



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

Calendar

Sat., Oct. 14, 8:30 a.m. — Second Saturday Birding *on the Chessie Trail* *
Mon., Oct. 16 — Seed and Suet Sale begins *
Thurs., Nov. 9 — Seed and Suet Sale pick-up *
Sat., Nov. 11, 8:30 a.m. — Second Saturday Birding at Boxerwood
Mon., Nov. 13 — Annual Meeting with program: "Painting Birds: A Step-by-Step Process with Lucinda Rowe," in the Piovano Room at the downtown Lexington library
* see article below

Autumn... the year's last, loveliest smile
— William Cullen Bryant, poet (1794-1878)

**October's Second Saturday Bird Walk:
moved from Boxerwood to the Chessie Trail**

Because Boxerwood's grounds will be devoted all weekend to staging its "Spectacle," we'll walk along the Chessie Trail this month, meeting on Saturday morning, October 14th, at 8:30 a.m. in the parking area off Stuartsburg Road (directions below). On our two-hour out-and-back stroll, we're likely to see a variety of birds, including herons, raptors, songbirds heading south, winter returnees, and year-round residents.

As always on these walks, wear good walking shoes and bring binoculars and water; also, be aware that there are no restroom facilities along the Trail. The walk will be cancelled in the event of rain. For more information contact Wendy Richards at richardsw@wlu.edu or 540-463-5214.

Directions to the trailhead: from Buena Vista, head west on U.S. 60, then turn right just before the Robey Bridge onto Stuartsburg Road. From Lexington, head east on U.S. 60. Just past the Robey Bridge, turn left onto Stuartsburg Road. Parking for the boat launch and the Chessie Trail is on the left on Stuartsburg, .2 mile from U.S. 60.

— Wendy Richards, Field Trip Chair

P.S. You can also go to Boxerwood's "Spectacle 2023: A Wild Notion!" — no time conflict. It takes place October 14 and 15 at 3 p.m. Find more information [here](#).

The 2023 Seed & Suet Fundraiser Starts October 16!

As hummers and tanagers head south, white-throated sparrows and juncos are on their way back to Rockbridge. The winter returnees will be hungry and scouting our yards for a reliable source of food once cold weather sets in. That is to say...it's time to stock up again for late fall and winter feeding!

Rockbridge Bird Club's annual seed and suet sale begins this year on October 16 and once again benefits Boxerwood, our local nature center and birding paradise.

Like last year, we will purchase sunflower seed from a local Rockingham farmer, and seed blends and suet from Lizzie Mae, a family-owned supplier in Ohio that purchases premium seed from Midwest farms and crafts their own mixes. The Rockbridge Farmers Co-op will receive and store our seed, and host a drive-through pick-up in their parking lot on November 9.

Club members and previous seed sale customers will receive product information and an order form via email later this month. All orders must be prepaid and received by October 30. Customers can order most easily from an online store that will be open for business on Boxerwood's website at the start of the sale. Those who prefer to pay by check can download the order form and mail or hand-deliver it to Boxerwood with their payment.

Thanks to all who have purchased seed in the past and those who plan to order this year. You're helping the Bird Club show our deep appreciation to Boxerwood for welcoming our club to wander freely through the varied habitats and naturalized gardens they maintain to support birds and other wildlife.

Have questions? Contact Bonnie (540-460-9147 or bonnie.bernstein@gmail.com).



Downy Woodpecker reaching for suet



Possible Chessie Trail sightings: can you identify them? Photos by Dick Rowe.

September 9 Boxerwood Report

Six of us showed up at 8:30 a.m. to kick off a new season of Boxerwood bird walks. Luckily a much needed rain held off for the morning as we wandered the trails and took turns finding the birds. There were still a few migrants around, including hummers that were enjoying the Jewelweed and Black-eyed Susan blooms. See next page for our list of 25 species.

Species seen: Mourning Dove, 4; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, 5; Turkey Vulture, 2; Sharp-shinned/Cooper's Hawk, 1 (too quick a look to determine which species); Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Northern Flicker, 1; Eastern Wood-Pewee, 1; Eastern Phoebe, 1; Red-eyed Vireo, 1; Blue Jay, 12; American Crow, 1; Carolina Chickadee, 4; Tufted Titmouse, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 1; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 1; Carolina Wren, 5; Northern Mockingbird, 3; Eastern Bluebird, 4; American Robin 4; House Finch, 2 (singing); American Goldfinch, 1; Eastern Towhee, 3; Scarlet Tanager, 1; Northern Cardinal, 9.

— Wendy Richards, Field Trip Chair



Magnolia Warbler 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.

Club Officers

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