

Backyard Birds & Coffee No. 32

Twas the night before tram ride

By
Clyde Wilson

*"Twas the night before our tram ride, when all thru the hotel
Not a creature was stirring, not even a night owl;
The binoculars were hung by the door with care,
In hopes that Lee our guide would soon be there;
All the birders were nestled throughout the hotel snug in their beds,
While visions of tundra swans covering the sky flew in their heads,
The team was in pajamas, and I in my cap,
Had woke up earlier but laid back down for a quick nap.
When outside the room there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.
I ran to the living room then to the balcony I flew like a bird,
Tore open the curtains, and what's that I heard?
As the sun rose over the ocean with such a glow
Gave the luster of mid-day the gulls flying below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a full size van and birders loading with all their gear,
And a lady driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment I must not let another second tick
More rapid than eagles as the team they came,
And she whistled, and shouted, and call'd them by name:
"Get in Adam! Now Paul, now Jeff, and Phil,
"On! Clyde, on! Donna, on! Roxana and Jill;
"The seats were quickly filled from the front to the back!
"Now speed away! Speed away! Speed and we forgot Jack!"*

*As the wild birds that before the storm fly,
I ran back to the hotel with sleepers still in my eye;
No time for the elevator so up the stairs I flew,
With my backpack on and binoculars too:
And then in a twinkling, I heard my name call
The sound of footsteps running down the hall.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
There was Jack half-dressed and funny as a clown:
His hair was a mess, a glove on one hand,
Barely dressed as he hurried with me to the van;
A spotting scope was flung on his back,
And he looked like a Martian but it was really Jack:
His eyes — how they sparkled! His feet in a scurry,
His teeth not brushed and I called out, "Hurry";
He tightened his belt around his pants like a bow
And the grin on his face; I shouted, "Let's go";
The stump of a toothbrush he held tight in his teeth,
And the toothpaste around his lips like a wreath.
He had a little beer belly that shook as he ran
And finally we made it to the van
He was chubby and plump, like a goose on a stump
And we all laughed out loud as he sat down with a bump;
A wink of her eye and the GPS preset
Lee blew the horn, no one else did we forget.
There was such noise and much chatter
As we drove to Back Bay and now there was nothing to matter
Then we boarded the open air tram excitedly
And there they were Tundra Swans as many as you can see
Click, click, and click with camera in hand
Oh look at that! Did you see the way they land?
There webbed feet glide on top of the water with ease*

*Then an American Bittern flies out of the reeds
So take a few moments to enjoy the look
Of a few of the many pictures I took
I'll close this article for now and will be out of sight
Until we meet again next week —
Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night.*

Birding notes and quizzes

You may view all past articles of Backyard Birds & Coffee online at www.backyardbirdscoffee.com as well as check out the upcoming dates for walks and tours.

Backyard Birds & Coffee is having an open house on Dec. 18 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Everyone welcome at 3410 Highway 903, Bracey.

Kerr Lake Bird Club meets monthly. Like us on Facebook. Kerr Lake Bird Club's December's meeting and Christmas party is Dec. 18 at Backyard Birds & Coffee. Bring your favorite covered dish.

Last week's quiz, "What bird is this?" was the Herring Gull. The winner was Bill Lindenmuth.

This week's quiz? How many Swans in all the pics in this article? Hope the winner likes coffee and chocolate, but who doesn't?

Take time to enjoy our beautiful birds and remember not to drive and bird like I do.

Email your quiz answers, comments, questions and/or birding stories to joinclyde@gmail.com. Also on twitter @clydejoinclyde. Visit us soon at our Bracey location. Look for the yellow birdhouses and the big yellow building with the red roof. There you will find bird feeders, bird food, flags, wind chimes and Christmas gifts. A great place for a quiet lunch and delicious coffee and tea, oh yeah, and chocolate. Open Monday-Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



A pair of Tundra Swan



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Sentara is dedicated to providing the highest-quality care to residents of Clarksville and the surrounding area. That's why we're pleased to have Dr. Rachael Burton as a member of the team at Sentara Clarksville Family Medicine. Dr. Burton joins our dedicated family nurse practitioners Jessica Ruff and Vicki Whitfield. This team is committed to providing comprehensive plans of care for their patients and helping them achieve their best possible health.

Meet Our Newest Team Member:

Rachael A. Burton, D.O.

- D.O. – Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine
- Residency in Family Medicine at Chesterfield Family Practice

To make an appointment, call
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