

2023 Howard County Fall Count
by Mike McClure and Chuck Stirrat

The thirtieth annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 16th, 2023, with the count data shown in the table below. This count has turned out to be slightly above average with numbers for the total birds up, but down for warblers. The total number of bird species was up 5 from last year while the number of individuals was up 840. For the warblers, the species count was up 2 while the number of individual warblers was down 110. The most notable feature was the sizable number and species of shorebirds not normally found on fall count. This is almost exclusively due to the mud flats on the Triadelphia Reservoir due to it being drained for dredging.

The number of participants, parties, and the overall effort as measured by the hours and miles continued to remain strong with increased counters and parties. Effort showed a slight decrease in hours and a significant decrease in miles for the count (primarily in car mileage). Details on species, individuals, and effort are presented by Area in the table at the end of this report.

2023 Count Data

	Observed Birds Countywide		Observed Warblers Countywide		Statistics
	Species	Birds	Species	Birds	
Numbers	130	16,088	25	443	
Historical High:Low	140 : 108	26,651 : 9,293	30 : 13	1,004 : 130	
Year 's of High : Low	2010 : 2004	1994 : 2004	1994 : 2004	1994 : 2004	
Averages for Birds & Species	124.53	15,093.90	23.07	430.01	
Counters : Parties					73:55
Counters : Parties Averages					55.9 : 36.6
Counters Hours : Miles					253.2 : 509.9
Counters Hours : Miles Averages					201.4: 436.7

Saturday's temperature started in the low 50s [dew point 49 °F] at 6:00AM with an almost totally cloudless sky. The temperature rose to 78 °F [dew point 53 °F] in late afternoon. Winds were light to nonexistent from morning until early evening. The day could be described as a beautifully enjoyable Fall day.

Bird count participants are: Peter Ashley, Debbie Belchis, Karan Blum, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Jane & Mark Chandler, Chen Chiu, Ken Clark, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis Coskren, Ben Costello, Jeff Culler, Ralph Cullison III, Susan & **Wes Earp (Area 1 Co-coordinator)** , Tiffany Fisk, Lynn Gregg, Cathy Hallam, Joe Hanfman, Meg & **John Harris (Area 6 Coordinator)**, Bill & Gayle Hill, Steve Jones, Michael Kerwin, Clayton Koonce, **Russell Kovach (Area 2 Coordinator)**, Patrick & **Meghaan Lane (Area 7 Coordinator)**, Shashi Lengade, Vitus Li, Kathie Lillie, Felicia Lovelett, Sabrina Lovell, Steve Luke, Brigitte Lund, Janet Lydon, Jamie Lynch, **Mike McClure (Area 4 & County Co-coordinator)**, Lauren McDougle, Karlyn McPartland, Woody Merkle, Kent Middlekauff, Katie Moore, Brian Moyer, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Ben Newton, Bonnie Ott, Steve Parr, Pam Perna, **Gregg Petersen (Area 3 Coordinator)**, Suzanne Probst, Mary Prowell, John Henri Rorabeck, Collon Routh, Russ Ruffing, **Kurt Schwarz (Area 5 Coordinator)**, Clare Sebok, Thomas Seivert, Hsiao (Mei) Shyong, Wen-Jong Shyong, Jo Solem, **Chuck Stirrat (County-Co-coordinator)**, Valerie Swan, Tim Thompson, Ashley Tipton, Robin Todd, Sherry Tomlinson, Lisa Troutman, **Mark Wallace (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**, Hillary Yarmus. A special thanks to **Shirley Reddoch and Gregg Petersen** who stepped in to host the in-person portion of the tally rally.

There were 9 species [down 7] for which there was only one bird sighted countywide and 9 species [up 1] for which there were only two birds sighted countywide. There were 7 species showing moderately high numbers (>500) and their change from last year are: Canada Goose 1,521 [+101]; Mourning Dove 571; Broad-winged Hawk 1,230 [+407]; Blue Jay 646 [-216]; American Crow 615 [+26]; European Starling, 2,992 [+1,637]; and Northern Cardinal, 557 [-128]. Note, for those species without a quoted change indicates that species was not part of the >500 group last year. Gray Catbird and American Robin fell out of this group this year.

The Selasphorus species (1) was a new species for the count, appearing in the McClure's yard feeding on flowers on Friday and then made a brief appearance on count day. It most likely is a Rufous Hummingbird, as there have been

confirmed Rufous sightings in the fall on several recent years in the neighborhood. However, without having the bird in hand (banding) or multiple photos catching key field marks it can't be confirmed as such. The following observations were new high counts: Semipalmated Plover 6, Greater Yellowlegs 7, Great Blue Heron 68 (prior high 48), Bald Eagle 30, Red-shouldered Hawk 97 (tied last year's new high), Great Horned Owl 9, Eastern Wood-Pee-wee 110, Common Raven 25 (prior high 10), and Dickcissel 12 (prior high 3 was only observed once before). Additional sightings of interest were write-ins: Herring Gull 2, American Pipit 1, Mourning Warbler 2, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 1.

Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible, attend the tally as well. Next year the 2024 Fall Count will be held on the 3rd Saturday of September which will be the 21st.

Howard County Fall Count 2023

BIRD COUNT - HOWARD CO. Species & Codes / Area No.:	Season:		Type:		Area:		Date:	
	Fall 1	Fall 2	Regular 3	Regular 4	Howard 5	Howard 6	9/16/2023 7	Totals
Canada Goose	285	173	119	240	241	155	308	1,521
Wood Duck	21		5	2			1	29
Mallard	2	16	12	15	20	7	31	103
Wild Turkey *	4		2					6
Rock Pigeon	59	4	34	51	1	4		153
Mourning Dove	103	62	200	24	35	49	98	571
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	5	5	2					12
Chimney Swift		112	119	2	4	9	13	259
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	32	10	20	4	6	5	9	86
<i>Selasphorus Species</i> ^{1,2} **				1				1
Killdeer	37	12			1			50
Semipalmated Plover *		6						6
Least Sandpiper		8						8
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	11						12
Semipalmated Sandpiper *		8						8
Spotted Sandpiper		3		1		1		5
Solitary Sandpiper		1		3				4
Lesser Yellowlegs		2						2
Greater Yellowlegs		6		1				7
Herring Gull **		2						2
Double-crested Cormorant		6	1	2	12		5	26
Great Blue Heron	7	20	10	8	7	5	11	68
Great Egret		4						4
Green Heron	1	1	4		1	1	5	13
Black-crowned Night-Heron *					2			2
Black Vulture	47	33	100	6	12	12	41	251
Turkey Vulture	97	43	151	15	26	23	61	416
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	3				2		6
Cooper's Hawk	1	7	5	1		3	2	19
<i>accipiter species</i>							10	10
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	4	5	11	2	2	1	5	30
Red-shouldered Hawk	16	10	22	12	4	11	22	97
Broad-winged Hawk	36	32	258	40	50	776	38	1,230
Red-tailed Hawk	4	6	9	1	1		4	25
Eastern Screech-Owl	6		1	1				8
Great Horned Owl	5		4					9
Barred Owl	1		1	3	1	1	2	9
Belted Kingfisher	5	5	8	2	2	3	4	29
Red-headed Woodpecker *	1		1					2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	55	28	54	16	29	19	44	245
Downy Woodpecker	24	14	34	14	20	9	29	144
Hairy Woodpecker	4	3	4	4	7		5	27
Northern Flicker	24	11	24	5	10	21	21	116
Pileated Woodpecker	18	8	15	1	5	2	8	57
American Kestrel	3		5	1		3		12
Great Crested Flycatcher @			1		1	2	2	6
Eastern Wood-Pewee	28	16	38	2	6	13	7	110
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher **						1		1
Acadian Flycatcher *	1		2	1			1	5
<i>Traill's Flycatcher</i> ¹ *					1			1
Least Flycatcher *			2			1		3
<i>Empidonax species</i>	5		3		3	1		12

Howard County Fall Count 2023

BIRD COUNT - HOWARD CO. Species & Codes / Area No.:	Season:		Type:	Regular		Area:		Howard		Date:
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals		
Eastern Phoebe	17	4	16	4	5	6	17	69		
White-eyed Vireo	4	3	8	1	4	5		25		
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	1	3		1			6		
Blue-headed Vireo		3				1		4		
Philadelphia Vireo *	1							1		
Warbling Vireo			1	3				4		
Red-eyed Vireo	14	12	24	1	10	5	14	80		
Blue Jay	114	54	167	46	75	62	128	646		
American Crow	143	110	192	23	24	27	96	615		
Fish Crow	9	2	228	4	10	41	5	299		
<i>crow species</i>	39		8	4	17	6	10	84		
Common Raven	5	2	5		1	1	11	25		
Carolina Chickadee	62	32	61	31	63	21	46	316		
Tufted Titmouse	69	35	46	22	27	18	52	269		
Horned Lark *	12							12		
Tree Swallow		3	1	3				7		
N. Rough-winged Swallow @		7						7		
Barn Swallow		6	2					8		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet @	1		2				1	4		
Cedar Waxwing	15	45	93	1	4	41	23	222		
White-breasted Nuthatch	48	24	30	13	19	11	31	176		
Brown Creeper @							1	1		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		1	5	1	4	2	3	16		
Carolina Wren	91	24	83	46	41	23	103	411		
House Wren	2	3	12	5	5	10	3	40		
Gray Catbird	52	23	92	26	55	56	87	391		
Brown Thrasher	4	1	8	3	3	9	2	30		
Northern Mockingbird	29	9	57	4	10	26	45	180		
European Starling	778	46	820	1,065	93	73	117	2,992		
Eastern Bluebird	115	56	71	7	11	43	42	345		
Veery		3			1	1	1	6		
Gray-cheeked Thrush *						2		2		
Swainson's Thrush		3	10		3	5	2	23		
Hermit Thrush *	1							1		
Wood Thrush	1	8	1				1	11		
American Robin	46	14	84	3	33	17	108	305		
House Sparrow	50	28	41		47	13	129	308		
American Pipit **		1						1		
House Finch	80	22	33	23	1	31	74	264		
American Goldfinch	81	81	94	58	45	39	82	480		
Chipping Sparrow	46	32	72	2	9	9	10	180		
Field Sparrow	2		5			2		9		
Savannah Sparrow *			2	5		1		8		
Song Sparrow	11	7	12	9	5	3	8	55		
Lincoln's Sparrow *		1				1		2		
Eastern Towhee	10	8	17		7	5	2	49		
Eastern Meadowlark			5					5		
Red-winged Blackbird		3	6	6	1	12	6	34		
Brown-headed Cowbird	43		1			8	10	62		
Common Grackle		1		5	1		1	8		
<i>unidentified blackbird</i>	30					9		39		
Ovenbird		1	3			2	2	8		

Howard County Fall Count 2023

BIRD COUNT - HOWARD CO.	Season:		Type:		Area:		Date:	
Species & Codes / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Blue-winged Warbler @			2					2
Black-&-white Warbler	8	7	4		4	5	1	29
Tennessee Warbler	2	1	3		2	3		11
Nashville Warbler					1		1	2
Connecticut Warbler **						4		4
Mourning Warbler **			2					2
Common Yellowthroat	14	7	11	2	11	3	4	52
American Redstart	5	7	21	2	8	19	4	66
Cape May Warbler		2	7		1			10
Northern Parula	6	7	14	1	2	6	2	38
Magnolia Warbler	15	6	13	2	9	11	3	59
Bay-breasted Warbler	2		1		1	2	1	7
Blackburnian Warbler	2	1	3		1	2		9
Yellow Warbler @	1							1
Chestnut-sided Warbler		4	5		2	6	3	20
Blackpoll Warbler	2	1	1		2	1		7
Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	1	5	1					7
Palm Warbler @	10	3	2			1	2	18
Pine Warbler		5	1		2	1	1	10
Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler		1		2	2			5
Prairie Warbler			2			2		4
Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	9	9	13		2	5	3	41
Canada Warbler						1		1
Wilson's Warbler		1	2					3
<i>unidentified warbler</i>	22		4		4	5	3	38
Scarlet Tanager	2	3	3		2	1		11
Northern Cardinal	92	30	116	67	57	66	129	557
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		3	4		6	1		14
Blue Grosbeak			1	2	3		4	10
Indigo Bunting	24	7	12		4	2	6	55
Dickcissel **	12							12
Area Total Birds:	3,198	1,525	3,950	1,983	1,271	1,934	2,227	16,088
Area Total Species:	83	95	97	66	78	83	74	130
Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Supplemental Data								
Time Start:	3:50 a	5:24 a	4:36 a	5:42 a	7:00 a	6:22 a	4:58 a	3:50 a
Time Stop:	8:00 p	5:32 p	6:30 p	5:30 p	2:25 p	5:00 p	3:45 p	8:00 p
Hours on Foot:	33.4	21.1	51.7	12.9	20.2	14.6	33.7	187.5
Hours by Car:	15.3	4.5	5.8	1.4	.8	5.6	3.0	36.4
Hours by Boat:								
Hours Other:								
Miles on Foot:	18.4	17.3	42.2	12.1	18.1	12.8	37.1	158.1
Miles by Car:	143.0	21.0	48.8	33.2	17.0	22.7	42.2	327.9
Miles by Boat:								
Miles Other:								
Hours Feeder Watching:	1.5	1.0					1.3	3.8
Hours Stationary:	16.8	.6	.1			.1	1.0	18.6
Hours "Owling":	3.0	1.3	1.6				1.0	6.9
Miles "Owling":	20.0	1.4	.5				2.0	23.9

Howard County Fall Count 2023

BIRD COUNT - HOWARD CO.		Season: Fall		Type: Regular		Area: Howard		Date: 9/16/2023	
Species & Codes / Area No.:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
County Weather	Temperature	%Clouds		Wind (Speed & Dir.)			Precip.(Type & Amt.)		
Dawn	51 ° F	10%					None		
AM	57.8 ° F	10%					None		
Noon	72.8 ° F	10%		1 NW			None		
PM	77.6 ° F	10%		1 NNW			None		
Dusk	68.8 ° F	10%					None		
Comments on Weather: (.e.g amount of ice, fog, etc.)	Gorgeous Fall day. Winds very light and almost no clouds all day.								
Area Code:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	
Total Observers in Area:	13	10	18	4	9	9	12	73	
Total Parties in Area:	10	5	11	5	5	10	9	55	
Total Party-Hours (Reg.):	48.7	25.6	57.5	14.3	20.9	20.2	36.7	223.9	
Tot. Party Hours (Feeder Watch):	1.5	1.0					1.3	3.8	
Total Party-Hours (Station'y):	16.8	.6	.1			.1	1.0	18.6	
Total Party-Hours (Owling):	3.0	1.3	1.6				1.0	6.9	
Total Party-Hours:	70.0	28.5	59.2	14.3	20.9	20.3	40.0	253.2	
Total Party-Miles:	181.4	39.7	91.5	45.3	35.1	35.5	81.3	509.9	
Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	

¹ Trail's Flycatcher and Selasphorus Sp. counted as species

² Most likely a Rufous Hummingbird