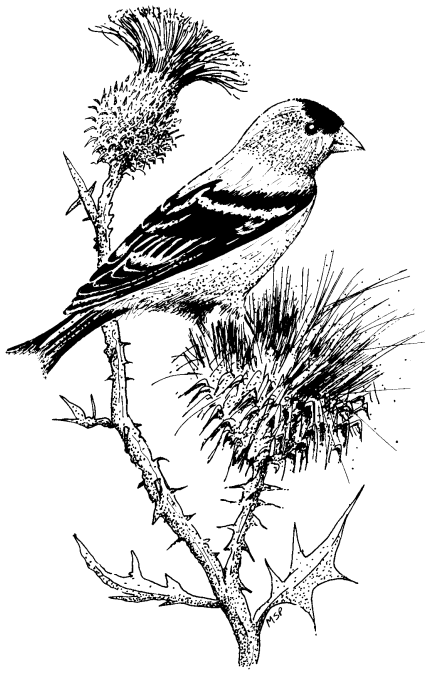


The Goldfinch

Newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club • A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society



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The Goldfinch, newsletter of the *Howard County Bird Club*, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the November/December 2004 issue is September 25, 2004.

Dave Holyoke, *Editor*
Suzanne Probst, *Graphic Artist*
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed, or e-mailed to: Dave Holyoke
3557 Conchita Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042
david.holyoke@ssa.gov
Please visit the Club's website at www.howardbirds.org

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME AND MEMBER APPRECIATION

BY JEFF FRIEDHOFFER

Here I am, sitting on my porch thinking about going to Cape May for a tern workshop and chasing whatever is currently in the area. I cannot believe there are only five weeks to go before September, and the start of the fall birding season. I am pleased to be taking over the leadership of the Howard County Bird Club from an outstanding administration. Kurt Schwarz has done a great job and I hope I can fill his shoes.

I would also like to recognize Emy Holdridge who is serving another term as our treasurer in addition to serving as the MOS treasurer. We are indeed lucky to have her excellent services. I want to recognize our long-serving secretary, Chuck Stirrat; he has been doing this job since I have been associated with the

Howard club and does an amazing job at capturing all the details of our meetings. A special thanks goes to Bob Solem for his outstanding work as our conservation chairman for many years. He has turned this task over to Kurt Schwarz who I am sure will do Bob proud. I also look forward to working with Bonnie Ott as our trip chair, and Jane Geuder as our meeting program chair; as far as I am concerned, these events are the heart of our club and these two ladies have done an outstanding job. I also look forward to working with Mary Jo Betts on the wonderful annual potluck dinner. And finally, a thanks to Dave Holyoke for editing this newsletter and Sue Probst for making it a work of art.

Welcome to all club members to our wonderful new season!

SPRING BIRD RECORDS MARCH 1 TO MAY 31, 2004

BY JOANNE SOLEM

A strange spring indeed! Despite the wet, chilly weather, some early dates were established and a few unusual species were reported; unfortunately, warbler migration was the poorest in years. Highlights included Red-necked Grebe, Little Blue Heron, Surf Scoter, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Bobwhite, Sora, Virginia Rail, and Sedge Wren.

The last **Common Loon** was spotted 5/22 at Centennial (JTv). A lone **Red-necked Grebe** was present at

Triadelphia Reservoir 4/3 (KS) to 4/9 (JS,EH). **Pied-billed Grebes** peaked at 7 on 4/15 at Lake Elkhorn (SAr), and **Horned Grebes** at 4 on 3/21 at Centennial (RC+;KS). Peak **Double-crested Cormorant** numbers seem to rise annually with a new high of 116 over the University of Maryland Central Farm (UMDCF) 4/17 (BO,NM,JS).

The earliest **Great Egret** appeared on a Union Chapel Rd pond 4/16 (*vide* WE). **Great Blue Herons** returned to

(*Spring Bird Records continues on page 2.*)

Lake Kittamaqundi (5 active nests 3/5 **MJa** and 4/21 **ME**) and to Vantage Point (14 active nests in April **JMa,DJo**). A new breeding location with 3 nests was discovered 4/17 along the Middle Patuxent adjacent to UMDCF (**KD,KH**). A **Little Blue Heron** spent 4/30 at a Meadowbrook pond in the company of a Great Blue Heron and a Great Egret (**JHe**). The first **Green Heron** was spotted 4/9 at Centennial (**JTv**). Near the end of May, 2 Green Heron young were observed in a nest overhanging Hittman (Jackson) Pond in Long Reach (**D&JRe**). A handsome **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at Centennial 4/4 (**WEB+**) stayed through 4/6 to the delight of many observers.

The buildup of geese at Centennial in early March prior to a major migratory movement included 2 leucistic **Canada Geese** 3/3 (**RR**) and the possibility of at least one small-race bird (**MHa;KS**). Up to 4 (1 w, 3 b) **Snow Geese** were also present (**KS**). Observers in several locations watched numerous flocks and hundreds of Canadas heading north on 3/4 (**SN;Rst**) and 3/5 (**SN;MW**). Many **Tundra Swans** also moved between 3/2 (**KS**) and 3/8 (**GA**). The peak day was 3/5 with five reports (**MAB;EH,JS;SN;GA;MW**). The 33 that paused on Lake Elkhorn that day were harassed by the *one* resident Mute Swan until they departed—a striking example of the negative impact this introduced species can have on native birds (**MAB**).

Duck migration was generally unremarkable, with a few notable exceptions. Two **Greater Scaup** 3/8 at Brighton Dam (**HH**) and 2 **Surf Scoters** 3/19 at Centennial (**SS;KS+**) were new early dates. The 1600+ **Common Mergansers** 3/2 at Triadelphia established a new high (**EH,JS**). Other good sightings included 4 **Gadwalls** at UMDCF 4/17 (**BO,NM,JS**); 14 **American Wigeon** on a Daisy Rd pond 3/18 (**KT**); 3 sightings of 2 **Northern Shovelers** at the Emmaus Rd pond and Centennial (**JS;EH;J&TDC**); a pair of **Northern Pintails** at Centennial last seen 4/7 (**LN**);

28 **Green-winged Teal** at UMDCF 4/10 (**EH,JS**); and a lingering **Ring-necked Duck** at Gateway on May Count (5/8) (**ES,MWr**). Triadelphia on 4/9 produced a **Long-tailed Duck** (first seen 4/4); 70 **Buffleheads**, and 16 **Red-breasted Mergansers** (**EH,JS**). For at least the third successive year, **Hooded Mergansers** nested at the Race Rd wetlands (**MHo,pb*** 4/24).

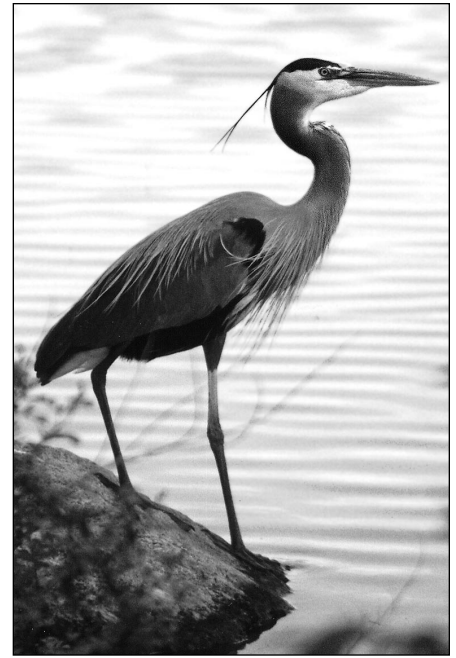
The **Osprey** seen from Brighton Dam 3/7 was the second earliest ever (**KH,KD**). **Bald Eagles** were widely reported in the county with nesting by the Triadelphia pair. Two **Northern Harriers** at Race Rd 5/15 were a late surprise (**BO+**). A light phase **Rough-legged Hawk** 3/3 at Brighton Dam was a nice flyover (**HH**), as was a **Peregrine Falcon** along Harding Rd on May Count (**JC,NM**).

A **Northern Bobwhite** on May Count along the Middle Patuxent at Murray Hill confirmed that at least one bird was still present there (**JTv**). This spring three **Wild Turkey** reports were received (**JCu;JN;JBy**).

A second year with ample rainfall produced attractive conditions for rails. One to 2 **Soras** were present at UMDCF 4/17 to 5/5 (**BO+**). One was also heard at a marshy pond on Hanover Rd. 5/10 (**JMa**). One to 2 **Virginia Rails** were observed at UMDCF from 5/11 to 5/24. (**BO,JS+**). Two **Virginia Rails** were also present at the Hanover Rd wetlands 5/5 to 5/24 (**BO,JMa,JS+**).

By the time shorebird migration was in full swing, the late March sandbars at Triadelphia Reservoir were again submerged. Fortunately, one of the ponds at UMDCF developed a muddy edge. **Semipalmated Plovers** were present there 5/7 (1-**EH**) to 5/21 (3-**JS,KD**), while 30 **Least Sandpipers** were counted on 5/12 (**BO,RR,EH**). A **Wilson's Snipe** at Gateway 5/29 was a new spring departure record (**ES**).

Bonaparte's Gulls started moving early with the first one spotted on Triadelphia 3/6, a new spring arrival date (**KS**). The 65 at Wilde Lake



Great Blue Heron at Wilde Lake.
(Photo by Sue Probst.)

3/15 tied the second earliest spring date (**HZ**). Another 65 rested on Triadelphia 4/9 (**EH,JS**), and 40 spent time on Lake Elkhorn 4/12 (**JW**). A second-year **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was a nice find at Brighton Dam 3/3 (**HH**). Single **Great Black-backed Gulls** were noted 3/2 Triadelphia (**EH,JS**) and 3/30 Lake Kittamaqundi (**MJa**). The earliest **Caspian Tern** was spotted 4/5 at Triadelphia (**HH**) and the latest 4/24 at Lake Kittamaqundi (**MJa**). The largest flock reported was a modest 12 on Lake Kittamaqundi 4/10 (**SPe**).

Perhaps the emergence of periodical cicada Brood X brought an influx of cuckoos to the area. Most observers remarked on the numbers seen and heard. Three **Black-billed Cuckoos** were reported on May Count; 3 were also present at West Friendship on 5/25-26 (**LC**). Few **Common Nighthawks** were noted with the last 2 seen 5/20 near Ellicott City (**JW**). The earliest **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** arrived at Talbot's Landing 4/19 (**R&JG**). Two adult **Red-headed Woodpeckers** visited a peanut feeder on Paddock Pl. from 3/20 to 4/16 before disappearing (**J&JSch**). A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** 5/11 at Centennial was late (**J&TDC**).

SPRING BIRD RECORDS (Continued from page 2.)

An **Acadian Flycatcher** made an early appearance 4/30 at Daniels (GA). Normally late arriving **Willow Flycatchers** dallied until 5/11 when 3 were counted at UMDCF (BO,EH,KD,JS). One **Least Flycatcher** was tallied on May Count at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was noted at Wynfield Rd 5/16 (RC). **Warbling Vireos** returned early. Both the bird on 4/19 at Lake Kittamaqundi (ME) and another on 4/20 at UMDCF (BO,KD,JS) beat the previous 4/21 arrival date.

A flock of 26 **Fish Crows** announced their presence in east Columbia 3/1 (J&TDC). While most swallow species were tardy, the first **Tree Swallow** was sighted at Centennial 3/15, just two days later than the earliest record (JTv). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were reported from half a dozen locations (TDC,JS;Web;TE;JTv;MW;JW) with the latest on May Count in Swansfield (JTv).

Sedge Wrens are rarely detected in migration. One was spotted at Blandair on May Count (BO). A **Marsh Wren** at the UMDCF 4/22 was a new early date (BO,EH,KD,JS). Unlike most of the thrushes this spring, **Swainson's** arrived unusually early: 4/21 Worthington (EMe) and 4/26 Brush Run (JW). Most **American Pipits** leave by the end of April, but 48 were still present on May Count.

Warbler migration was the poorest in years. It was marked by low numbers, scarcity of many species, and the abrupt drop-off of migrants after the middle of May. **Nashville Warblers** arrived early: 4/24 at MPEA (KS,CL) and 4/25 at Rt 175 & Oceana Dr (ES) for the second and third earliest dates. Few were found the rest of the season. A **Northern Parula** showed up in Allview's flood-plain 3/29 for a new early date (ES). Even traditionally late migrating species like **Blackpoll Warblers** were unreported in late May and early June. The last one was heard 5/21 (KD,JS). A **Prothonotary Warbler** was spotted 4/20 along Sucker Branch on

Frederick Rd (JMa,DJo) and 4 were tallied on May Count in eastern Howard Co (SAr+). An unusually early **Kentucky Warbler** was noted 4/19 at St. Johns La & Frederick Rd (EMe). A **Hooded Warbler** put in a record early appearance 4/17 on Forsythe Rd, along with an **Orange-crowned Warbler** (DH).

Two **Summer Tanagers** were noted in less than a week: 5/3 Manahan Dr (BO) and 5/8 MPEA (CR). Two **Scarlet Tanagers** on 4/20 near Triadelphia Mill Rd arrived on the second earliest date ever (BO,KD,JS).

Twenty-five to 30 **Eastern Towhees** (just one female) were counted 4/18 at Rockburn (E&JMe). **Chipping Sparrows** were seen in good numbers with the peak on 4/25: 40 at Rt 175 & Oceana (ES) and 15 at Patapsco Valley State Park near Ellicott City (KS). The only **Vesper Sparrow** was spotted 4/10 at the west edge of Western Regional Park (EH,JS). **Savannah Sparrow** numbers were modest with a high of 40 on 4/29 at UMDCF (BO,EH,KD,JS). An early **Grasshopper Sparrow** was seen 4/7 at West Friendship (LC). **Fox Sparrows** peaked on 3/4 with 30 at Patuxent River Park (KD,KH) and 5-6 at David Force (ES,MWr,RT). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were hard to come by although May Count tallied 2 (SAr,CK;TDC,JTv). A **Dark-eyed Junco** 4/18 at Wilde Lake was the last of the season (CN).

A **Blue Grosbeak** near Marriottsville Rd 4/28 was early (CF). An astonishing 150 **Rusty Blackbirds** (almost double the previous high) were counted on 4/17 on Dorsey Rd (ES). **Purple Finches** were present at 11 locations from 2/21 Duvall (3-KT) to 4/26 Worthington (1-EMe). Identical highs of 10 were recorded on 3/1 (KT), 4/13 Wynfield (RC), and 4/16 (EMe). **Pine Siskins** were few, with reports from west of Ellicott City 4/10 (1-KH,KD), Wynfield (1-R&MgC), and east of Ellicott City (1-SB). The **American Goldfinch** high of 54 was tallied at Wynfield 4/1 (RC).

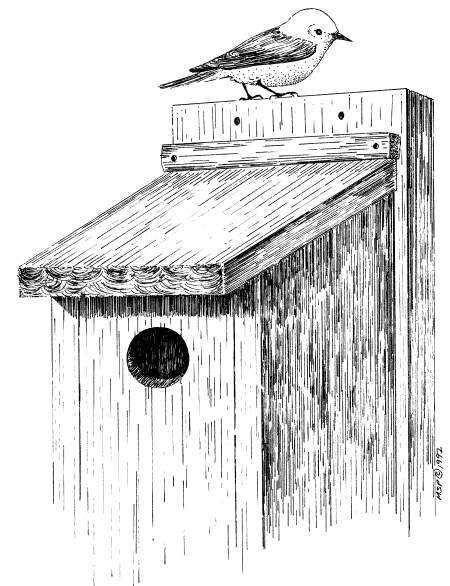
Observers: SAr-Stan Arnold, GA-Glenn Austin, MAB-Mary Ann Beverley, SB-Sue Buswell, JBy-Joe Byrnes, LC-Lisa Colangelo, JC-Jane Coskren, TDC-T. Dennis Coskren, JCu-Jeff Culler, MgC-Marge Cullison, RC-Ralph Cullison, III, KD-Karen Darcy, ME-Mark Eanes, WE-Wes Earp, Web-Ward Ebert, TE-Tracy Eve, CF-Cathy Franklin, MHa-Matt Hafner, DH-Dave Harvey, KH-Kevin Heffernan, JHe-Jane Heim, HH-Hans Holbrook, EH-Emy Holdridge, MHo-Mark Hollis, MJa-Marcus James, DJo-Diane Johns, CK-Charlie Kucera, CL-Cyndie Loeper, NM-Nancy Magnusson, JMa-John Maloney, EMe-Elayne Metter, JMe-Jeff Metter, JN-John Nagengast, SN-Sue Neri, CN-Carol Newman, LN-Louis Nielsen, BO-Bonnie Ott, SPe-Sherry Peruzzi, D&JRe-David & Joyce Rea; RR-Robert Ringler, CR-Chandler Robbins, SS-Steve Sanford, J&JSch-Judy & John Scherben, KS-Kurt Schwarz, JS-Jo Solem, RSt-Ralph Stokes, ES-Eva Sunell, RT-Robin Todd, KT-Kate Tufts, JTv-June Tveekrem, MW-Mark Wallace, JW-Jim Wilkinson, MWr-Michele Wright, HZ-Helen Zeichner.

MPEA-Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

UMDCF-University of Maryland Central Farm

May Count-May 8, 2004

*photograph posted at www.howardbirds.org



A Prothonotary Warbler considers an empty bluebird house as a possible nesting site.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL FALL COUNT SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2004

BY MIKE MCCLURE

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 18. **Mike McClure** 410-531-2780 and **Chuck Stirrat** 410-531-2417 are the county co-coordinators. Prior years have set an average of 126 species of birds identified on the count. Spend the day birding with us and help raise the average! 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. The county is divided into seven areas (shown below) which are used for all annual counts. A fall season field 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	Ron Polniaszek	410-531-6658
Area 3	Karen Darcy & Kevin Heffernan	410-418-8731
Area 4	Bill & Karan Blum	410-489-9197
Area 5	Kurt Schwarz	410-461-1643
Area 6	Bonnie Ott	410-461-3361
Area 7	Eva Sunell	410-995-0029

You may call an area or county coordinator or check at the September meeting to volunteer. **Martha and Don Waugh** will host the tally rally at 9522 Angelina Circle, Columbia, MD (410-381-8841, FletcherW@msn.com). The potluck dinner will be served at approximately 6:30 p.m. Call or e-mail them by September 16 to reserve space, choose a food to bring, and, if necessary, obtain directions.

2004-2005 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB OFFICERS

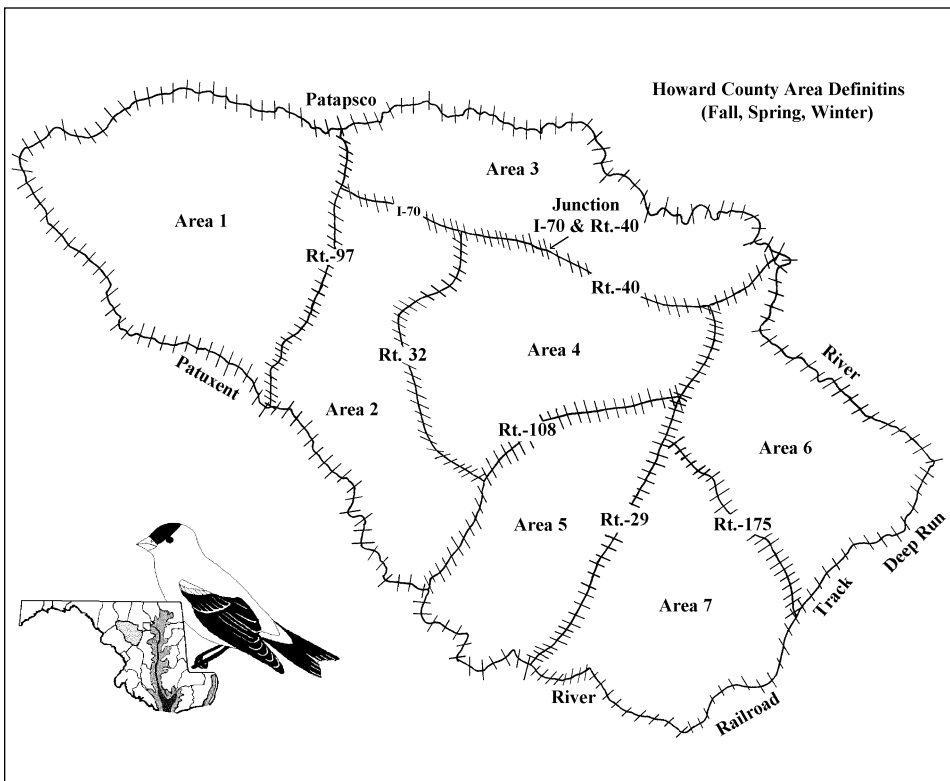
President: Jeff Friedhoffer
Vice-president: Kevin Heffernan
Secretary: Chuck Stirrat
Treasurer: Emy Holdridge
Chapter Directors: Tracy Eve (1st yr.)
 Tom Miller (2nd yr.)
State Directors: Mary-Jo Betts
 Karen Darcy
 Kate Tufts

STATE OFFICERS/COMMITTEES:

State Treasurer: Emy Holdridge
Atlas: Jane Coskren
Conservation: Maureen Harvey
Fall Seasonal Count: Chuck Stirrat
Investments: Martha Waugh
Mailing List: Bill Guion

CHAPTER COMMITTEES:

Field Trips: Bonnie Ott
Programs: Jane Geuder
Seed Sale/Scholarship: Eileen Clegg
Conservation: Kurt Schwarz
Newsletter: Suzanne Probst
 Dave Holyoke
Records: Jo Solem
Atlas: Jo Solem
 Bonnie Ott
Webmaster: Bob Solem



Thanks to our Howard County Fair Volunteers

By Suzanne Probst

I would like to thank 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, Lisa Colangelo, Jeff Friedhoffer, Ralph and Jane Geuder, Dave and Maureen Harvey, Elayne and Jeff Metter, Kurt Schwarz, Chuck Stirrat and Tom Strikwerda.** A special thanks also goes to **Jo and Bob Solem** for gathering and updating the promotional/educational literature that the bird club provides as free handouts. All of you continue to make this venture a success each year!

CLUB MEETINGS—NEW LOCATION!

BY JANE GEUDER

Club meetings are being held at a new location:

Howard County Recreation & Parks Headquarters
7120 Oakland Mills Road
Columbia, MD 21046

See the membership application for a map, or *The ADC Street Map Book* for Howard County, p. 16, 20-B. The Recreation & Parks Headquarters policy for inclement weather is as follows: If schools are closed for the day or close early due to snow and/or ice, all indoor facilities are closed for the day. You can check on the status of programs and facilities by calling the recorded program status line at 410-313-4451.

Hospitality and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m.
 Meeting/Program begins at 8:00 p.m.
 For further information call Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5366.

Thursday, September 9 "Birding in Remote Parts of China," by Dr. Donald Messersmith. Join Dr. Messersmith for his captivating presentation from rarely seen locations in China.


Thursday, October 14, "Birdlife on Travels in India," by Arlene Ripley. Join Arlene as she takes you on a photographic journey to the Indian subcontinent where she and her husband experienced three weeks of nature travel in early 2004. Areas covered (by plane, train, van, jeep, rickshaw and elephant back) were from Delhi to the tiger sanctuaries of Bandhavgarh and Ranthambhore, Keoladeo Ghana Bird Sanctuary and some World Heritage cultural sites. The final week began with a flight from Delhi to far eastern Assam province and Kaziranga National Park; home to many birds and mammals, especially wild elephants and the Indian One-horned Rhinoceros.


HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB FALL TRIPS

BY BONNIE OTT

FIELD TRIPS are a great way to improve birding skills, explore new places and meet other birders. Plan to arrive at the meeting area with enough time to be prepared to begin birding at the designated time. Carpooling is encouraged. Come prepared with appropriate footwear and gear (the trip description will offer advice). The leader has the option to cancel due to inclement weather. Directions for trips not on ADC maps may be found on the howardbirds.org website. If you have questions, call or e-mail the trip leader at the number/ address listed in the trip description, or field trip coordinator, **Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361** or bonnieott@verizon.net


To help make trips successful please stay behind the leader, keep talking to a minimum and stay with the group. Don't hesitate to ask questions or alert the leader to something you've spotted. Howard Bird Club members will be given priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

 **BUTTERFLIES THROUGH BINOCULARS**
Sept. 4, Saturday. 9:00 a.m. (1.5-2 hs)
 Leader—Dick Smith
 Meet at Centennial Park west end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path along the lakeside. Learn the basics of butterfly identification, in the hand and through the lens. Great for beginners and experts. We'll probably spot some birds and dragonflies too! Facilities available. Call Dick for info: 410-997-7439.

 **HAWK WATCH AT MT. PLEASANT**
Sept. 11, Saturday. 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
 Leader—Ralph Geuder
 Meet in gravel lot on entrance road of the farm. Bring a chair and sustenance to sit and watch the hawks fly. Mown grass paths through the fields and wood edges provide areas for walking excursions. Great for beginners. Facilities available. There may be a parking fee since this is "Celebration of Nature Day" at the farm. Call Ralph for info: 410-788-3764.


FALL COUNT
Sept. 18, Saturday

MIDDLE PATUXENT ENVIRONMENTAL AREA
Sept. 25, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. (half day)
 Leader—Stan Arnold
 Meet at gravel lot off Trotter Road. Moderately difficult walking through the woodland trails looking for fall migrants. Great area for warblers, thrushes and vireos. Philadelphia has turned up in previous years. Boots recommended for the tall grassy paths along the river. No facilities. Call Stan for information: 410-768-0155.

 **WEEKDAY WALK AT GWYNN ACRES**
Sept. 9, Thursday 8:00 (1-2 hours)
 Leader—Bonnie Ott
 Easy walking on paved path through the woods. Great habitat for migrant warblers and resident woodland species. Great for beginners. A reliable spot for Barred Owls. No facilities. Call Bonnie for info: 410-461-3361.

 **BEGINNER'S BIRD WALK AT CENTENNIAL**
Sept. 12, Sunday 8:30 a.m. (2-3 hours)
 Leaders—Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan
 Meet at the west end parking lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on paved path around the lake to learn the basics of bird identification, binocular and field guide use. Fall migration in full swing so possibilities are endless! Facilities available. Call Karen: 410-552-9342 or Kevin: 410-418-8731 for details.

DICKEY FARM (WITH CARROLL COUNTY CLUB)
Sept. 26, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (half day)
 Leaders—Dave and Maureen Harvey
 Meet at 32 & I-70 park-and-ride
 Explore the fields and woods of this private Howard County farm. Streams and

 =Great for beginning birders

(Field Trips continues on page 6.)

FIELD TRIPS (continued from page 5.)

ponds provide excellent habitat for a wide variety of birds. Boots recommended, grass and paths may be muddy and wet. No facilities.
Call Dave for info: 410-795-3117.

SPARROWS OF HOWARD COUNTY (WITH ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CLUB)

Oct. 3, Sunday. 7:00 a.m. (half day)
Meet at Rt. 100 & Meadowbrook park-and-ride. Visit a variety of sparrow habitats in Howard County to practice identification during the peak of sparrow migration. This time of year every species is expected with a chance for rarities. Knee boots will be needed for certain areas. Expect moderate to difficult walking. Facilities available at some spots.
Call Bonnie for info: 410-461-3361.

FALL MIGRANTS OF MOUNT PLEASANT

Oct. 9, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. (half day)
Leader–Bonnie Ott
Meet at gravel lot off entrance road. Moderate walking through fields and hedgerows in search of sparrows and other autumn migrants. Excellent view of the sky for flyovers. Paths and mown grass trails may be wet. Facilities available.
Call Bonnie for info: 410-461-3361.

SPARROW BIG DAY

Oct. 10, Sunday (all day)
The ultimate fall walk! Search for as many individual sparrows as possible. We're shooting for 1,000+ birds. Will hit all the Howard sparrow hot spots. ALL DAY moderate to difficult walking through many types of habitat. Some knowledge of sparrows helpful.
Limit of 10—call Bonnie at 410-461-3361 to reserve spot and get details.

AUDREY CARROLL SANCTUARY (WITH FREDERICK COUNTY)

Oct. 16, Saturday. 7:30 (half day)
Leader–Bonnie Ott
Meet at 32 & I-70 park-and-ride. Moderate walking on this 130-acre Audubon sanctuary to look for sparrows and learn the basics of sparrow identification. Facilities available.
Call Bonnie for info: 410-461-3361.

SEED SALE
Oct. 30, Saturday. 7:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
(See page 8 for more details.)

WEEKDAY WALK AT BON SECOURS
Nov. 3, Wednesday. 8:30 a.m. (2 hours)
Leaders–Michele Wright and Eva Sunell
Meet in the visitor's parking lot. Easy to moderate walking on the grounds of this lovely spiritual center. Woodlands and fields provide diverse habitat. Excellent view of the sky for flyover hawks. Great for beginners. Facilities available
Call Michele: 410-465-6057 or Eva: 410-995-0029 for information.

CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 7, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader–Kurt Schwarz
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners. Facilities available
Call Kurt for information: 410-461-1643.

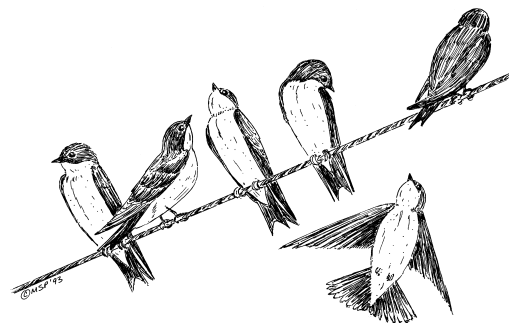
CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 14, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leaders–Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners. Facilities available
Call Karen: 410-552-9342 or Kevin: 410-418-8731 for details.

SANDY POINT STATE PARK (WITH ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY)
Nov. 20, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. half day
Leader–Hal Wierenga
Meet at Rt. 100 & Long Gate Parkway park-and-ride to carpool to meet the Anne Arundel club. We will join them to visit Sandy Point and the "Westinghouse Pond" and Northrop Grumman property. Moderate walking. Bring scopes if possible and expect a \$1-\$2 entrance fee. Snow Buntings and waterfowl are expected highlights. Facilities available.
Call Bonnie: 410-461-3361 or Al Haury: 410-923-0881 for information.

CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 21, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader–Jane Coskren
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners. Facilities available
Call Jane for information: 410-381-7344.

CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 28, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader–Richard Orr
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners. Facilities available. Call Richard for information: 410-730-7290.

BLACKWATER WILDLIFE REFUGE
Dec. 4, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. (all day)
Leader–Stan Arnold
Meet at MD 32 & Broken Land Parkway park-and-ride (the east side). Plan to stop in the a.m. at McDonalds in Easton for a pit stop/quick breakfast. Will stop at the Choptank River Bridge and Oakly Road to look at the waterfowl. The majority of time will be spent at the refuge. We'll end the day at Shorter's Wharf Road to look for Short-Eared Owl and Rough-Legged Hawk. Pack plenty of food and drinks and dress very warmly. Facilities available at certain spots. Call Stan for information: 410-768-0155.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

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

September 23, Thursday
Bonnie Ott, 8664 Manahan Drive
Ellicott City, 21043 • 410-461-3361

October 28, Thursday
Kurt Schwarz, 9045 Dunloggin Court
Ellicott City, 21042 • 410-461-1643

THE 25TH ANNUAL HOWARD LIST—2003

BY JANE COSKREN

In 2003 we found 226 species: 3 species fewer than 2002's total of 229. We added Whimbrel to the Howard list, and other exciting finds were Red-necked Grebe, Least Bittern, Ring-necked Pheasant, Golden Eagle, Virginia Rail, Common Moorhen, Black-bellied Plover, Upland Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull, Clay-colored Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, and Common Redpoll. We have not had a Black Tern since 1999 and, sadly, we missed Northern Bobwhite for the first time.

Let's hope for a really productive 2004. Find some birds and report them! Share your finds by activating the Howard County Rare Bird Alert: call **Bob Solem** at 301-725-5037 or **Bonnie Ott** at 410-461-3361.

Thanks to the following members who submitted their 2003 lists: **Rod Burley, Dennis Coskren, Jane Coskren, Karen Darcy, Kevin Heffernan, Nancy Magnusson, Jo Solem, and Paul Zucker**. Jo Solem's reports for the seasons captured many sightings not reported on individual lists, as did Paul Zucker's and Chuck Stirrat's, along with Mike McClure's compilations from special counts. Dennis Coskren helped compile the annual list.

Individuals who submitted their 2003 annual list will receive the 25-year compilation. Others may obtain it by sending a stamped, self-addressed, long envelope to **Jane Coskren, 6324 Sandchain Road, Columbia, MD 21045**.

2003 Annual Howard County List

Common Loon	Broad-winged Hawk	Hummingbird	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Common Yellowthroat
Pied-billed Grebe	Red-tailed Hawk	Belted Kingfisher	Eastern Bluebird	Hooded Warbler
Horned Grebe	Golden Eagle	Red-headed Woodpecker	Veery	Wilson's Warbler
Red-necked Grebe	American Kestrel	Red-bellied Woodpecker	Gray-cheeked Thrush	Canada Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Merlin	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Swainson's Thrush	Yellow-breasted Chat
American Bittern	Peregrine Falcon	Downy Woodpecker	Hermit Thrush	Scarlet Tanager
Least Bittern	Ring-necked Pheasant	Hairy Woodpecker	Wood Thrush	Eastern Towhee
Great Blue Heron	Wild Turkey	Northern Flicker	American Robin	American Tree Sparrow
Great Egret	Virginia Rail	Pileated Woodpecker	Gray Catbird	Chipping Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Sora	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Northern Mockingbird	Clay-colored Sparrow
Cattle Egret	Common Moorhen	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Brown Thrasher	Field Sparrow
Green Heron	American Coot	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	European Starling	Vesper Sparrow
Black-crowned	Black-bellied Plover	Acadian Flycatcher	American Pipit	Lark Sparrow
Night-Heron	Semipalmated Plover	Alder Flycatcher	Cedar Waxwing	Savannah Sparrow
Black Vulture	Killdeer	Willow Flycatcher	Blue-winged Warbler	Grasshopper Sparrow
Turkey Vulture	Greater Yellowlegs	Least Flycatcher	Golden-winged Warbler	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Snow Goose	Lesser Yellowlegs	Eastern Phoebe	Tennessee Warbler	Fox Sparrow
Canada Goose	Solitary Sandpiper	Great Crested Flycatcher	Orange-crowned Warbler	Song Sparrow
Mute Swan	Spotted Sandpiper	Eastern Kingbird	Nashville Warbler	Lincoln's Sparrow
Tundra Swan	Whimbrel	White-eyed Vireo	Northern Parula	Swamp Sparrow
Wood Duck	Upland Sandpiper	Yellow-throated Vireo	Yellow Warbler	White-throated Sparrow
Gadwall	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Blue-headed Vireo	Chestnut-sided Warbler	White-crowned Sparrow
American Wigeon	Least Sandpiper	Warbling Vireo	Magnolia Warbler	Dark-eyed Junco
American Black Duck	Pectoral Sandpiper	Philadelphia Vireo	Cape May Warbler	Lapland Longspur
Mallard	Long-billed Dowitcher	Red-eyed Vireo	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Northern Cardinal
Blue-winged Teal	Wilson's Snipe	Blue Jay	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Northern Shoveler	American Woodcock	American Crow	Black-throated Green Warbler	Blue Grosbeak
Northern Pintail	Laughing Gull	Fish Crow	Blackburnian Warbler	Indigo Bunting
Green-winged Teal	Bonaparte's Gull	Horned Lark	Yellow-throated Warbler	Dickcissel
Canvasback	Ring-billed Gull	Purple Martin	Pine Warbler	Bobolink
Ring-necked Duck	Herring Gull	Tree Swallow	Prairie Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Greater Scaup	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Palm Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Lesser Scaup	Glaucous Gull	Swallow	Bay-breasted Warbler	Rusty Blackbird
Surf Scoter	Great Black-backed Gull	Bank Swallow	Blackpoll Warbler	Common Grackle
Long-tailed Duck	Caspian Tern	Cliff Swallow	Cerulean Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Bufflehead	Forster's Tern	Barn Swallow	Black-and-white Warbler	Orchard Oriole
Common Goldeneye	Rock Pigeon	Carolina Chickadee	American Redstart	Baltimore Oriole
Hooded Merganser	Mourning Dove	Tufted Titmouse	Prothonotary Warbler	Purple Finch
Common Merganser	Black-billed Cuckoo	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Worm-eating Warbler	House Finch
Red-breasted Merganser	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	White-breasted Nuthatch	Ovenbird	Common Redpoll
Ruddy Duck	Eastern Screech-Owl	Brown Creeper	Northern Waterthrush	Pine Siskin
Osprey	Great Horned Owl	Carolina Wren	Louisiana Waterthrush	American Goldfinch
Bald Eagle	Barred Owl	House Wren	Kentucky Warbler	House Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Common Nighthawk	Winter Wren	Connecticut Warbler	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Whip-poor-will	Marsh Wren	Mourning Warbler	
Cooper's Hawk	Chimney Swift	Golden-crowned Kinglet		
Red-shouldered Hawk	Ruby-throated	Ruby-crowned Kinglet		

SUMMARY OF 2004 HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT

BY PAUL A. ZUCKER

The Howard County May Count was held on May 8, 2004. The earliest party started at 4:30 a.m. and the last parties lasted until 9 p.m. The weather was pleasant with temperatures in the 50's and 60's. Although the morning was overcast, the skies cleared in the afternoon. The count had a record turnout of 77 participants, who split into 42 parties (tied with last year for the largest number so far). The total of party-hours on foot (219.5) was higher than average but not near the record. The total number of birds tallied was 16,828; very similar to last year and fairly typical of the last fifteen years.

Although most of the birders who gathered at the tally expressed the view that they had a slow day, **the final tally shows an impressive total of 153 species, only one fewer than our record of 154** (reached in 1977 and 1984)! Numbers of individuals were in the expected ranges for most species. There were, however, 12 high counts since 1974 (Turkey Vulture, Canada Goose, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk (tied), Red-tailed Hawk, Solitary Sandpiper, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ovenbird, Louisiana

Waterthrush, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak). Furthermore, Brown Thrashers were the highest since 1975 and American Pipits since 1982. In contrast, there were some low counts: American Crow (and crow, sp.) since 1976, Tufted Titmouse since 1993, American Robin since 1981, and Kentucky Warbler was its lowest since 1987.

There were two new species added for the count (at least since 1974). They were the **Peregrine Falcon** and the **Sedge Wren**. Additional exciting sightings were Great Egret (4th in 15 years), Blue-winged Teal (2nd in last 15), Ring-necked Duck (3rd in last 15), Common Merganser (4th in last 15), Red-breasted Nuthatch (4th in last 15), Summer Tanager (3rd in last 15), and Pine Siskin (2nd in last 15). On the other side of the ledger are the species missed this year that were seen in at least half of the last 15 counts: Black-crowned Night-Heron, Ring-necked Pheasant (missed now for the seventh year in a row), American Woodcock and Willow Flycatcher. For the second time since 1996, a Northern Bobwhite was found.

(Howard County May Count continues on page 9.)

SEED SALE • SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30 7:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M.

BY KURT SCHWARZ

As the days shorten, temperatures cool, and our thoughts turn to the thrills of autumn migration, perhaps it has occurred to you, "What can I do to aid the birds that have brought me so much fun and excitement?" One great way to help our feathered friends is to purchase seed from the Howard County Bird Club's fall seed sale. The birds benefit in two ways: they get to dine on the yummy treats you provide—AND the proceeds are invested in habitat preservation and enhancement, but more about that later.

You probably have more mundane concerns about where to go, whether you will have to heft those heavy bags of seed, and so on. The process, in fact, is quite simple. You order seed in advance with a blank you can download from the website, or use the one you will receive in the mail about October 1st. On the morning of the sale (Saturday, October 30), drive to the First Presbyterian Church on MD 108, just east of US 29 (9325 Presbyterian Circle). Enter the church to obtain your receipt. Don't forget to shop the Wildlife Authority as well as the club's own merchandise offerings! Then re-enter your car, drive to the pallets, and the smiling volunteers will happily heft the bags of seed into your trunk, back seat, or wherever you direct. Okay, you will have to wrestle the bag(s) out of your car when you get them home, but the birds will appreciate it.

What happens to the proceeds? The club's board will assemble a variety of proposals, seeking projects right here in Maryland, as well as abroad, to benefit the birds we see in

Howard County. If you know of a worthy project, please inform a board member.

Since the sale's inception in 1979, under the able leadership of **Eileen Clegg** (with assistance from **Mary-Jo Betts** in recent years), we have raised \$50,000 which has been invested in habitat preservation and enhancement. Some of that money has been invested right here in Howard County to help get the Clegg Memorial Grassland project started in the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. In Maryland, we have also aided the "Old Growth Forest Project" at Frostburg University, the Little Patuxent Oxbow Sanctuary in Laurel, and the Belt Woods Environmental Area. Internationally, to assist our neotropical migrants, we have aided projects to preserve and enhance habitat in Central America, having invested in projects in Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Belize, and Panama. Donations for this past year went to a project in the Dominican Republic. We also provided substantial backing for the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas of the 1980s.

As you can see, the birds benefit twice from your seed sale purchase. So please give serious consideration to purchasing your seed from the club in October. You will also have an opportunity to make an additional contribution toward habitat preservation. 100% of all contributions will be directed to the habitat project(s) the board selects. Look for the seed sale order blank on the website or in the mail by October 1. Hope to see you at the Seed Sale!

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT (continued from page 8.)

We thank the **Randles** for hosting yet another great tally-rally (now a cherished tradition). **Chuck Stirrat** has again been a great help with numerical tabulations and checklist generation. The efforts of all the participants are what make the count what it is. Thanks go to: **Stan Arnold, Randy Beaton, Karan and Bill Blum, Susan Buswell, Joe Byrnes, Marty Chestem, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis and Jane Coskren, Jeff Culler, Marge and Ralph Cullison, Karen Darcy, Ward Ebert, Darius Ecker, Erin and Tracy Eve, Bob Fletcher, Dave and Maureen Harvey, Kevin Heffernan, Jane Heim, Bill and Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Dave Kubitsky, Charlie Kucera, Michael Leumas, Brigitte Lund, Nancy**

Magnusson, Jenny and Mike McClintock, Grazina and Mike McClure, Janet McKegg, Lynn Moore, Barry Miller, Sue Neri, Carol Newman, Doug and Jeanne Odermatt, Daryl Olson, Peter Osenton, Bonnie Ott, Karla Pearce, Anita Picco, Ron and Susan Polniaszek, Suzanne Probst, Chan and Stewart Robbins, Clyde Robinette, Jay Sheppard, Marie Skane, Phil Smith, Romaine Smith, Bob and Jo Solem, Michelle Stewart, Chuck Stirrat, Jo-Ann and Ralph Stokes, Tom Strikwerda, Eva Sunell, Robin Todd, Dick and Kate Tufts, June Tveekrem, Jerry and Marilyn Veek, Ginny Walker, Mark Wallace, Dave Wilusz, Michelle Wright, Sherry and Paul Zucker (compiler).

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS—MAY 8, 2004

SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL	SPECIES	TOTAL
Common Loon	7	Rock Pigeon	252	Carolina Chickadee	212	American Redstart	102
Double-crested Cormorant	7	Mourning Dove	400	Tufted Titmouse	283	Prothonotary Warbler	4
Great Blue Heron	58	Black-billed Cuckoo	3	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	Worm-eating Warbler	21
Great Egret	1	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	White-breasted Nuthatch	70	Ovenbird	310
Green Heron	21	Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Carolina Wren	183	Northern Waterthrush	6
Black-crowned Night-Heron		Great Horned Owl	6	House Wren	96	Louisiana Waterthrush	61
Black Vulture	99	Barred Owl	18	Sedge Wren	1	Kentucky Warbler	18
Turkey Vulture	255	Common Nighthawk	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	10	Common Yellowthroat	339
Canada Goose	857	Whip-Poor-Will	2	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	323	Hooded Warbler	25
Mute Swan	1	Chimney Swift	224	Eastern Bluebird	92	Wilson's Warbler	3
Wood Duck	62	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	20	Veery	29	Canada Warbler	4
Mallard	163	Belted Kingfisher	21	Swainson's Thrush	6	Yellow-breasted Chat	28
Blue-winged Teal	2	Red-bellied Woodpecker	286	Hermit Thrush	2	Summer Tanager	1
Ring-necked Duck	1	Downy Woodpecker	93	Wood Thrush	492	Scarlet Tanager	249
Common Merganser	10	Hairy Woodpecker	19	American Robin	365	Eastern Towhee	198
Osprey	11	Northern(Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	60	Gray Catbird	716	Chipping Sparrow	157
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	3	Pileated Woodpecker	47	Northern Mockingbird	206	Field Sparrow	73
Northern Harrier	3	Eastern Wood-Pewee	31	Brown Thrasher	64	Vesper Sparrow	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	Acadian Flycatcher	97	European Starling	976	Savannah Sparrow	8
Cooper's Hawk	13	Willow Flycatcher		American Pipit	48	Grasshopper Sparrow	25
accipiter species	2	Least Flycatcher	1	Cedar Waxwing	99	Song Sparrow	188
Red-shouldered Hawk	58	Empidonax species	1	Blue-winged Warbler	19	Lincoln's Sparrow	2
Broad-winged Hawk	4	Eastern Phoebe	57	Tennessee Warbler	1	Swamp Sparrow	12
Red-tailed Hawk	53	Great Crested Flycatcher	56	Nashville Warbler	2	White-throated Sparrow	77
American Kestrel	5	Eastern Kingbird	127	Northern Parula	159	White-crowned Sparrow	13
Peregrine Falcon	1	White-eyed Vireo	129	Yellow Warbler	108	Northern Cardinal	930
Ring-necked Pheasant		Blue-headed Vireo	3	Chestnut-sided Warbler	31	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	50
Wild Turkey		Yellow-throated Vireo	27	Magnolia Warbler	29	Blue Grosbeak	4
Northern Bobwhite	1	Warbling Vireo	21	Cape May Warbler	1	Indigo Bunting	230
American Coot		Red-eyed Vireo	542	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	87	Bobolink	367
Killdeer	19	Blue Jay	332	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	157	Red-winged Blackbird	617
Greater Yellowlegs	3	American Crow	201	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	50	Eastern Meadowlark	9
Lesser Yellowlegs	6	Fish Crow	29	Blackburnian Warbler	2	Common Grackle	378
Solitary Sandpiper	151	crow species	121	Yellow-throated Warbler	1	Brown-headed Cowbird	223
Spotted Sandpiper	62	Horned Lark	5	Pine Warbler	5	Orchard Oriole	57
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1	Purple Martin	24	Prairie Warbler	31	Baltimore Oriole	162
Least Sandpiper	30	Tree Swallow	163	Palm Warbler	1	House Finch	175
Wilson's Snipe	2	N. Rough-winged Swallow	88	Bay-breasted Warbler	1	Pine Siskin	2
American Woodcock		Bank Swallow	3	Blackpoll Warbler	24	American Goldfinch	405
Ring-billed Gull	16	Cliff Swallow	62	Cerulean Warbler	3	House Sparrow	295
Herring Gull	1	Barn Swallow	382	Black-&-white Warbler	61		

Note: Empty entry means that the total was zero.



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB
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CONSERVATION COLUMN

BY KURT SCHWARZ

Did you know that the Howard County Bird Club has become a voice in national conservation issues? Not only do the funds raised through our seed sale contribute to habitat preservation here in Maryland and abroad, we also add our voice on land conservation issues across the nation. Member George Alderson has been keeping his finger on the pulse of land use decisions across the country, and has written many letters on behalf of the club advocating habitat preservation in Alaska, Arizona, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, Wisconsin and the multi-state Yellowstone region. In addition, we have filed comments on proposed Bureau of Land Management (BLM) grazing regulations changes. Having

retired from the Department of the Interior, George has inside knowledge which is a great help in drafting these letters.

Closer to home, George has drafted several letters to the National Park Service, and three Maryland and West Virginia counties calling for the preservation of the right-of-way of the former Western Maryland Railroad as public land. Here in Howard County, letters regarding stadium lighting and deer hunting have been sent to county entities.

So the Howard County Bird Club has an impact on habitat preservation right here in Maryland, across the nation, and south of the border.

Thanks to George for giving us a national voice! And soon, you too may be asked to help. I plan to e-mail occasional action alerts to club members on conservation topics at the state and national level. Internet action campaigns have proliferated in the last few years, and are really quite easy. Click the link, fill in your name, address, etc., click a submit button, and off it goes.

