

HOWARD

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
 SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1981 VOL. 10 NO. 1

JOIN US NOW

Our September meeting inaugurates our tenth year as a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Please return the attached membership blank and questionnaire soon. Membership entitles you to quarterly issues of Maryland Birdlife, the Maryland Yellowthroat newsletter, and the Howard newsletter. It offers you the opportunity to participate in a full schedule of programs and field trips. In these inflationary times, our dues remain the same. Check the Calendar for the change this year in meeting place for programs.

COUNTY ACTIVE BREEDING RECORDS FOR COMMON GALLINULE & TREE SWALLOW

Although there had been previous evidence of Tree Swallows (Iridoprocne bicolor) nesting in Howard County, no active nests had been found until this summer when Mark Wallace documented two nests on the Cissel property on Jennings Chapel Road.

One nesting box (bluebird) was located about 5' high on a post approximately 500' from Cattail Creek on a hillside. The box originally contained the nest and eggs of a Carolina Chickadee. Swallows took over the box prior to 8 May bringing in a layer of white feathers to cover the chickadee nest. The first eggs were observed on 14 May (at least 2). No adults were seen.

The second box had contained a bluebird nest without eggs. It was mounted chest-high on a wooden post between a cow pasture and a mown grassy field. On 2 May the box contained a bluebird nest; 8 May a layer of white feathers had been laid over the nest; 14 May there were 5 eggs in the nest and 1 adult engaged in mock attack, diving and bill-clicking as Mark examined the box.

Certainly the most astonishing birding news of the summer from Howard County was the discovery by Paul Leifer of a nest with 8 eggs of a Common Gallinule (Gallinula chloropus) in a pond at the Laurel Raceway just north of Laurel. This record is particularly exceptional when one notes that this elusive species has been recorded only three previous years (1972, '77 & '78). Paul waded among the pondside vegetation (he had seen a Pied-billed Grebe well into June and suspected breeding) and came across this nest with eggs. No adult bird was seen so 21 June he went back to the area with several other birders to attempt to identify the nest. As Paul made his way into the cattails a Common Gallinule emerged from the vegetation and made its way alternately flying and walking to the far side of the race track. Paul continued to monitor the nest through 6 July. On that date there was still 1 chick in the nest; it contained no other eggs or shells. There still was an adult in the area.

CONSERVATION NEWS - Martha Chestem

This year's column will be conservation oriented and will most often be notes directly related to birds, e.g. habitats, feeding, endangered species. Let us hear from you if you have some news or would like further information on a particular item.

This summer our club sent fliers to all members, many former members and other interested persons to seek donations for an important project we have undertaken as one activity to celebrate our tenth anniversary. Have you responded to that plea for funds to assist the Nature Conservancy in saving Nassawango Creek on Maryland's Eastern Shore? If you have misplaced your notice or need more brochures to give friends, please call me at 730-1527 and you will receive what you request by return mail. Contributions are fully tax-deductible.

Several of our chapter members visited Nassawango Creek during the MOS State Convention last spring. Whether it was a return visit or the first, there was complete agreement that this wilderness must be saved. We enjoyed the warblers and spring wildflowers, but it is a great place to visit any time of the year. Do go if you have not seen it and go with the happy thought that you have helped to preserve it!

It is nice to report that the Dept. of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service has awarded a contract to Tom Cade, a Cornell ornithologist, to breed the Peregrine Falcon in captivity to reestablish the species in the wild. The contract is for \$240,000 and is expected to produce 100 Peregrines over the next two years. Cornell has had such a program for a number of years, but this is good news because the Dept. of Interior has granted few such contracts under its current leadership. We continue to receive occasional reports of a Peregrine Falcon seen flying about Columbia east of Route 29. This is most likely one of Cornell's birds. Watch for it and check to see if there is a leg band. Let us hear from you if you spot this magnificent bird.

Do you know National Audubon has a Hotline number for recorded reports on conservation topics from its Washington office? It may be well to call this number from time to time to check on the status of current legislation, environmental activities and, of course, to find out what Secretary of Interior Watt is up to. The number is (202) 547-9107.

BEVERAGE INDUSTRY RECYCLING PROGRAM (BIRP) OPENS IN HOWARD COUNTY

Howard County has a new recycling center which opened August 13, 1981. It is located just off Route 29, south of Route 32, on Old Columbia Pike (on the east side of the road and visible from Rt. 29). The hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 12 noon - 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

The bottom has fallen out of the market for many recycled materials, but presently BIRP is paying cash for the following items: Aluminum cans - 24¢ per lb.; aluminum scrap - 15¢ per lb.; bimetal cans - 1¢ per lb.; all-steel cans - 1¢ per lb.; plastic soda bottles - 3¢ per lb.; newspaper - 50¢ per 100 lbs. There may be some additional items accepted in the near future.

This is the beverage industry and food dealer's answer to mandatory deposit legislation. Recycle those items that will help to reduce the landfill, save our natural resources, and reduce the litter along our highways.

C A L E N D A R

(Map on back of this page.)

PROGRAMS- 7:45 p.m. Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Drive, Columbia.

- Sept. 10 - Thur. - "Adventures in South American Birding" - Dr. Robert Trever. Dr. Trever is an internist in Easton, MD. Birds are a consuming hobby for him and he has traveled the world in pursuit of them. His programs include extensive cultural background as well as specific birding information.
- Oct. 9 - FRIDAY (Note change from usual day.) "Birding Across the Continents" - Dr. Donald Messersmith. A Professor of Entomology at the University of Maryland, Dr. Messersmith is an avid birder. Members who have heard his previous programs remember him as a witty, lively speaker.
- Nov. 12 - Thur. - Tenth Anniversary Meeting. Chandler S. Robbins will be the featured speaker. More in the next newsletter. Be sure to circle this date on your calendar.

FIELD TRIPS - Field trips will continue to leave from the Grempler Realty Building parking lot on Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia unless otherwise indicated. The meeting place is across from the Flier building on the east side of the street.

Roy Trudel, 465-9398 (home) is the field trip chairman. Severe weather conditions may result in trip cancellation at the leader's discretion. If in doubt, call first. Carpooling will continue. Riders are expected to share gas and toll costs. Please make an effort to arrive on time.

- Sept. 12 - Sat - LITTLE PATUXENT RIVER AREA. Leaders: Eva Sunell, 995-0029 & Marty Chestem, 730-1527. This is a floodplain area with late summer flowers, fall warblers, and other birds. Meet at the Grempler parking lot at 8:00 a.m. $\frac{1}{2}$ day.
- Sept. 19 - Sat. - NATIONAL ZOO. Leader: Diane Rogler, 992-9104. This trip will leave from the Grempler lot promptly at 8:30 a.m. Upon arrival at the zoo at 10:00 a.m. the group will be given a guided tour by a zoo staff member through the bird house and other areas. At noon the bird laboratory opens and the group will visit that as well. The trip will be over officially about 1:00 p.m. but people may wish to stay to see the rest of the zoo. (Arrange carpools based on $\frac{1}{2}$ or whole day.) You may bring your lunch or purchase it at the zoo concession. The zoo would like to know how many will be in the group. Please call Diane by Monday, September 14, if you plan to attend. This rare opportunity to get behind the scenes will go rain or shine.
- Sept. 27 - Sun. - HABITAT WALK: CENTENNIAL PARK. Leaders: Bill Eckert, work phone 992-2483 & Bob Solem, 725-5037. Co-sponsored with Howard County Rec. & Parks. This year's series of habitat walks will be held at this developing park which will contain a lake eventually. Autumn flowering plants and migrating birds (including hawks if the winds are right). Meet at the Grempler lot at 12:40 p.m. or the ballfield parking lot on Woodland Rd. off Rt. 108 at 1:00 p.m.
- Oct. 4 - Sun. - FERN WALK. Leader: Jo Solem, 725-5037. This walk will be along the Patapsco River in the Henryton section to the only station of the Maidenhair Spleenwort known in the county. Emphasis on ferns, but flowers and birds will not be ignored. Meet at Grempler at 1:00 p.

Oct. 18 - Sun. - BENSON BRANCH PARK. Leaders: Bill Eckert, work 992-2483, and Mike & Grazina McClure, 286-2780. Co-sponsored by Howard County Rec. & Parks. There was much interest in this area last year during the seasonal habitat walks so another trip was scheduled this fall. Meet either at the Grempler lot at 12:30 p.m. or at the entrance to the Glenelg Country School on Folly Quarter Road at 1:00 p.m.

BOARD MEETING - A Board Meeting will be held at the home of Mike McClure, 12237 Mt. Albert Rd., Ellicott City, on Thursday, September 17 at 7:30 p.m. Call 286-2780 for directions. All officers and committee chairmen should plan to attend.

FIRST SEED SALE SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1981

Plan now to lay in your late fall and early winter supply of bird seed at the first sale of the season. Anyone who has purchased seed in a previous sale will receive a mailing in October. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, call Eileen Clegg, 730-4362. The site of the sale will again be the First Presbyterian Church on Route 108 east of Rt. 29. Pickup will be from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Orders must be prepaid. Volunteers are always welcome. Those who help at the desk receive a small discount while those who help load or haul seed in their vehicles earn a 25¢ bag of sunflower seed.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM LECTURES - BALTIMORE CHAPTER MOS

The Audubon Wildlife Film Lectures sponsored by the Baltimore Chapter of MOS will consist of the following programs in 1981-1982:

- Oct. 9, Fri. - "Hidden Worlds of the Big Cypress Swamp" - Richard Kern
- Nov. 6, Fri. - "Mountain Magic" - Walter Berlet
- Mar. 19, Fri. - "Wilderness in Alberta" - Lorne Wallace
- Apr. 23, Fri. - "Wildlife Safari to Argentina" - Jeffrey Boswall

All programs are held in the Dumbarton Junior High School auditorium, Dumbarton Road, west of the 7000 block of York Road, Baltimore, MD, 21212. Season tickets are \$8.00 for adults, \$5.00 for juniors (thru 17); single admissions are \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for juniors. Mail check or money order payable to Baltimore Chapter, MOS with a self-addressed and stamped envelope to Jeanne Woods, 8332 Merrymount Drive, Baltimore, MD 21207.

Directions to Longfellow Elem. School for Howard MOS programs.

