



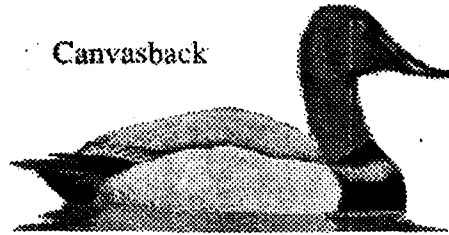
SUMMARY OF THE 2002 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT BY MIKE MCCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT

The ninth annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 21, 2002. In spite of what was agreed by all to have been a very slow day of birding, a total of 118 species were observed. Comparison totals for the prior 8 years are: high, 136 on 9/19/1998; low, 113 on 9/20/1997; average, 126 species, respectively. The number of participants and parties (58 and 33) showed little variation from last year's (57 and 37). The totals for party miles and hours are shown on the tally sheet. The participants covered about the same number of miles and hours counting as were recorded last year. The total of individual birds tallied to 16,303 compared to prior years (high, 26,651 on 9/17/1994; low, 14,600 on 9/16/2000; average, 19,777 birds, respectively). Finally, there were 21 fall warbler species identified compared to prior years (high, 30; low, 18; average, 26 species, respectively).

Saturday's temperature ranged from the mid 60's to the high 80's with limited breezes. The humidity was uncomfortable (dew point: 57-72 degrees) thanks to several preceding days of southerly air flow. The day was sunny until about 2:30PM when 100% cloud cover moved in. Most areas were extremely dry due to the below normal rainfall (9.36 inches for the year through September 21st). The preceding two years rainfall deficit was 13.97 inches. In short, it was a miserable day in the field for the counters both because of the weather but also the birds were few and far in between.

Nine years of data is at best a limited database. But it's still interesting to look at some preliminary trends and watch these trends as new data is added with future counts. The data has been reviewed from 1994 through 2002 for "total species", "total birds", and "total warbler species", respectively. The yearly trends for total species and total warbler species appear to be stable countywide. The yearly trend for total birds, however, appears to show a clear decline. This is at least in harmony with what most birders are already seeing in the field regardless of the day. These same 3 quantities were

Canvasback

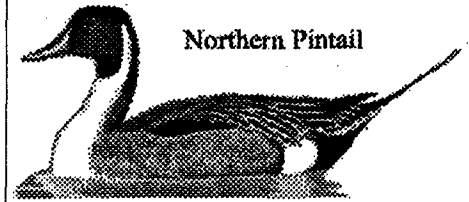


reviewed by day during the count window of September 15th through 21st (i.e., 15th, 16th, to 20th, 21st). The observed trends suggests that there are more species and birds observed when the count is at the end of the window than there are at the beginning of the window.

The accompanying table presents the count data. There were 17 species for which there was only one bird sighted countywide. Those honors go to the counters in areas 1, 3, 4, 5, & 7. There were 7 species for which there were only two birds sighted countywide. Those honors go to the counters in areas 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7. Species showing moderately high numbers are: Canada Goose, 914; European Starling, 2735; and Common Grackle, 1079. New to the count are Northern Pintail and Canvasback.

Thanks to all participants and those who acted as area coordinators for the count: Stan Arnold, Mary-Jo Betts, **Karan & Bill Blum** (Area 4), Marty Chestem, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis Coskren, Jane Coskren, Ralph Cullison III, Karen Darcy, Joan DeCarli, Harry E. Fink, Jeffrey A.

Northern Pintail



Friedhoffer, **Kevin Heffernan** (Area 3), Jane Heim, Kate Held, Bill Hill, Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Dave Holyoke, Mindy Krupp, Dave Kubitsky, Mike Leumas, Nate Levy, Brigitte Lund, Nancy Magnusson, John Maloney, Grazina McClure, **Mike McClure** (County Co-coordinator), John McKitterick, Sue Neri, Carol Newman, **Bonnie Ott** (Area 6), Anita Picco, **Ron Polniaszek** (Area 2), Susan Polniaszek, Suzanne Probst, **Kurt Schwarz** (Area 5), Susan Setterberg, Philip Smith, Bob Solem, Jo Solem, Robin Sorensen, Dan Southworth, Linda Southworth, **Chuck Stirrat** (County Co-coordinator), JoAnne Stokes, Ralph Stokes, Tom Strikwerda, **Eva Sunell** (Area 7), Robin Todd, June Tveekrem, Marilyn Veek, **Mark Wallace** (Area 1), Don Waugh, Michelle Wright, and Paul Zucker. A very special thanks to **Don and Martha Waugh** who hosted the evening tally.

This ninth fall count provided an enjoyable, although difficult time in the field for the participants, and of course there was a fun-time at the evening tally. Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible attend the tally as well. Next year the fall count will be held on the 3rd Saturday of September which will be the 20th.

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HOWARD COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT - September 21, 2002

Species & Codes (1) / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	Species & Codes (1) / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals			
Double-crested Cormorant	B				1	4	2	7	Northern Mockingbird	A	13	8	32	35	43	67	111	309		
Great Blue Heron	A	2	5	5	4	5	5	8	34	Brown Thrasher	A		1	3	1	2	26	4	37	
Great Egret	B						3	1	4	European Starling	A	60	20	177	152	494	1,091	741	2,735	
Green Heron	A	1		2	3	1		9	16	Cedar Waxwing	A	4		12	2	5	10	42	75	
Black-crowned Night-Heron	C				1			3	4	Blue-winged Warbler	@ B					1		2	3	
Black Vulture	A	2	6	52	3	2	49	5	119	Tennessee Warbler	B						1	8	9	
Turkey Vulture	A	19	11	59	15	14	38	41	197	Nashville Warbler	B							2	2	
Canada Goose	A	113	38	86	134	256	130	157	914	Northern Parula	A			4		2	1	2	9	
Mute Swan	A				2				2	Yellow Warbler	@ A							1	1	
Wood Duck	B	34	1	8	2	2		1	48	Chestnut-sided Warbler	A				2	1	1		4	
Mallard	A	2		3	66	8	11	90	180	Magnolia Warbler	A	5	4	9	8	13	15	18	72	
Northern Pintail	C							1	1	Cape May Warbler	B							1	1	
Canvasback	** A					1			1	Bik.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	A		2	2	5	1	2	12	12	
Osprey	B		2	4	1	2	1	10	10	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	@ A				5				5	
Bald Eagle (edimunk)	B				2			2	2	Bik.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	B	1	2	5	1	2			11	
Northern Harrier	B		1					1	1	Pine Warbler	B				7	1		1	9	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	B		2	4	2	2	1	11	11	Prairie Warbler	A	1						2	3	
Cooper's Hawk	B		1	3		3	3	10	10	Palm Warbler	@ A					1			1	
Red-shouldered Hawk	A	2	2	3	6	5	9	4	31	Black-&-white Warbler	A	5	1	7	12	6	13	14	58	
Red-tailed Hawk	A	2		2	2	2	3	6	17	American Redstart	A	3	2	10	9	10	14	11	59	
American Kestrel	A	1	6	16	1		2	1	27	Ovenbird	A								1	1
Merlin	C			1					1	Northern Waterthrush	B				1		2	3	3	
Killdeer	A	6	2	5	23	6	2	4	48	Kentucky Warbler	@ A							2	2	
Greater Yellowlegs	B	1							1	Common Yellowthroat	A	18	1	35	19	34	32	16	155	
Lesser Yellowlegs	B	2							2	Wilson's Warbler	B			1	1	1			3	
Solitary Sandpiper	B	2			2	1		2	7	Yellow-breasted Chat	A						3		3	
Spotted Sandpiper	B	2			1				3	Scarlet Tanager	A		1	3		2	1	2	9	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	C	28							28	Eastern Towhee	A	8	7	14	3	22	9	11	74	
Ring-billed Gull	A					4	4	5	13	Chipping Sparrow	A	25	7	7		11	23		73	
Rock Dove	A	2	30	209	288	24	140	10	703	Field Sparrow	A	7		7		10		8	32	
Mourning Dove	A	20	15	86	88	73	90	207	579	Vesper Sparrow	C			1					1	
Black-billed Cuckoo	B	3							3	Savannah Sparrow	B	5		3	6				14	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	A	1			1	3	1	1	7	Song Sparrow	A	22		18	18	14	13	23	108	
Eastern Screech-Owl	B				1	2	2		5	Swamp Sparrow	@ B			3					3	
Barred Owl	B					1		3	4	White-throated Sparrow	@ A					1			1	
Common Nighthawk	B	1			17				18	Northern Cardinal	A	36	16	81	126	115	108	168	650	
Chimney Swift	A	13	7	28	104	176	90	226	644	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	B	2				3			5	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	B			4	2	4	4	4	18	Blue Grosbeak	B	1							3	4
Belted Kingfisher	A	6	11	8	4	6	4	9	48	Indigo Bunting	A	50		11	25	2	5	6	99	
Red-headed Woodpecker	C			1	2				3	Bobolink	B	1				4			5	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	A	20	12	34	43	53	57	48	267	Red-winged Blackbird	A	1	4			8	5	120	12	150
Downy Woodpecker	A	2	4	22	27	35	31	16	137	Eastern Meadowlark	A						1			1
Hairy Woodpecker	A	5	2	2	2	3	9	5	28	Common Grackle	A		200			2	103	752	22	1,079
Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	A	9	4	23	9	30	22	22	119	Brown-headed Cowbird	A			1		11	6	2	20	
Pileated Woodpecker	A	3	1	4	1	4	10	4	27	House Finch	A	1	23	47	36	14	83	159	363	
Olive-sided Flycatcher	C					1			1	American Goldfinch	A	114	5	71	152	51	107	94	594	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	A	2	1	7	3	5	2	5	25	House Sparrow	A	4	6	127	2	140	44	123	446	
Acadian Flycatcher	A				1				1	Area Total Birds:	1,055	656	1,926	2,207	2,757	4,091	3,611	16,303		
Eastern Phoebe	A	10		16	10	11	12	14	73	Area Total Species:	65	48	71	77	80	69	81	118		
Great Crested Flycatcher	@ A	1							1	Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals		
Eastern Kingbird	@ A						2		2	Supplemental Data										
White-eyed Vireo	A		1	1	2	12	6	10	32	Time Start:	7:00 a	7:00 a	6:50 a	3:05 a	4:45 a	7:00 a	6:00 a	3:05 a		
Blue-headed Vireo	B			1					1	Time Stop:	7:30 p	1:30 p	5:00 p	5:00 p	4:45 p	12:45 p	5:15 p	7:30 p		
Warbling Vireo	@ B				1				1	Hours on Foot:	21.0		22.7	21.6	35.0	22.3	31.0	153.6		
Red-eyed Vireo	A		5	3	5	5	2	5	25	Hours by Car:	1.5		3.1	1.0	2.8	1.8	7.7	17.9		
Blue Jay	A	36	33	89	114	160	144	218	794	Hours by Boat:					2.0			2.0		
American Crow	A	49	47	56	44	65	108	88	457	Miles on Foot:	11.0	2.0	18.0	11.3	28.8	26.0	26.0	123.1		
Fish Crow	A			11	1	3		6	21	Miles by Car:	5.2		50.0	5.0	73.5	3.0	100.2	236.9		
Tree Swallow	A								1	Miles by Boat:					3.0			3.0		
Carolina Chickadee	A	18	19	55	78	102	78	125	475	Hours Feeder Watching:			5					5		
Tufted Titmouse	A	18	14	33	53	71	42	86	317	Hours Stationary:	2.0							2.0		
White-breasted Nuthatch	A	9	7	7	17	27	22	25	114	Hours "Owling":					2.0			2.0		
Carolina Wren	A	21	19	41	58	88	64	114	405	Miles "Owling":					7.0			7.0		
House Wren	A	5		1	3	2	18	5	34	Area Code:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	A								1	Total Observers in Area:	6	5	6	8	9	12	14	58		
Eastern Bluebird	A	45	9	47	12	31	39	30	213	Total Parties in Area:	3	1	3	6	7	5	8	33		
Veery	B			1					1	Total Feeder Watchers in Area:										
Swainson's Thrush	B					1		3	4	Total Party-Hours (Reg.):	22.5	6.5	25.8	22.6	39.8	24.1	38.7	173.5		
Wood Thrush	A	1		2	2	6	18	29	29	Total Party-Hours (Feeder):			5					5		
American Robin	A	112	7	38	39	136	136	140	608	Tot. Party-Hours (Stationary):	2.0							2.0		
Gray Catbird	A	25	12	55	120	128	109	121	570	Total Party-Hours (Owling):					2.0			2.0		
										Total Party-Hours:	24.5	6.5	26.3	22.6	41.8	24.1	38.7	178.0		
										Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals		

SUMMER BIRD RECORDS: JUNE 1 - JULY 31, 2002

BY JOANNE SOLEM

Summer marked the peak of the breeding season in this initial year of the second Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA). Howard County was fortunate in having all 34 blocks covered, at least to some degree. Since the completion of the first BBA 15 years ago, rapid development along with exploding populations of white-tailed deer and Canada Geese altered many habitats; however, county birders rose to the challenge. Highways and byways, parks, other public lands, and numerous private tracts were searched intensively. In addition to contributing to a scientific project, most participants enjoyed the new dimension which atlasing gave to their time in the field.

Although we have no county nesting records of Pied-billed Grebes, the species appears occasionally in summer. One was present on 6/7 at a farm on Rt. 108 & Centennial Lane (MW) & another (the same bird?) was spotted on 6/20 at Lake Elkhorn (LKELK) (EP). Small numbers of Double-crested Cormorants have made an appearance during many recent summers. One showed up on Wilde Lake (WILLK) 7/3 (HZ), staying the rest of the season with an occasional visit to Lake Kittamaquundi (MC). From 7/8 on, an im. was present on the floating platform at LKELK (JC).

Great Egrets were noted from 6/1 at Univ. of Md Cent. Farm (1-UMDCF) (BO, EH) to 1 on Fore-Bay Pond (FORBY) 7/24 (SN). The lone Little Blue Heron report was 6/1 at FORBY (SN). Black-crowned Night-Herons were reported from 5 locations (HZ, MC, JC, JW, SN, JS) between 6/2 & 7/21. Currently, there is only one known free-flying Mute Swan in the county. It left LKELK on 7/2 (SN), but turned up later in July at Centennial Park (CENPK) (JS).

A m. Canvasback continued to frequent Duckett Res. (DUKRS). After mid-May it was spotted again on 7/7 (JFr) & 7/15 (JS). An intriguing sighting was that of a male Hooded Merganser 7/7 in eclipse plumage on the Patapsco River well upstream from Henryton (JBy). It was not relocated despite searching, but it raises the possibility of nesting in either the Sykesville NW or Woodbine NE atlas block. Not all Ruddy Ducks reached their breeding ground as 2 f. were present 6/25 & 26 at Gateway (GATWY) (ES, RSt, ph). A m. put in an appearance 6/29 at CENPK (*vide* SPe), was noted 7/8 at WILLK (DOD), & stayed there at least through the month (HZ).

An Osprey was present 6/9 at LKELK (SN), 6/11 & 6/20 at GATWY (JW), 7/1 on DUKRS (JS), and several times during the summer at Lime Kiln Pond (KM). For at least two years, the tree in which the Triadelphia Reservoir Bald Eagles nested appeared to be in danger of falling over. WSSC Officer Pitts reported that this year the eagles moved their nest to a tree farther back in the same cove. At least one eaglet fledged. This first year of the BBA has verified a surge in breeding Cooper's Hawks in this part of the state. That is a mixed

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 ARTICLE).

blessing because they do eat birds. In early June, an east Columbia observer watched a Cooper's Hawk as it picked off a f. Red-bellied Woodpecker along with her entire brood of nestlings as each emerged from the nest cavity (OY).

Two out of the three vulture nests reported were in manmade structures (BO, DK). Especially nice was a Black Vulture nest found among rocks above the Patapsco River in the Woodbine area 6/23 (RT).

Wild Turkeys in the Patapsco & Patuxent watersheds are now much more common than pheasants or bobwhites. One birder encountered a hen with 13 poults along the Patapsco 6/23 reporting they "boiled out of grass without warning, then disappeared without a sound and with scarcely a shiver of the grass" (RT). What a lovely description of a memorable moment! On 7/10 a tom turkey made itself at home for more than an hour in a yard on Mt. Albert Rd. Definitely a nice bird to watch during breakfast (M&GM). One of the most exciting reports was that of 2 ad Northern Bobwhites along with at least 3 chicks on 5/22 along the Middle Patuxent just west of Murray Hill Rd (DSO). Recent nesting reports for that species are rare indeed for Howard County. Up to 2 Soras were present at UMDCF during the spring. The last was noted on 6/1 (BO). No proof of breeding was established although the vegetation & water levels during much of the period made it a possibility. Maybe next year.... An Am. Coot showed up on LKELK on 7/12 (SN), staying through at least 7/16 (JC).

Shorebirds were few with the last of the spring migrants seen on 6/1: 1 Lesser Yellowlegs at Waterford Farm (MW) & 4 Semipalmated Sandpipers at UMDCF (BO, EH). The choicest sighting was an Upland Sandpiper 7/6 at Alpha Ridge Landfill (RC). The first autumn Solitary Sandpiper was present 7/22 at LKELK (SN), and the first Spotted Sandpiper 7/23 at CENPK (HH).

Common Nighthawks have become a rarity in the county during the breeding season. One was reported on 6/25 over the Miller property on Frederick Rd. (MW, ES, RHe). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird chasing a Barn Swallow at LKELK 7/20 must have been an entertaining sight (J&CW).

A young Barn Owl was heard by an individual familiar with the species on 6/5 (MGU). Unfortunately, it was in a locked barn passed while horseback riding. There were two reports of an ad. Barred Owl with an im.: 6/10 Duvall (KT) & 6/16 College Ave (KS).

One observer near Laurel has a ceramic hummingbird feeder with holes at the top. One day when the feeder had been filled to the top she noticed a Carolina Chickadee visiting the holes repeatedly. Apparently even its short bill could reach the sweet liquid (BN). An adult Willow Flycatcher feeding young at Warfield's Pond Park 7/3 was a nice find (SAr). The first wandering Bank Swallow was spotted 7/6 over UMDCF (BO). Although finding a Cedar Waxwing nest building 6/1 at Rockburn Branch Pk was exciting, it was unfortunate that the nest was predated early in the nest cycle (E&JMe).

A Blue-winged Warbler family consisting of a m, f & a single fledgling was found 6/22 in the Middle Patuxent Errv. Area (MPENV) (J&CW). An ad. Pine Warbler with 1 fledgling was found near Laurel 7/3, surprisingly in a very small group of mature pines (JSh). On the same date he had a singing Cerulean Warbler within sight of the southern county line near Laurel. On 7/9 a f. Am. Redstart was feeding a fledged Brown-headed Cowbird in the MPENV (WEb), which was typical of the way cowbirds were confirmed. A f. Prothonotary Warbler had been noted at the Race Rd. wetland on 5/1 without evidence of breeding (R&JS); however, on 6/3 a male was seen with food for young (JMa). This was an excellent find which can be credited directly to atlasing. Although singing males have been noted in June several times in the same general location in the last few years, this is the only reported county nesting since 1993. A m. Prothonotary Warbler was seen 6/1 west of Henryton along the Patapsco (J&TDC). Another m. was reported at Woodstock 6/8 (plus 2 nearby on the Baltimore side of the river) (JMr), but nesting was not detected for any of these birds. By 6/4 many Louisiana Waterthrushes were out of the nest, 13 ad. & im. were seen along the river at Orange Grove, PVSP (SAr).

Most Scarlet Tanagers are bright red, but an occasional bird shades to orange. An orange m. was noted in the Clarksville CE block on 7/6 (WEb, EC).

Grasshopper Sparrows successfully nested along Roxbury Rd where 18 ad. & juv. were counted on 7/25 (SAr). One supposes delayed migration or non-breeding birds explain the convergence on 6/17 of a Savannah Sparrow, a Swamp Sparrow, & a Bobolink at UMDCF (BO, EH, JS). None of these species was seen or heard again at this location during the summer.

A Vesper Sparrow was heard along A.E.
(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Mullinix Rd. 7/4, one of the few county locations where they can still be found occasionally during the breeding season (J&CW). A White-throated Sparrow lingered until 6/2 at Meadowbrook (JTv). Blue Grosbeaks are not common so they attract attention with their substantial size and handsome color. A pair was present at Western Regional Pk 6/10 (KT); & at least 2 were spotted eating blueberries 7/15 at Lariland Farm on Rt. 94. Perhaps the grosbeaks were simply following the "pick-your-own" philosophy of the farm (LMo). On 7/18 an ad. & several fledglings were seen &/or heard on Pfeifferkorn Rd (LC).

Addendum for Spring: On 5/16, 2 Black-bellied Plovers were spotted on a sod farm on Jennings Chapel Rd. (JSh).

Observers: SAR - Stan Arnold, JBy - Joe Byrnes, MC - Martha Chestern, EC - Eileen Clegg, LC - Lisa Colangelo, JC - Jane Coskren, TDC - T. Dennis Coskren, RC - Ralph Cullison III, WEb - Ward Ebert, JFr - Jeff Friedhoffer, MGu - Mary Gustafson, RHe - Robin Hessey, HH - Hans Holbrook, EH - Emy Holdridge, DK - David Keane, JMr - Joel Martin, M&GM - Mike & Grazina McClure, E&JMe - Elayne & Jeff Metter, LMo - Lynn Moore, SN - Sue Neri, BN - Bea Newkirk, DOd - Doug Odermatt, BO - Bonnie Ott, EP - Elaine Pardoe, SPe - Sherry Peruzzi, KS - Kurt Schwarz, JSh - Jay Sheppard, JS - Jo Solem, DSo - Dan Southworth, RSt - Ralph Stokes, ES - Eva Sunell, RT - Robin Todd, KT - Kate Tufts, JTv - June Tveekrem, MW - Mark Wallace, JW - Jim Wilkinson, MWr - Michele Wright, OY - Orrey Young, HZ - Helen Zeichner, m. - male, f. - female, im. - immature, juv. - juvenile, ph. - photograph.

SEED SALE DONATIONS

That's right! The Howard County Bird Club has contributed nearly \$51,000 to other organizations to help save habitat—and your seed purchases and contributions have made it possible. Money from the seed sale and contributions has gone to local, state, national, and international organizations to benefit bird habitat and studies that protect the ecosystems of which birds are a part.

Do you have organizations in mind that you would like to see receive part of the money received from the 2002 seed sale? Kurt Schwarz will be telling you about it at the December, 2002 Howard Bird Club meeting and will have information on what the Bird Club Board needs to act on your request.

AMERICAN BIRDING ASSOCIATION'S PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area;

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food

clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a Group Member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment, and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g. no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS

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.

Thursday, November 14, "Impacts of the El Nino Cycle on Migratory Song Birds" by Scott Sillet, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center.

Thursday, December 12, "2002 Birdwatching Odyssey. Does the Scottish Crossbill Really Exist?" by Hank Kaestner.

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, e-mail bonnie1163@comcast.net. Page numbers refer to Birding Howard County, Maryland by Joanne K. Solem

✓ **November 3, Sunday 3 hours Annual Fall Foray at Centennial Park.** Walk the paved path around the lake for waterfowl and woodland birds. Great for beginning birders. Looking for lingering migrant passerines. Meet at west end lot at 8:00 a.m. Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361 Leader: Ralph Cullison

November 7, Thursday 2 hours. Weekday Walk at Wilde Lake. Easy walking on the paved path along the lake and along the wooded stream. Migrant waterfowl and gulls, woodland birds. Great for beginners. Meet at the boat dock at 8:30 a.m. No facilities. Call Bonnie for information. 410-461-3361

✓ **November 10, Sunday 3 hours Annual Fall Foray at Centennial Park.** Walk the paved path around the lake for waterfowl and woodland birds. Great for beginning birders. Waterfowl migrants expected along with raptors. Meet at the west end lot at 8:00 a.m. Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info- 410-461-3361

November 16, Saturday Half day Waterfowl of Howard County. After checking the lake expect to carpool to check the area lakes and ponds for migrant waterfowl. Meet at concession stand of Centennial Park at 8:00 a.m. Facilities available. Scopes useful. Leader: Jane Coskren 410-381-7344 *Rained out*

November 17, Sunday 3 hours Fall Foray at Centennial Park. Walk the paved path around the lake for waterfowl and woodland birds. Great for beginning birders. Ducks and grebes likely along with late migrant raptors. Meet at the west end lot at 8:00 a.m. Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Hiereman *Rained out*

✓ **November 24, Sunday 3 hours Fall Foray at Centennial Park.** Walk the paved path around the lake for waterfowl and woodland birds. Ducks and Grebes expected. Meet at west end lot at 8:00 a.m. Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info 410-461-3361. Leader Richard Orr

December 1, Sunday all day Horsehead Wetlands Center in Grasonville, MD. Ducks, Ducks, Raptors? Horsehead is a great place to see waterfowl up close in natural settings. We will also stop at Kent Narrows for sea ducks and gulls. Bring lunch and beverages. Dress in appropriate clothing for possible cold weather. Meet at 8:00 am at Broken Land Park & Ride east for carpooling. Facilities available. Leader: John Malone 301-317-4961

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.

✓ **November 21, TBD - Dave Holyoke's**

December, None

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2002 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL is due **NOVEMBER 22, 2002.** Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Email article contributions to Sue Probst at sprobst@comcast.net or Dave Holyoke at david.holyoke@ssa.gov. Also, please visit the club's site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.howardbirds.org>.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING?

When doing your Holiday shopping, why not consider a few purchases from the club's bookstore? If you have something in particular you are searching for, contact Ann Marie Raterman and ask if she can get that perfect item for you.

RENEW, RENEW, RENEW

Don't forget, if you have not already done so, it is time to renew your membership. Please complete and return the membership application that was included in the last issue of the newsletter. If you need another copy of the application, contact any board member.

2002 ANNUAL LISTS DUE BY JANE COSKREN

A list of all the birds seen in the county during the 2002 calendar year is being compiled for the 24th consecutive year. Did we break any records this year? Only you can help us decide. Assemble your sightings for the year (even if the list was compiled in your neighborhood or your yard) and mail to Jane Coskren, 6324 Sandchain Road, Columbia MD 21045 any time after December 31, but not later than March 3, 2002. The length of the list isn't important, because your list may contain the bird that will make 2002 a year for the record books.

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

GIVING TO THE ENVIRONMENT HAS NEVER BEEN EASIER BY BOB SOLEM

TEXTINCTION. Where did the Ivory Woodpecker go? Are there any Tasmanian Tigers left? How about Furbish's Lousewort? What is most in danger of extinction today? The Nature Conservancy also wondered, so they did a study which counted extinct and probably extinct species and those in immediate danger of extinction. It is a **VULNERABILITY INDEX**; the higher the percentage, the greater the danger that members of the group will be lost forever:

Butterflies	4%	Conifers	13%
Birds	6%	Flowering plants	16%
Mammals	6%	Freshwater fish	21%
Tiger beetles	7%	Amphibians	23%
Reptiles	7%	Crayfish	35%
Dragonflies	8%	Freshwater mussels	43%
Ferns	10%		

[Quoted from Stuart L. Pimm, *The World According to Pimm* (N.Y.: McGraw-Hill, 2001), pp 213-4.]

So what can we do about it? Let me quote from a book on dragonflies, reflecting the situation in Great Britain:

The practical problems of conserving dragonflies worldwide are enormous. Over 6000 species have been described already... Many countries have legislation to prevent the collecting of rare (or even common!) dragonflies.

Such legislation can be counterproductive *since it obscures the fact that it is loss of habitat which really matters...* Dragonflies depend proportionally more on unfarmed areas such as gravel pits, ornamental lakes and fishponds and, *above all, on waters in protected areas where nature conservation is the primary land use.* Protected Areas which are established to conserve their flora and fauna in perpetuity are extremely important since they will conserve their dragonflies whatever happens outside them. Protected Areas have never been more important than they are today. [Italics added. Quoted from Jill Silsby, *Dragonflies of the World* (Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001), pp 105-6. Jill Silsby is president of the Worldwide Dragonfly Association.]

So what's the bottom line? IT'S NOT THE SPECIES, IT'S THE HABITAT!

Will that be enough? Look at the four groups with percentages over 20. Each of these is part of a matrix of interdependent organisms, ranging from unicellular to the top of the food chain. So the last word is: IT'S NOT THE HABITAT, IT'S THE ECOSYSTEM!

NEW NEWSLETTER EDITORS!!!!

Beginning with the January/February 2003 issue of the Howard County Bird Club newsletter, you will have new editors, and perhaps a few additional surprises. Thanks to Sue Probst and Dave Holyoke for generously volunteering to assume the responsibility from me.

Thanks to everyone who has made contributions to and helped with the newsletter during the time I have been the editor. The newsletter truly is a team effort and I have enjoyed participating in it's production over the past several years.

