



May 2014 Newsletter

of the Rockbridge Bird Club, encouraging the enjoyment, knowledge, and conservation of birds in the Rockbridge Area.

Calendar

Program meetings are held at 7 pm in the Old Courthouse meeting room, in downtown Lexington. Informal gatherings are held at 5 pm in Munger Lodge at Boxerwood, on Ross Road. Field trips are half day unless otherwise noted.

Saturday May 3rd at 6:30 am - Field trip: Apple Orchard Mountain*

Saturday May 10th, at 7:3 am - Field trip: Summers property, Cold Mountain*

Wednesday May 14th at 4:30/5:00 pm – Shrub walk/Potluck dinner at Boxerwood*

Saturday May 24th – Morning field trip: Natural Bridge, led by Wes Teets*

Saturday June 7th carpool at 7:30am – Appalachian Trail birding hike*

Wednesday September 10th at 7 pm - Program: Dick Rowe, Chincoteague

Friday - Sunday, September 12th-14th - Virginia Society of Ornithology fall field trip: Chincoteague

Wednesday October 8th at 7 pm - Teta Kain, "Feeding Wild Birds"

**See article below*

* **Spring Potluck at Boxerwood Gardens**

The Club's very first spring potluck will be at Boxerwood on Wednesday, May 14, from 5:00 to 7:30! Come at 4:30 if you like, for a short tour of some bird-friendly shrubs led by Boxerwood horticulturist Faith Vosburgh. Children and guests are welcome. The potluck will be held at the timber-frame pavilion located near the driveway to the Lodge.

The Club will be providing hamburgers, brats, buns and drinks. Please RSVP online at our Sign-Up Genius page, where you can also sign up to bring a dish or assist with the event. The link is <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B44A4A92BA1FC1-maypotluck>. Or, if you have had ENOUGH of doing things online, just email Betty Besal

(bbesa15@gmail.com) and she will “pencil” you in. And if you have questions about the spring potluck or the sign-up process, please contact Betty.

Upcoming Field Trips*

- **Saturday, May 3rd**, we'll take a walk on Apple Orchard Mountain, guided by Club Ornithologist Dick Rowe. To carpool, meet in the Lexington Food Lion parking lot behind McDonalds at 6:30 a.m. (please note corrected time); alternatively, you may meet the group at 7:30 a.m. in the Sunset Fields pull-off on the Blue Ridge Parkway, at mile post 78.



Figure 1-Orchard Oriole. Dick Rowe, April 27th

- **Saturday, May 10th**, Bruce and Nancy Summers invite members of the Rockbridge Bird Club on a bird walk on their property near Mount Pleasant National Scenic Area in Amherst County. Kieran Kilday will lead the field trip. Meet at the Lexington Food Lion parking lot at 7:30 a.m. to carpool to the Summers' home, approximately 18 miles from the meeting point. Bruce reminds us to wear sturdy shoes or boots for walking on rocky trails. To help with planning, please let Wendy know if you'll be coming: sideway@rockbridge.net or 540-463-5214.
- **Saturday, May 24th**, Wes Teets will lead a morning walk at Natural Bridge, where he knows intimately the territory and its birds. Wes is now the Hotel's official bird walk leader. ***This trip has a limit of 20 participants.*** To sign up, please e-mail rockbridgebirdclub@gmail.com with your name and contact information by Saturday, May 17th. The Club will then let you know about carpooling plans and the option to have breakfast at the Hotel beforehand.



Figure 2. – Birding by Ear at Boxerwood Gardens

Birders on the April 12th field trip to Boxerwood Gardens practiced skills learned at “Birding by Ear 101,” the program given by Donna Finnegan at the Club’s April meeting.

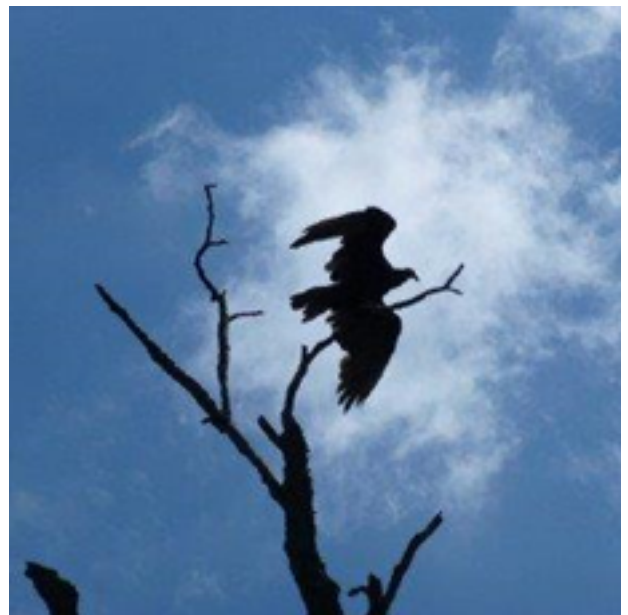


Figure 3 - Turkey Vulture, Kathy Morikawa

Impromptu field trips?

If somebody decides on one we’ll send out an email. Or if you want to invite Club members to meet you somewhere for birdwatching, we will put out the word. Email us at rockbridgebirdclub@gmail.com.



Have you been lucky enough to meet a bird like this one? It's a White-eyed Vireo, photographed by Dick Rowe on April 18. On <http://www.vmi.edu/fswebs.aspx?tid=41325&id=4294972715> Dick describes this species as an uncommon summer resident and breeder in our area. According to Cornell's Birds of North America website, the white-eyed vireos who summer here and farther north spend the winter in parts of Central American and the Caribbean; others are permanent residents in Florida and in a band along our southern coast. From the same account:

"The White-eyed Vireo is a migratory songbird more frequently detected by ear than by eye. Although this species is cryptic in both plumage and behavior, male White-eyed Vireos compensate with explosive and complex singing. Individuals have repertoires of a dozen or more distinct songs, each comprising six to ten highly variable elements. Because of its complex song delivery, this species is a compelling subject for studies of vocal communication."

The Birds of North America site gives detailed information (with footnotes to scientific papers) on all our species. It's by subscription, but you can sample a few species accounts for free: bna.birds.cornell.edu. You'll find briefer notes on life history, along with audio & video clips and hints on identifying species, at Cornell's www.allaboutbirds.org. And to go straight to some samples of White-eyed Vireo song, click here: www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/White-eyed_Vireo/sounds.

—Alexia Smith



For more information about the Club visit our website at www.rockbridgebirdclub.org

Contact the Club by email at rockbridgebirdclub@gmail.com or call Wendy Richards, 540-463-5214, or Laura Neale, 540-261-1909.

Join the Club by making out a check for \$15 or more to Rockbridge Bird Club and sending it, along with your address, email address, and phone number, to Betty Besal, 104 Shake Rag Road, Lexington, VA 24450. Thank you.

Club Officers

President, Wendy Richards

Secretary, Alexia Smith

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Treasurer, Betty Besal

Field Trip Chair, Kerry Kilday

Club Ornithologist, Dick Rowe

Newsletter edited by Alexia Smith & produced by Jan Smith. Please send feedback & news items to alexia@rockbridge.net