

HOWARD

DECEMBER 1975

VOLUME IV NO. 4

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
HOWARD COUNTY CHAPTER



CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

The bookstore has delightful Christmas cards, many books as well as records and bird tapes. Be sure to shop there for birding friends and relatives. Any special order can be placed by calling Marsha Krishnamoorthy at 997-5967. All profits go to the Sanctuary Fund so give it your support.

COMING EVENTS

Meet at Swansfield Elementary School.

Dec. 6, Saturday at 8 am - Local Feeder Trip, Ashton area. An excellent trip to help identify local wintering birds and to gain ideas for better ways of attracting birds to your own feeder. Leader-Nan Rhineland.

Dec. 11, Thursday Evening Program at 7:45 pm. Bill Clark will show slides of birds and talk about his recent trip to Europe.

Jan. 1, Triadelphia Christmas Count. Call Kris Krishnamoorthy (997-5967) by Dec. 10 so he can assign areas to be covered. Feeder reports within the count area are also needed.

Jan. 11, Sunday at 7:30 am - Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Trip with the Sierra Club. This will be an all day trip so bring lunch, coffee, snacks and warm clothes. Besides a bald eagle or two the refuge should be full of various geese and wintering ducks. Leader-Bob Herndon.

Jan. 17, Saturday at 7:30 pm - An Owl Explore. This evening trip will explore potential owl areas in and around Columbia. Tapes will be used to try to call out these nocturnal predators. Leader-Kris Krishnamoorthy.

ONLY REMINDER please note

Jan. 8, Thursday Evening Program - James Ruos, non-game bird specialist, of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, will speak on Birds of Prey. 7:45 pm.

*Nan Rhineland
did this round*

AUDUBON WILDLIFE LECTURES

Dec. 5, Friday - West Side Story, Mexico to Alaska, Walter H. Bertet
March 19, Friday - Papua, New Guinea, Twilight of Eden, Greg & Linda Powell McMillan
April 30, Friday - Wildlife By Day and by night, Steve Maslowe

single admission
Adult \$2.00
Junior (thrull7)
\$1.00

Dumbarton Junior High School
Dumbarton Rd. W. of 7000 bl. York Rd.
Baltimore, Md. 21212

Mail checks or money order payable to Baltimore Chapter M03 with a stamped self-addressed envelope to: Mr. Nicholas Kay, 611 Sussex Rd., Baltimore, Md. 21204.

SIGHTINGS

Merjorie Mountjoy reported her first evening grosbeak since 1972 on Nov. 20th. Let's hope we see more of them this year than many did last year. On Nov. 22 Iris (rishnamoorthy found canvasback, lesser scaup, hooded mergansers, pied and billed horned grebes as well as coot on Lake Kittauxquandi, and ruddy ducks on Wilde Lake.

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter in January will be given out at the meeting, January 8th. Those not attending will have their copies subsequently mailed to them.

BOBWHITES from Bent, Life Histories of North American Gallinaceous Birds.

The bobwhite is a popular game bird avidly hunted by sportsmen, and a friend of the farmer, more for the insects he devours than for the weed seeds and waste grain he picks up. Bobwhites love man's cultivated fields, shunning deep woods except when danger is present; they often perch on fence posts and low branches of orchard and other trees.

Their name is of course derived from their familiar courtship call. A second call is a sweet four syllable whistle used to answer the male in spring and a maternal call to the young. A third whistling note is the gather call often heard in fall when the flock is trying to regroup toward night as they collect to roost. This call is in two parts, slurred together, the first part emphasized, rather like a whistle used to call a dog. While the birds feed there is also a conversational chatter note, and when surprised by man or beast adults give a fine chattering call which confuses the intruder as the parents beat about in the dust to lure away the enemy. An alarm note is started when the chicks have scattered and hidden or if the parents fail to lead the enemy away. T-c-i-l-ick-ick-ick is sounded, machine-like in its regularity, until the coast is clear.

In fall the bobwhite forsores the company of man and finds shelter in brushy tangles on field and wood edges. He now travels in coveys of family members, or flocks of several families. Bobwhites feed when the sun is well up, not liking to get their feet and feathers wet, retire to rest for about four hours in the middle of the day, and reappear to feed two hours before sundown.

Their characteristic roosting in a close circle on the ground, heads out, tails in, is begun by one individual, followed by another and another until the circle is complete. Late comers jump on the backs, search for a yielding spot and wedge themselves in, thus protected from frost and enemies. They also roost off the ground in masses of wild grapes, bushy trees, cutbuildings, or on logs and lower fence rails.

Although generally nonmigratory in some sections they make short migrations on foot to better feeding areas or perhaps to escape adverse winter conditions. Although they can swim for short distances many weaker ones drown in attempting to cross major streams.

Many bobwhite visit brush and evergreen shelters open at both ends, to feed on grain and grit on bare ground. Corn on the ground near their habitat will sometimes bring them to a feeder.

Earliest Known Facts About Birds.

1. What is the earliest known literary reference to birds ?
2. Do birds have a leading role in any Bible Stories ?
3. What is the best known reference to birds in the Bible ?
4. What is the most ancient reference to birds in well known literature, aside from the Bible ?
5. Do birds play a leading part in any early literature ?
6. Did birds have a leading role in other ancient literature ?
7. Did Socrates ever speak of birds ?
8. ~~Did~~ What effect did Aristotle have on the study of birds ?
9. What is meant by the "Swan Song" ?
10. What place did the eagle hold in mythology ?

1. Genesis 1 - 20.
2. Genesis 7 & 8, First Kings 17:1 - 24.
3. Songs of Solomon 2:11 - 12.
4. Homer (born 850 B.C.) described in the Iliad the Trojans advance, "Like the cranes which flee ----".
5. Aesop (about 550 B.C.) wrote many fables based on his knowledge of animal behavior. One fable, "The Jay and the Peacock", include several observations on behavior.
6. Aristophanes (about 448 B.C.) the great Athenian dramatist, often used natural forms in his comedies. "The Birds", is one of his finest.
7. His last words referred to a bird.
8. He described the food territories, and studied the anatomy of birds. A lot of his studies were full of errors, nevertheless they continued to influence the Western World for more than 2000 years.
9. The belief that a dying swan sings a beautiful song arose behind the curtain of prehistory.
10. In almost all cultures the eagle was regarded as the personification of bravery and courage.

Finis.

The following two Christmas carols have been reworked by Frances Dawson and Jo Solen.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

1. On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me: a partridge in a bare tree.
2. On the second day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 2 rock doves and a partridge in a bare tree.
3. On the third day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 3 marsh wrens, 2 rock doves, etc.
4. On the fourth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 4 squawking birds, etc.
5. On the fifth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 5 bending rings, etc.
6. On the sixth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 6 snow geese laying, etc.
7. On the seventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 7 mute swans swimming, etc.
8. On the eighth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 8 mockers mating, etc.
9. On the ninth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 9 woodcocks dancing, etc.
10. On the tenth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 10 cranes a-leaping, etc.
11. On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 11 plovers piping, etc.
12. On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love sent to me: 12 grouse a-drumming, etc.

Here We come a-birding

The following is particularly dedicated to those avid birders who, this year, will spend New Year's Day on the Triadelphia Christmas Count.

I. Here we come a-birding
Among the leaves so old,
Here we come a-counting
So weary to behold;
Refrain: Lengthy lists come to you and to you your Old Crow too;
And God bless you and send you a record Christmas count;
And God send you a record Christmas count.

II. We are not yearly trespassers
That drift from door to door;
But we are Howard birders
Whom you have seen before;
(Refrain)

III. God bless the master of this count,
Likewise the counters too;
And all the other birders
That round the country go;
(Refrain)