



The Goldfinch

Newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club
A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
www.howardbirds.org

CLUB MEETINGS - BY [JANE GEUDER](#)

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What northern species are we likely to see in Howard Co. this winter?

- A. Purple Finch only
- B. Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, and Red-breasted Nuthatch
- C. Those species listed in B. plus Evening Grosbeak and possibly a crossbill
- D. A poor flight is forecast--enjoy the local birds!

(Answer on page 8, at the bottom of the Winter Finch Forecast article)



Pine Siskin

Thursday, November 13, 2014 "Ethiopian Natural History," by Gail Mackiernan. Gail, in a group of four with a driver/guide, spent 25 days in this ancient country which was never colonized. This 2013 trip through dramatic landscapes and contrasting ecosystems yielded over 550 bird species, including all the endemics. Birds were abundant and easy to photograph. Gail and her husband, Barry Cooper, are club members as well as members of the Montgomery County chapter. She has spoken to our club before.

Thursday, December 11, 2014 "Project SNOWstorm: Tracking Snowy Owls during the Great Irruption of 2013-14," by David Brinker, Regional Ecologist, MD/DNR. Dave, in partnership with several other naturalists, created the project as a collaborative effort of a diverse group of scientists to study this historic Snowy Owl irruption. His talk will detail the essential findings from the research. Information about these raptors was gathered using telemetry, banding, toxicology screening, DNA analysis, and more. Dave has spoken to our club in the past.

Meetings are at the Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044. Hospitality 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 Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

SUMMER BIRD RECORDS: JUNE 1-JULY 31, 2014

BY [JOANNE SOLEM](#)

This summer lacked heat waves and drought, while above average rainfall continued; unfortunately, this combination produced few birds of note. Significant species were Red-necked Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (breeding), and Dickcissel.

Wood Duck young are always a treat. Among this year's records were an adult and young at Allview 6/4 (**ESu**), one adult and ducklings at Font Hill Wetland Park 6/18 (**SMu**), two adults and two juveniles at Fulton 7/16 (**HPt, KnHf**), and a female with as many as six ducklings walking across several backyards in Hammond Village 6/5 (*fide JS*). A **Red-necked Grebe** at the north end of Triadelphia Reservoir was in no rush to

[\(Records continued on page 3\)](#)

FALL FIELD TRIPS BY JOE HANFMAN & BONNIE OTT

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 Joe Hanfman at auk1844@gmail.com or Bonnie Ott at bonnieott@verizon.net. HCBC members receive priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

CENTENNIAL PARK

November 2, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours - Daylight Saving Time ends). *Meet at west end parking lot off 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. Leaders - Kevin and Karen Heffernan, KJHeff@aol.com, 410-418-8731*

SHARPS AT WATERFORD FARM

November 8, Saturday 8:00 a.m. (half day). *Meet at farm parking area, through barns on right. 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. Knee-high waterproof footwear is advisable for part of hike.* *Leader - Wes Earp, wesandsue@gmail.com, 410-531-3197*

CENTENNIAL PARK

November 9, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours). *Meet at west end parking lot off 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. *Facilities available* *Leader - Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net, 410-461-2408*

CENTENNIAL PARK

November 16, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours). *Meet at west end parking lot off 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.

Facilities available

Leaders - Richard and Renee Peters, Richard@rrrrpeters.org

HOWARD WATERFOWL SEARCH

November 22, Saturday (8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.) *Meet at the Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkhorn.* Plan to visit the Columbia lakes to 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 locations.* *Leader - Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net, 410-461-1643*

CENTENNIAL PARK

November 23, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours). *Meet at west end parking lot off 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. *Facilities available* *Leader - Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net, 410-461-2408*

BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE


December 6, Saturday (All Day Trip)
Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly, Entrance fee or Duck Stamp required. Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details. We will carpool. *Facilities available at some locations.* *Leader - Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net, 410-461-1643*

TRIADELPHIA CHRISTMAS COUNT

December 20, Saturday. Your participation is welcome either in the field or at your feeder (if you are within the count circle). A tally rally with food is planned to finish up the day. Contact compiler David Holmes at musiclbndr@gmail.com (new e-mail address) or 410 -730 -7083 (e-mail preferred) to let him know you are interested.

START YOUR YEAR LIST

January 1, 2015, Thursday, 8:00 a.m. (half day) *Meet at the [Howard County Conservancy - Mount Pleasant Farm](#).* 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 is new! *Facilities available at some locations.* *Leader - Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net, 443-285-3302*

 = Great for beginning birders

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Copy may be sent to:

Howard Patterson

4209 Hermitage Drive

Ellicott City, MD 21042-6235

howard21042@verizon.net

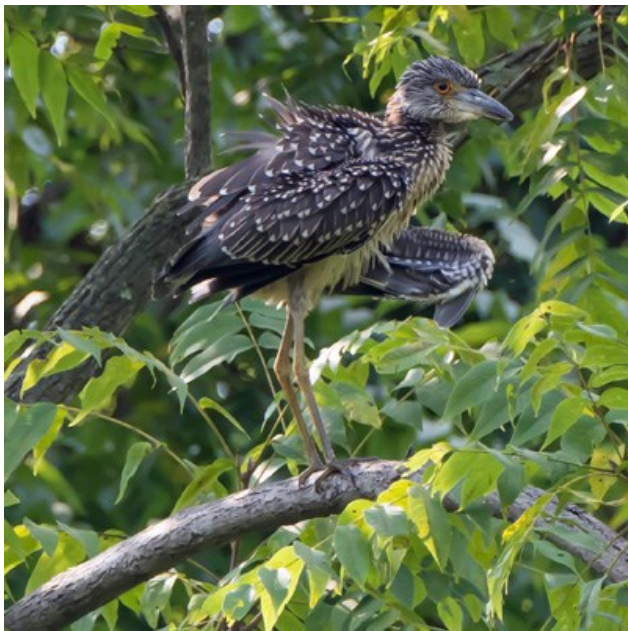
The Goldfinch, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the January/February 2015 issue is November 25, 2014.

Howard Patterson, *Editor*

(Records continued from page 1)

return to its breeding grounds. A kayaking birder reported the grebe on 6/21, noting he had seen it several times within that week (**DHl**). It is the county's only summer record for this species and, of course, the latest departure date.

Green Heron breeding habitat is widespread in the county. Among likely nest sites this year were Loyola Pond, E. Columbia 6/10 (**SN-4**), Warfield's Pond Pk 6/14 (**JS-pair**), and Meadowbrook Pk 7/29 (**BO-10+**). In addition to Wilde Lake, where **Black-crowned Night-Herons** can usually be located (**RRf-2**, 6/13), one was also seen at Lake Elkhorn 7/8 (**JW**) and one at Meadowbrook Pk 7/29 (**BO**). Although the first **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** nesting had been verified near Lake Elkhorn in 2012 (a pair began building a nest but never completed it), this year a juvenile bird barely able to fly was discovered in dense vegetation along the stream at Meadowbrook Park 7/29 (**BO**, ph.) An adult was noted at Lake Elkhorn 7/7 (**ALw**).



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (immature) at Meadowbrook Park
by Bonnie Ott

High water levels meant attractive shorebird habitat was almost nonexistent. As a result, it was no surprise that the earliest fall migrants weren't detected until the last week of July. These included **Spotted Sandpiper** at Centennial Park 7/27 (**BO**), **Solitary Sandpiper** at Big Branch 7/24 (**NM**), and **Greater Yellowlegs** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** at the north end of Triadelphia Reservoir 7/30 (**KS**).

The first post-breeding **Ring-billed Gull** wandered over Gateway Overlook 7/16 (**BO**). Although **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were slow

to arrive in spring, by the second week of June they were widespread (m. obs.). **Black-billed Cuckoos** continued to be reported: Mt. Pleasant 7/3 (**BO**, **ROr-1**), Montgomery Run 7/5 (**NM-1**), and Middle Patuxent Environmental Area 7/18 (**EHs-1**). One observer noted that both species were heard frequently on a daily walk along McKendree Rd and Rover Mill Rd (**LCg**).

Every summer brings at least one report of a **Red-headed Woodpecker**. After being heard in a wooded area of Timberleigh for several days, an adult appeared at a nearby suet feeder on 6/9 (**DNg**).

Blue Jays are well-known for their effective imitation of **Red-shouldered Hawk** calls. One at David Force WMA 6/6 enlarged its repertoire to include a **Cooper's Hawk** call (**KS**). Two **Common Ravens** were present at Annapolis Rock 6/13 (**RRf**).

Birders are used to seeing the first spring **Purple Martins** by late March, with many nests by the end of May. This year a martin box was erected at Belmont on 4/8, but no martins were seen near it until 6/7. By 6/28, three pairs were nesting and eventually all fledged young (**SPr**). **White-breasted Nuthatches** only occasionally use nest boxes. A pair delighted a trail monitor by utilizing a box at West Friendship Park, fledging three young in June (**LCg**). **Veerys** were reported from Henryton 6/1 (**KS**), Hipsley Mill Rd 7/1 (**JW**), and Blandair 7/10 (**EHs**). A **Blue-winged Warbler** was present at Annapolis Rock 6/5 (**JHf**). A **Nashville Warbler** lingered until 6/3 at Henryton establishing the second latest departure date (**NM**, **GMcC**, **JS**). Locally nesting warblers included the following: **Kentucky** at four sites (**KS**; **JS**; **JW**; **EHs**), **Hooded** at the north end of Triadelphia Reservoir (**RRf**), **American Redstart** and **Cerulean Warbler** at both Henryton and Marriottsville (m. obs.), **Yellow-throated** at Marriottsville (**RRf**; **KS**; **JW**), and a high of five **Yellow-breasted Chats** at Mt. Pleasant 6/26 (**KS**).

Most of the remaining **Grasshopper Sparrow** nesting habitat lies west of MD32 as evidenced by the following records: Western Regional Park 6/2 (**KS-3**), Carr's Mill Rd and West Friendship Park 6/13 (**LCg**), and Hardy Rd 7/2 (**JW**). Two at Gateway Business Park (just west of I-95) on 6/29 were a treat at an eastern location (**JW**). Sometimes a lone **White-throated Sparrow** remains into the summer season (approximately a dozen previous records). This year was notable for reports of at least three individuals: 6/10 and 7/30 Millbank Row, W. Columbia (**JTv**), 7/6 Gateway (**SN**), and 7/7 Fox Chase (**ROr**, **BO**).

The **Dark-eyed Junco** at Cavey Lane feeders 6/5 (**RRf**) was one day short of the county late record. An unusual orange variant

(Records continued on page 7)

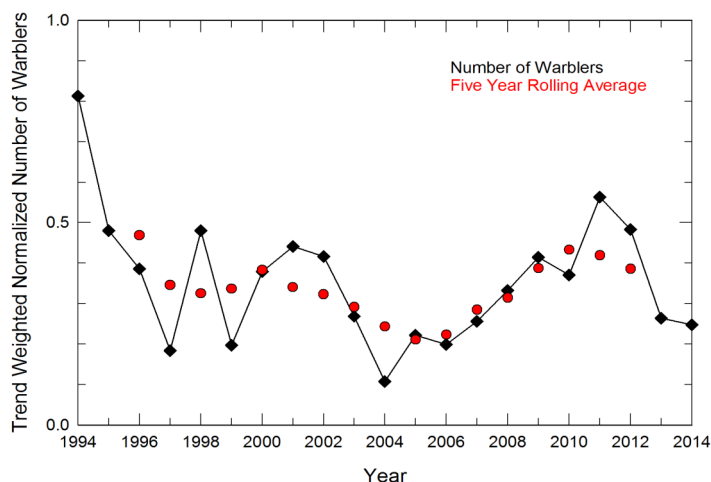
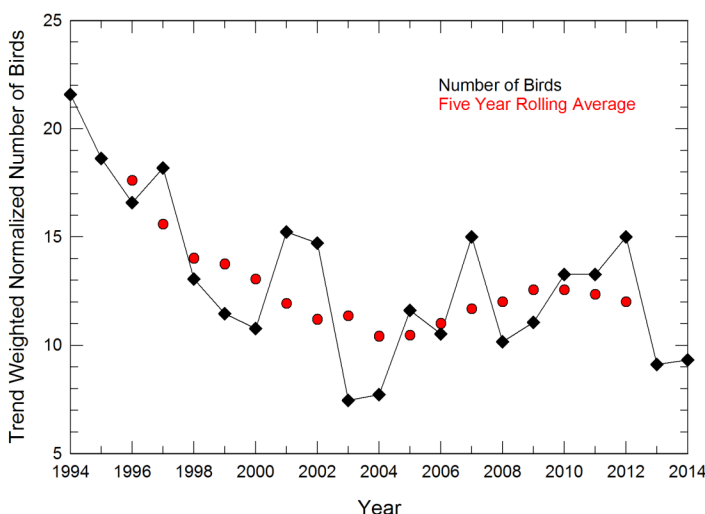
SUMMARY OF THE 2014 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT

BY MIKE MCCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT

The twenty-first annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 20, 2014. This count has turned out to be a below average count for the number of species and notably below average for the number of birds observed (11,027 total birds, 121 total species, 22 warbler species, and 293 total warblers). The number of warbler species was below average. Comparison totals for the prior 20 years are as follows: total birds, high, 26,651 in 1994; low 9,293 in 2004; average, 16,642; total species, high, 140 in 2010; low 108 in 2004; average, 125. For total warblers, high, 1,004 in 1994; low 130 in 2004; average, 458; warbler species, high, 30 in 1994; low 13 in 2004; average, 24.

The number of participants and parties (58 and 37) is nearly identical to last year but with two additional parties. The participants provided 212 hours of field counting time [average of 192]. The mileage was 449 compared to the average of 398 miles.

Saturday's temperature started at 60 degrees at 6:00 a.m. under full cloud cover, rising to 81 degrees in late afternoon with clearing to clear skies during the remainder of the day. The morning was comfortable (dew point: 58 degrees) at 6:00 a.m. rising to 64 degrees by the late afternoon. The high temperature and moderate dew point made for an uncomfortable afternoon in the sun. Winds were light (5-7 mph) from the south during the afternoon. Counters generally complained about the lack of birds. This problem is reflected in the data from the 21 years of Fall Counts as shown on the graphics for the total number of individual birds and warblers observed countywide as shown by their Rolling Five Year Average [RFYA] data. The RFYAs seem to support the fact that the numbers have reached their lows and are now beginning to rise which contrasts with the serious declines of the early years of the Fall Count.



The accompanying table presents the count data. There were 20 species for which there was only one bird sighted countywide and six species for which there were only two birds sighted countywide. The single bird sighting ties the highest ever observed and is unchanged from last year. Species showing moderately high numbers (>500) are Canada Goose, 996; Blue Jay, 851; crows [American+Fish+species], 709; European Starling, 1,187.

Count participants: Dena & Scott Berglund, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Grace Cheng, Lisa Colangelo, Trish Cope, Dennis Coskren, **Jeff Culler (Area 2 Coordinator)**, Ralph Cullison III, David Cummings, **Susan & Wes Earp, (Area 1 Co-coordinators)**, Ward Ebert, Ron Griffin, Joe Hanfman, John Harris, **Karen & Kevin Heffernan, (Area 3 Co-coordinators)**, Bill & Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Ed Huestis, Geraldine King, Mike Leumas, **Allen Lewis (Area 7 Coordinator)**, Kathie Lillie, Felicia Lovelett, Janet Lydon, Nancy Magnusson, Nancy McAllister, **Grazina & Mike McClure (Area 4 & County Co-coordinator)**, John McKitterick, Woody Merkle, Barry Miller, Tom Miller, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Richard Orr, **Bonnie Ott (Area 6 Coordinator)**, Howard Patterson, Ron & Susan Polniaszek, Tim Ray, Russ Ruffing, **Kurt Schwarz (Area 5 Coordinator)**, Kevin Smith, Richard Smith, Michelle Stewart, **Chuck Stirrat (County Co-coordinator)**, Tom Strikwerda, Eva Sunell, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts, June Tveekrem, **Mark Wallace, (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**, and Paul Zucker. Lastly, a very special thanks to Eileen Clegg who hosted the evening tally.

For the third year, counters were given the option to list the species of butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies seen as they were counting birds. A total of 19 people [14 in 2013 & 10 in 2012] turned in a list. They are **Susan & Wes Earp (Area 1 Co-**

HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT RESULTS - SEPTEMBER 20, 2014

Canada Goose	996
Wood Duck	25
American Black Duck	2
Mallard	139
Green-winged Teal	3
Double-crested Cormorant	22
Great Blue Heron	24
Great Egret	4
Green Heron	17
Black-crowned Night-Heron	2
Black Vulture	168
Turkey Vulture	272
Osprey	4
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	4
Northern Harrier	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	10
Cooper's Hawk	17
<i>accipiter species</i>	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	57
Broad-winged Hawk	7
Red-tailed Hawk	15
Semipalmated Plover	1
Killdeer	73
Spotted Sandpiper	4
Solitary Sandpiper	11
Least Sandpiper	18
Semipalmated Sandpiper	7
Ring-billed Gull	7
Rock Pigeon	293
Mourning Dove	382
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	4
Eastern Screech-Owl	3
Great Horned Owl	1
Barred Owl	7
Common Nighthawk	2
Chimney Swift	184
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	16
Belted Kingfisher	25
Red-headed Woodpecker	8
Red-bellied Woodpecker	210
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1
Downy Woodpecker	116
Hairy Woodpecker	28

Northern(Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	111
Pileated Woodpecker	35
American Kestrel	17
Eastern Wood-Pewee	56
<i>Empidonax species</i>	15
Eastern Phoebe	53
Great Crested Flycatcher	4
White-eyed Vireo	12
Yellow-throated Vireo	3
Warbling Vireo	1
Philadelphia Vireo	1
Red-eyed Vireo	42
Blue Jay	851
American Crow	461
Fish Crow	8
<i>crow species</i>	240
Common Raven	3
Horned Lark	30
Carolina Chickadee	311
Tufted Titmouse	218
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	125
Brown Creeper	1
House Wren	29
Carolina Wren	242
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	3
Eastern Bluebird	281
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1
Swainson's Thrush	1
Hermit Thrush	1
Wood Thrush	22
American Robin	358
Gray Catbird	364
Brown Thrasher	19
Northern Mockingbird	124
European Starling	1,187
Cedar Waxwing	145
Ovenbird	3
Blue-winged Warbler	1
Black-&-white Warbler	23
Prothonotary Warbler	1
Connecticut Warbler	1
Common Yellowthroat	94

American Redstart	32
Cape May Warbler	7
Northern Parula	9
Magnolia Warbler	38
Bay-breasted Warbler	1
Blackburnian Warbler	2
Yellow Warbler	1
Chestnut-sided Warbler	12
Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	13
Palm Warbler	10
Pine Warbler	1
Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	2
Yellow-throated Warbler	1
Prairie Warbler	1
Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	28
Canada Warbler	1
Yellow-breasted Chat	1
<i>warbler species</i>	11
Eastern Towhee	81
Chipping Sparrow	165
Field Sparrow	4
Savannah Sparrow	15
Grasshopper Sparrow	5
Song Sparrow	57
Lincoln's Sparrow	2
Scarlet Tanager	15
Northern Cardinal	427
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	12
Blue Grosbeak	13
Indigo Bunting	63
Bobolink	50
Red-winged Blackbird	101
Eastern Meadowlark	13
Common Grackle	131
Brown-headed Cowbird	121
Baltimore Oriole	2
House Finch	195
American Goldfinch	392
House Sparrow	296
Area Total Birds:	11,027
Area Total Species:	121

(Fall Count continued from page 4)

coordinators), **Karen & Kevin Heffernan (Area 3 Co-coordinators)**, Bill and Gayle Hill, Linda Hunt, Allen Lewis, Nancy Magnusson, Nancy McAllister, **Grazina & Mike McClure (Area 4 & County Co-coordinator)**, John McKitterick, Woody Merkle, Richard Orr, Howard Patterson, **Kurt Schwarz (Area 5 Coordinator)**, Richard Smith, Eva Sunell, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts, **Mark Wallace (Area 1 Co-coordinator)**.

Counters identified 35 species [22 in 2013 & 37 in 2012] of butterflies and moths for a total of 1,228 sightings [302 in 2013 & 407 in 2012]. For the dragonflies and damselflies, there were 12 species [15 in 2013 & 13 in 2012] and 120 sightings [126 in 2013 & 142 in 2012].

For the butterflies it was noted that there were good numbers for Common Buckeyes and Monarchs plus there were five species for which there were 100 or more individual sightings during the count. Of special note is the Giant Swallowtail that made an appearance for the count in Columbia where it had visited occasionally for about a week.



Giant Swallowtail

by Kathy Litzinger

For the dragonflies, there were good numbers of migrating Common Green Darners.

Special thanks go to both Linda Hunt, who graciously helped with arranging the butterfly counters and Richard Smith for making time to help with the field counting.

Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible attend the tally as well. Next year the 2015 Fall Count will be held on the 3rd Saturday of September which will be the 19th.

NINTH ANNUAL HOWARD COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT RESULTS

BY BETH JOHNSON AND JUNE TVEEKREM

This year's dragonfly count was held on August 16th. Overnight temperatures fell into the 50s, and it was almost noon before things warmed up enough for significant odonate activity.

While dragonfly numbers were quite low, diversity was slightly above average. We counted 45 species, the highest number of species recorded on an August count; 1,617 individuals were counted, the second-lowest number of individuals in the history of the count.

No new species were added to the count this year. For the first time, Spot-Winged Glider was not seen.

Twenty-five volunteers took part in the event, which is co-sponsored by the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks. Five 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), 2 (north), 3 (central), 4 (south), and 5 (east).

The late afternoon tally rally was held at the Robinson Nature Center. Thanks to Sue Muller for arranging for our use of this outstanding facility.

To our knowledge, this is the longest-running continuous county-wide odonate count in the United States. The complete 2014 results are posted online at

http://www.howardbirds.org/odonates/OdonateCounts/odonate_count_results.htm#2014.

Many thanks to the group leaders: Sue Muller (Area 1), Wes Earp (Area 1), June Tveekrem (Area 2), Tom Feild (Area 3), Bob Solem (Area 4), and Jo Solem (Area 5).

In addition to the group leaders, participants were as follows:
Area 1: Linda Davis, Julie Dunlap, Heide Grundmann, Grazina McClure, Mike McClure, Marianne Pettis
Area 2: Beth Johnson, Rosa Lubitz, Lisa Shannon, Richard Orr
Area 3: Paul Koehler, JoD Straub
Area 4: Karen Heffernan, Kevin Heffernan, Robin Todd
Area 5: Pat Caro, Kim Knox, Nancy Magnusson, Ken Clayton

Next year's dragonfly count will be on July 25th. We invite you to join us next summer!

THE HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS,

FEBRUARY 1– SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

Cindy Albright
Gill Bentley
Kimberley Bronow
Mary Ann & Pashang Esfandian
Kathryn Finegan
Joanne & Richard Freas
Melissa Greenblatt
Tammy & Michael Griffith
Albert Holm
Fang, Wei & Jason Lu
Sean McGuinn
Anne Philips
Rodolfo Quinio
Kathleen Roso
Kevin Smith

INTERESTING HUMMINGBIRD SEASON

David Holmes wants to remind you that “interesting hummingbird season” is upon us. Keep your feeders open until Thanksgiving and contact David at musiclbndr@gmail.com (new e-mail address) or 410 -730 -7083 (e-mail preferred) if you have a late hummingbird visiting so the hummingbird can be identified and possibly banded.

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

November 20, 2014
John McKitterick
10018 Maple Ave.
Columbia, MD 21046
(410) 997-3122, jbmck@verizon.net.

December — No Meeting

(Records continued from page 3)

Scarlet Tanager was photographed at the Middle Patuxent Env. Area 7/13 (**BO, ROr**). A tanager was observed feeding a **Brown-headed Cowbird** fledgling at West Friendship Park 7/19 (**GMcC**). The county has a healthy population of **Blue Grosbeaks** judging from at least nine sites reported (**KS; JW; JS**). Although there was no evidence of nesting, **Dickcissels** were reported at Western Regional Park 6/2 (**KS, ph.**) and at a private home on Roxbury Rd 6/6 and 6/30 (**MW**).



Scarlet Tanager (orange variant)

by Bonnie Ott

Thanks to Nancy Magnusson and Joe Hanfman for careful proofing.

Observers: **LCg** – Lisa Colangelo, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **KnHf** – Karen Heffernan, **DHf** – Dave Holyoke, **EHs** – Ed Huestis, **ALw** – Allen Lewis, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **SMu** – Sue Muller, **DNg** – Diane Nagengast, **SN** – Sue Neri, **ROr** – Richard Orr, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **HPT** – Howard Patterson, **SPr** – Sue Probst, **RRf** – Russ Ruffing, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JS** – Jo Solem, **ESu** – Eva Sunell, **JTv** – June Tveekrem, **MW** – Mark Wallace, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson.

Worth Reading

State of the Birds Report 2014

Includes a watch list of species most vulnerable to extinction, and a list of the common birds in steep decline

<http://www.stateofthebirds.org/>

Audubon Birds and Climate Change Report

314 Species on the Brink

<http://climate.audubon.org/>



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

10970 Millbank Row
Columbia, MD 21044

November/December 2014 - Inside This Issue

Club Meetings	Summer Bird Records
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Dragonfly Count Results	New Member Welcome
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	Winter Finch Forecast

Winter Finch Forecast

Each year Ron Pittaway of Ontario Field Ornithologists produces a *Winter Finch Forecast*, predicting movements of finches and other irruptive passerines based on the supply of each species' preferred foods (cones or seeds) in their normal wintering habitats. Although his forecasts apply mainly to Ontario and the nearby Canadian provinces and U.S. states, birders in the mid-Atlantic and other areas eagerly await his reports to get an idea what the coming fall and winter may bring their way.

For Maryland, and more specifically Howard County, the winter of 2014-2015 will not be a big irruptive year, but some species will be moving south. Likelihood of sightings in our locale is as follows:

Pine Grosbeak: unlikely. Excellent mountain-ash berry crops in parts of Quebec, Ontario and the boreal forest to the west will keep the birds north of us.

Purple Finch: highly likely. Most Purple Finches will move south because of low amounts of cones and tree seeds in Ontario. (A few Purple Finches were seen in Howard County in early October.)

Red Crossbill: unlikely, but possible. Poor cone crops are forcing some movement around the Great Lakes.

White-winged Crossbill: unlikely because of excellent spruce cone crops in areas of Canada and Alaska.

Common Redpoll: possible. Good to moderate flight south is predicted because of poor birch seed crops in Canada. Check weedy fields and nyger feeders.

Pine Siskin: likely. Pine Siskins will mostly move east and west, but some are expected to wander south. Listen for their calls and check nyger feeders.

Evening Grosbeak: unlikely. Very small numbers are expected to move south this winter.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: highly likely because of low white spruce cone crops in the Canadian boreal forest. Check black oil, sunflower, peanut, and suet feeders, as well as stands of Virginia pine and other coniferous evergreens. (A few were seen in Howard County in early October.)

The complete *Winter Finch Forecast 2014-2015* can be found at: <http://www.ofo.ca/site/page/view/articles.winterfinches>

Answer to Question on Page 1

What northern species are we likely to see in Howard Co. this winter?

Answer: B. Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, and Red-breasted Nuthatch