

# Dragon's Tale

Friends of Dragon Run  
PO Box 882  
Gloucester, VA 23061

Friends of Dragon Run, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to the preservation, protection, and encouragement of wise use of the Dragon Run and its watershed.

Volume XXX Number III

September 2014

## SEPTEMBER 17 GENERAL MEETING

### Inside this issue:

### Making Sense of Migration

At our next meeting (September 17 at 7:00 PM), Bill Williams will be discussing the mid-September peak of one of two annual migrations accomplished by tens of millions of birds across the globe. The program will be devoted to the complex interplay of factors that influence how birds achieve these extraordinary seasonal journeys, with particular emphasis on investigations conducted in eastern Virginia for more than half a century.

Our speaker is retired from the Williamsburg-James City County Schools, where he served as a teacher and K-12 Science and Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator for 31 years. He was a founder of the Williamsburg Bird Club and the founder of the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory. Bill is a past president of the Virginia Society of Ornithology and is currently a member of the VSO's Board of Directors. He is Chairman of the Virginia Avian Records Committee, is the Coastal Region editor for the journal, *Virginia Birds*, and is the Tidewater Region Reviewer for the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's citizen science eBird program. Bill was the Director of the Virginia Barrier Islands Colonial Waterbirds Survey for the Virginia Coast Reserve of The Nature Conservancy from 1975-2005 and was the founder and Director of the Kiptopeke Hawk Watch from 1977-2002. Bill was a founding member of the Williamsburg Land Conservancy. He currently serves on that organization's Board of Directors and served three terms as its president. He edited *The Birds of Virginia's Colonial Historic Triangle* published by the Williamsburg Bird Club in 2012. He is a graduate of Emory and Henry College and holds a Masters Degree in Biology from the College of William and Mary.

The meeting will be held at 7:00 PM in the Community Room of the Gloucester County Main Library located in the Main Street Shopping Center on Business Route 17 at the southern edge of Gloucester Court House.

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### Ever Save a Dragon?

### ROADSIDE TRASH PICKUP IS SATURDAY, SEPT. 20 AT 9:00 AM

Meet in the parking lot of Rappahannock Community College in Glenss. For more information contact Hugh Markham at [markham@crosslink.net](mailto:markham@crosslink.net)



LEFT—  
Tree Swallow

CENTER—  
Willet

RIGHT -  
Barn Swallow



## Looking Ahead. . .

By Davis Rhodes

### **Friends of Dragon Run has some interesting events coming up this Fall.**

I'd first like to invite everyone to mark their calendar and plan to attend the annual Fall Picnic which will be held this year on Saturday, September 27 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This event is always held at the Big Island preserve in King and Queen County between Mascot and Coldwater. Please look for your reservation ticket elsewhere in this issue and sign up to attend. If you need directions, give us a shout and we can e-mail them to you or talk you through the route by phone. The Rt. 603 and Rt. 610 roadways from Warner to the FODR property will also be well marked with yellow and black FODR signs pointing the way. We will enjoy some great BBQ, delicious side dishes, cold soft drinks, and desserts courtesy of our capable Picnic Chairperson Darbie Maccubbin, and folks who graciously donate their specialty dishes. Who knows, we might also be treated to another bagpipe serenade by Dr. John Langloh. Other activities available during the day include walks down some of the now-famous trails on the preserve and casual conversation with friends in the most relaxed atmosphere you can find anywhere. Be sure to bring a folding chair for your comfort wherever you decide to linger. Mother Nature has blessed this area with abundant wildlife and beautiful scenery just waiting to be enjoyed by new comers and old timers alike. There is plenty of room to park and there will be shuttle rides to and from the picnic area for those who wish to forego the pleasant walk. Ticket prices are quite reasonable and I promise you will enjoy the time you spend with us that day. If you need additional information, feel free to call a Board Member or Officer with your question.

For the outdoor lover not afraid to break a little sweat, we also need volunteer help on Saturday, September 13 to help trim the Big Island entrance road and the landing area where we hold the picnic. We will meet at the Big Island preserve parking area at 9:00 AM. Bring your lunch and something to drink as well as clippers, loppers or hand saws, gloves and sturdy shoes to wear. With a significant rainfall this spring and summer, the trees and shrubs along the roadway and at the landing have grown by leaps and bounds. We'd like to trim them up a bit to give us ample walking and driving space. We should be finished by 2:00 P.M. This event is a great way to get involved with FODR and to meet some new friends within our ranks. If you can help, please call John Jensen on (804) 769-1565 or (703) 402-7097 or Davis Rhodes on (757) 484-9522 or (757) 651-2260 by September 10th.

On Saturday, October 18 we will hold another workday, this time on Big Island itself. Trees and limbs have blown down or fallen across the trails on the 23-acre island and we need to clear them away to make the trails passable. This workday is not for the faint of heart but it should be fun as well as satisfying to see the trails system on the island restored to its usual form. Be sure to bring the same type food, drinks, tools and protective gear as mentioned above. Call John or Davis at the numbers above by October 14 if you can help. We will meet at the Big Island parking area at 9:00 AM that day.

Finally, on Wednesday, November 12, Friends of Dragon Run will hold its Annual meeting to elect Officers and Board Members for the coming year. The meeting will be held at the Gloucester Main Library at the foot of Main Street at 7:30 PM with refreshments served at 7:00 PM. We are privileged this year to have as our guest speaker, founding member Harvey Bland Morgan, who will share some thoughts about the early days of our organization. This is certain to be a fascinating evening for all and one that is certain to bring back interesting memories for many of our long-time members. Please try to join us. I am sure you will not regret taking part in this one.

Until next time, be safe!

*Davis*

## FODR ANNUAL PICNIC

Darbie Maccubbin



Don't miss our annual picnic on **Saturday, September 27th from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM** at the "Big Island put in" on the banks of beautiful Dragon Run. Members and friends are welcome to this fun event. The food is always wonderful. Please contact Darbie Maccubbin at [darbie-maccubbin@hotmail.com](mailto:darbie-maccubbin@hotmail.com) or (908) 612-9962 to volunteer your special side dish, salad, dessert or whatever you wish. BBQ will be provided. Also you may want to bring folding chairs to relax in after lunch.

Please register by using the form below. Include your phone number in case we need to postpone or cancel due to inclement weather.

Because there is no space for parking vehicles at the Big Island landing, a shuttle will be run back and forth to the picnic area. However, no service will be available between 12 noon and 1:00 PM so do plan to arrive early!

Volunteers are needed for set up, car shuttles, and clean up.

If you can help or have questions, please contact Darbie Maccubbin.

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 Friends of Dragon Run  
 ANNUAL PICNIC at Big Island  
 SATURDAY September 27, 2014

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of adults @ \$5.00 each \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of children under 16 (no charge) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this reservation form and your check, payable to Friends of Dragon Run, to:  
 FODR, PO Box 882, Gloucester, VA, 23061

## 2014 PADDLE SEASON RECAP

Teta Kain, Paddlemaster

Every year we wonder whether the water level on the river will remain high enough for us to complete our 30-day paddle season. This year was a different story. Come May, the water was too high for safe paddling conditions!

Usually, the average flow of the river during our paddle season ranges from 100 to 150 cubic feet per second (cfs) and height of the river is about 4-5 feet at the Mascot gauging station. On April 29, however, a sustained, heavy rainfall in the upper reaches of the watershed transformed the Dragon from a placid waterway into a raging torrent. By May 2, the current had skyrocketed to over 550 cfs and the height of the river soared to nearly seven feet, conditions far too treacherous for safe paddling. Consequently, we had to cancel the last six days of our season.

Compared to last year, when we were able to conduct trips on 28 of the 30 days scheduled, this year we were weathered out a total of 9 days. Nevertheless, we considered the 2014 season a great success. Many of the trips were fully booked and we escorted 207 participants down the river.

The vegetation was again a bit slow emerging but somewhat ahead of last year's very slow start. Even though there was usually lots of sun, many days were somewhat brisk. It was surprising that, in spite of a lot of severe weather during the winter months, the 3 ½-mile route was almost free of major blow-downs. The clean-up crew that we launch before each season found very few trees across the channel. They were able to concentrate on clearing out areas that had been giving paddlers trouble in the past. The water was high enough that beaver dams were not a problem and we enjoyed some of the easiest paddling conditions we've had in years.

Remember last year, how sad we all were that half the Bald Eagle nest that we see every year had blown down? Even though the adult eagles were seen on occasion, they made no attempt to rebuild the nest. We feared they had moved up the river to a new site and would probably never return to the old nest. Imagine our immense glee when we discovered they had rebuilt their nest - sturdier than ever - and were in full nesting activity. By the end of the season we could clearly see the adults feeding two young in the nest, and we strongly suspect there was a third, but could never get a clear view to prove it.

As always, the Prothonotary Warblers were numerous. We like to attribute Gary Driscole's efforts to their nesting success. Gary has erected, maintained, and monitored those small Prothonotary nesting boxes along the waterway for the past several years and we always see the birds around the boxes. If not Prothonotaries, often other species, especially Carolina Chickadees, move in to lay their eggs and rear their young. Wood Duck boxes, erected by a boy scout troop this past winter, are another project that seems to be quite successful. We saw numerous Wood Ducks all along the river. Another new project this year is tubular nesting structures on poles in the river for Mallards to use as nesting sites. No activity has been noted to date but this is an experiment that we will watch closely over the next months.

The smooth success of our paddle season is attributable to our superb crew of 25 volunteer members who give so freely of their time, materials, effort, and expertise to make the trips happen. They work together to see to the safety and comfort of every participant, the good repair of equipment and the assistance of paddlers whenever needed.

The returning crew members this year were Bob Anderson, Becky Day, Jed Dolan, Anne Ducey-Ortiz, Gary Driscole, John Jensen, Reyn Kinzie, Darbie Maccubbin, Lex Maccubbin, Gordon Page, Bruce Pully, Jim Pettyjohn, Davis Rhodes, Bernard Robins, and Jerry Varner.

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Paddle Season Recap—continued from page 4)*

New on the volunteer roster were Emily Anderson, David Henderson, Danny Ortiz, Kearfott Stone, Christine Tombleson, and Shawn Tombleson. Two other new members who were poised to join our ranks, only to be foiled by weather cancellations on the days they were scheduled, were Janice Moore and Dotty Rilee. Hopefully, they can sign on again next year.

There are two other essential volunteers who are vital to the whole effort. Bob Hancock provides that wonderful truck and trailer rig to get our kayaks back from Mascot to Big Island everyday. Without that set-up, it would be a very complicated and lengthy process to shuttle boats back and forth. Martha Graham, our indefatigable booking agent, who communicates with well over 300 people every spring to provide trip and registration information, gets everyone signed up for trips, sends the trip leader daily schedule sheets, keeps up with all additions and cancellations, and generally creates a soothing assurance that everything is under control and rolling along smoothly.

There was also a another project added this year - a sales table setup at Mascot at the end of each trip. On that little table we provided our new FODR t-shirts and decals for sale, along with beautiful watercolor note cards created by Ann Wilcox which she donated to FODR. We did quite a brisk little business at that table, thanks to seven volunteers and various crew members who served as sales representatives when the paddlers finished the trip. They were Maureen Fairbrother, Maggie Gerdts, Cynthia Honablue, Thad Hecht, Jane Rilee, Anne Wilcox and Debbie Rollins. They managed to sell so many t-shirts that we had to order more before the season was over. Sales of decals and notecards were so brisk that it prompted us to consider expanding the effort next year. Stay tuned.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Melinda Burnette  
 Terry Dascher  
 Joyce Kaswandik  
 Marvin & Jami Martz  
 Janice Moore  
 Bambi Thompson

**CONDOLENCES**

To Board Member David Milby  
 For the loss of his wife, Nancy Carter Milby

To Public Relations Chair Rebecca Day  
 For the loss of her father William Floyd Heider, Jr.

**Important Contacts**

S. Davis Rhodes	President	(757) 484-9522	s.d.rhodes@verizon.net
Bruce Pully	Vice-President	(804) 642-5243	bjpully@verizon.net
Adrienne Frank	Treasurer	(757) 566-4009	adrienne-gary@cox.net
Mark Chittenden	Immediate Past President	(804) 642-6060	markc@vims.edu
Tom Gregory	Property Manager	(804) 462-5608	Dragonswamp@kaballero.com
Teta Kain	Paddlemaster	(804) 693-5246	tkdragonrun7@gmail.com
Hugh Markham	Roadside Trash Pick Up		hmarkham@crosslink.net

## Virginia Society of Ornithology 2014 Foray

Teta Kain

Friends of Dragon Run's role in the recent breeding bird foray conducted by the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO) was a great success thanks to the help of several FODR members who gave of their time, equipment, and expertise to provide excellent conditions for surveyors to carry out their studies.

Each year VSO chooses one or two counties in which the survey is conducted and sends out teams to detect as many species of breeding birds as possible over a one week period in the chosen area. In June, with very few exceptions, all birds present are those that are engaged in nesting activities. That can be determined by observing birds displaying courting behavior, nest building, breeding, carrying nesting material, carrying food to young, presence of an active nest or detection of young. The results of each year's foray are published in *The Raven*, the official state journal of wild birds.

These data can be compared with past and future foray compilations to identify changes in the bird populations in a given area over time. The results are helpful to land management groups, forestry services, developers and other agencies as they try to better understand the impact of human activities on specific areas and habitats.

This year Middlesex and King & Queen counties encompassed the foray area. Four sites located on Friends of Dragon Run lands fell within that area. Two areas at Ware's Bridge on Rt. 602 were covered, along with the nature trail at Mascot and two extensive trails on the Big Island property were also surveyed.

Much work went into preparing the sites and assisting the surveyors. Davis Rhodes and John Jensen did yeomen's service trimming and clearing the trails and cutting heavy growth along the road into Big Island. Both men spent many days on mowers and swinging axes, loppers, and clippers, battling poison ivy, chiggers, ticks, and various other vermin to provide easy access to the different areas. Tom Gregory, Jed Dolan, Cynthia Honablu, Emily Anderson and Anne Ducey-Ortiz helped to define trails that had grown up and placed markers in areas that needed to be cleared. Gary Driscoll maintained and monitored the Prothonotary Warbler boxes he had erected along the river. He accompanied surveyor Brian Taber to record this year's result of the birds' nesting activities.

The final results from the four surveys on FODR properties were 544 individual birds comprising 60 species. All birds detected were those species that would be expected to be found in the habitats covered. The Ovenbird was the most prevalent species with a total 13 detected. Other species that were found in high numbers were Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, Wood Thrush, Prothonotary Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Northern Parula, and Indigo Bunting. Our thanks are extended to the many FODR members and VSO surveyors who conducted such an important study on our lands. The more knowledge we have, the better our understanding and the better we can manage our lands for the benefit of wildlife.

A complete list of all species detected and numbers of individuals (in parentheses) follows:

Yellow-billed Cuckoo (3); Barred Owl (2); Chimney Swift (3); Ruby-throated Hummingbird (1); Red-bellied Woodpecker (2); Downy Woodpecker (2); Hairy Woodpecker (1); Northern Flicker (1); Pileated Woodpecker (2); Eastern Wood-pewee (4); Acadian Flycatcher (11); Eastern Phoebe (1); Great Crested Flycatcher (7); White-eyed Vireo (9); Yellow-throated Vireo (6); Red-eyed Vireo (10); Blue Jay (12); American Crow (4); Carolina Chickadee (7); Tufted Titmouse (8); Carolina Wren (1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (5); Eastern Bluebird (1); Wood Thrush (10); American Robin (1); Gray Catbird (1); Brown Thrasher (7); Ovenbird (13); Worm-eating Warbler (1); Louisiana Waterthrush (4); Black-and-white Warbler (1); Prothonotary Warbler (10); Common Yellowthroat (3); Hooded Warbler (11); American Redstart (2); Northern Parula (12); Yellow Warbler (1); Pine Warbler (4); Yellow-throated Warbler (3); Prairie Warbler (2); Yellow-breasted Chat (2); Eastern Towhee (1); Chipping Sparrow (2); Grasshopper Sparrow (2); Summer Tanager (4); Scarlet Tanager (3); Northern Cardinal (7); Blue Grosbeak (1); Indigo Bunting (11); Red-winged Blackbird (1); Common Grackle (8); Brown-headed Cowbird (4); Orchard Oriole (1); American Goldfinch (4).

## Timbering Considerations for Conservation Land

Christine Tombleson

Ms. Pamela Mason, Senior Coastal Management Scientist with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) was the guest speaker at the April 28, 2014 FODR Board Meeting. She discussed some factors that should be taken into consideration when deciding to timber lands held in conservation. Timbering can provide needed economic resources to help perpetuate the organization's mission. However, the decision to timber needs to be evaluated for its impact on conservation land, habitat and other important aspects of land ownership and protection.

The value of a forest is more than just its trees. Forests are complex, interconnected webs of plant species, wildlife, and abiotic cycles. From an ecosystem point of view, some dead and dying trees in the forest are a good thing. Coarse woody debris (i.e. dead trees and the remains of branches on the forest floor) and snags (i.e. standing dead trees) are indicators of *good* forest health. Trees that die and fall in the forest contribute to a healthy functioning forest ecosystem by providing food, habitat, and structure for a variety of organisms. Woodpeckers forage for insects in snags; salamanders, small mammals, and invertebrates hide under fallen trees; and owls nest in snag cavities...just to name a few. A downed tree can become an ecosystem of its own, supporting fungi and soft mosses. As tree debris decomposes, energy and nutrients are recycled back into the forest system.

If timbering is being considered on lands held in conservation, there are many questions to ask. Which lands are appropriate for timbering? Wetlands, swamps, steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive areas should be avoided. If a parcel contains sufficient uplands to conduct a viable timbering operation, what are the management goals of the organization for that parcel? Is it to preserve the naturally occurring forest community or manage for different wildlife habitats? Does the organization have the resources (time, people, and funds) to effectively manage parcels for different habitats than currently exist?

If the goal of timbering is primarily to make money, the "side effects" of the timbering on habitat and other landscape characteristics should be recognized. For example, harvest choice will influence the character of the "new" resultant stand of trees. Clearcutting produces forests with shade intolerant species that require full sunlight and results in even-aged stands. Clearcutting also creates edges. Increased edges or ecotones will favor animals that inhabit this type of environment, such as white-tailed deer, red foxes, rabbits, quail and cowbirds. Edges have generally been regarded by wildlife managers as having a positive effect on wildlife because the number of species usually increases near habitat edges. However, fragmentation of forests is not desirable for species that depend on large areas of habitat. If uniform habitat is the existing condition, clearcutting will change the species composition of the area. In addition, many studies have found that nesting bird success decreased near edges as a result of increased nest predation rates. Open space created from timbering may form a barrier to movement of song birds. Gaps of 250 feet or more have produced isolation characteristics for some songbirds in small forest fragments created by power lines and roads. Clearcutting can also remove important buffer areas used as travel corridors by a variety of species.

Another option is to selectively cut trees from a forest. Select cutting/logging would avoid creating edges and removing buffer area, however select cutting typically removes the strongest trees, leaving the weaker ones left behind. Selective logging also tends to be a costly process and could negate the goal of timbering the property in the first place.

If the organization determines that timbering is a management choice, best management practices to control erosion, protect water quality and reforest the area are essential to protect the resources held in conservation.

Finally, FODR seeks to promote preservation and protection of the watershed through the example it gives the community by its actions. That example being primarily the concern it shows for the land it owns or manages. A landowner should consider a wide range of options before choosing to timber landholdings.

## Boy Scouts Make Donation to FODR



**Presenting T-Shirts & Receiving Donation**



**Boy Scouts Setting a Wood Duck Nest**

Two Eagle Scout Candidates from Gloucester Boy Scout Troop 2010 recently donated the remaining funds from their wood duck and mallard duck habitat project on the Dragon to FODR. Readers may remember the article by Jim Pettyjohn in the February, 2014 issue of The Dragon's Tale on the project that two Life Scouts undertook last fall to enhance habitat on the Dragon for mallards and wood ducks. After completing their project, Life Scouts, Curtis "C. J." Jones and Andy Schramm donated the \$177.44 that remained in their Eagle Project Fund to Friends of Dragon Run. FODR President Davis Rhodes joined the Scouts and their families recently for an informal spaghetti dinner at Salem United Methodist Church to receive the check, and to present the Scouts with their own FODR T-Shirts. The boys were pleased to get the shirts but really wanted to know, "Could we camp out at Big Island again sometime?" They had camped there over a weekend with their adult leaders, and could not have been more excited about what a great place the Dragon was to camp and explore. Davis assured the boys that Friends would arrange a camping trip for them when they were ready to go again.

As Jim Pettyjohn so appropriately mentioned in his article, the opportunity to provide educational experiences to our youth on the Dragon returns benefits to that special area in the form of interest and enthusiasm for keeping it pristine and protecting its future. These Scouts and their fellow Troop members will remember the project and the Dragon for many years to come. We will welcome their return with the same enthusiasm they displayed for that "special place", and we will use their generous donation appropriately to protect and preserve the Dragon in some way.

**DON'T FORGET  
ROADSIDE TRASH PICKUP DAY  
IS SATURDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 20 AT 9:00 AM**

Meet in the parking lot of Rappahannock Community College in Glens. For more information, contact Hugh Markham at [markham@crosslink.net](mailto:markham@crosslink.net)



### NOTICE

THE FODR ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Weds., Nov. 12.

Our guest speaker will be Harvey Bland Morgan, one of FODR's Founding Members who will talk about early days in the organization. Don't miss it!



## THE AMAZING RAISE

6 AM SEPTEMBER 17 THROUGH 6 PM SEPTEMBER 18  
GIVE TODAY. CHANGE TOMORROW.

David Henderson

The Amazing Raise ([www.theamazingraise.org](http://www.theamazingraise.org)) is our region's 36-hour online giving challenge that inspires and empowers our community to support Central Virginia nonprofit organizations in an **amazing** way, regardless of where you call home. It gets even better - when you give during The Amazing Raise, you also give your favorite nonprofits (FODR!!!) the chance to win additional incentive prizes ranging from \$500 to \$15,000!

Your generosity to the Central Virginia region is contagious. Last year, The Amazing Raise generated 18,000 individual gifts and \$1.5 million dollars in unrestricted support for participating charities. This year, more than 500 organizations representing communities in metro Richmond, the Tri-Cities, and the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula will take part. FODR is proud to be one of these participating organizations. GiveRichmond.org gives charitable donors like you an opportunity to bundle your giving to multiple organizations in one location – GiveRichmond.org sorts it out and distributes the proper amounts to the organizations that you designate. GiveRichmond.org gives FODR the opportunity to receive donations from our supporters via credit/debit card. There is no fee for FODR to participate in this event. There is a small fee applied to donations to cover costs of web hosting and credit/debit card processing. For every \$50 you donate, FODR will receive \$46.55.

If you have a credit/debit card and internet access, please go to [GiveRichmond.org](http://GiveRichmond.org) between 6 AM September 17 and 6 PM September 18 to help FODR participate in this major regional fund raising activity. Also, tell all of your friends to participate for FODR and for their favorite charitable organizations.

For more information about the Amazing Raise, go to [GiveRichmond.org](http://GiveRichmond.org) or visit their page on Facebook.

## FODR NEEDS YOUR HELP!

FODR Workdays are scheduled for Saturday, September 13 and Saturday, October 18. Meet at the Big Island parking area in Mascot at 9:00 AM. First up is trimming the entrance road and the landing area where the picnic is to be held. Bring your lunch with a drink and any trimmers, loppers or other hand saws. Sturdy shoes and gloves are a must. Work is usually complete by 2:00 PM. If you are available to help, please call John Jensen at (804) 769-1565 or (703) 402-7097 or Davis Rhodes at (757) 484-9522 or (757) 651-2260 by September 10.

**Thank you for your support of FODR.**

FODR Members can help stop global warming, reduce the carbon footprint, save energy and reduce solid waste just by using your PC mouse! When members choose to receive the *Dragon's Tale* electronically, they can reduce paper waste, printing costs and mailing costs for FODR. Those saved funds can then be directed toward our primary mission of the preservation, protection and encouragement of wise use of the Dragon Run and it's watershed.

Please send an email to [sdbober@yahoo.com](mailto:sdbober@yahoo.com) stating that you would like to receive future FODR newsletters electronically.

In addition, you can also "like" FODR on Facebook. Look for Friends of Dragon Run.

# T-Shirt Update

Cynthia Honablu

What a great experience !! Yes I'm talking about selling T-shirts for Friends of Dragon Run! For a person that is stuck behind a desk under fluorescent lights 5 days a week it was WONDERFUL to get out into the sunshine, enjoy a cool breeze and greet people as they gracefully glided to shore from Teta's more than informational kayak trip on the Dragon Run.

I'd like to personally thank those that bought T-shirts. The Board of Directors has been discussing the new design FOR YEARS ! And I'm glad to say that you and the t-shirt selling volunteers "christened the ship !" for this new product.

Now - if you missed out on buying a "T-Shirt in the Sunshine" – fret not! You can still order a t-shirt now. Details are below. Our FODR T-shirt is comfortable, fashionable, it's a great cause and it makes a great gift! Don't forget - the kids are going back to school soon. Thanks once again!

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If you would like to order a shirt(s), FODR has both new and old logo shirts in stock. The new ones (\$20 each) are available in bright green and gray (see photo below). New shirts in stock include -

Small -	5 gray, 11 medium green	Large -	4 gray, 1 medium green
Medium -	3 gray, 17 medium green	XLarge-	17 gray, 9 medium green

The classic style shirts (\$15 each) have a large tree on the back and the old-style dragon on the chest. Classic shirts in stock are -

Small -	7 in natural	Large -	2 in light green
Medium -	6 in natural	3XL -	1 in blue, 2 in light green

There are also 2 FODR hoody-style sweat shirts (size Large) in forest green available at \$25 each.

If you would like to place an order, please send a check payable to FODR and a list of the items you are ordering to:

Friends of Dragon Run  
 c/o J. Haury  
 PO Box 682  
 White Marsh, VA 23183



## Northern Snakehead Fish Reported in Rappahannock River



**LEFT—Northern Snakehead**

**RIGHT—Bowfin (native species)**

(Photos from Virginia Dept. of Inland Fisheries)

Northern snakehead fish have been reported in the Rappahannock River. This fish is an invasive species indigenous to Asia that was first sighted in a pond in Crofton, Maryland in 2002. Further research following the first reports indicated that the fish has been around since about 1998. The US Geological Survey has been tracking northern snakehead sightings ([nas.er.usgs.gov](http://nas.er.usgs.gov)) and has compiled over 1500 reports in Virginia. Most reports are on or near the Potomac River but a number of Rappahannock River reports have come in as well.

Virginia Tech summarized the northern snakehead's ability to expand their range as follows: "... traits include wide geographic range, tolerance of adverse chemical conditions and temperatures, ability to spawn multiple times per season, parental care, wide diet breadth, and large body size relative to competitors. In addition to their gills, northern snakeheads are able to breathe air, allowing them to survive in waters with low dissolved oxygen where other fishes would perish."

The northern snakehead has an elongated body with tan, dark brown and/or black with a mottled snake-like pattern. It has a large mouth with many teeth and a protruding lower jaw. A long dorsal fin runs along most of the back. It may grow to about 33 inches long. It can live in freshwater areas but can also tolerate a fairly high level of salinity. Northern snakeheads can breathe air and survive on land for up to 4 days as long as they remain wet. They have been known to move up to a quarter mile on wet land by wriggling their body and fins.

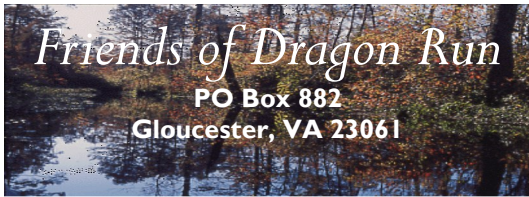
According to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) "anglers should expect to encounter snakeheads almost anywhere in the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg but at lower densities than currently seen on the Potomac. Several native species look similar to the northern snakehead. They include the bowfin, lamprey and American eel. Please report any unusual fish caught to VDGIF at (804) 367-2925 immediately. They will assist you with disposal. **Do not release these fish into the wild.**

VDGIF reports that "Exotic species like snakeheads can disrupt natural aquatic systems and may have significant impacts by feeding on and competing with native and/or naturalized fishes. In addition, they may transmit parasites and diseases to native wildlife in those systems."

If you would like to know more about northern snakeheads and the potential threat they pose, the following websites may be of interest to you; [fishwild.vt.edu/snakeheads](http://fishwild.vt.edu/snakeheads) , [dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/snakehead](http://dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/snakehead) , <http://nas.er.usgs.gov/snakeheads>.

*Susan Bober*





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



Have a Change of Address? Just send to FODR, PO Box 882, Gloucester, VA 23061

## ***FODR Activities for 2014***



### **September**

**5-6 Market Days**  
13 Big Island Work Day  
**17 General Meeting\***, Gloucester  
Library  
17-18 Amazing Raise  
20 Highway Trash Pickup  
22 Business Meeting, Saluda MPPDC  
**27 Fall Picnic**

### **October**

**4-5 Crab Carnival**  
15 Newsletter Deadline  
18 Big Island Work Day  
27 Business Meeting, Saluda MPPDC

### **November**

**7-8 Oyster Festival**  
**12 Annual Meeting\*\***, Gloucester  
Library  
15 Highway Trash Pickup  
**27 Thanksgiving**

### **December**

1 Annual Planning Meeting, Saluda  
MPPDC

\* General Meetings begin at 7 PM for refreshments & conversation; followed by a program at 7:30PM.

\*\* Annual Meeting begins at 7 PM for refreshments & conversation; followed by a business meeting & program at 7:30 PM.