



# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **BIRDWATCHING AT HENRICO LIBRARIES CONNECTS READING AND SCIENCE FOR ALL AGES**

*Intergenerational and interdisciplinary educational programming is coming to a library location near you in October.*

**Henrico, VA** – Henrico County Public Library will host “Citizen Science: Birding” workshops for children and their caregivers of all ages in early October. Preschool through elementary-aged children and their adult caregivers are encouraged to attend the workshops, happening at library locations across the county starting October 6.

The birding workshops are inspired by “Citizen Science,” a movement in the scientific community in which laypeople can contribute data to scientific research. There are many Citizen Science projects related to birds and birding, including the annual “Great Backyard Bird Count,” which the Library and dozens of patrons participated in last February. This fall, workshop participants can learn about and contribute to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s flagship citizen science project: eBird. Cornell’s eBird is a free and easy-to-use online tool for tracking bird sightings and learning about more types of birds to discover.

Each birding workshop will begin with a brief discussion of Citizen Science and birdwatching. After reviewing tips for spotting birds in the wild, attendees will go outside for a brief walk on the library grounds to spot and count birds. There will be a craft activity for children as well.

On October 20, Varina Library will have a special birding workshop with an appearance by Maria Gianferrari, the Virginia Reader’s Choice Award-winning author of *Coyote Moon*, who will discuss urban ecology, birding, and her new book *Hawk Rising*.

“These programs are interdisciplinary – appealing to the scientific as well as artistic and literary mind – and they are also intergenerational, great for children, parents, grandparents, and caregivers of all ages,” said Patty Conway, Community Relations Coordinator for HCPL.

The workshops are designed to “show off our book collections and a practical application of reading,” added Rick Samuelson, Youth Services Coordinator. “Identifying birds can be hard. But we have lots of books about birds and nature at the library, and reading a couple helps prepare you to figure out what you’re seeing when you step outside.”

Librarians hope this broad appeal and real-world application of reading will create an engaging learning space, connecting curious minds across the County, regardless of age.

“Our hope is to inspire a life-long love of learning in the community with programs like this one, which is scientific, but also social,” Conway said.

For those unable to make it to a Birding workshop, or who want to continue birding after October, Henrico County Public Library offers Birding Backpacks for children and caregivers that patrons can check out for free. Backpacks contain books on birding as well as binoculars, a Field Guide to Virginia birds, and laminated activity cards. Backpacks can be reserved online at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/birdingbackpacks> or by calling your local Henrico library location.

**Citizen Science: Birding** will be held at Twin Hickory Library on Saturday, October 6 at 10:30am, at Libbie Mill Library on Monday, October 8 at 9:30am, at Tuckahoe Library on Saturday, October 13 at 10:30am, and at Varina Library on Saturday, October 20 at 10:30am with a special appearance from celebrated children’s author Maria Gianferrari. Visit [henricolibrary.org](http://henricolibrary.org) or call your local library for further details.

For more information on this topic, contact Patty Conway, Community Relations Coordinator for Henrico County Public Library, at [pconway@henricolibrary.org](mailto:pconway@henricolibrary.org) / 804.501.1906.

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