

HOWARD

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1982 VOL. 10 NO. 3

NOVEMBER MEETING SUCCESSFUL CELEBRATION -- \$3500 TO NASSAWANGO FUND

The November meeting which had been designated as the beginning celebration of our tenth year was attended by about ninety people. There were several aspects of the evening which deserve mention. As part of this special year the club decided to help raise funds to preserve land along Nassawango Creek on the Eastern Shore. Members and friends responded so well that Treasurer David Pardoe was able to present Steve Hamblin of The Nature Conservancy with a check for \$3000. (That sum was raised to \$3500 when the Board voted to donate the proceeds from the November seed sale to this project.) Marty Chestem and Bob Solem, who served as co-chairmen for this aspect of the celebration, thank those who helped to save a portion of this intriguing habitat. Contributors are listed at the end of this article.

Chandler S. Robbins, author and biologist, spoke on the topic, "Forests Are for the Birds." This study of forest fragmentation relating particularly to the neo-tropical migrants (flycatchers, tanagers, warblers) was based, in part, on research done in Howard County. It underscored the necessity for preserving forest habitat of certain minimum sizes for various species. The idea was fascinating as well as frightening for as the county continues to develop large contiguous areas of forest dwindle.

Martha Chestem, one of the few individuals still living in the county who was part of the planning group when the chapter was founded, described some of the events and individuals who were so important in those early years. She is compiling a more extensive history of our first decade which should be available to members in a few months. At the end of her presentation she presented Founder Nan Rhineland with a framed scroll honoring her role in the organization of the Howard Bird Club. A donation to the Nassawango Fund by the chapter was also made in Nan's honor. She, along with President Mike McClure, then cut the decorated tier cake to inaugurate a social hour. The cake was as good as it looked (Eileen Clegg, who arranged for the cake, will supply the baker's name on request). The portion that was left was frozen for use at the Members' Potluck in February. Special thanks to Vice-president Jane Farrell who served as coordinator for this event, Eileen Clegg and Eva Sunell who helped as hostesses, and Melanie Heacock who hand lettered the scroll. Bob Solem photographed the occasion and will have photos on display at a coming meeting.

Donations to the Nassawango Fund were made by the following individuals:

John & Brenda Bell	Ethel Dolnick	Linda McDaniel	Elise Seay
Maud Banks	William & Louise Dove	Joanne Moroney	Robert & Joanne Selzer
Monika & Roderick Botsei	Frances Ehlers	Marjorie Mountjoy	Sva Sunell
David & Angela Boyter	John & Jane Farrell	G.C. & Rosamond Munro	Merwin & Bernice Thomas
Max & Marilyn Casper	Alice Grant	David & Elaine Pardoe	Roy Trudel
Martha Chestem	John Healy	Donald & Janet Randle	Nicholas & Margaret Varga
John & Eileen Clegg	Dudley & Patricia Jackson	Diane Rogler	Donald & Martha Wingo
George & Carole Cleland	Mike & Grazina McClure	Martin & Helen Ruther	Paul Zucker

Speakers Robert Trever & Chandler Robbins contributed their honorariums.
A contribution in honor of Founder Nan Rhineland was made by Howard MGS.
The proceeds of the November 1981 seed sale were donated by the chapter.

C A L E N D A R

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

(smaller schools closed)
Jan. 14 - Thur. - "Bird Feeding: Facts and Fallacies." - Dr. Aalred Geis, Biologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He will include material based on studies done primarily in Howard County.

(didn't get copies)
Feb. 11 - Thur. - "What Is Bird Song?" - Dr. E. G. Morton, National Zoological Park, Smithsonian Institution. An analysis of bird song by a variety of techniques.

FIELD TRIPS - Field trips will continue to leave from the Grempler Realty Building parking lot (across from the Flier building) on Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia unless otherwise indicated.

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. Dress appropriately for field work with stout reasonably waterproof footgear. Trips do not always follow marked paths.

Jan. 9 - Sat. COURTSHIP OF THE MALLARD. Leader: V. "Kris" Krishnamoorthy, 997-0251. Meet at 1:00 p.m. at the public dock on Wilde Lake on Hyla Brook Rd. in Running Brook. An opportunity to observe the courtship movements of an easily visible species. "Kris" will describe and point out the head-shake, grunt-whistle, nod-swimming and other features of the courtship ritual. Dress warmly; a minimum of walking.

(cancelled cold)
Jan. 17 - Sun. CENTENNIAL HABITAT WALK. Leaders: Bill Eckert, 992-2483 (day); Bob Solem, 725-5037 & Eva Sunell, 995-0029. Meet at Grempler at 1:00 p.m. or at the Centennial Lane turnout .2 mile north of Rt. 108 at 1:30 p.m. Landscape in winter featuring weeds, trees & birds. Co-sponsored by Howard Co. Rec. & Parks; second seasonal walk to this area.

(cancelled summer)
Jan. 23 - Sat. OWL WALK. Leader: Jay Sheppard, 725-5559. A search for wintering owls, especially Saw-whets in Montgomery and Howard counties. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Grempler or 10:00 a.m. at the Environmental Center parking area where Rt. 97 (Ga. Ave.) crosses the Patuxent River. Bring lunch. This trip will last till mid or late afternoon. Sturdy footgear and warm field gear is necessary. This trip involves some hiking and occasional crawling through dense young pine stands.

Feb. 3 or 10 - Wed. A NIGHT SKY IN WINTER. Leader: Joe Fields, 730-6290. Last year's astronomy night was so well-received that a second has been arranged. Meet at Rhinelander's on Folly Quarter Rd. at 8:00 p.m. for about a two hour session. Short lecture inside plus viewing of sky. Bring binoculars and astronomical telescopes if you have them. Dress warmly. Standing outside at night in winter is COLD. Feb. 10th is the alternate date in case of clouds on the 3rd. Call Joe if there is a question of whether the evening is "on."

Feb. 27 - Sat. FEEDER TRIP. Leader: Nan Rhinelander, 286-2427. Meet at Grempler at 9:30 a.m. $\frac{1}{2}$ day. Visit area feeders to see birds and plantings and to obtain ideas for your own feeding program.

BOARD MEETING - A Board Meeting will be held January 21st, Thursday, at Jo Solem's, 10617 Graeloch Rd., in southern Howard County. Call 725-5037 for directions. 7:30 p.m.

RARE BIRDS SIGHTED

A Snowy Owl made a brief appearance at Ft. McHenry in Baltimore in early December. Those members who had indicated on the questionnaire that they were interested in the Rare Bird Alert were called. Thanks to Marty Chestem, Helen Miller, Elise Seay and Jo Solem who did the calling.

Closer to home, Mark Wallace had a flock of 40-55 Snow Buntings near an archeological site he is working on Triadelphia Reservoir. Buntings were last reported in Howard County in 1963. The flock has remained in the vicinity for several weeks. If you are interested in trying to find them contact Mark at 725-6370.

Mark also reported two possible Red Knots on October 31 off Greenbridge Road on Triadelphia Reservoir. More substantive detail would have been valuable as this would have been the first county record for this species.

URBAN WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER RELEASES NEW PUBLICATION

A new publication entitled, "Planning for Urban Fishing and Waterfront Recreations," is now available from the Urban Wildlife Research Center, Inc., 10921 Trotting Ridge Way, Columbia, MD 21044, at \$5.50 per copy. It was prepared as a companion volume to their 1978, "Planning for Wildlife in Cities and Suburbs," for the U.S. Department of Interior's Biological Services Program, Fish and Wildlife Service. The 108 page manual "helps planners and developers enhance fishing and waterfront recreation in urban areas by giving guidance in how to enhance existing high-quality aquatic areas, restore degraded areas, and create new areas where appropriate."

ANNUAL MEMBERS' POTLUCK HAS NEW FORMAT

As part of our tenth anniversary celebration our ever-popular February potluck at Nan and Fred Rhinelander's home will be held on a weekend and will not take the place of a regular meeting. Saturday, February 20, 1982, at 6:30 p.m. is the evening scheduled for this ADULTS ONLY event. Reservations are necessary. Call Eva Sunell, 995-0029, by February 13 to reserve and to make food choice. Because a weekend evening allows extra program time, those bringing slides may plan a 10 minute presentation. This is a night for sharing your interests and enthusiasms for nature study. Photography is a natural but you may bring and share any craft, art, hobby, etc., that demonstrates your interest in some aspect of natural history. Share an evening of fun, good food, and fellowship guaranteed to be a highlight of this year. If you have questions or need transportation call Eva who may be able to let you know of others in your area who will be going. Note: If you have not yet paid your dues for the 1981-82 year, use the coupon below so that you don't miss this event. The Rhinelanders live on the south side of Folly Quarter Rd. about 1/2 mile west of the Franciscan Friars. The entrance is marked with "The Herbiary" sign. It is the last house on the lane. Call Nan at 286-2427 for more specific directions if needed.

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____

Single Adult \$8.00
Husband and Wife \$10.50
Child \$1.50
Senior (65 or over) \$5.00
Senior Couple \$6.50
Sustaining \$15.00

Mail coupon and check to
Howard County Chapter - MOS
c/o 13128 Williamfield Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Make checks payable to
Howard County Chapter - MOS

CONSERVATION NEWS - Martha Chestem

Last month I attended a one day workshop in Wilmington, Delaware, sponsored by the National Audubon Society as a part of its Audubon Mobilization Campaign. These workshops are being held at key sites throughout the country to assist persons in developing strategy for more effective citizen action to meet changing trends in environmental policies. The small group discussions covered a number of topics, e.g. working with the news media, effective citizen lobbying and fund raising. Russell W. Peterson, President of the National Audubon Society and former Governor of Delaware, was the keynote speaker.

A point frequently stressed throughout the day was the importance of working through Congress or (on state issues) representatives in the state legislature. Present at the meeting were several former and current staff members of senators and congressmen. They emphasized repeatedly that letters and telephone calls can and do have a very positive influence on any given issue. This can be true even when you think your representative's mind is so set that it cannot be changed. We were told, "The mailbag is the best 'hot line' to the people back home." Letters need not be long; in fact, they should be reasonably brief: state the issue (number of the bill if known), then state your opinion clearly and concisely. Phraseology and grammar are unimportant; your ideas and beliefs given in a rational and forthright manner are important. An excellent pamphlet, "The Guide for Citizen Action" covering the topics discussed at the workshop can be purchased from Audubon for \$2.50. I would be happy to lend a copy to anyone interested (tel. 730-1527).

The Maryland Wildlife Administration has drafted (with assistance from environmental groups) a final proposal for check-off legislation. If passed, it would require the state income tax form to have provision for taxpayers to donate part or all of their refunds to the state nongame and endangered wildlife fund. We will be reporting the progress of this idea in future newsletters as well as how individuals may help to assure passage of this legislation. New Jersey is working on similar legislation; West Virginia's law is effective next year. There are nearly 20 states (mostly in the West) which have similar laws. Colorado, the leader in this endeavor, has had great success in raising funds for its state program over the past few years.

REMINDER - 1981 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD LISTS DUE JANUARY 15, 1982

Send your 1981 lists of all bird species you have seen in Howard County during 1981 to David Holmes, 5643-A Harpers Farm Rd., Columbia, MD 21044 by January 15, 1982. The compilation will be published in the March-April newsletter.

ORNITHOLOGY II OFFERED AT HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Bill Hilgartner, who has taught a field course in ornithology at Howard Community College, will be teaching a four week course emphasizing classification, behavior and anatomy of birds. Refer to page 7 of the Winter 1982 catalogue recently issued by the Community Education section. The cost is \$15. The course is scheduled on Thursdays from 7:30-9:30 p.m. beginning March 4, 1982.

DEADLINE FOR MARCH - APRIL NEWSLETTER is February 15, 1982. Send or phone items to Jo Solem, 10617 Graeoch Rd., Laurel, MD 20707; phone 725-5037. Submissions are welcome.

WINTER SEED SALE COMING - STOCK UP FOR REMAINDER OF FEEDING SEASON

Seed Sale Coordinator, Eileen Clegg, has announced that the second seed sale of the 1981-82 year will be held on Saturday, January 30, with a snow emergency date of February 6. Prices are listed on the order blank below and are the same as they were in November. The 5% Maryland sales tax is included in all prices.

Remember that the most difficult part of the winter lies ahead. Natural food supplies diminish as spring approaches. February and March frequently bring snow as well as sleet, freezing rain and high winds. Be sure that you have enough seed to last until about mid-April.

Pickup is at the First Presbyterian Church on Route 108, one-half mile east of Route 29, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 30, unless a snow emergency has been declared. If you will be unable to pick up your seed at the stated time, contact Eileen at 730-4362. Also call her if you would like to volunteer to help. Those working at the desk receive a small discount on their order, while those loading receive a free bag of either mixed seed or sunflower.

THIS IS THE ONLY NOTICE MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE. No individual mailing will be sent. All orders must be PREPAID and received by January 21, 1982. Use the order form below.

THANKS VOLUNTEERS! It is the volunteers who make these sales possible and the club is grateful for their enthusiastic help. Working at the desk during the November sale were Frances Ehlers, Jane Farrell, Linda McDaniel, Jan Randle, Martha Waugh and Elise Seay. Helene Farrell provided a poster to publicize the Nassawango appeal while there were also items from the bookstore for sale and some of our winter birds on display. ~~Trucks or vans were provided by Max Casper, Terry Kretz, Warren Long, Mike McClure, Don Randle, Ted Rhineland and Eva Sunell.~~ Most of those individuals also helped load and were joined by John Clegg and Roy Trudel. Eileen reports that this fine crew moved over 12,000 pounds of seed! The Board at its November meeting voted to donate the entire proceeds of this sale to the Nassawango Fund which meant we were able to donate another acre (\$500) to The Nature Conservancy. We thank all of those members and friends who supported the sale and made this kind of generosity possible.

Order by January 21st - Mark the January 30th Pickup Date on Your Calendar
 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB JANUARY SEED SALE

	No. of Bags	Total
50 lbs. Black Oil Sunflower.....	_____	... @ \$14.70
20 lbs. Black Oil Sunflower.....	_____	... @ \$ 7.35
25 lbs. Mixed Seed.....	_____	... @ \$ 7.35
50 lbs. White Millet.....	_____	... @ \$13.65
50 lbs. Sunflower Pieces.....	_____	... @ \$28.88
5 lbs. Thistle (niger).....	_____	... @ \$ 6.83

Price includes 5% Maryland sales tax. Total Order _____

Make check payable to Howard County Chapter-MOS

Mail to Howard Co. Bird Club Seed Sale
 9094 Lambkin Lane
 Columbia, MD 21045

Name _____
 Address _____
 Telephone _____

YES, I would like to volunteer to help with the sale. Please contact me.
 This is a new order. Please add my name to your mailing list for next fall.

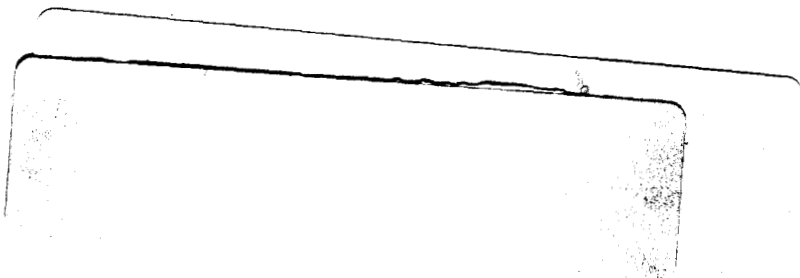
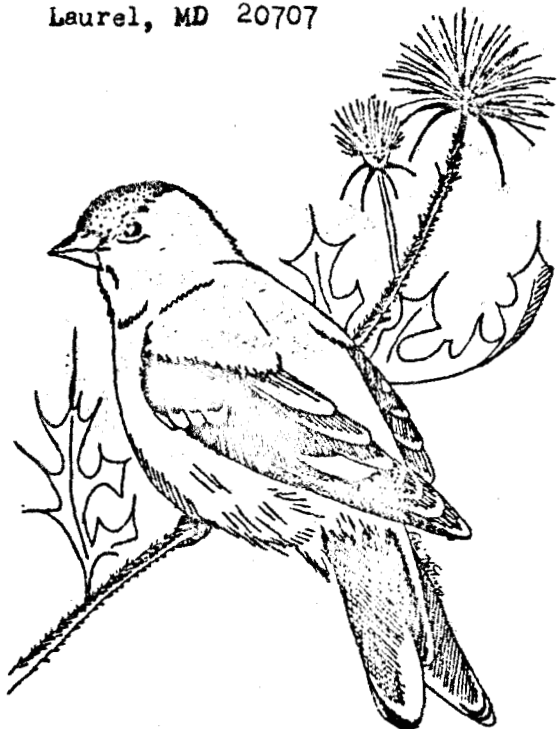
MOURNING DOVE'S VISIT LEAVES AN IMPRESSION - Jo Solem

About 7:00 a.m. on December 9, the John Bell family heard a loud thud as something hit the house. Brenda opened the curtains on the patio door in time to see a Mourning Dove flying from the house toward the trees. That was surprising because, judging from the sound of the impact, she thought it would have been stunned if not killed. After the sun came up she noticed that the bird had left an attractive design on the glass surface. Easily identifiable was a distinct impression (head on) of the dove: bill, head, outstretched wings and part of the tail. The high winds during that period began eroding the imprint within hours but portions lasted a week or more.

A question immediately comes to mind: how was this impression created? According to The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds by John K. Terres, the powdery substance left on the window is a product of the powder (down) feathers which grow continuously from the base and disintegrate at the tip. Van Tyne and Berger state that most bird feathers produce minute particles of powder, but powder feathers reach their highest development in herons and bitterns of North American species. Among the conjectured uses for this type of feather are to remove fish oil and slime from feathers, to dress the plumage and to protect the feathers from moisture. Whatever the function, the fine powder sifts over the entire plumage giving a "bloom" to the appearance of certain species, i.e. the male Northern Harrier and Swallow-tailed Kite (whose black feathers are transformed into a pale gray thanks to this powdery substance).

Because large numbers of birds hit glass surfaces every year surely there will be other species reported who leave as graphic an impression as this dove did. Perhaps lighting conditions will sometime be such that an interesting photograph can be made similar to one I remember seeing some years ago of the ghostly image of an owl which had flown against a picture window.

Howard County MOS
10617 Grae Loch Rd.
Laurel, MD 20707



Seed Sale Order Blank Inside