



THE GOLDFINCH



A CHAPTER OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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VICE PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

BY MIKE KERWIN

Welcome to the 25th year of the Howard County Bird Club. Club members over the last several months have spent time preparing this year's Silver anniversary agenda, a part of that preparation was a review of the club's activities over the last 25 years. Although I have not been with the club from the beginning, I am none the less very proud to be a member of a club that has accomplished so much in the past 25 years. Over the last 25 years the club has sponsored and led hundreds of walks; developed a great Club Bookstore; donated thousands of dollars of bird seed sale money to local, state and international environmental causes; participated in numerous boards and committees on the local, state and national level; developed checklists for the county and several of its parks; participated in numerous bird counts; organized a county rare bird alert; and presented hundreds of interesting talks on topics ranging from birds to wildflowers to butterflies, all the while, having a great time involved in something we love. We invite you to join us in the activities this year and help share and provide the enjoyment and knowledge that our members are always seeking.

HOW DID THE HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB BEGIN?

As we begin the 25th year of the Howard County Bird Club, we wondered about the history of the club during those 25 years. *Elayne Metter* volunteered to research the historical files of the club, which consist of newsletters for the entire 25 years. She found some interesting items, one of which appeared on the April 1974 issue and explains how the club came into existence. A reprint follows.

"Nan Rhineland, retiring President, first took the initiative to organize the Howard County Chapter of MOS. She located and brought together a small group of persons (few who knew each other before that night) one November evening in 1972. Before the end of that first meeting, temporary officers were selected and the work began. An election was held in March 1973, and Nan became officially the first President. It was mainly through her guidance, enthusiasm, and interest that the very young chapter grew. For her work as President this past year the board wishes to say, "THANK YOU AND WELL DONE!"

The Howard County Bird Club is fortunate to have three members who were among the founding members of the club. They are: *Marty Chestern, David Holmes and Jo Solem*. We, as current members, owe these three original members a debt of gratitude for their foresight and fortitude in taking the initiative to form the Howard County Bird Club. To them, we say "THANK YOU AND WELL DONE."

NOTE: Thanks to Elayne's initiative, throughout the 25th year we will be sharing with you some of the history of the club through reprinting of a variety of newsletter articles.

1997-1998 CLUB BOARD MEMBERS

President:
Maud J. Banks
Vice President:
Mike Kerwin
Secretary:
Chuck Sturatt
Treasurer:
Shiras Guion
Chapter Directors (two year term):
Suzanne Probst (first year)
Mary-Jo Betts (second year)
State Directors:
Elayne Metter
Carol Newman
Donald Waugh
Paul Zucker

FIRST HOWARD COUNTY ATLAS RESULTS AVAILABLE

The recently published *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia* contains a section on pp. 29-32 devoted to "Changes in the Breeding Bird Distribution." Quarterblock coverage in fast-growing Howard County enabled comparisons to be made between the 1973-1975 and 1983-1987 atlases. Space limitations in the book allowed only a small number of species maps and percentage changes to be listed. Purchasers of the book who wish to obtain the complete results of the first atlas as published in *Maryland Birdlife* (March 1978) may obtain a copy at any meeting from the Club Bookstore at no charge.

NEED A TURKEY? BY SUSAN SETTERBERG

Need a turkey for your life list? Let them find you. It was recently reported in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* that there are some really wild turkeys in Bucks County, just north of Philadelphia. Early in April, three turkeys chased motorists near Routes 152 and 202 in New Britain Township. The reportedly fat and feathered creatures would emerge from the woods and run after cars. Traffic was clogged and motorists were a bit unnerved.

Fortunately for the birds, they were neither hit nor caught even though they were chased for most of the morning by police. Police reported they had no description. Obviously, they are not birders.

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SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 TO MAY 31, 1997

BY JOANNE SOLEM

Spring brings out the birders. They are rewarded with flocks of waterfowl, a few shorebirds, singing residents, and warblers in their breeding finery. Spring is a great time for learning and discovery: new life birds, new songs, new habitats. This year was no exception, though numbers of many species continued at low levels. Although some special sightings on May 10 (May Count) will be noted, a complete summary of that count by the compiler will be featured in a separate article.

Common Loon migration extended over much of this period but produced no large flocks. Horned Grebes were spotted from 3/15 at Wilde Lake (WILLK)(HZ) to 5/20 WILLK (DOD). Four were the most seen; they were on Centennial (CENPK) 3/24 to 4/3 (JF, TDC). Small numbers of Double-crested Cormorants were noted during most of April and May. The high of 7 was recorded on the north end of Triadelphia Reservoir (UPTRI) 4/26 (NM). Elusive American Bitterns are always notable. This spring 1 was present in a flooded area of Vantage Point (VANPT) 4/20 & 4/29 (MC); a second was found 5/10 in cattails in the small pond at Font Hill Wetland Park (FHWLP) (K&BB, SS, MV). Wandering egrets and herons were scarce. A single Great Egret was noted at VANPT 5/22 (MC, HZ). Three adult Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported during the period: Univ. of Md Central Farm (UMDCF) 4/5 (JF, TDC, GJ, JS), Lake Elkhorn (LKEK) 5/9 & 20 (DE), WILLK 5/22 (DOD). Chestern's discovery of three active Great Blue Heron nests in the beaver-created wetland at VANPT was exciting. Two of the nests had 3 young, 1 had 1. It is thought to be the first time that more than two pairs have attempted nesting in this county.

Few migrating flocks of Tundra Swans were noted. The largest group (80) was seen resting on the reservoir as viewed from Brighton Dam (BRDAM) (DN, JS). Although there is a countywide overabundance of Canada Geese, Snow Geese were scarce. The only two were reported 3/6 at Fulton Pond (FULPD) (white) & 3/6 & 7 Daisy Road pond (blue) (MW).

The only Green-winged Teal (a pair) were at CENPK 4/6 (JF, TDC) and the lone Northern Pintail (male) was at Clark's farm pond on Roxbury Road 3/6 (MW). The last Gadwall was seen on a pond on Old Frederick Road (OFRRP) 3/16 (JF). Canvasback numbers continued to be low with the 9 on 3/9 at LKELK the seasonal high (DE). Wintering Redheads stayed until 3/16 when 1 was still found on OFRRP (JF). Ring-necked Ducks, which some years are seen by the hundreds in migration, passed through in modest numbers with a high of 46 on 3/13 at Waterford Farm (WATFD) on Jennings Chapel Road (MW). A male Greater Scaup was spotted at CENPK 3/16 (JF). Although Oldsquaw rarely spend much time in the county, they are a usual feature on TRIRS. This year that location hosted the only two reported 4/6 (RSu). No scoters were detected and all the goldeneyes appeared to have moved through in February. Hooded Mergansers were only sparingly reported; Common Mergansers which winter (usually in the hundreds on TRIRS) largely left in late February. Red-breasted Mergansers, which are often the most difficult of the three species to locate, turned up at a number of lakes with the last one on 4/19 WILLK (DOD). The high of 18 was on 3/8 at the quarry on Brighton Dam Rd (JS).

The Bald Eagles on TRIRS continued their consistent parenthood. The pair was observed feeding at least 1 chick 4/13 (NS). Although one Howard County birder found spring hawk watching rewarding on Chesapeake Bay, the flights did not appear over this county. The best Broad-winged Hawk count was 4/26 at Schooley Mill Park when a field trip produced 15 (DE, MK, m.obs.). The lone Peregrine Falcon was at BRDAM 4/5 (JF, GJ).

A flock of 10 Wild Turkeys was noted along

EACH 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 301-725-6037. 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.

Jennings Chapel Road 3/4 (DN). The Middle Patuxent Environmental Area appears to have gained a small flock. On 5/10 a bird was heard (CSR, AG); several HowCo Rec & Parks employees have either seen or heard birds there also (*vide* PNo). A female turkey was along Hipsley Mill Road 5/10 (P&BD). Ring-necked Pheasants were reported in three locations during the spring; Northern Bobwhites were heard at Rockburn Branch Park 5/11 (D&PE).

Wintering American Coots remained with a high of 9 at CENPK 3/31 (JF). It was a poor spring for rail reports; the situation for shorebirds was not much better. The only Semipalmated Sandpipers were 2 at UMDCF 5/10 (M&GM). A lone Pectoral Sandpiper was at FULPD 5/14 (JS). Common Snipe were seen only a few times at CENPK where they are normally regular in migration. UMDCF, which often produces several dozen, shared a meager high of 4 on 5/10 (M&GM) with 4 at WATFD 3/13 (MW). Five American Woodcock were located at CENPK 3/5 (AG, PNo).

Anyone visiting lakes and reservoirs this spring had a good chance of seeing Bonaparte's Gulls or Caspian Terns. The high Bonaparte's flock was 50 on 4/13 at CENPK (MK, DE) while 26 Caspians were recorded 4/24 at WILLK (C&PN). One of the best birds of the season and a first for WILLK was the exceedingly late Glaucous Gull present from 5/15-5/24 (DOD, m.obs.).

Eighteen Common Nighthawks were seen at LKELK (including 2 perched) 5/17 (DE). Fortunately, the perched birds remained until the following day when they could be observed by field trip participants. Although Whip-poor-wills do pass through the county in small numbers, they are no longer detected every year. On 5/10 at Henryton, Palapco Valley SP (HENPV) one answered a Barred Owl call (DE).

Red-headed Woodpeckers are unusual enough and attractive enough to garner attention. This year an adult was along Carroll Mill Road 5/10 (K&BB, SS, MV); a pair were seen in the vicinity of a cavity from 5/14-5/23 in the Timberleigh area (DN); and an adult was at the Willow Spring Golf Course 5/27 (HS). Few Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were reported. The last was seen 5/10 Daniels, PVSP (CS). Half a dozen Least Flycatcher reports were nice (many more silent *Empidonax* flycatchers frustrated observers). Field trips produced two of the three Horned Lark reports with a flyover at Alpha Ridge Park (ALRGP) 3/23 (DHo, m.obs.) and at least 2 in a plowed field across from the office at UMDCF 4/5 (JS, m.obs.) Thanks to G. Jett's patience and persistence an American Pipit was spotted in the same field. Five Horned Larks were present 4/2 at the Moxley farm on MD 144 (WE, RS).

In High Ridge Park (HIRGP) a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches excavated a nest cavity (B&BN). The Nagenegasts had a pair nesting in a box in their yard. Although bluebirds and Tree Swallows have become common box nesters in this area, Tufted Titmice are much more infrequent. This year the Botsais, McClures and Cleggs all reported nesting titmice in boxes.

There were only two Gray-cheeked Thrushes reported: 5/7-5/12 at Hallmark (HALMK) (Web) and 5/10 HIRGP (CSR).

Cedar Waxwings were still present in large flocks into late May: 5/17 WILLK 40 (C&PN) & 5/21 LKELK 38 (DE). A possible Philadelphia Vireo 5/10 at CENPK is still being evaluated by the May Count compiler at the time of writing.

The lone Golden-winged Warbler report was

5/6 from Hugg-Thomas WMA (D&MH) and the single Cape May Warbler was seen 5/9 (HALMK) (Web). Two Prothonotary Warblers were noted: 5/14 VANPT (HZ) and a female 5/18 LKELK (DE, m.obs.). One Mourning Warbler was observed at CENPK 5/17 (KS); two others were seen in the vicinity of Howard Chapel Road, Patuxent River SP 5/20 & 5/30 (JSh). The hybrid Brewster's Warbler was documented twice: 5/10 Jennings Chapel Road (P&BD) & 5/11 RKBRP (D&PE). The latter bird was singing a Golden-winged's song.

Spring usually brings at least one Summer Tanager report; this year there were two. A male was seen 5/5, 6 & 11 on MD 108 near SLMLP (CSh) and a pair were watched 5/10 at Gateway (ES, MB, NL). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were more widely reported than usual because they showed up at feeders during a period of rainy weather. Indigo Buntings also came to several feeders.

American Tree Sparrows appear to have departed early after wintering in good numbers. The only sightings were 1 on 3/21 CENPK (JF, TDC) & another 3/30 Hunt Ridge (CS). The high count of Savannah Sparrows was 24 at the milk plant (MD 216 & Leishear) 5/10 (JF, JS). Fox Sparrow reports were few and numbers were low. Lincoln's Sparrows were located in the usual meadow at SLMLP: 2 on 5/11 (NM) & 1 on 5/14 (along with 7 Swamp Sparrows) (JS). The last White-throated Sparrow was noted 5/17 HENPV (CS) & the last White-crowned Sparrow 5/14 LKELK (D&PE). Bobolinks were reported from 5/5 Poplar Springs (2-WE), to 50 on 5/19 on MD 216 (Wessel's) (MW). The high was more than 100 on 5/8 in western HowCo at Sharp's (MW).

May Counters stumbled across an Eastern Meadowlark nest with 5 eggs at SLMLP (NM, CSh, LS). Rusty Blackbirds were elusive with only a few reports; the high was 15 on 4/7 VANPT (MC).

Purple Finches were seen in March & April: 3/22 Dunluggin 2 males (KS); R. Munro had them on 9 days between 4/4 & 4/16 with a high of 5 (2 males) on 4/13. The last 2 (1 male) were in Hammond Village 4/15 (J&RS).

A tantalizing report of a Sandhill Crane in the Lisbon area on 5/8 was submitted. The sighting lacked sufficient documentation to forward to the MD/DC Records Committee, but the date was within two days of a bird seen in the Buckeystown area (Frederick Post photo). Sightings of rarities of this magnitude should be passed along at once to allow for a search of the area. Detailed notes should be made before consulting any field guides. The western part of the county is not heavily birded—any number of interesting birds could turn up.

Observers: Thanks to all who contributed one or more sightings. Those cited by initial in the article are listed below: Maud Banks (MB), Karen & Bill Blum (K&BB), Martha Chestern (MC), T. Dennis Costen (TDC), Phil & Barbara Davis (P&B), Wes Eap (WE), Ward Ebert (WEB), Dennis Ecker (DE), Paula Ecker (PE), Jane Farrell (JF), Aleda Geis (AG), Dave & Maureen Harvey (D&MH), David Holmes (DHo), George Jett (GJ), Mike Karwin (MK), Nathan Levy (NL), Nancy Magnusson (NM), Diane Nagengast (DN), Bea & Bob Newark (B&BN), Carol & Paul Newman (C&PN), Phil Norman (PNo), Doug Odenmatt (DOD), Chandler S. Robbins (CSR), Norm Saunders (NS), Susan Setzberg (SS), Craig Sholley (CSh), Jo Solem (JS), Robert Solem (RS), Hank Stanton (HS), Lisa Stevens (LS), Chuck Strlat (CS), Rick Sussman (RSu), Eva Sunell (ES), Marilyn Veek (MV), Mark Wallace (MW), Helen Zeichner (HZ), many observers (m.obs.), Howard County (HowCo).

THE GEOLOGY OF HOWARD COUNTY

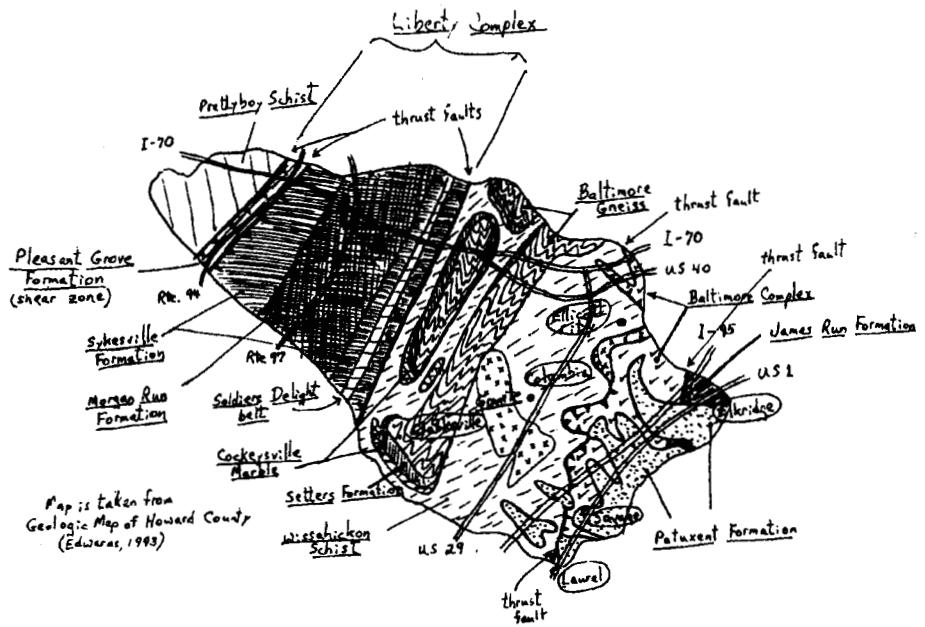
BY DENNIS COSKREN

The geological history recorded in the rocks of Howard County spans well over a billion years, long before life first crawled out of the ocean. The oldest rock, the Baltimore Gneiss, lies in a band across the central part of the county, from the town of Highland to Woodstock, on the Patapsco River. It was first formed as volcanic ash and flows in a volcanic mountain range similar to the Cascades, of Mount Saint Helens fame. These rocks were soon caught up in a collision zone much like that of the modern Himalayas, where today the continental mass of India is slowly grinding its way into the mass of Asia. The scenery then in Howard County, a billion years ago, would have been one of bleakness and splendor, as towering mountains, glacier-capped, mounted into the sky, unrelieved by grass or flowers. Unfortunately, we know little about that mountain range, the record in the rock is incomplete, compared to that of later periods, and the story has been confused and complicated by later events.

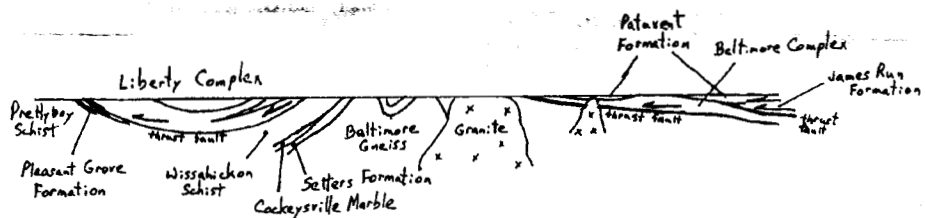
Several hundred million years later, near the beginning of the Paleozoic Era, which began 540 million years ago, the story resumes. The Baltimore Gneiss mountains had worn down by that time, and the supercontinent which they had crowned had split apart to form a new ocean, the Iapetus Sea. The ocean continued to widen, and new oceanic crust formed then as it does today, by the intrusion and hardening of lava in a crack down the middle. The new rock thus formed was composed of basalt, gabbro, and similar iron- and magnesium-rich rocks; the process can be observed today in Iceland, where a similar crack runs across the width of the island. The eastern 20% of Howard County (much of that part east of US 29) is underlain by the floor of this vanished ocean, which is known as the Baltimore Complex.

As the sea advanced over the eroded roots of the mountains, it laid down a layer of sand and gravel, now preserved as a thin strip of quartz-rich rock, the Setters Formation, which immediately overlies the older Baltimore Gneiss. The sand was quickly replaced by a carbonate bank, or thick layer of limestone. A similar deposit today underlies the Bahamas, where the calcite-rich remains of plants and animals are laying down a blanket of limestone along the submerged southeastern edge of North America. The ancient lime muds are now preserved as the Cockeysville Marble, which is most easily seen as blocks of fill at Centennial Lake. The tranquil and clean seas of the Cambrian Period were eventually muddied; as the new ocean began to close, the seafloor buckled and began to slide back down into the depths of the earth, in a process known as "subduction." Wherever this occurs, a deep trench is formed in the ocean. It is flanked by a range of volcanoes where some of the downward-moving rock is melted and rises back to the surface as explosive lava in an arc-shaped range of volcanoes like the Aleutian Islands or the islands of Japan. Such a range rose in Howard County, the rocks of that range are preserved at the east tip of the county, near Elkridge, where they are known as the James Run Formation. The volcanic peaks were quickly attacked by torrential rains, which washed mud and sand into the sea. The dirty sediments are known today as the Wissahickon Schist (in central Howard County) and the Prettyboy Schist (in western Howard County, west of Route 94). No fossils have been found in these rocks, probably because they have been severely deformed and heated, but from the fossil record of other places we can guess that the county was inhabited by a rich fauna of arthropods (including trilobites), early molluscs, and the first primitive chordates (not yet deserving of the name "fish").

The ocean continued to shrink as the far side (Europe and Africa) advanced, and the rocks which had been crushed and mangled by being carried into the subduction zone were in part raised back to the surface as the island arc began to move westward, until they collided with the continent. The distorted,



SKETCH MAP OF THE GEOLOGY OF HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND



GEOGRAPHICAL CROSS SECTION OF HOWARD COUNTY, MARYLAND

badly broken, and ground-up remains of those rocks (known as a "melange") were pushed northwestward over the edge of the continent. The melange is known as the Morgan Run Formation. It includes slices of old oceanic crust, one of which forms a thin band (about a quarter of a mile wide) called the Soldier's Delight belt, from near Henryton to the Triadelphia Reservoir.

The Morgan Run rocks were exposed and in turn eroded, partly by large-scale submarine landslides. The landslide deposits, containing large blocks of rock embedded in mud, formed a new unit called the Sykesville Formation, after the town in Carroll County where it is well exposed. As the slow-motion collision continued at a rate of a couple of inches a year, the Sykesville and Morgan Run rocks were thrust northwestward as a single mass (termed the Liberty Complex), which is present in a band approximately five miles wide on both sides of Route 97. Further to the east, the old ocean floor and the volcanic island arc were also thrust northwestward, as slices of the earth's crust broke and piled up on one another. The resulting mountain-building period (the Taconic "Orogeny" during the Ordovician Period) takes its name from the modern Taconic mountains along the Massachusetts-New York boundary. Unlike the modern Taconics, the old Taconic mountains were a mighty range, and extended from Alabama to at least Newfoundland. The heat and pressure involved in the collision cooked and deformed

("metamorphosed") the rocks, and altered their original character. The limestone of the old carbonate bank was cooked to marble, the muds became schists, and any fossils were destroyed.

During the succeeding Silurian Period, after the deformation was completed, bodies of granitic rock intruded the piled-up tangle of strata, helping further to obliterate the original nature and relations of the old rocks. The granites are present as large masses ("plutons") near Ellicott City and near Columbia, and small tendrils and stringers of granite permeate much of the rock in this area. The locations of the plutons were probably marked on the surface by large volcanoes, and Howard County must have been endowed then with spectacular (if dangerous) scenery, as the volcanoes erupted explosively amidst the still-towering crags of the Taconic mountains. However, there was little appreciation of the scenery, as the first organisms (primitive plants and possibly the earliest terrestrial arthropods) were just beginning to colonize the barren dry lands.

The collision scenario was repeated about 250 million years ago as the Alleghenian Orogeny near the end of the Paleozoic Era, when the old Iapetus sea was annihilated as the continents on the far side finally met the North American coast. Another towering mountain range arose, and slices of the crust were again folded and pushed northwestward. Those folds and

(Continued on page 4)

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faults can be seen in western Maryland and central Pennsylvania (along with many other places in the Appalachians), but the effects are not as obvious in Howard County. One zone of faulting and shearing, about half a mile wide, parallels the west edge of the Liberty Complex approximately along Route 94, from the Patuxent River at Annapolis Rock to Lisbon and beyond to the Patapsco River. This line marks the old fault where the Liberty Complex was shoved northward, and it was reactivated during the later Alleghenian Orogeny. The ground-up and double- or tripley-sheared rock in the fault zone is called the Pleasant Grove Formation — a deceptively bucolic name for a body of rock that has had such a violent genesis!

Pangaea, the supercontinent formed by the final collision, didn't endure long. About 190 million years ago, Pangaea began to break up. Deep valleys, much like the present east African rift valley, formed as Europe and Africa began to pull away from North America and the modern Atlantic Ocean was born, much as the Iapetus Ocean had been born 400 million years earlier. Red sandy and muddy sediments laid down along the floors of those valleys can be found as near as Montgomery County, near Seneca, but none are preserved in Howard County. However, the flows of basaltic lava that came to the surface when the crust began to pull apart left evidence of their passing as discontinuous vertical sheets ("dikes") of basalt extending from Scaggsville in the south to Mount Hebron in the north. If you could have visited Howard County at that time, you might have seen some of the first primitive birds, along with wandering herds of herbivorous dinosaurs.

The high plateaus and deep rift valleys of the Triassic and early Jurassic Periods became the eastern edge of North America as the new ocean grew, and as the edge moved away from the hot upwelling of mantle material that had caused the continental breakup, it eroded down and subsided. By the following Cretaceous Period, it began to drop below sea level, and the Atlantic washed in over the easternmost reaches of the continent. In concert with the rivers carrying mud and sand from the now-aging Appalachian Mountains, the sea laid down a new layer of sediments, which now makes up the coastal plain of the eastern United States, from Massachusetts to Texas. Easternmost Howard County, east of I-95, is mostly blanketed by these sediments (the Patuxent Formation), which are made up of coarse sand and gravel, and clay and silt. The Patuxent is the youngest geologically significant rock in the area, although modern sands and silts are still being laid down along present-day streams.

As a geologist interested primarily in the older rocks and structures, I find the Patuxent Formation a nuisance, as it covers the more interesting (to me) and complicated rocks of the ocean-crust Baltimore Complex and the island-arc James Run Formation, which record the messy events of the early Paleozoic history of the county.

NOTE: On Sunday, October 19, Dennis will lead a field trip to teach us about the geology of Howard County. See the Calendar of Programs and Field Trips for details. We hope to see you there.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED FOR FAIR EXHIBIT

We need a volunteer to coordinate volunteers and setup of the club's exhibit at the Howard County Fair, beginning in 1998. Duties include soliciting and coordinating volunteers, and setup and planning of the fair's exhibit. Interested parties please contact **Darius Ecker 410-312-9165** or **Maud Banks 410-381-3240**.

RARE BIRD ALERT E-MAIL OPTION BY CHUCK STIRRAT

Have you wanted to add to your Howard County Rare Bird Alert List? Don't want to hear about the "great bird" after it left? Consider selecting participation in the club's Rare Bird Alert this year on the membership application included in this newsletter, as a way to up your list or avoid disappointment. And this year its even more effective as there is a new option.

The expanding use of e-mail by club members has motivated the introduction of an alternative way to communicate rare bird alert announcements to members. If you would like to receive notification of Howard County rare bird alert announcements by e-mail please provide your e-mail address and check the option for e-mail alert on the membership application form. All those who ask will be added to an e-mail distribution list that will be sent announcements of rare bird sightings in Howard County whenever the normal phone list alerting system is initiated. Since this is a new venture, we ask you to specify e-mail or telephone notification, not both.

The Howard County Bird Club rare bird alert program attempts to alert those who asked to be notified whenever a rarity is located in the county and there appears to be a reasonable chance the bird will be relocated by others who attempt to find the bird. The phone network relies on volunteers who receive the initial call and then call a pyramid network of callers with the details of what bird, when and where it was observed. On the membership survey you can specify preferences such as work and home phone numbers and whether messages should be left on answering machines and voice mail systems. Please request to be on the network only if the number will be a local phone call from the Columbia area (of course this is not a requirement for the e-mail alert.) Also it is requested that you not place your name on the

phone alert unless there is a reasonable chance you will attempt to actually locate rarities, as those making calls are volunteers and have only a finite amount of time to contribute. Since there is no such overhead with the e-mail alert, if you would like to "know about" rarities, even if you are unlikely to "chase" them, you can ask that you be on the e-mail alert.

Bea Newkirk is the current coordinator of the phone network (see article below). She also coordinates the volunteers who make the calls. (Thanks to the volunteers for your continuing support.) **Bob Solem** has agreed to coordinate and maintain the new e-mail distribution list. One of the following people should be contacted, as soon as possible, whenever a species not on the Howard County list or one with an abundance rating of D or E (as well as many of those with a C rating) is observed. They will assist with initiating the alert when appropriate:

Bea Newkirk 301-498-1902
Jo or Bob Solem 301-725-5037 (oclenata@msn.com)
Jane Farrell 410-381-7344 (Coskren@erols.com)
Marty Chestern 410-730-1527
Darius Ecker 410-312-9165 (darius@abs.net)
Chuck Stirrat 410-531-2417 (Charles.Stirrat@hnapl.edu)

The county list with abundance codes was published in **Birding Howard County, Maryland** and is available on the club World Wide Web site (<http://www.abs.net/~darius/birding.html>).

The phone chain although quite reliable, is not infallible, as volunteers may not always be available, or may not be able to contact everyone when they make calls. If you wish to increase the odds of being notified, you are urged to form a network of friends that will backup the official alert, and call you if they are notified of a rarity. As with any birding activity there are no guarantees that just because a bird was reported it will still be locatable when you visit the location, or that the report was completely accurate. The uncertainty is part of the challenge of being a birder. Good Birding!!

SPECIAL 25TH ANNIVERSARY PRESENTATION

On Thursday, October 9, 1997, the Howard County Bird Club will host a special 25th anniversary meeting and program. The scheduled presentation will be "The Dark Side of the Loon: Migration and Winter Biology of the Common Loon," by Paul R. Spitzer, Ph.D. The meeting and presentation will be held at 7:30 pm at the Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia. Dr. Paul Spitzer is an ecologist and teacher, trained in biological sciences with over 25 years of field experience. He is the Chesapeake's foremost loon researcher. For this special presentation only, tax deductible donations to Dr. Spitzer's research will be accepted at the meeting.



RARE BIRD ALERT COORDINATOR NEEDED

Bea Newkirk, who has headed the Rare Bird Alert (RBA) since its inception, has requested that someone else be appointed to take sole or shared responsibility for the RBA.

This is an ideal position for someone who is housebound; being an active field birder is not important. Telephoning 6-10 callers and organizing calling lists constitute the job. Since only those birds which are highly unusual in the county are put on the RBA, it may be triggered only once or twice a year.

For individuals who wish to see specific species which may not be rarities but might be needed as life or county birds, i.e. Yellow-throated Warbler, Willow Flycatcher, etc., check *Birding Howard County, Maryland* for possibilities or contact **Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361**, who maintains special "want lists."

If you would like to volunteer as Rare Bird Alert Coordinator or need more information, contact **Bea Newkirk 301-498-1902** or President **Maud Banks 410-381-3240**.



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

SEPTEMBER 1, 1997 - AUGUST 31, 1998 MEMBERSHIP



NAME(S) _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

MAIL TO TREASURER: *Shiras Guion*
 8007 Martown Road
 Laurel, MD 20723
 (301) 490-0444

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:
 NEW MEMBER OR RENEWAL
 HOUSEHOLD (ONE ADDRESS) \$ 22.50
 NUMBER OF: ADULTS _____
 JUNIORS (UNDER AGE 18) _____
 INDIVIDUAL..... \$ 15.00
 JUNIOR (UNDER AGE 18, NO ADULT IS MEMBER)..... \$ 9.00
 SUSTAINING (PER PERSON)..... \$ 45.00
 LIFE (PLUS ANNUAL CHAPTER DUES) \$400.00
 HOWARD Co. CHAPTER DUES (IF LIFE, OR MEMBER
 OF ANOTHER MOS CHAPTER)..... \$ 5.00
 NAME OF PRIMARY CHAPTER: _____

PHONE NUMBER () _____
 ABOVE INFORMATION CHANGED FROM LAST YEAR
 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: *Howard County Chapter - MOS*
IMPORTANT: (CHECK ONE)
 I WISH MY ADDRESS & PHONE NUMBER TO APPEAR IN THE STATEWIDE
 MOS DIRECTORY.
 I WISH MY ADDRESS, BUT NOT MY PHONE NUMBER TO APPEAR IN
 THE STATEWIDE MOS DIRECTORY.

QUESTIONNAIRE - (PLEASE COMPLETE EACH YEAR)

I WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

WHAT LOCATIONS WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN GOING ON OUR FIELD
 TRIPS?

WHAT PAST TRIPS HAVE YOU ENJOYED MOST?

WHICH HOWARD COUNTY BIRDS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF THE HOWARD COUNTY RARE BIRD
 ALERT NETWORK?(PLEASE CHECK ONLY IF THERE IS A REASONABLE CHANCE
 YOU WILL ATTEMPT TO FIND BIRDS WHEN NOTIFIED) LOCAL CALLS ONLY.

CONTACT ME AT HOME () _____
 WORK () _____
 E-MAIL _____

BEST TIME OF THE DAY TO CALL _____
 I CAN TELEPHONE OTHERS
 DELETE MY NAME FROM THE RARE BIRD ALERT LIST

PLEASE SEND INFORMATION ABOUT THE BIRD CLUB TO THE FOLLOWING
 NON-MEMBER:

NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

SURVEYS AND COUNTS

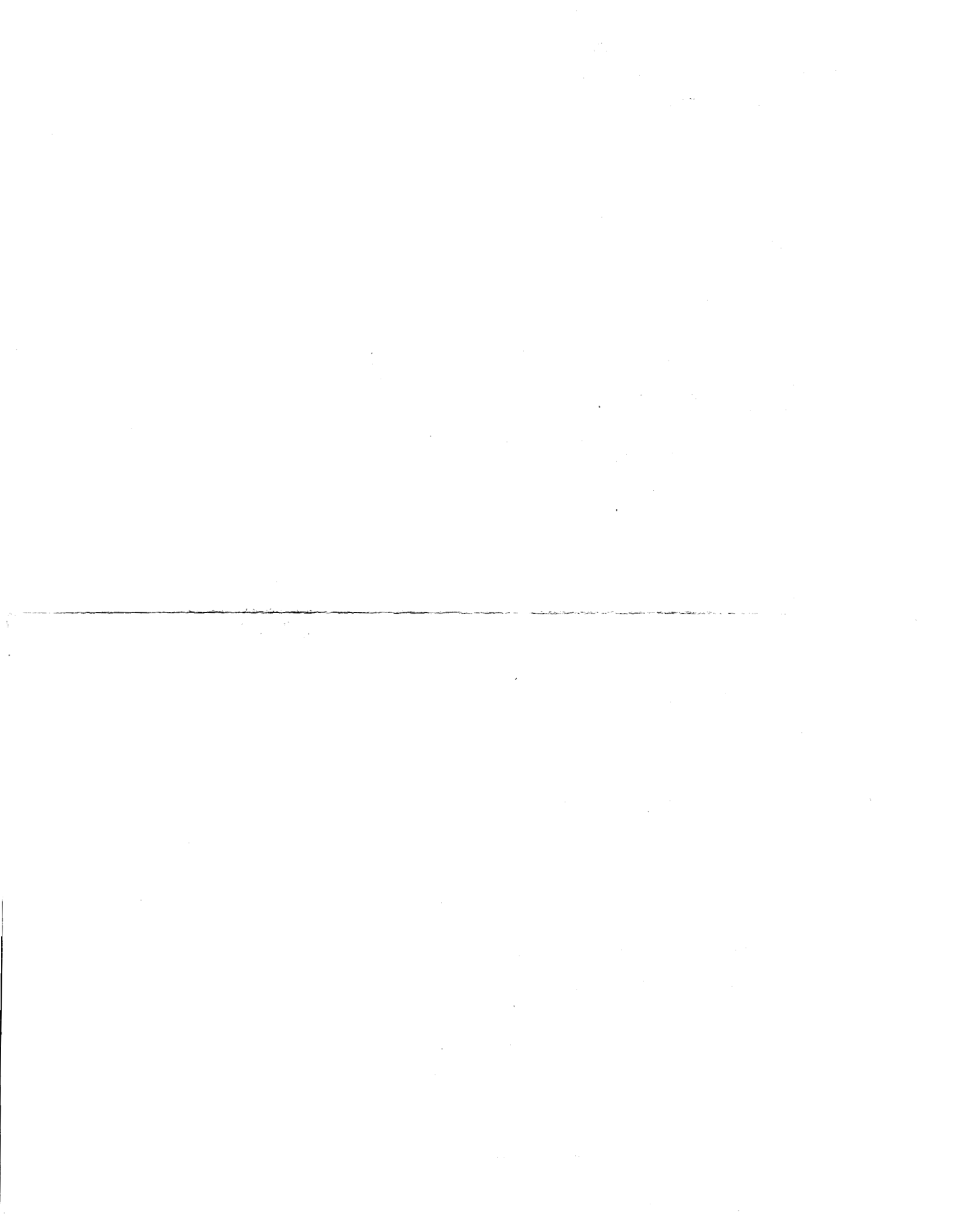
- MAY BIRD COUNT WILDFLOWERS & PLANTS
- FALL BIRD COUNT BUTTERFLIES
- MID-WINTER BIRD COUNT
- HELP COMPILE BIRD LISTS FOR PARKS & OPEN SPACE
- HOWARD COUNTY PARKS. WHICH? _____
- COLUMBIA LAKES. WHICH? _____
- OTHER? _____

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

- HOST/HOUSTESS AT A MEETING
- PROVIDE BAKED GOODS
- HELP WITH POTLUCK OR SPECIAL EVENTS
- STAFF CLUB EXHIBITS AT SHOWS & FAIRS
- WORK ON PUBLICITY & INFORMATION DISPLAYS
- PREPARE SPECIAL MAILINGS FOR STATE MOS

CLUB ACTIVITIES

- FIELD TRIPS:**
- HELP PLAN SERVE AS TRIP LEADER
- EDUCATION COMMITTEE:**
- GIVE TALKS IN SCHOOLS OR TO GROUPS
- PROGRAMS:**
- HELP PLAN
 - I HAVE SUGGESTIONS, PLEASE CALL ME
- BOOKSTORE:**
- ASSIST WITH SALES OR INVENTORY
- NEWSLETTER:**
- CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES HELP WITH MAILING
- CONSERVATION:**
- PHONE OR WRITE LETTERS TO PUBLIC OFFICIALS
 - WORK WITH CLUB MEMBERS AS ISSUES ARISE
- BOOST BLUEBIRDS (AND OTHER CAVITY NESTERS):**
- MONITOR A BOX
 - START A TRAIL
 - I HAVE A BOX/TRAIL



Common Loon @ _____
 Pied-billed Grebe @ _____
 Double-crested Cormorant _____
 American Bittern * _____
 Great Blue Heron _____
 Great Egret _____
 Snowy Egret * _____
 Little Blue Heron _____
 Cattle Egret* _____
 Green Heron _____
 Black-crowned Night-Heron * _____
 Glossy Ibis * _____
 Mute Swan _____
 Canada Goose _____
 Wood Duck _____
 Green-winged Teal _____
 American Black Duck _____
 Mallard _____
 Northern Pintail * _____
 Blue-winged Teal _____
 Northern Shoveler @ _____
 Gadwall* _____
 American Wigeon _____
 Ruddy Duck * _____
 Black Vulture _____
 Turkey Vulture _____
 Osprey _____
 Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk] _____
 Northern Harrier _____
 Sharp-shinned Hawk _____
 Cooper's Hawk _____
accipiter species _____
 Red-shouldered Hawk _____
 Broad-winged Hawk _____
 Red-tailed Hawk _____
 American Kestrel _____
 Merlin * _____
 Peregrine Falcon * _____
 Ring-necked Pheasant * _____
 Wild Turkey * _____
 Northern Bobwhite * _____
 Sora * _____
 American Coot @ _____
 Black-bellied Plover * _____
 American Golden-Plover ** _____
 Semipalmated Plover * _____
 Killdeer _____
 Greater Yellowlegs _____
 Lesser Yellowlegs _____
 Solitary Sandpiper _____
 Spotted Sandpiper _____
 Sanderling ** _____
 Semipalmated Sandpiper * _____
 Least Sandpiper _____
 Pectoral Sandpiper _____
 Dunlin ** _____
 Short-billed Dowitcher * _____
 Common Snipe * _____
 American Woodcock * _____
 Laughing Gull _____
 Ring-billed Gull _____
 Herring Gull _____
 Great Black-backed Gull @ _____
gull species _____
 Caspian Tern _____
 Forster's Tern ** _____
 Black Tern * _____
 Rock Dove _____
 Mourning Dove _____
 Black-billed Cuckoo _____
 Yellow-billed Cuckoo _____
 Eastern Screech-Owl _____
 Great Horned Owl _____
 Barred Owl _____

Common Nighthawk _____
 Chimney Swift _____
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird _____
 Belted Kingfisher _____
 Red-headed Woodpecker * _____
 Red-bellied Woodpecker _____
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker @ _____
 Downy Woodpecker _____
 Hairy Woodpecker _____
 Northern Flicker _____
 Pileated Woodpecker _____
 Olive-sided Flycatcher * _____
 Eastern Wood-Pewee _____
 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher ** _____
 Acadian Flycatcher * _____
 Least Flycatcher * _____
Empidonax species _____
 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 species _____
 Carolina Chickadee _____
 Tufted Titmouse _____
 Red-breasted Nuthatch * _____
 White-breasted 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 _____
 American Pipit * _____
 Cedar Waxwing _____
 European Starling _____
 White-eyed Vireo _____
 Solitary Vireo _____
 Yellow-throated Vireo _____
 Warbling Vireo @ _____
 Philadelphia Vireo * _____
 Red-eyed Vireo _____
 Blue-winged Warbler @ _____
 Tennessee Warbler _____
 Nashville Warbler _____
 Northern Parula _____
 Yellow Warbler @ _____
 Chestnut-sided Warbler _____
 Magnolia Warbler _____
 Cape May Warbler _____
 Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler _____
 Yel.-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler @ _____
 Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler _____
 Blackburnian Warbler _____
 Yellow-throated Warbler _____
 Pine Warbler _____

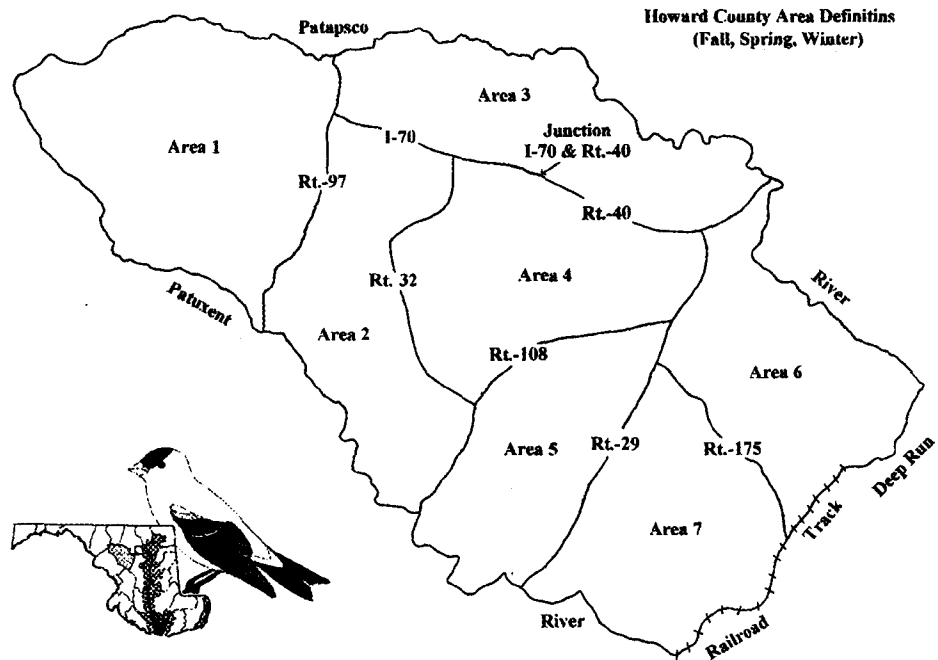
Prairie Warbler _____
 Palm Warbler @ _____
 Bay-breasted Warbler _____
 Blackpoll Warbler _____
 Cerulean Warbler @ _____
 Black-&-white Warbler _____
 American Redstart _____
 Prothonotary Warbler * _____
 Worm-eating Warbler @ _____
 Ovenbird _____
 Northern Waterthrush _____
 Louisiana Waterthrush @ _____
 Kentucky Warbler @ _____
 Connecticut Warbler ** _____
 Mourning Warbler ** _____
 Common Yellowthroat _____
 Hooded Warbler _____
 Wilson's Warbler _____
 Canada Warbler _____
 Yellow-breasted Chat _____
warbler species _____
 Summer Tanager ** _____
 Scarlet Tanager _____
 Northern Cardinal _____
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak _____
 Blue Grosbeak _____
 Indigo Bunting _____
 Rufous-sided Towhee _____
 Chipping Sparrow _____
 Field Sparrow _____
 Vesper Sparrow * _____
 Savannah Sparrow * _____
 Grasshopper Sparrow @ _____
 Song Sparrow _____
 Lincoln's Sparrow ** _____
 Swamp Sparrow @ _____
 White-throated Sparrow @ _____
sparrow species _____
 Dark-eyed Junco @ _____
 Bobolink _____
 Red-winged Blackbird _____
 Eastern Meadowlark _____
 Common Grackle _____
 Brown-headed Cowbird _____
blackbird species _____
 Baltimore Oriole _____
 Purple Finch * _____
 House Finch _____
 American Goldfinch _____
 House Sparrow _____
 Write-ins: ** (use back if necessary)

* May require write-up or oral amplification
 ** Will require write-up
 @ Early or late date, be sure of observation.

**FOURTH ANNUAL FALL COUNT
BY MIKE McCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT**

The Howard County Bird Club's annual Fall Count, scheduled to be held each year on the third Saturday of September, will be held on September 20. **Mike McClure 410-531-2780 and Chuck Stirrat 410-531-2417** are the county co-coordinators. Prior years have tentatively set a range of 130-135 species of birds identified on the count. Will the range be expanded? Spend the day with us and be the first to know! Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to participate. Ask to be put with an experienced individual if you do not wish to have your own territory. Counts are a good way to learn and are great fun. The county is divided into seven areas, as shown in the diagram, which are used for all annual counts. A fall season tally sheet for Howard County is included in this newsletter. Species that require a write-up include those identified with a double asterisk (**), as well as any write-ins. Others that may require a write-up or oral amplification (*), as well as those that are early or late dates (@), are indicated. Please note that as for the May count, a separate sheet is to be used for each type of count, i.e. regular, owling, feeder or stationary (e.g. hawk watches).

The following area coordinators have been named: **Area 1. Mark Wallace 301-725-6370; Area 2. Paul Zucker (H):301-279-7896, or (W):410-792-6000, Ext. 4971; Area 3. Darius and Paula Ecker 410-312-9165; Area 4. Bill and Karan Blum 301-776-8311; Area 5. Doug**



Odermatt 410-992-1812; Area 6. Bonnie Ott 410-461-3361; and Area 7. Eva Sunell 410-995-0029. You may call an area or county coordinator to volunteer, or check at the September meeting.

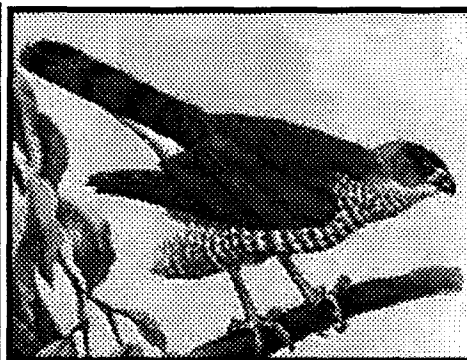
Martha and Don Waugh will host the tally rally at 9522 Angelina Circle, Columbia, MD, 410-381-8841. The pot luck dinner will be served at approximately 7:00 pm. Call them by September 16 to reserve space, choose a food to bring, and if necessary obtain directions.

**AT THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME
BY GRAZINA AND MIKE McCLURE**

Saturday, April 19, was a cold windy day with temperatures in the mid 40's and winds at 15 to 25 mph. We had finished leading the beginners field trip at Wilde Lake and were on our way home at about 11:45 am. We were driving up out of a stream valley and into an area of open fields, one of which was grass covered. The grass had not received it's first mowing of the spring, and stood about 4 inches high.

Suddenly, Grazina yelled, "There are Grouse or something in that field. Turn around!" We continued down the road looking for a safe place, turned around, and drove back to the road going into the field. We went in about 30 feet, stopped, and grabbed our binoculars.

We quickly determined that the two birds were Cooper's Hawks. One was an adult, the other was an immature, and they were about 70 feet away. The adult was about 10 feet to the right of the immature. Both birds appeared to be under stress, with puffed up feathers, occasional open mouths, and considerable head bobbing and posturing. The immature was also holding its wings fanned out like a cape and favoring its right leg. Our first thought was that the imma-



ture was injured and that the adult was about to have a nourishing lunch out of the immature.

As we continued watching, the adult began hopping towards the rear of the immature, but always maintaining the about 10 foot separation. The immature remained stationary other than turning its head to keep an eye on the adult. The adult stopped briefly behind the immature and then continued hopping to a position about 10 feet left of the immature. Suddenly, the immature hopped threateningly towards the adult. However, it seemed very unstable on its feet and appeared to be using its wings against the grass to balance itself. Also, its right

leg was outstretched toward the tail as if injured.

The birds continued posturing for about 30 seconds. Suddenly, the adult took flight with both legs down and talons open, heading towards the immature. We were sure that lunch was about to be served. However, the immature quickly turned 180 degrees, and began flying in a labored and unstable fashion. The immature was not injured, rather it was carrying a large kill of some type in its right talons. The two birds flew parallel to each other. During this flight, the adult made several unsuccessful attempts at grabbing the prey from the immature's talons. After about 50 feet of flight, the immature dropped the prey and the two birds continued close flying through a tree lined hedgerow and out of sight. We waited several minutes hoping the Cooper's would return, either individually or together. They did not.

We drove forward to get a better look at the prey, but the grass was too tall. We got out and walked over to the prey, and with a stick, rolled it over to confirm that the prey was a freshly killed adult American Robin.

We quickly returned to the vehicle, and continued our trip home.

SUMMARY OF 1997 HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT

BY PAUL A. ZUCKER

The 1997 Howard County May Count was held on May 10, 1997 from 4:00 am to 9:00 pm. There were 66 observers (same as last year and second only to 1994) in 39 parties who tallied slightly over 17000 individual birds (down slightly from the last three years). The total species count was an excellent 147 which is the sixth highest total in the last 24 counts. Although total party hours were similar to last year's, the totals were lower. Perhaps this was due to the unusually chilly weather on the count day.

The most notable sightings were: Wild Turkey (second time in 15 years), Gray-cheeked Thrush (now seen for the fifth time in 15 years, but documentation will still be required for the state compiler), Philadelphia Vireo (second time in 15 years), Brewster's Warbler (fourth time in the last 15), and Summer Tanager (twice in 15). Thirteen species had high counts compared to the last 24 years: Canada Goose (no surprise here), Black Vulture, Tree Swal-

low, Cliff Swallow, Solitary Vireo, and eight species of Warbler (Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Cerulean, Black-and-white)! On the other hand, the number of Blackpolls was low, and we missed the Cape May, Prothonotary, and Mourning Warblers.

This year was the first time in the 24 years I have records that the Bobwhite was not found. The Least Sandpiper was also missed. There was only one Ring-necked Pheasant seen, and only three Grasshopper Sparrows were found (record low for this species). Purple Martins were also low. The decline of the Bobwhite, Pheasant, and Grasshopper Sparrow may relate to the decline of open country in the more heavily counted parts of the county. House Finches were the lowest since 1985, declining sharply from a few years ago.

Special thanks go to the *Randles* for hosting yet another great tally rally and to *Chuck*

Stirat for helping with the numerical tabulations and for producing special checklists for use in the field and for the tallies. The efforts of the participants and area coordinators are also appreciated: *Maud Banks, Karen and Bill Blum, Marty Chestern, Lisa Colangelo, Randy and Richard Crook, Barbara and Phil Davis, Ward Ebert, Paula and Darlus Ecker, Jane Farrell, Carol Garza, Jane and Ralph Geuder, Edwin Gould, Shiras Gulon, David Hollyoke, Mike Kerwin (area 1), Dave Kubitsky, Robyn Landry, Mike Leumas, Nathan Levy, Dennis Luck, Brigitte Lund, Nancy Magnusson, Grazina and Mike McClure (area 4), Elaine and Jeff Metter, Rosamond Munro, Erich Neupert, Carol and Paul Newman, Doug Odermatt (area 5), Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott (area 6), Dawn Parker, Anita Picco, Susan and Ron Polniaszek, Suzanne Probst, Ann Marie Raterman, Frank Reilly, Nanine Rhinelander, Chandler Robbins, Clyde Robinette, Susan Setterberg, Craig Sholley, Sylvia and Jay Silverman, Romayne Smith, Jo and Bob Solem (area 7), Hank Stanton, Lisa Stevens, Chuck Stirat (area 3), Eva Sunell, Robin Todd, Marilyn Veek, Mark Wallace, Michele Wright, Helen Zeichner, and Sherry and Paul Zucker (area 2 and county compiler).*

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS - MAY 10, 1997

SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL
COMMON LOON	3	RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD	26	BROWN THRASHER	16	NORTHERN CARDINAL	746
AMERICAN BITTERN	1	BELTED KINGFISHER	16	CEDAR WAXWING	35	ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK	21
GREAT BLUE HERON	20	RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	1	EUROPEAN STARLING	1,050	BLUE GROSBEAK	8
GREEN HERON	25	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	174	WHITE-EYED VIREO	136	INDIGO BUNTING	149
MUTE SWAN	1	DOWNY WOODPECKER	98	SOLITARY VIREO	14	EASTERN TOWHEE	190
CANADA GOOSE	515	HAIRY WOODPECKER	11	YELLOW-THROATED VIREO	24	CHIPPING SPARROW	76
WOOD DUCK	34	NORTHERN FLICKER	63	WARBLING VIREO	8	FIELD SPARROW	81
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK	1	PILEATED WOODPECKER	17	PHILADELPHIA VIREO	1	SAVANNAH SPARROW	29
MALLARD	186	EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE	28	RED-EYED VIREO	327	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW	3
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	1	ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	33	BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	61	SONG SPARROW	149
COMMON MERGANSER	1	WILLOW FLYCATCHER	1	BREWSTER'S WARBLER (HYBRID)	1	LINCOLN'S SPARROW	2
BLACK VULTURE	69	LEAST FLYCATCHER	3	TENNESSEE WARBLER	2	SWAMP SPARROW	21
TURKEY VULTURE	190	EMPIDONAX SPECIES	7	NASHVILLE WARBLER	3	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	85
OSPREY	9	EASTERN PHOEBE	50	NORTHERN PARULA	169	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	6
BALD EAGLE	1	GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER	34	YELLOW WARBLER	163	BOBOLINK	277
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	5	EASTERN KINGBIRD	137	CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER	103	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	774
COOPER'S HAWK	3	PURPLE MARTIN	19	MAGNOLIA WARBLER	111	EASTERN MEADOWLARK	11
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	37	TREE SWALLOW	254	BLK.-THRTD. BLUE WARBLER	266	COMMON GRACKLE	772
BROAD-WINGED HAWK	11	N. ROUC +WINGED SWALLOW	63	YEL.-RUMPED (MYRTLE) WARBLER	411	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	129
RED-TAILED HAWK	32	BANK SWALLOW	8	BLK.-THRTD. GREEN WARBLER	71	ORCHARD ORIOLE	52
AMERICAN KESTREL	9	CLIFF SWALLOW	178	BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER	26	BALTIMORE ORIOLE	137
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	1	BARN SWALLOW	470	YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER	6	HOUSE FINCH	175
WILD TURKEY	2	BLUE JAY	270	PINE WARBLER	6	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	395
AMERICAN COOT	4	AMERICAN CROW	509	PRAIRIE WARBLER	33	HOUSE SPARROW	270
KILLDEER	28	FISH CROW	18	PALM WARBLER	2		
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	1	CROW SPECIES	405	BAY-BREADED WARBLER	1	TOTAL	17,211
LESSER YELLOWLEGS	1	CAROLINA CHICKADEE	330	BLACKPOLL WARBLER	5		
SOLITARY SANDPIPER	70	TUFTED TITMOUSE	346	CERULEAN WARBLER	28	START	4:00 AM
SPOTTED SANDPIPER	48	WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH	55	BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER	136	STOP	9:00 PM
SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER	2	CAROLINA WREN	99	AMERICAN REDSTART	286		
COMMON SNIFE	4	HOUSE WREN	97	WORM-EATING WARBLER	21	FOOT HOURS	194.5
RING-BILLED GULL	189	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	18	OVENBIRD	147	CAR HOURS	20.3
HERRING GULL	1	BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	263	NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH	13	OTHER HOURS	0
CASPIAN TERN	1	EASTERN BLUEBIRD	111	LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH	27	FOOT MILES	147.8
ROCK DOVE	246	VEERY	56	KENTUCKY WARBLER	35	CAR MILES	316.9
MOURNING DOVE	370	GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH	1	COMMON YELLOWTHROAT	345	OTHER MILES	0
BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO	1	SWAINSON'S THRUSH	9	HOODED WARBLER	20	OWLING HOURS	2.3
YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	4	HERMIT THRUSH	1	WILSON'S WARBLER	7	OWLING MILES	5.6
GREAT HORNED OWL	3	WOOD THRUSH	242	CANADA WARBLER	21	FEEDER HOURS	5.0
BARRED OWL	5	AMERICAN ROBIN	578	YELLOW-BREADED CHAT	11		
WHIP-POOR-WILL	1	GRAY CATBIRD	581	SUMMER TANAGER	2	PARTICIPANTS	66
CHIMNEY SWIFT	390	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	167	SCARLET TANAGER	138	PARTIES (REG, OWL, FEED)	39

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.

- September 11, Thursday **"Birds of Prey: Adaptations and Natural History,"** by Mike Mennett of Watkins Wildlife Nature Center. Join us for this exciting evening, which will include live raptors. NOTE: For this first fall meeting, wear a T-shirt or a sweatshirt showing where you've birded or a favorite conservation cause.
- October 9, Thursday **"The Dark Side of the Loon: Migration and Winter Biology of the Common Loon,"** by Dr. Paul Spitzer. We hope to see you for this very special event, our 25th anniversary lecture. See details on page 4 of this newsletter.
- 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 footwear and layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. NO pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement weather or fewer than three participants FOR INFORMATION, CALL BONNIE OTT, at 410-461-3361.
- August 31, Sunday **Butterfly Search at Centennial Park** - Meet at 9:30 am at the west end parking lot. Leader: Richard Smith. Will cancel if overcast. Call leader at 410-997-7439 for more information.
- September 13, Saturday **Migrant Search at Schooley Mill Park** - Meet at 7:30 am in the upper parking lot. Leaders: Darius and Paula Ecker. Should produce warblers, sparrows and some good flyovers. Paths may be muddy. Call leaders at 410-312-9165 for more information.
- September 20, Saturday **Fourth Annual Fall Count** - See details on the page 9 of this newsletter.
- September 22, Monday **Weekday Walk at David Force Park** - Meet at 8:30 am off Pebble Beach Drive. Leader: Jo Solem. Habitat includes woodlands, a stream and fields. Call leader at 301-725-5037 for more information.
- September 28, Sunday **Hugg-Thomas** - Meet at 8:00 am in the Hugg-Thomas parking lot. Leader: Dave Harvey. Fall migrants and sparrows probable. Paths may be muddy. Call leader at 410-795-3117 for more information.
- October 4, Saturday **A Day at Bombay Hook and Environs** - Meet at 7:00 am at the Rt. 32 and Broken Land Parkway park and ride (car parking). Leaders: Darius and Paula Ecker. Bring lunch, snacks and drinks. Expect small entrance fee and toll. Call leaders at 410-312-9165 for more information.
- October 18, Saturday **University of Maryland Central Farm** (joint with Harford County MOS) - Meet at 7:45 am at the Howard County Board of Education building on Route 108. Leader: TBA. May be muddy as we search the fields for sparrows. Possibly 10+ species of LBJ's. Call Bonnie for more information.
- October 19, Sunday **Geology Trip Howard County and Adjacent Areas** - Meet at 8:00 am at the Rt. 108 and Rt. 29 park and ride. Leader: Dennis Coskren. See article on page 3 of this newsletter. Learn the ancient history of Howard County as revealed in the rock. Call leader at 410-381-7344 for more information.
- October 21, Tuesday **Weekday Walk at Wilde Lake** - Meet at 8:30 am at the boat dock. Leader Helen Zeichner. Look for waterfowl and woodland birds. Call leader at 410-730-3695 for more information.
- October 25, Saturday **Annual Seed Sale** - Details will be mailed to you separately.
- October 26, Sunday **A Day at Waggoner's Gap** - Meet at 8:00 am at the Golden Triangle Mall (Route 40 and 29). Leader Ralph Geuder. Bring lunch, drinks and spend the day watching migrating hawks. Call Bonnie for more information.
- November 2, 9, 16, 23 Sunday **Sundays at Centennial Park Walk** - Meet at 8:00 am at the west end parking lot. Leader: TBA. Walk the paved path around the lake. Call Bonnie for more information.
- November 15, Saturday **Waterfowl in Howard County** - Meet 8:00 am at the Centennial Park concession stand. Leader: Jane Farrell. We'll tour several Howard County lakes and ponds. Call leader at 410-381-7344 for more information.
- November 29, Saturday **Snow Bunting Search at Sandy Point State Park** - Meet at 7:30 am at the Route 32 and Broken Land Parkway park and ride (car parking). Leaders: Darius and Paula Ecker. Last year we were successful in our search. Call leaders at 410-312-9165 for more information.

Board of Directors meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm, unless otherwise noted, at the home of the board member listed. If directions are required, please call the hosting board member.

September 25, Thursday **Mary-Jo Betts**, 9494 Crisscross Court, Columbia, MD 21045, phone 301-596-5559.

October 23, Thursday **Maud Banks**, 6666 Downdale Place, Columbia, MD 21045, phone 410-381-3240.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1997 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL IS DUE SEPTEMBER 26, 1997. Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Call or mail to Paula and Darius Ecker, 9270 Crazyquilt Court, Columbia, MD 21045, Phone 410-312-9165 or e-mail to Paulae2156@aol.com. Also, please visit the club's site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.abs.net/~dariuse/birding.html>.

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

apter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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CONSERVATION COLUMN

BY BOB SOLEM

More than 2 million people enjoy watching and photographing wildlife in Maryland each year. This includes people who take trips to see wildlife and those who enjoy wildlife in their own backyards. The total economic effect of wildlife viewing in Maryland in 1996 was \$458 million. This includes direct profits from sales generated by recreational expenditures and economic benefits from sundries, employment and tax revenues.

Almost half of Maryland's adult population maintains habitat for wildlife on their properties, including feeding wild birds, offering water, and planting shrubs and trees for wildlife food and shelter.

Hunting, fishing, bird watching, and other life-related recreation continued to be a successful national economic engine in 1996, with participants spending \$96.9 billion in pursuit of these pastimes and supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs, according to preliminary findings from the nation's most comprehensive study on this subject, conducted every 5 years by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

This represents more than a 59-percent increase in expenditures since 1991, when the Service last conducted its National Survey of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Related Recreation, and accounts for about 1.3 percent of the nation's gross domestic product, which measures the size of the economy. "The survey

confirms again that it is impossible to separate the well-being of our nation's wildlife and wildlife habitat from the health of our economy," said Acting Fish and Wildlife Service Director John Rogers. "Our fish and wildlife are not just a priceless treasure we hand down from one generation to another, they are the source of jobs and growth for both the national and local economy from coast to coast."

Meanwhile, the number of bird watchers, wildlife photographers, and other nonconsumptive participants 16 years and older dropped 17 percent during the 5-year period to 63 million from 76 million in 1991. *Even so, their expenditures rose 39 percent to \$29 billion.* Twenty-four million Americans took trips for the specific purpose of observing, photographing, or feeding wildlife in 1996 while 61 million enjoyed nonconsumptive wildlife-related recreation around their homes. In all the study showed 18 percent of the population 16 and older fished during 1996, 7 percent hunted, and 31 percent participated in nonconsumptive wildlife-related recreation.

Recent studies have shown that states with quality environments, attractive to wildlife, are attractive to business. According to Dr. Stephen Meyer of The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "States with stronger environmental policies consistently outperform weaker environmental states on all economic measures."

This comment was based on his 1994 study, "Environmental and Economic Prosperity: Testing the Environmental Economic Hypothesis." In Meyer's findings, Maryland ranked among the top states for economic growth, while it tied for eighth place among 17 states proven "strong" on an environmental checklist. In a similar study, "Gold and green," from the Institute for Southern Studies, Maryland ranked in the top 12 (of 50 states) in both economic and environmental quality. Maryland's effort to conserve environmental quality, including wildlife and habitats, contributes to its general economy by helping to make it a desirable place to live and work.

(Information in this article is from the U.S. FWS and a Maryland DNR newsletter.)

MAILING YOUR NEWSLETTER

Martha Chestem mails your newsletter each month as well as the seed sale blanks. She has to be sure that everything is prepared according to Post Office regulations so that we get the best postal rates. This newsletter reflects the changes that Suzanne Probst brought to our attention and that Paula Ecker incorporated into the newsletter format. Bob Solem is producing the labels with the delivery point barcode.

