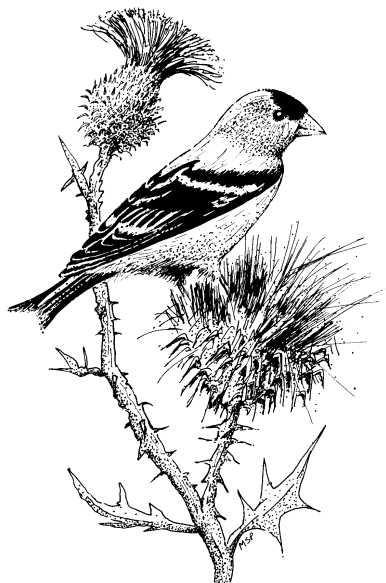


# The Goldfinch

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



## Inside This Issue

<a href="#">Club Meetings</a> .....	1
<a href="#">Summer Bird Records</a> .....	1
<a href="#">Board of Directors Meetings</a> .	2
<a href="#">Fall Field Trips</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Fall Count Results</a> .....	4
<a href="#">In Memoriam</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Dragonfly Count.</a> .....	6

**The Goldfinch**, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the January/February 2012 issue is November 25, 2011.

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:  
Amanda Witt  
8865 Purple Iris Lane  
Elkridge, MD 21075  
[amanda.witt@yahoo.com](mailto:amanda.witt@yahoo.com)

Please visit the Club's website at [www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org)

## CLUB MEETINGS - BY [JANE GEUDER](#)

Thursday, November 10, 2011 "Northern Peru – Naturalists' Travelogue," by Dennis and Jane Coskren and Jim and Rosa Lubitz. This presentation will show the highlights of a birding trip taken to northern Peru in January 2011. The trip crossed the Andes from the humid foothill forests of the western Amazon basin, to the stark Sechura desert of the Pacific coast. Between the two extremes, the route went across cloud-forested Andean ridges, through the cactus- and mesquite-studded Marañón valley, and into the threatened tropical deciduous ecosystem.

Thursday, December 8, 2010 "The Birds of [Magee Marsh](#)," by Ralph Geuder. Spring warblers are the main draw here, but this Ohio site offers many other interesting species as well. Jane and Ralph Geuder have made a number of trips in recent years to this site on Lake Erie. This 2,202 acre refuge boasts over 300 species of birds including 36 species of warblers. The boardwalk here is as good as it gets for close-up looks and opportunities to photograph spring migrants.

Meetings are at the **Robinson Nature Center**, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044. Hospitality and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m. Meeting with program begins at 8:00 p.m. Nature Center doors unlocked at 7:15 p.m. and locked again at 8:15 p.m. There is no admission charge. For further information call Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

## SUMMER BIRD RECORDS – JUNE 1 TO JULY 31, 2011

BY [JOANNE SOLEM](#)

Summer's record-breaking heat produced few highlights. Notable species were [Great Blue Herons](#) nesting in a new location, [Mississippi Kite](#), [American Coot](#), [American Woodcock](#), [Common Raven](#), and [Savannah Sparrow](#).

**Wood Ducks** were spotted at four sites (**SN, BO, JW**). Although **Wild Turkeys** were in their usual haunts along the Patuxent (**KS**) and the Patapsco (**RRf**), they were also reported from Manor La

(**WE**). More intriguing was a hen wandering Oakland Mills, E. Columbia (**CMcK**, ph.; *vide* **MO'S**) and a report from the vicinity of Waterloo Park (*vide* **AWt**). A male **Ring-necked Pheasant** in early July along Shaffers Mill Rd would be notable if pen-reared birds did not make all county sightings suspect (**M&JBr**).

Eight **Great Blue Heron** nests, at least three with young, were dis-

(*Records continued on page 2*)

(Records continued from page 1)  
covered at Waterford Farm 6/20, a new location (**WE, MW**). The **Black-crowned Night-Heron** count reached three (one ad.) at Wilde Lake 6/5 (**ROr**). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were present during June at Lake Elkhorn; the most interesting observation was an adult carrying sticks 6/2 (**RRf**). Despite scattered reports the last few years, no one has yet produced a photograph of an active nest. Some day....

A record-breaking 224 **Black Vultures** were counted on a farm on Morgan Station Rd adjacent to the Patapsco 6/22 (**WE**). A food composting facility, close to the north side of the river, is a major attraction. In June, an adult **Mississippi Kite** continued to be seen in the late afternoon: 6/10 over MD175/w. of MD108 (**JCn**) and 6/30 over US100/Snowden River Pkwy (**JW**).

An **American Coot** appeared on Waverly Pond, MD99/Woodstock Rd 6/4, staying to 6/6—a fine summer record (**RRf**). A few **Spotted Sandpipers** were slow to depart with one at W. Friendship setting a late date of 6/6 (**JCu**)—until one was seen at Centennial on 6/7 (**MKw**)! One at Fulton Pond barely a month later on 7/9 was one of the earliest-ever July dates (**DCm**). Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** showed up at Western Regional Park 7/31 (**BHi**). A **Least Sandpiper** at Fulton 7/9 established a new fall migration date (**DCm**), while a **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Western RP 7/23 was the third earliest (**DCm**). A summer **American Woodcock** 6/8 at the Middle Patuxent Env. Area was welcome news (**PNr, RRk**).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were widespread. **Chimney Swifts** nested in Jan Randle's chimney in Braeburn 7/16 (*vide* **ESu**). A **Great Crested Flycatcher** used a large nest box on Marydell Rd 6/18 (**ESu**). Three **Horned Larks** were noted 6/18 and 6/24 along Old Frederick Rd, w. of Underwood Rd (**JW**). **Common Ravens** fledged young at Rocky Gorge Dam with five birds there 6/4 (**FSh**) and three (at least one young) on 6/21 (**JSh**). Before leaving the area, **Cliff Swallows** from the Sykesville bridge colony spent 14 days feeding over nearby property along upper portions of River Rd; 50 was the high on 7/27 (**FLv**). Two were at Browns Bridge, a former nest site, 7/11 (**JW**). High **Veery** counts were six at South Wind, Middle Patuxent Env. Area 6/7 (**JS, GMcC**) and five at Hipsley Mill Rd 6/5 (**KS**).

Five **Prairie Warblers** were counted at Annapolis Rock 6/5 (**KS**). High counts of **American Redstarts** were 10 at Marriottsville 6/14 (**JS, KDy, GMcC**) and eight at Hipsley 6/5 (**KS**). Also at Hipsley, six **Kentucky Warblers** were present 7/17 (**KS**); three **Hooded Warblers** were tallied along Cabin Branch 6/30 (**JSh+**).

The season's only **Savannah Sparrow** was noted along Old Frederick Rd, ¼ mile w. of Underwood 6/18 (**JW**). **Grasshopper Sparrow** reports came from Mt. Pleasant (Woodstock Rd area) 6/12 (**BO**), Old Frederick Rd 6/18 and 24 (**JW**), and U. of MD Central Farm 7/12 (**WE**). **Blue Grosbeaks** were spotted in five locations. Five **E. Meadowlarks** were seen along Carrs Mill Rd (opp. Western RP) 6/15 (**WE**).

A leucistic female **House Sparrow** appeared intermittently along Stone Hill Dr. during June and July (**KLz**). Plumage was cream to white, bill and legs were pink, eyes were dark.

**Observers:** **JBr** – Jim Brinkley, **MBr** – Marilyn Brinkley, **JCn** – Jon Corcoran, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **DCm** – David Cummings, **KDy** – Karen Darcy, **WE** – Wes Earp, **BHi** – Bill Hill, **MKw** – Mike Kerwin, **KLz** – Kathy Litzinger, **FLv** – Felicia Lovelett, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **CMcK** – Carl McKnight, **PNr** – Phil Norman, **SN** – Sue Neri, **ROr** – Richard Orr, **MO'S** – Michael O'Sullivan, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **RRk** – Robert Rock, **RRf** – Russ Ruffing, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **FSh** – Fred Shaffer, **JSh** – Jay Sheppard, **JS** – Jo Solem, **ESu** – Eva Sunell, **MW** – Mark Wallace, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson, **AWt** – Amanda Witt.

## 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. Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the November meeting is a week earlier. If directions are required, please call the hosting board member.

**November 17** (Note: This is the third Thursday.)

Jim Lubitz  
10908 Millbank Row  
Columbia, MD 21044  
410-730-7958

**December** – no meeting

# 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.

## SHARPS AT WATERFORD

**FARM** Nov. 5, Sat. 8:00 a.m. (half day) *Meet at farm parking area on right, just past barns. Rte. 97 S. to right on Jennings Chapel Rd., 1 mile to right into farm at sign.* Moderate walking over crop stubble, farm roads, and paths on this working farm. Fields with crop residue, extensive woodlands, Cattail Creek and floodplain, three ponds and five shallow waterfowl impoundments make for diverse habitats and good birding opportunities. Port-a-pots available. Waterproof footwear and clothing advisable in wet weather with one small stream crossing planned. *Leader – Wes Earp, [the\\_earps@verizon.net](mailto:the_earps@verizon.net) or 410-531-3197.*

## CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 6, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) Note that Daylight Saving Time ends. *Meet at west end 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 – Jeff Culler, [cullersfuls@hotmail.com](mailto:cullersfuls@hotmail.com) or 410-465-9006.*

## HOWARD WATERFOWL

**SEARCH** Nov. 12, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (half day) *Meet at the Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkborn.* Plan to visit the Columbia lakes search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons and other waterfowl. Easy walking involved. Plan to carpool.

Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available at some stops. *Leader - Kurt Schwarz, [krschwa1@verizon.net](mailto:krschwa1@verizon.net) or 410-461-1643.*

## CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 13, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) *Meet at west end parking lot on Centennial Lane.* See November 6th for description. *Leaders - Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 or [KJHeff@aol.com](mailto:KJHeff@aol.com).*

## CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 20, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) *Meet at west end parking lot on Centennial Lane.* See November 6th for description. *Leader – Joe Hanfman, [auk1844@comcast.net](mailto:auk1844@comcast.net) or 410-772-8424.*

## CENTENNIAL PARK

Nov. 27, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) *Meet at west end parking lot on Centennial Lane.* See November 6th for description. *Leader – Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329 or [LBRoller@verizon.net](mailto:LBRoller@verizon.net).*

## BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Dec. 3, Saturday (all day) 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. Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details. *Leader – Stan Arnold, [dy.dx@earthlink.net](mailto:dy.dx@earthlink.net) or 410-768-0155.*

## START YOUR YEAR LIST

January 1, 2012, Sunday (8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.) *Meet at the 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 where every bird is new! Facilities available. *Leader - Bonnie Ott, [bonnieott@verizon.net](mailto:bonnieott@verizon.net) or 443-285-3302.*

 = Great for beginning birders

## YOUTH BIRDING

Are you interested in helping the next generation discover the joys of birding? You can commit to as much or as little time as you would like. For more information, please contact Sue Muller at [SMuller@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:SMuller@howardcountymd.gov).

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Triadelphia Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Saturday, December 17, 2011. If you would like to participate, please contact the compiler, David Holmes, at [musiclbndr@verizon.net](mailto:musiclbndr@verizon.net) or 410-730-7083.

# SUMMARY OF THE 2011 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT

BY [MIKE MCCLURE](#) AND [CHUCK STIRRAT](#)

The eighteenth annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 17, 2011. All field counters agreed it was a slow day of birding. That said, this has turned out to be an average count for the number of species and birds observed (16,830 total birds, 121 total species, 21 warbler species) with the exception of a high count for the number of warblers (714, 2<sup>nd</sup> highest). Comparison totals for the prior 17 years are as follows: total birds, high, 26,651 in 1994; low 9,293 in 2004; average, 16,929; total species, high, 140 in 2010; low 108 in 2004; average, 125; individual warblers, high, 1,004 in 1994; low 130 in 2004; average, 460; warbler species, high, 30 in 1994; low 13 in 2004; average, 24.

The number of participants and parties (48 and 32) was split compared to last year's (59 and 31) with eleven fewer participants but one additional party. The participants provided 199 hours of field counting time (average of 189). The mileage was 455 compared to the average of 384 miles.

Saturday's temperature started in the high 40's at 6:00 a.m. under full cloud cover, rising to 58° in late afternoon with lingering intermittent light rain in the central part of the county. The eastern portion of the county had no rain while the western portion had periods of heavy rain. The humidity was comfortable (dew point: 47° at 6:00 a.m. rising to 54° by 6:00 p.m.). Winds were not an issue during 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 18 years of Fall Counts as shown on the graphics that can be found on the website.

The accompanying table presents the count data. There were 10 species for which there was only one bird sighted countywide and nine species for which there were only two birds sighted countywide. Species showing moderately high numbers (>500) are Canada Goose, 1,134; Broad-winged Hawk, 690; Rock Pigeon, 595; Blue Jay, 801; Crows [American+Fish+species], 993; American Robin,

754; European Starling, 3,352, Northern Cardinal, 599.

Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible attend the tally as well. Next year the 2012 Fall Count will be held on Saturday, September 15.

The count participants were Brinkley, Jim & Marilyn; Coren, Ann; Coskren, Dennis & Jane; Culler, Jeff; Cullison III, Ralph; Cummings, David; **Darcy, Karen (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**; Earp, Susan; **Earp, Wes (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**; **Ebert, Ward (Area 2)**; Feild, Tom; Finedore, John; Fuller, Kelly; Hanfman, Joe; **Hefernan, Kevin (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**; Holdridge, Emy; King, Geraldine; Lengade, Shashi; Leumas, Mike; Lillie, Kathie; Lovelett, Felicia; Lund, Brigitte; Magnusson, Nancy; McClure, Grazina; **McClure, Mike (Area 4 & County Co-coordinator)**; McKitterick, John; Miller, Barry; Miller, Tom; Neri, Sue; Newman, Carol; Orr, Richard; **Ott, Bonnie (Area 6)**; Pearce, Karla; Polniaszek, Ron &, Susan; Randle, Jan; Ruffing, Russ; **Schwarz, Kurt (Area 5)**; Smith, Romayne; Solem, Bob & Jo; Stewart, Michelle; **Stirrat, Chuck (County Co-coordinator)**; **Sunnell, Eva (Area 7)**; **Wallace, Mark (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**; Wright, Michele. **Lastly, a very special thanks to Don and Martha Waugh who hosted the evening tally.**

---

## IN MEMORIAM: ELAYNE METTER

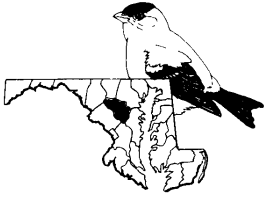
Long-time member Elayne Metter died August 9, 2011, at the age of 60. Along with her husband, Jeff, Elayne regularly attended meetings, joined field trips, and participated in many seasonal counts. In the 1990s, she served on the chapter board as the Publicity Chair as well as one of the Howard chapter's State Directors. On the state level, besides attending annual conferences, Elayne had been a member of the MOS Sanctuary Committee. She submitted seasonal bird reports for her area of Worthington. A July 2000 photograph of a Red-breasted Nuthatch was a valuable record from her yard. She and Jeff presented programs to the local chapter describing their worldwide travels. Members may remember the most recent one detailing birding opportunities near the Los Angeles airports, helping travelers make the most of layovers in an area they knew well.

Many members will remember Elayne for her love of kingfishers, as well as for the whimsical Halloween cards she created.

—Joanne Solem

## HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT RESULTS - SEPTEMBER 17, 2011

Canada Goose	1,134	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	Yellow Warbler	3
Wood Duck	21	Downy Woodpecker	171	Chestnut-sided Warbler	52
Gadwall	3	Hairy Woodpecker	40	Magnolia Warbler	78
Mallard	193	Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	123	Cape May Warbler	4
Blue-winged Teal	19	Pileated Woodpecker	39	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	45
Hooded Merganser	1	Eastern Wood-Pewee	51	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	3
Wild Turkey	1	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	2	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	57
Pied-billed Grebe	3	Acadian Flycatcher	8	Blackburnian Warbler	7
Double-crested Cormorant	16	<i>Empidonax species</i>	25	Pine Warbler	14
Great Blue Heron	39	Eastern Phoebe	51	Palm Warbler	24
Great Egret	5	Great Crested Flycatcher	5	Bay-breasted Warbler	6
Green Heron	18	White-eyed Vireo	5	Blackpoll Warbler	5
Black Vulture	91	Yellow-throated Vireo	1	Black-&-white Warbler	62
Turkey Vulture	129	Blue-headed Vireo	1	American Redstart	38
Osprey	7	Warbling Vireo	3	Ovenbird	6
Bald Eagle	6	Philadelphia Vireo	4	Northern Waterthrush	2
Northern Harrier	4	Red-eyed Vireo	92	Common Yellowthroat	127
Sharp-shinned Hawk	10	Blue Jay	801	Canada Warbler	2
Cooper's Hawk	12	American Crow	624	<i>warbler species</i>	155
<i>accipiter species</i>	3	Fish Crow	11	Eastern Towhee	38
Red-shouldered Hawk	51	<i>crow species</i>	358	Chipping Sparrow	359
Broad-winged Hawk	690	Common Raven	1	Field Sparrow	53
Red-tailed Hawk	13	Horned Lark	65	Savannah Sparrow	11
<i>buteo species</i>	1	Tree Swallow	5	Song Sparrow	110
American Kestrel	30	Carolina Chickadee	424	Lincoln's Sparrow	2
Merlin	3	Tufted Titmouse	253	Swamp Sparrow	1
Peregrine Falcon	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	147	Scarlet Tanager	21
Killdeer	107	Carolina Wren	235	Northern Cardinal	599
Solitary Sandpiper	1	House Wren	33	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	25
Least Sandpiper	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	5	Blue Grosbeak	10
Ring-billed Gull	11	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	8	Indigo Bunting	160
Caspian Tern	1	Eastern Bluebird	237	Dickcissel	3
Rock Pigeon	595	Swainson's Thrush	7	Bobolink	41
Mourning Dove	472	Wood Thrush	9	Red-winged Blackbird	488
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	American Robin	754	Eastern Meadowlark	12
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	Gray Catbird	435	Common Grackle	23
Great Horned Owl	2	Northern Mockingbird	113	Brown-headed Cowbird	516
Barred Owl	2	Brown Thrasher	17	House Finch	111
Chimney Swift	38	European Starling	3,352	American Goldfinch	454
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	32	Cedar Waxwing	294	House Sparrow	260
Belted Kingfisher	27	Tennessee Warbler	8		
Red-headed Woodpecker	3	Nashville Warbler	2	<b>Total Birds:</b>	<b>16,830</b>
Red-bellied Woodpecker	203	Northern Parula	14	<b>Total Species:</b>	<b>121</b>



## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

10970 Millbank Row

Columbia, MD 21044

ADDRESS SERVICE SUGGESTED

### November/December 2011 - Inside This Issue:

Club Meetings

Summer Bird Records

Fall Field Trips

Fall Count Results

In Memoriam

Dragonfly Count

## RESULTS OF SIXTH ANNUAL COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT

BY JUNE TVEEKREM

This year's dragonfly count was held on August 20. The weather was perfect for odonates – sunny with a high around 90°. However, odonate numbers were low. We found 40 species comprising 1,974 individuals. Interestingly, the greatest numbers and diversity of dragonflies occurred in the western part of the county, even after accounting for the fact that two groups were looking in that area.

The event, co-sponsored by the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks, attracted 29 participants, seven of whom were new to the count. Participants came from Howard, Carroll, Montgomery, Baltimore, and Frederick counties.

Six groups of observers, plus two individuals not in a group, fanned out throughout the county. The county was divided into five territories or areas: 1-west county, 2-north, 3-central, 4-south, 5-east.

A late afternoon tally rally at June Tveekrem's house provided a festive end to the day.

Some of the better finds were Swamp Spreadwing, Lilypad Fork-tail, Fawn Darner, Prince Basket-tail, Bar-winged Skimmer, and Blue-faced Meadowhawk. The complete results are posted online at <http://southernspreadwing.com/odes/count2011/>.

I'd like to thank our group leaders: Sue Muller (Area 1), Wes and Sue

Earp (Area 1), Bob Ringler (Area 2), June Tveekrem (Area 3, and County Coordinator), Bob Solem (Area 4), and Jo Solem (Area 5).

In addition to the group leaders, participants were Ken Clayton, Mia Dubin, Rena Dubin, John Fisher, Sherry Fisher, Amanda Goldberg, Beth Johnson, Brooks Longley, Janet Lydon, Nancy Magnusson, Deanna Marquart, Grazina McClure, Mike McClure, Linda Roberts, Ritesh Shah, Pooja Shah, Siddharth Shah, Bill Sherman, David Smith, Tim Thompson, William and Shep (last name unknown).

Next year's dragonfly count will be in June. We invite you to join us to look for early season odonates!