



# THE GOLDFINCH



A CHAPTER OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## PRESIDENT'S WELCOME BY DON WAUGH

Welcome to the 29<sup>th</sup> year of the Howard County Bird Club and the 57<sup>th</sup> year of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Once again, we urge all members to sign on for another year of good birding with your friends in the club.

Last year we exceeded our goal of 300 members. If we continue our efforts to interest new people in birding with us, this year we could eclipse our all time high of 371 members. Let's do it.

We are planning another year of excellent programs and interesting and informative activities. With your help we can make this a banner year without allowing too much work to fall on any one member. Volunteers will be needed for field trip leaders, breeding bird atlas activities, hosting our meetings, and many other opportunities.

Last May 25, we lost a friend and long time member of the Howard County Bird Club. Marjorie Mountjoy had been unable to participate in club activities for the last few years, but she remained a close personal friend of the birding community. In appreciation of the friendships she made and the objectives of the club, she made a bequest of \$10,000 to the Club. We will miss her very much and we will do our very best to use her generous donation wisely.

Let's get together on Thursday, September 13 at 7:30 p.m. for our first program of the year at the Longfellow Elementary School. We're looking forward to seeing you and meeting the friends you bring.

*Don Waugh*

## BIRDING PRIVATE PROPERTY IN HOWARD COUNTY

Field trips offer a chance to get to know new places and bird on private property not always accessible on a daily basis. There are locations on the fall schedule that will offer new birding opportunities for our members. Planned fall field trips will give you the chance to learn the boundaries of the properties. In order to stay on good terms with the property owners, please follow the guidelines stated for each location. Some of the following places are not "new" but the details for birding them may be.

### Mt. Pleasant, Woodstock

The property of the Howard County Conservancy is open to all club members. The main entrance is a gravel road that turns right at an outbuilding. Please park in the grass before the turn. You must call at least two days prior and leave a message that you plan to be on the property birding. The number is 410-465-8877. There are groups of school children that come to the conservancy, pesticide applications and large events that may result in the director calling you back that it is an inconvenient day. Please do not go near or behind the main house. There are tenants that live there. Please keep a list of sightings and submit to Bonnie Ott. We are compiling a checklist for the property and appreciate all sightings and evidence of breeding. Their website is <http://www.hcconserv.com>

### Bon Secours

The Sisters of Bon Secours have invited us to bird their property. Volunteers from our club will help them compile a bird list for the grounds and lead nature walks for the residents and guests. There is a visitor parking lot at the top of the hill. The building on the right after you enter is where you check in. In the foyer they have maps of the nature trails. Inform the person in the first office on the left or with the security guard that you will be birding the grounds. Please keep in mind that this is a "mediation and spiritual retreat center"

so be quiet while birding the area. All bird lists need to be sent to Bonnie Ott. There is no need to call ahead. They are open 7 days a week and birding is allowed from dawn to dusk.

### University of Maryland Farm

The board reviewed the terms agreed upon with the farm's director as to birding the property. Access to the farm remains limited to the original dozen letter holders for purposes of counts, breeding bird surveys and leading field trips. Please do not go into the farm property unless on a club sponsored field trip or with an original letter holder. This policy is the result of many hours of work by club members in order to obtain limited access.

### Western Regional Park

This is a county-owned park of over 200 acres. It is not "opened" to the public but is available for birding. There are no trails or facilities. Parking is in the gravel lot directly behind the Glenwood Library. Do not go in the driveway to the senior center on the left. Stay away from the white house on Carr's Mill Road since there are tenants living there. There is a huge area of fields and woods ready to be explored. As with all county parks it is open from dawn to dusk. Please submit all lists of bird sightings to Bonnie Ott.

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## SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 TO MAY 31, 2001

BY JOANNE SOLEM

Once again birders endured a spring with no major migrant fallouts. The most active field observers complained of low numbers of neotropicals migrants (with the usual exception of Yellow-rumped, Palm, and Blackpoll warblers). An early heat wave in April brought a few birds far ahead of their usual arrival dates, while some short distance migrants, like Gray Catbirds, seemed to be in no hurry to put in an appearance. Although the passerine migration drew complaints, some seldom-seen wetland species were welcome. Least Bittern, King Rail, Cattle Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Glossy Ibis, and Common Moorhen were among the highlights of the season.

Many thanks to the dozens of observers who contributed sightings, which added to the understanding of local migration.

The last Common Loon was observed 5/22 over Rt 32 near Triadelphia Rd (D&MH) with the seasonal high of 71 on 4/14 at the University of Maryland Central Farm (UMDCF) (BO+). The final Pied-billed Grebe was spotted 4/27 at Lake Elkhorn (LKELK) (JC), the same location as the high of 7 on 4/9 (JC). Horned Grebes are normally seen singly or in groups of fewer than 6. This spring a flock of 30+ rested on Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) 3/27 (HH). One hung around LKELK until 5/6 (SAR); the last one lingered until 5/12 at the Avalon/Orange Grove section of Patapsco Valley State Park (AOGPV) (RO). No unusually high numbers of Double-crested Cormorants were noted. Two were still present at Lake Kittamaquundi 5/29 (MJ).

Three American Bittern reports were received: 4/14 UMDCF (BO+), 4/19 Corridor Rd Pond (ES), and 4/21 Meadowbrook (MDBRK) (KS,RC+). One of the special birds this spring was a Least Bittern seen 5/2 at UMDCF (BO,JS,EH), a long-anticipated county bird for all three observers. A hastily arranged field trip to the site the same evening brought out almost two dozen birders. Unfortunately, the bittern was not relocated, although an elusive King Rail was heard by a few people (DS,JS,Ja).

The Great Blue Herons in downtown Columbia didn't act as expected. Although 9 nests with adult birds were observed at the old site at Vantage Point (VANPT) early in the nesting season, none of those nests produced any young. Partway through the breeding season some of the birds at that location moved a few hundred yards north, where 7 nests were built which produced at least 5 young (sight lines were not good so there may have been more). Other pairs moved several hundred yards in the other direction to the north end of Lake Kittamaquundi (LKKIT) where they built 5 nests which produced at least 6 young (MC). These nests were easily seen from the sidewalk near the hotel.

The first Great Egret of the season was present 3/25 at VANPT (HZ,MC). Cattle Egrets no longer appear annually, so one at Fore Bay Pond (FORBY) near LKELK on 4/20 drew plenty of attention (SN+). The earliest Green Heron was noted at MDBRK 4/1 (BO,EH). Single adult Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported on 4/21 from both LKKIT (MC) (where it appeared frequently throughout the period), and FORBY (SN+). An adult Yellow-crowned Night-Heron made a brief appearance 5/9 at LKELK (JC). Any Glossy Ibis is notable, 2 are extra special. Fortunately, they stayed at Fulton

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 301-725-5037. 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

Pond (FULPD) 4/30 (KM+) & 5/1 (6:30 p.m.-NM) allowing many birders to see them.

The only Snow Geese were found in March: 3/8 Cooksville, 2 wh. (WE) and 3/12 Daisy Rd Ponds (DSYRP) 1 (BO). March 3 was a major flight day for migrating Canada Geese. On that date, a northbound flock of 100+ flew high over Wilde Lake (WILLK); another of the same size was noted high over Centennial Park (CENPK) (KS). The same day 5 flocks totaling 670 birds passed over Warfield's Pond Park (WARPP) between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m. heading northwest. Traveling with the Canadas were 32 Tundra Swans (NMLJS).

Five Wood Ducks appeared at Daniels, PVSP (DANPV) 3/2 (JS,KT) where they breed annually. A female (f) with 5 young at David Force Park on 5/28 was nice (ES,MWR). Gadwalls, as usual, were scarce with 2 at Union Chapel Pond (UNCHP) on 3/14 & 3/26 (KT) and 1 male on 4/2 at CENPK (KS). Often American Wigeon are relatively widespread and numerous migrants. Except for a flock of 65 on 3/12 at DSYRP (BO), numbers were modest and reports few with 10 on the same pond 3/9 (KT) and 6 at Waterford (WATFD) on Jennings Chapel Rd 4/2 (MWD) the high counts. The 50+

American Black Ducks at UMDCF 3/14 was the seasonal high (BO,JS,KT,HZ). Three Blue-Winged Teal were at DANPV from 3/14 (RC) to 4/6 (DF), with 2 at UMDCF on 4/22 (NM). The only Northern Shovelers reported were 2 spotted from Brighton Dam 3/11 (BO,KS+). One to 3 Northern Pintails frequented VANPT from 3/2 to 4/3 (HZ), making appearances at WILLK 4/5 (HZ) and CENPK 3/31 (JC). The last Green-Winged Teal was observed at CENPK 5/17 (KS), with a high of 15 at UMDCF 4/12 (BO,EH,JS,KT).

Canvasbacks wintered in small numbers with the last one at CENPK 3/23 (JC). One male Redhead was present at Pigtail (PIGTL) 3/18 (NM) to 3/26 (HH). Seasonal highs of migrant Ring-necked Ducks were modest. Sixty on 3/25 at PIGTL was tops (BO). The last one was seen 4/24 LKELK (DE). A leucistic Ring-necked (shades of gray) stayed at CENPK from 3/16 (JC) to 3/22 (KS). It associated with a flock of 9 to 11 Ring-neckeds of normal plumage. A f Greater Scaup in March (JC) & a male in April (KS), both at CENPK, as well as 2 on TRIRS 3/26 (HH) were more than usual. One flock of 23 Lesser Scaup on TRIRS 3/9 (JS,KT) to 3/24 (NM) was the peak number for that species. A Long-tailed Duck (formerly Oldsquaw) on 3/15 at TRIRS (JS) stayed until 3/26 (HH), although it was not always visible from viewing areas. Buffleheads were few. A flock of 20 on 4/4 WATFD (MW) was the high. The only Common Goldeneyes were 3 f on 3/13 LKELK (SAR).

Hooded Merganser numbers were low with the last 4 f seen at DANPV 4/15 (NM). Common Mergansers generally live up to their name in this county where they winter, except when the reservoirs are frozen. The high count on TRIRS was 409 on 3/17 (NM), with the last

one seen on the Patapsco River at Marriottsville PVSP (MARPV) 4/8 (RR). Red-breasted Mergansers are often hard to find, but more sightings than usual were logged with a high of 7 on 3/5 PIGTL (KT). Ruddy Ducks were present, as usual, at WILLK but in low numbers (m.obs.). The last 2 were seen at LKELK 4/24 (DE). The year's first Osprey flew over CENPK 3/18 (JMa+). Numerous Bald Eagle sightings are a welcome change from just a few years ago. The outcome of the nest on TRIRS is unknown according to WSSC personnel. Autumn, not spring, brings predictable flights of Broad-winged Hawks; however, on 4/13 over Manahan Dr (MANHN) 440+ went streaming over soon after a front went through (BO). In the same flight were 8 Red-taileds, 3 Osprey, 6 Red-shoulders, 2 Sharp-shinneds, and 4 Accipiter sp. On the same date RC had 1 Broad-winged Hawk at MARPV. Merlins were reported from 4/5 CENPK (BO) to 5/6 MANHN (BO).

A Northern Bobwhite was heard 5/5 at Rockburn Branch Park (RKBPR) (BO,JS), a standard location for the species a decade ago. Another fine report was a Ring-necked Pheasant heard 5/20 on Hobb's Rd (B&GH). One Wild Turkey was reported 5/12 in western Howard County (HOWCO) (MK).

Common Moorhens create a stir because of their infrequent appearance. One was present 5/14 & 15 at WARPP (KT+), a good bird for the park. American Coot numbers peaked at 22 on 3/19 at CENPK (SPe,KBo).

Reservoirs were full so the best shorebird habitat was at CENPK, FORBY, & UMDCF. The Semipalmated Plover high was 15 at UMDCF 5/21 (NM). On 3/11 at the farm, the same observer had had the year's first Greater Yellowlegs, while the initial Lesser Yellowlegs appeared at CENPK 4/10 (BO). A Solitary Sandpiper arrived at LKELK 4/14 (ES,MWR) and the last flew over MANHN 5/22 (BO). Semipalmated Sandpiper numbers peaked briefly at 16 on 5/22 UMDCF (JS); on the same date Least Sandpipers hit 42 (JS) at UMDCF & 5 at LKELK (JC). A Pectoral Sandpiper was present 5/14 LKELK (JMa). A Dunlin is always a special sighting. This year a breeding-plumaged bird was present at UMDCF 5/21 (NM) & 5/22 (JS). Common Snipe numbers reached 79 on 4/3 UMDCF (BO). American Woodcock were performing courtship flights at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPENV) by 3/15 (JSc). They were also reported from Schooley Mill Park (SLMLP) 4/13 (RC) and, despite extensive development, at Gateway (GATWY) 5/12 (ES,SN). One wonders how much longer they will hold on there.

A major flight of Bonaparte's Gulls was caught on 4/5 when HZ had 75 on LKKIT in the a.m. On WILLK in the p.m., the same observer had a flock of 52 which grew to more than 100. It reached 131 at 4:15 p.m. (KS). He saw what may have been the same flock at CENPK at 5:00 p.m.

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The last one of the spring was present at LKKIT 4/22 (SN). The UMDCF hosted 500 Ring-billed Gulls on 3/17 (NM). Great Black-backed Gulls frequented WILLK from at least 2/6 to 4/7 with a high of 4 on 4/5 (m.obs.).

Caspian Tern numbers were low, though at least a few could be seen much of the month of April from 1 on 4/2 CENPK (JS) to 1 on 4/26 LKKIT (JS). The high was 17 on 4/22 at LKKIT (SN). Forster's Terns are more likely to be seen in late summer and autumn so a single on 4/17 at CENPK (LM) was nice.

A Black-billed Cuckoo was watched on 5/6 at the Sisters of Bon Secours (SBSCR) property on Marriottsville Rd. (BO); 1 was also observed on 5/8 SLMLP (SAr,JMa). We received a secondhand report of a probable Barn Owl heard on several dates in late March and early April on Guilford Rd. near Clarksville (fide MW). There is limited habitat for the species in that area.

The first Common Nighthawk of the year was spotted at FORBY 5/1 (SAr); the last 6 were over MANHN 5/25 (BO). Whip-poor-wills were back along Hipsley Mill Rd by 4/13 (KT). They were also heard 4/30 on Jennings Chapel Rd west of Daisy Rd (MW). Early Chimney Swifts were present on 4/9 over both MDRK 1 (NM,JS) & MANHN 5 (BO). The first Ruby-throated Hummingbirds moved into western HOWCO with 1 at Wynfield (WYNFD) 4/21 (RC) & 1 on Duvall Rd. (DUVAL) 4/22 (KT).

Two Red-headed Woodpeckers were noted, both in mid-May: 5/12 Henryton, PVSP (HENPV) (D&PE) & 5/13 UMDCF (BO,EH,HZ). The last Yellow-bellied Sapsucker lingered until 5/8 at LKELK (JMa).

GA had a rather early Eastern Wood-pewee at HENPV 4/28. An Acadian Flycatcher turned up near Ellicott City (ELLCY) 5/2 (JMa). The first Willow Flycatcher was not found until 5/11 at CENPK (GA). The only Least Flycatcher reported was silent most of 5/23 at MANHN. Finally, in late afternoon it began calling, identifying itself (BO). Two Olive-sided Flycatchers were observed: 5/12 MPENV (CR) & 5/23-24 MANHN (BO+). Great Crested Flycatchers were reported on 4/22 at WILLK (HZ) & also at DUVAL (KT).

White-eyed Vireos showed up on 4/13 at CENPK (GA) & MPENV (JMa). Warbling Vireos were back at UMDCF on 4/21 (BO,JC,EH,JS). Horned Larks are always of interest. On 3/7 there were 12+ on Rt 97 near Lisbon, while on 5/8 a pair was feeding young at UMDCF (WE). Fifteen were tallied on 5/12 on Underwood Rd (D&MH).

Tree Swallows were seen in good numbers on 4/7 with JC counting 20 at WILLK & 100 at CENPK. An early Rough-winged Swallow was at MARPV 3/18 (RC). A final Bank Swallow came through 5/13 UMDCF (NM).

Red-breasted Nuthatches were not present in large numbers, but they were consistent at a few feeders. DHo last saw his nuthatch on 5/5 (central HOWCO); a pair in Swansfield stayed until 4/23 (JTv); & the f. of a pair north of CENPK last appeared at the feeder 5/6 & 1 was last heard in the pines behind the house 5/22 (GA).

A completed Carolina Wren nest was discovered at CENPK 3/15 (BO), while on 3/31 in Allview (ALLVW) there was a clutch in a nest on a porch. The nesting failed in cold, wet weather (ES). March House Wrens could be wintering birds. There were two sightings that

month: 3/8 LKELK (JC) & 3/18 PIGTL (NM). The next reported was 4/9 DANPV (JMa), three weeks later. The only spring Marsh Wren was at AOGPV 5/12 (JSh). The final Ruby-crowned Kinglet sighting was 5/12 (UMDCF) (M&GMc,RSm).

A Veery arrived in Worthington 4/25 (EMe). The same yard played host to an extremely early Swainson's Thrush for the week of 4/17-25. The last ones in the county stayed until a normal 5/27 at Hallmark (HALMK) (WEb) & DUVAL (KT). The HALMK yard was visited by a Gray-cheeked Thrush 5/23-24.

American Pipits are visitors to fields in western HOWCO, but now and then they appear elsewhere. One frequented the rocks below the dam at CENPK from 3/18 (JMa+) to 4/3 (HZ,MC). Cedar Waxwings stayed in flocks well into May—from 200 in a single flock 3/21 at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab (NM) to 150 at LKELK 5/22 (JC).

The only Golden-winged Warbler sighted was 4/25 at CENPK (PMc). Tennessee Warblers are more common in autumn, but there were a number of spring reports. The last was 5/23 in east Columbia on Sandchain (TDC). Cape May Warblers are another species with a better chance of being seen in autumn. There were two spring records this year: 5/4 ALLVW (ES) & 5/12 SLMLP (NM). Although few warbler species appeared in any numbers, Yellow-rumped Warblers can always be counted on to make a good showing. LKELK is a local concentration spot, especially along the south shore. On 4/17 SAr vaguely claimed "hundreds" near the lake, while on 4/27 JC counted 125. Black-throated Green Warblers arrived a little early at HENPV on 4/21 (GA). The first Blackburnian Warbler was found 5/1 at SBSCR (BO,JS+).

Yellow-throated Warblers returned to nesting areas along the Patapsco River on 4/7: HENPV 1 (BO,HZ); MARPV 2 (RC) & 1 (J&TDC). The trill of Pine Warblers is one of the early signs of spring. The first were tallied on 3/16: TRIRS 2 (BO,MJB) & the Middle Patuxent, Eden Brook 1 (ES,MW). The initial Prairie Warbler was at SLMLP 4/15 (DOI). Palm Warblers are another species that can sometimes be found by the dozens, especially at LKELK. The high count there (as well as countywide) this spring was 40 (ES,MW). Blackpoll Warblers are late migrants with 9 still at LKELK 5/31 (DE). The first Cerulean Warbler was located at HENPV 4/22 (GA). Flashy Prothonotary Warblers always attract attention. This year the earliest was 4/13 along Benson Branch in central HOWCO (GMc). There were three other sightings. Perhaps next year's Breeding Bird Atlas effort will turn up a nesting pair again. As usual, Northern Waterthrushes are the later arriving of the waterthrushes. This year 1 was noted at RKBPR 4/23 (NM,JS), while the first Louisiana Waterthrush had arrived more than a month earlier on 3/22 CENPK (SMu). Mourning Warblers are late migrants with the bird seen 5/23 MANHN (BO) right on schedule. There is no ready explanation for the male reported on 4/25 at HENPV (seen & heard) (JMa). A Hooded Warbler turned up at RKBPR 4/22 (E&JMe). The first Wilson's Warbler 4/30 LKELK (SAr) was on the early side. Canada Warblers were scarce this spring. The first one came through on a very early 4/22 at RKBPR. How pleasant to have the sighting verified by an excellent photograph (E&JMe)!

Summer Tanagers are noteworthy birds

here. This spring, sightings (all males) spanned a month. One was both heard & seen on 4/24 HENPV (BO,JS,MJB); the second was at Western Regional Park (WSTRP) 5/7 (KT); and the third (& fourth?) bird was noted 5/14 & 5/23 at MANHN (BO+).

On 4/10 at CENPK 10 Eastern Towhees were present (JC). The last American Tree Sparrow was tallied on 3/28 at UMDCF (BO). Numbers of Chipping Sparrows at WYNFD rose from 1 on 3/2, to 11 on 3/4, & finally to 45 on 4/18 (RC). Vesper Sparrows are usually present the first 10 days of April. This spring 2 were noted on 4/7 at Mount Pleasant (MTPLT) (BO). Ten were present on 4/10 at UMDCF (BO). A number like that is more reminiscent of totals 40 years ago than anything in recent memory. One was also noted at GATWY on 5/12 (ES,SN). Savannah Sparrows numbers hit 40 at the following locations: 4/6 WSTRP (JS,KT); 4/7 MTPLT (BO+); & 4/21 UMDCF (BO). The latest were 2 on 5/20 at Woodford Rd & Rt 97 (KS). A Grasshopper Sparrow appeared on 4/19 in each of two locations: UMDCF & Ten Oaks Rd (WE). Numbers of Fox Sparrows were low. The last one was noted 4/10 on Whiskey Bottom Rd (JMa). Song Sparrows were present at UMDCF in numbers for a month. One hundred were counted on 3/4 & again on 4/3 (BO). Lincoln's Sparrows, which are so reliable in the county in autumn, are hard to find in spring. The only two sightings were 5/12 SBSCR (RT) & 5/15 SLMLP (HH). Six Swamp Sparrows were tallied on May Count 5/12, the last of the season. One White-throated Sparrow hung around at Talbot's Landing until 5/27 (R&JG). A final White-crowned Sparrow was spotted 5/13 HENPV (JMa). A Dark-eyed Junco stayed until 5/25 at WILLK (CN), unusually late for this April-departing species.

Some Rose-breasted Grosbeaks have become confirmed feeder users. An early f. appeared at a feeder near WILLK 4/18 (HZ). The last reported was 5/23 MANHN (BO). Two f. Blue Grosbeaks were seen at LKELK 4/27 (JC). Indigo Buntings are also utilizing feeders. They were reported on 4/22 from three locations: WILLK (ftr) (HZ), Longfellow (ftr) (CC), & MPENV (BO). Bobolinks were present for much of the month of May with a high of 140 on 5/5 at UMDCF (BO). Rusty Blackbirds were tallied in small numbers with the last 2 birds 4/30 at LKELK (BO). The first Orchard Oriole was spotted at SLMLP 4/22 (DOI). The 2 male Baltimore Orioles (1 singing) reported from High Ridge 4/4 were bizarrely early, though they were present in a yard where they have nested for at least 30 years (BN). The next one arrived in the county 4/24 at CENPK (GA)—much more appropriate timing.

Purple Finches were not reliable at any location and, in each case, there were just a few. A male was the first of the spring at MANHN 3/26 (BO) and also the last, at LKELK 4/25 (SAr). Others who reported the species during this period (mostly at feeders) were JC, JH, JMa, EMe, J&RS, KT & HZ.

Observers who are identified with initials: SAr - Stan Arnold, GA - Glenn Austin, MJB - Mary Jo Betts, KBo - Ken Board, MC - Martha Chestern, JC - Jane Costigan, TDC - T. Dennis Costigan, RC - Ralph Cullison III, WE - Wes Earp, WEb - Ward Ebert, DE - Dennis Eckler, PE - Paula Eckler, DF - David Farrer, R&JG - Ralph & Jane Gauder, D&MH - Dave & Marureen Harvey, B&GH - Bill & Gayle Hill, HH - Hans Holbrook, EH - Emmaline Holbrook, DHo - Dave Hoyt, MJ - Mark James, MK - Mike Karsin, MH - Nancy Magnusson, JMa - John Mahoney, KM - Kathy Marano, GMc - Graeme McCune, MMc - Mike McClure, PMc - Paul McGowan, EMe - Elaine Metter, JMa - Jeff Metter, Siku - Sue Michler, CN - Carol Newman, SN - Sue Neri, DOI - Daryl Olson, ROY - Richard Orr, BO - Bonnie Ott, SPS - Sherry Puzari, RR - Robert Ringler, CR - Chan Robbins, KS - Kurt Schwarz, JSc - Jeff Schwiegerjohn, JSh - Jay Sheppers, RSm - Romayne Smith, JS - Jo Solari, RS - Robert Sear, ES - Dan Southworth, ES - Evan Sward, RT - Robin Todd, KT - Kate Tuffs, JTv - Jane Trevarion, MW - Mark Wallace, MW - Michele Wright, HZ - Helen Zechner m.obs. - many observers.

## FIELD TRIPS 101

Field trips are a great way to learn more about bird identification. Even if you have the ability to identify most birds on your own, field trips offer the chance to become familiar with places that may be new to you. It's a chance to meet other club members and enjoy the company of a great group of people.

Here are a few helpful hints to keep our trips running smoothly.

1. **Be on time.** Make note of the meeting time and be "ready to bird" at the appointed time. Some trip leaders will start off on the hour and if they head off into the woods, will be out of sight quickly.

2. **Talking.** All leaders rely heavily on their ears to find and identify birds. During the course of a field trip there are appropriate times to talk (walking through a non-birdy spot, waiting at rest stops). During active birding, conversation should be kept to a minimum. When there is excessive noise, the birds disappear.

3. **Stay behind the leader.** It is good field trip etiquette to stay behind the leader at all times. Forging ahead may flush or disturb birds.

4. **Spishing.** Unless requested by the leader, avoid spishing or playing tapes.

5. **Calling out birds.** Most leaders appreciate participants' help with spotting and calling out birds. It is better to alert the group to a bird rather than let it "get away." If you are unsure of a sighting feel free to alert the leader and leave the identification to him/her.

6. **Asking questions.** All leaders welcome questions. The only time to refrain is when the leader is actively trying to draw in a bird or identify it.

7. **Sharing costs.** When carpooling, it is appropriate to share the cost of gas.

2001-2002  
CLUB BOARD MEMBERS

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**Don Waugh**

Vice President:  
**Kurt Schwarz**

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**Kate Tufts (first year)**  
**Carol Garza (second year)**

State Directors:  
**Mary-Jo Betts**  
**Paula Ecker**  
**Darius Ecker**

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**October 20 Saturday** - Western Regional Park - Jo Solem and Bonnie Ott - 1/2 day. 8:00 am. RT 97 south of I-70. Take library entrance on west side of RT. 97 just below Miller's Mill Rd but before Carr's Mill Rd. Drive into but do not park in library lot. Just past the front of the library, turn right on a driveway to the right of the white house (the senior center). Park in the gravel lot. Spend several hours exploring an old farm which will become a major county park. Fields should provide sparrows, great view of the sky for flyovers, two small woodlots and a bit of scrub. Wear long pants. There are ticks! Trails are not always well-defined and expect to walk through tall grass. Facilities at the library (along with Starbucks!) Call Bonnie for info-410-461-3361.

**October 21 Sunday** - THE BIG SIT - Centennial - Kurt Schwarz-all day. Meet at 8:00 am. on the west side of the wildlife area. This is our third year participating in this event, sponsored by the New Haven Bird Club. Stay for a little while or stay all day. Bring chair and sustenance as we count as many species as possible from our 17 foot circle. Facilities available. ~~No walking. Call Kurt for info-410-461-1643~~

**October 27 Saturday** Seed Sale. Details will be mailed.

**November 3 Saturday** - Kinder farm Park-1/2 day - David Farmer. 7:30 - 32 and Broken Land Parkway to carpool to AA county. This varied habitat should yield an assortment of birds. Facilities available, call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**November 4, Sunday** - Centennial Park - 3 hours - John Maloney. 8:00 West end lot (pg. 5). Walk around the lake for a wide variety of land and water birds. Migrant raptors still moving. Facilities available, call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**November 8, Thursday** - Weekday Walk Lake Elkhorn - 2 hours. 8:30 Broken Land Pkwy. lot. (pg. 43) Walk around the paved path of the lake to look at waterfowl and woodland birds. No facilities. Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**November 11, Sunday** -Centennial Park - 3 hours - Darius Ecker. 8:00 West end lot (pg. 5). Walk around the lake for a wide variety of water and woodland birds. Facilities available, call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**November 18, Sunday** - Centennial Park - 3 hours - Mike Kerwin. 8:00 West end lot. (pg. 5) Walk the paved path around the lake to look for migrating waterfowl. Very small possibility of Oldsquaw. Facilities available, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**November 19, Monday** - Weekday Walk at Wilde Lake - 2 hours. 8:30 Boat dock (pg. 47) Walk along the lake and through woodlands in search of winter birds and waterfowl. No facilities. Call Bonnie for info- 410-461-3361

**November 25, Sunday** - Centennial Park -3 hours - Richard Orr. 8:00 at West end lot. (Pg. 5) Looking for migrant waterfowl and any lingering odenates. Facilities available, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361

**December 1, Saturday** - BLACKWATER - all day - Stan Arnold. All day at this eastern shore refuge to look at waterfowl extravaganza. Dress very warmly, bring food and drink for the entire day. Scopes useful. Facilities available. Call Stan for info 410-768-0155

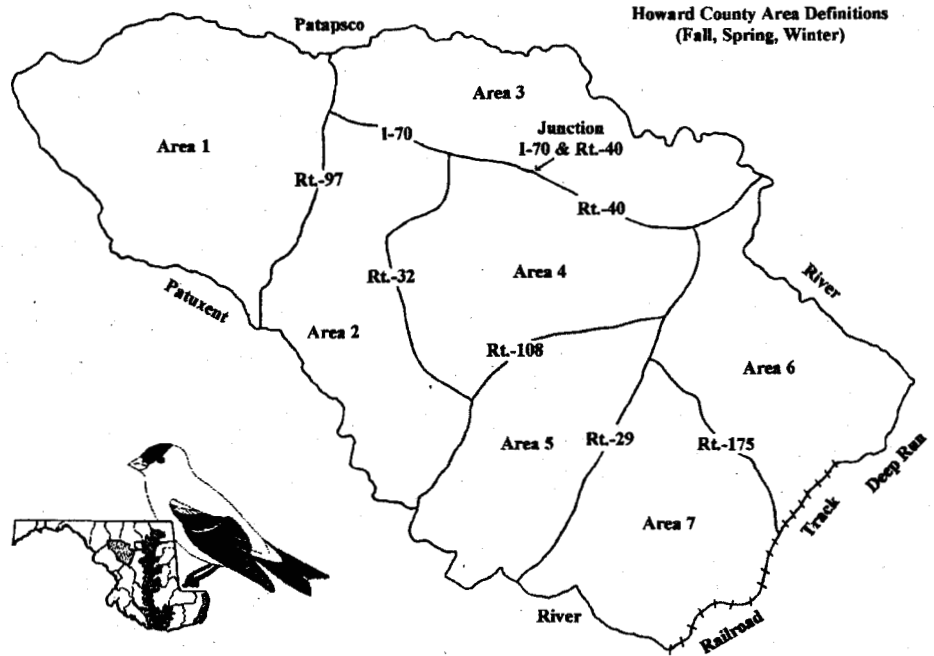
**New Years Day** Start your 2002 list!

**Martin Luther King Weekend.** Delaware 3 day event. Kate Tufts is in the process of putting together a new birding adventure.

## EIGHTH 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 15<sup>th</sup>. Mike McClure 410-531-2780 and Chuck Stirrat 410-531-2417 are the county co-coordinators. Prior years have set an average of 127 species of birds identified on the count. Will this fall count be above or below? 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 (shown below) 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.

The following area coordinators have been named: Area 1) Mark Wallace 301-725-6370; Area 2) Paul Zucker (H):301-279-7896, or



(W):443-778-4971; Area 3) Darius & Paula Ecker 410-312-9165; Area 4) Bill & Karan Blum 410-489-9197; Area 5) Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643; 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 meet-

ing. 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 Sept. 15, to reserve space, choose a food to bring, and if necessary obtain directions.

## SUMMARY OF 2001 HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT BY PAUL A. ZUCKER

The 2001 Howard County May Count was held on May 12, 2001 from 4:15 AM to 11:30 PM. The total species count of 144 was an average result, and the party hours (190 by foot, 21 by car, 1 by owl, 2 at feeders, and 2 on bicycle) were also typical of the last several years. The total number of birds seen (over 17000) was more than last year but similar to the few years prior to that. In contrast, our 72 participants in 41 parties was the highest ever. There was another great change from last year: the weather was lovely, with a high in the mid-eighties. (No one will forget the difficulty of birding in last year's 95 degree, muggy heat.)

We did have a number of unusual sightings (recorded fewer than five times in the previous 15 counts). These included Horned Grebe (one previous time in the last 15 years), Herring Gull (4 previous), Red-headed Woodpecker (3 previous), Olive-sided Flycatcher (one previous), Horned Lark (2 previous), Marsh Wren (2 previous), and Vesper Sparrow (first time since 1993, but 5 times previous to that in the past 15 years). There was also a sighting of Trumpeter Swan, which has been referred to the records committee for evaluation. There were eight high

counts for the 15 year period: Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Killdeer, Great Crested Flycatcher, Louisiana Waterthrush, Chipping Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, and (groan) 772 Canada Geese.

There were also some interesting misses. This was the fourth year in a row that the Ring-necked Pheasant was not found, and the Northern Bobwhite has now been missed four out of the last five years. Both of these species were regularly seen before 1997. Other unusual misses were Common Loon (last miss was in 1986), Osprey (last miss was 1976), Black-billed Cuckoo (second miss in 15 years), and Great-horned Owl (second miss in 15 years). The relatively low counts for Black-throated Blue and Yellow-rumped Warblers, along with the absence of Palm Warblers, are consistent with the rather late date for this count.

Very special thanks go to the Randles for hosting yet another great tally rally and to Chuck Stirrat 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: **Andy Aguilera, Stan Arnold,**

**Mary Jo Betts, Karan and Bill Blum, Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, Lisa Colangelo, Jane and Dennis Coskren, Joan DeCarli, Diane and Jan and Bob Depuy, Ward Ebert, Paula and Darius Ecker (area 3 assistant), Jeffrey Friedhoffer, Aelred Geis, Jane and Ralph Geuder, Maureen and Dave Harvey, Emy Holdridge, Dave Holyoke, Wendy Keller, Eleanor Kelley, Mike Kerwin, Dave Kubitsky, Nancy Magnusson, Grazina and Mike McClure (area 4), Jim McGibney, Penny and Alan McQuarrie, Diane Mecham, Elaine and Jeff Metter, Sue Neri, Carol Newman, Jeanne and Doug Odermatt (area 5), Richard Orr, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott (area 6), Susan and Ron Polniaszek, Suzanne Probst, Nanine Rhinelandt, Chan Robbins, Clyde Robinette, Kurt Schwarz, Susan Setterberg, Jay Sheppard, Silvia and Jay Silverman, Romayne Smith, Jo and Bob Solem (area 7), Hank Stanton, Chuck Stirrat (area 3), Tom Strikwerda, Eva Sunell, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts, June Tveekrem, Mark Wallace, Jim Wilkenson, Michelle Wright, Helen Zeichner, and Sherry and Paul Zucker (area 2 and county compiler).**

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS - MAY 12, 2001

SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL
HORNED GREBE	1	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER	257	AMERICAN ROBIN	529	SAVANNAH SPARROW	42
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	46	DOWNY WOODPECKER	83	GRAY CATBIRD	645	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW	40
GREAT BLUE HERON	56	HAIRY WOODPECKER	17	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	221	SONG SPARROW	172
GREAT EGRET	2	NORTHERN(YELLOW-SHD)	58	BROWN THRASHER	33	LINCOLN'S SPARROW	1
GREEN HERON	26	PILEATED WOODPECKER	36	EUROPEAN STARLING	867	SWAMP SPARROW	6
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON	1	OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER	1	AMERICAN PIPT	5	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	9
BLACK VULTURE	93	EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE	142	CEDAR WAXWING	702	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	3
TURKEY VULTURE	211	ACADIAN FLYCATCHER	194	BLUE-WINGED WARBLER	5	NORTHERN CARDINAL	841
CANADA GOOSE	772	WILLOW FLYCATCHER	4	TENNESSEE WARBLER	5	ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK	9
MUTE SWAN	4	EMPIDONAX SPECIES	2	NASHVILLE WARBLER	2	BLUE GROSBEAK	7
TRUMPETER SWAN		EASTERN PHOEBE	69	NORTHERN PARULA	134	INDIGO BUNTING	261
WOOD DUCK	50	GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER	85	YELLOW WARBLER	139	BOBOLINK	187
MALLARD	198	EASTERN KINGBIRD	154	CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER	23	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	697
BALD EAGLE [AD/IM/UNK]	1	WHITE-EYED VIREO	121	MAGNOLIA WARBLER	33	EASTERN MEADOWLARK	8
NORTHERN HARRIER	1	BLUE-HEADED VIREO	3	CAPE MAY WARBLER	1	COMMON GRACKLE	401
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	4	YELLOW-THROATED VIREO	25	BLK.-THRTD. BLUE WARBLER	25	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	264
COOPER'S HAWK	5	WARBLING VIREO	33	YEL.-RUMPD (MYRTLE) WARBLER	22	ORCHARD ORIOLE	39
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK	32	RED-EYED VIREO	492	BLK.-THRTD. GREEN WARBLER	39	BALTIMORE ORIOLE	174
BROAD-WINGED HAWK	2	BLUE JAY	334	BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER	4	HOUSE FINCH	220
RED-TAILED HAWK	25	AMERICAN CROW	444	YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER	4	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	467
AMERICAN KESTREL	6	FISH CROW	33	PINE WARBLER	7	HOUSE SPARROW	274
WILD TURKEY	1	CROW SPECIES	406	PRAIRIE WARBLER	43	AREA TOTAL BIRDS:	17,264
SEMPALMATED PLOVER	8	HORNED LARK	15	BAY-BREADED WARBLER	5	AREA TOTAL SPECIES:	144
KILLDEER	57	PURPLE MARTIN	24	BLACKPOLL WARBLER	30	SUPPLEMENTAL DATA	
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	1	TREE SWALLOW	160	CERULEAN WARBLER	7	TIME START:	4:15 A
LESSER YELLOWLEGS	9	N. ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW	35	BLACK-&WHITE WARBLER	32	TIME STOP:	11:30 P
SOLITARY SANDPIPER	62	BANK SWALLOW	1	AMERICAN REDSTART	69	HOURS ON FOOT:	199.6
SPOTTED SANDPIPER	18	CLIFF SWALLOW	90	WORM-EATING WARBLER	29	HOURS BY CAR:	21.3
LEAST SANDPIPER	36	BARN SWALLOW	286	OVENBIRD	221	HOURS BY BOAT:	
COMMON SNIFE	2	CAROLINA CHICKADEE	322	NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH	9	HOURS OTHER:	2.0
AMERICAN WOODCOCK	1	TUFTED TITMOUSE	361	LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH	43	MILES ON FOOT:	154.7
RING-BILLED GULL	3	WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH	54	KENTUCKY WARBLER	49	MILES BY CAR:	243.4
HERRING GULL	1	CAROLINA WREN	240	COMMON YELLOWTHROAT	300	MILES BY BOAT:	
ROCK DOVE	147	HOUSE WREN	115	HOODED WARBLER	22	MILES OTHER:	2.5
MOURNING DOVE	375	MARSH WREN	1	WILSON'S WARBLER	3	HOURS FEEDER WATCHING:	1.5
YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO	2	RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	1	CANADA WARBLER	9	HOURS STATIONARY:	
EASTERN SCREECH-OWL	1	BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER	266	YELLOW-BREADED CHAT	36	HOURS "OWLING":	.8
BARRED OWL	9	EASTERN BLUEBIRD	206	SCARLET Tanager	153	MILES "OWLING":	2.0
CHIMNEY SWIFT	276	VEERY	23	EASTERN TOWHEE	174		
RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD	16	SWAINSON'S THRUSH	16	CHIPPING SPARROW	191		
BELTED KINGFISHER	17	HERMIT THRUSH	2	FIELD SPARROW	88		
RED-HEADED WOODPECKER	1	WOOD THRUSH	392	VESPER SPARROW	2		

BROCHURE REVISED

Thanks to Suzanne Probst for the updated design of the Howard County Bird Club's yellow informational brochure. Her professional touch is apparent in the improved appearance of this handout. Brochures are placed at local libraries and nature oriented stores. If you know of an individual who might enjoy Bird Club activities, ask to have a brochure mailed to that person. Leave a message at 301-725-5037 or e-mail odenata@msn.com.

CAVITY NEST DISPLAY MISSING

The five-celled cavity nest display (gray with a handle) cannot be located. It was frequently used for County Fair displays and perhaps someone who has worked the fair has it stored in a closet. If you know its whereabouts, please contact Sue Probst at 410-992-3489.

HOWARD COUNTY FAIR THANKS BY SUZANNE PROBST

Thanks to all of the folks who very graciously volunteered their time to help staff the club's booth at the Howard County Fair in August: Marty Chestem, Paula & Darius Ecker, Jeff Friedhoffer, Ralph & Jane Geuder, Dave & Maureen Harvey, David Holyoke, Elayne & Jeff Metter, Phil Probst, Kurt Schwarz, Chuck Stirrat, and Don & Martha Waugh. We couldn't do it without all of you!

## CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia. Meeting is canceled 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 13, Thursday "Maryland Coast to Crest: A Look at our State's Biodiversity," by Dr. Charles Stine.**

**October 11, Thursday "The Joy of Atlasing," by Chandler S. Robbins.**

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.* The page numbers refer to the book "Birding Howard County" which gives maps and directions. All trip lengths are approximate. FOR INFORMATION, CALL BONNIE OTT, at 410-461-3361 or e-mail at [bonnie163@home.com](mailto:bonnie163@home.com).

**September 2 Sunday - Butterflies through Binoculars - 3 hours - Dick Smith. 9:30 am. Centennial Park (pg. 5) west end lot. Easy walking in search of butterflies, bring binoculars, facilities available. Call Dick for info 410-997-7439 (cancelled if overcast or raining)**

**September 7 Friday - Weekday Walk at Font Hill - 1.5 hours 8:00 am. Meet at sign off Font Hill Drive. Easy walking on paved paths and mown grass looking for early fall migrants. Wetland patches and ponds offer hopes for unexpected goodies. No facilities, call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**September 9 Sunday - Beginner's Bird walk - 2 hours - Mike Kerwin. 8:30 am. Centennial Park (pg. 5) west end lot. Easy walking around the lake to learn beginning bird identification. Learn how to use binoculars and field guides. Facilities available, Call Mike for info 410-461-2408**

**September 15 Saturday Fall Count. See article on page 5 of this newsletter.**

**September 17 Monday - Weekday Walk at Gwynn Acres - 2 hours. 8:00 am Meet at Ram's Horn and Columbia Rd. (Pg. 24). Easy walking on paved path through woodlands in search of fall migrants. Barred Owls possible. No facilities, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**September 22 Saturday - Henryton Hike - 3-4 hours - Ralph Cullison. 8:00 am. Meet at Henryton Rd to hike along the river in search of thrushes and other migrants. (Pg. 35) No facilities, Call Ralph for info 410-442-2181**

**September 23 Sunday - Middle Patuxent Environmental Area - 3 hours - Stan Arnold. 7:30 am. Board of Education on Rt 108. Moderate-difficult walking through woods and fields in search of migrants. Varied habitat of fields and woodlands should produce good warblers and vireos. Paths may be muddy, no facilities, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**September 29 Saturday - Mt. Pleasant - 3 hours - Kurt Schwarz. 7:30 am. meet at shed. Moderately difficult walking through field areas in search of Lincoln's and other sparrows. Great for flyovers. Facilities available, call Kurt for info 410-461-1643**

**September 30 Sunday - Schooley Mill Park - 3 hours - TBA. 7:30 am. upper lot (pg. 19). Moderate to difficult walking, paths may be muddy. Wide variety of migrants and flyovers possible. Facilities available, Call Bonnie for info- 410-461-3361**

**October 6 Saturday - Bon Secours - 3 hours - Bonnie Ott. 7:30 am. visitor parking lot off Marriottsville Rd. Moderate walking along wood edges and fields. Explore the beautiful grounds of this spiritual retreat. No facilities, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**October 7 Sunday - Beginner's Bird Walk - 2 hours - TBA. 8:30 am. Lake Elkhorn, (pg. 43) meet at Cradlerock lot to walk around the lake and check Fore Bay pond. Learn the basics of bird ID, choosing a field guide and using binoculars. No facilities, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**October 9 Tuesday - Weekday Walk-David Force -2 hours 8:00 am. Meet at sign off Pebble Beach Drive. Moderate walking, paths may be muddy. Woods, fields, pond and stream should provide a variety of species. No facilities, Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361**

**October 13 Saturday - SPARROWS! University of Md Farm - Bonnie Ott. Limited trip to first 12 participants Very early start, strenuous trip-details will be given to the dozen brave souls who desire to spend ½ day looking at LBJ's, wetlands and upper dry field habitats will be covered. High boots required. Call Bonnie for info and to reserve spot 410-461-3361**

**October 14 Saturday - Hawk Watch - Mount Pleasant - Mike Kerwin. 9:30 am. Stay an hour or two or stay all day. Bring chair, lunch and drinks to sit and watch the hawks fly. Facilities available. Call Mike for info- 410-461-2408**

**October 24 Wednesday - Weekday Walk at Alpha Ridge - 2 hours. 8:00 am. at Alpha Ridge Park with possible side trip to Henryton Rd. Possibility of walking through high grasses. Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info-410-461-3361**

*(Continued on page 4)*

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 27, Thursday, TBA.**

**October 25, Thursday. TBA.**

**NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2001 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL IS DUE SEPTEMBER 21, 2001.** 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](mailto:Paulae2156@aol.com). Also, please visit the club's site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.howardbirds.org>.

# HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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## CONSERVATION COLUMN

### BONN ACCORD ADDRESSES GLOBAL WARMING BY BOB SOLEM

In July delegates from 180 countries worked out a new approach for a world-wide treaty on global warming. Senior diplomats from European Union countries and Japan agreed that an alternative strategy to cope with global climate change is needed to replace the Kyoto treaty rejected by the President of the United States. The new treaty must be ratified by 55 nations responsible for 55 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. The next international conference on global warming is in October in Marrakesh, Morocco.

In the approach agreed upon at Bonn, nations can take credit for "sinks," forested areas that absorb carbon dioxide gas—a provision that benefits Japan, Canada, and Russia. (It would also benefit the United States.) There is a provision for new funding to help developing countries cope with rising seas, devastating storms and diminished harvests anticipated in coming decades because of climate change. The fund will be \$550 million instead of \$1 billion because the United States has refused to pay its previously allocated share. The United States has 4 percent of the world's population but produces 25 percent of the planet's greenhouse gases and has rejected the Kyoto treaty, predecessor to the Bonn agreement.

A Wall Street Journal editorial endorsed the new approach: "Why require the nations of this planet to spend the hundreds of billions of

dollars necessary to reduce carbon dioxide and other emissions when we don't even know if the earth's climate is getting permanently hotter or if that temperature change is caused by human activity or if that change is even dangerous? Why, indeed. Except that if new and more sophisticated research proves that human-generated greenhouse gases are a menace to civilization as we know it, then it is better to start now to control them and far better to do so in the most cost effective fashion. And that's why we harbor a certain fondness for one part of the Kyoto treaty — emissions trading. Emissions trading — part of a package called "cap-and-trade" — is one of the incentive-based market strategies that has been developed as an alternative to traditional fiat-based, nanny-sez-so regulation. The idea is simple: a lower level of pollution is agreed upon and targeted; permits reflecting that level are issued, or even sold, to polluters; firms that produce emissions below their targets can sell their excess permits to firms that exceed their targets. Firms have a straightforward incentive to come up with emission-reducing innovations because they can keep the financial rewards of their innovation through reduced abatement costs, reduced payments for emission permits and/or selling unneeded permits."

## BIG DAY TIES LAST YEAR BY KATE TUFTS

When the description of a field trip in the Goldfinch states "Intensive all day search..." believe it. Better yet, consider it to be understated. The Big Day 2001 was intensive, grueling, hot, long, and you name it. Even the Energizer Bunny would have been put to the test.

On May 3, fifteen stalwart birders proved they were up to the challenge. The group met at Rockburn Elementary School in the eastern part of the county at 5:45 a.m. Then it was immediately off to Rockburn Branch Park for the first birds of the day. There was no dallying over favorite birds on the Big Day. The idea is to see how many birds can be seen or heard by the group during the day. At least three people, including one of the trip leaders, must have seen or heard the bird for it to make the list. Most birds called were counted although a few were not for lack of sufficient verification.

Thanks to careful planning, the listers methodically worked their way from the eastern to the western part of the county. Fourteen sites were visited to include the lakes in Columbia, trails along the Patapsco, University of Maryland Central Farm and Brighton Dam. The day was not without comic relief, thanks to two snakes visiting reptile lover, Mary-Jo Betts. She is certain that one fell right off of Ralph Cullison's scope. Andy Aquilera and Dianne Deputy gave an amazing demonstration on how to stand in a huge patch of poison ivy and never get an itch. We were not without sustenance as there was a small bit of time allowed for lunch at the very marge of the beautiful Alpha Ridge Landfill.

A passing cold front toward late afternoon boosted spirits and the re-energized birders continued their trek toward the west. The day officially ended at 8:45 p.m. on Hipsley Mill Road to the lovely sounds of whip-poor-wills, the day's 111<sup>th</sup> bird. That was a tie with 2000's record.

Well, there's always next year. We know the hummingbirds are out there somewhere.