



Howard

A Chapter of the
Maryland Ornithological Society



Vol. 21, No 1
Sept-Oct 1992

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Joanne K. Solem

Welcome to the Howard County Bird Club's 20th year! We invite you to renew your membership or join as a new member and participate in our regular and special activities.

Our members share an enthusiasm for birds in particular and the natural world in general. We try to increase our understanding of local bird distribution, protect and enhance specialized habitats, and help our members and the public appreciate the critical role birds play in the environment.

In order to achieve these goals, the Bird Club has presented more than 175 monthly programs and 500 field trips as well as workshops and special classes since its founding in 1972. In addition, three censuses have been held annually: May Count, the Triadelphia Christmas Count, and, since 1986, Midwinter Count.

Education has been an important part of our focus since 1973. Using our mounted specimens or slides, members have presented from 20 to 60 programs each year to school classes and a wide variety of community organizations. Publication of *Attracting Birds in the Maryland Piedmont* has enabled us to assist several thousand feeder watchers. Newsletters and other publications have brought local bird and conservation news to our members.

We have worked with the Department of Recreation and Parks in a number of ways, ranging from our long-running seasonal habitat walks and the jointly sponsored Bluebirds in the Parks program to our Parks Checklist Project which compiles bird, plant, and butterfly checklists for the major county parks.

Dramatic alterations in land use in this county as well as in other parts of the hemisphere have had measurable as well as unknown effects on local birdlife. The Bird Club's first 20 years have been critical for local bird study. We have played an important role in documenting changes in county bird populations. Numerous members participated in the Howard County Breeding Bird Atlas 1973-75 and the Maryland/D.C. Breeding Bird Atlas 1983-87. Individuals have helped with winter bird surveys, breeding bird censuses, and feeder watches; they have assisted in area banding programs; and dozens have contributed to the success of our highly effective bluebird nesting box project.

Hundreds of members and friends have supported our twice yearly seed sales begun in 1979. Profits and additional contributions have enabled the Bird Club to donate more than \$29,000 to conservation causes, mostly for habitat preservation. We have also been actively involved in local and state conservation issues and intend to continue this emphasis.

Although some of what we do has scientific value, most of us watch birds for fun. Because birding can be enjoyed on many levels, our members reflect a wide spectrum of interests, abilities, and commitment. Our activities provide numerous opportunities for the inexperienced to learn and for the more skilled birders to share in a friendly atmosphere. If your interest in birds is recent or you feel you could improve your identification skills, go along on field trips and volunteer to participate in annual counts by going with experienced observers. Beginners should be warned, however, that this hobby can become a lifelong addiction.

Do join us as we mark our 20th year. Keep abreast of county birding activities, enhance your knowledge, and increase your skill--even if you never leave your yard. Become an active partner in working to monitor, protect, and preserve habitats and bird populations. We welcome your support and your participation as we look forward to the next 20 years!

Joanne K. Solem



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 pm. Meeting/program begins at 8:00 pm. Club bookstore opens at 7:30 pm.

Sept 10 Thursday "Birds of Prey" Bill Troutman, Patapsco State Park Ranger and speaker for Maryland Dept. of Natural Resource's "Scales and Tails" presentations. Bill will be assisted in his presentation by a *live* raptor.

Oct 8 Thursday Twentieth Anniversary Meeting: "Forest Fragmentation and Nesting Birds" - Chandler Robbins, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist. Chan has studied the decline of birds migrating to neotropical areas in Mexico, the Caribbean and Cuba over the past few years. He is recognized as one of the most knowledgeable persons in the U.S. on this subject.

Field Trips meet as described for each trip. Carpooling is encouraged; riders share the cost of gas and tolls. Dress for the field 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 three participants. Questions? Call the trip leader or Field Trip Chair, Bonnie Ott (410) 461-3361.

Sept 12 Saturday BUTTERFLY WALK AT CENTENNIAL PARK - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Leader - Richard Smith (410) 997-7439. Meet at parking lot at west end of park. Rain will cancel. Call leader if overcast. Co-sponsored by Ho.Co. Rec. & Parks (HCRP)

Sept 15 Tuesday CASUAL BIRD WALK AT GWYNN ACRES - 8:30 to 11:00 am. Leaderless walk on paved path through shady woodland. Meet at path entrance on Columbia Road.

Sept 20 Sunday ROCKBURN BRANCH PARK FOR FALL WARBLERS - 7:30 am, half day. Leader - David Holmes. Meet at park office. Learn fall warbler plumages, other migrants are possible. Call Bonnie at (410) 461-3361 for questions.

Sept 26 Saturday PAW PAW TRIP AT SAVAGE PARK - 9:00 am, half day. Leader - Bob Solem, (301) 725-5037. Meet at office concession building. Enjoy flora and fauna on this paw paw search.

Sept 30 Wednesday CASUAL BIRD WALK AT VANTAGE POINT - 8:30 to 11:00 am. Leaderless walk through this Columbia area. Meet at Olivers, corner of Vantage Point Road and Leaf Treader Way.

Oct 15 Thursday CASUAL BIRD WALK AT TURF VALLEY - 8:30 to 11:00 am. Leaderless walk through woods and fields. Meet at signpost on Pebble Beach Drive.

Oct 16 Sunday HABITAT WALK ALONG CEDAR LANE - 1:00 to 2:30 pm. Meet at park office. Co-sponsored with HCRP.

Oct 24 Saturday HAWK WATCH AT ROCKBURN BRANCH PARK - 10:00 am to early afternoon. Leader - Ralph Geuder. Meet above tennis courts off Montgomery Road. Bring chair or blanket and lunch if you want to sit and watch the hawks fly.

Oct 18, 25 Nov 1, 8 Sundays CENTENNIAL WEEKLY BIRD WALKS - 8:00 to 11:00 am. Four leaders. Look for migrating waterfowl, songbirds and sparrows. Scopes will be available. Meet at parking lot at west end of park. Co-sponsored with HCRP.

Oct 30 Friday CASUAL BIRD WALK IN SWANSFIELD - 8:30 to 11:00 am. Leaderless walk through woods to the river. Meet at corner of Rock Coast Rd and Cedar Ln.



Historical Note: Volume 1, Number 1 of the Howard County Chapter newsletter was published in December 1972. There were 34 member households at that time compared to our most recent membership list with 265 member households. Five of the original members can still be found on our current roster. Among the original membership were David Holmes, who was treasurer, and Martha Chestem, who took care of the newsletter and publicity.

★ Please return the enclosed membership application soon. The membership year runs from Sept 1 to Aug 31. Your prompt renewal saves us postage.

BIRDER PROFILE

We thought it might be nice to let you all know a little more about, not only the birds, but the birders in the club. To start this section, we chose last year's club president, Ralph Gender. Ralph has been with the Howard County Chapter for 11 years. He has also served as club vice-president and on the local and state board of directors for the MOS. He is an avid hawk watcher and can be found "leading" the annual club hawk watch from his folding chair in the fall. (See the calendar for this year's hawk watch date.)

Ralph's favorite birds are, what else but, raptors. In fact, it was because a friend took him to Hawk Mountain, PA, 15 years ago that he developed an interest in birds of prey. Ralph enjoys watching this group of birds because of their majesty and the mystery of their migration. His most memorable hawk watching experience being a September day at Hawk Mountain watching the migration of 5000 Broad-winged Hawks.

A special thank you goes to Ralph for his time and efforts as president of the club last year.

1992-1993 CLUB OFFICERS

- President. Joanne Solem
- Vice-President Tom Strikwerda
- Secretary. Shiras Guion
- Treasurer. Nancy Magnusson
- State Directors. Jane Farrell,
Don Waugh, Helen Zeichner, Paul Zucker
- Chapter Directors. Pat Hirt and
Dave Kubitsky

FALL SEED SALE

The first seed sale of 1992-1993 is Sat., October 24. Order blanks will be sent in September. If you do not receive an order blank by Oct. 10 or if you have questions, call Eileen Clegg, (410) 730-4362.

BLUEBIRD SURVEY

Bluebird survey forms will be mailed soon to those participating in the club's Boost Bluebirds project. If you do not receive a form and want to participate, contact Mark Wallace, (301) 725-6370. Forms should be mailed to Mark at 10537 Martellini Dr., Laurel, MD 20723. Mark reports that the May storms took a toll on many nestlings, hitting when the birds were most vulnerable at about 8 to 12 days old. The bluebirds started nesting later than usual this year but have been quite busy since.

MAY COUNT ACCOUNT

The May Count summary and comments were not available in time for the Sept-Oct Newsletter. Keep your eye open for the information in a future newsletter.

⇒ ⇒ **NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1992 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL** is due Oct. 5. Call or mail to Susan Setterberg, 9445 Clocktower Ln, Columbia, MD 21046; Phone (301)498-4734.

Autumn arrival and departure dates are due December 7, 1992 to Jo Solem, 10617 Graeoch Road, Laurel, MD 20723. Call Jo at (301) 725-5037 if you need sheets.

BOARD MEETING: Thursday, September 24, 1992, 7:30 pm, Longfellow Elementary School.

CONSERVATION REPORT

Bob Solem

In this, our twentieth year, it is worthwhile republishing the conservation policy statement adopted by the club in 1986:

"The Howard County Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society realizes that we are entering a new era of environmental conservation.

"The first wave of activity for environmental protection began around 1900 with efforts to preserve land in national parks and forests in order to stem the loss of wildlife and forest lands. This was the era of President Theodore Roosevelt and a few organizations and pioneer environmentalists.

"The second stage of environmental protection began in the 1960's, the era of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. The growing awareness and active intervention of private citizens led to the growth of numerous national and local groups fighting pollution of water, land and air. This activity continues today and is characterized by efforts to influence legislation and administrative actions and to challenge decisions through the courts.

"Gradually there has been a recognition that there is a need for a third stage of activity since we can no longer be effective solely by opposing environmental abuses. Concerned citizens and organizations are going the extra mile, proposing alternative solutions for the legitimate concerns, requirements and needs that underlie poorly planned or ill-advised projects. This activity requires an expanded citizen awareness of the science and economics of environmental protection. Jobs, the rights of stockholders, the needs of agriculture, industry and consumers, therefore become part of the new environmental agenda.

"The Howard County Chapter, MOS recognizes the need for this stage of environmental protection and will become involved in issues which directly involve our goals and interests."

As early as 1974, our newsletter recommended the use of recycled paper; in 1977 we began our campaign to tell of locations where members could take aluminum and other material for recycling. Finally, in 1989, the Howard County government began curbside pickup of material for recycling and locations for others to use.

In 1982, Martha Chestem was one who pushed the state legislature to pass legislation for a checkoff on the state income tax form for donations to be used to protect threatened species. Finally, in 1988, the "Chickadee Checkoff" became a reality, and the tax form (starting in 1989) had a line for donations to the State Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund.

In 1976, the club published its first notice that the Maryland Environmental Trust was the vehicle to use for donations of conservation easements on land. Now - The Howard County Conservancy is available right here to accomplish the same goal. (Details of *The Howard County Conservancy* will be included in the mailing for the fall seed sale by the Bird Club.)

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
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RENEWAL



★ Celebrating 20 years ★

