



# VSO Newsletter

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

WINTER 2021-22

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**Editor:** Dixie Sommers

### Change of Address (USPS or email)

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[vsomembership@cox.net](mailto:vsomembership@cox.net)

**Send submissions** by email. Attach MS Word document or plain text, with high resolution photos. Submissions may be edited for style and/or length.

**Contact** VSO President Terri Cuthriell at: [virginiabirdconservation@gmail.com](mailto:virginiabirdconservation@gmail.com)

## Winter Wildlife Festival Returns!

*By Jessica Ruthenberg, VSO Board Member*

Virginia's largest birding and wildlife viewing festival that was downsized last year during the pandemic will return bigger than ever, holding activities throughout January, culminating the weekend of the 28th-30th.

Presented by the City of Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, this Virginia Beach-based festival celebrates the abundant and diverse wildlife wintering in coastal Virginia. This year's event is bringing back in-person activities and continuing some of its socially distanced innovations from 2021.

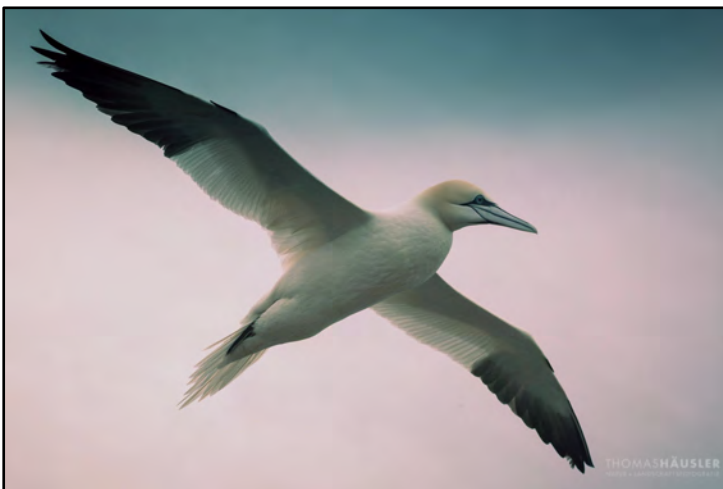
Many field trips booked quickly when registration opened in November, but some spots are still available and there are multiple other ways to participate in this popular festival.

All talks and workshops will once again be presented virtually, allowing participation from anywhere. On Friday, January 28, author Jennifer Ackerman will deliver a virtual keynote presentation on *The Bird Way*, which will explore the fascinating behaviors of birds. Several other virtual workshops will be presented, including a talk by Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory on Hawkwatchers in Coastal Virginia, a presentation by the Department of Wildlife Resources on the Loggerhead Shrike, and introductory workshops on birding, e-Bird, and iNaturalist.

Returning this year is one of the festival's newest additions, the Birding Challenge. The Birding Challenge is a friendly competition that challenges teams to observe as many birds as possible in a day and is open to all ages and levels. All participants will receive a t-shirt and the top teams in each division will receive awards of recognition.

Other activities include a photography contest that runs throughout January with prizes in six categories, an exhibit hall, a month-long children's outdoor Storywalk, and a community art project to be displayed at the exhibit hall.

To register for these activities and find more information on the festival, visit [www.vbgov.com/winterwildlife](http://www.vbgov.com/winterwildlife) and join the festival's Facebook group.



*Northern Gannet, a regular winter visitor to Virginia Beach.  
Photo by Thomas Haeusler*

# The Atlas and More on Bird Conservation

By Terri Cuthriell, VSO President

Happy New Year! Hope yours is off to a great start!

Looking back, 2021 was a busy year for VSO as we settled on some ambitious goals for the Second Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas publication (see p. 3), and as we made progress on plans for research and outreach at the Bramble Hill Preserve. And we'll be busy again in 2022! We have plenty of work ahead to accomplish our Atlas goals, and we're working through exciting plans at our property in Highland County for research and habitat improvements that focus on the early successional, high elevation avian specialists.

I'm also looking forward to making this a year to expand the VSO mission of education, research, and conservation across the state. The time has never been so urgent for VSO to connect and enlarge our team of engaged bird loving conservationists.

I'll continue to support my own local and statewide conservation initiatives this year, and I'll continue expanding the bird friendly habitat on my own property with native shrubs and wildflowers. There is probably a place where you live as well that needs improvement – even in our own yards or local parks! There are like-minded conservation organizations across the state we can collaborate with to increase our impact and common objectives.

Maybe you are actively working toward helping the birds in your community. Maybe you have

budding ideas for education and conservation or research projects in your local area that could benefit from VSO support. If so, we want to know about them! So, I invite you and our Virginia bird clubs to reach out to any of the VSO board members or to me and share your ideas and things you're doing to make a difference.

I hope to meet with you this year, either virtually, or in person at the annual meeting, or on one of our fabulous field trips, or even at your club's membership meeting. VSO needs your support for our ongoing projects like the Breeding Bird Atlas and Bramble Hill Preserve. Virginia's birds need ever more individual and partnership efforts across the whole state! There are never too many volunteers! Especially now as we seek to strengthen public awareness and involvement.

If you've been working towards these ends, you know how gratifying (and sometimes challenging) conservation work is - I applaud you! If you'd like to increase your participation, I encourage you to join me and make 2022 a year to amplify your unique talents to connect and expand our membership, to share the delight and our understanding of birds, and to actively volunteer with the VSO team.

Best Winter Birding!

Terri

<b>VSO OFFICERS</b>		
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# VSO Adopts Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas Publication Goal

*By Dixie Sommers, VSO Newsletter Editor*

The VSO Board has adopted as the Society's goal two recommendations of the Atlas Final Products Committee: that the Atlas will be a website and will present species accounts for about 210 breeding bird species, accompanied by sections on key topics and appendices providing supplemental information.

The Board deferred consideration of a recommendation concerning interactive maps, pending further information on costs and fundraising results.

**Why a website?** The Atlas Final Products Committee rated the pros and cons of Atlas format options: printed book, digital book, and website. This process resulted in a strong preference for a website, primarily because this format provides easy access to the Atlas for both the general public and natural resource professionals within and outside of Virginia.

A website format will also make the Atlas available for free (no expensive book to purchase) and allow small detail, such as on maps, to be more easily viewed. While there are some disadvantages, including the need for continued maintenance, the committee judged these to be heavily outweighed by the advantages.

**What will the Atlas provide?** The website will present species accounts that include a high-quality photograph, a brief species narrative, maps showing the distribution of the species across Virginia and how the distribution changed between the first and second Atlases, trends in species population, a table summarizing the number of survey blocks by the species' breeding status, timing of breeding activity (breeding phenology), and other details.

The website will also feature sections that discuss important findings from the Atlas, describe Virginia's physiographic regions and types of habitat and other topics. There will be several appendices presenting details not presented elsewhere on the website.



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyd, VA. A new Virginia breeding species. Photo by Dixie Sommers*

The Atlas website will also acknowledge the vital work of the volunteers who collected the millions of field records that comprise the Atlas database, as well as the many donors who make the Atlas possible.

**What is the schedule?** Currently, Dr. Ashley Peele and her team at Virginia Tech are wrapping up the review and organization of the millions of Atlas field records. This work will be completed in early 2022. The team will then move on to data analysis and the production of much, but not all, of the content for the published Atlas. Their work is funded by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR).

With completion of the analysis work in the fall of 2023, we will concentrate on building the website and writing the sections and the species account narratives and producing the remaining content. Publication of the Atlas is projected for late 2025.

**What will all this cost?** The Atlas Final Products Committee estimated the cost to the VSO at \$274,000 over 2022-2025. The DWR is funding the data review and analysis, and will provide in-kind resources, particularly staff support to coordinate the project and produce maps and some

other content. The VSO Board plans to finalize our fundraising plan in early 2022.

The Atlas Final Products Committee includes members are from the VSO, DWR and Virginia Tech. Sergio Harding of DWR chairs the group. VSO representatives are Rexanne Bruno, Lisa Perry and Dixie Sommers.

While a great deal of work is before us, the VSO Board and the Atlas Final Products Committee are excited about the plans for publication.

VSO will continue to need your help! We need your continued financial support. We also welcome volunteers to join our fundraising team.

We also want to hear from you – questions and comments please!

### How You Can Help the VABBA2!

- ✦ Help the VSO fund our part of the final Atlas by donating on-line at [www.virginiabirds.org](http://www.virginiabirds.org) or by mail to VSO, P.O. Box 5994, Williamsburg, VA 23188-5994. Thank you!
- ✦ Volunteer to help us raise funds for the Atlas! Email to [VSOAtlas@gmail.com](mailto:VSOAtlas@gmail.com)
- ✦ Let us know your questions and comments by email to [VSOAtlas@gmail.com](mailto:VSOAtlas@gmail.com)
- ✦ Receive e-mail atlas updates from DWR by subscribing at <https://dwr.virginia.gov/atlas-updates/>
- ✦ Check out atlas information on the VSO website <http://www.virginiabirds.org/vabba2> and the DWR website [www.dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/birds/virginia-breeding-bird-atlas](http://www.dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/birds/virginia-breeding-bird-atlas).

## VSO Annual Meeting for 2022

*By Bob Ake, Cape Henry Audubon Society*

The Cape Henry Audubon Society and the Friends of Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge are making tentative plans to hold a modified VSO Annual Meeting and Dismal Swamp Birding Festival the weekend of April 29- May 1, 2022.

There will be a full schedule of field trips, but many of the usual indoor events held at previous Annual meetings such as the banquet, vendor sales, and local chapter displays will have to wait until the shadow of covid has passed.

The business meeting, research paper presentations, and program speaker presentation will take place virtually, perhaps at a time other than during the weekend of the fieldtrips. Stay tuned for further details, pencil in the dates on your calendar, and hope for good news on the virus front.





# Register Soon for the VSO's 2022 Outer Banks Field Trip – February 4-6

*Meredith Bell, VSO Field Trips Co-chair*

Make plans to join us for the VSO's Winter field trip at the Outer Banks of North Carolina February 4-6! The weekend's leaders include Bill Akers and Jerry Via, as well as VSO field trip co-chairs Lee Adams and Meredith Bell. We always have a great variety of birds—and often a few surprise species, too—no matter what the weather.

**COVID GUIDELINES** VSO is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all participants. We encourage every participant to be vaccinated, if at all possible. By registering for this event, you agree to abide by all guidance provided by individual field trip leaders, the Comfort Inn, and local businesses. North Carolina's guidelines are not the same as Virginia's. For example, our host hotel encourages guests to wear masks but does not require them.

**VERY IMPORTANT!** All VSO field trips are open to members at no charge. If you have not renewed your dues for 2022 or have not joined yet, you can [RENEW or JOIN here!](#)

**You can register quickly online [here](#).** Be prepared to provide the names of participants in your party along with a telephone number and email address so we can contact you if needed. You'll quickly receive a confirmation email with all of the details you see here. If you have any



*Redhead.- Photo by Sally Knight.*

questions, contact Meredith Bell, trip coordinator, at [merandlee@gmail.com](mailto:merandlee@gmail.com) or 804-824-4958.

**Bring FRS (two-way) radios** if you have them because this helps us stay in contact when driving in caravans.

**HEADQUARTERS** The Comfort Inn South Oceanfront in Nags Head is again the trip headquarters. There's a huge deck off the second floor, which offers great beach-viewing opportunities.

The special VSO room rate is \$76 for oceanfront and \$62 for bay-view (plus tax). Ocean front rooms are available on a first come, first served basis. The 7<sup>th</sup> floor bayside rooms offer a panoramic view of the bay but do not have balconies. The hotel's contact information is: 8031 Old Oregon Inlet Road, Nags Head, NC 27959; Phone: 252-441-6315. Reservations must be made by **January 21, 2022** to get the special VSO rate.

**MEALS** A complimentary breakfast buffet is included with your stay, beginning each morning at 6:00 AM. The hotel will have plastic gloves available to use when going through the buffet. They will also have the adjacent Neptune Conference Room open for us so we can avoid the



*Birders on the move!- Photo by Kate Lowry.*

close quarters of the breakfast area. Lunch and dinner are on your own.

**MONDAY, JAN 31** We'll hold a Zoom video call with an overview of the weekend and have a presentation by Jerry Via, one of the field trip leaders. We'll record the call and send a link for the recording to all registrants afterwards.

**FRIDAY, FEB 4** You have two options for Friday, and you do NOT need to register in advance for your preference.

**Option 1-** Lee Adams will lead the all-day trip to Lake Mattamuskeet. Meet in the hotel lobby at 7:15 AM for 7:30 departure. Expected driving time is 90 minutes. Bring snacks, beverage, and lunch. Optional: camp or lawn chair for greater comfort while eating lunch. Those interested will stop at Alligator River on the return trip to listen and watch for Short-eared Owls at dusk.

**Option 2-** For those who prefer less driving, Meredith, Bill Akers, and Jerry Via will cover areas closer to the hotel:

**AM:** Jennette's Pier is just two blocks from the hotel and has a 1,000 foot-long pier that allows close-up looks of many ocean birds. Mid-morning we'll visit other nearby spots. Lunch is on your own.

**PM:** Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. We'll explore areas that won't be covered on Sunday's AM trip. Those interested can stay until dusk with Lee Adams' groups to listen for Short-eared Owls.



*Razorbill - Photo by Bruce Grimes*

**5:00-6:00 PM:** A Meet-and-Greet Happy Hour in the Neptune Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at the end of the hall. The hotel is providing complimentary coffee/tea and snacks, and you can bring a different beverage if you prefer. This is a great chance to interact with the trip leaders and other participants. Dinner is on your own.

#### **SATURDAY, FEB 5**

**AM:** Visit the impoundments of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding areas. We'll divide into smaller groups for a safer caravan experience, and every group will visit all areas. Lunch is on your own.

**PM:** Visit Jennette's Pier, the beach, and other nearby areas. In the past, species of note at the pier included Dovekie, Razorbill, Red-breasted Merganser, Horned Grebe, and Northern Gannet. We've also spotted dolphins and whales from there. At 3:00 PM we'll gather at Bodie Lighthouse to view waterfowl from the platform.

**6:00 PM:** A tally of the weekend's species in the Neptune Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Complimentary coffee and tea will be available.

**SUNDAY, FEB 6, AM:** Explore Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Drive on your own and meet at 8:30 AM at the main entrance on Milltail Road. We'll caravan down this road so you can easily catch up with us if we've already started.

Come prepared for variable weather, lots of birds and a great time!

If you have any questions, contact field trip coordinator Meredith Bell at 804-824-4958 or by email [merandlee@gmail.com](mailto:merandlee@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you on the Outer Banks in February!

# VSO Chincoteague Field Trip Report

September 10-12, 2021

Meredith Bell, VSO Field Trips Co-chair

The weather was perfect for the VSO field trip to Chincoteague on September 10-12, and we had breezes or winds that kept the mosquitoes at bay most days.

We tallied 141 species, which included birds found on the Causeway, Chincoteague Island and Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. It was exciting to return after missing last year. There were many first-timers among the 115 registrants, and several got multiple life birds.



*A banded American Oystercatcher. The band was reported and the photographer learned that this bird is 9 years old. Photo by David Clark.*

This year we experimented with two events that were so successful they will now be standard practice for future VSO weekend field trips.

We had a *Zoom call* the Monday evening before the weekend to preview the trip since we couldn't gather indoors for the normal Friday evening. We recorded the call so those who couldn't attend live were able to watch the recording. Jerry Via gave an excellent presentation on shorebird and tern identification, and a few attendees said they watched it multiple times!

We held a *Meet-and-Greet Happy Hour* outdoors on the back lawn of the Refuge Inn from 5:00-6:00pm, and 75 people attended. This provided an excellent opportunity for newcomers to meet other

members and have familiar faces before the first trips on Saturday. Some folks were having such a good time that they stayed until 7:00!

There are many details that could be reported about the weekend. Here are highlights...

**The two boat trips** on Saturday and Sunday mornings held a variety of shorebirds and raptors, unexpected waterfowl (2 Eared Grebes), and drama (a Bald Eagle swooped down and snatched a Laughing Gull from the water). No wonder the birds take flight *en masse* when they sense an Eagle nearby!

**Wildlife Loop** held far fewer mosquitoes and far more ducks (both in numbers and species) than in recent years. We also had Pectoral Sandpipers and lots of Yellowlegs, both Greater and Lesser.

**Thirteen species of warblers**, the largest number we've had since 2015. Most were seen on the Island Nature Trail and Woodland Trail, with several species we don't often see: Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted and Northern Waterthrush.

**Island Nature Trail** also had rarities like Olive-sided Flycatcher and Philadelphia Vireo.

**The causeway** had three White Pelicans, Black-necked Stilts and even a Wilson's Phalarope, seen and photographed by Seth Honig.



*Wilson's Phalarope. Photo by Seth Honig*



We appreciate so much the dedication of all the field trip leaders—Jerry Via, Bill Akers, Lee Adams, Andrew Rapp, Bob Ake, John Pancake and Meredith and Lee Bell—who worked hard to ensure everyone had a great experience.

We've already locked in the 2022 dates, September 9-11. Mark your calendar now and plan to join us for spectacular birding at a remarkable place!

### Complete List of Species for the Chincoteague Field Trip, September 2021

Canada Goose	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Blue Jay	Bobolink
Blue-winged Teal	Great Black-backed Gull	American Crow	Eastern Meadowlark
Northern Shoveler	Caspian Tern	Fish Crow	Baltimore Oriole
Gadwall	Common Tern	Tree Swallow	Red-winged Blackbird
American Wigeon	Forster's Tern	Purple Martin	Brown-headed Cowbird
Mallard	Royal Tern	Barn Swallow	Common Grackle
American Black Duck	Sandwich Tern	Carolina Chickadee	Boat-tailed Grackle
Northern Pintail	Black Skimmer	Tufted Titmouse	Worm-eating Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Double-crested Cormorant	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Waterthrush
Surf Scoter	White Pelican	Brown-headed Nuthatch	Black-and-white Warbler
Eared Grebe	Brown Pelican	House Wren	Common Yellowthroat
Rock Pigeon	Great Blue Heron	Carolina Wren	American Redstart
Mourning Dove	Great Egret	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Northern Parula
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Snowy Egret	Eastern Bluebird	Bay-breasted Warbler
Chimney Swift	Little Blue Heron	American Robin	Yellow Warbler
Ruby-throated	Tricolored Heron	Gray Catbird	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Hummingbird	Cattle Egret	Brown Thrasher	Palm Warbler
Clapper Rail	Green Heron	Northern Mockingbird	Pine Warbler
Black-necked Stilt	Black-crowned Night-Heron	European Starling	Yellow-throated Warbler
American Avocet	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	Cedar Waxwing	Prairie Warbler
American Oystercatcher	Heron	House Sparrow	Summer Tanager
Black-bellied Plover	White Ibis	House Finch	Scarlet Tanager
Kildeer	Glossy Ibis	American Goldfinch	Northern Cardinal
Semipalmated Plover	Black Vulture	Seaside Sparrow	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Piping Plover	Turkey Vulture	Saltmarsh Sparrow	Blue Grosbeak
Whimbrel	Osprey	Song Sparrow	Indigo Bunting
Marbled Godwit	Northern Harrier	Eastern Towhee	
Ruddy Turnstone	Cooper's Hawk		
Red Knot	Bald Eagle		
Stilt Sandpiper	Red-tailed Hawk		
Sanderling	Belted Kingfisher		
Dunlin	Red-headed Woodpecker		
Least Sandpiper	Red-bellied Woodpecker		
Pectoral Sandpiper	Downy Woodpecker		
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Northern Flicker		
Short-billed Dowitcher	American Kestrel		
Spotted Sandpiper	Merlin		
Solitary Sandpiper	Peregrine Falcon		
Lesser Yellowlegs	Great Crested Flycatcher		
Willet	Eastern Kingbird		
Greater Yellowlegs	Olive-sided Flycatcher		
Wilson's Phalarope	Eastern Wood-Pewee		
Laughing Gull	White-eyed Vireo		
Ring-billed Gull	Philadelphia Vireo		
Herring Gull	Red-eyed Vireo		



*Birders and scopes on Beach Road. Photo by Shirley Devan*



# RENEW YOUR VSO MEMBERSHIP!

*Shirley Devan, Membership Secretary*

If you renewed already, you probably beat the price increase!

VSO membership dues went up on January 1, 2022, to these slightly higher annual dues:

Student – \$10 (unchanged)

Active – \$20 (unchanged)

Family – \$35

Sustaining – \$50

Contributing – \$75

In the last few years, the VSO has taken on substantial challenges – the most demanding one being the Second Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas. The field research for the Atlas has ended but the analysis and publication phase will continue through 2025. The VSO is responsible for funding a good bit of this work.

Bramble Hill, a wonderful 30-acre property in Highland County, came to the VSO in 2020. Management, maintenance, and conservation of

this unique birding habitat – including Golden-winged Warbler breeding habitat – will require more investment from the VSO in the coming years. We hope that VSO members will help to treasure and preserve this unique asset.

In addition to these obligations, VSO wants to increase funding for Conservation Grants, Murray Scholarships, Field Ornithology Scholarships, and Youth Conservation Scholarships.

We are confident that our membership supports ALL of these efforts in addition to our ongoing “regular” membership benefits such as newsletters and The Raven PLUS field trips and Annual Meetings which we hope will return to normal schedules in 2022.

We appreciate your continuing support over the past years and trust you will be with us in 2022 and beyond.

## VSO Seeks Award Nominations and Grant and Scholarship Applications

Part of the VSO’s mission is *to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia*. Two important ways we carry out this mission are to recognize scientific achievements through awards and to support the development of young scientists through grants and scholarships. The VSO is currently seeking nominations and applications for the following awards, grants and scholarship.

### **Mitchell A. Byrd Award**

The Mitchell A. Byrd Award, established in 2011, recognizes outstanding scientific achievement in the field of ornithology. The award is named for Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, retired College of William and Mary Professor of Biology, whose research career was key to the restoration of the eastern United States’ Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon populations.

Recipients shall demonstrate an exceptional record of contribution to the scientific knowledge of Virginia’s birds through evidence including, but not limited to, publications such as papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals and books or book chapters derived from the candidates’ original scientific research, conference presentations, recommendation letters from scientific peers, and other forms of peer recognition (e.g., an award from a national scholarly society).

Any member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology may nominate a candidate for the Byrd Award. The Byrd Award Committee selects a recipient for the award from among the candidates, and the award is presented during the Annual Meeting.

Please contact Patti Reum at [pareum@gmail.com](mailto:pareum@gmail.com) to submit the name of your nominee. Deadline is **January 31, 2022**. The award will be presented at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

### James Eike Service Award

In 1983, the Virginia Society of Ornithology Board of Directors approved the James Eike Service Award, named in honor of James Eike, a member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology from 1933 until his death in 1983. Eike’s long and faithful service, his dedication, and his enthusiasm in promoting the work of the VSO gave him a unique status in the organization. The recipient is recognized by the presentation of a silver Raven pin. The first pin was given to Claire Eike, in honor of her late husband for whom the award was named.

The James Eike Service Award is given to recognize a VSO member for outstanding service to the Virginia Society of Ornithology. Eligibility for consideration would include service as an officer, board member, foray director, field trip leader, or other contributions to the organization.

The Eike Service Award Committee is soliciting nominations for the award. Nominators should send a letter of nomination giving the rationale behind the nomination. In addition, two letters of support are required. These materials should be sent to **Patti Reum** at [pareum@gmail.com](mailto:pareum@gmail.com) by **February 1, 2022**. The committee will review all nomination packets and make its recommendation to the VSO Board in the spring with the award itself being presented at the 2022 VSO Annual Meeting.

### VSO Conservation Grants, \$500-\$1000

Every year, the VSO awards conservation grants to worthy candidates conducting research in the field of bird conservation with potential benefits to Virginia species and habitats. The VSO Board of Directors has budgeted \$2,500 annually. Awards are usually \$500, \$1,000 or occasionally more, and the amount is determined by the Conservation Committee.

Applicants are encouraged to submit a request in writing to the Conservation Committee Chair. Each application should include:

- A one-to-two-page research proposal describing how the proposed work will lead to improved conservation of Virginia’s avifauna and/or its habitat
- Requested funding level
- Detailed budget for requested funding

The Conservation Committee will consider each application and confer with the entire Board of the VSO. Recipients are asked to report their findings to the VSO board and members at the completion of their project, occasionally at the VSO Annual Meeting in May.

DEADLINE for application: **January 31, 2022**. The committee will notify the applicant(s) around February 15. Please submit your application to VSO’s Conservation Committee Chair Patti Reum at [pareum@gmail.com](mailto:pareum@gmail.com).

### NEW VSO MEMBERS, SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2021

Lisa Billow, Norfolk, VA Joy Chambers, Annapolis, MD David Clark, Norfolk, VA Beverley Counts, Locust Grove, VA Drew Daniels, Roanoke, VA Virginia Daugherty, Charlottesville, VA Tammy Dickinson, Washington, DC Audrey Digges, Reston, VA Roy Drake, Midlothian, VA Susan Galbreath, Moseley, VA	Jay Gamble, Nellysford, VA Sue Hamilton, Port Republic, MD Rex Holmlin, Williamsburg, VA Kim Kozella, Palmyra, VA Kimberly Labidi, Norfolk, VA Virginia Masterson, Charlottesville, VA Jessica Michetti, Oakton, VA Cynthia Mitchell, Winchester, VA Shirley Mitteldorfer, Hardy, VA Christopher Monahan, Richmond, VA	Lauren Schneider, Ligonier, PA Edith Schumacher, Blacksburg, VA Randy Shannon, Henrico, VA Elizabeth Shell, Reston, VA Robert Solomon, Blacksburg, VA Samantha Sparks, Arlington, VA John Spindler, Mechanicsville, VA Richard Wallace, Lexington, VA Anna Weaver, Norfolk, VA Doug Wigner, Henrico, VA Logan Williams, Willis, VA
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*Awards, continued.*

## **VSO Murray Award, \$1000**

The Murray Award was established in 1980 to honor the Rev. J. J. Murray, Sr., a charter member of the VSO and the editor of its journal, *The Raven*, from its inception until 1969.

The award is designed to promote graduate and undergraduate research consisting of current or projected field studies on Virginia birds. The VSO Board of Directors has budgeted \$2,000 annually to support two proposals. 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 held in May and is encouraged to publish the results in an appropriate journal. The recipient will also be awarded a one-year membership in the VSO.

Applicants must submit the following materials by **January 31, 2021**, as a PDF file:

- Proposal of up to 5 pages including background, objectives/hypotheses, methods, expected results, and benefits to Virginia birds. Citations should be included in the 5 pages.
- Budget describing how the VSO funds will be used along with any other funding already acquired to carry out the project.
- Name of the institution and department they are enrolled in, the degree they are working towards, and the name of their research advisor.

Applicants should also have their advisor send a letter of recommendation separately that, at a minimum, verifies the applicant is a student in good standing and is receiving the advisor's support for the proposed project. Inclusion of additional information about the applicant is also helpful and will be considered by the reviewers.

Applicants will be notified of the results by mid-March 2022. Please send proposals or requests for information to Lesley Bulluck, Center for Environmental Studies, VCU, [lpbulluck@vcu.edu](mailto:lpbulluck@vcu.edu)



*Osprey, the research subject of 2020 Murray Award winner Michael Academia. Photo by Dick Rowe*

## **VSO Field Ornithology Scholarship, \$500**

The VSO would like to annually support one student to participate in a formal training/workshop to gain field ornithology skills (i.e., mist-netting, banding, etc.).

Applicants need to submit the following materials by January 31, 2022 (a) description of the workshop they hope to attend, including a web link to the opportunity if one exists, (b) description of why the student needs to gain these skills, and (c) a brief budget of expected expenses.

Students working with a faculty member to carry out a specific project to benefit Virginia birds will be given priority. Applicants will be notified of the results by early March 2022.

Please send proposals or requests for information by **January 31, 2022**, to Lesley Bulluck, Center for Environmental Studies, VCU, [lpbulluck@vcu.edu](mailto:lpbulluck@vcu.edu)





The Virginia Society of  
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## 2022 VSO Membership Renewal

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[vsomembership@cox.net](mailto:vsomembership@cox.net)

Your support means so much to the success of the VSO. Thank you!

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