



# Life's Extras Birding Celebration

Honoring the life of educator, coach, naturalist and birder Randy Smith, 1951-2023.

**May 3-5, 2024**

**Hungry Mother State Park**

## Friday, May 3

6 - 8 pm

American Eagle Foundation presents the Extraordinary Mad World of Vultures at Marion's Historical Lincoln Theater. No charge, but donations to the Eagle Foundations are greatly appreciated.

## Saturday, May 4 **Events located at Hemlock Haven Conference Center unless noted**

7 - 9 a.m.

Registration to pick up Name Tags and SWAG Bag (full Celebration attendees)

7 - 8:45 a.m.

Early morning bird hike with Bob Riggs

9 - 10 a.m.

Plenary Speaker-Eagle Foundation

10 - 11 a.m.

Learn about Birds of the World with Steven Hopp

11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Wings to Soar Raptor Program

12:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Lunch at the Lakeview Event Center - \$12.00 per person- pre-register

1:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Randy Smith's Celebration - Boat Ramp off of Mitchell Valley Road

2:45 - 3:45 p.m.

Raptors in SWUA with Ron Harrington

4 - 5 p.m.

Wings to Soar Raptor Program

5 p.m.

Supper at the Lakeview Event Center - \$20.00 per person- pre-register

7 - 9 p.m.

Evening Owl Paddle - Pre-register - Dock 'n Shop



See reverse for  
information about  
speakers and programs.

## Sunday, May 5

7 - 9 a.m.

Early Morning Bird Hike with Bob Riggs - Boat Ramp off of Mitchell Valley Road

9:30 - 11 a.m.

Kayaking and Birding by Ear with Melanie Smith-pre-register - Dock 'n Shop

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Nature Journaling with Suzanne Stryk - Shelter #2: **Please bring a bagged lunch**

1:45 - 2:15 p.m.

Bird Homes with Mike Evans

2:30 - 3:15 p.m.

Bird Rehabilitation with Darin Handy

3:45 - 5:30 p.m.

Saltville Wellfields Birding Field Trip with Monica Hoel and Bob Riggs - Meet at Saltville Food Country parking lot. Pre-register for limited transportation.

More Info

276-781-7413

[tanya.hall@dcr.virginia.gov](mailto:tanya.hall@dcr.virginia.gov)



#### American Eagle Foundation

Through a deeply passionate commitment to conservation and educational outreach, the American Eagle Foundation is dedicated to inspiring the global community to guard and protect the Bald Eagle and all birds of prey. Their mission is carried out in a variety of ways through three main pillars: conservation, education and protection. Visitors can now enjoy their brand new facility, conveniently located just off exit 407 in Kodak, Tennessee, by visiting [www.eagles.org](http://www.eagles.org) to make a reservation.



#### Robert Riggs

Riggs has been an avid birder since third grade. A graduate of ETSU, he worked for the Department of Game and Inlands Fisheries until retirement after which he joined The Ohio State University as a research data field technician where he traveled the state gathering bird counts and habitat information that the university used for research on bird migration and land use. He is a member of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.



#### Dr. Steven Hopp

Dr. Hopp is broadly trained in the life sciences and received his Ph.D. in Animal Behavior from Indiana University. He moved to Southwest Virginia in 1984 to teach at Emory & Henry College and has taught courses in wildlife management and sustainable agriculture in the Environmental Studies program at Emory & Henry. He has studied different species of Vireos for more than 25 years. His main interest is in their vocal behavior, but he has broadly studied their natural history including life history strategies, breeding ecology and behavior on their wintering grounds.



#### John Stokes and Dale Kernahan (Wings to Soar)

Stokes and Kernahan have been caring for birds of prey for a combined 78 years. They formed Wings to Soar, a non-profit organization that conducts educational raptors programs at schools, state parks, civic groups and Rock City (Georgia). They utilize birds who are no longer able to live in the wild (which are provided a comfortable and stimulating environment as they live out their lives). Audience members get to experience these amazing creatures and learn about their important role in the ecosystem.



#### Ron Harrington

Harrington has enjoyed watching nature since he was a boy growing up in Sugar Grove, Virginia. Now a Bristol resident, he became a serious birder in the 1980s. He is a member of the Bristol Bird Club and became especially fascinated by hawks. He began learning everything he could about the migration of the broad-winged hawks and began collecting data for scientific research that he sends to the Hawk Migration Association of North America. He is also the chair and compiler for the annual Glade Spring Christmas Bird Count.



#### Melanie Smith

Smith is the head librarian at Chilhowie Elementary School. She's an active member of the Holston Rivers Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalist and is often called on for nature education programs for children and adults throughout the local community. Her ability to bird by ear makes her a valuable asset for any bird walk or birding class. Smith received her undergraduate and master's degrees from East Carolina University and was named a Southwest Virginia Regional Teacher of the Year in 2023.



#### Suzanne Stryk

Suzanne Stryk is an artist who finds equal fascination in the natural world and the visual arts. Her conceptual nature paintings and assemblages have appeared in solo exhibitions throughout the country, including The National Academy of Sciences (D.C.) and the Illinois Institute of Art in Chicago. Portfolios of her images have been featured in Orion, Ecotone, Terrain.org and the Kenyon Review. She's the recipient of a George Sugarman Foundation grant and a Virginia Commission for the Arts fellowship for the project "Notes on the State of Virginia," the precursor to her book, *The Middle of Somewhere*. She lives in southwestern Virginia.



#### Mike Evans

Evans says he grew up in nature with a father who was a naturalist before the word was coined. A semester of ornithology in college hooked him on birds, but he also has a passion for mammals, butterflies, reptiles and amphibians, wildflowers, and dragonflies and damselflies. He worked 34 years with the USDA Forest Service, serving the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. Using plans and data from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, he builds species specific cavity nest boxes that accommodate 24 of the 85 or so cavity nesting birds in North America.



#### Darin Handy

Handy is a graphic artist, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and a member of the Holston Rivers Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalist. He graduated with a graphic design degree from Radford University and went on to complete his master's degree from Belle Meadows Bible College. He is known as a favorite around the region as a knowledgeable and entertaining educator, who does lively programs about wildlife for schools, libraries and community events. Rehabilitated animals that are unable to return to the wild accompany him to share information about snakes, possums, birds of prey, snapping turtles and more. He can be followed on Facebook at "All Are God's Creatures Sanctuary."



#### Monica Hoel

Hoel is the alumni director at Emory & Henry College and an active member of the Holston Rivers Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalist. An enthusiastic birder, she presents nature education programs to children, college students and adults. She enjoys assisting with bird outings in the Saltville Well Fields. She serves on the board of the Virginia Society of Ornithology.