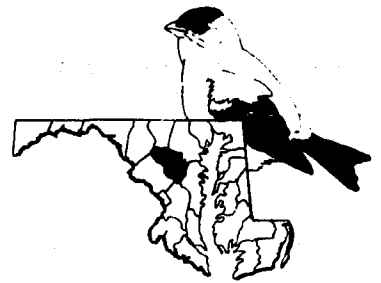




Howard

A Chapter of the
Maryland Ornithological Society



Vol. 20, No 5
May-Jun 1992

\$5,000 FOR SIERRA DE LAS MINAS, GUATEMALA



The Howard County Bird Club donated the proceeds from the two 1991-1992 seed sales and 50 individual donations to purchase and perpetually protect over 80 acres of rich rainforest in the Sierra de las Minas in Guatemala. This is a mountain range over 40 miles long containing some 583,000 acres, an area of almost incredible biodiversity. It has been named a biosphere reserve, a designation applied to a limited number of areas which are of special value because of their rich and varied habitats. Only a fraction of this choice area has been acquired, and the time to save it is limited. Nature Conservancy International scientists using satellite maps have calculated that more than 40% of the forest cover in this reserve has disappeared through deforestation in the last ten years.

The habitats vary from dry scrub to cloud forest. The variety of trees, flowering plants, mosses, and ferns is particularly high (e.g., more than 280 species of wild orchids). This diverse vegetation supports a wide variety of mammals, birds, amphibians, and insects. Chandler Robbins, biologist at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, spent a week banding birds in the cloud forest portion of this reserve in early 1992 as part of his continuing study of winter habitats of neotropical migrants. He commented that cloud forest species of hummingbirds and wood creepers were varied, the striking Resplendent Quetzal (national bird of Guatemala) was common, and the most frequent North American warbler was the Wilson's! Other habitats in the reserve shelter wintering American Redstarts, Black-and-white Warblers, Ovenbirds, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Least and Great Crested Flycatchers, and many others. More than 30 species of warblers winter in the reserve including the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler.

We thank our seed sale customers who supported this conservation cause through their purchases and also gratefully acknowledge donations made by the following:

Mike Bandy
Ann Barnes
Buff Barr
John & Brenda Bell
Susan Bell
Pat Brokos
Lois Carleton
Mary Coffey
Beverly Ditch
Bob Doyle
Warren Drell
Marsha Durson
Gerald & Libby Einem

Jane Farrell
Richard Fawcett
Christina Glorioso
Melvin Goldstein
Linda Hammil
R. W. Handwork
Dave Harvey (honorary)
Patricia Hirt
Nancy Huting
Phyllis Jovich
Eleanore Klitzke
Paul Kojzar
Dave & Julie Kubitsky

Don Kyle
Russ Lange
Margaret Lord
Nancy Magnusson
Betty Mayer
James & Claudia Medwin
Don & Fran Nahrgang
Elsa Ponce
James Resau
Rosamond Ridgley
Florence Saito
Susan Setterberg
Skip Skipton

Rosayne Smith &
Clyde Robinette
Bob & Jo Solem
Tom Strikwerda
Nettie Taylor
Helen Thompson
Bruce & Virginia Weber
J. M. Whisnant
G. J. Wilson
Barbara Schuyler
& Pat Wilson
Michele Wright
Helen Zeichner

If you wish to make a contribution during the year, send your check made out to Howard County Chapter--MOS. Mark it for Tropical Habitat Preservation and send it to Treasurer Nancy Magnusson, 8589-F Falls Run Road, Ellicott City, MD 21043.

1992-1993 OFFICERS ELECTED

At the annual meeting in April, the following were elected to lead the Howard County Bird Club for the coming year: President Joanne Solem, Vice President Tom Strikwerda, Secretary Shiras Guion, Treasurer Nancy Magnusson; State Directors: Jane Farrell, Don Waugh, Helen Zeichner, Paul Zucker; Chapter Director: Dave Kubitsky. (Pat Hirt will be serving the second year of her term as Chapter Director.) The Nominating Committee was Eva Sunell, Tom Strikwerda, and Paul Zucker (chair).

THE BIRDING YEAR IN HOWARD COUNTY

JULY
Jo Solem



- Late summer is a good time to study the young of local breeding birds. Fledglings are sometimes identical to adults, but in some species there is a dramatic difference in plumage. At the very least, the young of common perching birds will have a short tail and only partially developed wing feathers when they leave the nest. They will continue to beg for food for several weeks after fledging.
- Continue watching for vagrant egrets and herons (other than the regular Great Blue and Green-backed) on local lakes and rivers; many will be immature birds.
- Look for young Wood Ducks and adults in eclipse plumage on secluded ponds and rivers. The marshy end of Centennial Lake usually holds a few.
- By mid-month, start watching muddy flats and reservoir/lake edges for early shore-bird migrants. Most will be adults still in partial breeding plumage.
- Bald Eagles and Ospreys may wander over or near water, although eagles may be seen almost any time of the year in small numbers, particularly around the reservoirs.
- Warm summer days, when thermals are strong, are a good time to observe soaring hawks and vultures. Watching Black and Turkey Vultures together helps to separate the two species. Much of the Patapsco River Valley offers favorable possibilities.
- At dusk, listen for owls (especially screech-owls) this month and next since the families have fledged and are talkative.
- Late in July, juvenile Purple Martins gather in flocks, often in dead branches at the tops of tall deciduous trees.
- Late this month start checking Triadelphia Reservoir at Brighton Dam as well as lakes and ponds for flocking swallows.
- Chokecherries should be ripe the last part of July and the first part of August. Be alert for birds feeding on the fruit.
- There is some early migration of songbirds this month. Note the disappearance of Orchard Orioles by month's end as well as the ~~departure of most of the Yellow Warblers.~~
- Those with a curious turn of mind should watch for fledgling Brown-headed Cowbirds and observe the host species.
- American Goldfinches begin to nest in late July when thistle goes to seed. The county bird can be seen at Centennial, Schooley Mill, or Rockburn Branch Parks.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED BETWEEN APRIL 11, 1991 AND APRIL 9, 1992

Each year the club's mounted specimens and slide programs are borrowed by many members and used for educational presentations and displays. This educational arm of the Bird Club reaches thousands of people each year in an effort to introduce them to the fascinating world of natural history. Any member may borrow specimens (call Jo Solem 301-725-5037); if you are a parent, consider making presentations to clubs or classes in which your children are enrolled. Reference material accompanying each box of specimens provides background information. Individuals who used club materials for programs, displays, or personal study during the year included Connie Bockstie, Martha Chestem, Eileen Clegg, Carolyn Cradler, Linda Furlong, Ralph Geuder, Judy Habib, Margie Kupiec, Mike McClure, Bonnie Ott, Frankie Pardoe, Suzanne Probst, Florence Saito, Joanne Solem, Regina Somerlock, Barbara Sullivan, Eva Sunell, Michele Wright, and Helen Zeichner.

Groups to whom presentations were made or places where there were displays included the following: Phelps Luck E.S. 2nd grade GT & 4th grade, Swansfield E.S. 1st grade, Montessori School (Longfellow), Rockburn Park Chipmunk Hour (Dept. of Rec & Parks), Clemens Crossing E.S. after school program, West Friendship E.S. 4th & 5th grade outdoor day, How. Co. Rec & Parks Nature Camps, Howard County Fair, Glenelg Country School 9th grade biology, Westowne E.S. (Balt. Co.), Oakland Mills M.S. Outdoor Ed., Deep Run E.S. 2nd grade GT, Middle Patuxent Nursery School, Wilde Lake Nursery School, Dept. of Rec & Parks Trim-a-tree Program, West Friendship E.S. Trail Blazers Club, Hammond E.S. kindergartens, St. John's Parish Day School, Patapsco M.S. 7th grade science, Allenford Garden Club, Cub Scout Pack #917 Den 6, Howard Community College Science Club, Brantley Baptist Home School Group, Swansfield E.S. Brownie Troop, Clemens Crossing E.S. 4th grade (Maryland Day), Daisy Troop #1356, and Principles of Ecology class at Hood College.

CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS, FIELD TRIPS, SPECIAL EVENTS

Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia. 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.

MAY 14 "LITTLE GREEN BIRDS" - David Holmes. David is always able to provide excellent bird slides because he photographs during banding. He has spoken previously on "Little Brown Birds." This time he will help us unravel the identification of flycatchers, vireos, and other small green look-alikes. It's not easy being green...

Field trips meet as described for each trip. Carpooling is encouraged with riders sharing the cost of gas and tolls. Dress for field work with stout, reasonably waterproof footgear & layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. No pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement weather or fewer than 3 participants. Questions? Call leader or Field Trip Chair Bonnie Ott (410) 461-3361.

MAY 9 **MAY COUNT.** See explanation on the insert in this newsletter. For additional information or to volunteer, call Paul Zucker (301) 279-7896 (H) or (301) 953-5000 x 4971 (O).

JUNE 13 **SUMMER WILDFLOWER WALK.** Leader: Bob Solem (301) 725-5037. 1/2 day. Saturday Wincopin Neck Trail. Meet at Savage Park office at 9:00 a.m.

JUNE 20 **SUMMER SOLSTICE BIRD WALK.** Leader: Nancy Magnusson (410) 461-8912. Saturday 1/2 day. Schooley Mill Park. Meet at 7:30 a.m. in upper parking lot straight ahead. Look for Howard County breeding birds at time of peak song. Trails may be muddy.

BOARD MEETING: Thursday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m., Longfellow Elementary School.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1992 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL is due July 15. Call or mail to Susan Setterberg, 9445 Clocktower Lane, Columbia, MD 21046; telephone (301) 498-4734.

SPRING MIGRATION RECORDS (March through May) are due by June 7 for *Maryland Bird-life* and *American Birds*. Send to Joanne Solem, 10617 Grae Loch Road, Laurel, MD 20723; telephone (301) 725-5037.

SUSAN SETTERBERG NAMED NEWSLETTER EDITOR



This issue of the newsletter will be my final one as editor. It is hard to believe 17 years have passed since I somewhat reluctantly agreed to be a co-editor.

Anyone who accepts a role as a volunteer for such an extended period can do so only with the support and cooperation of numerous individuals. I cannot possibly enumerate them all and for that reason I hesitate to list names; however, I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude to some of the most consistent contributors. Martha Chestem and Jon E. Boone each authored a group of bird identification articles. Chris Ludwig initiated the *Hot Spots* series and received help from many birders; others wrote articles after he left the area. Georgia Morris provided the fine drawings and much of the text for the *Flower Feature*. Bob Solem covered conservation issues for half a dozen years, assisted with the *Flower Feature*, and moved the newsletter into the computer age. Each deserves my special thanks.

In addition to the long-term features, there were those who wrote annual cavity nester, count, and annual list summaries; birders who submitted first county bird record descriptions; while field trip and program chairs provided items punctually. There were any number of members who contributed behavioral observations, travel descriptions, or drawings. All of them were appreciated. Without the help of all of these people, my job would have been extremely difficult and the newsletter much less useful to the local birding community.

Jan and Don Randle deserve a vote of thanks for the many hours over the years they spent preparing the newsletter for mailing as does Marty Chestem, who tilted with any number of postal windmills in her faithful mailing of this publication.

I am pleased Susan Setterberg has been named the new editor. She brings enthusiasm, interest, and experience to the position; she also needs your help. Please provide her with the same support you have given me so that she can produce an informative newsletter in a timely fashion. Her address is 9445 Clocktower Lane, Columbia, MD 21046; telephone (301) 498-4734. She looks forward to hearing from you.

-- Jo Solem

222 SPECIES FOR 1991 ANNUAL LIST

Jane Farrell



I was surprised when the number of bird species seen in Howard County added up to 222. Many local birdwatchers complained about the BORING birding year, and they were to some extent correct. Fourteen species of this total were observed by only one person or one party of birders. We have many observers in the field year-round, and we get excellent county coverage. One observer of bird activity state-wide remarked that Howard Countians are the most competitive intracounty birders around. We take that as a compliment, whether meant or not. Our competition involves seeing how many good birds we can find and how many people we can share them with.

To reach a total of 222 species in a year in which we did not have large numbers of any kinds of birds is impressive. Waterfowl were not great, the variety of shorebirds was down, vireos and warblers were not outstanding--all in all we pulled a very respectable total out of a mediocre year. (Bob Solem looked at the 13-year compilation and noted that 176 species have been seen in all 13 years; 200-210 species can be counted on most years.)

But there were highlights and, again, new birds for the county list. Four of these new birds were seen by multiple observers: Black Scoter on Wilde Lake, Eurasian Wigeon on Centennial Lake, Tricolored Heron on Triadelphia Reservoir, and two individual Northern Shrikes (one at Schooley Mill Park and one at Patapsco Valley State Park). New species seen by only a single observer will not be listed until they clear the Maryland/DC Records Committee.

As usual there were misses. Last year I asked for Redhead, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden-winged Warbler, and Connecticut Warbler in 1991; you found Rough-legged Hawk and Golden-winged Warbler. I'll ask again for Redhead and Connecticut Warbler and add a request for a variety of shorebirds and an unusual tern or two. Let others know if you find unusual species. Call Bea Newkirk (301) 498-1902 to activate the Rare Bird Alert!

Thanks to these members who submitted their complete 1991 lists: Burton J. Alexander, Connie Bockstie, Jane Farrell, Nancy Magnusson, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Suzanne Probst, Norm & Fran Saunders, Jo Solem, Eva Sunell, and Helen Zeichner. Jo Solem's, Mike McClure's and David Holmes' data from season reports & special counts captured some species that would otherwise be missing. David Holmes and Bob Ringler shared their technical expertise and provided guidance. Bob Solem produced the computerized 13-year compilation. ~~Individuals who submitted their 1991 annual lists~~ will receive a printout of the 13-year compilation. Other members may request it by contacting Jane Farrell at (410) 381-7344 or by sending a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to 6324 Sandchain Road, Columbia, MD 21045.

Addendum: Add Dickcissel to the 1990 annual list, making the total 222 species. Add Glaucous Gull to the 1987 annual list, bringing that total to 215 species. Add Wild Turkey to the 1982 annual list, which brings the total to 215.

Red-throated Loon	Northern Harrier	Great Horned Owl	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Ovenbird
Common Loon	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Barn Owl	Eastern Bluebird	Northern Waterthrush
Pied-billed Grebe	Cooper's Hawk	Northern Saw-whet Owl	Veery	Louisiana Waterthrush
Horned Grebe	Red-shouldered Hawk	Common Nighthawk	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Kentucky Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Broad-winged Hawk	Chuck-will's-widow	Sussex's Thrush	Mourning Warbler
American Bittern	Red-tailed Hawk	Whip-poor-will	Hermit Thrush	Common Yellowthroat
Great Blue Heron	Rough-legged Hawk	Chimney Swift	Wood Thrush	Hooded Warbler
Great Egret	Golden Eagle	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	American Robin	Wilson's Warbler
Snowy Egret	American Kestrel	Belted Kingfisher	Gray Catbird	Canada Warbler
Little Blue Heron	Merlin	Red-headed Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird	Yellow-breasted Chat
Tricolored Heron	Peregrine Falcon	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Brown Creeper	Summer Tanager
Cattle Egret	Ring-necked Pheasant	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	American Pipit	Scarlet Tanager
Green-backed Heron	Wild Turkey	Bonny Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Northern Cardinal
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Northern Bobwhite	Hairy Woodpecker	Northern Shrike	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Glossy Ibis	Sora	Northern Flicker	European Starling	Blue Grosbeak
Yundra Swan	Common Moorhen	Pileated Woodpecker	White-eyed Vireo	Indigo Bunting
Mute Swan	American Coot	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Solitary Vireo	Rufous-sided Towhee
Snow Goose	Semipalmated Plover	Eastern Wood-Peevee	Yellow-throated Vireo	American Tree Sparrow
Canada Goose	Killdeer	Acadian Flycatcher	Marbling Vireo	Chipping Sparrow
Wood Duck	Greater Yellowlegs	Willow Flycatcher	Red-eyed Vireo	Field Sparrow
Green-winged Teal	Lesser Yellowlegs	Least Flycatcher	Blue-winged Warbler	Vesper Sparrow
American Black Duck	Solitary Sandpiper	Eastern Phoebe	Golden-winged Warbler	Savannah Sparrow
Nallard	Spotted Sandpiper	Great Crested Flycatcher	Tennessee Warbler	Grasshopper Sparrow
Northern Pintail	Sanderling	Northern Kingbird	Nashville Warbler	Fox Sparrow
Blue-winged Teal	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Horned Lark	Northern Parula	Song Sparrow
Northern Shoveler	Least Sandpiper	Purple Martin	Yellow Warbler	Lincoln's Sparrow
Godwit	Pectoral Sandpiper	Tree Swallow	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Swamp Sparrow
Eurasian Wigeon	Sunlin	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Magnolia Warbler	White-throated Sparrow
American Wigeon	Common Snipe	Bank Swallow	Cape May Warbler	White-crowned Sparrow
Canvasback	American Woodcock	Cliff Swallow	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Dark-eyed Junco
Ring-necked Duck	Wilson's Phalarope	Barn Swallow	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Bobolink
Greater Scaup	Laughing Gull	Blue Jay	Black-throated Green Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Lesser Scaup	Bonaparte's Gull	American Crow	Blackburnian Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Oldsquaw	Ring-billed Gull	Fish Crow	Yellow-throated Warbler	Rusty Blackbird
Black Scoter	Herring Gull	Callina Chickadee	Fine Warbler	Brewer's Blackbird
Common Goldeneye	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Tufted Titmouse	Prairie Warbler	Common Grackle
Hufflehead	Great Black-backed Gull	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Fawn Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Hooded Merganser	Caspian Tern	White-breasted Nuthatch	Cape May Warbler	Orchard Oriole
Common Merganser	Black Tern	Brown Creeper	Blackpoll Warbler	Northern Oriole
Red-breasted Merganser	Rock Dove	Carolina Wren	Corvican Warbler	Purple Finch
Ruddy Duck	Mourning Dove	House Wren	Black-and-white Warbler	House Finch
Black Vulture	Black-billed Cuckoo	Winter Wren	American Redstart	Fine Siskin
Turkey Vulture	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Prothonotary Warbler	American Goldfinch
Osprey	Eastern Screech-Owl	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Worm-eating Warbler	Evening Grosbeak
Bald Eagle				House Sparrow

MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1992 - Paul Zucker

Every year since 1948, members and friends of the MD Ornithological Society have conducted an annual May Count. You are urged to participate for all or part of the day at the peak of migration for an experience like no other in the birding year.



The compiler for the Howard County May Count is Paul Zucker, 12813 Huntsman Way Potomac, MD 20854, telephone (301) 279-7896 (H) or (301) 953-5000 x 4971 (O). Field and feeder watchers must contact the compiler during the two weeks preceding the count or at the April chapter meeting. Areas to be birded and observer groupings will be assigned by the compiler but, whenever possible, requests will be honored. Inexperienced or beginning birders are encouraged to participate for even a few hours (early a.m. is most productive); the compiler will team them with more experienced observers.

Each of the 18 regions in the county has a team leader who is responsible for combining all field notes from his/her region into a clean, final tally sheet which must be turned in at the tally (extras will be available). Leaders must also total party miles & time, include names & addresses of observers, and obtain documentation for all unusual species reported. (Time out of the assigned area and lunch breaks should be subtracted from totals.) Observers within talking or shouting distance are one party. If two or more birders spend an hour together on foot, that constitutes one party hour; however, if one member is separated from others for half an hour, then the total is 1 1/2 party hours. Count all birds; large flocks can be estimated. Do not ignore House Sparrows, European Starlings and other common species. Birds seen outside your assigned area should be noted separately and given to the area leader of that sector at the tally. Comparison of time, direction, and location may enable additions without double counting.

Individuals birding in the county that day who are not participating in May Count occasionally desire to turn in their sightings. To prevent double counting, the only species that can be accepted are those which no one else has seen. Such species are frequently those which require written documentation.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS



All unusual sightings need to be documented. Include the name of the person making the identification, names of all others who saw the bird, when and where seen, lighting conditions, optics used, behavior, time period observed, field marks, etc.

Any species not previously recorded in the county nor listed on the checklist needs to be documented. The following species (seen on four or fewer of the last 15 Howard County May counts) need to be documented: Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Cattle Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Glossy Ibis, Tundra Swan, Green-winged Teal, American Black Duck, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Greater or Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Wild Turkey, Sora, American Coot, Upland Sandpiper, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope, Bonaparte's Gull, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, Forster's Tern, Barn Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Gray-cheeked Thrush, American Pipit, Loggerhead Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Mourning Warbler, Summer Tanager, Dickcissel, American Tree Swallow, Henslow's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, or Rusty Blackbird.

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

Anyone who participates in the count is welcome to attend the tally. If you are unable to attend, please make prior arrangements with your area leader or the compiler to turn in or phone in results count day or evening. 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 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 Md. 32 and south of the stoplights at Owen Brown and Freetown Roads.) Entrance road is Braeburn Road, turn right on Lochridge and continue to first house on left after Hillbrook Drive (one long block).

STATE-WIDE BIRD COUNT

County _____

COMMON LOON _____
 PIED-BILLED GREBE _____
 HORNED GREBE _____
 DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT _____
 AMERICAN BITTERN _____
 LEAST BITTERN _____
 GREAT BLUE HERON _____
 GREAT EGRET _____
 SNOWY EGRET _____
 LITTLE BLUE HERON _____
 TRICOLORED HERON _____
 CATTLE EGRET _____
 GREEN-BACKED HERON _____
 BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON _____
 YEL.-CROWNED NIGHT HERON _____
 GLOSSY IBIS _____
 MUTE SWAN _____
 CANADA GOOSE _____
 WOOD DUCK _____
 AMERICAN BLACK DUCK _____
 MALLARD _____
 BLUE-WINGED TEAL _____
 GADWALL _____
 AMERICAN WIGEON _____
 GREATER SCAUP _____
 LESSER SCAUP _____
 BUFFLEHEAD _____
 HOODED MERGANSER _____
 COMMON MERGANSER _____
 RED-BREASTED MERGANSER _____
 RUDDY DUCK _____
 BLACK VULTURE _____
 TURKEY VULTURE _____
 OSPREY _____
 BALD EAGLE [ad/im/unk] / / /
 NORTHERN HARRIER _____
~~SHARP-SHINNED HAWK~~ _____
 COOPER'S HAWK _____
 RED-SHOULDERED HAWK _____
 BROAD-WINGED HAWK _____
 RED-TAILED HAWK _____
 AMERICAN KESTREL _____
 MERLIN _____
 RING-NECKED PHEASANT _____
 RUFFED GROUSE _____
 WILD TURKEY _____
 NORTHERN BOB-WHITE _____
 CLAPPER RAIL _____
 KING RAIL _____
 VIRGINIA RAIL _____
 SORA _____
 COMMON MOORHEN _____
 AMERICAN COOT _____
 BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER _____
 SEMIPALMATED PLOVER _____
 KILLDEER _____
 AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER _____
 GREATER YELLOWLEGS _____
 LESSER YELLOWLEGS _____
 SOLITARY SANDPIPER _____
 WILLET _____
 SPOTTED SANDPIPER _____
 UPLAND SANDPIPER _____
 RUDDY TURNSTONE _____
 SANDERLING _____
 SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER _____
 LEAST SANDPIPER _____
 PECTORAL SANDPIPER _____
 DUNLIN _____
 SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER _____
 COMMON SNIPE _____
 AMERICAN WOODCOCK _____

LAUGHING GULL _____
 BONAPARTE'S GULL _____
 RING-BILLED GULL _____
 HERRING GULL _____
 GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL _____
 CASPIAN TERN _____
 ROYAL TERN _____
 COMMON TERN _____
 FORSTER'S TERN _____
 LEAST TERN _____
 BLACK SKIMMER _____
 MOURNING DOVE _____
 BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO _____
 YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO _____
 COMMON BARN OWL _____
 EASTERN SCREECH OWL _____
 GREAT HORNED OWL _____
 BARRED OWL _____
 COMMON NIGHTHAWK _____
 CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW _____
 WHIP-POOR-WILL _____
 CHIMNEY SWIFT _____
 RUBY-THRTD. HUMMINGBIRD _____
 BELTED KINGFISHER _____
 RED-HEADED WOODPECKER _____
 RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER _____
 YEL.-BELLIED SAPSUCKER _____
 DOWNY WOODPECKER _____
 HAIRY WOODPECKER _____
 NORTHERN FLICKER _____
 PILEATED WOODPECKER _____
 EASTERN WOOD PEWEE _____
 ACADIAN FLYCATCHER _____
 LEAST FLYCATCHER _____
 EASTERN PHOEBE _____
 GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER _____
~~EASTERN KINGBIRD~~ _____
 HORNED LARK _____
 PURPLE MARTIN _____
 TREE SWALLOW _____
 N. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW _____
 BANK SWALLOW _____
 CLIFF SWALLOW _____
 BARN SWALLOW _____
 BLUE JAY _____
 AMERICAN CROW _____
 FISH CROW _____
 CROW SP. _____
 BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE _____
 CAROLINA CHICKADEE _____
 TUFTED TITMOUSE _____
 WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH _____
 BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH _____
 BROWN CREEPER _____
 CAROLINA WREN _____
 HOUSE WREN _____
 MARSH WREN _____
 RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET _____
 BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER _____
 EASTERN BLUEBIRD _____
 VEERY _____
 GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH _____
 SWAINSON'S THRUSH _____
 HERMIT THRUSH _____
 WOOD THRUSH _____
 AMERICAN ROBIN _____
 GRAY CATBIRD _____
 NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD _____
 BROWN THRASHER _____
 WATER PIPIT _____
 CEDAR WAXWING _____
 EUROPEAN STARLING _____

WHITE-EYED VIREO _____
 SOLITARY VIREO _____
 YELLOW-THROATED VIREO _____
 WARBLING VIREO _____
 RED-EYED VIREO _____
 BLUE-WINGED WARBLER _____
 GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER _____
 TENNESSEE WARBLER _____
 NASHVILLE WARBLER _____
 NORTHERN PARULA _____
 YELLOW WARBLER _____
 CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER _____
 MAGNOLIA WARBLER _____
 CAPE MAY WARBLER _____
 BLK.-THRTD. BLUE WARBLER _____
 MYRTLE WARBLER _____
 BLK.-THRTD. GREEN WARBLER _____
 BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER _____
 YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER _____
 PINE WARBLER _____
 PRAIRIE WARBLER _____
 PALM WARBLER _____
 BAY-BREASTED WARBLER _____
 BLACKPOLL WARBLER _____
 CERULEAN WARBLER _____
 BLACK & WHITE WARBLER _____
 AMERICAN REDSTART _____
 PROTHONOTARY WARBLER _____
 WORM-EATING WARBLER _____
 OVENBIRD _____
 NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH _____
 LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH _____
 KENTUCKY WARBLER _____
 COMMON YELLOWTHROAT _____
 HOODED WARBLER _____
 WILSON'S WARBLER _____
~~CANADA WARBLER~~ _____
 YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT _____
 SUMMER TANAGER _____
 SCARLET TANAGER _____
 NORTHERN CARDINAL _____
 ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK _____
 BLUE GROSBEEK _____
 INDIGO BUNTING _____
 RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE _____
 CHIPPING SPARROW _____
 FIELD SPARROW _____
 VESPER SPARROW _____
 SAVANNAH SPARROW _____
 GRASSHOPPER SPARROW _____
 SHARP-TAILED SPARROW _____
 SEASIDE SPARROW _____
 SONG SPARROW _____
 SWAMP SPARROW _____
 WHITE-THROATED SPARROW _____
 WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW _____
 DARK-EYED JUNCO _____
 BOBOLINK _____
 RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD _____
 EASTERN MEADOWLARK _____
 RUSTY BLACKBIRD _____
 BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE _____
 COMMON GRACKLE _____
 BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD _____
 ORCHARD ORIOLE _____
 BALTIMORE ORIOLE _____
 PURPLE FINCH _____
 HOUSE FINCH _____
 AMERICAN GOLDFINCH _____
 HOUSE SPARROW _____
 Write-in species on Back! Many need
 DETAILS!

Time Start: _____ Hours on Foot: _____
 Time Stop: _____ Hours by Car: _____
 Hours by Boat: _____
 Hours other: _____
 Hours Feeder Watching: _____

Miles on Foot: _____
 Miles by Car: _____
 Miles by Boat: _____
 Miles other: _____

Weather: _____
 Temp. %Clouds Wind* Precip.
 Dawn _____
 AM _____
 Noon _____
 PM _____
 Dusk _____
 *Speed and Direction (e.g. NW10, S5)

Hours "Owling": _____
 Miles "Owling": _____

7TH MIDWINTER COUNT

February 1, 1992 - David Holmes
& Joanne Solem, Co-Compilers

Well--the wind was howling. The owls surely weren't. The counters howled a bit --mostly about the wind. But the wind wasn't impossible. We reported wind speeds from 3 to 35 mph. The average was probably 12 to 18 (Beaufort 4) in the morning and 18 to 24 (Beaufort 5) in the afternoon with some higher gusts. There were still sheltered areas, and the temperatures were moderate (38° to 28° F from a max/min thermometer in the central western part of the county). Obviously a front had just passed, and we watched under clouds and snow showers in the morning and watched the clouds move out in the afternoon. Birds were there, but we had to work for them. We found a definite 89 species and 55,886 individuals for a truly middling count. From 1988 through 1992, our low species count has been 87 and the high 91. Our count of individuals is the highest except for 1989 and 1990 when we had over 60,000 black-birds each year. This year we had good numbers of crows and gulls, great geese, and middling blackbirds. Our party hour total is our second highest, but for the past four years, the low was 243 and the high was 268, so this is a fairly insignificant difference. The totally nifty occurrence this year is that the party hour totals for the Triadelphia Christmas Bird Count (TR CBC; Dec 21, 1991) and the Howard County Midwinter Count (HC MDW) differ only by 14; 256 for us and 242 for TR CBC. Since the weather was somewhat similar for both counts (mostly changeable skies and a bit too much wind), this suggests that direct number comparisons could be meaningful. Some of them are surely fascinating! But let's look at some items of interest within our midwinter count data before we start serious cross-count comparisons.

We added two lines to our overall count list this year. The first was "buteo sp." which is important mostly for the Raptor Society information we are sending in. The single new species was American Coot, bringing our overall total of species ever seen to 104. Our 11 coots were scattered in three areas; the amount of open water that suggests also saved our total species number. Besides the coots, we found record high numbers of 13 water-dependent species; our two Pied-billed Grebes and single Gadwall tied previous highs. The grebes and Gadwall also joined the Wild Turkey and Brown Thrasher in appearing on our midwinter count for only the second time. There were no true rarities reported, although the Red-headed Woodpecker is not frequent in the county. As we all know, "winter finches" were scant, and Red-breasted Nuthatches didn't exist. Our worst miss had to be the Savannah Sparrows which Mark Wallace and David Holmes saw off Bushy Park Road while doing an experimental walking route both before and after our count (five seen on January 27 and six on February 10).

New high counts were logged for Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks, Barred Owls, Eastern Bluebirds, Gray Catbirds, and House Finches. Tundra Swans and Song Sparrows set record lows, and the list of next to low totals included Pileated Woodpecker, Fish Crow, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Field Sparrow, and House Sparrow.

The two counts this winter strongly suggest some of the results from our first year of counting. In 1986, the party hour totals for both counts were almost as close as they were this year. Our permanent resident species were astoundingly similar, the late migrants showed truly drastic declines from the earlier count to the later count, and four other resident species were significantly lower on the midwinter count. Let's look at some of those comparisons:

	TR CBC	HC MDW		TR CBC	HC MDW
Northern Flicker	237	113	Fox Sparrow	19	1
Brown Creeper	48	26	Song Sparrow	705	258
Winter Wren	26	13	Swamp Sparrow	29	18
Golden-crowned Kinglet	69	26	White-throated Sparrow	1535	1243
Hermit Thrush	38	8	White-crowned Sparrow	63	43
American Robin	678	13	Dark-eyed Junco	1193	1077
Cedar Waxwing	693	584			
Yellow-rumped Warbler	78	18	Mourning Dove	1821	1094
Rufous-sided Towhee	87	18	Red-bellied Woodpecker	312	217
American Tree Sparrow	55	27	Pileated Woodpecker	44	9
Field Sparrow	336	49	Carolina Wren	344	240

O.K., so the junco and waxwing totals may not be meaningful, and robin flocks are almost as irregular as blackbirds. But look at all the others. These differences are hard to accept as normal seasonal die-off. In addition, eight species were substantially higher on the midwinter count; there is no simple explanation although we're making lots of intelligent guesses:

	TR CBC	HC MDW		TR CBC	HC MDW
Red-shouldered Hawk	29	60	Blue Jay	400	486
American Kestrel	26	43	Eastern Bluebird	248	335
Rock Dove	646	961	House Finch	1000	1907
Belted Kingfisher	28	36	House Sparrow	375	603

Party hours - Foot	176.75	Party miles - Foot	142.0		FIELD	FEEDER	TOTAL
Party hours - Car	75.00	Party miles - Car	833.9	Total species	87-88	36	89
Party hours - Owling	5.00	Party miles - Owling	38.75	Total individuals	52,858	3,028	55,886
TOTAL	256.75	TOTAL	1014.65				
Party hours - Feeder	85.25						

OBSERVERS: AREA 1: MARK WALLACE, Marty Barron, Joe Byrnes, John Hoffman, Elwood Martin, Bob Ringler, Jay Sheppard, Robin Todd; AREA 2: NANCY MAGNUSSON, Val Barnes, Mary Maxey, Peter Osenton, Pamela Presley, Tom Strikverda, Paul and Sherry Zucker, Bill Kidwell^{*}, Don and Judy Proia^{*}, Skip Skipton^{*}, Romayne Smith^{*}; AREA 3: DAVE and MAUREEN HARVEY, Ralph Cullison, Carol and Dan Haft, Karen Morley, Art Rogers, Steve Sanford, Gene Scarpulla, Will & Robin Tress, R.W. Handwork^{*}, Dave Kirkwood^{*}; AREA 4: MIKE McCLURE, Grazina McClure, Kimberly Gross, David Holmes, Mike Leumas, Paul, Carol and Deborah Newman, Karan Repsher, Susan Setterberg, Chuck Stirrat, Jim Blanchard^{*}, Georgia Eacker^{*}, Sandra French^{*}, Margaret Lord^{*}, Jim Resau^{*}, Steve Schrader^{*}, Dominic and Rae Weston^{*}; AREA 5: GREG VAN NOSTRAND, Burton Alexander, George Chase, Marty Chestem, Eileen, John and Andrew Clegg, Peggy Erbe, Jeff Hatfield, Norma Petersen, Cynthia Sibrel, Dan and Linda Southworth, Vinc Van Nostrand, Michele Wright, Helen Zeichner, Ellen & Han Bryson^{*}, Joe Condron^{*}, Susan Earp^{*}, Sarah and Glenn Funkhouser^{*}, John Greer^{*}, Pat Hirt^{*}, Pat Jackson^{*}, Dennis Luck^{*}, Rosamond Munro^{*}; AREA 6: BONNIE OTT, John Ott, Connie Bockstie, Ralph and Jane Geuder, Ann Higgins, Dave and Julie Kubitsky, Brigitte and Bob Lund, David Mozurkewich, Suzanne Probst, Hank Stanton, Cathy and Leroy Williamson, William Brandenstein^{*}, Alex Donovan^{*}, Sharon Fearite^{*}, Linda and Dan Hamill^{*}, Pam Janesh^{*}, Irv Robinson^{*}; AREA 7: JO SOLEM, Maud Banks, Jane Farrell, John KcKitterick, Bea Newkirk, Eva Sunell, Don Waugh, Jim and Carol Wilkinson, Ron Cotterman^{*}, Tina Fiester^{*}, Tom Hodgson^{*}, Judith Howse^{*}, Duncan MacDonald^{*}, Jim and Claudia Medwin^{*}, Greg Pontius^{*}, Bob Solem^{*}, Christine Thomas^{*}

CAPITALS - Area Leaders; * - indicates a feeder/yard watcher

BLUEBIRD MONITORS - The bluebird report in the last newsletter inadvertently left out three monitors: Connie Bockstie, Ceil Casciaro, and Suzanne Probst. Together they monitored the more than 20 boxes on Sharp Road. Thanks for your weekly faithfulness over the last three years in checking those boxes!

PHONE NUMBER CORRECTION - Don & Martha Waugh's phone number is (410) 381-8841. It was listed incorrectly in the directory.

REHABILITATION HELP - Pam Janesh, one of our members, volunteers on Saturdays at the Chesapeake Wildlife Sanctuary. If you find birds or animals in need of help, her telephone number is (410) 799-0682. Eva Sunell (410) 995-0029 can also provide advice and some emergency help.

19TH ANNUAL POTLUCK - Monika Botsai did her usual fine job of organizing this special event with help from Grazina McClure and Rod Botsai. Mike McClure was responsible for organizing

the program of members' slides. Thanks to them and to those who came early to lend a hand in setting up or stayed late to help with cleanup. There is always an ample amount of delicious food and an enjoyable sample of photos. Anticipate next year's 20th annual event.

GREATER SCAUP OR RARE BIRD ALERT - When a male Greater Scaup showed up on Wilde Lake in March, Bea Newkirk and her team of callers enabled a number of people to see this bird. Greater Scaup are not seen in the county every year and are difficult to distinguish. Thanks to those individuals who make the rare bird alert calls: Connie Bockstie, Monika Botsai, Joe Byrnes, Margie Kupiec, Mike Leumas, Brigitte Lund, Marjorie Mountjoy, Rosamond Munro, Bonnie Ott, Elise Seay, Zelda Simon, Peg Willson, and Helen Zeichner.

CENTENNIAL WALK LEADERS - The spring Centennial walks were led by Martha Chestem, Jane Farrell, Helen Zeichner, and Paul Zucker. Many thanks!

CONSERVATION REPORT Bob Solem

The Maryland House of Delegates passed a law (HB1296) that would permit hunting on Sundays. Those of you who go out on Christmas Count, Midwinter Count, or attempt to bird during the hunting season know that Sundays are the only day that the thousands who enjoy birdwatching have to get out in the field without immediately coming under ground fire. None of the jurisdictions bordering Maryland permit hunting on Sundays. Since the bill must also be passed by the Maryland Senate, Jane Geuder, Gerry Einem, Margo Garner, Lucy Klekebusch-Steinitz, Zelda Simon, Don Waugh, Peggy Willson, and Eileen Clegg activated the telephone tree to notify members in his district to call State Senator Christopher McCabe (District 14) and express opposition to extension of hunting on Sundays. McCabe is on the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee, which considers such bills; the Senate committee killed the Sunday hunting bill on April 2.

Senate Bill 135 repeals the 1992 termination date for voluntary donations on the state income tax form to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund and makes the provision permanent. SB 135 was one of two check-off bills that survived the Senate. On April 2, the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species fund bill passed both houses of the legislature and was sent to the governor for signature.

BIRDING BY EAR, III

Bonnie Ott



This is the concluding section of a three part series designed to introduce readers to identifying birds by their songs.

4. The more songs you know, the easier it will be to make additions and learn some of the more difficult songs. Often the song of one species may be easily associated with another. If you are familiar with the Northern Mockingbird's song in which it repeats each phrase three or four times, the Brown Thrasher's is easy to learn. It sings in a similar manner but repeats each phrase just twice. The American Robin's song is a highly useful one to learn. Many birds sing robin-like songs but with subtle differences. The Scarlet Tanager's has a burry quality, the Rose-breasted Grosbeak's phrases are run together in a lengthy song interspersed with "chink" notes, while the Red-eyed Vireo's contains pauses between monotonous phrases.

5. Even when a song is relatively unmusical, it is often easier to remember if it can be associated with something as in the following examples:

Red-breasted Nuthatch - tin horn
American Bittern - pump
Canada Goose - honk
Eastern Screech-Owl - whinny
Black-and-white Warbler - squeaky wheel
Grasshopper Sparrow - insect

Horned Lark - tinkling bells
Belted Kingfisher - rattle
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - cat mewing
Veery - oboe in downward spiral or whistling down a well
Field Sparrow - dropped ball bouncing

The best way to learn bird songs is by going out into the field with an experienced person. Seeing a bird while it is singing will help to fix the song in your mind. Although there is no substitute for field work, there are some helpful aids available in the form of cassette tapes, records, and videos. Walton and Lawson's *Birding by Ear*, part of the Peterson field guide series, is perfect for beginners. Although the field guides to bird songs and various habitats are useful, they often overwhelm the beginner. It is best to concentrate on a small group of birds. Become well acquainted with a few before going on to another group. Trying to listen to too many at any one time leads to confusion or, worse, the feeling that learning any is hopeless. The Howard County library has a set of Audubon video guides which enable you to see the bird at the same time you are hearing its songs. Tapes, records, and videos are all useful tools, but use them as supplements to field work (or listening at your feeder).

As you improve your birding skills, nothing will compare to a spring morning filled with the voices of birds--voices you recognize!

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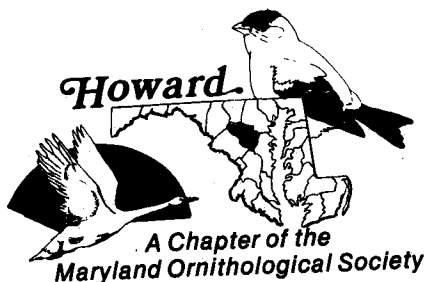
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HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

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- MIDWINTER COUNT RESULTS
- ANNUAL BIRD LIST

