



**Howard County Bird Club**  
**A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society**  
**Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes**  
Thursday, December 7, 2023

**Attendance** [In-person presence indicated by (√), virtual attendance by (#), Voting Member by (\*)]

**2023-2024 Club Officers:**

President:\* Gregg Petersen  
Vice-president:\* Val Swan √  
Secretary:\* Chuck Stirrat √  
Treasurer:\* Tim Thompson #  
Chap. Directors:\* Lauren McDougle (1<sup>st</sup> yr.)  
Nancy McAllister (2<sup>nd</sup> yr.) #  
State Directors:\* Donna Carollo #  
John McKitterick √  
David Sandler √  
Sherry Tomlinson #  
Past President:\* Mary Maxey √

**Standing Committees:**

Records:\* Jo Solem #  
Publicity/Outreach:\* Kelsey Wellons #  
Programs:\* Mary Lou Clark √  
Newsletter:\* Megan Bolcar  
Habitat:\* Sue Probst √  
Butterflies:\* Kevin Heffernan  
Field Trips:\* Joe Hanfman  
Conservation:\* Robin Todd #

**Working Groups**

Webmaster?Membership: Bob Solem #  
Potluck: Sherry Tomlinson  
BBA3: Sue Muller #

**Others:**

**General Notes**

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with the in-person portion held at the home of Val Swan. The total number in attendance was 16 (7 in person/9 Zoom). Attendance at the regular club meeting held November 9 was 52 (33 in person/19 Zoom). Kim Abplanalp gave a program entitled “Common Tern Raft.”

**Officer’s Reports**

**President’s Remarks** (Petersen): Gregg was not present as he had a conflicting other meeting. He had provided the attached agenda and attachments in advance. Val reviewed the items under President’s remarks Val provided an update that the summary of appreciation coins was missing the awarding of a coin to Kurt Schwarz done on October 27 (Corrected version is attached). She drew attention to the included link to a new HCC video, [Howard County Conservancy: About Us Video](#), which features Gregg leading our birding field trip during the Earth Day celebration. In response to a question Val expanded on the last item regarding a meeting on pondless water features and birds, she said that Gregg is attending the meeting to provide information on such features as he has one in his yard and that the request was for information not funding (see item under MOS meeting below). Gregg also plans to mention our YMOS backpack essay contest during this meeting.

**Vice-President’s Remarks** (Swan): Val did not have any special remarks but thanked everyone for attending.

**Review of Minutes/Secretary** (Stirrat): Chuck thanked Bob again for taking the minutes for the last meeting. A few corrections were found by reviewers. These included the proper use of fulfill, Ophelia was a Tropical Storm not a Hurricane and it was spelled with an “e” not an “i” and spell check introduced “Marlin” for “Merlin” in describing the workshop. In the review of prior minutes the wording was revised to clarify that the change made was to reflect it was Val who presented the coin, not Gregg. The minutes were accepted with these modifications.

**Treasurer’s Report/Treasurer** (Thompson): Tim had provided the attached Treasurer reports for October and November. He reported that after six months of multiple attempts he now has electronic access to our Vanguard account. Tim reported that he met with our tax accountant, Betty Aylward, the day before to discuss the status of our returns. She has been focused on the first return we need to refile (Tax Year 2021-2022) but has had multiple conflicts so is still working on them. She has asked another CPA for advice on whether the filing needs to track each of the multiple investments that were in the bequest or whether it can be treated as one overarching Commonwealth

Financial account (which would be much simpler). The IRS is currently on hold pending the rollover to the new tax year, so nothing can be filed until early January. She also provided Tim with a list of background questions that we need to provide answers for so she can complete Form 990. Tim will work with Chuck and Gregg to provide a draft response and then share it with the Board before sending it to Betty. In response to a question, Tim answered that we had filed for an extension to file. Chuck clarified that we had filed the extension for the Tax Year 2022-2023 return (was due in Sept 2023). The return we are working on is an amendment to our prior filing which was the wrong form (much simpler version that was not the one needed once the Ponce estate funds were placed in the Commonwealth FN account during our 2021-2022 tax year).

## **Standing Committee Reports**

**Records** (Jo Solem): Jo had provided the attached report in advance of the meeting. Jo reported that she had trouble with coming up with superlatives to describe this Fall birding season. She stated that this was probably the most amazing birding season for the county that she has seen in her fifty years following it. She credited this to a large participation by area birders, WSSC actions including the drawing down of the reservoir combined with agreeing to permit birders to access the portions of the reservoir with expansive mud flats. This resulted in an amazing diversity and number of shorebirds (18 species).

**Publicity/Outreach** (Wellons): Kelsey stated that the club Facebook is going well. She said she had been posting pictures of the appreciation coin presentations but is missing ones for those given to David Holmes and Joe Hanfman at a Centennial walk on Nov 19. Bob told her they were attached to the report for that field trip on the website. Kelsey thanked Bob for the information. Val remarked that the link to the YouTube posting of the program on the Tern Raft was included in "The Birding Community E-Bulletin" an email newsletter published by Paul Baicich. The newsletter has a readership of 3,300. Kelsey reported that the Zoom subscription renewal is coming due, and she will change the account to her credit card from Brian Moyer's. The cost for a year's subscription is up \$10 to \$160.

**Programs** (Clark): Mary Lou had provided the attached summary of currently planned programs for all of 2024 except for September (not yet scheduled). She expressed appreciation to Sue Muller for her helpfulness when the schedule needed to be rearranged.

**Newsletter** (Bolcar): Megan was not present. The January/February issue will be available shortly.

### **Habitat** (Probst):

Waterford Flats – Gregg reported in his agenda that he still has had no luck acquiring access to the Flats for all MOS members. Mr. Sharp prefers to defer any such change until renewal of the 5-year MOU. In his input Gregg proposed adding an action item for him to work on a draft of a new MOU for Waterford Flats with Russ and the Flats committee.

Annual Kestrel report to Howard County – Sue Probst stated she has confirmed with Brenda Lee that she doesn't need a formal report for the box this year. The only nesting behavior that Donna reported was some interest in the box shown by Tree Swallows.

Emy's Meadow mowing issue – Sue Probst reported that Emy's Meadow which was planted as a pollinator meadow had been mowed in late October or early November. This is much earlier than would be most beneficial to over-wintering birds and pollinators, and some felt there was a Rec and Parks policy governing when to mow the spaces designated as pollinator areas. Brenda Lee with Howard Rec and Parks seemed to just accept the early mowing when it was broached with her. It was suggested that Sue might want to speak with Kevin Heffernan to see if he had anything to add from the pollinator needs and benefits of later mowing. Sue Muller said that there probably isn't a formal policy but in the past mowing of the multiple pollinator plots in parks was a focus. Someone mentioned that it might be worthwhile to look at the policy BGE had agreed to in treating the powerline right of ways as pollinator areas. Sue Probst stated she would take the action to discuss this further with Brenda and see if there is or could be a policy established.

**Butterflies** (Kevin Heffernan): No report.

**Field Trips** (Hanfman): Joe provided the attached report on field trips scheduled and others that could be scheduled if leaders are identified. Gregg mentioned in his input we should pursue identifying field trips to be led by John Henri Rorabeck and Mary Prowell. Val commented that Gregg makes an appeal for new trip leaders in his “Chirps to the Flock” column in the next issue of the Goldfinch.

**Conservation** (Todd): Robin provided the attached Conservation Report. This was what he prepared for the MOS Board Meeting on December 2. It contains items outside the county borders, but most are of general interest. Mary Lou asked Robin who “George” was in his report. Robin answered that this was George Alderson, a member of our club, who has for year monitored Bureau of Land activities and calls for public input. George is very experienced in writing public comment inputs on environmental issues. Robin stated that he will resume work on and involve others who expressed interest in the “Carbon Footprint as a Birder” action item.

## Work Group Reports

**Webmaster/Membership** (Bob Solem): Bob reported that with Mary Lou’s input he has added the subject of the regular meeting programs in 2024 to the club calendar. He has also created two new pages on the website that reflect the new structure of the board committees, with one for Habitat Preservation and one for Conservation. In summarizing the membership Bob reported that the membership is now up to 335, including eight Junior members. Since his last update there have been six new members join, 14 renewals received, and there are still 37 non-renewals. The renewals have been received since November 3, following the follow-up appeals made by Nancy and Lauren. Bob also reported that when he sends out NewsGrams he uses two separate mailing lists, those who are paid up members and a second one for those who have not renewed. The top of the mailing for the second group has a bold reminder added at the top that reads “TIME TO RENEW MEMBERSHIP.”

**Potluck** (Tomlinson): Sherry reminded us of the potluck scheduled for March 23, 2024. She plans to focus on encouraging new members to attend. She asked if there was a budget for the potluck included in the budget. Chuck said he felt the only item in the budget was a small amount designated for “Hospitality” but that we have been spending significantly more than what was budgeted. She was asked to propose how much of a budget she thought might be appropriate. She said \$150. It was moved, seconded, and passed that the board approved \$150 would be available to support the potluck. Sherry then asked whether we wanted to include a real-time Zoom element, e.g., during the showing of member photos. After discussion someone suggested we could assemble the photos into a slide show that could be posted on the website that would be available without consideration of having to join a Zoom session. We agreed to do that and not have a real-time Zoom for the potluck.

**Breeding Bird Atlas 3 / Safe Skies** (Muller): Sue said she has been continuing to promote a few species of interest at this time of year, namely pigeons, eagles, and owls. She plans to offer a training session on finding owl nests soon.

### Safe Skies

Gregg sent word that he had learned that RNC has a meeting this week to review window designs with [featherfriendly](#) and [collidescape](#), potential providers, to discuss details of the picture appliques and costs.

## State Board Director Reports

**State Board Meeting** (Petersen, Carollo, McKitterick, Sandler, Tomlinson, Todd, etc.): The latest meeting was held on December 2. David provided the attached summary of the meeting. John added that the MOS Board has added a small fund to provide funds to local chapters to support local school projects that support birds (\$2000 available after May 1). This came about because one chapter reported that a teacher had asked her school district for a few hundred for a bird watching project, but it was denied. The local chapter wanted to step in but didn’t have funds and asked MOS for help. Eventually the school board did approve the project, but this served to identify the need for such a fund. Some one suggested that a small flyer about this MOS program might be included in the backpacks to draw attention to this opportunity. John also reported that the new MOS budget adds a fund to be used to help “smaller” chapters with costs such as speaker fees and venue rentals that they can’t afford from their limited budgets. John reported that as the MOS Executive Secretary he was working to negotiate the MOS liability

insurance contract with a new vendor. Chuck pointed out how the club handles getting the certificate of insurance for WSSC prior to May Count. Lastly, he mentioned that going forward it is likely members who interact with minors/YMOS will need to have background checks done. He has identified a company that does these checks for \$25/person for non-profits. The company is highly recommended. John, as the Executive Secretary, is the point of contact for these checks.

## **Old Business**

Need hosts for Board meetings (March, April, & May) John McKitterick reminded us that he had volunteered to host the April meeting. We still need hosts for March and May. *Sec. Note: We could consider asking the general membership if anyone wanted to host a board meeting and get a chance to see the Board in action if no one volunteers.*

Hat and Logo Wear Update – Gregg provided the attached update showing there were orders for 39 hats.

YMOS Committee Formation – Gregg proposed tabling this subject for now. John McKitterick asked what we had in mind with this topic. In short, we would like to see a YMOS group that focused on the Western Shore locales as it is difficult for Howard youth to participate in most Eastern Shore activities. John stated that this is also a desire and a focus for MOS. They are actively searching for someone to lead such an effort. We agreed to table it for now.

Summary of Board Actions Taken between Regular Board Meetings (document as Old Business - if any) – None.

Butterfly Table scarf and tripod – Sue Probst confirmed the trifold has been ordered and it will be stored with Mary Lou. Sue reported that the company that made the bird table scarf no longer makes them, so she has been looking for other suppliers. In addition, she has been personally thinking about the design but recognizes she needs to consult with members of the butterfly group for input on the design. She agreed to an action to consult on the design with them.

HCBC Magnets and Clings – Gregg has reported these were ordered and have been received.

Review and find Equipment – Mobile/Outdoor Microphone (nominally \$200) – Kelsey reported that she has narrowed her search for a microphone to mount on the camera for recording club videos to just a few choices and will finalize her choice shortly. She will send the Board her choice via email, and unless she hears otherwise will proceed to purchase it and then submit a request for reimbursement to Tim (Mountjoy Fund).

In a related topic, at the beginning of the meeting in trying to set up the camera to show in-person speakers to those on Zoom, it was obvious that having a small table tripod would make for a much more stable image. Chuck had brought one in his bag and brought his out to be used for that purpose. In a side conversation John, David and Chuck agreed the club should purchase one from the equipment fund approved at the last meeting. The one Chuck had cost \$20 and is available from Amazon ([https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08LGGXH1J/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_search\\_asin\\_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B08LGGXH1J/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1)).

Detailed Implementations of Reorganized Board – Gregg had reported that work is still ongoing. There has been some progress since the last meeting, thanks to Bob. Effort has been more documentation than execution so far.

Reimbursement of BBA3 Atlasing mileage outside county – Sue Muller had indicated that on this final year of the atlas the focus will be more on trying to help other counties get more blocks to completion. She had suggested if the club would reimburse Howard members willing to travel outside the county for their mileage costs more would volunteer. It is unclear if this would be a significant incentive. John McKitterick stated that he knew that other incentives were being discussed at the state level. He knew that Gabe Foley had broached having prizes or awards for individuals who were able to close out blocks especially in counties with less coverage. We took no action on this topic.

**Nominating Committee** – Gregg needs to appoint a nominating committee by January. Discussions have identified a couple of candidates. We will at a minimum need one Chapter Director to replace Nancy. The committee will need to confirm other current officers are willing to continue.

## **New Business**

Feeder Watch Field Trip – Gregg would like to flesh out the feeder watch trip concept and hold one this winter. We agreed that this type of trip is not a traditional field trip but more of a social activity with a bird focus (“cocoa and cookies”). We agreed this could involve a small sub-committee but mostly it needed someone to lead the effort. This doesn’t require someone with bird knowledge as much as organizing/coordinating skills. This seems like a good item to solicit hosts with feeders and a leader(s) at the meeting on December 14. Gregg was given the action to solicit volunteers for both roles (at the meeting).

YMOS Backpack Essay Contest – Gregg had reported he now has this year’s backpack. We need a volunteer to run the award competition. We ran it in April in 2023 and Bob was very helpful with the effort, but Gregg suggested we should run it in March so we could award the winner at the April meeting. Gregg would like to reach the schools this time. This is also a task that could well appeal to those attending the club meeting as opposed to field birders. Gregg provided the attached contest information sheet with a link to the essay form for the prior contest. Gregg was given the action to solicit volunteer(s) to organize and run the competition (at the meeting).

MOTUS Tower - Gregg proposed an action in the agenda to get consideration of this project underway. His proposal was that he, in coordination with Sue Probst, should develop a fact sheet about what it is. This should include an initial look at what creating one in Howard County would involve. The fact sheet is to be sent to the Board prior to discussing the project at the January Board meeting.

Dividing “large” field trips into multiple sub-groups – During the meeting Val introduced this topic as a sidebar. She stated that during some of the larger Centennial walks the idea of dividing the group into two or more sub-groups and asking other qualified field trip leader(s) who were present to lead them had been broached. In discussion there were those in support of the idea and others felt the larger groups tended to “split” on their own without officially designating alternate leaders. We agreed that this could be added as an additional part of the field trip leader responsibilities appearing on the web and sent to leaders by Bob in advance of trips for their review. The primary focus was that deciding to divide the group would be left to the discretion of the officially designated trip leader. Val agreed to take an action to prepare and send a sentence capturing this discretionary option to the field trip leader instructions and send it to Bob for inclusion. *Sec. Note: This sentence has already been added to the website.*

## **Review of Prior Action Items**

- Review and edit the club information card when it is sent to the board – All NO RUSH
- Research and propose the purchase of a microphone for video recording – Kelsey UPDATED
- Prepare a formal proposal on “Carbon footprint as a Birder” for consideration – Conservation Committee
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg

## **New/Continuing Action Items:**

- Review and edit the club information card when it is sent to the board – All
- Inform board of microphone chosen for video recording and purchase it - Kelsey
- Prepare a formal proposal on “Carbon footprint as a Birder” for consideration – Conservation Committee
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg
- Speak to Brenda Lee about Howard Rec & Parks pollinator meadow mowing policy – Sue Probst
- Seek volunteers to be hosts and a leader to coordinate a Winter Feeder Watch Trip - Gregg
- Develop and send a fact sheet about what a MOTUS tower is to the Board prior to the January meeting.- Gregg, Sue Probst
- Draft new/updated MOU for Waterford Flats addressing MOS access - Gregg, Russ Ruffing, and Flats Committee
- Obtain renewal of MOS Letter for WSSC Access to greater Triadelphia and Howard Duckett Reservoirs for 2024 - Gregg with MOS President (Evelyn Ralston)
- Find volunteer(s) to lead YMOS Backpack Competition - Gregg
- Find hosts for Mar and May Board Meetings - All

- Develop design for the Butterfly scarf for tabling events with input from the Butterfly committee – Probst, Litzinger?
- Draft sentence for field trip leader instructions on potential to divide very large group for website - Val
- Renew Zoom subscription – Kelsey
- Prepare preliminary answers to questions asked by tax advisor – Tim, Chuck

**Around the Room**

- Jo commented that Megan is doing a very good job as the Goldfinch editor. Jo wanted to draw attention to a request Megan had made of field trip leaders including those leading the beginner trips and workshops. Megan is looking for items for the Beginner Birder column, namely she wants them to provide her with the “one item” the leader would say was the single most important to know/do as a successful birder.
- John McKitterick told Kelsey that the speaker next week, Will Hershberger, will be using his own Apple computer, and share his screen via Zoom. Kelsey said she didn’t see any problem with that. With this setup the club computer and camera will only be used for the meeting activities prior to the program. He will be visible to the Zoom audience if he stands in front of the camera on his laptop. Mary Lou remarked that she had seen his presentation, and he did stay by the podium so all should be fine.

**Board Meeting Schedule**

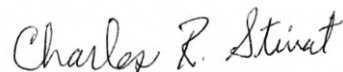
Board meetings are generally held 4th Thursday of month at 7:30 PM (hybrid)

|                    |                           |   |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---|
| September 28, 2023 | - Gregg Petersen          |   |
| October 26, 2023   | - Mary Maxey              |   |
| November 2023      | - NO MEETING              | (moved to the first Thursday of December to avoid |
| December 7, 2023   | - Val Swan (Gregg absent) | Thanksgiving & even out time between meetings     |
| January 25, 2024   | - Mary Lou Clark          |   |
| February 22, 2024  | - Gregg Petersen          |   |
| March 28, 2024     | -                         |   |
| April 25, 2024     | - John McKitterick        |   |
| May 23, 2024       | -                         | (Joint meeting with new and old members)          |

**Attachments** (Copies of handouts provided at meeting and club correspondence filed with original minutes)

- Agenda – December 7, 2023
- HCBC Coin Awards as of December 3, 2023
- Treasurer Report – October 2023
- Treasurer Report – November 2023
- Records Committee Report, December 7, 2023 (Oct. 24 – Nov. 30) – Joanne Solemn
- Howard County Bird Club Programs 2024 – Mary Lou Clark
- January – February 2024 Field Trips – Joe Hanfman
- Conservation Committee Report for December 2, 2023 MOS Board Meeting
- MOS Board Meeting 12/02/2023 – David Sandler
- Embroidered Orange Hats Update / Custom Imprints Logo Wear – Gregg Petersen
- YMOS Backpack Contest Info Page (2023 contest)

Minutes submitted by:



Charles R. Stirrat  
Secretary, Howard County Bird Club

**Howard County Bird Club Board Agenda**  
**December 7, 2023**

Topic: HCBC Board Meeting - Dec. 7 @ 7:30

Time: Dec 7, 2023 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89912962636?pwd=dFk4S1lNl2Y4Kzg2enJsdUdiakdPQT09>

Meeting ID: 899 1296 2636

Passcode: 416186

**Agenda**

- **President's Remarks** – Absent
  - Thanks for your continuing service!
  - 2 reminders: 9pm conclusion and 347 membership goal for 23-24
  - Appreciation Coin Update (Update attached-2)
  - Valued Service Awards submission period complete. These awards are made at the President's discretion-generally no more than 2/year.
    - I will request the advice of previous awardees to inform my final selection by the end of January to make the awards in April.
  - Howard County Conservancy has published a new video. Some small excerpts were filmed during our Earth Day field trip (beginning, there: [Howard County Conservancy: About Us Video](#))
  - Marriottsville Mount View Middle School pondless water feature for birds discussion Friday (will mention YMOS backpack competition)
- **Vice President's Remarks** – Val Swan
- **Review of Minutes** - Chuck Stirrat (minutes enclosed-3)
- **Treasurer's Report**-Tim Thompson (Oct and Nov reports enclosed-4 & 5)
  - 2021/2022 Filing correction update?
- **Standing Committee Reports**
  - Records-Jo Solem (attached-6)
  - Publicity/Outreach-Kelsey Wellons
  - Programs 2024 Schedule-Mary Lou Clark (schedule-7)
  - Newsletter-Megan Bolcar
  - Habitat-Sue Probst
    - Waterford Flats-Petersen
      - Still no luck including all MOS members for access. Mr. Sharp deferred to wait until renewal of 5-year MOU. **ACTION:** Gregg work on new MOU Waterford Flats draft with Russ and Flats Committee.
      - Annual Kestrel Report to HoCo
      - Emy's Meadow mowing issue
  - Butterflies-Kevin Heffernan

- Field Trips –Joe Hanfman (attached-8)
  - Possible additions for Rorabeck and Prowell
- Conservation-Robin Todd
- **Work Group Reports**
  - Webmaster/Membership – Bob Solem (McAllister & McDougle)
  - Potluck-Sherry Tomlinson w/Meghaan Lane March 23, 2024
  - Safe Skies-Sue Muller
    - Gregg determined that Robinson Nature Center has a meeting this week to review window designs with [featherfriendly](#) and [collidescape](#) providers to discuss details of the picture appliques and costs.
- **State Board Director Reports** – Sandler
  - MOS Convention Ocean City November 22 - 24, 2024
- **Old Business**
  - Need Hosts for Board Meetings – All Board Members
    - Mar, Apr, & May open.
  - Hat and Logo Wear Update - Petersen (Update enclosed – 9)
  - YMOS Committee Formation -tabled for now.
- **New Business**
  - Feeder Watch Field Trip-Would like to flesh out the feeder watch field trip concept for this winter. Needs to be done in the short term. Small field trip sub-committee. – Lead?
  - Gregg has the YMOS backpack – Need a volunteer to run the award competition.
    - We ran it for the month of April this year-Bob was very helpful .
      - Perhaps we do it in March in time for award at the April meeting?
    - Would like to reach the schools this time.
    - **ACTION:** Volunteer to run competition? (enclosed-Essay form from last year-10)
- **Review of Prior Action Items**
  - Club Information Card Update - Clark
  - Butterfly table scarf & table trifold – Probst
    - Trifold ordered-stored with Mary Lou, **ACTION:** scarf design to be coordinated with club members active with butterfly records.
  - HCBC magnets and clings were ordered and received – Petersen
  - Review and Find Equipment: Mobile/outdoor Microphone buy @ \$200 – Wellons
  - “Carbon Footprint as a Birder” final recommendations – Todd Conservation Committee
  - Detailed implementation of reorg – Petersen –
    - Still ongoing, some progress thanks to Bob since last meeting. More about documentation than execution.
  - Reimbursement of BBA3 Atlasing mileage outside county? - Muller
- **New/Continuing Action Items**
  - MOTUS Tower – Petersen **ACTION:** In coordination with Sue Probst, develop and send fact sheet about what it is to board for Jan meeting.



- Updated MOU Waterford Flats MOU **ACTION:** Petersen work on new MOU with Russ Ruffing and Flats Committee to consider add of all MOS access.
- Renewal of MOS Letter for WSSC Access to greater Triadelphia and Howard Duckett Reservoirs for 2024 **ACTION:** Petersen with MOS President
- YMOS Backpack Competition Lead **ACTION:** Need Volunteer (Gregg can transition)
- Mar, Apr, & May Board Meetings **ACTION:** Need hosts.
- Design of Butterfly scarf for tabling events: **ACTION:** Probst (& Litzinger?)
- End of Year 2023 Kestrel House Report to Brenda Lee, Howard County if needed..  
**ACTION:** Probst
- **Around the Room**
- **Upcoming Schedule**
  - December 14 Wil Hershberger Celebration of Bird Song
  - December 16 Christmas Count David Holmes
  - 2024 Board Meetings
    - Need hosts for March, April, and May HCBC Board Meetings (attendance @7-9 people)
      - January 25, 2024 – Mary Lou Clark host
      - February 22, 2024 - Gregg Petersen host
      - March 28, 2024 - **Needs host**
      - April 25, 2024 - **Needs host**
      - May 23, 2024 - **Needs host** (Swan absent)

## Howard County Bird Club Coin Award Record

1. Chuck Sharp 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
2. Wes Earp 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
3. Jo Solem 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
4. Russ Ruffing 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
5. John Harris 8/31/23 Bird walk by Chuck
6. Meg Harris 8/31/23 Bird walk by Chuck
7. Dave Ziolkowski 9/2/23 Nighthawk watch by Gregg
8. Mary Lou Clark 9/9/23 Bird Walk by Chuck
9. Roshan Vignarajah 9/14/23 by Gregg
10. Peter Kaestner 9/14/23 Club Meeting by Gregg
11. Kimberly Kaestner 9/14/23 Club Meeting by Gregg
12. Kate Tufts 9/15/23 Home Visit by Gregg
13. Chuck Stirrat 9/16/23 Fall Count Potluck by Gregg
14. Sue Probst 9/16/23 by Fall Count Potluck by Gregg
15. Manager Shannon Davis 9/24/23 Robinson Nature Center Open House by Val
16. Maryland State Delegate Terri Hill HCC Safe Skies Legislation Event 9/30/23 by Val
17. Maryland State Senator Clarence Lam HCC Safe Skies Legislation Event 9/30/23 by Gregg
18. Jeff Swan 10/5/23 at Sharp's Farm water structure final installation by Gregg
19. Larry Zoller 10/12/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
20. Sue Muller 10/12/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
21. Bonnie Ott 10/18/23 at Beginner Bird Walk by Val
22. Steve Luke 10/21/23 at Merlin Class by Gregg
23. Lauren McDougale 10/21/23 at Merlin Class by Gregg
24. Kurt Schwarz 10/27/23 at Bird Families & Art of Bird ID Walk by Val
25. Russ Kovach 11/5/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
26. Kristin Trouton 11/5/23 at Skywatch by Gregg
27. Robin Todd 11/09/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
28. Kim Abplanalp 11/09/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
29. Ben Costello 11/11/23 at Val beginner trip by Val
30. Renee Peters 11/12/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
31. Richard Peters 11/12/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
32. Bob Solem 11/12/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
33. David Holmes 11/19/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
34. Joe Hanfman 11/19/23 at Centennial Walk by Gregg
35. Jay Sheppard 11/20/23 at Owl Trip by Gregg
36. Marcy Stutzman 11/20/23 at Owl Trip by Gregg
37. Anna & Harry Fink 12/3/23 via mail by Gregg (accounting & past bird club support)
- 38.

# Howard County Bird Club - Treasurer Report

Printed: 12/6/23 1:29 PM

Financial information for period

Starting:

1-Oct-2023

Ending: 31-Oct-2023

## Financial Account Balances

| Account              | Balance             | Net Change          | Comment         | Date  |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| PNC Bank             | \$2,195.85          | (\$951.36)          | See sheet below | 10/31 |
| Vanguard             | \$458,347.39        | (\$5,952.76)        | See Notes 3     | 10/31 |
| <b>Current Total</b> | <b>\$460,543.24</b> | <b>(\$6,904.12)</b> |                 |       |

## Virtual Fund Balances

### Operating Funds

| Date (Latest Update) | Fund (Code)                           | Balance     | Comment   |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|
| 10/31/23             | Operations Fund (O)                   | \$8,963.92  | Implied balance (Total Financial Accounts - Sum of 6 other virtual funds) |
| 5/15/23              | Habitat Fund (H)                      | \$7,846.92  | no activity   |
| 10/21/21             | Butterfly Fund (B)                    | \$740.00    | no activity   |
| 10/31/23             | Unrealized Vanguard Market Change (U) | \$16,187.94 | virtual fund tracked in the right most columns of Vanguard tab            |

### Gift Funds

|          |                         |              |             |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 7/17/23  | Mountjoy Fund (M)       | \$3,068.48   | no activity |
| 10/24/23 | Chestem Estate Fund (C) | \$13,735.98  | no activity |
| 1/1/23   | Ponce Estate Fund (P)   | \$410,000.00 | no activity |

## Income Activity

1-Oct-2023

to

31-Oct-2023

| Description                               | Purpose                    | Method | Amount            | Code        |
|---|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY Income as of Prior Report</b> |                            |        | <b>\$2,122.73</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
|   | No activity during October |        |                   |             |
|   |                            |        |                   |             |
|   |                            |        |                   |             |
|   |                            |        |                   |             |
|   |                            |        |                   |             |
| <b>Income for this Period</b>             |                            |        | <b>\$0.00</b>     |             |
| <b>Total Income - Fiscal Year To Date</b> |                            |        | <b>\$2,122.73</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |

## Expense Activity

1-Oct-2023

to

31-Oct-2023

| Description                                 | Purpose  | Method | Amount            | Code        |
|---|--|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY expenses as of prior report</b> |  |        | <b>\$2,339.69</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
| Lauren McDougle                             | Refreshments of HCBC monthly meeting   | CK     | \$96.59           | O           |
| Valerie Swan                                | Seed for Waterford Flats   | CK     | \$706.57          | C           |
| Mary Lou Clark                              | Poster   | CK     | \$25.44           | O           |
| Wake Audubon                                | Speaker Honorarium   | CK     | \$100.00          | O           |
| Guy DiRoma                                  | Refreshments of HCBC monthly meeting   | CK     | \$67.32           | O           |
| Gregg Petersen                              | Materials to build the deck at Waterford Flats (funds to come from the Chestem fund) | CK     | \$136.13          | C           |
| MailerLite                                  | First payment to new email service   | Debit  | \$15.90           | O           |
|   |  |        |                   |             |
|   |  |        |                   |             |
|   |  |        |                   |             |
| <b>Expenses for this Period</b>             |  |        | <b>\$1,147.95</b> |             |
| <b>Total Expenses - Fiscal Year To Date</b> |  |        | <b>\$3,487.64</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |

SEE note 1

|  |                  |                     |             |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>Income over Expenses for Club Fiscal Year</b> | 5/1/23 - 4/30/24 | <b>(\$1,364.91)</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
|--|------------------|---------------------|-------------|

**Additional Remarks/Comments:**

- 1. Club Fiscal Year is May 1 - Apr 30.
- 2. Net change of Vanguard account is net of
  - o No dividend for VESGX
  - o Monthly dividend from VMFXX \$185.60
  - o Month **decrease** in market value of VESGX (Global ESG Select Admiral Fund) **-\$6,138.36**
- 3. Vanguard Performance To Date
  - o Total Deposits since established \$ 440,000.00
  - o Total Account Balance as of 10/31/2023 \$ 458,347.39 (including unrealized market changes)

Note 2 & 3 is updated with Oct data

**Gift Funds Activity**

1-Oct-2023  
Month Activity

to

31-Oct-2023  
Current Balance

**Mountjoy Fund Transactions**

No Activity.

**Chestem Fund Transactions**

Materials and seed purchases

**Ponce Fund Transactions**

No Activity.

# Howard County Bird Club - Treasurer Report

Printed: 12/6/23 2:07 PM

Financial information for period

Starting:

1-Nov-2023

Ending: 30-Nov-2023

## Financial Account Balances

| Account              | Balance             | Net Change         | Comment         | Date  |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------|
| PNC Bank             | \$1,641.97          | (\$553.89)         | See sheet below | 11/30 |
| Vanguard             | \$493,968.49        | \$35,621.09        | See Notes 3     | 11/30 |
| <b>Current Total</b> | <b>\$495,610.46</b> | <b>\$35,067.20</b> |                 |       |

## Virtual Fund Balances

### Operating Funds

| Date (Latest Update) | Fund (Code)                           | Balance     | Comment  |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| 11/30/2023           | Operations Fund (O)                   | \$8,490.83  | Implied balance (Total Financial Accounts - Sum of 6 other virtual funds)    |
| 5/15/2023            | Habitat Fund (H)                      | \$7,846.92  | no activity  |
| 11/22/2023           | Butterfly Fund (B)                    | \$840.00    | Contribution from Amateur Gardener's Club for Kevin's butterfly presentation |
| 11/30/2023           | Unrealized Vanguard Market Change (U) | \$51,628.25 | virtual fund tracked in the right most columns of Vanguard tab               |

### Gift Funds

|            |                         |              |             |
|------------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 7/17/2023  | Mountjoy Fund (M)       | \$3,068.48   | no activity |
| 10/24/2023 | Chestem Estate Fund (C) | \$13,735.98  | no activity |
| 1/1/2023   | Ponce Estate Fund (P)   | \$410,000.00 | no activity |

## Income Activity

1-Nov-2023

to

30-Nov-2023

| Description                               | Purpose   | Method | Amount            | Code        |
|---|---|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY Income as of Prior Report</b> |   |        | <b>\$2,122.73</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
| The Amateur Gardener's Club               | Honorarium paid to Kevin Heffernan for butterfly talk | CK     | \$100.00          | B           |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
| <b>Income for this Period</b>             |   |        | <b>\$100.00</b>   |             |
| <b>Total Income - Fiscal Year To Date</b> |   |        | <b>\$2,222.73</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |

## Expense Activity

1-Nov-2023

to

30-Nov-2023

| Description                                      | Purpose                                   | Method           | Amount              | Code        |
|--|---|------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY expenses as of prior report</b>      |   |                  | <b>\$3,471.74</b>   | <b>FYTD</b> |
| Kim Abplanalp                                    | Speaker Honorarium                        | CK               | \$100.00            | O           |
| Gregg Petersen                                   | Reimburse member for HCBC Magnets         | CK               | \$238.50            | O           |
| Gregg Petersen                                   | Reimburse member for static window clings | CK               | \$178.08            | O           |
| Brown & Associates                               | Printing Newsletter                       | CK               | \$65.00             | O           |
| MailerLite                                       | Payment for email service                 | Debit            | \$15.90             | O           |
| Custom Ink Retail                                | Reflective safety hat                     | PayPal           | \$21.41             | O           |
|  |   |                  |                     |             |
|  |   |                  |                     |             |
|  |   |                  |                     |             |
|  |   |                  |                     |             |
| <b>Expenses for this Period</b>                  |   |                  | <b>\$618.89</b>     |             |
| <b>Total Expenses - Fiscal Year To Date</b>      |   |                  | <b>\$4,090.63</b>   | <b>FYTD</b> |
| SEE note 1                                       |   |                  |                     |             |
| <b>Income over Expenses for Club Fiscal Year</b> |   | 5/1/23 - 4/30/24 | <b>(\$1,867.90)</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |

**Additional Remarks/Comments:**

1. Club Fiscal Year is May 1 - Apr 30.
2. Net change of Vanguard account is net of \$35,621.09
  - o No dividend for VESGX
  - o Monthly dividend from VMFXX \$180.78
  - o Month **increase** in market value of VESGX (Global ESG Select Admiral Fund) **\$35,440.31**
3. Vanguard Performance To Date
  - o Total Deposits since established \$ 440,000.00
  - o Total Account Balance as of 11/30/2023 \$ 493,968.49 (including unrealized market changes)

Note 2 & 3 is updated with Nov data

**Gift Funds Activity**

1-Nov-2023

to

30-Nov-2023

Month Activity

Current Balance

**Mountjoy Fund Transactions**

No Activity.

**Chestem Fund Transactions**

No activity

**Ponce Fund Transactions**

No Activity.

## **Records Committee Report, December 7, 2023 (Oct. 24 – Nov. 30) – Joanne Solem**

Experienced birders anticipate autumn for good reason. November 30<sup>th</sup> closed a stellar season in the county, certainly one of the most exciting in the club's history. For their efforts in finding, reporting, and sharing the many unusual species, Howard County birders deserve to take a collective bow.

With the county bird species total well above 300, it is becoming increasingly difficult to add new ones. Some years there are none. Notably, the month of November brought two new species within 13 days! Although both sightings were well-documented, just one could be widely shared.

**County species 313!** The first of the new county species, an immature **Black-legged Kittiwake**, was a one-observation-wonder at Triadelphia Reservoir on 11/11 (Kurt Schwarz, ph., Joe Hanfman, Steve Luke, ph., John and Meg Harris). Bonaparte's Gulls are uncommon but regular in late fall at this location. One or two had been reported three times in November prior to this sighting, so this individual appeared initially to be yet another Bonaparte's in first-winter plumage. When the bird was sighted, the presence of a collar, normally seen on juvenile kittiwakes, elicited comment, but it is a field mark also known to be present in some Bonaparte's plumages. That evening, Kurt compared his photos to references and concluded that the bill shape, as well as the shape of the collar and facial spot were consistent with a Black-legged Kittiwake, a mostly pelagic species. Experienced birders to whom he submitted the photos agreed. Despite searching later the same day and the next, the bird was not seen again. Interestingly, two kittiwakes were photographed at Sandy Point State Park in Anne Arundel Co the following day. The Triadelphia bird and one near Durham, NC were the only two Piedmont Black-legged Kittiwakes in the US in November.

**County species 314!** On 11/22, just 11 days later, Bonnie Ott was searching for spider egg cases and birds at Rockburn Branch Park when a pale *Myiarchus* flycatcher caught her eye. It was soon determined to be an **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, a wanderer from the arid Southwest. This individual settled into an area of deciduous thicket with ample food, shelter, and water. The location was near the Montgomery Rd entrance to the park, ample parking was available, and Thanksgiving weekend was just beginning. That combination of factors brought birders by the dozens to the site. Bonnie spent many hours on multiple days generously assisting visitors in locating the bird. (Despite its relatively large size, its pale coloring and habit of disappearing for extended periods made her help invaluable.) The flycatcher remained day after day. Even after a strong cold front moved in on 11/29, the bird was still present. It was last seen on 11/30, a fitting close to an exceptional autumn season. Joe Hanfman's careful tabulation from eBird, several social media sites, and personal contacts verified that a *minimum* of **146** people had seen it.

County birders received an assist in their quest for rarities this season, as the dredging at Triadelphia Reservoir provided choice habitat for migrating shorebirds at the mouth of a Howard County tributary. The mudflat was present for many weeks and was “a gift that kept on giving.” The assortment of seldom-seen species was astonishing: Black-bellied Plover, American Golden-Plover, Dunlin, White-rumped, Baird’s, and Western Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitcher—18 shorebird species in all. New high counts for several species were equally remarkable with a few totals several times their previous highs: Least Sandpiper 218, White-rumped 107, and Pectoral 172.

Snow, Ross’s, Greater White-fronted, and Cackling Geese all made an appearance since the last board meeting. Ducks continued trickling in, and the first Common Mergansers on Triadelphia were the precursors of the hundreds to come.

Raptors demanded attention with a second autumn Golden Eagle (11/11), and three successive days at the Skywatch in early November when Bald Eagle totals were 11, 13, and 12. (Some of us remember when seeing one eagle in the county *in the course of a year* was a cause for celebration. Now we can enjoy a healthy population of our National Bird year-round.)

The last day of the season also saw the return to the Mt. Hebron area of presumably the same male Baltimore Oriole which has wintered annually since 2019.

*Note:* As usual, much additional detail will be included in the Autumn 2023 summary published in the March/April *Goldfinch*. To spotlight the two new county species sooner, each will be the subject of an individual article in the January/February issue of the newsletter.

Some excellent species have already been seen during the first days of December. They are not included in this summary; they will, however, be part of the January report to the board which will begin with the first day of the winter season.

*Special thanks to Joe Hanfman for providing some of the above totals. He even created a spreadsheet listing all the known Ash-throated Flycatcher observers, along with their dates of observation! It truly takes a village.*



**Howard County Bird Club Programs 2024**  
**Mary Lou Clark-Programs**

**January-Finding Eagles & Owls for the Final Year of the BBA3** by Sue Muller

**February-Miles and Miles of Texas; Hill Country and Big Bend** by Kurt Schwarz

**March-Explore the Macro World** by Bonnie Ott

**April-The 2023 Howard County Butterfly Survey Results** by Kevin Heffernan

**May- Recent Advances in Owl Biology and Conservation** by Steve Sheffield

**Sept-Not booked yet.**

**Oct-Marbled Murrelet Research** by Josh Ward

**Nov-RaptorQuest, Chasing America's Raptors** by Scott Harris

**Dec- Birding in Idaho** by Sue and Wes Earp

## January – February 2024 Field Trips

### Joe Hanfman – Field Trip Committee Chair

**Excerpt of Joe's Comments:** Thanks to all who made the Centennial trips a successful season. I would be happy to add as many trips as we can get leaders. You will see that we have added a January Centennial trip, starting at the boat ramp, to look for waterfowl. When Centennial freezes up, the last place to freeze is at the boat ramp. We can get large numbers of geese and ducks and sometimes a special goose.

Jo brings up some excellent points of some of the obstacles we need to overcome, most importantly volunteers to lead the trips. I have found that a general request for leaders gets minimal results. I usually have better luck directly asking and fortunately many folks respond. **If there are any trips that you can lead just let me know and we will put them on the schedule.**

### Start Your Year List

January 1, 2024, Start at 8:00 (half day)

Meet at the Howard Conservancy – Mount Pleasant Farm.

Easy walking on woodland trails. May plan to bird several different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new!

Facilities available

Leader – Kurt Schwarz, [krschwal@verizon.net](mailto:krschwal@verizon.net)

### Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

January 6, Saturday, All Day Trip

Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee.

Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly, Entrance fee or DuckStamp required.

Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details. We will carpool.

Facilities at some spots

Leader – Kurt Schwarz, [krschwal@verizon.net](mailto:krschwal@verizon.net)

## **Centennial Park**

January 13, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Meet at the boat ramp, accessed from the South Entrance.

This trip will hopefully focus on waterfowl.

Leader – to be announced

## **Alpha Ridge Landfill**

January 19, Friday, Half day

Reservations required. Carpooling is required. Moderate walking over hills and fields of the landfill. We will search for Short-earedOwls with no guarantee of finding one. Other possibilities are Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Eastern Meadowlark. No facilities on the landfill.

Limited to a maximum of five cars.

Contact Joe Hanfman for reservations, [auk1844@gmail.com](mailto:auk1844@gmail.com)

## **Cape Henlopen**

January 20, Saturday, full day

All-day driving trip to the Delaware shore, stops to include Indian River Inlet, Cape Henlopen State Park, and Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Entry into Delaware State Parks is free from December through February. Target species include wintering seaducks, Great Cormorant, Northern Gannet, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Short-eared Owl, and maybe even a shot at Snowy Owl! Participants may pack a lunch, but we will also make a quick stop at Wawa. Be prepared for light to moderate hiking, especially at Cape Henlopen.

Meet at the [Broken Land Park and Ride Lot West](#) at 6:00 a.m. and plan to carpool. There are restroom facilities are Indian River (portable toilets), Cape Henlopen, Cape May Ferry Terminal, and of course at Wawa.

Leader – Russell Kovach, [Russell.kovach@gmail.com](mailto:Russell.kovach@gmail.com)

## **Mid-winter Count**

February 3, Saturday

## **Lake Elkhorn**

February 9, Friday, 8:00 a.m. 2-3 hours.

Meet at Dockside Parking lot.

Easy walking along the lake and to Forbay Pond. Waterfowl, sparrows and winter finches are possible. The lake can turn up interesting surprises. No facilities

Leader – Allen Lewis, [allenlewis@gmail.com](mailto:allenlewis@gmail.com)

## **A Search for Owls**

February 17, Saturday, 9:30 a.m.

Learn how to find owls by habitat and signs.

Our target species are Long-eared, Saw-whet, and other owls.

No facilities. Sign up with the leaders.

Leaders – Gregg Petersen, [sig29@aol.com](mailto:sig29@aol.com); David Cummings, [wcummings9@gmail.com](mailto:wcummings9@gmail.com)

## **Woodcock Search**

Late February or early March, exact date to be determined based on the weather.

Leader - Mary Lou Clark, [doctorfx\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:doctorfx_99@yahoo.com)

## CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2, 2023 MOS BOARD MEETING

### 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Endangered Species Act and Lobbying in DC

As part of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Kurt and I joined a group of conservation activists from around the country in DC on September 12 and 13. The event was organized by Defenders of Wildlife with support from the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and several other NGOs. The first day was devoted to seminars on how to lobby, a symposium with presentations by leaders from government, academia and NGOs, a ceremony and a reception. On the second day we split into groups by state and visited law makers to urge them to continue their support for ESA. Kurt and I were shepherded by Annie Hard Kern, Steve Holloman of ABC to the law maker's offices. We met staffers in the offices of Senators Ben Cardin and Chris. Van Hollen, and Representatives Ruppertsburger, Sarbanes (we met the Representative Sarbanes in person) and Trone.

We thanked each representative for their votes for the Lesser Prairie Chicken and for supporting the ESA. We asked for their continued support for the adequate funding of the ESA, to oppose any attempts to weaken the Act, and to support the National Biodiversity Strategy (House Rees. 195). Lastly we made a special plea for the Red Knot: suggesting that, if Maryland's 10 horseshoe crab harvesting permits were bought out, this would reduce pressure on the crab population, to the benefit of Red Knots. We promised to provide a cost estimate for such a buy out.

### Free Paper Bags for Lower Income Shoppers in PG County

We signed on to Clean Water Action letter urging that lower income shoppers in PG County be exempted from having to pay for paper bags at retail outlets. The impetus was the new regulation banning plastic bags at retail outlets, but requiring fees for paper ones.

### Onshore Gas & Oil Leasing

A letter to BLM, drafted by George, supporting its proposed rule for Onshore Gas & Oil Leasing, where it specified that consideration must be given to prevent 'unnecessary or undue degradation of the lands and their resources' when deciding if a lease should be issued. The letter made several recommendations, including preventing BLM staff from receiving positive performance ratings for issuing leases.

### BLM's "Blueprint for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Outdoor Recreation,"

In a letter drafted by George, we commented on BLM's "Blueprint for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Outdoor Recreation," a document that looked at recreation across BLMs huge inventory of lands for the rest of this century. The letter urged BLM to put protection of lands under its care ahead of recreation by identifying sensitive areas, and by directing recreation into less vulnerable areas.

## Coastal Barrier Resources Act

We signed on to a letter from a National Audubon letter regarding the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA). The letter urged the House of Representatives to strengthen their bill by including a 2-year pilot program to explore how to expand coastal barriers upland to cope with future sea level rise and, to expand the definition of coastal barriers. The Senate bill already contained these sensible additions.

## Grand Escalante-Staircase Management Plan

In yet another letter drafted by George, we commented on BLM's draft management plan for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah. MOS recommended Alternative C as the most suitable for conserving wildlife, the wilderness experience, and historic sites, but added MOS' own recommendations.

## Opposition to USDA Crop Act of 2023

We signed on to a letter by the Center for Biological Diversity's letter opposing the USDA Crop Act of 2023 since it leans far too heavily towards allowing unrestricted use of pesticides on farmland.

## Synthetic Alternative to Horseshoe Crab Blood for Biomedical Testing

Prompted by the US Pharmacopeia's announcement that it is considering adopting the synthetic alternative (rFC), blood for biomedical testing for microbial contaminants, the Horseshoe Crab Recovery Coalition (HCRC) wrote a letter applauding the USP's decision. HCRC noted that adoption of rFC would provide an alternative to the use of blood of Horseshoe crabs and relieve pressure on their population and made several additional recommendations. We signed on in support of this letter.

## Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act funding

We signed onto a letter by the American Bird Conservancy in support of the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act of 2023 (H. R. 4389). This would increase funding for the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (NMBCA).

## Maglev – Water Quality Certification

Baltimore-Washington Rapid Rail (BWRR), the group in charge of the Maglev project, requires a Water Quality Certification (WQC) to be issued by Maryland Department Environment (MDE) in order to proceed. BWRR admits that Maglev would impair three Tier II (high quality) streams, namely Beaverdam Creek I and II and the Patuxent. To balance this, BWRR is arguing that the project would benefit the local community so that damage to the streams should be ignored. We used a MailChimp alert to ask MOS to contact MDE and urge it deny a WQC, noting that the

local communities will not benefit. We also sent an MOS letter to MDE making the same case in more detail.

#### Manti-La Sal National Forest Draft Management Plan

We submitted a letter drafted by George, to BLM commenting on its plan draft management plan for the Manti-La Sal National Forest. We urged BLM to adopt plan B with elements of plan D to strengthen the conservation of habitat for wildlife.

#### Planned New Bridge at Swallow Falls State Park Threatens Old Growth Trees

The bridge across the Youghiogheny at Swallow Falls needs to be replaced. The plan is to site the new bridge parallel to, instead of where, the existing one is located. This would allow the existing bridge to carry traffic during the construction of its replacement, but it would require the felling of 2.4 acres of mature trees in Swallow Falls State Park, including some majestic hemlocks that pre-date European settlement. The area is designated an Important Bird Area by National Audubon; many declining Forest Interior Dwelling species nest there. We sent letters to Governor Wes Moore and Garrett County Public Works director Jay Moyer, urging them to deny the easement which would be required to fell these trees. We noted that the required 3-month road closure would not create safety or inconvenience issues since neither fire trucks nor school buses use the existing bridge and police resources are present on either side of the bridge. Local activist Steve Storck helped with background information. We may need to follow up on this matter if Garrett County persists with the alignment.

#### Threat to Forest Tract in Oxbow Reserve Watershed

Anne Arundel County is considering developing some parcels of county land for playing fields and related sports facilities. One of these is a Board of Ed owned tract of 66 acres of forest in the Oxbow Preserve watershed, close to Bacontown Park. Such development would be extremely damaging to the run off to the Oxbow, a noted site for various water birds, and would destroy an tract of deciduous forest, where much such forest has been lost. The County has set up online surveys for each parcel of County land to allow members of the public to submit their preferences. Jay Sheppard has been very active in opposing plans to develop the Board of Ed property. MOS sent out a MailChimp to all members urging them to fill in the survey by checking the box for leaving the area undeveloped. A letter from MOS to the relevant AA County officials is planned for December.

#### CostCo's Wasteful Packaging

Those of you who use CostCo may have noticed that they are using large packaging even for small items. US PIRG sent out an appeal to contact the CEO of CostCo and urge him to stop his company's wasteful use of packaging. I urged the Committee to contact this gentleman and am pleased that several did so.

## Huge Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Facility Planned for Louisiana

CP2 is a huge LNG facility that is proposed for the Louisiana coast. If built it would release the equivalent of more than 50 coal-fired power plants, as well as destroying 133 acres of wetlands and interfering with local fisheries and subjecting the nearby inhabitants to another example of environmental injustice. A MailChimp appeal is planned, urging MOS members to sign onto the Sierra Club protect page aimed at President Biden and Secretary Granholm.

I wish to thank George, for his well-researched letters on federal matters and Kurt, for covering for me while I was away, birding in South Africa.

Best regards,



Robin G. Todd PhD  
Chair, MOS Conservation Committee  
Robin.todd@mdbirds.org

November 30, 2023



## MOS Meeting 12/02/2023

The meeting was held on the campus of Hood College, hosted by Frederick County Bird Club. The meeting was presided over by Evelyn Ralston, the new MOS president after the resignation of Bonnie Borsa due to medical concerns. Evelyn was Vice President, Steve Sheffield has now assumed that role. John McKitterick is now the immediate past president.

The bylaws were changed to allow for this orderly transition in the future if an MOS officer is unable to complete their term. These changes will be voted on as part of the Spring 2024 elections.

1. The webmaster will be added as member of the MOS board.
2. Treasurer's report- Carol Daugherty reports MOS is doing ok. Funds have been allocated for YMOS and Education, Diversity, and Inclusion.
3. The board next discussed MOS sponsored bird trips. MOS will receive \$100 from each participant's trip registration and a new "all volunteer" committee will be formed to help Maryanne Dolan with trip details and possible trip leadership. Maryanne noted that sometimes a free trip registration is available from different tour groups and she discussed briefly who might this free trip go to (examples - board members, others who have contributed significantly to MOS, trip leaders).
4. Next, EDI (Education, Diversity, and Inclusion) issues presented. MOS is sponsoring Black and Latino inclusion via the group "Nature Forward". Access issues were also discussed, an example - DNR has improved access at Hughes Hollow by widening and improving path from parking area.
5. Monies have been allocated to give to local chapters for speakers and room, to school teachers for items like bird houses, and Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership ( earlier it was announced that Gabe Foley will be the new head of MBCP).

### Committee Reports

1. BBA -Gabe Foley reports that data has been reviewed and submitted to eBird.
2. Awards - Joy Aso, just a reminder that awards are available
3. Conservation- Robin Todd submitted his report. The board discussed whether conservation issues should be confined to state vs national issues. I believe that it was recommended local issues are the priority but, national issues should also be .
4. MOS convention- Meg Harris reports that it will be held November 22-24, 2024 at the Grand Hotel in Ocean City, Md. Volunteers are needed. Earlier judging of the photo contest was discussed, the issue was how to judge photos ( I don't remember if the was a resolution).
5. YMOS George Radcliffe- photo big day approaching and MOS members can donate to YMOS, monies to go to Md Biodiversity project. Backpacks for young birders were distributed to chapters who requested them.
6. EDI- Ross Geridenwill step down as chair
7. Investments - Jim Moore reports that MOS has moved from conservative strategy to a more aggressive one.
8. Marcia Watson reminds us that the Md/DC birding guide is on the MOS website.
9. Bird Life magazine- Gene Scarpulla is retiring from putting out "Bird Life" magazine. The latest issue was just mailed and he reports that a digital copy may be offered in the future.
10. The Yellowthroat- Dave Wood notes articles for future issues are needed
11. Sanctuaries - Jeremy Castle submitted his report prior to meeting. Mention was made of road access to Irish Grove. Tidal flooding was the issue.
12. Scholarships - Anna Urciola reports 9 applications for Hogg Island scholarships were received for the 5 slots.

The meeting ended at approximately 12:30.

### Embroidered Orange Hats-Update

- Since the last meeting a small sub-committee (Val, Mary Lou, Lauren, and Gregg) discussed whether we saw the need other club logo items in the short term beyond the orange hat such as T-shirts, long sleeve light shirts, and additional hats selections. We/they decided that for now, the orange hat was the only item for priority. The thought about the hat was that club members had other hats but not an orange one.
- 39 hats were ordered from Custom Ink and are due in by Dec 11<sup>th</sup>
  - After Gregg had gotten board approval and confirmed sufficient interest for a quantity buy of at least 25, he had a discussion with Anna Fink (Harry's wife) that Custom Ink also had a setup for direct member ordering and group shipment to save shipping costs, so that is how we made the buy with direct payments. This obviated the need for a club member buying in quantity, then "reselling" to other members.
- Most hats will be distributed at the Dec 14 meeting. Alternate arrangements can be made with Gregg for folks that can't attend.
- Because the hats are embroidered, our detailed logo had to be simplified and abstracted to some extent.
- MOS lettering dropped off because it was too small to embroider. Modified logo:



### Custom Imprints Logo Wear-Additional Options for HCBC Members to Make Direct Buys

- Not everyone was interested in the orange hats or may later want to obtain HCBC logo-ed items.
- Some time ago, Mary Lou referred us to Frederick Bird Club President Mike Spurrier who has a site set up for his club for hats, T-shirts (short and long sleeve), backpacks, and a cooler. He then in turn set up a site for MOS logo-ed items.
  - <https://marylandbirdclubs.itemorder.com/shop/home/>
  - Close-up pictures of samples of Mike's logo wear are shown below.
- These logos are decals, not embroidered - (see pictures below).
  - Decals are less durable-but they can be in more complete detail. They may be best suited for items that are not routinely washed like hats, backpacks, and the cooler.
  - Logo-ed items also cost less than embroidered ones.
  - To wash shirts, it is recommended that the shirt be turned inside out to prolong the integrity of the decal.
- Custom Imprints has agreed to set up a mirrored purchase site for HCBC shortly with logo decal offerings.
  - No cost to the club, nor administrative need.
  - This provides an on-demand option for members.
  - We can explore the cost of embroidered selected items.

- This allows club members to buy individually, and they can pick up directly from Frederick to save shipping cost.



## YMOS Backpack Contest

<https://howardbirds.website/young-birder-mos-backpack-contest/>

### Young Birder MOS Backpack Essay Contest

Are you interested in birds but need the equipment to do it? Then this is the contest for you! The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and Howard County Bird Club (HCBC) have teamed up to provide you the opportunity to win a backpack, a pair of binoculars, a bird book AND a free one-year youth membership in the HCBC by completing a short essay (no more than 300 words) telling us how this would help your interest in birds! Your entry must be received by April 30, 2023.

#### Rules:

1. Entrant age is 8-16.
2. Entrant is a Howard County resident.
3. Entrant agrees to consider accepting the prize at the Howard County Bird Club meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup> (if possible).
4. Parent has given consent on enclosed form.

Please write an essay telling us how you could use a backpack, a pair of binoculars, and a bird field guide to improve your birding. If your essay is judged as the best, you will be the winner of this Young Birder MOS (YMOS) backpack and give your birding a boost!

**Download this form**, fill it out, save it, and email it as an attachment to [howardbirdclub@mdbirds.org](mailto:howardbirdclub@mdbirds.org). You will get our answer by May 8.

***President's Note: Need to add contact phone number to the essay form.***