

HOWARD

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
September - October VOL V NO 1
1976

WELCOME BACK

We are looking forward to another active year. As we begin our fifth year as a chapter we welcome old members and look forward to making many new friends who share our interests in the natural world. Please mail the enclosed membership blank to the treasurer whose name appears on the sheet or bring it with you to the September meeting. Please be sure to fill in the questionnaire. If you wish to continue receiving the newsletter please join promptly. Spiraling costs and a desire to improve the quality of each newsletter have forced us to begin printing only every other month. The editors (Nan Rhineland & Jo Sola) continue to welcome contributions of book reviews, puzzles, sightings or any items of interest.

CALENDAR

PROGRAM

Programs and business meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from September thru May at Swansfield Elementary School on Cedar Lane in Columbia. The program begins at 7:45 P.M. with a short break after the program followed by the business meeting. Bring the children and leave at the break if you wish. The book store is open both before and after the meeting.

September 9, Thursday - Col. Bodenstein - "Marshes." Col. Bodenstein is the new President of the Maryland Ornithological Society and will also speak briefly about MOS as an organization.

October 14, Thursday - Eileen and John Glegg - "Alaskan Adventure."

FIELD TRIPS

September 11, Saturday - Mc Keldin Area of Patapsco Park, fall migrants. Leader Marty Chestem. $\frac{1}{2}$ day. Meet at 7:30 A.M. at Swansfield Elementary parking lot. Bring lunch if you desire to stay in the park all day.

September 26, Sunday - Fern Walk, southern Howard Co. Leader, Jo Sola. Birders welcome but primary purpose of trip will be to find some of the common ferns in the county. Meet at 1:30 P.M. in the Swansfield Elementary parking lot.

October 9, 10, 11 - Saturday, Sunday, Monday - Columbus Day Weekend - Brigantine, Cape May, N.J. Trip - Call Leroy or Cathy Williamson for details 730-0338. There will be good opportunities for photographers as well as birders. Leave 7:00 A.M. Swansfield Elementary.

October 23, Saturday - Rain Date Sunday, Oct. 24 - Local Lakes Bird Trip - Leaders Cathy & Leroy Williamson. Social hour following trip. Meet at 7:30 A.M. Swansfield Elementary.

BOARD MEETINGS

Sept. 30, Thursday - Eileen & John Glegg's - 8909 Tamar Dr., Apt. 101. Tel. 730-4362
October 28, Thursday - Bob Herndon's - 5243 Hesperus Dr. Tel. 730-0942.

... (10-11) year the editors will feature a series of articles on the general theme of "attracting birds." Our initial contribution has been prepared by N. Rhinelanders.

"Berrying Shrubs for the Hungry birds"

By planting trees, flowers and shrubs around the property, be it large or small, the population of birds can be increased throughout the year. Of the three horticultural types, shrubs form the backbone; they provide privacy on one's own lot; they are used to divide a property into utility areas, to hide trash cans, laundry lines, vegetable gardens and children's play areas from the leisure area: patio, terrace, barbeque or quiet sitting room. Furthermore, shrubs grow quickly often reaching their desired height in up to three years. In forming a visual barrier hedges or groupings of shrubs are useful as territorial barriers for birds; more birds will nest closer together given visual obstacles than they will if the same amount of space is devoted to open clear terrain.

Shrubs are usually recommended by fruiting season but even when they are not providing food they may be useful for cover and nesting sites, as well as for their blooms and varied leaf forms. From a landscaping point of view the smaller the shrub the greater the number needed to provide a mass, a harmonious grouping, on the property. In addition one small plant is less likely to attract birds to its fruit than a mass of the same fruiting plants. One plant will be found by the birds already in the area, but a huge clump of plants is more likely to be spotted and touted about as a first class feast.

During the fall and early spring there is more rainfall and cooler temperatures. These are the best times to plant shrubs. Of all the summer and fall fruiting shrubs we too will most enjoy the raspberries and blackberries. These brambles also make fine nesting and protective cover as a wild tangle in a back corner of the yard. Another favorite of both bird and man is the blueberry-huckleberry family, both of which prefer acid soil. A third native shrub which can be used for wine, jellies and fritters is the Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis* 8-10'). Its June white plate-sized flowers are followed in summer by heavy clusters of black berries which are eaten by a hundred species of birds including Flickers, other woodpeckers, Bluebirds, and thrushes.

Buckthorn (*Rhamnus caroliniana* 6-10') with red fruit which turns black is especially valuable due to its extended period of fruiting which begins in July and is still available for food until the autumn frost.

Of the shrub dogwoods both the Gray Dogwood (*Cornus racemosa* 5-6') and the Red-osier Dogwood (*C. stolonifera* 5-6') make excellent bird fare and both flower in small white clusters which are attractive in the back yard. The fruit of the Red-osier is lead gray, black-dotted and in clusters but its bright red bark contrasts beautifully with a snowy background. The Silky Dogwood (*C. amomum* 6-8') is particularly useful in wet places and woodland edges. It is a carefree plant in the right spot with grayish purple bark and clusters of pale blue berries. These three are all native, grow quickly and can be dug from the wild.

Sapphireberry Sweetleaf (*Symplocos paniculata*) available as nursery stock grows 5-7' and produces clusters of sapphire-blue berries in autumn. These are such favorites of the birds that they are not even given a chance to ripen before they are eaten up.

Shadbush or Serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis* 10-15') has lovely white flowers in early spring. Its small purple apple-like fruits are so popular that they, too, are long eaten before summer arrives.

Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin* 8-10') has yellow flowers which cover the branches before the leaves appear in spring. Its fragrant foliage turns bright yellow in fall and its scarlet berries are eaten by fall migrants as well as resident birds. This native species is very common and can be dug when small from the wild.

Strawberry Bush (*Quonymus americanus* 8') has salmon pink fruit which in autumn delights the Scarlet Tanager, Sapsucker and Thrushes.

... May ... followed by bright red or yellow berries which are sought by Kingfishers, Thrushes, Catbirds and Waxwings.

Besides the many shrubs for spring, summer and fall food there are a number of shrubs which fruit in the fall and carry this fruit on into the winter. In the holly family Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata* 6') is a deciduous shrub of open growth which prefers rich soil. It produces orange-red fruit for fall and early winter. To insure fruiting both sexes of holly plants need to be planted. Winterberry is said to attract 48 species of birds.

Of all the berry-producing viburnums desirable for birds Arrowwood Viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum* 6-10') is said to be the favorite. Most viburnums are shade-tolerant and thus can be planted under trees. The Arrowwood Viburnum has small white clusters and slate-blue berries which turn black on ripening. This plant can be dug successfully from the wild and is common in our area. Nannyberry (*V. lentago* 8-10') has cadet-blue berries while White Rod (*V. cassinoides* 6-8') has varicolored berries. The American Cranberrybush (*V. trilobum* 8') furnishes white blooms, vivid fall color and red berries. The Mapleleaf Viburnum (*V. acerifolium* 4-5') endures much shade and is attractive throughout the year with shapely leaves which turn purple in fall with blackish fruits. Locally it grows considerably taller (7') and very broad so allow it plenty of room for full growth. It also keeps its foliage in mild winters in our climate. The Blackhaw Viburnum (*V. prunifolium* 10-15') is not particular as to soil and produces abundant berries for the birds. All the viburnums bloom in May and June while their attractive fruits, while they mature early in the season, hang well through the winter and are desirable for 35 species of birds.

Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* 3-5') is best known for its red foliage and berries in autumn which are not eaten by summer residents or fall migrants. It is best described as famine food to be eaten when other desirable food is gone or snow covered. A thorny hedge provides excellent protection from bird enemies and nesting sites for Song Sparrows and Catbirds. The European Barberry (*B. vulgaris* 6-8') has escaped cultivation and can be dug from the wild to provide red berries in fall and winter.

Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus* 3-4') is especially good for dry banks where low growth is wanted or to face down taller shrubs. Its small pink flowers are followed by currentlike red fruit in autumn and winter appealing to Purple Finches and Grosbeaks.

The European Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare* 6-8') is likely to be the escaped privet in Howard County whose black berries furnish food for many birds. It grows on almost any soil.

In the rose family the *Rosa rugosa* (3-6') has hips which persist through the winter and are often acceptable to game birds, P. Finches and Bluebirds. The Japanese rose (*R. multiflora*) a climber makes good wildlife escape and nesting cover but it's too rampant for the small property. It self-seeds widely in this area becoming a pest on farms.

Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina* 20') and the Smooth Sumac (*R. glabra* 15') furnish last resort food in spring when other supplies are used up for Woodpeckers, Chickadees, Jays, Sparrows and early Phoebes. Fall migrating Hermit Thrushes & Robins enjoy the berries.

Any articles of this length cannot cover all the shrubs which attract birds to their fruits or seeds. Also in one area fruits of a shrub popular in another area may go untouched as seems true locally of the American Cranberrybush. If you have a shrub which is particularly attractive to birds it is hoped that you will pass this information on to the writer so that future articles can give a still wider choice of food plants for homeowners to choose from to attract birds and beautify their grounds. Reference - Arnoldia Vol. 5, Nos. 2-3, April 6, 1945. "Build Bird Population with Food Plants." G. Russell Mason.

CLIP AND SAVE - Meeting dates for the Howard Bird Club for the 1976-77 Year

Sept. 9	Nov. 11	Jan. 13	March 10	May 12
Oct. 14	Dec. 9	Feb. 10	April 14	

The food on your table may have wasted more energy just to package it than was actually used in producing it. Aluminum and plastic containers which take large amounts of energy to produce are becoming more widely used at the expense of glass, steel and paper packaging which use less energy. Among the highest energy users are TV dinners, frozen prepared foods, flavorings and spreads, canned beverages and cooking oil sprays. It takes 9,058 units of energy to produce a 16-oz. non-returnable bottle of Royal Crown Cola--two-thirds of that spent on the packaging. While a returnable bottle the same size takes an additional 1,850 units of energy to make the returnable bottles are re-used an average of 15 times so the total energy requirement is much lower over a period of time. Since Americans spend about 12% of their total energy output on growing, processing and packing food there are five methods of reducing energy consumption: growing more vegetables and fruit at home, shifting from animal to vegetable protein, cutting down on processed foods, avoiding nonreturnable beverage containers and buying more bulk and unpackaged foods.

RECYCLE - If you are unable to grow and process your own food you can help to lessen our energy consumption by recycling. Newspaper and glass bottles can be recycled each Saturday morning from 9 A.M. till noon at the Public Works Garage (opposite the Exxon Station) in Columbia. Papers should be bundled and glass sorted according to color.

ALUMINUM - The Reynolds Aluminum Co. now has a recycling station in Wilde Lake. It's near the village center in the Lynx Lane Shopping Center. Collection began Friday, June 4, 9:30 A.M. to 11 A.M. and will continue at the same spot every other Friday. The company will purchase all aluminum cans, pie plates, foil, frozen food trays, aluminum siding, gutters, storm doors and lawn furniture if free from foreign materials and cut to lengths not exceeding 3 feet. The price per pound is 15%. To test for the presence of aluminum, use a magnet; aluminum is not magnetic. Each time aluminum is recycled a 95% energy savings results over producing aluminum from virgin ore.

WILDLIFE SYMPOSIUM - The Chesapeake Audubon Society is sponsoring a one-day symposium Oct. 30 focusing on Maryland's threatened and endangered plants and animals. The symposium will be held at the University of Md. Baltimore County Campus. The cost is \$2 per person with lunch optional at \$1.50 per person. To attend send a check to "Wildlife Symposium" P.O. Box 3173, Catonsville, Md.

Bird Name Quiz

The birds listed in the left-hand column below have been known by a variety of common names in the past. Match the correct answer from the column on the right with the bird on the left.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>1.</u> Green Heron | 1. Yellow-hammer; High-hole |
| <u>2.</u> Sharp-shinned Hawk | 2. Chewink; Swamp Robin |
| <u>3.</u> Kestrel | 3. Preacher Bird; Little Hang-nest |
| <u>4.</u> Woodcock | 4. Jug Swallow; Gave Swallow |
| <u>5.</u> Yellow-billed Cuckoo | 5. Bullet Hawk; Little Blue Darter |
| <u>6.</u> Barred Owl | 6. Firebird; Black-winged Redbird |
| <u>7.</u> Common Flicker | 7. Rain Crow; Rain Dove |
| <u>8.</u> Pileated Woodpecker | 8. Old Field Lark; Meadowlark |
| <u>9.</u> Eastern Kingbird | 9. Yellow Titmouse; Summer Warbler |
| <u>10.</u> Cliff Swallow | 10. Logcock; Great God Woodpecker |
| <u>11.</u> Wood Thrush | 11. Hoot Owl; Swamp Owl |
| <u>12.</u> Red-eyed Vireo | 12. Thistle Bird; Wild Canary |
| <u>13.</u> Yellow Warbler | 13. Green Bittern; Fly-up-the-Creek |
| <u>14.</u> Ovenbird | 14. Golden-crowned Thrush; Teacher |
| <u>15.</u> Eastern Meadowlark | 15. Song Thrush; Wood Robin |
| <u>16.</u> Baltimore Oriole | 16. Golden Robin; Hang-nest |
| <u>17.</u> Scarlet Tanager | 17. Chippy; Hair-bird |
| <u>18.</u> American Goldfinch | 18. Timber Doodle; Big Mud Snipe |
| <u>19.</u> Rufous-sided Towhee | 19. Grasshopper Hawk; Kitty Hawk |
| <u>20.</u> Chipping Sparrow | 20. Bee Martin; Field Martin |

Answers on final page of this newsletter.

Outdoors --

Plant shrubs for attracting birds. Your choices are numerous; the reward in bird species ~~is~~ great.

Walk around your neighborhood on a regular basis--you may be surprised at what crosses your path if you are not in too much of a hurry. There are still fledgling birds of some species in the area and soon larger numbers of migrants will be coming thru.

Keep your birdbath filled. The local birds need a constant & plentiful water supply & so do the migrants.

Watch for migrating Monarch butterflies. Occasionally you may see dozens or even hundreds during the course of a day.

Promise yourself a trip, picnic or a few hours in a habitat unlike that around your home. You'll find different birds, wild flowers, trees & insects. If you live on a bare lot, visit the woods; if you're surrounded by trees, walk thru a meadow; if you're an apartment dweller, try the seashore--you may discover a whole new world.

Look down as well as up. Fall is the best time to discover gorgeous fungi, numerous wild flowers are blooming and colorful butterflies are easily observed.

Indoors --

Look over the section on fall warblers in your field guide. Don't let the similarity of the greens, yellows & olives discourage you. It's fun to try--and there is always the chance you'll find one you recognize!

Check hawk flight silhouettes. With hawks migrating from now until mid-November keep an eye on the sky when you're outside, especially on sunny days with northwesterly winds.

Examine your binoculars to be sure they're dust free, the lenses are clean and the neck strap is in good shape.

Plan the location, number & type of bird feeders you will be using later in the fall. Start acquiring, building, cleaning, repairing & ordering toward that end.

Meet YOUR BOARD - President 1976-77 - Ben Dawson

Ben is a native of Norfolk, Va. where, after high school, he served as an apprentice harbor pilot for a year and a half while deciding where he was headed. He attended Hampden-Sydney College with interests so eclectic that he managed the unusual feat of graduating with a B.A. and a B.S. in just 4 years. A particular interest in biology led him to the University of Va. School of Medicine. Internship and residency took him to Philadelphia and later a fellowship in hematology in Boston continued his medical training.

The Dawsons are pioneer Columbia residents for Ben and Frances purchased a house there 8 years ago but the best-laid plans of Uncle Sam are apt to be changed so that Ben's "involuntary servitude" with the army was served at Fort Knox, Ky. which meant leaving the new Columbia home. After three years they returned Howard Co. Ben is now with the University of Md. School of Medicine, runs the hospital blood bank and a private lab, does research on an army grant and manages to find time to publish numerous professional papers.

The Dawsons share an enjoyment of the cultural life available in the area while Ben is particularly enthusiastic about their proximity to the Bay. From March until Nov. much of his free time is spent sailing as he hones his skills in olympic class yacht racing competition. Since Anne's arrival last March there has been less time to sail; there might be a bright side to it if she turns out to be a good crew member some day. He is also interested in photography and used to take birds and wild flowers; now he seems to be concentrating more on baby pictures. . . . When he isn't reading medical journals he likes to wade into nineteenth century European novels and scientific philosophy.

Quiz Answers --

1. 13; 2. 5; 3. 19; 4. 18; 5. 7; 6. 11; 7. 1; 8. 10; 9. 20; 10. 4; 11. 15;
12. 3; 13. 9; 14. 14; 15. 8; 16. 16; 17. 6; 18. 12; 19. 2; 20. 17.