



# The Goldfinch

Newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club  
 A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society  
[www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org)



## CLUB MEETINGS - BY JANE GEUDER

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Thursday, May 12, 2016 "Nature at its Finest Moments!" by Middleton Evans. This noted Maryland photographer has captured seasonal displays of wildlife over a 15 year period at a small naturalized pond in Baltimore. Middleton has spoken to our club a number of times. His latest book, published last April, carries the same title as the talk and will be available for sale at the meeting.

Meetings are at the **Robinson Nature Center**, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044. Hospitality at 7:00 p.m. Meeting with program begins at 7:30 p.m. There is no admission charge. For further information call Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

## WINTER BIRD RECORDS: DECEMBER 1, 2015 – FEBRUARY 29, 2016

BY JOANNE SOLEM

### RARE NEW YEAR'S DAY BIRD



Club member Bridget Lewis photographed this Tennessee Warbler Jan. 1 on Willowood Way, just the second Maryland winter record ever.

Although some waterfowl made expected appearances this season, surprisingly they did not dominate the notable species. In addition to a Ross's Goose, the county hosted a Laughing Gull, a Tennessee Warbler, a Painted Bunting, and an Evening Grosbeak. Winter weather was memorable for a record-setting snowstorm January 22-23rd which produced a bonanza of feeder birds.


**Snow Goose** was almost a no-show this season. A group of six was picked up at a farm near I-70/MD 94 on 2/25 (AVS). A **Ross's Goose** (sixth record) appeared at the JHU Applied Physics Lab 1/4 with a flock of 120 Canadas (KHf; m. obs.). **Cackling Geese** made scattered appearances with a high of six at Centennial Pk (CENPK) 1/6 (JHf). An unusual movement of **Canada Geese** was noted in late December. During the afternoon of 12/27, a high vocal flock of 190 moved southeast over Hammond Village (JS), while the following day at least five high, noisy flocks at different locations in the east totaling ~1,000 seemed to be moving purposefully (KLz). Perhaps this was a last push from the laggards as lakes north of us froze. Spring goose migration began a bit early with five flocks totaling 300+ over Mt Pleasant (MTPLT) 2/28 (MKw) and 700+ in multiple flocks over Allview 2/29 (ESu).

[Records](#) continued on page 3)


## SPRING FIELD TRIPS BY 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 Joe Hanfman at [auk1844@gmail.com](mailto:auk1844@gmail.com). HCBC members receive priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

May is a great time to find birds in Howard County. The last four years of data in eBird (the Cornell Lab of Ornithology site used by many birders to record their observations) show 195 species seen in the month of May in Howard County. More than thirty species of warblers, migrating thrushes, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, and Black-crowned Night-Heron are some of the highlights of May birding locally. This year the Howard County Bird Club has scheduled a series of "leaderless" field trips. Participants will meet at the designated location and enjoy a morning finding resident and migrant birds. There will certainly be one or more experienced club members on each field trip, as well as someone willing to create and share an eBird checklist.

 **Western Regional Park** (Leaderless walk)  
May 3, Tuesday, 7:30 a.m. *Meet at Carr's Mill Road parking lot.* Moderate walking along field edges and woodland trails. Opportunity for warblers, sparrows, thrushes, and flyovers. Facilities available.

**Half Day Big Day** (Leaderless walk)  
May 7, Saturday, 7:00 a.m. (half day). *Meet in the parking lot at Mt. Pleasant Farm/Howard County Conservancy,* from where we will carpool to other birding locations. Birding will be a little faster paced than other walks, as our goal will be to see or hear as many species as possible. Participants may continue as long as they desire. Facilities may be available at some locations.


 **Schooley Mill Park** (Leaderless walk)  
May 11, Wednesday, 7:30 a.m. (2-3 hours). *Meet at the upper parking lot, 12975 Hall Shop Road, Highland.* Moderate walking on mulched trails and mowed paths (muddy conditions possible). Opportunity for spring migrants and flyovers. Facilities available.


**May Count**  
May 14, Saturday (all day). See [announcement](#) on page 6 for details.

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


Howard Patterson, Editor  
4209 Hermitage Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042-6235  
[howard21042@verizon.net](mailto:howard21042@verizon.net)

**The Goldfinch**, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the September/October 2016 issue is July 25, 2016.

 **Middle Patuxent Environmental Area**  
(Leaderless walk) May 20, Friday, 7:30 a.m. (half day). *Meet at the Trotter Road parking lot.* Moderate walking through wooded trails and along the river. Great area for migrants of all species. No facilities.

 **Mystery Trip** (Leaderless walk)  
May 24, Tuesday, 7:30 (half day). *Meet at the Meadowbrook Park and Ride.* Participants will determine where to go for the morning based on knowledge of recent sightings.

**Annual Dragonfly Count**  
June 11, Saturday. See [announcement](#) on page 5 for details.

 = Great for beginning birders

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## HAWK AND OWL DRAMA BY JOE HANFMAN

About 1:00 p.m. on March 3, I saw a juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk pounce on something on the ground in my yard. It appeared to be a woodland vole. I watched the hawk eat the entire vole in a short amount of time. While watching the hawk with bins, something large flew in and hit the hawk on its back. The hawk got away and started screaming. Standing on the ground under my feeders was a Great Horned Owl. The owl flew away and shortly the crows found it. While crows were messing with the owl, the hawk came in and attacked a crow. The crows flew off and then the crazy hawk decided to attack the owl. For a while the owl ignored it, but eventually the owl chased off the hawk. Most of the time this was going on an adult Red-shouldered Hawk was flying over my house calling. If the young hawk is not careful, my owl may be having hawk for dinner.

Forty wary **Mallards** were present at Waterford Farm 12/9 (**WE**). **Gadwalls** and **Northern Shovelers** were predictable at Race Road Wetlands whenever there was open water (m. obs.). The Quarry Pond south of Brighton Dam Rd remained open. It was used by a variety of waterfowl including a high of 23 **American Black Ducks** 1/15 (**RRf**). A male **Lesser Scaup** at Lake Elkhorn (**LKELK**) 2/25 was the only one recorded this season (**ALw**). Two **Northern Pintails** at Alpha Ridge Landfill on 2/6 (Mid-winter Count) were a choice sighting (**JHf, RCu**). A few **Redheads** at three sites were picked up by many birders. A flock of 124 **Ring-necked Ducks** at the pond on Marriottsville Rd 2/27 were early migrants (**DSn**). One female **Common Goldeneye**, an elusive migrant, appeared briefly at Wilde Lake (**WILLK**) 1/18 (**TRd**); possibly the same bird showed up at the Quarry Pond 2/14 (**MKw, JHr**; m.obs.). The usual large numbers of **Common Mergansers** were late arriving at Triadelphia Reservoir with 52 at Brighton Dam (**BRDAM**) on 12/28 (**ALw**), 489 on 1/10 (**JS**) and 1,050 on 1/15 (**RRf**).

**Wild Turkey** reports from at least seven sites were mostly in February. A flock of 42 counted at W. Friendship Pk on 2/14 (**BO**) set a new high. Those turkeys were seen multiple times during the following weeks. **Double-crested Cormorants** are scarce in winter so one at Dorsey Run Rd 1/16 (**Rn&RPr**) and one behind Duckett Dam 2/6 (**JS, SMu**) were nice.

**Bald Eagles** caught the attention of many people when a fish kill at **WILLK** in early January attracted up to 11 birds (various dates: **ROr, AMcE, JFr**). There were unverified reports of up to 30. **BRDAM** is the usual hot spot for wintering eagles. The season's high there was 27 (14 ad.) on 2/7 (**MKw**). For the fourth consecutive year, a pair returned to their Folly Quarter Rd nest; on 2/6, both were present with one on the nest (**GMcC**).

Normally, few **Wilson's Snipe** overwinter so eight at Alpha Ridge Landfill 2/6 were a pleasant surprise (**JHf, RCu**). **American Woodcock** lingered into winter with one seen on 12/10 at Annapolis Rock (**ANNRK**) (**DCm**). During mild winters, woodcock are usually courting by mid to late February. Feb 6<sup>th</sup> was early and far from mild. That evening, with several inches of snow on the ground (a few bare spots) and a temperature of 21° F, one was heard at **ANNRK** and four were courting at Hipsley Mill Rd, a mile away (**JSh, MSz**). Perhaps woodcock are seldom observed under such conditions because birders tend to choose better weather in which to enjoy the skydance of these bizarre-looking shorebirds.

**Bonaparte's Gulls** made at least one appearance in

each of the winter months, an unusual occurrence. They were seen at Fulton Pond, **CENPK**, and **BRDAM** with a high of four at the latter site on 2/13 (**RHl**). **Laughing Gulls** are infrequent at any time of the year, so one at Fulton 12/29 attracted attention (**DCm, ALw**; m. obs.). Of the December records, this was the latest [12/14/96 J. Solem].

This was not a major flight year for **Northern Saw-whet Owls**, but a few were found at **ANNRK**. The first was spotted 12/5 (**DCm**); the high was three on 12/8 (**JSh+**). At least one stayed the winter, but appeared to change its roost almost every night making it hard to find. A field trip there on 2/20 did produce one saw-whet for the many delighted participants (**JSh, AVS+**). Almost as exciting for the nine people who stayed till evening for the woodcock display was a saw-whet at Hipsley Mill Rd that called spontaneously (**JSh+**).



Northern Saw-whet Owl  
by Anthony VanSchoor  
Annapolis Rock  
Feb. 20, 2016

The season's lone **Red-headed Woodpecker** was seen at Waterford on 2/6 (**MW**).

Eight **American Kestrels** in four areas on 2/6 were a welcome upturn, the highest number on this count since 2008. **Merlins** were reported from **CENPK** 1/4 (**DCm**), Old Frederick Rd 1/26 (**K&KnHf**), Trinity School on Landing Rd 2/4 (**AVS**), and near Morgan Station Rd 2/6 (**S&WE**). A **Peregrine Falcon** was photographed at **WILLK** 1/10 (**ROr**), and one was seen over Larriland Farm, MD 94 on 2/27 (**JHf**).

**Eastern Phoebes** were few this winter with none on Mid-winter Count (which occurred after the record snowstorm). **Common Ravens** are increasingly living up to their name. Reported from eight locations, they were noted multiple times at **ANNRK**, **BRDAM**, and **MTPLT**. **Horned Larks** were found in modest numbers with a high of 25 on 1/25 along Underwood Rd (**JHf**). The vanguard of **Tree Swallows** (2) appeared at **CENPK** 2/28 (**AVS**). Other than a weird bird on 2/3/06 during an extremely warm winter, this was the earliest spring swallow ever. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were few. Single birds turned up at Tiller Dr on 1/31 (**JCu**) and Worthington on 2/15 (**BMg**).

Amur corktrees planted at **CENPK** attracted up to 200 **Cedar Waxwings** plus **American Robins**, **American Crows**, **Eastern Bluebirds**, and **Red-winged Blackbirds** during the last half of January, until

(Records continued on page 4)



the ample supply of fruit was exhausted (**BO**; **JS**; m. obs.). Four **Hermit Thrushes** at ANNRK 2/10 were the season's high (**JSh+**).

An unusually high number of **Gray Catbirds** and **Brown Thrashers** stayed into or through the winter. **Catbirds** were reported from CENPK (2) (**BO**), Blandair (**JW**), Timberleigh (**DNg**), River Hill (**JHr**), and Triadelphia Rd (**GHy**). **Thrashers** appeared at Blandair (**JW**), CENPK (**MLC**), LKELK (**MSt**), Gorman Stream Valley NRA (Eden Brook) (**TDC**), Middle Patuxent Env. Area (**MWm**), and Hermitage Dr (**HPT**).

A **Tennessee Warbler** in a yard at Willowood Way 1/1 was an astonishing bird for the winter season (**BLw**, ph.). There is just one other winter record *ever* for Maryland according to R. Ringler. **Orange-crowned Warblers** are among the few warbler species that can be expected in winter. One was seen at Blandair 1/2 (**AVS**), possibly the same one present at that location in early November. Another late warbler was a **Yellow-breasted Chat** on a tree branch at eye level at the corner of Gov. Warfield Pkwy/Little Patuxent Pkwy 1/10 (**K&KnHf**). There are only two prior winter records: one in January and one in February.

**American Tree Sparrow** highs of eight were notched at both MTPLT 2/4 (**BO**) and Meadowbrook Park 2/15 (**RHI**). Mid-winter Count on 2/6 tallied six **Chipping Sparrows** at four locations. The season's high count of 30 **White-crowned Sparrows** was made, as usual, at a farm on Roxbury Rd (**MW**). A leucistic **Dark-eyed Junco** appeared in Allview 2/14. It was mostly white with some dark streaks on the wings (**ESu**). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were scarce; surprisingly, there were none at Alpha Ridge Landfill on 2/6 (**JHf**, **RCu**), a consistent winter site.

A female **Painted Bunting** (third record) was documented with photos on a Maryland Facebook birding site with a request for i.d. help. The bird visited an Elkridge feeder and was last seen 1/19 (**KRb**).



Painted Bunting (fem.) by Ken Roberge  
Elkridge, Jan. 19, 2016

The only **Rusty Blackbirds** reported were two at Dorsey Hall 2/4 (**AVS**) and one at W. Friendship Pk 2/21 (**RRf**). An unusual number of **Baltimore Orioles** turned up this season. One appeared at

Tinted Hill, E. Columbia 1/17 and was still present 2/29 (**MKk**); a second showed up at a feeder at LKELK 2/11 (**E&DPd**) and continued to at least 2/26 (**ALw**); while a third stopped from 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. at a Mt. Albert Rd feeder 2/13 (**G&MMcC**). All were females; all were photographed; and all three showed up at their respective sites at overlapping times on 2/13 to establish the total.

There were scattered reports of one or two **Purple Finches**, mostly from mid-January to mid-February, primarily in the west. Although the high count of 18 **Pine Siskins** was made on 12/6 at Schooley Mill Pk, as they were feeding with **American Goldfinches** on sweet gum seeds (**NM**, **JS**), the species was scarce during early winter. Reports picked up in late January through the end of the season. Sixteen were counted at Thornbrook Dr on 2/9, where varying numbers had been present sporadically since 12/29 (**JCu**). A lone male **Evening Grosbeak** at Waterford 2/6 was one of the highlights of the season (**MW**).

Many thanks to Joe Hanfman, Nancy Magnusson, and Howard Patterson for proofing and editing assistance.

**Addendum:** The nest on a grain silo at a farm on Michele Dr, cited in the Nov/Dec *Goldfinch* article, successfully fledged two **Ospreys** during the summer of 2015 (*fide WE*) for the first verified successful nesting in decades.

**Abbreviations:** ANNRK – Annapolis Rock, CENPK – Centennial Park, LKELK – Lake Elkhorn, MTPLT – Mt Pleasant, WILLK – Wilde Lake

**Observers:** MLC – Mary Lou Clark, TDC – T. Dennis Coskren, JCu – Jeff Culler, RCu – Ralph Cullison III, DCm – David Cummings, SE – Sue Earp, WE – Wes Earp, JFr – Jeff Friedhoffer, JHf – Joe Hanfman, JHr – John Harris, GHy – Gabrielle Hayes, KnHf – Karen Heffernan, KHf – Kevin Heffernan, RHI – Russell Hillsley, MKw – Mike Kerwin, MKk – Margaret Kraak, ALw – Allen Lewis, BLw – Bridget Lewis, NM – Nancy Magnusson, GMcC – Grazina McClure, MMcC – Mike McClure, AMcE – Anne McEvoy, BMg – Barbara Muggleworth, SMu – Sue Muller, DNg – Diane Nagengast, ROr – Richard Orr, BO – Bonnie Ott, DPd – David Pardoe, EPd – Elaine Pardoe, HPT – Howard Patterson, RPr – Renee Peters, RPr – Richard Peters, TRd – Timothy Reichard, KRb – Ken Roberge, RRf – Russ Ruffing, DSn – David Sandler, JSh – Jay Sheppard, JS – Jo Solem, MSt – Michelle Stewart, MSz – Marcy Stutzman, ESu – Eva Sunell, ANS – Anthony VanSchoor, MW – Mark Wallace, JW – Jim Wilkinson, MWm – Matthew Williams.

## ELEVENTH ANNUAL HOWARD COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT

The Eleventh Annual Howard County Dragonfly Count, co-sponsored with the Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks, will be held this year on Saturday, June 11, 2016.

No experience is necessary to participate. Join fellow birders and naturalists in enjoying these beautiful insects. Each group of observers, with an experienced leader, visits sites within the county. The group identifies and counts every dragonfly and damselfly seen. Beginners and photographers are welcome.

For prior years' count data, see [http://www.howardbirds.org/odonates/OdonateCounts/odonate\\_count\\_results.htm](http://www.howardbirds.org/odonates/OdonateCounts/odonate_count_results.htm). For other historical information, visit the club's website, [www.howardbirds.org](http://www.howardbirds.org) and click on the dragonfly links for a preview of Howard County odes.

If you are interested in participating, leading a group, or assisting in some other way, please contact count coordinator, Beth Johnson, at [bajohnsonjohnson@verizon.net](mailto:bajohnsonjohnson@verizon.net).

## 2015 ANNUAL LIST FOR HOWARD COUNTY BY JOE HANFMAN

Birders reported a total of 225 species for Howard County in 2015. This total was the nineteenth highest total in the last 37 years. There is a record of a Western Tanager, a first ever for the county, which is pending approval of the MD/DC Records Committee. If accepted, 2015 will be at 226 species and tied for the sixteenth top year, which is slightly above the average.

The top county birds of the year were the county's first **Trumpeter Swans** and the second ever **Little Gull**. Three **Trumpeter Swans** were photographed on Lake Elkhorn during the late afternoon of 5/19 by Albert Holm. The observer contacted two friends, Guy and Susan Moody, who arrived shortly before the birds lifted off and continued west. The record was recently accepted by the Maryland/DC Records Committee, and constitutes a new county record! Speculation is that these birds were the same ones that had spent time at Patuxent Refuge last winter. A flock of 250 **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at Centennial Park on 4/12, tying the record for the second largest ever (Russell Hillsley, Joe Hanfman). What was even more exciting was that an adult **Little Gull** was traveling with them, the county's second record, just one year after the first.



Little Gull by Kevin Heffernan  
Centennial Lake, April 2015

Two **Least Terns** at Fulton 5/30 were the third record (Joe Hanfman). Soon after the sighting they continued north. **Black Terns** are unpredictable and years may pass between sightings. Two were spotted at Triadelphia on 8/11 by Jo Solem.

Examine the complete list at: <http://www.howardbirds.org/records/HowardCountyAnnualBirdList.htm>

Thanks and congratulations to all those who spent many hours scouring the county, finding birds, and sharing their sightings.

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO HCBC

THANKS TO THESE MEMBERS FOR THEIR  
GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS

#### Contributions above basic membership to HCBC

Gill Bentley	Felicia Lovelett
Scott & Dana Berglund *	Megan Lu
Susan Buswell	Anne McEvoy
Martha Chestem	Barry Miller & Michelle Stewart
Eileen Clegg	Georgia Morris *
Ralph Cullison	Howard Patterson
Robert Doyle	Russ Ruffing
John Finedore	Kurt Schwarz & Patsy Kennan
Kathryn Finegan	Richard Smith
Harry Fink	Bob & Jo Solem
Jeff Friedhoffer	Daniel & Linda Southworth
Mary Gold	Charles Stirrat
John & Meg Harris	Tom Strikwerda
Linda Hunt	Robin Todd *
Sally & Bob Kendall	Will & Robin Tress
Mike Kerwin	Sam Wilson
Kathie & Ralph Lillie	

\* Also contributed to MOS

#### Sustaining

Mark Baker  
Mike Kerwin  
Woody Merkle

## MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2016

BY KEVIN HEFFERNAN

The first half of last winter was relatively warm but Mother Nature made up for that in the second half. Winters seem to last longer these days. Well, spring is finally here and May Count is just around the corner. May Count, always the second Saturday in May, is on May 14<sup>th</sup>, which is the latest date that it can be. For beginning birders, this is an excellent opportunity to be paired with more experienced birders and to see and hear a number of both residents and spring migrants. Think warblers, vireos, thrushes, shorebirds, etc. The spring migrants are passing through headed north, the summer residents are back, and some of the winter migrants are still around. Over the last 10 years across the county, we have tallied an average of 144 species during the May Count. Last year's total was 136.

For the count, Howard County is divided into the seven areas shown on the map. Each area has an Area Coordinator (name and phone number listed below) who communicates with the counters, assigns territories, and compiles area results. If you are a beginner, ask to be paired with a more experienced birder. Since the point is to tally every individual bird, extra eyes and ears are helpful. If you want to see a particular species, give me a call (410-418-8731) and I will try to place you in a location where you would have a good chance of seeing that bird.

Area 1 Wes Earp	410-531-3197
Area 2 Tom Strikwerda	301-942-2841
Area 3 Chuck Stirrat	410-531-2417
Area 4 Mike McClure	410-531-2780
Area 5 Karen Heffernan	443-857-1789
Area 6 To be determined	
Area 7 John McKittrick	410-997-3122

At the end of the day, all of the counters are invited to a tally rally at Linda Hunt's house (Note: this is a change from last year) to share what was seen and come up with the county totals. It is a great op-

portunity to relax, swap stories of the day, and find out what everyone else has seen. (Directions to Linda's house will be provided by the area coordinators.) Please contact Linda in advance (raven10322@hotmail.com or 410-733-5255) to let her know how many are coming from your party and your choice of food or beverage to bring. Dinner will begin at 7 p.m. and the tally will start at 8 p.m. The completed checklist must be turned in to the area coordinators at the tally rally. If you cannot make it, be sure that your checklist is delivered or is called in by 7 p.m. We will find out what rarities were seen and often go out the next day to try to relocate them.

Come join us. This is a great chance for beginning birders to see many new and beautiful species of birds as they pass through in their spring plumage.



### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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

May 26, 2016  
 Meg & John Harris  
 6400 Ripe Apple Ln  
 Columbia, MD 21044  
 (240) 755-0183  
 jaybee.harris@gmail.com  
 mctharris@gmail.com

**THE HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB  
 WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS,  
 FEBRUARY 1-MARCH 31, 2016**

Bonnie Bezula  
 Susan Bishop  
 Mary Lou Clark  
 Joyce Duffy-Bilanow & Steve Bilanow  
 Donald & Ann Howell  
 Mary Love  
 Lisa Troutman



## HOWARD COUNTY MID-WINTER COUNT, FEBRUARY 6, 2016

BY JOE HANFMAN

A cold and overcast day with temperatures 22 – 41° F. The reservoir and ponds were 90% iced over and rivers were ice free. We recorded 87 species which is three below the average of the last 30 years and the same number as 2015. The total number of individual birds was 24,812 which is 28,071 below the average and the second lowest number ever recorded. It is also 140,088 below the maximum number of birds recorded.

A Baltimore Oriole found at a Columbia feeder was only the second time one was seen on the count. Common Ravens are becoming more common and one was found for the fourth time and now three years in a row.



Baltimore Oriole by Kevin Heffernan  
Lake Elkhorn -Feb. 13, 2015

All time high counts were recorded for Wild Turkey (32), Bald Eagle (28), Cooper's Hawk (15), Wilson's Snipe (8), and American Robin (2,681).

All-time low counts were recorded for Canvasback (1), Rock Pigeon (116), Mourning Dove (390), Belted Kingfisher (5), American Crow (958), Brown Creeper (3), European Starling (2,325), and House Sparrow (258).

Fifty-four of the 87 species tallied have been seen on all 30 Mid-winter Counts. Seventy-eight of the 87 species tallied have been seen on at least 50% of all 30 Mid-winter Counts.

The birds that have been seen on more than half of the counts but missed this year were Snow Goose, Mute Swan (not expected), Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Redhead, Lesser Scaup, Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Harrier, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Eastern Phoebe, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Gray Catbird. This was the only year that Herring Gull has been missed.

Many people contributed to the success of the day. Sixty-one observers spent 190.8 hours and covered 124.2 miles on foot and 527.6 miles by car. Another 3.8 hours were spent feeder watching, plus 4.7 hours stationary and 3.8 hours of owling.

Chuck Stirrat updated the taxonomic order, summarized the area worksheets, and provided field and feeder checklists. Area leaders arrange coverage, do follow-up if necessary, and compile area totals. Their names are in boldface below (*anyone who counted in more than one area or also at a feeder is listed just once*). Once again, we thank Karen and Jeff Culler for generously serving as hosts for the tally and welcoming us to their home.

Land permission from Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and many private property owners assure good coverage—we are extremely grateful.

Observers: *Area 1.* **Mark Wallace, Wes Earp**, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Trish Cope, Sue Earp, Toni Evans, Ron Griffin, Woody Merkle, Robert Ringler, Jay Sheppard, Marcy Stutzman, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts; *Area 2.* **Ward Ebert**, Michael O'Sullivan, Peter Osenton, Tom Strikwerda, Patricia Van de Velde, Paul Zucker; *Area 3.* **Joe Hanfman**, Jeff and Karen Culler, Ralph Cullison, Mary Erickson, Steven Jones, Russ Ruffing, Will & Robin Tress; *Area 4.* **Mike McClure**, John Harris, Mike Kerwin, Mike Leumas, Grazina McClure. *Area 5.* **Karen & Kevin Heffernan**, Meg Harris, Clayton Koonce, Nancy Magnusson, Howard Patterson, David Smith, Ginny Walker; *Area 6.* **Chuck Stirrat**, Richard Orr, Anthony VanSchoor. *Area 7.* **Kurt Schwarz**, Dennis Coskren, David Cummings, Ed Huestis, Margaret Kraak, Allen Lewis, John McKitterick, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Jo & Bob Solem, Eva & August Sunell, Jim Wilkinson

Howard County Mid-Winter Count - February 6, 2016			
	Totals		Totals
Cackling Goose	1	Downy Woodpecker	168
Canada Goose	7,021	Hairy Woodpecker	29
American Wigeon	3	Northern Flicker	94
American Black Duck	12	Pileated Woodpecker	40
Mallard	305	American Kestrel	8
Northern Pintail	2	Merlin	1
Canvasback	1	Blue Jay	470
Ring-necked Duck	69	American Crow	958
Bufflehead	7	Fish Crow	183
Hooded Merganser	32	<i>crow species</i>	805
Common Merganser	148	Common Raven	1
Ruddy Duck	3	Horned Lark	74
Wild Turkey	32	Carolina Chickadee	421
Double-crested Cormorant	1	Tufted Titmouse	421
Great Blue Heron	9	White-breasted Nuthatch	178
Black Vulture	229	Brown Creeper	3
Turkey Vulture	248	Winter Wren	6
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	28	Carolina Wren	220
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	Golden-crowned Kinglet	22
Cooper's Hawk	15	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	84	Eastern Bluebird	360
Red-tailed Hawk	56	Hermit Thrush	13
<i>buteo species</i>	1	American Robin	2,681
American Coot	1	Brown Thrasher	1
Killdeer	2	Northern Mockingbird	121
Wilson's Snipe	8	European Starling	2,325
American Woodcock	5	Cedar Waxwing	21
Ring-billed Gull	286	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	24
<i>gull species</i>	23	Eastern Towhee	32
Rock Pigeon	116	American Tree Sparrow	6
Mourning Dove	390	Chipping Sparrow	6
Eastern Screech-Owl	2	Field Sparrow	56
Great Horned Owl	10	Savannah Sparrow	30
Barred Owl	6	Fox Sparrow	9
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Song Sparrow	313
Belted Kingfisher	5	Swamp Sparrow	10
Red-headed Woodpecker	2	White-throated Sparrow	959
Red-bellied Woodpecker	220	White-crowned Sparrow	30
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	21	<i>sparrow species</i>	21
	<b>Totals</b>		<b>Totals</b>
Dark-eyed Junco	1,195		
Northern Cardinal	693		
Red-winged Blackbird	1,114		
Eastern Meadowlark	1		
Common Grackle	134		
Brown-headed Cowbird	211		
<i>blackbird species</i>	8		
Baltimore Oriole	1		
House Finch	371		
Purple Finch	3		
Pine Siskin	33		
American Goldfinch	259		
Evening Grosbeak	1		
House Sparrow	258		
<b>Total Birds:</b>	<b>24,812</b>		
<b>Total Species:</b>	<b>87</b>		
<b>Deer Seen:</b>	<b>138</b>		
		<b>Supplemental Data</b>	<b>Totals</b>
		<b>Time Start:</b>	5:35 a
		<b>Time Stop:</b>	11:45 p
		<b>Hours on Foot:</b>	140.9
		<b>Hours by Car:</b>	49.9
		<b>Miles on Foot:</b>	124.2
		<b>Miles by Car:</b>	527.6
		<b>Hours Feeder Watching:</b>	3.8
		<b>Hours Stationary:</b>	4.7
		<b>Hours "Owling":</b>	3.8
		<b>Miles "Owling":</b>	8.7
		<b>Total Field Obs.:</b>	59
		<b>Total Field Parties:</b>	44
		<b>Total Feederwatchers:</b>	2
		<b>Total Feederwatch Parties:</b>	2
		<b>Total Observers:</b>	61
		<b>Total Parties in Area:</b>	46
		<b>Total Field Pty-Hrs (Reg.):</b>	190.8
		<b>Total Party-Hrs (Feeder):</b>	3.8
		<b>Total Pty-Hrs (Stationary):</b>	4.7
		<b>Total Party-Hrs (Owling):</b>	3.8
		<b>Total Party-Hours:</b>	203.1
			<b>Totals</b>



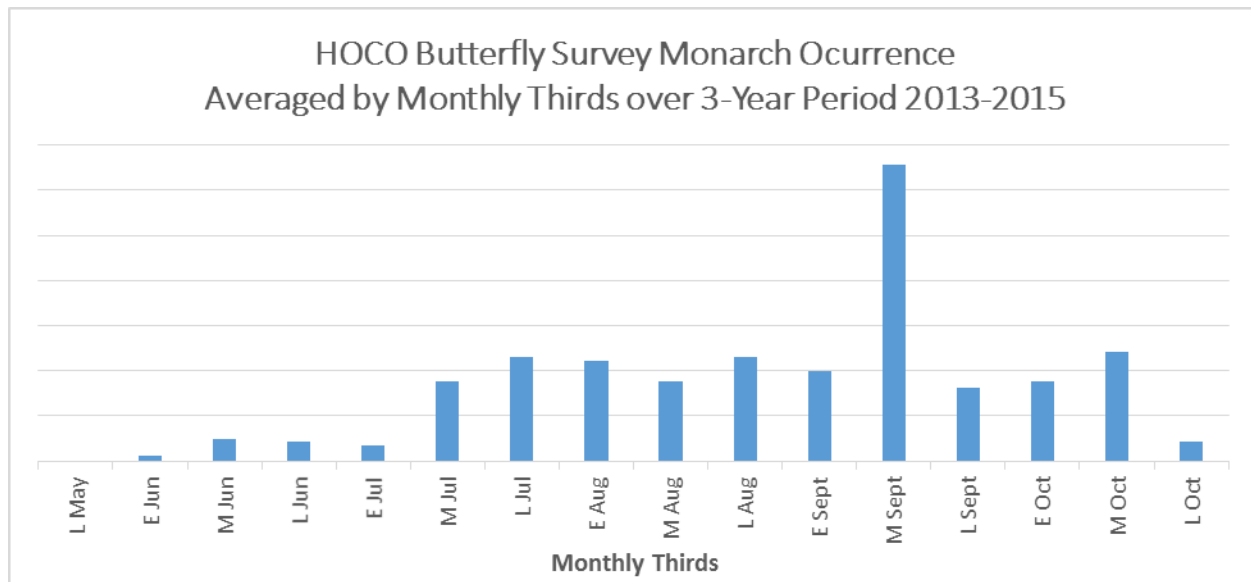
## 2016 BUTTERFLY SURVEY OPPORTUNITIES

BY LINDA HUNT

We are entering our third year with the butterfly survey. Monarch, garden, and park surveyors are needed!

Over the past three years we have surveyed over 30,000 individual butterflies documenting 73 of the approximately 76 species that might still occur in Howard County. During this time over 30 "incidental" and "official" surveyors contributed sightings from over 25 different locations. Surveyors documented the existence of over a dozen rare/unusual species, established some species/host plant preferences, and contributed information documenting species brood/flight cycles for the Howard County Piedmont area.

The graph below shows the average Monarch count per survey site for each monthly third from late May to late October. The averages were calculated from data for all HCBC survey sites over the three-year period 2013-2015. The high count in mid-September is from individuals that were passing through during the Monarch peak fall migration. Counts during other monthly periods were from either early or late migrants (late summer and fall only) or from non-migrating residents.



Based on the information from these past surveys, this year we hope to involve:

more **garden surveyors** (to document the effects of more gardeners planting native and pollinator preferred plants);

a few **people surveying patches of milkweed for Monarch caterpillars, chrysalises, and of course, adults** (to better document Monarch presence in Howard County);

and more **surveyors covering some butterfly "hot spots"** that during the survey for the past three years have only been surveyed on a "hit or miss" basis (to determine the presence of rare/unknown species as well as the density of more common species).



Monarch  
by Bonnie Ott  
HC Conservancy-August 2010



Monarch Caterpillar by Bonnie Ott  
Fox Chase-Sep. 2013



Monarch Chrysalis by Annette Allor  
Lake Elkhorn Plots-Sep. 2012



## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

P. O. BOX 1323

COLUMBIA MD 21044-1323

### May/June 2016 - Inside This Issue

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Spring Field Trips	Hawk and Owl Drama
Dragonfly Count	2015 Annual List
Member Contributions	May Count
New Members	Mid-winter Count
Butterfly Surveys	Potluck Thanks

## POTLUCK THANKS

BY KATHIE LILLIE

The 2016 Annual Potluck Dinner took place March 19<sup>th</sup>, and I wish to thank Bird Club members, guests, and the Robinson Nature Center staff for their support, even if not everyone was able to attend the actual event. 'Twas the last day of winter, complete with both snow and rain, and 32 people came out to socialize and share dinner dishes and desserts, including a castle-shaped cake that sort of exploded chocolate! Many thanks to Ward Ebert for arriving early and setting up the electrical cords, and the RNC staff for setting up the tables and chairs – in fact, several times as more people arrived. Many Bird Club members generously helped

with the set-up and take-down, which really helped the event to flow smoothly. Thank you to John and Meg Harris and Bonnie Ott for donating the very special and beautiful door prizes this year, and the lucky winners who took them home. Thank you to everyone who contributed their photos to the “slide” show, the highlight of the evening, and to John McKitterick for navigating the equipment and coordinating the show. So much birding now includes photography, and we got to see many fine photographs, too numerous to name all, but including a beautiful Mountain Bluebird, Black Kites in Germany, and a very cool-looking Potoo.