



May 2023 Newsletter
of the
Rockbridge Bird Club,
encouraging
the enjoyment, knowledge, &
conservation of birds in the Rockbridge Area

Calendar

Sat., May 6 — Big Spring Day, in the mountains around Peaks of Otter *

Sat., May 13, 6:30 a.m. — Annual trip to Apple Orchard Mountain *

Note: this is our "Second Saturday" outing for May! Back to Boxerwood in June.

Sat., May 20, 7:30 a.m. — A bird walk on private property *

Sat., June 10, time tbd — Second Saturday at Boxerwood: last of the season, to resume in September

* see article below

A bird in hand is a certainty. But a bird in the bush may sing!
— Bret Harte, American fiction writer & poet (1836-1902)

Reminder: Big Spring Day on May 6

This annual bird count in the Peaks of Otter area, now in its 52nd year, is conducted by the Lynchburg and Roanoke Valley Bird Clubs, who invite our members to participate. Big Spring Day Coordinator/Compiler Donna Mateski de Sanchez can match you up with an existing team. And, she notes: "Some teams bird throughout the afternoon, so you could easily meet up with a group mid-morning." Contact Donna at mateski@bu.edu or 434-546-3812.

Apple Orchard Mountain trip on Saturday, May 20

That's Migratory Bird Day! — and by happenstance it's the day for our annual pilgrimage to this special place for seeing migrating wood warblers, vireos, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Scarlet Tanagers. Dick Rowe, VMI biology professor and Club Ornithologist, will be our leader.

We'll meet at the Lexington Food Lion parking lot at 6:30 a.m. to caravan to the Parkway. Alternatively, you may travel on your own and meet the group at 7:30 a.m. at the Sunset Fields pull-off (mile marker 78.4).

From there, we'll follow Radar Road on foot to the top of Apple Orchard Mountain, a gradual up-and-back walk of about 2 miles — with frequent stops to look and listen — returning to Lexington mid-afternoon.

Be sure to wear good walking shoes, and bring along water and a snack. In the event of heavy rain the walk will be canceled. For more information, or in case of doubtful weather, contact Wendy Richards at 463-5214 or richardsw@wlu.edu.



*Canada Warbler
& Scarlet Tanager
Photos by Dick Rowe*



*Below: Cerulean
Warbler. Photo
by Dick Rowe*

Get acquainted — or re-acquainted — with some warbler songs!

Here's the Bird Advisor's [webpage](#) presenting the songs of a dozen or so warblers, most of whom we have a chance of seeing on Apple Orchard Mountain. There are tips on what to listen for, and each warbler gets a photo portrait plus both audio and video of its song. (You might want to skip over the following species for now: Yellow & Prairie Warblers are found at lower elevations, and Dick tells us Yellow-rumps are barely possible up on the Ridge and Wilson's very rare.)

By invitation to the Club: a bird walk on private property

This walk will take place on Saturday, May 20, at a farm in the Northwest part of the County with a nice variety of habitats. We'll meet at Tractor Supply at 7:30 to carpool.

In case of heavy rain, the event will be cancelled. For more information contact Bob Biersack: bob.biersack@gmail.com.





Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Photo by Dick Rowe



JOIN THE CLUB by making out a check for \$15 or more per household to Rockbridge Bird Club and sending it, along with your address, email address, and phone number, to Jan Smith, 564 Big Hill Road, Lexington, VA 24450. Thank you.

For more information about the Club, visit our website at www.rockbridgebirdclub.org and find us on Facebook.

Contact the Club by email at rockbridgebirdclub@gmail.com, or call Laura Neale, 540-261-1909.

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