230 Viewmont Drive
 Evington, VA 24550

2008 Thanksgiving Window Watch Count

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ ST ____ Zip _____

- Date of count _____
- Start Time (Count for 1 hour.) _____
- Temperature at start _____
- Weather (a) Sunny, (b) Partly cloudy, (c) Cloudy, (d) Rain, (e) Snow, sleet.
- Wind: (a) None, or very gentle, (b) Moderate, (c) Strong or very strong.
- Habitat: (a) Crowded residential, (b) Residential, (c) Suburban, (d) Rural, fields, croplands nearby, (e) Rural, mostly woods.

Birds	Number Seen in the Circle	Number Seen Outside Circle
Mourning Dove	_____	_____
Northern Flicker	_____	_____
Red-bellied Woodpecker	_____	_____
Downy Woodpecker	_____	_____
Hairy Woodpecker	_____	_____
Blue Jay	_____	_____
American Crow	_____	_____
Carolina Chickadee	_____	_____
Black-capped Chickadee	_____	_____
Tufted Titmouse	_____	_____
White-breasted Nuthatch	_____	_____
Carolina Wren	_____	_____
Northern Mockingbird	_____	_____
European Starling	_____	_____
House Sparrow	_____	_____
Common Grackle	_____	_____
Northern Cardinal	_____	_____
Purple Finch	_____	_____
House Finch	_____	_____
Pine Siskin	_____	_____
American Goldfinch	_____	_____
Eastern Towhee	_____	_____
Dark-eyed Junco	_____	_____
Chipping Sparrow	_____	_____
White-throated Sparrow	_____	_____
Song Sparrow	_____	_____
OTHERS:		
_____	_____	_____
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VSO Foray Highlights: In Search of Bachman's Sparrow June 12-17, 2009

The 2009 VSO foray covered Greenville and Sussex counties and portions of Southampton County. It included an intensive survey of The Nature Conservancy's Piney Grove property and the Raccoon Creek Longleaf Pine Restoration Area in Sussex, areas that are not normally accessible to the public. The 24 participants recorded 99 species, including 26 confirmed breeders.

While the target species, Bachman's Sparrow was not located, there were a number of interesting findings. Single Anhingas were reported from Sussex and Southampton. Mississippi Kites showed a continuing presence in extreme southeast Greenville, with additional sightings as far north as the Three Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant northeast of Emporia, and Cooper's Hawk was reported in all three counties. There were several sightings of a family of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers

feeding a large fledgling at Piney Grove. A Loggerhead Shrike was found in southwest Greenville, unusual for a species that increasingly is only observed wintering further north and west in the state. Horned Larks were reported from several locations in all three counties. A single report of a Swainson's Warbler from Greenville County was about six miles northwest of its "traditional" location at the Route 730 Low Ground Road crossing of the Meherrin River and probably represents the most westerly report of the Coastal Plain population.

Thanks to The Nature Conservancy for providing access to Piney Grove Preserve, and to William Owen for providing permission to access the Raccoon Creek Longleaf Pine Restoration Site.

~Wendy Ealding, 2009 Foray Coordinator.

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 Shirley Devan, Williamsburg
 Keith Carson, Highland County

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 \$ _____ Small Grants Conservation Fund
 \$ _____ Virginia Birds

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A letter will be sent to the recipient notifying them of your gift.

VSO Sales

	<u>Price</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Total</u>
<i>Birds of Smyth County</i> (1999)	\$6.00	_____	_____
<i>Birds of the Virginia Cumberlands</i> (2001)	\$8.00	_____	_____
<i>Birds of Prey in Virginia</i> (1990)	\$9.00	_____	_____
VSO Field Checklists, 10	\$3.00	_____	_____
VSO Arm Patch	\$4.00	_____	_____
VSO Cloisonne Pin	\$5.00	_____	_____
<i>Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist</i>	\$20.00	_____	_____
Total Merchandise		_____	_____
Total for Membership and Sales		_____	_____

Please make checks payable to VSO. Return form and remittance to:
Virginia Society of Ornithology
1230 Viewmont Drive
Evington, VA 24550-2006