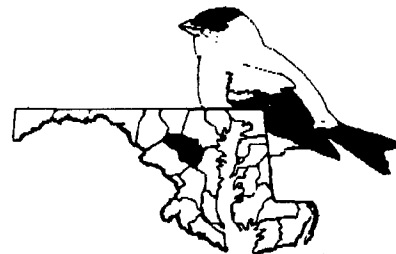




# Howard

A Chapter of the  
Maryland Ornithological Society



May - June 1995

Volume 23, No. 5

## Winter Bird Records: December 1, 1994 to February 28, 1995 - by Joanne Solem

**E**ach season Howard County bird sightings are compiled and submitted to *Maryland Birdlife* and *Field Notes*. Because both publications provide overviews for large areas, only a fraction of Howard County sightings are published. The records are not lost, however, for they are the basis for county records. All records are welcomed and appreciated. Any individual who turns in seasonal sightings receives a copy of the county compilation. To request a form on which to log dates, please call (301) 725-5037. The Board has requested that a digest of the seasonal highlights appear in the newsletter. Observers are referred to by their initials (see the list at the end of the article). Locations are written out the first time cited; thereafter, abbreviations are used.

The diversity of species in this Piedmont county is low during the winter reporting period, but the potential for rarities is high. This season exceeded expectations. A summary of the Howard County Midwinter Count (HCMWC) is a separate article.

Common Loons continued to be scarce with a single report on 1/2 at Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) (HZ,MC). A Horned Grebe appeared on Centennial (CENPK) on 1/22 and stayed till 1/29 (JS,CB,m.obs.). Double-crested Cormorants are unusual in the Piedmont in winter. The 3 at CENPK on 2/24 were the second Feb. record (CB) for the county. At least 5 Snow Geese wintered with reports of 3 separate white adults, 1 imm. white, and 1 blue phase (JF,JS,JW,HZ).

A female Green-winged Teal was seen at CENPK 1/11-1/29



(CB,BO,HZ); Wallace had 4 on 2/11 on a Roxbury Rd. pond. Some duck species are seen only a few times each year: a Northern Pintail female and a Red-head male were on a Daisy Rd. pond on 1/23 (HZ,CB); a Northern Shoveler female was reported from CENPK on 12/1 (JF) & 1/3 (BO); and an imm. male or female Greater Scaup was present from 1/28 to 2/11 at CENPK (JF,JS,m.obs.). It was often near a Lesser Scaup female and Ring-necked Ducks so good comparisons were possible. The only Oldsquaw was on TRIRS on 12/11 (JF,JS). Common Mergansers wintered, as usual, on TRIRS, but the high of 125 on 2/25 (JS) was not

particularly high. A single Red-breasted Merganser on 12/31 (TRIRS) (HZ) was the only report.

The Bald Eagle pair is again nesting on TRIRS (JF,JS). An unusual visitor to the county was a light phase Rough-legged Hawk which was seen infrequently since its discovery on 11/25 (BO): CENPK on 12/11 (D&PE), Stanford Rd. 1/12 & 1/20 (JF), and MD 100 east of US 29 on 2/14 (CB). There were 2 Merlin reports on 1/4: Stanford Rd. (JF) and Pindell School Rd. (D&MH). Farrell also had a Peregrine on 2/10 on Stanford Rd.

One or two American Coots may have been moving among lakes during the winter: CENPK (CB,JF,HZ), Lake Elkhorn (JW), and Wilde Lake (WILLK) (C&PN). Sheppard had 3-6 Wild Turkeys on MD 97 on 2/10 & 2/11 in Patuxent River State Park (PATRP). Although no Northern Bobwhite were located on the HCMWC, 2 winter reports were received from RG, including 1 at Rockburn Branch Park (RKBRP).

Gulls were headline news this season. In patrolling Alpha Ridge landfill (ALRGL) for the HCMWC, Scarpulla and Cullison came up with a Yellow-legged Gull which, if accepted by the MD/DC Records Committee would not only be a county first, but one of the few records in North America. The observers completed that day by spotting 3 Iceland and 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls. A first-winter Glaucous had been present on the statewide Gull Count Day 1/28 (NM,JS) and again on 2/18 (m. obs.). Lesser Black-backed

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# Howard - County of Consistent Birding

## "NOT in 1994!" - by Jane H. Farrell

**H**oward County birders found an extraordinary 236 species of birds in 1994; this surpasses the previous record of 225 in 1991 and 1992 by an incredible 11. The singular nature of 1994 is illustrated by the consistency in the number of species seen in the years since 1988: 1988, 222; 1989, 224; 1990, 222; 1991, 225; 1992, 225; 1993, 223. Additionally, many birders remarked that their 1994 totals of species seen in Howard County were personal highs.

How did we do it? Three species new to the county were identified: **Eared Grebe**, **Piping Plover**, and **Stilt Sandpiper**; we had second county records for **Eurasian Wigeon** and **Clay-colored Sparrow**; **Black Scoter** and **Brewer's Blackbird** were third county records. Other notable finds were **Red-necked Grebe**, **King Rail**, **Long-eared Owl**, lots of **Common Redpolls**, **Black-capped Chickadee**, and **Orange-crowned**

**Warbler**. Most of these special finds were seen by multiple observers.

All news is not good, however. The changes in land-use in Howard County with farms being developed and meadows disappearing, continue to adversely affect our native birds. Not one **Whip-poor-will** was reported in 1994, the first time since 1979; **Barn Owl** was not found; and **Northern Bobwhite** and **Ring-necked Pheasant** were reported by only a few observers. Grassland species such as **Vesper Sparrow**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, and **Eastern Meadowlark** have declined precipitously. We need to support farmland preservation and maintenance of habitat diversity in Howard County, to include grasslands and meadows.

What will 1995 bring? It can't top 1994, can it? Get out there! Have fun! Find some birds! Share your finds by activating the Howard County Rare Bird Alert; call **Bea Newkirk** on (301) 498-1902.

**ADDENDUM:** 1991, **Clay-colored Sparrow** (record accepted), new total 225; 1993, **Sharp-tailed Sparrow** (record accepted), new total 223.

Thanks to the following members who submitted their complete 1994 lists: **Burton Alexander**, **Ward Ebert**, **Jane Farrell**, **Dave Harvey**, **Peter Osenton**, **Bonnie Ott**, **Jo Solem**, **Chuck Stirat**, and **Helen Zeichner**. **Jo Solem's** season reports and special counts compiled by **David Holmes** and **Jo Solem**, **Paul Zucker**, and **Mike McClure** and **Chuck Stirat** captured species not reported by individual contributors. **Bob Ringler** provided technical advice, and **Bob Solem** produced the 16-year compilation. Individuals who submitted their 1994 annual lists will receive this compilation. Others may obtain it by sending a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to Jane Farrell, 6324 Sandchain Road, Columbia, MD 21045.

### 1994 HOWARD COUNTY LIST

COMMON LOON	BALD EAGLE	BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH
PIED-BILLED GREBE	NORTHERN HARRIER	YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH
HORNED GREBE	SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	EASTERN SCREECH-OWL	EASTERN BLUEBIRD	KENTUCKY WARBLER
RED-NECKED GREBE	COOPER'S HAWK	GREAT HORNED OWL	VEERY	CONNECTICUT WARBLER
EARED GREBE	NORTHERN GOSHAWK	BARRED OWL	GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH	MOURNING WARBLER
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	LONG-EARED OWL	SWAINSON'S THRUSH	COMMON YELLOWTHROAT
AMERICAN BITTERN	BROAD-WINGED HAWK	COMMON NIGHTHAWK	HERMIT THRUSH	HOODED WARBLER
GREAT BLUE HERON	RED-TAILED HAWK	CHIMNEY SWIFT	WOOD THRUSH	WILSON'S WARBLER
GREAT EGRET	ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD	AMERICAN ROBIN	CANADA WARBLER
SNOWY EGRET	AMERICAN KESTREL	BELTED KINGFISHER	GRAY CATBIRD	YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT
LITTLE BLUE HERON	MERLIN	RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	SUMMER Tanager
TRICOLORED HERON	PEREGRINE FALCON	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	BROWN THRASHER	SCARLET Tanager
CATTLE EGRET	RING-NECKED PHEASANT	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	AMERICAN PIPIT	NORTHERN CARDINAL
GREEN HERON	WILD TURKEY	DOWNY WOODPECKER	CEDAR WAXWING	ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON	NORTHERN BOBWHITE	HAIRY WOODPECKER	EUROPEAN STARLING	BLUE GROSBEAK
YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON	KING RAIL	NORTHERN FLICKER	WHITE-EYED VIREO	INDIGO BUNTING
GLOSSY IBIS	VIRGINIA RAIL	PILEATED WOODPECKER	SOLITARY VIREO	RUFOUS-SIDED TOWHEE
TUNDRA SWAN	SORA	OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER	YELLOW-THROATED VIREO	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW
MUTE SWAN	AMERICAN COOT	EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE	WARBLING VIREO	CHIPPING SPARROW
SNOW GOOSE	BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER	YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER	PHILADELPHIA VIREO	CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
CANADA GOOSE	SEMPALMATED PLOVER	ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	RED-EYED VIREO	FIELD SPARROW
WOOD DUCK	PIPING PLOVER	WILLOW FLYCATCHER	BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	VESPER SPARROW
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	KILLDEER	LEAST FLYCATCHER	GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER	SAVANNAH SPARROW
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK	GREATER YELLOWLEGS	EASTERN PHOEBE	TENNESSEE WARBLER	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
MALLARD	LESSER YELLOWLEGS	GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER	ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER	FOX SPARROW
NORTHERN PINTAIL	SOLITARY SANDPIPER	EASTERN KINGBIRD	NASHVILLE WARBLER	SONG SPARROW
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	SPOTTED SANDPIPER	HORNED LARK	NORTHERN PARULA	LINCOLN'S SPARROW
NORTHERN SHOVELER	SANDERLING	PURPLE MARTIN	YELLOW WARBLER	SWAMP SPARROW
GADWALL	SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER	TREE SWALLOW	CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW
EURASIAN WIGEON	LEAST SANDPIPER	NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW	MAGNOLIA WARBLER	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW
AMERICAN WIGEON	PECTORAL SANDPIPER	BANK SWALLOW	CAPE MAY WARBLER	DARK-EYED JUNCO
CANVASBACK	STILT SANDPIPER	CLIFF SWALLOW	BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER	BOBOLINK
REDHEAD	SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER	BARN SWALLOW	YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD
RING-NECKED DUCK	COMMON SNIFE	BLUE JAY	BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER	EASTERN MEADOWLARK
LESSER SCAUP	AMERICAN WOODCOCK	AMERICAN CROW	BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER	RUSTY BLACKBIRD
OLDSQUAW	LAUGHING GULL	FISH CROW	YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER	BREWER'S BLACKBIRD
BLACK SCOTER	BONAPARTE'S GULL	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	PINE WARBLER	COMMON GRACKLE
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	RING-BILLED GULL	CAROLINA CHICKADEE	RAVINE WARBLER	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD
COMMON GOLDENEYE	HERRING GULL	TUFTED TITMOUSE	PALM WARBLER	ORCHARD ORIOLE
BUFFLEHEAD	ICELAND GULL	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	BAY-BREASTED WARBLER	BALTIMORE ORIOLE
HOODED Merganser	LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL	WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	BLACKPOLL WARBLER	PURPLE FINCH
COMMON Merganser	GLAUCOUS GULL	BROWN CREEPER	CERULEAN WARBLER	HOUSE FINCH
RED-BREASTED Merganser	GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	CAROLINA WREN	BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER	COMMON REDPOLL
Ruddy Duck	CASPIAN TERN	HOUSE WREN	AMERICAN REDSTART	PINE SISKIN
BLACK VULTURE	FORSTER'S TERN	WINTER WREN	PROTHONOTARY WARBLER	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH
TURKEY VULTURE	BLACK TERN	MARSH WREN	WORM-EATING WARBLER	EVENING GROSBEAK
OSPREY	ROCK DOVE	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	OVENBIRD	HOUSE SPARROW
	MOURNING DOVE			BREWSTER'S WARBLER

# Howard County Midwinter Bird Count 11 February 1995

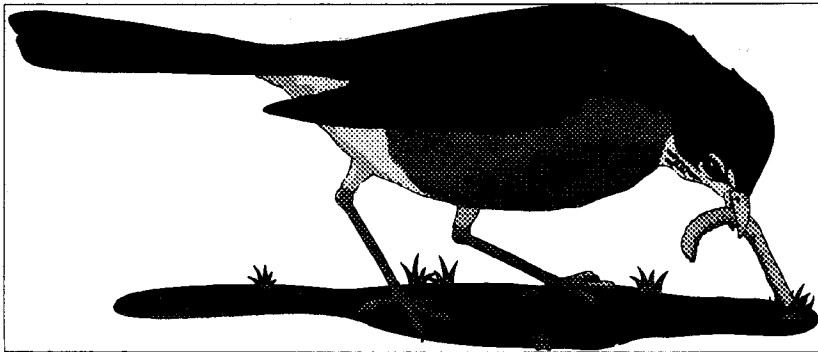
- by David Holmes & Joanne Solem

**W**hat a neat day! Our 10th count brought lots of firsts; our first ever weather postponement (smart in retrospect even though it may have lowered our participation a bit), 3 new species for our midwinter counts (details to follow), 17 new high individual counts, and one high tie. Less positive firsts were 2 species missed for the first time ever, and 2 new species lows. We were very pleased with 78 field observers (exactly the same number as on the Triadelphia Christmas Bird Count this year) and had 16 additional people (plus seven of our field observers) send in feeder sheets. This is so close to our record of 80 field observers the difference almost isn't worth noting. Ah well, if you break ALL the records in one year, what is left to work toward?

Our day was almost as perfect as last year, starting clear and calm, with increasing light clouds, an afternoon-only breeze, and moderate temperature (ca. 25 - 40). The owls did well with 2nd high counts on both **Great-horneds** and **Barreds**. Our new day did come right at the end of our only week of winter so waterfowl weren't terrific (lowest species variety since 1988) but the less hardy land birds were still present in surprising quantities. In a season which has to be one of the most boring in memory for birds (no invasions at all), our total of 92 species (tying our 2nd high) shows superb observer effort.

Our 17 high count species were; **Black Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Wild Turkey** (still only one flock), **Iceland Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker** (nearly doubled

last year's high), **Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, American Robin!**, **Rufous-sided Towhee, Savannah, Fox, Song, and White-crowned Sparrows. Lesser Black-backed Gull** tied last year's high of 3. Notice that 5 of these are basically non-migratory. Compared to the Triadelphia Christmas Bird Count (hereafter CBC), these species are all over the charts. The species with nearly equal numbers were **American**



**Our 17 high count species were; Black Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Wild Turkey (still only one flock), Iceland Gull, ..... Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, American Robin!**

**Black Duck, Bald Eagle** (same 2 nesting birds), **Northern Harrier, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Rufous-sided Towhee, White-throated Sparrow and House Sparrow.** The surprising ones were the **Harrier** (so many!), **wren, towhee, and White-throats.** The last 3 species usually appear in greatly reduced numbers after the first of the year.

Species we found in much ( 1 1/2 times or more) greater numbers than Triadelphia include **Cooper's, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrel, Rock Dove, American Robin, American Tree Sparrow, and White-crowned Sparrow.** We also found small

numbers of **pheasants** and our turkey flock which they missed entirely. The **hawks, "chickens", Rock Doves, and White-crowns** suggest that Howard County still has both more area and more truly rural area left than within the CBC circle. The **Tree Sparrows** are known to move into our area late the way many of the next group of species are known to leave us.

Twenty-eight species appeared on our count in numbers substantially lower (2/3 or less) than on Triadelphia CBC. Past year's comparisons show that the **sparrows** regularly seem to move out with weather patterns between the counts so the **Juncos, Field, Fox, Swamp, and Song Sparrows** were not a surprise. Except - that **Fox Sparrows** tripled their previous high count for US this year. Other species which are semi-hardy or weather driven include **Eastern**

**Phoebe, Brown Creeper, Kinglets, Hermit Thrush** (more than doubled our previous high), and **Yellow-rumped Warbler.** **Gulls and Crows** reflect the richness of Montgomery County refuse. **Great Blue Herons, Kingfishers, and Carolina Wrens** probably reflect the freezing temperatures just before we counted. The CBC had one flock of 45 **Killdeer** which we didn't. **Conjunctivitis** was still working on the **House Finches. Waxwings and Goldfinches** are irregular migrants anyway. And I haven't a clue why there was so much difference between out counts of **Hairy Woodpeckers, Chickadees, Bluebirds, or Mockingbirds.** Are we covering our residential areas less efficiently? That much die-off?

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WINTER BIRD COUNT - HOWARD COUNTY

Count Date: Feb. 11, 1995

Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Pied-billed Grebe							1	1	<i>crow species</i>	879	332	1,019	433	45	42	248	3,098
Horned Grebe									Carolina Chickadee	99	118	178	91	111	142	129	868
Great Blue Heron	1	1		1			2	1	Tufted Titmouse	98	95	133	89	92	145	103	755
Tundra Swan		1						1	Red-breasted Nutha		1						1
Mute Swan				1	2			3	White-breasted Nut	37	36	35	18	12	30	6	174
Snow Goose				2				2	Brown Creeper	2	1		2				6
Canada Goose	2,951	3,362	645	980	31	9	197	8,175	Carolina Wren	33	29	44	20	25	46	33	230
Green-winged Teal		4						4	Winter Wren	10	8	6			1	2	27
American Black Duc	3	98	2	6	1			110	Golden-crowned Kin	8	3	7		3	6	3	30
Mallard	203	297	35	352	117	53	131	1,188	Ruby-crowned Kingl	2			2		1		5
Blue-winged Teal									Eastern Bluebird	49	75	48	17	1	29	13	232
Northern Shoveler									Hermit Thrush	8	10	5	1		4	1	29
Gadwall									American Robin	165	677	120	118	71	67	57	1,275
American Wigeon	11	17				2		30	Gray Catbird						2		2
Canavasback				1	4			5	Northern Mockingbir	67	76	36	60	36	50	58	383
Redhead									Brown Thrasher						3		3
Ring-necked Duck							1	1	American Pipit			14					14
Greater Scaup				1				1	Cedar Waxwing	27	82	13	29	79	8	29	267
Lesser Scaup				3				3	European Starling	800	1,733	2,418	489	313	381	789	6,923
Common Goldeneye									Yel.-rumped Warble	12	1	2	2	4			23
Bufflehead				2				2	Northern Cardinal	247	153	194	165	159	165	210	1,293
Hooded Merganser									Rufous-sided Towhe	18	10	3	1	1	14	9	56
Common Merganser		7						11	American Tree Spar	14		6	2				23
Red-breasted Merga									Field Sparrow	10	39	18	28		6	5	106
Black Vulture	20	31	99	6	1	39		196	Savannah Sparrow			13	1				21
Turkey Vulture	38	61	114	46	20	150	20	449	Fox Sparrow	7	10	2	3		9	2	33
Bald Eagle		2						2	Song Sparrow	125	65	130	74	40	32	102	568
Northern Harrier	1	2	1		1			5	Swamp Sparrow	1	6	3	1		1	2	14
Sharp-shinned Haw	2	3	2	3	4	6	3	23	White-throated Spar	345	234	263	108	90	170	175	1,385
Cooper's Hawk	2					1	1	4	White-crowned Spar	74	50	27	1		1	1	154
<i>scapiter species</i>									<i>sparrow species</i>								
Red-shouldered Ha	9	9	9	13	12	11	13	76	Dark-eyed Junco	228	168	327	121	76	135	140	1,195
Red-tailed Hawk	21	22	26	22	4	11	9	115	Red-winged Blackbir	53	32	186	55	16	128	165	635
American Kestrel	4	3	7	8		6	3	31	Eastern Meadowlark	15			1				16
Ring-necked Pheasa		1	2				1	4	Rusty Blackbird								
Wild Turkey	5							5	Common Grackle		3	38	412	149	332	391	1,325
Northern Bobwhite									Brown-headed Cow		211	13	37		111	27	399
American Coot						1		1	<i>blackbird species</i>			20	858	30	1,699		2,607
Killdeer		1		2				5	Purple Finch								
Common Snipe									House Finch	238	153	176	152	124	203	249	1,295
Ring-billed Gull	119	347	2,126	145	164	182	226	3,309	Pine Siskin								
Herring Gull	4	1,057	1,878	12		42	15	3,008	American Goldfinch	17	64	32	39	12	31	20	215
Iceland Gull			3					3	Evening Grosbeak								
Lesser Black-backed		1	2					3	House Sparrow	125	100	127	112	96	90	123	773
Great Black-backed		5	71		1			77	Area Total Birds:	8,881	11,060	11,729	6,065	2,525	5,575	4,352	50,187
<i>gull species</i>		34	297	70	6	54	90	551	Area Tot. Species:	59	69	64	62	47	54	58	341
Rock Dove	211	93	157	218		292	29	1,000	Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Mourning Dove	122	202	84	177	100	117	201	1,003	Supplemental Data								
Eastern Screech-Ow		1	3					4	Hours on Foot:	32.5	22.5	33.0	26.7	21.8	25.9	30.5	193.0
Great Horned Owl	2	7	6		1	1		17	Hours by Car:	12.2	8.7	18.0	11.1	1.5	8.0	6.0	65.5
Barred Owl		3	3	2	3			11	Hours by Boat:	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Short-eared Owl			1					1	Hours Other:	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Belted Kingfisher	2	2	6	3				16	Miles on Foot:	21.3	15.3	33.0	18.5	26.0	21.8	27.5	163.4
Red-bellied Woodpe	44	47	45	31	26	61	26	280	Miles by Car:	121.5	85.5	82.6	193.0	38.0	73.2	93.5	687.3
Yellow-bellied Saps	2	1	1			1	4	9	Miles by Boat:	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Downy Woodpecker	45	38	50	32	31	47	39	282	Miles Other:	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0
Hairy Woodpecker	7	6	5	2	4	9	2	35	Hrs. Feeder Watch:	.0	2.5	.0	9.7	8.0	10.0	4.7	34.9
Northern Flicker	21	16	18	15	11	15	15	111	Hours Stationary:	.0	.0	9.5	.0	.0	.0	.1	9.6
Pileated Woodpecke	17	9	10	2	5	11	6	60	Hours "Owling":	2.0	4.0	3.2	.3	1.0	.5	.5	11.5
Eastern Phoebe		1	1					2	Miles "Owling":	15.2	46.0	19.4	1.0	1.0	.1	.1	82.8
Horned Lark		4						4	Total Observers:	7	12	13	15	11	11	9	78
Blue Jay	107	47	53	33	70	161	60	531	Total Parties:	5	7	9	6	8	6	7	48
American Crow	969	608	251	325	316	209	139	2,817	Tot. Feederwatches:		2	1	6	4	6	4	23
Fish Crow	25	34	60	7	2		1	129									

# May Count is Saturday, May 13, 1995

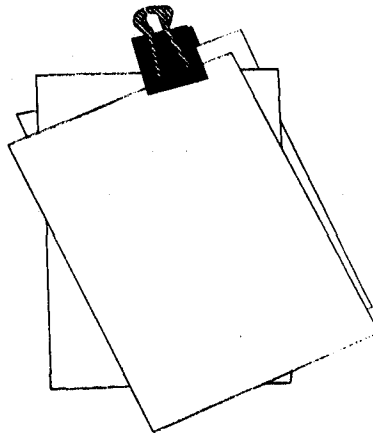
- by Paul Zucker

**S**ince 1948, the Maryland Ornithological Society has conducted an annual May Count. Everyone is urged to join in; no matter your skill level. Identification is only part of being successful; you have to spot the bird first, so every pair of eyes helps. And, it is great fun. The compiler for Howard County is **Paul Zucker**. Call him at (301) 279-7896 (Home) or (301) 953-5000 x 4971 (Office) to participate in the count. Paul will pair you up with someone else if you'd like, based on your skill level, and assign you an area to cover. Special requests are honored whenever possible.

**HOW IT WORKS:** The county has been divided into seven areas (as for the Winter Count), each with an area coordinator. The area coordinators will assemble the parties and combine their results after the count. All parties however must make sure their day lists are delivered to the tally rally. Leaders are responsible for tracking party miles and time, names and addresses of the participants, and documentation for unusual sightings. Observers within talking or shouting distance of each other are considered 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 the other for ½ hour, then the total is 1½ party hours. All birds (including, ugh, Starlings, and House Sparrows) must be counted. Large flocks can be estimated. If you see something exciting outside your assigned area, make a note of the time, direction of flight, and location. The sighting can be reported to the area coordinator for that sector at the

tally; and the bird may be added to the count if we are assured double counting did not take place. Separate tally sheets and hours need to be kept for feeders and for owling.

**UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS:**  
Any species not previously recorded



*Separate tally sheets and hours need to be kept for feeders and for owling.*

in the county or listed on the checklist needs to be documented. Acceptable documentation includes the name of the person making the identification, names of all others who saw the bird, when and where it was seen, lighting conditions, optics used, behavior of the bird, time period observed, field marks, etc. Sometimes sketches help. Some examples of what is considered unusual are: *Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Snowy Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Glossy Ibis, Tundra Swan, Snow Goose, 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, Virginia Rail, Sora,*

*American Coot, Semipalmated Plover, 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, Common Nighthawk, Chuck-will's-widow, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Loggerhead Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Summer Tanager, Dickcissel, American Tree Sparrow, Henslow's Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, or Rusty Blackbird.*

**THE TALLY DINNER!!** Everyone who participates in the count is welcome to attend the tally pot luck. If you are unable to attend, please make arrangements with your area leader or the compiler to turn in or phone in results during the count day or early that evening. Call **Jan Randle** at (410) 531-6296 to let her know the number of people coming from your party and your choice of food to share. (Non-cooks & all day counters can ask Jan for alternative suggestions.) Dinner usually begins between 6:30 and 7:00 pm. The tally will begin at 8 pm. The Randles live in Braeburn which is on the west side of Cedar Lane in the section north of MD 32 and south of the stoplights at Owen Brown and Freetown Roads. The entrance road to the area is Braeburn Road, turn right on Lochridge and continue to first house on left after Hillbrook Drive (6424 Lochridge Road).





# 1994 Bluebird Program Results

- by Mark Wallace

**C**avity nesters had another good year in Howard County. Information was received from 112 monitors checking 1004 boxes. After adjusting the results for the decrease in the number of boxes from 1993 to 1994, bluebirds, chickadees, titmice, and House Wrens all did better than last year's record.

The first bluebird egg was laid April 8 and the last clutch fledged September 10. Fifteen boxes fledged three clutches, 87 fledged two clutches, and 194 fledged one clutch. In 1994, 447 boxes were used by bluebirds, 2372 eggs were laid, 592 eggs were lost, 1780 eggs hatched, 202 young were lost, and 1567 young bluebirds fledged. Hank Stanton and I banded 728 young.

~~Other cavity nesters produced well:~~ Carolina Chickadee 143 (a record), Tufted Titmouse 43, Tree Swallow 121 (a record), House Wren 731, Purple Martin 208, Great Crested Flycatcher 6+ (one nesting in a bluebird box with a squirrel-enlarged entrance and the other in a martin house), and White-breasted Nuthatch 5.

Eleven of the 17 adult bluebirds reported lost were killed by cats, four were victims of the winter weather, and five were killed by House Sparrows. The main causes of the 202 young lost were House Sparrows (63), unknown (29), and weather (27). The primary causes of the 592 eggs lost were infertile or addled (145), unknown (66), House Sparrows (89), and House Wrens (66).

Some major trails and their bluebird production were the following: Wallace, 406 boxes fledged 607 (and had a higher than usual number of 5-egg clutches); Stanton, 180 boxes

fledged 310 (six boxes had 6-egg clutches); Robbins, 40 boxes fledged 90; Kubitsky, 19 boxes fledged 57; Howard County Rec & Parks, 45 boxes fledged 54; Bogdan, 20 boxes fledged 38; Cope, 14 boxes fledged



19; and Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Corp., 22 boxes fledged 16.

Thanks to all the following individuals who cooperated in the countywide cavity nester project: *Jim & Vee Abe, Julie Anthony, Dan Ashby, Leslie & Sam Bailey, William Ballentine, Daniel Barnes, Virginia & Fred Bassler, Richard Baumgardner, Brian Becker, Paul Belz, Raymond & Sally Bernier, Robert Bogdan, Monika Bossal, Rick & Nan Brokaw, Allen & Estell Brown, Gisela Brown, Sandy Brown, Adam Bulharowski, John & Ermlna Cameron, Raymond & Judy Carper, John & Eileen Clegg, Catherine Clevenger, Kathy Colston, Florence Corroy, Regina Cope, Nancy & Mike Cottle, Ralph Cullison, Ethyl Marie Demino, Leonard Dolhert, Catherine Earp, Wesley & Susan Earp, John & Dorothy Easter, John & Debbie Erwin, Wendy & Howie Feaga, Wayne & Joanie Fenwick, Rosemary Fisher, James Floyd, Herb Fox, John & Emily Frasier, Robert & Shirley Freeland, Sandra French, Karen Fuseller, Ralph & Jane Geuder, Evelyn Gilbert, Cory Glennon, Frank Gomez, John & Corrine Gorzo, Lee & Carol Grant, Bob Harris, Kenneth & Donna Hawkes, Nancy & Guy Hawkins, James Heller, Lawrence & Merrilyn Hill, Linore Holt,*

*Eugene & Naomi Hostetler, Dorothea Howard, Erie Howard, Howard Iager, Thomas Johnson, Harry Jones, Helen W Jordan, Hugh & Sandy Kendell, Michael Kerwin, Judy & Don Keuch, Raymond Kruhm, Dave Kubitsky, JoAnn & Jack Lutes, Mary & Joseph A Marilley, Grazina & Mike McClure, Diane Nagergast, Robert Nelson, William & Margaret Nelson, Jim Nichols, Turner & Janet Nichols, Ron & Janet Oaks, Donald Parlette, Walt Patterson, Edward Peters, Dean & Meriam Reed, Chris Reisinger, Eleanor Robbins, Rick & Burnadette Rolfe, Kurt Schwarz, Elizabeth Scott, Leroy Sealing, Mary Shea, Raymond & Elizabeth Ann Shenk, William B Sines, Boyd & Edna Smith, Max Smith, Charene Snyder, Henry Stanton, Chuck Stevens, Shane Stroup, Ralph Stup, Robert Sturgill, Susan Sullivan, Andre & Vera Thomann, Jan & Dot Titherington, Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Corp. (Bob Parks), Norman & Helen Tyson, Ron & Sharon Upchurch, Mark Wallace, Felix Westwood, Al White, Dean Wood, Mary Jane Wright, Roger & Carol Young, Peter Zerhusen.*

The *Bluebirds in the Parks* program, which the Bird Club co-sponsors with the Howard County Department of Recreation and parks, produced 54 bluebirds. Park data is included in totals shown. People who monitored in the parks in 1994 were *Jack Adams, Julie Dunlap, Susan Earp, Sharon Femrite, Clifford Groes, Joanne Howard, Mary Ellen & Kristen Hux, Michael Meyerhoff, Sandy Meyerhoff, Kirsten M. Saxe, Don Tharpe, Mary Vonessen, Melanie Waters, Michele Wright.*

If you would like to help monitor boxes, establish a trail in the county, or report the location or results of a nest box, contact me at (301) 725-6370. Leave a message and I will get back to you.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

(Continued from page 3)

### Midwinter Bird Count ...

Our brand new birds include a **Greater Scaup** which spent a week or so on Centennial Lake and is still creating discussion over its age and sex, the **Short-eared Owl** at the landfill which was seen by the participants in the gull trip the Saturday following our count, and pending acceptance by the Rare Bird Records Committee, a **Yellow-legged Gull** at the landfill. Considering the logistics of the landfill, our desire to keep access available, and the birder response to this gull's appearance in Washington, we regrettably decided that this bird was too good to announce. It was not seen the next week on the long scheduled club gull-trip, or on any other occasion anyone birded the location. That was a truly tough call!

Our first misses were **Hooded Merganser** and **Purple Finch**. Missed for the second time was **Common Snipe**. New lows were set by **Tundra Swan** and **Brown Creeper**. This is not observer incompetence!

Great thanks go to the area coordinators (see participant list), to **Mike McClure** who worked up all your raptor data, to **Chuck Stirrat** who put the count data on a modern computer, to feeder watchers who submitted reports for the original day (mostly at my request), to **Hal and Zelda Simon** for being willing to host the tally rally on the original date and greatly to **Bonnie Ott** and family who agreed to host us on the replacement date. This was a very high quality event. It is now time to start the analysis articles. Can I do as well at finding time and money (for the super computer) as you do at finding birds?? Don't place bets. See you next year!

**OBSERVERS:** **AREA 1:** MARK WALLACE, Paul Jung, Michael Kerwin, Harold Nelson, Daryl Olson, Jay Sheppard, Rick Sussman; **AREA 2:** NANCY MAGNUSSON, Lauren Duff, Ward Ebert, Bari Henderson, David Henderson, Donald D. Henderson,

Peter Osenton, Skip Skipton, Romaine Smith, Tom Strickwerda, Paul Zucker, Sherry Zucker; **AREA 3:** DAVE HARVEY, Brent Byers, Mary Byers, Keith E. Costley, Ralph Cullison III, Darius Ecker, Paula Ecker, Maureen Harvey, Bill Kulp, Arthur Rogers, Steve Sanford, Eugene Scarpula, Roxann Yeager; **AREA 4:** MIKE McCLURE, Bob Betz, Mary-Jo Betz, James Blanchard, Bill Blum, Karen Blum, Randy Crook, Rich Crook, Marge Cullison, Georgia Eacker, Kim Gross, Shiras Guion, Mike Leumas, Grazina McClure, Jim McGibney, Frank Reilly, James Resau, Steve Schrader, Sue Setterberg, Chuck Stirrat, H. Zack Stough, Michelle Wright; **AREA 5:** GREG VAN NOSTRAND, Burton Alexander, Ellen Bryson, Hal Bryson, Doug Chamblin, Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, John Clegg, Susan Earp, Dennis Luck, Rosamund Munro, Carol Newman, Paul Newman, Doug Odermatt, Helen Zeichner; **AREA 6:** BONNIE OTT, Connie Bockstie, William Brandenstein, Alex Donovan, Jr., Sharon Femrite, Jane Geuder, Ralph Geuder, Marjorie Kupiec, Dave Kubitsky, Bob Lund, Brigitte Lund, Joe Picard, Sue Probst, Hank Stanton, Joseph Thornton; **AREA 7:** JIM WILKINSON, Maud Banks, George Chase, Jane Farrell, Ed Gould, John McKitterick, Bea Newkirk, Jo Solem, Eva Sunell, Don Waugh.

(Continued from page 1)

### Winter Bird Records ...

were reported several times with the high number away from the landfill 3 at Fulton on 1/16 (JF). **Bonaparte's Gulls** are scarce in the winter, but they were reported 3 times including a February sighting which was a county first: 9 on 12/11 at TRIRS (JF,JS), 1 at CENPK on 1/28 (CB), and 3 at CENPK on 2/5 (JF,JS).

On 2/11 for the HCMWC, Cullison surveyed ALRGL leaving GS to scope his beloved gulls. While crossing an extensive weedy-grassy field, RC startled a **Short-eared Owl**, a species for which there are few county records. The bird stayed thru 2/18 which was the bird club's field trip to the landfill. **Horned Larks** were reported 3 times in addition to HCMWC: 1 on 2/5 at Fulton (JW), 3 on 2/7 at CENPK (BO), and 1 on 2/25 along Underwood Rd. (JS).

The mild winter and ample food supply combined to keep **American Robins** in the county in good numbers. The weather also benefited **Carolina Wrens**. **Gray Catbirds** and **Brown Thrashers** were seen on the HCMWC. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** are never easy to find in the winter: this year 1-4 were seen thru much of the winter at CENPK (JF,BO). Other reports included 2 at Vantage Pt. (VANPT) (HZ) and 1 on LKELK's beaver pond (JW).

A few **American Tree Sparrows** wintered at CENPK (CB, JF, BO, HZ, m.obs.). Mild weather kept **Chipping Sparrows** into December: 2 on 12/2 at Mt. Pleasant (MTPLT) (BO,JS,SS) and 1 on 12/16 at Alpha Ridge Park (BO,JS).

Twelve **Savannah Sparrows** were spotted at MTPLT on 12/2 (BO,JS,SS). **Fox Sparrows** were seen throughout the period: 3 on 12/17 in southern How. Co. (JF,JS), 2 at PATRP on 1/29 (JF,JS), 1 at VANPT on 2/8 (HZ), 3 at RKBPR on 2/11 (BO) and 1 at LKELK on 2/26 (JW). **White-crowned Sparrows** were present in abundance on 12/16 at MTPLT when 65 were estimated (BO,JS). **Six Eastern Meadowlarks** were found on 1/16 at Gorman Rd. & I-95 (JW). The only **Rusty Blackbird** was spotted by CB at her feeder near Ellicott City on 2/12.

Winter observers cited above: **Connie Bockstie (CB)**, **Martha Chestem (MC)**, **Ralph Cullison (RC)**, **Darius & Paula Ecker (D&PE)**, **Jane Farrell (JF)**, **Ralph Geuder (RG)**, **Dave & Maureen Harvey (D&MH)**, **Nancy Magnusson of & Paul Newman (C&PN)**, **Bonnie Ott (BO)**, **Gene Scarpulla (GS)**, **Susan Setterberg (SS)**, **Jay Sheppard**, **Joanne Solem (JS)**, **Mark Wallace (MW)**, **Jim Wilkinson (JW)**, **Helen Zeichner**, many observers (m.obs.).

### Potluck Fun

The annual potluck dinner was, as always, great fun with good food and great slides shared by all. A big thank you goes to **Monika Botsai** and **Grazina McClure**, who were assisted by **Rod Botsai** and **Mike McClure**, for all the efforts they expended to make sure the night was a success.



# Calendar of Programs and Field Trips

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.

**May 11, Thursday** "Birds of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego," by Hank Kaestner. Hank works for McCormick Spice Company and visits exotic locations. He is a photographer and a birder. He enjoys sharing his slides, explorations, and findings with others.

Field Trips meet as described for each trip. Carpooling is encouraged; riders share the cost of gas and tolls. Dress for the field trip with stout, reasonably waterproof footgear and layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. NO pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement or fewer than three participants. FOR INFORMATION, CALL **BONNIE OTT**, at (410) 461-3361.

**May 13, Saturday** **MIGRATORY BIRD DAY AND MAY COUNT DAY** - For additional information about May Count, see page 5 of this newsletter.

**May 20, Saturday** **WESTERN HOWARD COUNTY** - Meet at 7:00 am at the Park & Ride on Rt. 32 north of I-70 for this half day trip. Leader - **David Holmes**. Planned stops include turf farms and Hugg-Thomas Wildlife Management Area. Horned Larks and Bobolinks possible. Call Bonnie for more information.

**June 11, Sunday** **EVENING WALK AT GWYNN ACRES** - Meet at 7 pm on Old Columbia Road at Rams Horn Row to walk the paved path for Wood Thrushes, Veerys and possible Barred Owls. Bring a flashlight. Call Bonnie for more information.

**July 16, Sunday** **HERON AND EGRET SEARCH** - Meet at 7:30 am at Centennial Park west end lot off Centennial Lane to search Howard County waters for wading birds. Call Bonnie for more information.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING:** Thursday, May 25, 1995, 7:30 pm at the home of Jane Farrell, 6324 Sandchain Rd., Columbia, MD 21045, phone (410) 381-7344. This will be a joint meeting of the incoming and outgoing board members..

**SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1995 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL** is due **JULY 28, 1995**. Call or mail to Paula and Darius Ecker, 9270 Crazyquilt Court, Columbia, MD 21045, Phone (410) 312-9165. Articles can be submitted via computer bulletin board at (410) 312-5276 using data bits=8, parity=none, stop bits=1, ANSI terminal type, 1200 up to 14.4K baud.

## A Message from the New Editors

**A**s we begin our new assignment as editors for the Howard County Bird Club Newsletter, we wish to express our appreciation to Susan Setterberg for her meticulous organization of the newsletter materials and files. She set high standards for the newsletter, and we will make every effort to uphold those standards.

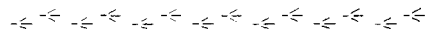
What is your opinion of the new look for the newsletter? We would appreciate your comments and suggestions.

We would also appreciate any articles you may wish to submit. Please

be sure your submissions reach us by the date noted in *Calendar of Programs and Field Trips*.

We look forward to hearing from you.

*Paula and Darius Ecker*



## Rockburn Branch Park Checklist

**T**he Rockburn Branch Park Bird Checklist is now being printed, and will be available for distribution soon. More details will be included in a future edition of the newsletter.

For now, if you need additional information, call Bonnie Ott at (410) 461-3361.

## Did you Know ...

**T**he Snow Goose and Blue Goose are the same species with a plumage color inheritance pattern similar to that of Black and Yellow Labrador Retrievers.

**T**he longest recorded life span of a wild North American waterfowl species is claimed by a <sup>51111</sup> Snow Goose banded as an adult in 1952 in the Northwest Territories and recovered 28 years later near Acres, Texas.

*0 named a Goose  
01228 28 + 3 mo.*

## Conservation Report - by Bob Solem

Let's reflect on our priorities so we can do our own cost-benefit analysis regarding the effects of pending legislation. The state legislature has finished its session for the year; read in the newspaper what laws have been changed and what the impact will be.

For the United States Congress, it is still a matter of pending action. Following are some of the significant bills:

- **Job Creation and Entitlement Act** - requires cost benefit studies and risk assessments before new regulatory protection rules are issued and provides for compensation under certain circumstances.
- **Endangered Species Act** - reauthorization & review of provisions
- **Clean Water Act** - reauthorization & review of provisions, including wetlands
- **Safe Drinking Water Act** - reau-

thorization & review of standards.

Sensible cost-benefit analysis was apparently used in the proposed Roth bill (on regulatory risk assessment) passed by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee in March. Apply these criteria to other environmental bills that Congress is considering:

- Human health and safety is paramount
- Existing environmental and safety rules remain
- Benefits to people and the environment cannot always be expressed in dollars
- Congressional oversight is appropriate
- Judicial review should be limited to what is needed to correct injustices and not be used to harass and delay
- Regulatory agencies must thoroughly review alternatives in order to retain the benefits of regulation while reducing the costs.

## Did You Identify These Birds?

As promised, here are the answers to the quiz contained in the last issue of the newsletter. How many did you get correct?

A wise chicken? **Sage Grouse**  
 Embarrassed Singer? **Red-faced Warbler**  
 Soviet Survey? **Redpoll**  
 Minimal change in direction? **Least Tern**  
 Slow mover? **Creepers**  
 Regal angler? **Kingfisher**  
 A church official? **Cardinal**  
 The wife of the late Charles William? **Chuck-Wills-Widow**  
 Pale Robert? **Bobwhite**

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## Howard County Bird Club

*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED