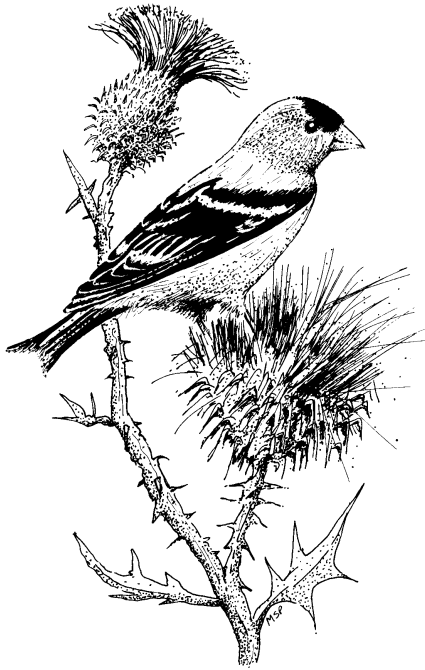


# The Goldfinch

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



## WINTER BIRD RECORDS

### DECEMBER 1, 2004 TO FEBRUARY 28, 2005

BY JOANNE SOLEM

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Copy may be e-mailed to: Suzanne Probst  
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Please visit the Club's website at [www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org)

Lakes and reservoirs remained open in December, but by late January were mostly frozen. The mast crop was poor so Blue Jay numbers were low, and few northern irruptives ventured south. There were, however, some records that brightened a drab season. White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Northern Goshawk, Wild Turkey (in suburban locations), Long-eared Owl, Snow Bunting, and Lapland Longspur were all notable species.

A blue phase **Snow Goose** flew over Schooley Mill Park 12/18 (NM); perhaps the same one was present at John Hopkins APL 1/9 (JS). These were the only reports until 20-25 were spotted flying north near Bethany Lane and Rt. 40 on 2/6 (MWr). Flocks are so infrequently detected in the county that this was the largest group since 1992!

**Cackling Goose** is a recently split species which can only be differentiated from a small **Canada Goose** with careful study. One was photographed at Wilde Lake 12/11 (KH, KD) and appeared to move to Centennial 12/12 (EH, ph.). Multiple observers at Centennial documented at least two birds through 1/9/05 (JHf). **Tundra Swans** were still moving the last half of December and early January (JSh; EC; EH; KS, JBy, JCu); the first two spring migrants were noted over Rt. 32 on 2/24 (HH).

The Triadelphia Christmas Count party covering that reservoir on 12/18 turned up the following waterfowl: **American Wigeon** 1, **American Black Duck** 9, **Mallard** 300,

**Northern Pintail** 11, **Green-winged Teal** 5, **Common Goldeneye** 12, **Hooded Merganser** 25, and **Common Merganser** 43 (RMs, REt, MSg). A **Gadwall** was present on a Daisy Rd pond 1/31 (KT). A flock of 21 black ducks at Centennial 12/12 was unusually large for that location (KS). Pintails were present at Centennial most of the season reaching a high of six on 2/7 (SPe, KBo). Two pairs of **Redheads** found open water at the quarry pond on Brighton Dam Rd on Howard County Midwinter Count (HCMC) 2/5 (DHn). Likely the same four birds were seen at Warfield's Pond Park 2/12 (JS) and at Western Regional Park 2/17 (KT; LC). As usual, **Ring-necked Ducks** remained through the season at Lake Elkhorn (high of 50 on 12/3) (SN) and at Centennial where the high was 118-141 on 12/19 (KS). One of the winter's choice sightings was a male **White-winged Scoter** on Triadelphia 12/12 (KS+); it stayed until 12/13 (BO). The two **Long-tailed Ducks** which associated with the scoter on 12/12 (KS) increased to a flock of 23 by the next day (BO). Following a trend of the last few years **Common Mergansers** on Triadelphia lived up to their name reaching 1,000+ on 12/29 (KS) and 1,200-1,300 on 2/23 (JS).

A late **Osprey** cruised over Centennial 12/8 for the third December record ever (JTv). **Bald Eagles** continue to be most consistently seen from Brighton Dam (many obs.). Other locations reported were Centennial (*vide* SMu [2]; SPe, KBo), Wilde Lake (JFr), east Columbia (JW),

(Continued on page 2.)

and High Ridge (*vide* BN). Besides the three **Northern Harriers** on HCMC (D&MH; KS, JFi, SDv; M&GMcC, CRo, RSm), one was spotted over Hallmark 2/20 (Web). The only **Northern Goshawk** reported was an im. at the Green Manor Turf Farm, Rt. 32 on 12/31 (HH).

Among the more bizarre sightings this season were **Wild Turkeys** in two suburban areas. One was strolling through yards in Columbia Hills 1/8 (MBo, BL); the other availed herself of seed under feeders along Branch Woods Ct staying in a tiny stream valley from early January through the end of the period (SB). **Killdeer** peaked at 34 on 12/8 at Triadelphia (EH, JS). By HCMC only one could be located countywide (TDC, RS). **Wilson's Snipe** occasionally winter in small numbers. Three were present at UMDCF 1/7 (BO, EH, JS); four were found on HCMC (MW; M&GMcC, CRo, RSm [2]; K&BB). An **American Woodcock**, a species unusual in the Piedmont in winter, was heard on 1/4 at Annapolis Rock Rd (HH, JBr). They started to migrate by mid-February with 2-4 (2-19) present at the same location (JSh+) and four at West Friendship 2/23 (LC).

A late **Bonaparte's Gull** was spotted at Triadelphia 12/12 (KS). HCMC tallied three **Great Black-backed Gulls** at Alpha Ridge landfill (RC). It's hard to believe that the all-time high of 400 was reached on 2/1/97, less than a decade ago (GSc, RBi, RC). What a difference an active landfill makes!

The **Eastern Screech-Owl** nestbox project initiated by Jay Sheppard has attracted 1-2 roosting owls this season at Hallmark (J&Web). Let's hope they nest. A **Long-eared Owl** was heard in pines along Lime Kiln Rd the evening of 2/12 (HH, JBr). The same observers heard two **Northern Saw-whet Owls** on 1/4 at Annapolis Rock Rd. A Bird Club search on 2/19 for saw-whets turned up a total of two seen (two locations), as well as 1-2 Barred Owls and Long-eared Owl pellets (JSh+).

An **Eastern Phoebe** in Kings Contrivance 1/1 (DSO) and one on 2/1 and 2/5 in Swansfield (JTv) were the only ones reported. HCMC **Blue Jay** totals hit a 20 year low of 133. A few **Red-breasted Nuthatches** wintered: (T&EE; DHo; EMe; JSh; JTv). The **Gray Catbird** at Fore Bay Pond on 12/24 (JW) was late. Two others hung around elsewhere until HCMC (JLy; JTv), as did two **Brown Thrashers** (ML; BO, EH). Both species are nice winter records.

**Yellow-rumped Warblers** were hard to come by with the three on HCMC setting a new low (TDC, RS; JSh; POs). A **Pine Warbler** stayed through the period supplementing its diet at feeders west of Ellicott City (KH, KD). **Chipping Sparrows** are unusual in winter so five at Wynfield 2/25 (RC) and two on 2/27 at Western Reg. (BHi) were good sightings. The high for **Savannah Sparrows** was 12 on 12/4 at the landfill (RC). The total of 23 **Fox Sparrows** on HCMC was the third highest ever.

The leucistic **Northern Cardinal** (white with a small amount of red in the tail) was reported again from Meadowbrook 12/20 (MRa); the initial report had been 7/18/04. Twelve **Eastern Meadowlarks** at the landfill 12/4 were nice (RC). **Rusty Blackbirds** were scarce with one at Wynfield 1/24-26 (RC) and one on HCMC (DOI, RR). A **Snow Bunting** in a field along Old Frederick Rd, west of Rt. 32 on 1/29 was an excellent find (JW). The bunting was not re-found—a party searching for it on 2/6 had to settle for a **Lapland Longspur** (RC, BO, EH).

Few northern irruptive species moved south this winter. A lone **Common Redpoll** appeared at a feeder on Roxbury Rd during a snowstorm 1/22 (K&BB), and one **Pine Siskin** was noted at a Worthington feeder 12/2 (EMe). There were scattered **Purple Finch** reports over the course of the winter (Web; R&JG; KT; EMe; JW).

HCMC—Howard County Midwinter Count, Feb. 5  
UMDCF—University of Maryland Central Farm

**Observers:** K&BB—Karan & Bill Blum, RBI—Rick Blom, KBo—Ken Board, MBo—Monika Botsai, JBr—Jim Brighton, SB—Sue Buswell, JBy—Joe Byrnes, EC—Eileen Clegg, LC—Lisa Colangelo, TCD—T. Dennis Coskren, JCu—Jeff Culler, RC—Ralph Cullison III, KD—Karen Darcy, SDv—Sharon Davis, JEb—Jane Ebert, Web—Ward Ebert, REt—Rob Etgen, T&EE—Tracy & Erin Eve, JFi—John Finedore, JFr—Jeff Friedhoffer, R&JG—Ralph & Jane Geuder, JHF—Joe Hanfman, D&MH—Dave & Maureen Harvey, KH—Kevin Heffernan, DHn—Don Henderson, BHi—Bill Hill, HH—Hans Holbrook, EH—Emy Holdridge, DHo—David Holmes, ML—Mike Leumas, BL—Brigitte Lund, JLy—Janet Lydon, NM—Nancy Magnusson, RMs—Rich Mason, M&GMcC—Mike & Grazina McClure, EMe—Elayne Metter, SM—Sue Muller, SN—Sue Neri, BN—Bea Newkirk, DOI—Daryl Olson, POs—Peter Osenton, BO—Bonnie Ott, SPe—Sherry Peruzzi, MRa—Mark Raab, RR—Robert Ringler, CRo—Clyde Robinette, GSc—Gene Scarpulla, MSg—Mark Schilling, KS—Kurt Schwarz, JSh—Jay Sheppard, RSm—Romayne Smith, JS—Jo Solem, RS—Robert Solem, DSO—Dan Southworth, KT—Kate Tufts, JTv—June Tveekrem, JW—Jim Wilkinson, MW—Mark Wallace, MWw—Michele Wright.

*Migration and breeding records are welcome. Material is compiled seasonally and is due on 3 March, 3 June, 3 August, and 3 December. (Note that these seasons are not identical to calendar seasons.) Sightings of species on the county list which are Accidental (five or fewer records), Hypothetical, or are new county records must be accompanied by written and/or photo documentation. Submit to Jo Solem at odenata@msn.com or 10617 Grae Loch Rd., Laurel, MD 20723.*

# THIRD YEAR ATLAS RESULTS

BY JOANNE SOLEM AND BONNIE OTT

After completing three years of the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas, Howard County's 34 blocks are in good shape. Number of species per block is an excellent 84.9, while the important percentage of Confirmed plus Probable species per block is 82%. Damascus Center-east, Woodbine Southwest, and Laurel Northwest all are above 90%!

Balance in covering all quarterblocks is important. Woodbine Center-east and Relay Northwest lead this category with 61 species found in all quarterblocks. If you are an atlaser, please make a concerted effort to work in the 45 quarterblocks which are still below 60 species. This should be a priority in 2005.

Highlights in 2004 were confirmations of Least Tern in Relay Northwest (Anne Arundel Co.) and Virginia Rail in Sykesville Southeast, with Dickcissel as a Probable nester in Woodbine Northwest. By the end of the third year, Wild Turkey was confirmed in four blocks (Woodbine Northeast and Southwest, Clarksville

Northwest, and Ellicott City Center-west). Broad-winged Hawk was finally found during the 2004 breeding season in four quarterblocks, but the presence of that species is still significantly below that of the 1980's. A major focus in the final two years of the project is establishing the presence, as well as breeding, of some of the dwindling warbler species—no small challenge. Sadly, we continue to document the drop in field species from the previous atlas as the county loses farmland.

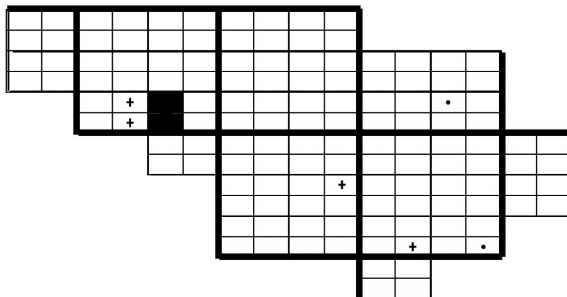
For a summary of results or to download a package of species maps, visit the bird club's website [www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org). Though you may not be an active atlas participant, you may provide valuable data. Pass along sightings of bobwhite, pheasants, and turkeys, nesting Chimney Swifts, vultures or hummingbirds, as well as owls or whip-poor-wills heard or seen. Friends or acquaintances may mention some of these birds. We need the date (or an approximation) and location. Call Bonnie at 410-461-3361

and leave a message or e-mail Jo at [odenata@msn.com](mailto:odenata@msn.com).

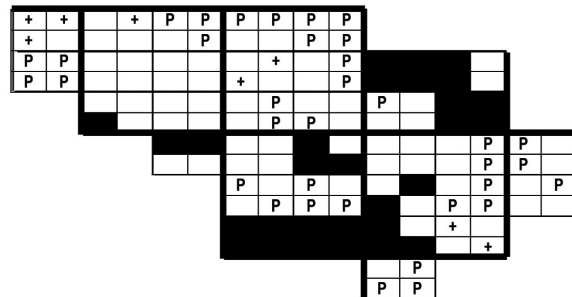
As usual there have been a few changes in responsibility. Although Dave Holyoke (SY-SW) and Sherry Peruzzi (SV-NW) will no longer be compiling blocks, we appreciate their help during the first three years and the fine start their blocks have made. Thanks to Joe Byrnes, Jeff Culler and Phil Smith, who not only will continue to work their own blocks, but have picked up Woodbine Center-west to help Kate Tufts. Phil has also volunteered to compile Sykesville Southwest. Eva Sunell will again assist with several eastern blocks. Daryl Olson has returned to the county so Ginny Walker looks forward to assisting instead of compiling Clarksville Southwest. Thanks for stepping in last year, Ginny. All data contributions from bird club members and friends have been appreciated. What an outstanding effort so far. We anticipate that the last two years will continue this excellent beginning.

**Tree Swallow and Kentucky Warbler are two species whose Howard County presence varies widely from the last atlas:**

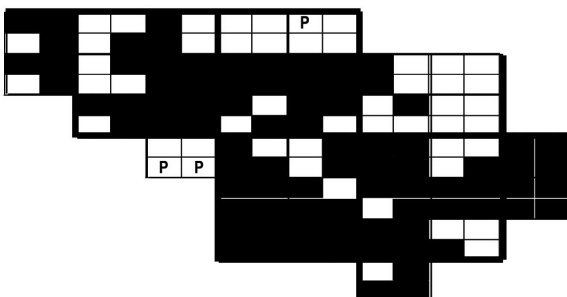
■ Confirmed    P Probable    + Possible    O Observed



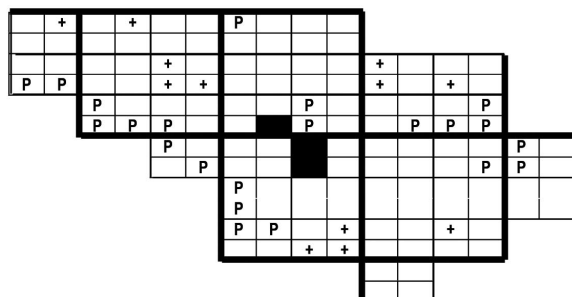
Tree Swallow 1983-1987



Kentucky Warbler 1983-1987



Tree Swallow 2002-2004



Kentucky Warbler 2002-2004

# TWENTIETH HOWARD COUNTY MIDWINTER COUNT, FEBRUARY 5, 2005

BY JOANNE SOLEM AND EMMALYN HOLDRIDGE

For two decades Howard County birders have braved snow, ice, and cold to count birds on one Saturday in late January or early February. This count was initiated in 1986 as one of two in Maryland to see if there were significant differences in birds present in late fall/early winter, during the traditional Christmas Count period, and those present in midwinter. When David Holmes wrote the initial summary article he asked, "So, did we learn anything? Of course; that we should do this again!"

So we did—19 more times! In the course of 20 years we *have* learned a few things. We have become resigned to the fact that, in most years, the Triadelphia Christmas Count turns up more species than the Howard County Midwinter Count. Autumn migration is not always complete in late December so late migrants can boost Triadelphia's results. That count also has the advantage of open water most years. By midwinter, limited open water severely restricts waterfowl numbers, while snow cover and cold frequently force most of the marginally hardy wintering species to flee. Residents like Carolina Wrens, which are not cold-hardy, regularly suffer major population drops. Early February is winter on the calendar, but incubating Great Horned Owls and courting Red-shouldered Hawks and Red-tailed Hawks are welcome signs of spring for midwinter counters. One of the few things we can say about winter birds is that even during the coldest, snowiest winters, populations in central Maryland are not static.

Twenty years is not a sufficiently long period on which to base real trends, but even two decades are sufficient to see some changes taking place. Canada Goose numbers increased during the first decade; it may be wishful thinking to believe that the population has stabilized. Waterfowl numbers swing so wildly, depending on the amount of open water, that no realistic judgments can be made. Within the years of this count, an active Bald Eagle nest has been estab-

lished on each reservoir. As a result, numbers of this species have risen from zero the first three years to mostly three to five the last few years. Unfortunately, American Kestrel numbers have dropped dramatically. Ring-necked Pheasants, found on nine of the first 10 counts, were last reported in 1997. The opportunity to tally rare gulls is much diminished by the closing of the local landfill. House Finch numbers continue to drop. Although irruptive species are notoriously unpredictable, we haven't tallied more than one Evening Grosbeak since 1986 when 67 were counted. The last one on this count was noted in 1991.

What were the highlights of the 2005 count? The 85 species total was low with just three other counts at or below that figure. The all-time high was 94 species in 1997 and 2002. There were 23 feeder/yard watchers in 18 locations. They were valuable in adding four species: Eastern Phoebe, Gray Catbird, Chipping Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird. In addition, they contributed one of three Red-breasted Nuthatches, 148 of the 359 American Goldfinches, and 8 of 35 Hairy Woodpeckers, along with significant numbers of other species.

For the second consecutive year, new lows (eight) vastly outnumbered new highs (one), while field parties and hours and miles on foot were down for the second consecutive year. Frozen ponds, lakes, and reservoirs reduced waterfowl variety and numbers, and a poor mast crop dropped the Blue Jay total drastically. Eastern Towhee set the only new high at 64; the lows included American Wigeon 2, Mallard 424, Herring Gull 32, Northern Flicker 32, Blue Jay 133, Brown Creeper 4, Yellow-rumped Warbler 3, and House Finch 266. Second high totals were Bald Eagle 3(t), Sharp-shinned Hawk 21, Cooper's Hawk 11, and Wilson's Snipe 4(t). Second low totals included Canvasback 2(t), Bufflehead 2(t), Common Merganser 4, Great Black-backed Gull 3(t), Northern Mockingbird 189, and

Purple Finch 3(t). No new species were added to the count, nor did we miss any species that had been seen on 19 previous counts. As usual, Canada Goose numbers have been adjusted to try to reduce double counting, but all field observers understand that the totals are a best guess. (Cynics among us have suggested that there is no way we could over-count geese.) Interestingly, Area 6 reported zero geese which is quite astonishing. Despite the many thousands of Canadas, we failed to locate a Cackling Goose, a species recently split from Canada Goose. Maybe next year. . . . A bright spot on this count was the 11 American Kestrels. Although that number is not even a quarter of some the totals of two decades ago, it is a welcome improvement over last year's all-time low of one.

When comparing the Triadelphia Christmas Count on December 18 with HCMC on February 5, the total number of species was almost identical: T-86, H-85. Totals for some species were as follows: Killdeer T-2, H-1; Eastern Phoebe 4, 1; Red-breasted Nuthatch 3, 3; Carolina Wren 310, 179; Golden-crowned Kinglet 296, 20; Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1, 0; Hermit Thrush 11, 4; American Robin 162, 810; Gray Catbird 1, 2; Brown Thrasher 2, 2; American Tree Sparrow 16, 22; Chipping Sparrow 21, 2; and Purple Finch 6, 3. No siskins were detected on either count.

Any countywide count involves the planning and cooperation of numerous individuals, from co-compiler **Emy Holdridge's** persistence and careful organization beginning months before the count, to **Chuck Stirrat's** patient working and reworking of the totals afterward. In addition to the core of capable area captains, this year we welcomed Ward Ebert as compiler for Area 2. As always, we are mindful that birders from other counties are essential to the success of this count. After spending a day in the cold, everyone looks forward to the warm hospitality of **Martha** and **Don Waugh**, our tally hosts. Many thanks



Howard County Winter Bird Count - February 5, 2005								
Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Pied-billed Grebe		1					2	3
Great Blue Heron	1	1		1	2		2	7
Black Vulture	26	23	31	37	3	4	10	134
Turkey Vulture	64	19	63	29	18	32	19	244
Canada Goose	2,251	2,769	236	1,310	520		234	7,320
Mute Swan							1	1
Wood Duck			4					4
American Wigeon		2						2
American Black Duck	2	13		11			14	40
Mallard	74	63	50	77	17		143	424
Canvasback					2			2
Redhead		4						4
Ring-necked Duck	1	24		1	5		36	67
Bufflehead		1					1	2
Common Goldeneye	3							3
Hooded Merganser	2	2		3	4		6	17
Common Merganser							4	4
Ruddy Duck		1		3	4			8
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	1			1			1	3
Northern Harrier			2	1				3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	3	5	3	1	5		21
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	2	5			2	11
<i>accipiter species</i>				2				2
Red-shouldered Hawk	10	6	7	7	4	7	9	50
Red-tailed Hawk	30	10	12	15	5	12	7	91
<i>buteo species</i>			1	2				3
American Kestrel	9			2				11
American Coot							2	2
Killdeer							1	1
Wilson's Snipe	1			3				4
Ring-billed Gull	17	10	60	98	98	78	141	502
Herring Gull		1	22			3	6	32
Great Black-backed Gull			3					3
<i>gull species</i>					2			2
Rock Pigeon	16	10	40	318	1	72		457
Mourning Dove	296	93	149	94	24	27	97	780
Eastern Screech-Owl	1		1					2
Great Horned Owl	2		2		1			5
Barred Owl	4	1	2					7
Belted Kingfisher	5	1	1	1	1		1	10
Red-bellied Woodpecker	30	14	26	12	15	15	34	146
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3				1	1	2	7
Downy Woodpecker	38	16	23	20	14	25	32	168
Hairy Woodpecker	14	3	8	4		4	2	35
Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flick	4	3	4	8	4	4	5	32
Pileated Woodpecker	11	2	4	3	1	1	4	26
Eastern Phoebe					1			1
Blue Jay	74	8	8	29	10	1	3	133
American Crow	543	99	534	131	19	23	67	1,416
Fish Crow	9	2	14	1	2	1	1	30
<i>crow species</i>	87	9	208	238	7	27	1	577
Horned Lark	11		5					16
Carolina Chickadee	113	20	69	45	34	30	125	436
Tufted Titmouse	87	19	47	39	45	37	100	374
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2				1			3
White-breasted Nuthatch	64	7	24	11	26	14	47	193
Brown Creeper	2	1					1	4
Carolina Wren	42	21	23	19	12	18	44	179
Winter Wren	8	2	1	2	1	1	3	18
<b>Area Code:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Golden-crowned Kinglet	11	1	1				3	20
Eastern Bluebird	109	18	46	59		2	33	275
Hermit Thrush			1			1	1	4
American Robin	464	71	92	16		8	119	810
Gray Catbird						1	1	2
Northern Mockingbird	43	21	47	29		6	15	189
Brown Thrasher				1			1	2
European Starling	1,611	95	1,117	1,096		52	99	4,175
Cedar Waxwing	29		2	15		18	7	105
Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	1	1						3
Eastern Towhee	14	10	17			4	8	64
American Tree Sparrow	5	2	8	5				22
Chipping Sparrow							2	2
Field Sparrow	35	7	59	4		4	7	132
Savannah Sparrow			10	11			1	22
Fox Sparrow	9	4	5					23
Song Sparrow	260	68	156	69		8	32	689
Swamp Sparrow	18	5	3	7				36
White-throated Sparrow	489	161	374	106		48	62	1,402
White-crowned Sparrow	5	50	7					62
<i>sparrow species</i>		12		60		1		73
Dark-eyed Junco	354	113	197	268		32	50	1,160
Northern Cardinal	262	131	161	164		59	65	982
Red-winged Blackbird	83	3	23	48			64	320
Rusty Blackbird	1							1
Common Grackle	1,021	77	1,286	238			86	2,708
Brown-headed Cowbird	2		251	27			4	284
<i>blackbird species</i>			17	470			50	537
Purple Finch	1		1					3
House Finch	91	15	37	15		16	41	266
American Goldfinch	107	11	17	64		12	65	359
House Sparrow	174	82	184	35		83	41	844
<b>Area Total Birds:</b>	<b>9,162</b>	<b>4,243</b>	<b>5,810</b>	<b>5,395</b>	<b>1,263</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>2,491</b>	<b>29,658</b>
<b>Area Total Species:</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Area No.:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Supplemental Data</b>								
<b>Time Start:</b>	5:30 a	7:15 a	7:15 a	7:00 a	7:00 a	7:30 a	7:20 a	5:30 a
<b>Time Stop:</b>	6:35 p	5:15 p	5:30 p	4:00 p	3:30 p	3:30 p	5:30 p	6:35 p
<b>Hours on Foot:</b>	30.0	9.2	20.0	19.2	11.3	13.0	27.3	130.0
<b>Hours by Car:</b>	7.8	1.3	7.0	1.3	.7	.4	1.5	20.0
<b>Miles on Foot:</b>	15.0	6.0	19.5	12.0	9.8	13.0	23.5	98.8
<b>Miles by Car:</b>	159.0	31.4	82.0	12.0	17.0	11.0	15.0	327.4
<b>Hours Feeder Watching:</b>	3.0	4.5	5.0	5.0	11.0	19.0	6.0	53.5
<b>Hours Stationary:</b>							.7	.7
<b>Hours "Owling":</b>	1.0					.1		1.1
<b>Miles "Owling":</b>	5.0							5.0
<b>Area Code:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>Tot. Field Obs. in Area:</b>	10	7	8	9	8	6	9	56
<b>Tot. Field Parties in Area:</b>	5	5	5	4	6	3	6	34
<b>Tot. Feederwatchers:</b>	1	3	2	4	4	6	3	23
<b>Tot. Feederwatch Parties:</b>	1	2	1	3	3	5	3	18
<b>Total Observers in Area:</b>	11	10	10	13	12	12	12	77
<b>Tot. Field Pty-Hrs (Reg.):</b>	37.8	10.5	27.0	20.5	12.0	13.4	28.8	150.0
<b>Total Party-Hrs (Feeder):</b>	3.0	4.5	5.0	5.0	11.0	19.0	6.0	53.5
<b>Tot. Pty-Hrs (Stationary):</b>							.7	.7
<b>Total Party-Hrs (Owling):</b>	1.0					.1		1.1
<b>Total Party-Hours:</b>	41.8	15.0	32.0	25.5	23.1	32.4	35.5	205.3
Note: Totals adjusted for counting in two areas or as both a field and feeder counter.								
<b>Area Code:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Totals</b>

for their generosity, as well as that of the many individuals and organizations who again gave us access to land.

Set aside **Saturday, February 4, 2006** for next year's Howard County Midwinter Count. Go to [www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org) for a comparison of all county midwinter counts.

Twentieth Midwinter Count participants:  
**Area 1. Mark Wallace**, Joe Byrnes, Lisa Colangelo, Jeff Culler, Wes & Susan Earp, Diane Nagengast (f), Daryl Olson, Bob Ringler, Jay Sheppard, Kate Tufts; **Area 2.**

**Ward Ebert**, Louis & Andrew Colangelo (f), Don Henderson, Bill Kidwell (f), Peter Osenton, Ron & Susan Polniaszek, Tom Strikwerda; **Area 3. Dave & Maureen Harvey**, Ralph Cullison III, Sharon Davis, John Finedore, Lynn & Linda Holley (f), Will & Robin Tress; **Area 4. Mike McClure**, Randy Beaton, Bill & Karan Blum, Georgia Ecker (f), Patsy Kennan (f), Mike Leumas, Grazina McClure, Clyde Robinette, Romayne Smith, Chuck Stirrat; **Area 5. Kevin Heffernan**, John Blaisdell (f), Ellen & Hal Bryson (f), Karen Darcy, Jeff Friedhoffer, Carol Newman, Doug & Jeanne Odermatt, Karla Pearce, June Tveekrem (f), Michele Wright;

**Area 6. Bonnie Ott**, Susan Buswell (f), Ralph & Jane Geuder, Jane Heim (f), Emy Holdridge, Brigitte Lund, Janet Lydon (f), Elayne & Jeff Metter (f), Emily Miller (f), Anita Picco; **Area 7. Kurt Schwarz**, Mary-Jo Betts (f), Mary Ann Beverly (f), Dennis & Jane Coskren, Erin & Tracy Eve, John McKitterick, Sue Neri, Bob & Jo Solem, Eva Sunell, Jim Wilkinson.

*Area coordinators are in boldface, (f) is primarily a feeder watcher. Field observers who also counted their feeders are listed as field only; any observer who had responsibilities in more than one area is listed once.*

## CLUB MEETINGS

BY JANE GEUDER

Don't forget, club meetings are now being held at:

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

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, May 12 "Frogwatch USA,"** by Sue Muller, naturalist with Howard County Recreation and Parks. Sue is a club member who organizes local volunteers to monitor amphibian populations as early indicators of environmental health. Worldwide decline of frogs, salamanders and related species warn of habitat changes affecting all living things.

## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB SUMMER 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.

### HUGG-THOMAS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

**May 1, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. Half day.**

*Meet at gravel lot.*

Moderate walking through the woodlands and field edges. Great habitat for warblers, tanagers and vireos. Nesting Hooded, Kentucky, Ovenbird and Louisiana Waterthrush. No facilities. *Leaders—Dave and Maureen Harvey 410 795-3117.*

### JUG BAY BOAT TRIP

**May 7, Saturday. 5:30 a.m. All day**

*Meet at Meadowbrook park-and-ride.*

Limit 16. Join naturalist Greg Kearns for a morning boat trip through the wetlands of Jug Bay. Over 100 species of birds expected. The boat trip will last approximately 3 hours. Plan for a picnic lunch and then an early afternoon bird walk along the trails. Facilities available. \$5-\$6 per person fee for the boat.

*Call Bonnie Ott to sign up 410 461-3361.*

### MAY COUNT

**May 14, Saturday**

*See article on page 7.*

### MOS CONVENTION

**Solomons Island**

**May 20, 21, 22**

### DELAWARE SHOREBIRDS OR "HOT SPOTS FOR RED KNOTS"

**May 29, Sunday. 6:00 a.m. All day.**

*Meet at west side of Park and Ride at Rt. 32 and Broken Land Parkway.*

Joint with Montgomery County. We will travel 2 to 2 1/2 hours to Delaware in search of shorebirds. Participation limited to 12 people, total of 3 cars. Arrive prepared to carpool. Bring food, WATER, and LOTS of BUG REPELLENT. We will meet MontCo participants at 8:30 a.m. at Bombay Hook Visitor Center. *Leaders—Kurt Schwarz and Cyndie Loeper. Reserve spot with Kurt, 410-461-1643, krschwa1@comcast.net*

**Board of Directors 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.

### May 26, Thursday

(Joint meeting with new and old board members.)

Tom Miller

6404 Glasgow Circle  
Eldersburg, MD 21784  
410-795-7005

## CAREY RUN WORK DAY APRIL 30

Hello MOS members,

Carey Run Work Day is scheduled for April 30 this year. Hopefully the snows of Garrett County will be a memory by then! Doug Parker and I have many projects and we need your help. Please clear your schedule for April 30 and join us (we should also have some great birds by then). If you've never been to Carey Run, this is your big chance to see what a beautiful sanctuary we have and help keep it in tip-top shape.

We will start at 8:30 A.M. If you can't be there by 8:30, please come when you can. Allegany chapter will provide the meat and drinks. Please bring a covered dish to share, and join in the fellowship. It would be helpful for all interested persons to contact Doug or myself so we know how many helpers we'll have.

Doug can be reached at parkernkda@aol.com or 310-663-1909, and I can be reached at gaffneyg@mindspring.com or 301-895-4646.

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!

Thank you,  
Barbara Gaffney  
Sanctuary Committee

# MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2005

BY JEFF FRIEDHOFFER

Since 1948, the Maryland Ornithological Society has conducted an annual May bird count. Everyone is invited to join in, no matter what your skill level. Identification is only part of the challenge; you have to spot (or hear) the bird first, so every extra pair of eyes and ears helps. This is a great opportunity to meet other bird club members, to learn from more experienced members, and to have a great time.

The county has been divided into the same seven areas as for the winter count, and each has an area coordinator. If you have a particular preference for an area to count in, please contact the corresponding coordinator. The coordinators for each area are:

<b>Area 1</b>	<b>Kate Tufts</b>	<b>410-489-7052</b>
<b>Area 2</b>	<b>Ward Ebert</b>	<b>301-490-5807</b>
<b>Area 3</b>	<b>Chuck Stirrat</b>	<b>410-531-2417</b>
<b>Area 4</b>	<b>Mike McClure</b>	<b>410-531-2780</b>
<b>Area 5</b>	<b>Doug Odermatt</b>	<b>410-992-1812</b>
<b>Area 6</b>	<b>Bonnie Ott</b>	<b>410-461-3361</b>
<b>Area 7</b>	<b>Jo Solem</b>	<b>301-725-5037</b>

Special requests are honored whenever possible. Please mark your calendars now.

The leader of each party records the number of all birds seen (even European Starlings and House Sparrows!) using the checklist included in this issue of the newsletter. Extra copies of this checklist will be given to the area coordinators as well. These are specially constructed lists that show the birds that are normally seen on the count. Any bird that has been found in four or fewer of the last 15 counts has been excluded. If you are fortunate enough to see a bird not on this list, you need to write it in and (on the back) write a couple of sentences about what you observed and where you found it.

This year is the fourth season for the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas. Those

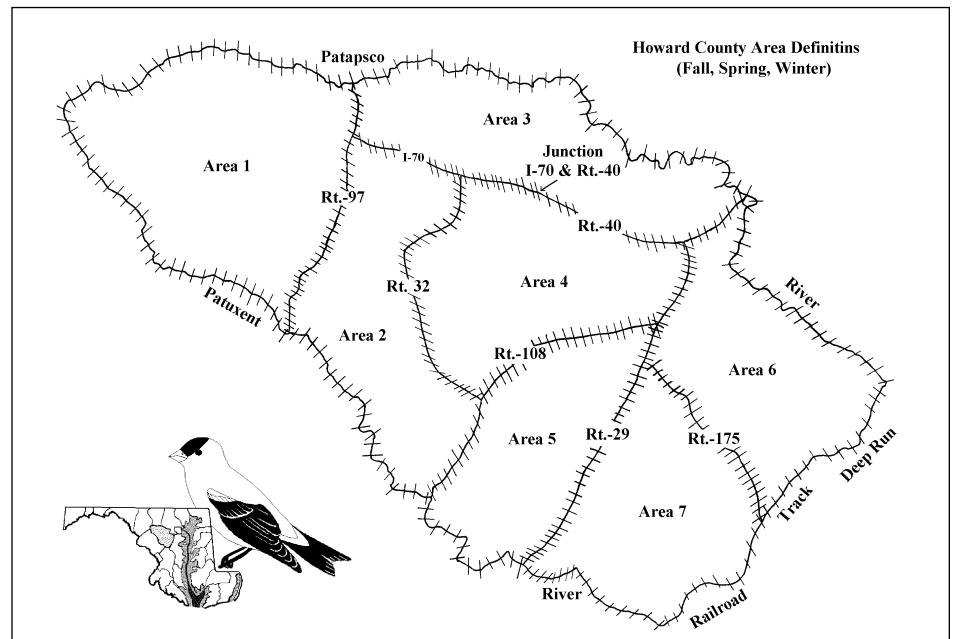
species that are within the "safe dates" are shown on the checklist with an asterisk. Even if you do not have an atlas block to survey, you can help by noting any kind of courtship or nesting behavior. Please write down the behavior and carefully note the precise location. All such data, as well as sightings of species that are within the safe dates, are useful for the atlas. This is an extremely important project for the MOS and for the Howard chapter, and all support provided is immensely appreciated.

On the back of the checklist, the party leader needs to record the start and stop times, total party hours by foot, car, or other means, and the party miles. Observers within talking or shouting distance are considered to be one party. If two or more birders spend an hour together on foot, that constitutes one party hour. If one member is separated from the others for half an hour, then the total is 1.5 party hours. Non-birding hours should not be counted. In addition, the names and addresses of all the party members should be listed on the back of the checklist. (If you see something outside of your assigned

area, please make a separate note of it, as it may be included for the area where you saw it.)

**The completed checklist must be turned in to the area coordinators at the tally rally that night!** You are strongly urged to attend the tally rally after the count. It is a great opportunity to relax and swap stories of the day. If you cannot make it, be sure that your checklist gets delivered or gets called in to Jan Randle (410-531-6296) by 7 PM.

**The tally dinner will again be at the Randle's,** continuing a magnificent tradition of hospitality. Call **Jan Randle (410-531-6296)** in advance and let her know how many are coming from your party and your choice of food or beverage to bring. Dinner will begin by 7 PM and the tally will start at 8 PM. The Randles live at 6424 Lochridge Road in the Braeburn neighborhood of Columbia. From Cedar Lane, turn west onto Braeburn Road (the turn is between route 32 and Freetown Road), next turn right onto Lochridge and continue to the first house on the left beyond Hillbrook Drive.



# HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB'S INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

BY KURT SCHWARZ

As you know, the Howard County Bird Club raises funds every year through the annual bird seed sale to preserve or enhance habitat for the birds. We have raised \$50,000 through the efforts of Eileen Clegg and her small army of volunteers. For the last several years, we have been trying to alternate between local projects and international ones which would help protect wintering habitat for our neotropical migrants. Three of those donations have been made through the American Bird Conservancy, which coordinates fund-raising for projects south of the border, through its Conservation Counterparts program.



## Veracruz River of Raptors

In 1999, we contributed \$1,500 to the River of Raptors project in Vera Cruz, Mexico. This project studies the migration of raptors through the largest raptor migration corridor in the world. Most of the world's Mississippi Kites, a species that delighted many of us last spring, pass through there. The program also educates the local populace about the importance of conserving raptors.

In 2002, we supported conservation in Panama the old fashioned way, by buying it. The \$2,200 we donated was pooled with other funds to purchase 452 acres to form a private reserve on the border with Costa Rica. Besides protecting globally and nationally threatened species such as

the Three-wattled Bellbird, the area is also wintering habitat for the Baltimore Oriole.

Last year, we provided \$2,000 for the Sierra de Bahoruco National Park in the Dominican Republic. The donation received matching funds from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Bay Foundation; more bang for our buck! The funds were used to develop a management plan for the park, which faces numerous management issues, such as squatters and cross border traffic from Haiti.



We will be seeking a project or projects right here in Maryland to invest the funds from the 2004 sale. It is my hope that we will be able to spend them right here in Howard County this time.

## Dream Job Available Soon!

Imagine this on your resume;  
"Editor of the Howard County Bird Club newsletter."  
Sounds impressive, doesn't it?

We can help make this happen for you if you have good writing skills, basic knowledge of Microsoft Word (or other word processing software), and access to email.

If you are interested in the job, we will provide training and work closely with you to get out your first edition at the end of August.

Please contact Jeff Friedhoffer if interested in the position.  
Jeff can be reached at 410-997-5366 or [jafried@ieee.org](mailto:jafried@ieee.org).

## In Memoriam

We are saddened to report the passing of the husband of long-time member Virginia Donovan. Alex J. Donovan passed away unexpectedly on Feb. 18, 2005.

Our condolences to Virginia.



# The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill

A MOVIE REVIEW BY JEFF CULLER

First let me start with a disclaimer. I am not a movie reviewer nor do I pretend to be one. I am only letting others know about a movie that I thoroughly enjoyed and feel is well worth seeing. *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* is a documentary filmed in and around the San Francisco Bay area. It follows the relationship between a homeless street musician and a flock of Cherry-headed Conures. Yes, I know that Conures are an invasive species; however, if you can get beyond that fact you're in for a delightful treat. The film focuses on Mark Bittner and his interactions with the flock. As Mark studies and learns about the birds' behavior he also finds out a lot about himself.



*Editor's note: At time of publication, The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill was still playing in Washington, DC at the Avalon Theater and E Street Theater. Log onto [www.wildparrotsfilm.com](http://www.wildparrotsfilm.com) for current film locations.*

Any time a movie, especially a documentary, can elicit multiple emotions (I laughed and cried) it has a lot going for it. It even has a surprise ending! *The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill* is a feature-length film of 83 minutes and is currently playing at the Charles Theater. Enjoy!

## POTLUCK THANKS

BY SUE PROBST

Thanks to everyone for making our potluck dinner such an enjoyable event this year! Personally, I always look forward to the yummy dishes and great slide presentations that are the highlight of the evening. And this year was no exception, thanks to all who brought lots of good food and fantastic slides.

Many members contributed to this year's dinner, but I want to give a special thanks to several individuals who, year after year, volunteer their services to help make it so much fun for the rest of us. Thanks to **Marty Chestem**, who produces those wonderful "bird cartoon" placemats.

I also want to thank **Monika and Rod Botsai** who always take care of the sodas and ice. And I want to thank Monika and **Mary-Jo Betts** for all of their advice and moral support to me as a "novice" potluck dinner chairperson.

Many thanks also go to everyone who was kind enough to come early to set up the room and/or who stayed late to clean up. They include: **Mary-Jo Betts, Monika and Rod Botsai, Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, Karen Darcy, Jeff Friedhoffer, Dave and Maureen Harvey, Kevin Heffernan, Tom Miller, Sue Neri, Doug and Jeanne Odermatt, Bonnie Ott,**

**Phill Probst, Jan and Don Randle, Bob and Jo Solem, Chuck Stirrat, Kate and Dick Tufts, and Lilly Zuberi.** I also want to give a special "thank you" to **Tom Miller** and **Jeff Friedhoffer** who coordinated the digital slide presentations, and to **The Wildlife Authority, Mike Callahan, and Jo Solem** for their "door prize" contributions.

With such great food, fabulous slides, and wonderful company, I look forward to joining all of you at next year's potluck dinner!



**HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB**  
*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*  
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**May/June 2005—Inside This Issue:**

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Midwinter Count Totals	Parrots of Telegraph Hill
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May Count Announcement	

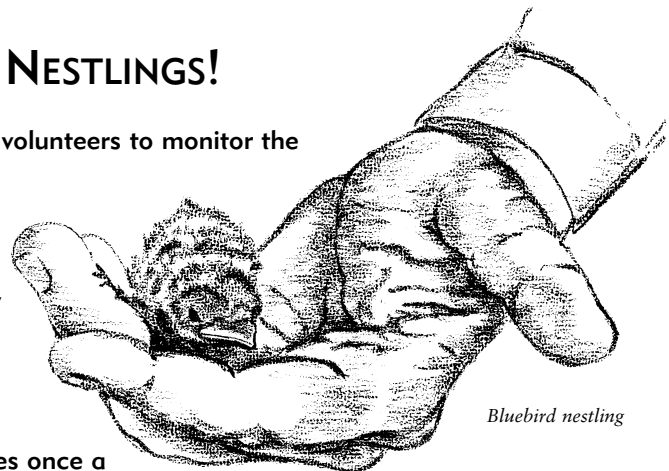
## HELP THE NESTLINGS!

Howard County Recreation & Parks is in need of volunteers to monitor the following nest boxes:

Warfield Pond Park - 4 boxes  
(near West Friendship)  
Hopewell Park - 1 box (near Snowden River Pkwy  
and Oakland Mills Rd. in Columbia)  
Dorsey Hall - 1 box (King's Cup Court)  
Meadowbrook Park - 2 boxes (Stallion Court)

Volunteers are responsible for checking nest boxes once a week from April through August. Volunteers complete data sheets from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Birdhouse Network. Data collected includes species identification, number of eggs laid and hatched and the number of fledglings. Contact Sue Muller if you are interested in volunteering. No experience necessary!

Susan Muller  
Natural Resource Technician  
Howard County Recreation & Parks  
410 313-4697  
smuller@co.ho.md.us



*Bluebird nestling*