



## **4th Annual Southern Boreal Birding Festival June 4 – 6, 2010**

### **Festival Schedule of Events**

#### **Friday, June 4**

- 3:00pm **Registration** begins at Canaan Valley Resort State Park Main Lodge Lobby
- 6:00pm **Exhibits** open to the public (Pine Room)
- 7:00pm\* **Introductory Remarks** (Pine Room)
- 7:15pm **Welcome to Canaan Valley** (Speaker: Rob Gilligan, Superintendent of Canaan Valley Resort State Park and Blackwater Falls State Park.)
- 7:20pm **Bird Festival Welcome** (Casey Rucker – Festival Director)

#### **Saturday, June 5**

- 5:00am **Continental Breakfast** (Pine Room)
- 5:30am **Target Bird Search** (Difficulty 2). Find the birds most sought after by festival participants, as stated on registration forms we have received. This will most likely entail a 45 minute drive (one way) to the Stuart Memorial Hwy. Two years ago the group found a Brewster's Warbler among the Golden-winged Warblers. High elevation breeders will be the goal unless the requested majority of target birds dictate otherwise. (Matt Orsie, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 5:30am **Early Bird Special - Breeding Warblers** (Difficulty 2, except for hike up Seneca Rocks – 4). Driving time is approximately 45 minutes each way. We will explore habitats at altitudes ranging from 4,000' to 1,500' to find warblers singing on their breeding grounds, including Cerulean, Worm-Eating, Yellow-Rumped, Blackburnian and Golden-Winged. An optional 3-mile hike will climb a thousand feet to the north peak of Seneca Rocks, for a Pine Warbler serenade. Exact route will depend on scouting results. (Casey Rucker, Leader - meet at Pine Room)

- 6:00am **Conifer Habitats High and Low** (Difficulty rating 4). This trip will explore the Freeland, Parsons and Kelly-Elkins Tracts of Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, including some of the more recently-acquired land in the Refuge. We will explore Canaan Valley conifer wetlands as well as spruce-dominated highlands. There will be a moderately-strenuous one and a half mile hike, and participants may encounter fifty or more species along the way. Trail will be wet and rubber boots are strongly recommended. (Ken Sturm, Leader – meet at Pine Room)
- 7:00am **Birds of Canaan Valley** (Difficulty rating 2-3). This trip will tour Canaan Valley Resort State Park and neighboring tracts of Canaan Valley NWR. We may see as many as fifty species, including warblers such as Blackburnian, Magnolia, Nashville, Black-throated Blue and Green, Ovenbird and Chestnut-sided, and other local specialties such as Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos and Alder and Willow Flycatchers. (Michael Welch, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 8:30am **Canaan Birds for Beginners** (Difficulty rating 2) A short audio-visual presentation will be shown in the Spruce room to start this walk. Afterwards participants will walk from the Lodge onto nearby trails at Canaan Valley Resort State Park, including a visit to an observation tower. This trip will include hemlock wetlands and grasslands, and we may encounter Winter Wrens, Blackburnian Warblers and the haunting song of the Hermit Thrush. (Jackie Burns, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 12:00pm **Lunch** - All morning walks will return in time for lunch and afternoon activities. (Pine Room)
- 1:00pm **Northern Tract, Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge** (Difficulty rating 2). We will explore the most remote part of the National Wildlife Refuge, including little-visited wetlands, early-successional meadows and hardwood forest. This area has recently hosted such rare birds in our area as Golden-winged Warbler and Clay-colored Sparrow. The drive takes nearly an hour on a tough road (carpooling in rugged vehicles is recommended) but our beautiful destination makes it worthwhile. During a prior festival, participants got great, safe views of a young black bear as a bonus during this walk. (Michael Welch, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 1:00pm **Sparrow Workshop** - Hard to distinguish, and often harder to see, sparrows pose among the greatest identification challenges to birders. Learn to identify the ten breeding sparrows of Canaan Valley, by shape, plumage, song, habitat and behavior. (Ken Sturm & Casey Rucker, Leaders - meet at Pine Room)
- 2:00pm **Grassland Birds of Canaan & Vicinity** (Difficulty rating 2). Driving time is approximately 50 minutes. Beginning at the Freeland Tract of Canaan Valley NWR, continuing at the Refuge's Beall Tract, and finishing at Fairfax Stone, we may encounter thirty bird species along the way, including sought-after Bobolinks and Henslow's, Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows. (Matt Orsie, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 5 – 7:00pm **Dinner** (on own) – participants are encouraged to have dinner at the resort or

venture out to the local community.

- 7:00pm\* **Social Hour** – Light hors d'oeuvres available in Pine Room
- 8:00pm\* **Keynote Address – Rob Tallman:** Mr. Tallman will introduce us to the West Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas Project II, a critically important survey begun last year. Rob will teach us how to participate and inform us of results to date.

## Sunday, June 6

- 5:00am **Continental Breakfast** (Pine Room)
- 5:30am **High Elevation Breeders and Golden-Winged Warblers** (Difficulty 2). We will take a 45 minute drive (one way) to the Stuart Memorial Hwy. Two years ago the group found a Brewster's Warbler among the Golden-winged Warblers. High elevation breeders will be the goal unless the requested majority of target birds dictate otherwise. (Matt Orsie, Leader – meet at Pine Room)
- 7:00am **Mountaintop Birds** (Difficulty rating 3). Driving time 10 minutes. We will ride the chairlift at Canaan Valley Resort Ski Center to near the top of Cabin Mountain at an elevation of 4,200 feet (\$5 fee for lift). Once on the mountaintop, we will walk along forest trails and a pipeline cut to Bald Knob. Birds we may encounter include Golden-crowned Kinglet, high altitude warblers, and we may even look down on soaring raptors! Trails may be wet, depending on weather conditions. (Michael Welch, Leader – meet at Pine Room)
- 8:00am **Canaan Birds for Beginners** (Difficulty rating 2) A short audio-visual presentation will be shown in the Spruce room to start this walk. Afterwards participants will walk from the Lodge onto nearby trails at Canaan Valley Resort State Park, including a visit to an observation tower. This trip will include hemlock wetlands and grasslands, and we may encounter Winter Wrens, Blackburnian Warblers and the haunting song of the Hermit Thrush. (Jackie Burns, Leader - meet at Pine Room)
- 11:00am\*\* **Beekeeping Demonstration** - Ben McKean will provide a brief look at honeybees, their biology, honey production, and disease and pest management. Ben will be available to answer your questions regarding the recent events associated with honeybee colonies. (Spruce Room)
- 12:00pm **Farwell Lunch** - We will tally our totals for the festival, and wish our participants a great summer of birding. (Pine Room)
- 1:00pm **Thunderstruck Property, Nature Conservancy** (Difficulty rating 2). This outing offers birders the rare opportunity to visit a newly-acquired property of Thunderstruck Conservation LLC, managed by The Nature Conservancy, located on Mt. Porte-Crayon. Thunderstruck supports one of the largest environmentally significant and biologically diverse relatively intact forested blocks in the Central Appalachians. Participants will drive from 2,600-foot elevation to 4,300 feet, encountering riparian habitat, early successional meadows, second growth

northern hardwood forest and spruce forest along the higher elevations. Beginners and experienced birders alike will encounter a variety of habitats from grassland to woodland to wetland, and participants will contribute to the creation of a bird list for the property. Participants will be required to sign a liability waiver before entering the property, and carpooling is recommended. (Leaders Amy Cimarolli, Mike Powell and Casey Rucker - meet at Pine Room)

\* Evening programs are open to non-Bird Festival guests for a fee of \$5 per adult, with children 12 and under free with paying adult.

\*\* Free and open to non-Bird Festival guests.

Note: Schedule is subject to change without notice.

### **Difficulty Ratings**

1. Easiest - Easy walking on relatively level surfaces or mainly birding from your vehicle.
2. Moderate - Relatively easy walking on improved trails. Walking surfaces may be uneven. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are recommended.
3. Difficult - More difficult walking/hiking across improved and unimproved trails. Walking surfaces may be uneven, rocky, and wet. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots are required.
4. Most Difficult - Difficult walking/hiking across improved and unimproved trails with considerable elevation changes. Walking surfaces may be uneven, rocky, and wet. Sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots required along with drinking water and snacks.

### **Driving Times**

- All tours will leave from Canaan Valley Resort State Park.
- Driving times are approximate and carpooling is highly recommended.
- Gas stations may be limited, so please fill up before trip.
- Some roads are rocky, gravel roads, but 4 wheel drives are not required.

### **Festival Information**

For information regarding the bird festival, please contact Dave Vance, Canaan Valley Resort at 304-866-4121 x2788 or [vanced@canaanresort.com](mailto:vanced@canaanresort.com)