



VOL 15, No 5  
May-June 1987

# Howard

*A Chapter of the  
Maryland Ornithological Society*



## AMERICAN AVOCET VISITS LAKE ELKHORN FOR FIRST COUNTY RECORD



On Sunday morning, 15 March 1987, an American Avocet was reported from Lake Elkhorn by both Dick Hegner and Don & Martha Waugh. The telephoned descriptions of the bird were definitive enough so that it was put on the Rare Bird Alert by mid-morning. Thanks to Bea Newkirk and her efficient callers, many birders were able to see this rarity which stayed for a single day. Descriptions of the avocet by the initial observers will be forwarded to the State Records Committee along with black and white photographs taken by Bob

Solem. The callers for the Rare Bird Alert also recently advised individuals of Bonaparte's Gulls in Fulton, thanks to John Blaisdell's sighting, and a Horned Grebe on the new Centennial Lake spotted by Jane Farrell and Jo Solem. Current Alert callers are Marjorie Mountjoy, Barbara Doarnberger, Peggy Willson, Jean Nicholson, Debbie Grant, Joe Byrnes, Margie Kupiek, Mike Leumas, Helen Zeichner, Monika Botsai, Anna Llewellyn, James Medwin, and "Spud" Loomis. Bea can always use additional callers. If you have benefited from this service and would like to help, call her at 498-1902.

## 1986 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD LIST RATING - EXCELLENT! - DAVID HOLMES

Not a record breaker, but very close: 1986 produced 210 species and 2 hybrids for Howard County birders--plus 2 species which have gone to the Maryland Rare Bird Records Committee. The highest yearly total since we have kept records (1979) is 212 so our potential for a tie is real. (Not to second-guess the Records Committee, but I'll be awfully surprised if they don't accept the Sandhill Crane photo which we've passed on to them. The other pending bird is more of a toss-up.) The crane was spotted and photographed on foot and wing by a brand new birder in back of her house southwest of Woodbine. The second (or third) new county species is White-rumped Sandpiper, seen 13 September and very briefly on 12 October, at Triadelphia Reservoir. This is another of those "normal migrants" which our limited habitat keeps mostly out of Howard County. The "pending" bird's identity will be published in a later newsletter if accepted.

The hybrids include a bird at the landfill which was identified as a Great Black-backed/Herring Gull on the Mid-Winter Count by Bob Ringler and Hal Wierenga who have certainly studied more gulls more intently than any of the rest of us. Bob also also fortunate enough to find a Lawrence's Warbler (the recessive form of a Blue-winged/Golden-winged Warbler get-together) at Green Bridge Road on 6 September. Both birds are firsts for the county.

Other indications of rarity are categories on the "Preliminary Check-List of the Birds of Howard County." According to that list, 5 species moved from "Hypothetical" (fewer than 3 records without photograph or specimen) to "Accidental Visitor" (1-5 modern records with specimen or photo or 3-5 records without). These birds were all seen for the third time: Sanderling, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Forster's and Black Terns, and Long-eared Owl. Moving up from "Accidental Visitor" status were Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Snow Bunting. Caspian Tern was seen for only the second year since 1956. This is an excellent number of irregularly observed species for a single year's efforts.

As always though, we missed some! By far the worst was Least Flycatcher which dropped off the "observed every year since 1979 list" this year. It is good to be cautious with

Empidonax flycatchers, but this is truly frustrating. They were here. Three other species had been seen regularly in alternate years since 1979--until 1986. These were Philadelphia Vireo, Connecticut Warbler, and Lincoln's Sparrow, all truly tough to find without mist nests in our part of the world.

We can fuss about missing those four species but, again for balance, seven species which have been very irregular in Howard County were seen for the third consecutive year in 1986. How many of these have you seen in the county at all?--American Bittern, Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, Laughing Gull, Golden-winged Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, and Summer Tanager.

And, isn't this really the fun of birding--the knowledge that one absolutely never knows just what will happen on any day or in any year? Oh, for more time to spend out catching the happenings! We do thank the following people for sending in their 1986 county lists: John Blaisdell, Marty Chestem, Jane Farrell, Alice Grant, Dave Pardoe, Jo Solem, and Mark Wallace. Other sources used for compiling this list were the three annual bird counts (Christmas, Mid-Winter, and May) and the season reports which Jo Solem compiles for Maryland Birdlife.

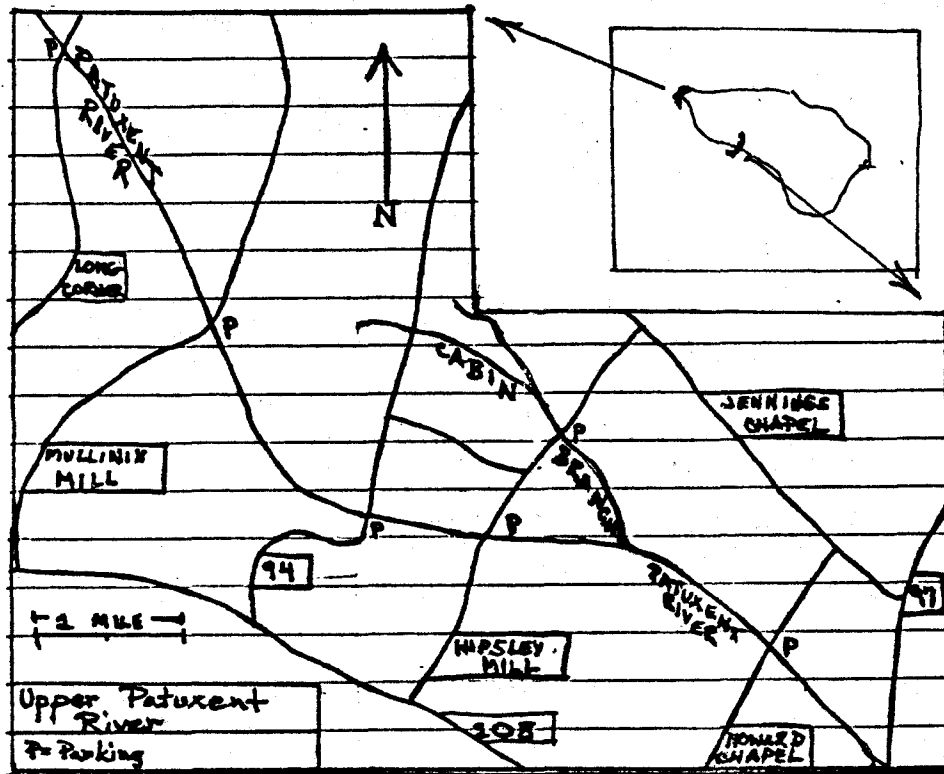
1987? Get your tails out there! It's been good so far with a first, a second and 2 fifth county sightings already. The more we're out, the better the odds. Find the oddest--and send in the description. Happy hunting!

- |                           |                        |                           |                         |                              |                        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Common Loon               | Turkey Vulture         | Herring Gull              | Tree Swallow            | Warbling Vireo               | Yellow-breasted Chat   |
| Pied-billed Grebe         | Osprey                 | Iceland Gull              | N. Rough-winged Swallow | Red-eyed Vireo               | Summer Tanager         |
| Horned Grebe              | Bald Eagle             | Lesser Black-backed Gull  | Belt Swallow            | Blue-winged Warbler          | Scarlet Tanager        |
| Double-crested Cormorant  | Northern Harrier       | Great Black-backed Gull   | Cliff Swallow           | Golden-winged Warbler        | Northern Cardinal      |
| American Bittern          | Sharp-shinned Hawk     | Caspian Tern              | Barn Swallow            | Tennessee Warbler            | Rose-breasted Grosbeak |
| Great Blue Heron          | Cooper's Hawk          | Forster's Tern            | Blue Jay                | Nashville Warbler            | Blue Grosbeak          |
| Great Egret               | Red-shouldered Hawk    | Black Tern                | American Crow           | Northern Parula              | Indigo Bunting         |
| Little Blue Heron         | Broad-winged Hawk      | Rock Dove                 | Fish Crow               | Yellow Warbler               | Rufous-sided Towhee    |
| Cattle Egret              | Red-tailed Hawk        | Mourning Dove             | Carolina Chickadee      | Chestnut-sided Warbler       | American Tree Sparrow  |
| Green-backed Heron        | Rough-legged Hawk      | Yellow-billed Cuckoo      | Tufted Titmouse         | Magnolia Warbler             | Chipping Sparrow       |
| Black-crowned Night Heron | American Kestrel       | Black-billed Cuckoo       | Red-breasted Nuthatch   | Cape May Warbler             | Field Sparrow          |
| Turkey Swan               | Merula Falcon          | Eastern Screech Owl       | White-breasted Nuthatch | Black-throated Blue Warbler  | Vesper Sparrow         |
| Mute Swan                 | Ring-necked Pheasant   | Great Horned Owl          | Brown Creeper           | Yellow-rumped Warbler        | Savannah Sparrow       |
| Snow Goose                | Northern Bobwhite      | Barred Owl                | Carolina Wren           | Black-throated Green Warbler | Grasshopper Sparrow    |
| Canada Goose              | Common Moorhen         | Long-eared Owl            | House Wren              | Blackburnian Warbler         | Fox Sparrow            |
| Wood Duck                 | American Coot          | Common Nighthawk          | Winter Wren             | Yellow-throated Warbler      | Song Sparrow           |
| Green-winged Teal         | Sandhill Crane         | Whip-poor-will            | Golden-crowned Kinglet  | Fine Warbler                 | Swamp Sparrow          |
| American Black Duck       | Semipalmated Plover    | Chimney Swift             | Ruby-crowned Kinglet    | Prairie Warbler              | White-throated Sparrow |
| Mallard                   | Killdeer               | Ruby-throated Hummingbird | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher   | Pale Warbler                 | White-crowned Sparrow  |
| Northern Pintail          | Greater Yellowlegs     | Belted Kingfisher         | Eastern Bluebird        | Bay-breasted Warbler         | Dark-eyed Junco        |
| Blue-winged Teal          | Lesser Yellowlegs      | Red-headed Woodpecker     | Veery                   | Blackpoll Warbler            | Snow Bunting           |
| Northern Shoveler         | Solitary Sandpiper     | Red-bellied Woodpecker    | Gray-cheeked Thrush     | Cerulean Warbler             | Bobolink               |
| Gadwall                   | Spotted Sandpiper      | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  | Swinson's Thrush        | Black-and-white Warbler      | Red-winged Blackbird   |
| American Wigeon           | Sanderling             | Downy Woodpecker          | Hermit Thrush           | American Redstart            | Eastern Meadowlark     |
| Canvasback                | Semipalmated Sandpiper | Hairy Woodpecker          | Wood Thrush             | Prothonotary Warbler         | Rusty Blackbird        |
| Redhead                   | Least Sandpiper        | Northern Flicker          | American Robin          | Mourning Warbler             | Common Grackle         |
| Ring-necked Duck          | White-rumped Sandpiper | Pileated Woodpecker       | Gray Catbird            | Ovenbird                     | Brown-headed Cowbird   |
| Lesser Scaup              | Pectoral Sandpiper     | Eastern Wood Pewee        | Northern Mockingbird    | Northern Waterthrush         | Baltimore Oriole       |
| Oldsquaw                  | Dunlin                 | Acadian Flycatcher        | Brown Thrasher          | Louisiana Waterthrush        | Orchard Oriole         |
| Common Goldeneye          | Short-billed Dowitcher | Willow Flycatcher         | Water Pipit             | Kentucky Warbler             | Purple Finch           |
| Bufflehead                | Common Snipe           | Eastern Phoebe            | Cedar Waxwing           | Mourning Warbler             | House Finch            |
| Hooded Merganser          | American Woodcock      | Great Crested Flycatcher  | European Starling       | Common Yellowthroat          | Pine Siskin            |
| Common Merganser          | Laughing Gull          | Eastern Kingbird          | White-eyed Vireo        | Hooded Warbler               | American Goldfinch     |
| Red-breasted Merganser    | Bonaparte's Gull       | Horned Lark               | Solitary Vireo          | Wilson's Warbler             | Evening Grosbeak       |
| Ruddy Duck                | Ring-billed Gull       | Furkie Martin             | Yellow-throated Vireo   | Canada Warbler               | House Sparrow          |
| Black Vulture             |                        |                           |                         |                              |                        |

## OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 1987-88 YEAR

The Nominating Committee consisting of Zelda Simon, Maud Banks and Helen Zeichner announced the following slate of officers for the Howard County Chapter MOS for 1987-88: President, Martha Chestem; Vice-President, Sue Hudson; Secretary, Sandra Goolsby; Treasurer, Eva Sunell; Chapter Directors: Maud Banks, Donald Randle; State Directors: Jane Farrell, Tom Strikwerda, Paul Zucker. They were elected at the April meeting.

BIRDING "HOT SPOTS" IN HOWARD CO. - CHRIS LUDWIG - PATUXENT RIVER STATE PK.



The Patuxent River above Triadelphia Reservoir (Patuxent River State Park) is a relatively wild and scenic area where county naturalists can explore a setting that is reminiscent of Maryland's piedmont years ago. The river's swamps, woodlands, and fields show little disturbance from man now that areas which were farmed or grazed are gradually returning to forest. Often the only signs of human intrusion are the footpaths that trout fishermen have created along the river.

To gain a real sense of times past, park along Hipsley Mill Road at the Patuxent River or at Cabin Branch and walk downstream. There are foot trails along both. During migration and the breeding season, warblers are prominent, especially in the heavily forested areas. These wooded trails are particularly good for Worm-eating, Blue-winged, Kentucky, and Hooded Warblers. The wet meadows above Howard Chapel Road along the river are another area of interest. Here, a dense population of Willow Flycatchers are best seen in late May, June, or July; a variety of sparrows are particularly common from October to April. From late autumn to early spring this park is a good place to find Rusty Blackbirds, Hermit Thrushes, and Winter Wrens. Barred Owls are residents. The only county Red-headed Woodpecker nesting record is from this area.

Wildflower enthusiasts will enjoy the Hipsley Mill Road area. Before searching the floodplain woods, look along the road bank for two uncommon county wildflowers: Goat's Rue (Tephrosia spicata) and Whorled Coreopsis (Coreopsis tripteris). Goat's Rue blooms in early June, the Whorled Coreopsis from June to August. Two woodland flowers found are Bunchflower (Melanthium sp.) which blooms in July and Greek Valerian (Polemonium reptans) which blooms in May. Many other surprises await the observant botanist.

Jay Sheppard, a birder and trout fisherman, provided much of the information for this location. He's let us in on one of the largest and most pristine of our county's natural areas. If you have other areas worthy of the title "hot spots" please contact me evenings or weekends at 796-8373. Enjoy!

A WORD OF WARNING: Jay suggests strongly that this area be avoided between 15 October and 28 February when hunters on adjoining land may make an excursion risky.

A HUMMINGBIRD ON MY FINGER - KATHY CAHILL

During the spring of 1986 we put out a hummingbird feeder for the first time, and I guess we hit the jackpot. Within a week or two, we were visited by several hummers. They were fascinating to watch so when a special program on a PBS channel was listed, our whole family watched. We were especially intrigued by the pictures of birds sitting on people's fingers.

My oldest son, Tom, decided to see how close he could get to our visitors. Off and on for about a week he sat in a lawn chair near the feeder; the birds continued to feed. Then I tried to get one to sit on my finger. I was amazed to see how close one of the females came. Within a day my youngest son, Brian, was able to tickle the same bird on her belly while she was feeding, but we could not get her to perch. (The distinctive gray zigzag on her breast enabled us to identify her.) After the third day, I decided to change my hand position. I placed my thumbs around the feeder (actually braced on it) and held my index fingers about an inch or so above the yellow flowers on the feeder. After hovering for a few seconds, the female hummingbird perched. What a thrill!! Throughout the summer, at least 20 people enjoyed the experience of "holding" this tiny bird while she drank. As she became more accustomed to us, her time on our fingers increased. She no longer took a quick sip and dashed off, but would sit and drink, stop to look at us, and drink again. We could not get the male to come near us and, although the other female would come close to perching, she never landed. While we were at the feeder with the female, the male would rarely make an appearance although often he could be heard fussing from a distance. Within a few minutes of our moving from the feeder, the male would fly to a nearby tree and take up his vigil. When the perching female came for a drink, he would attack her vigorously and chase her from the feeder.

Toward the beginning of September, we noticed the hummingbirds came to feed less frequently. I took the feeder down about the second week in September after not seeing them for several days. On 1 October, I was outside painting a bench about 18 feet from where the feeder had hung when I heard a loud buzzing directly over my right shoulder. I thought it must be a very large bee, but when I turned around, there, hovering right next to me, was the perching female. She stayed for a few seconds and then was gone. I'd like to think she was saying good-bye. We wished her godspeed and promised her that the feeder would be hanging when she returned in the spring.

Initially, we used  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of white sugar to 1 cup of water, but we gradually diluted the solution to 2 cups of water with the same amount of sugar. We did not use red food coloring after the first week of feeding and it didn't seem to matter. If any club members would like to see the hummingbirds this summer, call me at 788-5951. Of course, we're hoping our special female will return.

Ed's Note: Hummingbirds are not the only species attracted to sweets. In mid-March, Mike & Grazina McClure noticed that chickadees and a Downy Woodpecker were attracted to the sap oozing from a recently pruned Sugar Maple.

\*\*\*\*\*

Enclosed in this newsletter is a reporting form for bluebirds and other native cavity nesters for the 1987 breeding season. Monitor your boxes carefully and return it at the end of the breeding season. If you have questions relating to cavity nesters, contact Joe Suess 854-0250 or Mark Wallace 725-6370 co-chairmen of the project. Bill Eckert needs a monitor for the boxes in the as-yet-not-open-to-the-public Schooley Mill Park near Highland. Call him at 992-2464 days to volunteer.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is an opportunity to help with the club bookstore. Fran Schoenberger is looking for an individual who would be able to provide storage and transportation to meetings. If you can help, contact Fran at 465-1981 or Marty Chestem at 730-1527.

CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS, FIELD TRIPS, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia, MD. Meeting is cancelled if schools are closed for any reason. Hospitality session at 7:30 p.m. Meeting/program begins at 8:00 p.m. Club bookstore opens at 7:30 p.m.

Field trips leave from Grempier Realty parking lot (across from the Flier building on Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia) unless otherwise listed. Carpooling is encouraged with riders sharing cost of gas and tolls. Dress for field work with stout, reasonably waterproof footgear and layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. No pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement weather. If you have questions, contact the leader(s) or Field Trip Chairman Roy Trudel 992-7105, evenings.

APRIL 25 - C & O CANAL WALK. See March/April newsletter for details. Leader: Richard Saturday  
Giannola 774-5483.

MAY 2 - MAY COUNT, All day, countywide. Beginners and experienced birders welcome. Saturday  
Call Paul Zucker 681-9005. For last minute changes on Friday, May 1 only, call Jo Solem 725-5037. Atlas coordinators ask that all counters record any evidence of breeding observed along with location.

WILDFLOWER WALK, PATUXENT RIVER APPRECIATION DAY. Leader: Bob Solem 725-5037. 1:00-3:00 p.m. Meet at park building in Savage Park.

MAY 9 - INDIAN SPRINGS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA & C&O CANAL, WASHINGTON COUNTY. Saturday  
Leader: Chuck Dupree, 796-1086. All day trip at height of migration; mostly level walking. Meet at Grempier at 7:00 a.m. Bring lunch; carpooling.

MAY 14 - "FLOWERS AND BIRDS" - Joyce Kelly. As the president of Defenders of Wild- Thursday  
life, our speaker will not only talk about two of her favorite subjects, wildflowers and birds, but also of the role Defenders plays in the environmental movement.

MAY 16 - WILDFLOWER WALK, DANIELS SECTION, PATAPSCO VALLEY STATE PARK. Leader: Bob Saturday  
Solem, 725-5037. Meet at Grempier Realty at 1:00 p.m. (birds also good here).

MAY 17 - SCHOOLEY MILL PARK. Leader: Jo Solem. Opportunity to bird an area before Sunday  
it is opened to the public. Dense population of Grasshopper Sparrows as well as a stream valley which should hold migrants. 1/2 day. Meet at Grempier at 7:30 a.m.

MAY 23 - GREAT BLUE HERONRY AT JUG BAY. Leader: Michele Wright, 465-6057. You heard Saturday  
Rich Dolesh describe this area, now see the herons nesting led by Greg Kearns, park naturalist. Must have at least 15 people for trip to go. Call Michele by May 16th to register. 3/4 day. 7:30 a.m. at Grempier lot.

MAY 30 & 31 - PINE BARRENS, NJ. Leader: Jim Stasz, (301)-257-9540. Second of his ser-  
Sat. & Sun. ies of trips to this ecologically exciting area. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Atsion Ranger Station on Rt. 206 north of Hammonton on Sat. Camping available or make reservations at Hammonton Motor Lodge (609)-561-5700. Wear old clothes & bring old tennis shoes for bog walking.

MAY 31 - WILDFLOWER WALK, HUGG-THOMAS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA. Leader: Bob Solem, Sunday  
725-5037. Explore an area near Sykesville on the Patapsco River. Meet at Grempier at 1:00 p.m.

JUNE 6 - RECREATION EXPO AT COLUMBIA MALL. Call Eileen Clegg 730-4362 to volunteer Saturday  
an hour or two at the exhibit between 10:00-9:30 p.m.

JULY 5 - GOLDFINCH WALK. Leaders: Bill Eckert, 992-2464 & Jo Solem, 725-5037. Sunday  
9-11:00 a.m. Meet at the concession building off Rt. 108 at Centennial Park to observe the county bird and other summer residents. Co-sponsored with Howard Co. Recreation & Parks.

JULY 26 - SUMMER HABITAT WALK: CENTENNIAL PARK. Leaders: Chuck Dupree 796-1086 & Sunday  
Bill Eckert 992-2464 (0). Third in the yearly series at this site. Meet at the concession building off Rt. 108, 1:00 p.m. Co-spon. How.Co. Rec & Pks.

(Continued on other side)



AUG. 16 - RIVER WADE. Meet at concession building at Savage Park. Wear old shoes Sunday with socks. Minimum age 8 years accompanied by an adult. Call Bill Eckert 992-2464 for more information. 1:00-3:00 p.m.



AUG. 20-24 - CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Chuck Dupree will be in the area Thur-Mon. and would be happy to have club members join him in birding the refuge. Please contact him at home by Aug. 18th to arrange meeting time & place, 796-1086 evenings.

BOARD MEETING - Joint meeting with new and old Board members. Meeting at John & Eileen Clegg's, 6007 Flywheel Ct. Call 730-4362 for directions. 7:30 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED BETWEEN APRIL 20, 1986 AND APRIL 11, 1987

Each year the educational activities of the Howard County Bird Club are varied and numerous with thousands of people benefiting. Our mounted specimens are most in demand, but occasional requests are also made for slides, nests, or the feeder box; some members serve as resources for special projects. Among those to whom presentations were made were Cub Scout Packs #794, 613, 144, those meeting at Glenelg Methodist church, # 649, 307, 817, 678, Boy Scout Troop #720 and Brownie Troop 1491; various elementary schools: Talbott Springs, Lisbon, West Friendship, Westowne, Bryant Woods, Swansfield, Hammond, Stevens Forest, Waterloo, Longfellow; Patapsco & Hammond Middle Schools, Centennial High School biology classes & ecology club, and Glenelg Country School and High School (various projects); garden clubs: Laurel, Dorsey Hall, Rollingwood, Split Rail; other clubs & groups: Extension Homemakers' Annual Spring Day luncheon, Womens' Interest Group (Beaufort Park), Ladies of the Elks, Owen Brown Place; classes: ornithology session at Catonsville Community College, Howard Comm. College natural history course, P.G. Co. Environmental Program for James Harrison Ele. School, Central Library Sat. program for children; fairs & shows: MOS state convention, Recreation Expo, Oakland Mills Village Fair, Home Town Fair, seed sales, Howard County Fair; plus a bird walk as a birthday present, and a presentation for Children's House, Montessori.

Individuals who made or assisted in the presentations (a number of members borrowed specimens for groups in which their children participated) were Cathy Williamson, Jo Solem, Bill Bridgeland, Martha Chestem, Helen Zeichner, Barbara Uglow, Linda Harsy, Paul Zucker, Jim Hill, Carolyn Cradler, Florence Seiko, Eileen Clegg, Maud Banks, Marcia Krishnamoorthy, Jane Geuder, Eva Sunell, Mary Heffernan, Patricia Greenwald, Monika Botsai, and Jerry Einem. If you are interested in learning how to make presentations about birds, call Marty Chestem 730-1527.

\*\*\*\*\*

- Our February speaker, Joe van Auken, donated his honorarium to Jane Zuke's raptor rehab center. Richard Dolesh, our March speaker indicated that he would also donate his honorarium to a conservation cause.
- The club thanks Helen Thompson for her food donation at the recent State Board Meeting in the county. The last feeder trip visited feeders at Pat Jackson's, Pat Hirt's and Frances Ehlers'. Thanks to those who helped with the annual potluck especially Monika Botsai and Grazina McClure who handled the food and reservations and Mike McClure who did an excellent job organizing the slide portion of the evening.
- The Baltimore MOS chapter sponsors a Junior Nature Camp for 3rd-8th graders. It runs from June 19-21 at Camp Hashawha in Carroll County. Older students with strong nature interests can apply to be junior leaders. Limited to 50 campers. Call Mike Resch 661-4313 or Tameron Walder 665-5964 before May 22nd.
- Continue recycling aluminum, newspapers and glass Saturdays 9-1 at the rear of the Hamilton Avnet building on Oak Hall Rd. near the post office in Columbia. Ask that your material be credited to the Howard County Bird Club.

HOWARD COUNTY MOS -MIDWINTER BIRD COUNT - JANUARY 31, 1987 - DAVID HOLMES  
& JOANNE SOLEM, CO-COMPILERS

What a day! To wax poetic: The snow, the snow.  
Oh oh, oh oh!

We could get our cars to most places we wanted to start, but then we couldn't park. And if we found parking, the walking was so tough that we couldn't get where we wanted to go. This was probably the roughest count we will do for years--barring ice storms. And our results reflected our coverage difficulties. All of the fairly territorial woods and scrub birds were reported in lower numbers than last year and this was with a one-third increase in field hours. We simply could not get into their territories. The number of field observers was up dramatically as was the number of feeder watchers. The proportions of feeder birds to field birds in most species were also up dramatically from last year's average of 10-12% to this year's 15-25%. Blue Jays, chickadees, and titmice were very close to 30% feeder reports while House Finches and goldfinches were over 40% feeder reports. But, let's start from the beginning.

The second annual Midwinter Bird Count was held on Saturday, January 31, 1987. The day was mostly cloudy with temperatures ranging from a low of 22F to a high of 40F. Winds were WNW 15-20 mph from about mid-morning throughout the afternoon. That meant that the birds stayed under cover even more than usual. Snow cover ranged from 9-16 inches with most areas under 12-14 inches. And nobody had snowshoes!

But even in all this, we had 48 people in the field and 48 more watching 40 feeders. That's great! But the useful data concerns party hours and party miles reflecting the actual coverage effort. Let's look at our count from last year, the Triadelphia Christmas Count from this winter, and this count so we can think of some comparisons:

	HMC 86	TR	HMC 87
Party hours - foot	97.0	170	85.5
car	36.0	34	78.5
feeder	38.0	--	110.0
Party miles - foot	88.0	197	68.0
car	452.5	458	676.0
Species	81	92	79 78
Individuals	28,966	72,884	33,963

As always, the numbers may not mean exactly what they look like. From the bottom up, the Triadelphia Count includes birds from 2 crow roosts which totalled almost 28,000 compared to our 3050. They also had nearly 15,000 more blackbirds and starlings than we did. We are very happy without that sort of quality.

Species totals reflect a great deal more open water and owling effort on Triadelphia. While Triadelphia had 21 species we did not, 6 were swimmers, 3 more like open water and 4 were owls. We couldn't go owling safely with no way to get off a road. Howard County came up with 8 species that Triadelphia missed. That was just about a trade-off.

Miles: Howard County is a bit bigger than a Christmas Count circle but not that much. For several of us, the most efficient technique for the day we had was simply to drive every road in our territory because they were at least sort of cleared and hope that lots of birds had come in from where we wanted to be to all the neighborhood feeders that we had a chance of seeing.

Hours: our organizational effort was wonderful this year. But, the increase in feeder hours is a mixed blessing. Since without color tagging, there is no way to determine whether the same flocks or individuals are returning repeatedly to a single feeder, we limit the numbers our observers can turn in. There is no way a person who watches a feeder for 4 hours can equal the total of individuals listed by someone who has tromped for 4 linear miles in the same amount of time. The system is simply not yet perfect. One of the unexpected projects this count is suggesting is a search for some sort of statis-

tical formula for integrating feeder hour productivity with field hour productivity. As things now stand, the higher proportion of feeder hours, the lower the birds per party hour numbers will be. So the birds per party hour figures in the next paragraph do not mean the same thing on the different counts. That's frustrating since birds per party hour is the standard used by American Birds and most local societies to measure population differences. We love you feeder watchers. We just don't yet know how to handle your data.

Let's keep on comparing the same species of birds we featured last year to see what we found out about them this year. All figures are simple birds per party hour calculations which, if the party hours have equivalent production possibilities, will show increases or decreases in populations--or habitat coverage--for each species.

SPECIES	HOW - 86	HOW - 87	TRI - 86	TRI - 87
Red-bellied Woodpecker	0.989	0.381	1.228	0.980
Downy Woodpecker	0.964	0.460	0.943	1.098
Hairy Woodpecker	0.164	0.047	0.165	0.191
Pileated Woodpecker	0.101	0.015	0.101	0.137
Carolina Chickadee	1.940	1.204	2.386	3.618
Tufted Titmouse	1.518	0.905	1.557	1.721
White-breasted Nuthatch	0.636	0.204	0.500	0.422
Carolina Wren	0.983	0.266	0.987	1.186
Northern Mockingbird	1.342	1.053	2.000	1.971
Northern Cardinal	3.817	3.190	5.032	4.578
House Sparrow	2.595	2.865	3.905	3.343

Now, let's look at a few of the migrants which were so intriguing last year. The columns are the same as above.

Song Sparrow	1.732	1.774	3.848	3.338
White-throated Sparrow	7.609	4.697	13.665	10.917
Field Sparrow	0.277	0.237	1.595	0.613
Dark-eyed Junco	7.181	4.927	11.804	9.877
House Finch	5.165	3.810	3.367	5.490
American Goldfinch	2.639	0.876	2.411	1.044
Total individuals	182.463	123.956	489.880	357.275

Notice that only Song Sparrow and House Sparrow show increases. Look across the table at the House Finch figures; and at the total individuals. No! We don't think all the birds are dying off. Triadelphia simply counted 14,000 fewer crows in 1987 than in 1986. Do consider these factors when you think about these figures; the productivity differences of party hours at feeders and in the field, the snow which kept most of us from large areas without our territories, and the spring and early summer drought which had to affect the winter food supply substantially. Did the drought push more birds toward feeders (see first paragraph) or was it the snow? Or both?? Do you begin to understand why it takes several years of data before comparisons are truly meaningful?

And what was fun? The manure pile at the University of Maryland farm on Folly Quarter Road which attracted a veritable cloud of birds. The 258 Horned Larks compared to last year's 0. The "good" birds: 2 Wild Turkeys at the far western edge of the county which are only the second county record, the redpoll flock which was almost dismissed as siskins, the very dull Dickcissel which was seen at a feeder twice on count day but never again. The Tally Rally with all that wonderful food (thanks to everyone who contributed goodies). And is there really only one person in the club who goes cross-country skiing? Don Morris had 1 of our 2 reported Great Blue Herons while on his skis. A wonderful idea--except that next year it will rain. And you know what? We'll all be out in it.

Many thanks to Zelda and Hal Simon for hosting the tally dinner for field participants, to Jane Farrell for planning the meal, and to the area leaders. We appreciated Jay Sheppard's personalization of the field list for this count and Bob Solem's help with part of the compilation.



HOWARD COUNTY MOS - MIDWINTER BIRD COUNT - JANUARY 31, 1987

Great Blue Heron	2	Rock Dove	5012	Cedar Waxwing	7
Tundra Swan	310	Mourning Dove	898	European Starling	3989
Mute Swan	3	Barred Owl	5	Yellow-rumped Warbler	8
Canada Goose	2700	Belted Kingfisher	8	Northern Cardinal	874
American Black Duck	38	Red-headed Woodpecker	1	Dickcissel <i>later removed</i>	<del>1</del>
Mallard	577	Red-bellied Woodpecker	107	Rufous-sided Towhee	6
American Wigeon	31	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	18	American Tree Sparrow	22
Canvasback	2	Downy Woodpecker	126	Field Sparrow	65
Ring-necked Duck	2	Hairy Woodpecker	13	Savannah Sparrow	1
Hooded Merganser	1	Northern Flicker	68	Fox Sparrow	1
duck sp.	80	Pileated Woodpecker	5	Song Sparrow	486
Black Vulture	56	Horned Lark	258	Swamp Sparrow	4
Turkey Vulture	147	Blue Jay	222	White-throated Sparrow	1287
Northern Harrier	2	American Crow	1301	White-crowned Sparrow	97
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	Fish Crow	22	Dark-eyed Junco	1350
Cooper's Hawk	1	crow sp.	1727	Red-winged Blackbird	29
Red-shouldered Hawk	36	Carolina Chickadee	330	Eastern Meadowlark	38
Red-tailed Hawk	42	Tufted Titmouse	248	Rusty Blackbird	1
American Kestrel	18	Red-breasted Nuthatch	15	Common Grackle	286
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	56	Brown-headed Cowbird	39
Wild Turkey	2	Brown Creeper	9	Purple Finch	13
Northern Bobwhite	29	Carolina Wren	73	House Finch	1044
Common Snipe	2	Winter Wren	3	Common Redpoll	41
Ring-billed Gull	1894	Golden-crowned Kinglet	15	Pine Siskin	48
Herring Gull	6015	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	American Goldfinch	240
Great Black-backed Gull	111	Eastern Bluebird	72	House Sparrow	785
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	Hermit Thrush	11		
gull sp.	185	Northern Mockingbird	283		
TOTAL	79 species		33,964 individuals		

OBSERVERS: AREA 1: Mark Wallace\*, Jay Sheppard, Elwood Martin; AREA 2: Peter Osenton\*, Mariano Gonzales, Sandy Goolsby, Tom Strikwerda, Don Morris (F), Frances Ehlers (F), Judy Proia (F), Joseph Suess (F); AREA 3: David Holmes, Allen McBride, Michele Wright, Jane Geuder, Eirik Blom, Juliana Simpson, Bob Dixon, Dave Harvey, Karen Skuldt, Joe Byrnes, Margie Kupiec, Lynn & Linda Holley (F), Colin Willett (F); AREA 4: Mike\* & Grazina Mc Clure, Jim Orgain, Fran Schoenberger, Caroline Halliday, Chuck Stirrat, Jerry Persall, Jim Blanchard (F), Bob Doyle (F), Irv Robinson (F), Sue Hudson (F), Roy Trudel (F), Peg Willson (F), Margaret Lord (F), Georgia Eacker (F); AREA 5: Marty Chestem\*, Kevin Hefferman, Burton Alexander, John & Eileen Clegg, Teresa Kelley, Alice Grant (F), Mrs. & Mrs. C. Belechner (F), Marjorie Mountjoy (F), Pat Hirt (F), Zelda Simon (F), Don & Jan Randle (F), Rosamond Munro (F), John Blaisdell (F), Helen Zeichner (F); AREA 6: Chuck\*, Betty (F) and Gail (F) Dupree, Bob & Norma (F) Bogdan, Nancy Huting, Cathy Williamson, Marcia & Anu Krishnamoorthy, Charles Williams, Ralph Geuder (F), Monika Botsai (F), Kathy, Tom & Brian Cahill (F), Sal & Ceil Casciaro (F), Max Casper (F); AREA 7: Jo\* & Bob (F) Solem, Jane Farrell, George Chase, Sam Droege, Eva Sunell, Maud Banks, Dick Hegner, Don & Martha Waugh, Ed & Leone Gould, Georgia Morris (F), Gene & Judy Major (F), Bea Newkirk (F), Fran Nahrgang (F), Spud Loomis (F), M. Kupiec (F), Sue Schmutge (F), Ralph & Beth Heimlich (F).

\* indicates an area leader; F denotes a feeder/yard watcher

\*\*\*\*\*

Michele Wright is beginning to learn taxidermy which will help the chapter immensely. Her major problem right now is storage of frozen bird specimens. If any member has a small freezer they would care to donate (tax deductible contribution), call Michele at 465-6057.

# FIELD GUIDE TABS: IDENTIFY BIRDS FAST! - JERRY PERSALL

When I first started birding about a year ago, it was an interesting exercise to select a field guide. Everyone I spoke with seemed to have a personal preference and the occasional article in various birding magazines pointed to no guide in particular. The title of Edward W. Cronin, Jr.'s Getting Started in Bird Watching, however, appealed to my beginner's sense of needing a gentle step-by-step introduction to the techniques of birding. It was through Roger Tory Peterson's recommendation on the cover, "invaluable for beginners," that I was led eventually to purchase Peterson's own A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies.

I soon learned, however, that one has to learn techniques even for using a field guide in the field. Birds don't always give you the time to flip page by page through your guide, trying desperately to accurately identify and confirm their species. I have since been on a number of walks with club members and others elsewhere and have learned through experience the overall organizational format of the Peterson guide. No expert birder yet, I do know that crows are not in the same section as Accidentals.

It was with pleasure, then, that I recently discovered for sale a set of field guide tabs that attach easily to the various sections of the guide. These tabs allow quick reference in the field, where speed can be important, by dividing birds into groups.

The set of tabs will accommodate:

- Peterson's A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies
- Peterson's A Field Guide to Western Birds
- Robbins, et al Birds of North America
- National Geographic's Field Guide to the Birds of North America

The tabs themselves are easy to apply. Instructions are included along with handy "line-up" spacing guides. I should say they are easy to apply with due patience. In my hurried enthusiasm, I mismarked two tabs out of the 33 provided. Now my tab #17 (Woodpeckers) lies over and obscures tab #18 (Flycatchers), a fact that I'll probably always remember when using the guide in the field. The tabs are self-adhering and appear to be made of plastic.

Altogether I have made, I think, a nice improvement in my own copy of Peterson's guide, and I can flip easily to whatever section demands my attention at the moment. The Field Guide Tabs are made by The Brown Company, Yawgoo Pond Road, P.O. Box 277, W. Kingston, Rhode Island 02892. I was able to purchase mine locally at The Nature Nook in Ellicott City.

\*\*\*\*\*

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

- Eileen Clegg 730-4362 welcomes volunteers to man the table for Recreation Expo in the Columbia Mall on Saturday, June 6. It's pleasant to chat with passersby and if you are inexperienced she will be happy to put you with an experienced individual. Mike McClure 531-2780 who is in charge of our exhibit at the county fair in August invites you to spend an evening helping (normally you get time off to also see the fair). Marty Chestem set up the exhibit we recently had at Howard Community College for the Gardening Show April 11. Helping during the day were Marjorie Mountjoy, Elise Seay, Mike & Grazina McClure, Marcia Krishnamoorthy, Cathy Williamson, Helen Zeichner and Alice Grant. Alice spoke on Backyard Wildlife Habitats.
- Jane Zuke thanks the club for their donation to her rehabilitation work. Part of the sum has been used for two small cages Mark Wallace is building for her which will be used both for confining wing-injured birds and for transporting birds that she uses in programs.
- Thanks to Cliff Grant who recently made a donation from the sale of some of his finely crafted bluebird boxes. His generosity is much appreciated.

## HOWARD ATLAS UPDATE - Chandler S. Robbins

Howard is one of the most important Atlas counties in Maryland because this is Howard County's second breeding bird atlas and it permits us to make comparisons with the published atlas of 1973-75 (Klimkiewicz and Solem, Maryland Birdlife 34:3-39). So, naturally, when the 1986 atlas data became available, I examined the Howard County data first. I participated extensively in the atlas field work in Howard County in 1973-75. For the present atlas, I have spent most of my field time in more distant counties that have few active birders; consequently, my contribution in Howard County has been minimal this time. It has been very exciting to me, therefore, to follow the excellent progress made by Howard Chapter members.

The entire Atlas program in Maryland is proceeding so well that Maryland will not have an extra "mop-up" year as several states have had to do. That means that any coverage we fail to complete this year will result in permanent gaps in our atlas maps. By pointing out some of the remaining weaknesses in the Howard atlas data, I hope we can focus our final efforts where they will be most productive. If you are not already participating, please volunteer. You will enjoy it.

### Progress

Progress to date has been absolutely phenomenal as the result of collaboration of so many enthusiastic birders under the leadership of County Coordinators Chuck Dupree and Jane Farrell. Every atlas block in the county has been visited several times. The number of species per block presently ranges from 56 in Relay CW to 100 in Woodbine SW. (I can't congratulate any special persons at this time because the printout does not include names of observers.) Seventy or more species have been found in 30 of the 34 Howard County blocks, and half of those below 70 are boundary blocks that overlap into other counties.

### Completing the Weak Blocks

Because the boundary blocks were included in the 1973-75 atlas, it is important to be sure they are well covered again this year. Some of these were assigned to members from other Chapters, but these folks will appreciate any assistance they can receive from Howard members.

### Filling in the Holes

In the 1973-75 atlas, 40 species were found in every 5-km block in Howard County, and 8 species were found in every quarter-block. The published report omitted maps for 23 of the species that were found in every block, but the new State atlas will have a map for every species. Thus, if a common species is missed anywhere in Howard County there will be a hole in the map in that position.

In reviewing Howard records from the new printout I checked those species that had been found in every block in 1973-75, and I found several gaps in the 1983-86 data. For example, Scarlet Tanager is not listed for Clarksville NW, Rock Dove is missing from Relay SW, Phoebe from Woodbine CE, and Chipping Sparrow from Sykesville CW. Probably no species will be found in every block in Maryland, but at least 40 must still nest in every block in Howard County; we have found 28 of them already.

### Comparisons with 1973-75

To me the most exciting result of the Howard County atlas is the opportunity to make direct comparisons with 1973-75. That opportunity is severely limited in Montgomery County because Montgomery, the first Maryland county to do an atlas, was covered only

with a 5-km grid, and most of the species found in every 5-km atlas block in 1971-73 still occur somewhere in every block. In Howard, on the other hand, with a quarter-block (2-1/2 km on each side) grid, the decline or increase in many species can be shown. For example, the present coverage (through 1986) is 93% that of 1973 (7573 quarter-block records versus 8129 in 1973-75). By the end of 1987 I estimate that coverage will be within a few percent of that of 1973-75.

In the meantime, some important changes in distribution can be detected. By adjusting for the 93% coverage (dividing the 1983-86 quarter-block totals for each species by 0.93), we can estimate the extent of increases and decreases that have taken place in the intervening decade. The following species were found in at least twice the number of quarter-blocks in which they were detected in 1973:

Canada Goose	Cliff Swallow	Blue-winged Warbler
Tree Swallow	Cedar Waxwing	House Finch

These additional species were found in more than 30% more quarter-blocks than in 1973-75:

Mallard	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Northern Parula
Red-tailed Hawk	Pileated Woodpecker	Prairie Warbler
Red-shouldered Hawk	White-breasted Nuthatch	Hooded Warbler
	Eastern Bluebird	

The following species are more than 30% below their 1973-75 figure (when adjusted for 93% coverage), so a decrease in Howard County is likely:

Am. Black Duck	Horned Lark	Eastern Meadowlark
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Bank Swallow	Grasshopper Sparrow
Black-billed Cuckoo	Prothonotary Warbler	Vesper Sparrow

#### Priorities

A minimum goal of 70 species in every Howard County block and 50 species in every quarter-block seems attainable. Most blocks already have over 75 species. Only four are under 70:

Damascus NE	Woodbine CE	Clarksville NW	Relay CW
-------------	-------------	----------------	----------

Quarter-blocks in these four blocks also need attention, as do the following (the other quarter-blocks are in excellent shape):

Damascus CE 2	Woodbine SE 2,4	Ellicott CE 1,2,3	Savage NW 1
Woodbine NW 1,3,4;	Sykesville NW 4	Ellicott SE 2,4	Savage NE 3
Woodbine NE 1,2,3,4;	Sykesville CW 1,2,3	Sandy Spr NE 3	Savage SE 2
Woodbine CW 3;	Sykesville SE 1,2	Clarksville CE 3	Relay NW 2

By knowing which expected species are lacking from each block--and such a list will be provided each participant this season--an effort should be made to fill in any obvious gaps and then search appropriate habitats for other missing species. Request help from other birders if you are unable to complete the search yourself. Review the quarter-block records for your block. The Howard quarter-block coverage so far has been fabulous; and a little effort directed toward obvious gaps and toward the under-covered quarter-blocks will make the final result outstanding.

Finally, for those interested in rarities, the Howard County superblock from 1973-75 was Relay NW, with 107 species and from 87 to 101 species in each quarter-block. This block had four confirmed species that have not been recorded as more than possible in Howard County in 1983-86: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Virginia Rail, Spotted Sandpiper, and Prothonotary Warbler. Other blocks in 1973-75 had the following species that were not found in the county in 1983-86: Ruffed Grouse, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Summer Tanager, and Savannah Sparrow. Good hunting!

MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 2, 1987 - PAUL ZUCKER

Every year since 1948 members and friends of the Maryland Ornithological Society have conducted an annual May count. No other state can equal this record of spring migration counts taken on a single day each year. The results of this group effort are compiled and published in Maryland Birdlife.

All members of the Howard County Chapter and interested friends are invited to participate. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know other chapter members at the optional tally rally at the end of the day. Inexperienced birders are encouraged to participate; the compiler will try to team them with more experienced birders. (Personally, I have learned an immense amount about birding from going out on counts like this in a small group with more experienced colleagues.) Participation is also sought from people who will watch their feeders. It is not necessary to spend the entire day counting (although many people do)--part-day participation is also encouraged.

The compiler for the Howard County May Count is

Paul A. Zucker  
112 Finale Terrace  
Silver Spring, MD 20901  
Telephone 681-9005

The areas to be birded and the groupings of observers into parties will be assigned by the compiler although, whenever possible, requests will be honored. There are many parts of the county which are yet to be covered. It is necessary for all participants (including feeder watchers) to contact the compiler during the two weeks prior to the count or at the April chapter meeting.

The county has been divided into 18 regions; a team leader will be assigned for each region. Each leader is responsible for combining all the field notes from that region into one clean, final tally sheet. This tally sheet ~~MUST be turned in to the compiler~~ at the tally rally. This final tally should be neat (no extraneous marks), legible, and on the official form which is enclosed (extras available at rally). The leaders are also responsible for tallying start time and miles, stop time and miles, party-hours by car and by foot, party-miles by car and by foot (and by other means), and the names and addresses of all the participants on the team. (Time out for lunch and time out of the assigned area must be subtracted off the totals.) In addition, the team leaders are responsible for obtaining the write-ups of all unusual sightings for their regions.

Occasionally, people who are birding in Howard County on May Count day, but who are not Count participants, wish to submit observations to the compiler. Such records are welcome but can only be used in those cases when no one else has seen the species in question (otherwise there may be double counting). Such less common species are generally "unusual sightings" as described below which require written documentation.

#### SOME GENERAL HINTS

It is necessary to keep track of party-hours and party-miles separately for time spent in the car, on foot, or with other means of transportation. Observers within talking or shouting distance of each other are one party. Thus, if a party of three people spends an hour together on foot, then one party-hour should be notated. If, however, one party member is separated from the others for half of that hour, then a total of one and a half party-hours should be tallied. I find it easiest to keep track of the hours spent on foot by making a notation to the nearest quarter-hour each time I get back into the car.

Count all birds. Large flocks can be estimated (don't be timid--most people underestimate). Although undue effort should not be spent chasing after common birds, it is important to count all birds seen. Don't ignore House Sparrows and European Starlings.

For keeping notes in the field, I like to use a notebook. Final totals, times and miles are then transcribed to the tally sheet which is enclosed. When I see a few birds of a species, I record them using hash marks (#). When I see a large flock, I write the total number and then circle it. It is a good idea to have extra paper along for making notes about unusual sightings. If something unusual is seen, it is useful to make the appropriate notes on the spot. (See the section below entitled UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS for procedures and species to be documented.)

If you see birds outside of your assigned area, please make notes on a separate sheet of paper. This information should not be added to your tally but should be given to the person responsible for the area where the birds were seen. If your total for that species in their region is higher than theirs, they can use your total instead. Only if you are both sure that you counted different individual birds can your total be added to theirs.

#### UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

All unusual sightings need to be documented. Such documentation should include name of person making the identification, names of all others who saw the bird, when and where the bird was seen, how far away the bird was (approximately), what the lighting conditions were, what the bird was doing and how long it was observed, what field marks and coloration were observed, any other information pertaining to the decision of the species of the bird in question.

The following species are unusual for Howard County May Counts and need to be documented. First, all species not on the official check list (enclosed in this mailing) are considered unusual. Second, all of the following species which have been seen on four or fewer of the last 13 Howard County May Counts are considered unusual and should be documented: Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Cattle Egret, Black or Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Glossy Ibis, Tundra Swan, Green-winged Teal, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Greater or Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Merlin, Wild Turkey, Sora, American Coot, Upland Sandpiper, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short or Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope, Bonaparte's Gull, Herring Gull, Eastern Screech-Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Common Nighthawk, Red-headed Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Water Pipit, Loggerhead Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Wilson's Warbler, Summer Tanager, Dickcissel, American Tree Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, and any other species you suspect may never have been seen on the Howard County May Count.

MAY COUNT TALLY POTLUCK TO BE HELD AT DON & JAN RANDLE'S, 6424 LOCHRIDGE ROAD, BRAEBURN

Although it is not necessary to attend the tally in order to participate in the May Count, many birders find that the get-together in the evening is a pleasant and satisfying way to end one of the best birding days of the year. It provides an excellent opportunity to share your best sightings, find out what others saw (and where), and perhaps relate the thrill of seeing some species for the very first time. Anyone who participates in the Count is welcome at the tally (including feeder watchers). Call Jan Randle 531-6296 to let her know the number coming and your choice of food to share. (Non-cooks or all-day counters are not expected to prepare a culinary masterpiece; ask Jan for suggestions.) Counters begin gathering any time after 5:30 p.m.; dinner usually begins between 6:30-7:00 p.m. The Randles live in Braeburn which is on the west side of Cedar Lane (the section north of Rt. 32 and south of the stoplight at Owen Brown Rd.) Entrance road is Braeburn Rd., turn right on Lochridge and continue to first house on left after Hillbrook Dr. (one long block). If unable to attend, make arrangements with area leader or Paul to turn in or phone results sometime during Count Day or evening. All participants will receive a copy of the results and highlights.