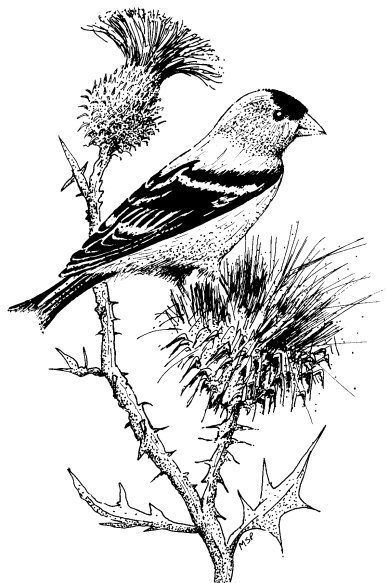


# The Goldfinch

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



## CLUB MEETINGS - BY JANE GEUDER

Thursday, November 11, 2010 “An Edge Effect at the Landscape Scale-Daily Commuting by Brown-Headed Cowbirds,” by Dr. David Curson, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon MD-DC. His talk will describe his research on brood parasitic cowbirds and their community of host species in pinyon-juniper woodlands in New Mexico.

Thursday, December 9, 2010 “Twenty Years of Changing Birdlife: Results of the 2002-2006 MD-DC Atlas Project,” by Walter Ellison, editor of the of the breeding bird atlas. He will describe the goals of a breeding bird atlas, explain data collection, and show how the birds of several habitats have fared since the 1983-87 atlas findings.

Meetings are held at Howard County Recreation & Parks Headquarters 7120 Oakland Mills Road, Columbia, MD 21046. Hospitality and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m. Meeting with program begins at 8:00 p.m. For further information call Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

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## SUMMER BIRD RECORDS: JUNE 1 – JULY 31, 2010

BY JOANNE SOLEM

**The Goldfinch**, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year. **Copy deadline for the January/February 2011 issue is November 25, 2010.**

Amanda Witt, *Editor*  
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

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

Summer normally produces few notable birds. This year Little Blue Heron was the best. Both night-herons, Black-billed Cuckoo, Red-headed Woodpecker, Cerulean Warbler, and Prothonotary Warbler were additional highlights.

Patuxent River State Park is a **Wild Turkey** stronghold. Three reports this season included 14 (2 f. and ~12 chicks) along Hipsley Mill Rd 6/18 (**CSt,DHv**), three young north of Howard Chapel Rd 6/30 (**JHf,JS+**), and three young south of Hipsley Mill Rd 7/15 (**SBg**).

Two **Little Blue Herons** flew over Centennial 7/29 (**BO**), the

only ones recorded so far in 2010. **Black-crowned Night-Herons** continued regularly at Wilde Lake with a high of three (2 ad.) 7/14 (**JCu**). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** visited Lake Elkhorn intermittently (**MSt; SN**). The only **Osprey** reports came from Centennial 6/13, 7/11, 7/17 (**MKw**).

Flocking **Killdeer** reached a modest peak of 28 at Browns Bridge 7/31 (**BHi**). The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** arrived on 7/31 with one at Tarbay Dr (**KS**) and one at Fulton Pond (**BHi**). **Solitary, Spotted, and Least Sandpipers** dropped in at Browns Bridge and

(Records continued on page 2)

*(Records continued from page 1)*

Tarbay Dr 7/11 (**JHf**). The high count of Least was 21 at Browns Bridge 7/31 (**BHi**). An **American Woodcock** flushed from a trail south of Hipsley Mill Rd 7/2 (**CSt**).

A lone **Ring-billed Gull** was spotted over Dobbin Rd 7/13 (**JHf**). **Black-billed Cuckoos** were reported twice: Cavey La, Woodstock 6/8 (**RRf**) and Annapolis Rock, PRSP 7/3 (**DCm**). **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were well reported with 10 observers noting birds at eight locations.

**Eastern Screech-Owls** turned up at W. Friendship 7/29 (**LCg**) and Duvall Rd 7/31 (**K&DTf**). **Barred Owls** were reported from Hipsley Mill Rd 6/18 (**CSt,DHv**) and 7/15 (**SBg**); Stone Hill Dr 6/24 (**KLz-1 ad., 2 fl.**); and Elkhorn throughout July (**SN-2**). A pair of **Chimney Swifts** nested in Randle's chimney at Braeburn 7/12 (**ESu, JRn-2+**). The **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** nest at Eden Brook was last observed (and photographed) 6/2 with a female and one nestling (**BO**). Of the four hummers at Thornbrook Rd 7/11, one was an adult male (**JCu**). A **Red-headed Woodpecker** again seen at a farm on St. Michaels Rd 7/28 (**W&SE+**) raised hopes that they had nested in the vicinity.

Fifteen **Acadian Flycatchers** were reported in the River Rd/Sykesville section of PVSP 6/6 (**FLv**). **Yellow-throated Vireos** were noted at MPEA (**BO**), Howard Chapel Rd (**KS**), and Browns Bridge (**MBw**). **Warbling Vireos** were present at Centennial (**MKw**) and at Oakland Mills Rd (**JW**). Twenty-four **Red-eyed Vireos** were tallied at Hipsley Mill Rd 6/17 (**JHf,JS+**).

A **Common Raven** was spotted at I-95/MD216 on 6/3 (**TFe**). One **Horned Lark** was present at A.E. Mullinix Rd 6/23 (**JW**). In addition to the usual dam and bridge nesting sites, **Cliff Swallows** were reported from Fulton Pond 6/7 (**JHf-2**), US29/Middle Patuxent River (a former nesting location) 6/13 (**JW-1**), and Johns Hopkins APL 6/24 (**NM-1**). At Browns Bridge, a nesting location used several decades ago, four were seen at a minimum of two nests 7/11 (**JHf**). Nesting **Barn Swallows** at Centennial peaked at 73 on 6/26 (**MKw**). A **Carolina Wren** was feeding a fledging **Brown-headed Cowbird** at Allview 6/27 (**ESu**).

**Veery** reports were more numerous than usual. The high was at Hipsley Mill Rd, PRSP where seven were recorded 6/27 (**KS**) and five on 7/5 (**SBg**); the River Rd/Sykesville section of PVSP had four on 6/6 (**FLv**); and two were still singing along the South Wind Trail at MPEA 7/5 (**J&RS, M&GMcC**). Eight **Wood Thrushes** were counted south of Hipsley Mill Rd 6/17 (**JS,JHf+**).

**Blue-winged Warblers** were present during the nesting season at both River Rd/Sykesville 6/6 (**FLv**) and Annapolis Rock Rd 6/18 (**CSt,DHv**). **Yellow Warblers** at Centennial dropped from five on 6/13 to two on 7/31 (**MKw**). Two **Pine Warblers** were at Annapolis Rock 6/30 (**JHf**). A **Prairie Warbler** was at the same location on 6/18 (**CSt,DHv**). **Cerulean Warblers** are a choice nesting species. They were reported from Henryton 6/2 (**BO,EH-1**) and south of Hipsley Mill Rd from 6/17 (**JHf,JS+-1**) to 7/3 (**KS-1**). **Black-and-white Warblers** were noted at Henryton 6/2 (**BO,EH-**

1) and at Big Branch 6/7 (**JS,ROr,GMcC-1**). **American Redstarts** were widely reported: Henryton 6/2 (**BO,EH-1**), Avalon, PVSP 6/4 and 6/25 (**JS, G&McC,ROr**), as well as three locations in PRSP with a high of eight south of Hipsley Mill Rd 6/17 (**JS,JHf+**). A singing **Prothonotary Warbler** lingered at Pigtail until 6/3 with no evidence of nesting (**JCu**). On 6/6, 16 **Ovenbirds** and 11 **Louisiana Waterthrushes** (new high) were counted at River Rd/Sykesville, PVSP (**FLv**). **Hooded Warblers** have hung on in two sections of PRSP: 6/17 Hipsley Mill Rd and 6/30 Howard Chapel Rd (**JHf,JS+**).

**Grasshopper Sparrows** are confined almost exclusively to the northwestern part of the county. They were reported from A.E. Mullinix Rd 6/23 (**JW-1**), Carrs Mill Rd across from Western Regional Park 7/26 (**KS-1**), and Old Frederick Rd/Underwood Rd 7/18 (**JW-1**). A **Blue Grosbeak** was spotted at Meadowbrook 6/28 (**JW**). An **Eastern Meadowlark** was seen at Carrs Mill Rd 6/26 (**KS**).

**Exotics:** Two **Black Swans** continued at a pond south of MD144/fairgrounds 7/7 (**JCu**).

**Spring Additions:** **Turkey Vultures** nested in a barn along the Patapsco River west of MD94 on 5/5 (**BHi**). A **Rusty Blackbird** was reported from So. Trotter Rd 5/5 (**MW**).

**PRSP** – Patuxent River State Park  
**PVSP** – Patapsco Valley State Park  
**MPEA** – Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

*(Records continued on page 3)*

(Records continued from page 2)

**Observers:** **SBg** – Scott Berglund, **MBw** – Mike Bowen, **LCg** – Lisa Colangelo, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **DCm** – David Cummings, **SE** – Sue Earp, **WE** – Wes Earp, **TFe** – Tom Feild, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **DHv** – Dave Harvey, **BHi** – Bill Hill, **EH** – Emmalyn Holdridge, **MKw** – Mike Kerwin, **KLz** – Kathy Litzinger, **FLv** – Felicia Lovelett, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **MMcC** – Mike McClure, **SN** – Sue Neri, **ROr** – Richard Orr, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **JRn** – Jan Randle, **RRf** – Russ Ruffing, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JS** – Jo Solem, **RS** – Robert Solem, **MSt** – Michelle Stewart, **CSt** – Chuck Stirrat, **ESu** – Eva Sunell, **DTf** – Dick Tufts, **KTf** – Kate Tufts, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

**B**oard 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.

**November 18** (Note: This is the **third** Thursday.)

Kurt Schwarz  
9045 Dunloggin Court  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
410-461-1643

**December** – No board meeting

## CORRECTION

Karla Pearce also participated in the May Count, but was inadvertently omitted from the list of observers.

# FALL FIELD TRIPS

## BY BONNIE OTT & JOE HANFMAN

Field trips are a great way to improve birding skills, explore new places and meet other birders. Arrive at the meeting site ready to leave at the designated time with appropriate footwear and gear. Carpooling is strongly encouraged. The leader may cancel due to inclement weather/hazardous driving conditions. Directions for trips not on ADC maps are on the Club's website. Questions? Contact the trip leader or Field Trip Coordinator Bonnie Ott at [bonnieott@verizon.net](mailto:bonnieott@verizon.net). HCBC members receive priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

### CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 7, Sun., 8:00 a.m., (2-3 hours)  
Note that Daylight Saving Time ends. Meet at west parking lot on Centennial Lane. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader - Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329 or [LBRoller@verizon.net](mailto:LBRoller@verizon.net).

**HOWARD WATERFOWL SEARCH** Nov. 13, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (half day) Meeting place to be determined, as the Broken Land Parkway Lot will likely remain closed. Contact the leader for precise location. Plan to visit the Columbia lakes to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterfowl. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Leader - Kurt Schwarz, [kerschwa1@verizon.net](mailto:kerschwa1@verizon.net) or 410-461-1643.

### CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 14, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) Meet at west parking lot on Centennial Lane. See November 7<sup>th</sup> for description. Leader - Joe Byrnes, [LBRoller@verizon.net](mailto:LBRoller@verizon.net) or 410-730-5329.

### CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 21, Sun. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)

Meet at west parking lot on Centennial Lane. See November 7<sup>th</sup> for description. Leader - Bonnie Ott, [bonnieott@verizon.net](mailto:bonnieott@verizon.net) or 410-461-3361.

### CENTENNIAL PARK


Nov. 28, Sun. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)  
Meet at west parking lot on Centennial Lane. See November 7<sup>th</sup> for description. Leader - Jeff Culler, [cullerfuls@hotmail.com](mailto:cullerfuls@hotmail.com) or 410-465-9006.

## BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

December 4, Saturday, (all day)  
Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details. Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly! Entrance fee or Duck Stamp required. We will carpool. Facilities at some spots. Leader - Stan Arnold, 410-768-0155 or [dy.dx@earthlink.net](mailto:dy.dx@earthlink.net).

## START YOUR YEAR LIST

Jan. 1, Sat. (8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)  
Meet at Centennial Park boat ramp off MD108. Easy walking on paved paths and woodland trails. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year when every bird's new! Facilities available. Leader - Bonnie Ott, [bonnieott@verizon.net](mailto:bonnieott@verizon.net) or 410-461-3361.

 = Great for beginner birders

# SUMMARY OF THE 2010 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT

BY MIKE MCCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT

The seventeenth annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 18, 2010. All field counters agreed it was a slow day of birding. That said, this turned out to be one of our better counts. A new high [140 versus 136] was set for the number of species observed. Comparison totals for the prior 16 years are as follows: high, 136 on 9/19/1998; low 108 on 9/18/2004; average, 125 species. This new high, 140 species, includes a Traill's Flycatcher which is either an Alder or a Willow Flycatcher and can only be separated by vocalization. Since there were no Alder or Willow Flycatchers reported, the Traill's must be one of the two and hence, is included. Highlights were first-ever Common Merganser and Baird's Sandpiper, and second time occurrences of Wild Turkey, American Golden-Plover, Western Sandpiper, Hermit Thrush, and Purple Finch. The extensive mudflats at Cattail Creek added many more shorebirds than on prior counts.

The number of participants and parties (59 and 31) was split compared to last year's (52 and 34) with seven additional participants but three fewer parties. The participants provided 201 hours of field counting time. The mileage was 476 compared to the average of 380 miles. The total of individual birds tallied to 16,052 which is below the average. Comparisons to prior years: high, 26,651 on 9/17/1994; low, 9,293 on 9/18/2004; average, 16,934 birds. Finally, 23 warbler species were identified (high, 30; low, 13; average, 24 species) with 448 individual warblers sighted (high, 1004; low, 130; average, 446 individuals).

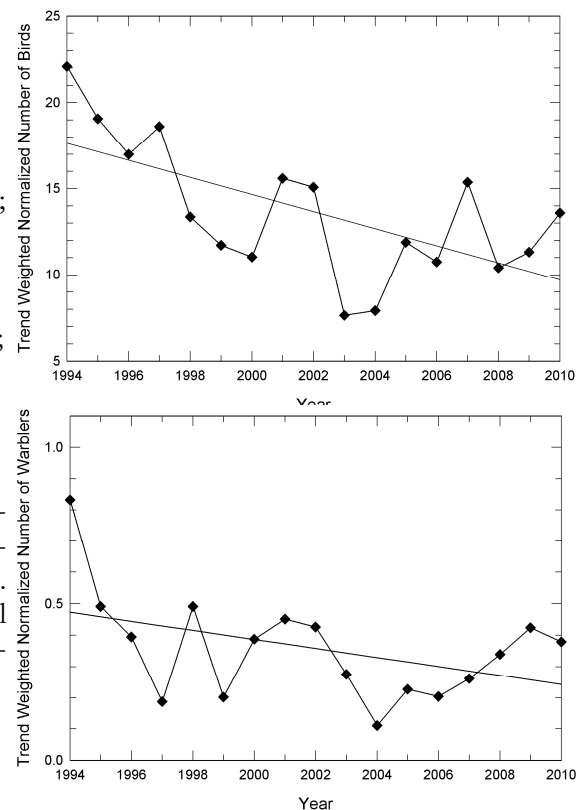
Fall Count has been adversely affected by the weather on eight occa-

sions (50% of the time). These weather events ranged from severe drought, to extensive rainfall, to unseasonably hot and humid conditions, to comfortable temperature and humidity accompanied by high winds for the day. Saturday's temperature started in the low 50's at 6:00 a.m. under light cloud cover, rising to 77° in late afternoon with lingering light cloud cover. The humidity was comfortable (dew point: 48° at 6:00 a.m. rising to 58° by 6:00 p.m.). Winds were very light throughout the day. In spite of the delightful weather, counters generally complained about the lack of birds. This problem is reflected in the data from the 17 years of Fall Counts as shown on the graphics for the total number of individual birds and warblers observed countywide.

The accompanying table presents the count data. There were 18 species for which there was only one bird sighted countywide and 14 species for which there were only two birds sighted countywide. Species showing moderately high numbers (>500) are Canada Goose, 793; Broad-winged Hawk, 896; Rock Pigeon, 731; Blue Jay, 1,094; crows [American+Fish+species], 2018; American Robin, 909; Gray Catbird, 557; European Starling, 943, Northern Cardinal 646; and American Goldfinch, 664.

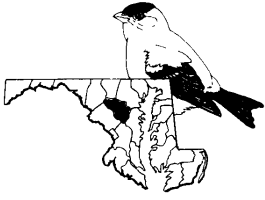
Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible attend the tally as well. The eighteenth annual Fall Count will be held on Saturday, September 17, 2011.

The count participants were Randy Beaton, Scott Berglund, **Bill & Karan Blum (Area 4)**, Monika Botsai, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Joe Byrnes, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis & Jane Coskren, Jeff Culler (**Area 2**), Ralph Cullison III, David Cummings, **Karen Darcy (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**, Susan Earp, Wes Earp (**Area 1 Co-coordinator**), Ward Ebert, Bill Ellis, Tom Feild, Joe Hanfman, **Kevin Hefferman (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**, Bill & Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Michael Kerwin, Kathie Lilli, Felicia Lovelett, Rosa Lubitz, Brigitte Lund, Nancy Magnusson, Grazina McClure, **Mike McClure (County Co-coordinator)**, John McKitterick, Woody Merkle, Barry Miller, Tom Miller, Sue Neri, **Bonnie Ott (Area 6)**, Karla Pearce, Ron & Susan Polniaszek, Robert Ringler, **Kurt Schwarz (Area 5)**, Romaine Smith, Bob & Jo Solem, Michelle Stewart, **Chuck Stirrat (County Co-coordinator)**, Tom Strikwerda, **Eva Sunell (Area 7)**, Robin Todd, Lan-Feng Tsai, Dick & Kate Tufts, Marilyn Veek, **Mark Wallace (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**, Michele Wright. Lastly, a very special thanks to **Don and Martha Waugh** who hosted the evening tally.



## HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT RESULTS - SEPTEMBER 18, 2010

Canada Goose	793	Downy Woodpecker	180	Yellow Warbler	2
Wood Duck	42	Hairy Woodpecker	36	Chestnut-sided Warbler	10
Mallard	248	Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	123	Magnolia Warbler	72
Blue-winged Teal	2	Pileated Woodpecker	69	Cape May Warbler	2
Green-winged Teal	5	Eastern Wood-Pewee	42	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	24
Common Merganser	1	Acadian Flycatcher	4	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	2
Wild Turkey	2	Least Flycatcher	1	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	78
Pied-billed Grebe	4	<i>Empidonax species</i>	19	Blackburnian Warbler	2
Double-crested Cormorant	8	Eastern Phoebe	89	Pine Warbler	6
Great Blue Heron	42	Great Crested Flycatcher	5	Prairie Warbler	3
Great Egret	9	Eastern Kingbird	2	Palm Warbler	5
Green Heron	13	White-eyed Vireo	32	Bay-breasted Warbler	2
Black-crowned Night-Heron	2	Yellow-throated Vireo	3	Black-&-white Warbler	41
Black Vulture	200	Blue-headed Vireo	2	American Redstart	37
Turkey Vulture	251	Warbling Vireo	2	Ovenbird	4
Osprey	9	Philadelphia Vireo	6	Common Yellowthroat	85
Bald Eagle	4	Red-eyed Vireo	42	Hooded Warbler	1
Northern Harrier	4	Blue Jay	1,094	Wilson's Warbler	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	16	American Crow	778	Canada Warbler	2
Cooper's Hawk	19	Fish Crow	141	<i>warbler species</i>	33
<i>accipiter species</i>	3	<i>crow species</i>	1,099	Eastern Towhee	76
Red-shouldered Hawk	92	Horned Lark	16	Chipping Sparrow	265
Broad-winged Hawk	896	Tree Swallow	5	Field Sparrow	44
Red-tailed Hawk	30	Barn Swallow	6	Savannah Sparrow	20
American Kestrel	14	Carolina Chickadee	421	Grasshopper Sparrow	5
American Golden-Plover	1	Tufted Titmouse	267	Song Sparrow	70
Killdeer	75	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Greater Yellowlegs	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	169	Swamp Sparrow	2
Lesser Yellowlegs	5	Carolina Wren	204	White-throated Sparrow	1
Solitary Sandpiper	11	House Wren	35	Dark-eyed Junco	1
Spotted Sandpiper	10	Marsh Wren	1	Scarlet Tanager	17
Semipalmated Sandpiper	4	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	6	Northern Cardinal	646
Western Sandpiper	1	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	6	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	37
Least Sandpiper	83	Eastern Bluebird	230	Blue Grosbeak	16
White-rumped Sandpiper	1	Veery	2	Indigo Bunting	154
Baird's Sandpiper	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	Bobolink	19
Pectoral Sandpiper	13	Swainson's Thrush	7	Red-winged Blackbird	203
Ring-billed Gull	3	Hermit Thrush	1	Eastern Meadowlark	7
Rock Pigeon	731	Wood Thrush	9	Common Grackle	164
Mourning Dove	253	American Robin	909	Brown-headed Cowbird	285
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	Gray Catbird	557	<i>blackbird species</i>	100
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	13	Northern Mockingbird	155	Baltimore Oriole	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	6	Brown Thrasher	26	Purple Finch	12
Great Horned Owl	4	European Starling	943	House Finch	217
Barred Owl	11	Cedar Waxwing	166	American Goldfinch	664
Chimney Swift	176	Blue-winged Warbler	1	House Sparrow	201
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	45	Tennessee Warbler	2		
Belted Kingfisher	28	Nashville Warbler	3	<b>Total Birds</b>	16,052
Red-bellied Woodpecker	278	Northern Parula	29	<b>Total Species</b>	140



## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

6007 Flywheel Court

Columbia, MD 21044

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### November/December 2010 - Inside This Issue:

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## CLUB BOOKSTORE

BY WARD EBERT

Is it time to buy a new field guide? Does your current field guide talk about Hutchin's Goose, Marsh Hawks, Solitary Vireos, and Olive-backed Thrushes? Do you wonder why you can't find a Northern Harrier or Blue-headed Vireo in it? Are you afraid to open it on a windy day because the pages are falling out? Perhaps you should visit our bookstore for an instant upgrade at a fantastic discount. The bookstore is available before every club meeting.

Maybe an in-depth book about sparrows or hawks would help you move to the next ability level. We have a wide variety of bird-related books, both new and used, at reasonable prices. They make excellent holiday gifts for beginners as well as experts, and your fellow club members are available to advise and recommend the right choice. We also have a limited number of author-autographed copies of several books that would be a fine addition to your library.

Profits from book sales go to support birdlife. Donations of used birding-related books are always welcome.

