



*Field Guides Tour Report*  
**Virginias' Warblers 2013**

May 29, 2013 to Jun 2, 2013  
John Rowlett, Lena Senko, Eric Hynes

*For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).*



*Though a declining species over much of its breeding range, the Golden-winged Warbler is still doing quite well in parts of Virginia, thanks to folks like the O'Bryans, who maintain areas of early successional habitat for the benefit of the warblers. This cooperative male wowed us at Bramble Hill. (Photo by guide Eric Hynes)*

This twenty-second iteration of Virginias' Warblers (over an 18-year period) was one of the very finest of the lot! I have never been with a more convivial and charming group of participants, and it was a delight to be able to share the Parulid richness of the two Virginias with this lively group, along with not one but two other guides, both of whom brought special character and talent to the trip. So thanks to Lena and Eric!

Highlights were numerous, but seeing 25 of the 26 species of breeding warblers we encountered had to rank tops. Yet four Empidonax and four brown-backed thrushes, a full house of some of North America's simply premier birds, and a host of gracious hosts who people the land—all these merit special mention as sources of unsurpassed pleasure.

I want to express our gratitude to Patti, Pen & Cabell, Ches & Nancy, and Margaret & Wayne for hosting meals and sharing their Highland County wealth; to Abbie for all her preparation and tasty creations; and to the literary scribes who summed it all up (see the Conclusion at the back of this list). I hope the triplist annotations highlight some of your favorite sightings and that our paths will cross on another tour somewhere, sometime. I know that for myself moments from this tour will be coming up on my screen for a long time!

--Pepper

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#### KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: \* = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

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#### BIRDS

##### *Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)*

**CANADA GOOSE** (*Branta canadensis*) – Here and there.

**WOOD DUCK** (*Aix sponsa*) – A pair attempted to settle in for the evening on the Goodall pond as we were leaving but thought better of it considering

the group of birders.

**MALLARD** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) – We usually see more than the two encountered.

*Phasianidae (Pheasants, Grouse, and Allies)*

**RUFFED GROUSE** (*Bonasa umbellus*) – Two almost grown young birds standing in the road (FR17) on our "Alder Flycatcher" loop. Nice views by birders in both vans.

**WILD TURKEY** (*Meleagris gallopavo*) – One seen flying off the roadside along Hwy 250; it put in alongside the forest edge enabling all in the rear van also to get good views.

*Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)*

**GREAT BLUE HERON** (*Ardea herodias*) – One standing at a pond near Hightown in the Blue Grass Valley.

*Cathartidae (New World Vultures)*

**BLACK VULTURE** (*Coragyps atratus*) – Seen daily.

**TURKEY VULTURE** (*Cathartes aura*) – Seen daily.

*Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)*

**COOPER'S HAWK** (*Accipiter cooperii*) – One seen by some as it flew over IH64 east of Staunton on our last afternoon.

**BALD EAGLE** (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) – A handsome adult seen in the same tree on two occasions in the Blue Grass Valley.

**RED-SHOULDERED HAWK** (*Buteo lineatus*) – More common from the Blue Ridge east, where ours were seen.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** (*Buteo platypterus*) – Most common on our route in the mountainous Blue Ridge, where we had our three.

**RED-TAILED HAWK** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) – Generally distributed in low numbers; we had at least one bird on four days.

*Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)*

**KILLDEER** (*Charadrius vociferus*) – Regular near our motel in Monterey.

*Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)*

**ROCK PIGEON** (*Columba livia*) [I]

**MOURNING DOVE** (*Zenaida macroura*) – Seen daily.

*Cuculidae (Cuckoos)*

**YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO** (*Coccyzus americanus*) – Several seen and heard.

*Strigidae (Owls)*

**BARRED OWL** (*Strix varia*) – One was sitting in the road along the Blue Ridge Parkway, evidently having attempted to capture prey; it flew off and we had reasonably good views of it in the forest. We also saw a pair at our lunch spot at Humpback Rocks Picnic Area, and one bird of this pair gave us the best looks for the group as a whole.

*Apodidae (Swifts)*

**CHIMNEY SWIFT** (*Chaetura pelagica*) – Not uncommon; seen daily.

*Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)*

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD** (*Archilochus colubris*) – Though we had singletons here and there, our best looks came at Margaret's feeders, Bramble Hill, where we enjoyed at least three birds.

*Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)*

**BELTED KINGFISHER** (*Megaceryle alcyon*) – One seen in the Greenbriar Valley, one in the Blue Grass Valley.

*Picidae (Woodpeckers)*

**RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) – Eric got us on our first pair, and we had several close looks at this striking woodpecker—simply one of the great birds of North America!—in the Blue Grass Valley. To see this boldly patterned *Melanerpes* approach us in response to playback and begin drumming on the dead limb of a locust was thrilling for all. This so-cool woodpecker tied Cerulean Warbler for the second-best bird of our tour.

**RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER** (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – Seen nicely, but took a backseat to the Red-headed.

**YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER** (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – Fine views of a beautiful male at the Science Camp, Pocahontas County; others were heard delivering their distinctive drum and their unique complaint.

**DOWNY WOODPECKER** (*Picoides pubescens*) – A couple seen; other heard.

**HAIRY WOODPECKER** (*Picoides villosus*) – More common than its smaller cousin in most of the area we visited.

**NORTHERN FLICKER (YELLOW-SHAFTED)** (*Colaptes auratus auratus*) – This Picid, which spends so much time on the ground after ants, was seen daily.

**PILEATED WOODPECKER** (*Dryocopus pileatus*) – Our best view was of a bird flying high overhead at Old House Run, no doubt making a territorial pass as is their wont.

*Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)*

**AMERICAN KESTREL** (*Falco sparverius*) – A pair seen in the Blue Grass Valley; its nesting cavities are competed for by Starlings, which are usually successful in driving out the Kestrels, resulting in a diminished population in the Blue Grass Valley over the past 20 years.

*Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)*

**EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE** (*Contopus virens*) – We had several good views of this breeder, first at Warren Ferry, but also in the mountains below about 3200 feet.

**ACADIAN FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax virens*) – Seen at Old House Run on a couple of occasions and heard at various sites in the Blue Ridge

and along streamsid es as high as somewhat above the Science Camp, West Virginia.

**ALDER FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax alnorum*) – Fine studies along FRs 14 and 17, Pocahontas County, West Virginia.

**WILLOW FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax traillii*) – Singing on territory behind our motel, Monterey, and well seen along the Greenbriar River, Bartow.

**LEAST FLYCATCHER** (*Empidonax minimus*) – Seen best (and heard) at the Science Camp, WV. Heard in open woodlands elsewhere along our route.

**EASTERN PHOEBE** (*Sayornis phoebe*) – Fairly numerous throughout our route. [N]

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** (*Myiarchus crinitus*) – A pair seen exceedingly well at our breakfast picnic spot in the Blue Ridge.

**EASTERN KINGBIRD** (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) – Not uncommon along our route; one remarkable sighting of a female on the nest suspended in a tent caterpillar webbing near New Hampden in the Blue Grass Valley. [N]

#### Vireonidae (Vireos)

**WHITE-EYED VIREO** (*Vireo griseus*) – Seen our first afternoon at Warren Ferry in Albemarle County.

**BLUE-HEADED VIREO** (*Vireo solitarius*) – Seen well and heard in several sites in the Blue Ridge and the Alleghenys.

**WARBLING VIREO** (*Vireo gilvus*) – One responded to the Yellow-throated Vireo fuss at Warren Ferry our first afternoon.

**RED-EYED VIREO** (*Vireo olivaceus*) – Common throughout our route with exception of the highest elevations.

#### Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

**BLUE JAY** (*Cyanocitta cristata*) – Daily.

**AMERICAN CROW** (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) – Daily.

**COMMON RAVEN** (*Corvus corax*) – Daily above 2000 feet.

#### Alaudidae (Larks)

**HORNED LARK** (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Great views of a skylarking bird on Laurel Springs Road just outside Blue Grass!

#### Hirundinidae (Swallows)

**TREE SWALLOW** (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – Fairly common in the valleys west of the Blue Ridge; the birds nesting off the porch at the Heveners' farm provided repeated studies. [N]

**BARN SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*) – Seen daily. [N]

**CLIFF SWALLOW** (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Several seen nicely here and there; uncommon but regular as a breeder in the area we birded.

#### Paridae (Chickadees and Tits)

**CAROLINA CHICKADEE** (*Poecile carolinensis*) – Several east of and in the Blue Ridge; seen best in eastern Highland County on our last morning, where a pair was mobbing Pepper's screech-owl imitation.

**BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE** (*Poecile atricapillus*) – Seen in the highlands west of the Blue Ridge.

**TUFTED TITMOUSE** (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – Encountered daily.

#### Sittidae (Nuthatches)

**RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta canadensis*) – Several seen nicely in the Alleghenys west of the Blue Ridge; strictly a mountain bird as a breeder in VA and WV.

**WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** (*Sitta carolinensis*) – The lowland-nesting nuthatch, getting up into almost 3000 feet in the Blue Ridge.

#### Certhiidae (Treecreepers)

**BROWN CREEPER** (*Certhia americana*) – Excellent views of this super little bird with the cool, warbler-like song. One of Eric's favorites. We had nice looks in the Alleghenys where it is a breeder.

#### Troglodytidae (Wrens)

**HOUSE WREN** (*Troglodytes aedon*) – Rather sparingly distributed in our area with the exception of Albemarle and Fluvanna counties.

**WINTER WREN** (*Troglodytes hiemalis*) – What an illimitable source of sonorous, bubbling song! We had great views of this tiny package of myrth at Gaudineer Knob.

**CAROLINA WREN** (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – Seen in the James River valley and heard on other days.

#### Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

**BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** (*Poliophtila caerulea*) – Nice looks at the slender Cerulean Poliophtila—not as cerulean as the warbler!

#### Regulidae (Kinglets)

**GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET** (*Regulus satrapa*) – Wow! The male's fiery crown really stands up!

#### Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

**EASTERN BLUEBIRD** (*Sialia sialis*) – Not uncommon along our route—below 3000 feet.

**VEERY** (*Catharus fuscescens*) – We heard the lovely song of this *Catharus*, but it was the only brown-backed thrush we failed to see.

**SWAINSON'S THRUSH** (*Catharus ustulatus*) – Nice looks of a songster at the "remanent" virgin spruce grove.

**HERMIT THRUSH** (*Catharus guttatus*) – Good views of another fine songster at the same red spruce grove.

**WOOD THRUSH** (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Heard daily, and seen finally in eastern Highland County along the Cowpasture River.

**AMERICAN ROBIN** (*Turdus migratorius*) – Seen daily. [N]

#### Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

**GRAY CATBIRD** (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – As it happened, we recorded this Mimid mostly in Highland and Pocahontas counties, but it is more than likely the most numerous non-permanent resident breeder in Albemarle.

**NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD** (*Mimus polyglottos*) – Almost daily.

**BROWN THRASHER** (*Toxostoma rufum*) – Quite common in the Blue Grass Valley.

*Sturnidae (Starlings)*

**EUROPEAN STARLING** (*Sturnus vulgaris*) – Daily. [I]

*Bombycillidae (Waxwings)*

**CEDAR WAXWING** (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – Seen on most days; a late breeder.

*Parulidae (New World Warblers)*

**OVENBIRD** (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – The first, phylogenetically speaking, of the 26 warblers we encountered on the tour, 25 of which were seen well.

We had great looks at an Ovenbird at our opening picnic breakfast as it sang walking along horizontal limbs well above the ground.

**WORM-EATING WARBLER** (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – Several seen and heard along FR 814; this bird is a subtle beauty among the Parulids.

**LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia motacilla*) – We finally had one settle down long enough for us to enjoy good views at Old House Run.

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH** (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – Several heard in Blister Swamp, our best sighting coming about a mile beyond where we heard our first two. This is the southernmost breeding area for this northern species.

**GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER** (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Seeing a classic male Golden-wing sit out, sing, and casually preen itself only a few feet away at Bramble Hill was certainly among the highlights of our trip! We had a lot of fun with Carole's rump remark, which I will not repeat here but which referred to the bird's utilizing its uropygial gland (which many non-passerines do not have) to distribute oil onto its feathers as it preened—quite distracting. Carole was pointing out, for those viewing (and photographing) the bird! (I admit that it loses something in translation!) We enjoyed another male near the Cowpasture River in eastern Highland. Golden-wings continue under much threat but are doing quite well in western Highland, hands down its Virginia stronghold, in part thanks to the O'Bryans who maintain their early succession briery pasture so critical for survival.

**BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** (*Mniotilta varia*) – Some great looks at this striking warbler, our first on our first afternoon in Fluvanna County near Scottsville. We had daily encounters.

**PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** (*Protonotaria citrea*) – What a jewel of the swamp this bird is! Fabulous views our first afternoon along the James River at Warren Ferry. Sweet, sweet, sweet indeed!

**MOURNING WARBLER** (*Geothlypis philadelphia*) – Outstanding views of several, first at the Science Camp, thanks to Lena; perhaps our best sighting came in WV on Hwy 250 near the Pocahontas-Randolph County line where one perched over our heads on a bare limb and continued to sing for some time for all to marvel at. Stunning.

**KENTUCKY WARBLER** (*Geothlypis formosa*) – That rascal, always a bit of an outsider on this tour, just wouldn't show itself along the Blue Ridge Parkway where it nests in low numbers. What a good reason to return! [\*]

**COMMON YELLOWTHROAT** (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Several encountered; seen best at the marsh on FR14 where we had a very responsive male.

**HOODED WARBLER** (*Setophaga citrina*) – Seen beautifully in the Blue Ridge. A very pretty warbler.

**AMERICAN REDSTART** (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – Seen almost daily. We found a nest attended by a female along FR814. The adult males are bold in pattern. Based on ubiquity of song, American Redstart is likely the commonest of the Parulids breeding in the Blue Ridge. [N]

**CERULEAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga cerulea*) – Another tour highlight! What tremendous views of lovely males (and a female or two)! To see this warbler so low and so well is one of the top warbler treats of this tour. Though precipitously declining throughout much of its range, Cerulean is holding its own in the Blue Ridge where it does well as a breeder.

**NORTHERN PARULA** (*Setophaga americana*) – Fine views of a male our first afternoon, Warren Ferry; our best views came at the Science Camp where we watched a handsomely marked male respond to playback and show itself off just a few feet away.

**MAGNOLIA WARBLER** (*Setophaga magnolia*) – One of the prettiest warblers! We had some fine sightings in the hemlocks and spruce of Pocahontas and Randolph counties, perhaps the nicest at Gaudineer Knob.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** (*Setophaga fusca*) – What a gem! While this Parulid spends much of the year in subtropical Andean South America, it was on fire for us at Gaudineer Knob.

**YELLOW WARBLER** (*Setophaga petechia*) – Fairly common along the river valleys in Highland County and along the Greenbriar in Pocahontas County. "Sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm so sweet" too!

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – This beauty was seen first in the Blue Ridge, but we had many good looks, especially memorable ones coming at the small swamp on FR14 and at Bramble Hill.

**BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** (*Setophaga caerulescens cairnsi*) – Wonderful studies of a male in the rhodos along FR17 and of another male at the virgin spruce in Randolph County. This Appalachian subspecies has black streaks on its dark blue back.

**PINE WARBLER** (*Setophaga pinus*) – A nice last-minute surprise above the Hardware River in Fluvanna County where we had our Chat and Prairie. A big warbler.

**YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (MYRTLE)** (*Setophaga coronata coronata*) – Excellent views on Gaudineer Knob where this warbler has been nesting now for about 30 years; this and the Goodall farm mark the southern limit of its regular breeding range. Watch for this taxon to be elevated to species status (and split from Audubon's).

**YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (YELLOW-LORED)** (*Setophaga dominica dominica*) – Excellent views of a singing male that responded by descending to within a few feet of our heads at Warren Ferry, Albemarle County. Along our route, this taxon inhabits riparian sycamores, in which they place their nests, usually high above ground.

**PRAIRIE WARBLER** (*Setophaga discolor*) – A superb warbler with a memorable, ascending song; seen splendidly—chestnut back-marks and all—in a patch of early succession pine above the Hardware River, Fluvanna County.

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** (*Setophaga virens*) – Nice views in the mixed conifer-hardwoods of Pocahontas and Randolph counties, WV. A nice male was responsive at the Science Camp.

**CANADA WARBLER** (*Cardellina canadensis*) – An exquisite warbler with that delicate necklace! Seen very well in the rhodos along FR17 and at Blister Swamp along Hwy 250. Its song is a pleasing if inimitable jumble of notes (except perhaps for Eric's friend!).

**YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** (*Icteria virens*) – What a furtive comic! This "warbler," if it can indeed be so called (a skeptical view resides in the generic name!), was difficult to see well until it finally succumbed to playback and did a lovely song flight over the early succession pine and

overgrown pasture near Scottsville! For future reference, to be in attendance for such a floppy display at night under a big moon is very heaven!

#### Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

**EASTERN TOWHEE** (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) – Enjoyed daily.

**CHIPPING SPARROW** (*Spizella passerina*) – Also encountered daily.

**FIELD SPARROW** (*Spizella pusilla*) – We saw this sparrow best at Margaret's Bramble Hill and along the Greenbriar River at Bartow, but it was singing each morning behind our motel in Monterey.

**VESPER SPARROW** (*Poocetes gramineus*) – Two fine individuals seen near the beginning of Laurel Fork Road above Blue Grass. What a nice song!

**SAVANNAH SPARROW** (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – Seen well singing on the fence in nice grassland, Highland County.

**GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** (*Ammodramus savannarum*) – Excellent studies of a pair on the ground and on the fence in good grassland along FR640 above Blue Grass.

**SONG SPARROW** (*Melospiza melodia*) – Daily along our route, not too high in elevation.

**SWAMP SPARROW** (*Melospiza georgiana*) – Splendid views of this well-marked sparrow in the marsh along FR17; one of Lorraine's favorites.

**DARK-EYED JUNCO (SLATE-COLORED)** (*Junco hyemalis carolinensis*) – This large, gray-billed taxon is an Allegheny form of the species. Seen best perhaps at Gaudineer Knob. [N]

#### Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

**SCARLET TANAGER** (*Piranga olivacea*) – A superb bird! Heard quite often in the Blue Ridge and seen several times, lastly along the Cowpasture River where we had a pair (I think this was our sole female).

**NORTHERN CARDINAL** (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) – The state bird of six states, including Virginia and West Virginia.

**ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – Great songster, great bird! Our first was a young male, our second an adult male, both seen nicely. The male of this species characteristically sings from the nest!

**BLUE GROSBEAK** (*Passerina caerulea*) – A smashing male above the Hardware River near Scottsville. A nice surprise.

**INDIGO BUNTING** (*Passerina cyanea*) – Plentiful; seen and heard daily. Likely the most abundant non-permanent resident breeder west of the Blue Ridge and Albemarle County.

#### Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

**BOBOLINK** (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) – One of the great birds of North America—and South America, since it winters in the Pampas! They nest in the Blue Grass Valley, and while we saw several beautiful males and watched them perform their song flights, I saw fewer in number this year than in any year over the past decade.

**RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD** (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) – Seen daily in fair numbers.

**EASTERN MEADOWLARK** (*Sturnella magna*) – Ditto.

**COMMON GRACKLE** (*Quiscalus quiscula*) – Ditto.

**BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD** (*Molothrus ater*) – Seen and heard daily.

**ORCHARD ORIOLE** (*Icterus spurius*) – Good studies of a couple of first-summer males, our best sighting near New Hampden (where we saw the Kingbird on her nest).

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** (*Icterus galbula*) – Encountered daily. A striking beauty and one of Emily Dickinson's favorite birds.

#### Fringillidae (Siskins, Crossbills, and Allies)

**PURPLE FINCH** (*Haemorhous purpureus*) – Great views of a responsive male on FR14 where we saw our first Alder Flycatcher.

**HOUSE FINCH** (*Haemorhous mexicanus*) – Almost daily. Some were hanging around our motel in Monterey.

**AMERICAN GOLDFINCH** (*Spinus tristis*) – Seen and enjoyed daily.

#### Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

**HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*) – Almost daily. [I]

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## MAMMALS

**VIRGINIA OPOSSUM** (*Didelphis virginianus*) – One seen on our third day.

**EASTERN COTTONTAIL** (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – One seen on our fourth day.

**PLAIN EASTERN CHIPMUNK** (*Tamias striatus*) – Almost daily; the commonest mammals on the tour.

**WOODCHUCK** (*Marmota monax*) – Seen on several occasions.

**EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – Common east of the Blue Ridge; a few in Highland County.

**FOX SQUIRREL** (*Sciurus niger*) – The common *Sciurus* in Highland County.

**RED SQUIRREL** (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) – Not uncommon in the mountainous regions of the Alleghenys.

**NORTHERN RACCOON** (*Procyon lotor*) – A leader-only and one DOR.

**STRIPED SKUNK** (*Mephitis mephitis*) – One DOR, the way they're normally seen, alas.

**WHITE-TAILED DEER** (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – Seen almost daily.

#### Herps

**SPRING PEEPER** (*Pseudacris crucifer*) – Formerly placed in the genus *Hyla* (tree frogs), the Spring Peeper is now placed in *Pseudacris* (chorus frogs). We enjoyed a chorus of these Peepers at the Goodall Farm, where several of us watched one peeping that Pen noticed at the woodland edge. A lifer for Jan and others.

**EASTERN SNAPPING TURTLE** (*Chelydra serpentina*) – One seen on our last day.

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## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

*Thanks to Ann and Barb we have some delightful verses by which to recall our tour! You'll just have to remember their trading off reading them to us in the parking lot our final morn at the Montvallee:*

'Twas on a hot and sunny day  
That 12 to Charlottesville did come  
Colourful warblers for to see,  
The depths of those bird songs to plumb.

We met up with our leaders three,  
Abby had made the coolers full,  
James river, Monterey, Durbin too,  
There'd never be a moment dull.

Now Durbin was the place that John  
Had started the tour, warblers to see,  
Now named Virginias' Warblers tour  
They've been going for a quarter century.

Now Eric was our bonus guide,  
A spotter of birds splendiferous.  
His mnemonics gave us warbler sounds,  
That amused as well as instructed us.

Lena is the newest member of the team;  
A birdwatching job's long been her dream;  
Botany and yoga are her other delights,  
More trips with Field Guides are in her sights.

We mustn't forget our gracious hosts  
Patti and Margaret, Pen and Ches;  
They opened their house to us strangers all,  
Without so much as a second guess.

Twenty-five kinds of warblers we did see—  
Well blast that Kentucky anyway!  
We say goodbye to new-found friends,  
With good memories to last many a day.

*Then, thanks to Elizabeth, we received the following advice to birders from a birder:*

Thanks to all for a great trip, and in the spirit of Barbara and Ann's T-shirts offering advice from different animals, here is "Advice from a Birder":

Always look up  
Follow the green dot  
Be patient, they'll be back next year  
Scope things out, but then step aside  
Don't be afraid to go backwards, sometimes the view is better  
Follow your leaders, you are in good hands  
You can be very happy with two in the bush  
Birders band together

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**Totals for the tour: 123 bird taxa and 10 mammal taxa**