



# 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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### King Eider

First Howard County Record  
Found by Russ Ruffing  
Triadelphia Reservoir, 12/16/17



photos by Kevin Heffernan

Thursday, March 8, 2018 “The Azores and Madeira Islands: Endemics and Island Beauty,” by Phil Davis. Phil has long been fascinated by these islands as stepping stones for vagrant European and African rarities arriving in North America. Phil and his wife, Barbara, traveled to the islands in 2104 and returned two years later to lead a group of birders on a grand tour of seven islands. This will be a multimedia presentation focusing on endemic species and the overall beauty and culture of these infrequently visited islands. Phil has served as secretary for the MD/DC Records Committee for more than twenty years.

Thursday, April 12, 2018 “From Mountains to Saltmarsh: Rediscovering the MOS Sanctuaries,” by Marcia Watson. MOS owns nine sanctuaries, spanning the state from Garrett County to Somerset County on the lower Eastern Shore. They are open to the public at no charge every day of the year, and represent a microcosm of the habitats for birds in Maryland. Marcia will review the history of the sanctuary program, cover some of the challenges MOS faces in managing the properties, and suggest ways interested individuals can become involved.

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. Nature Center doors unlocked at 6:45 p.m. There is no admission charge. For further information call John Harris at 240-755-0183. Website: <http://www.howardcountymd.gov/RobinsonNatureCenter>

## AUTUMN BIRD RECORDS: AUGUST 1 – NOVEMBER 30, 2017

BY JOANNE SOLEM

A season that was light on waterfowl and shorebirds produced a fine array of passerines, and, with the aid of some unusual species, made it a season to relish and remember. The highlights were many: Greater White-fronted Goose, Black Scoter, Red-throated Loon, Glossy Ibis, Stilt Sandpiper, Sedge Wren, Clay-colored Sparrow, and breeding Dickcissels—plus a continuing education in how dramatically Night Flight Call (NFC) equipment is impacting our knowledge of local bird movement.

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** appeared with hundreds of **Canada Geese** in a field on the south side of Carr’s Mill Rd, opposite Western Regional Pk on 11/1 (KS). The rolling hills and the normal daily movement of the flocks to other locations made the bird a challenge to track, but it was reported through 11/3. A lone white **Snow Goose** in a flock of 28 Canadas flew over Cavey La 10/16 (RRf). **Cackling**

(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.

### **CENTENNIAL PARK**

March 4, Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. *Meet at west end parking lot off Centennial Lane.* Easy walking around the lake on paved path. Waterfowl expected, early migrant passerines possible. Facilities available.

Leaders - Richard and Renee Peters, [Richard@rrrrpeters.org](mailto:Richard@rrrrpeters.org)

### **CENTENNIAL PARK**

March 11 Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. Daylight Saving Time starts (set clocks ahead). *Meet at west end parking lot off Centennial Lane.* Easy walking around the lake on paved path. Waterfowl expected, early migrant passerines possible. Facilities available.

Leader - Mary Lou Clark, [doctorfx\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:doctorfx_99@yahoo.com)

### **WINTER SPARROW SEARCH**

March 17, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Search the wetlands and dry fields as we look for as many sparrows as possible while looking for signs of spring. This is the peak time for singing Fox Sparrows. Waterproof boots are recommended. Facilities at some spots. Meet at the parking lot of the Howard County Conservancy.

Leader - Bonnie Ott, [sparrowdamsel@gmail.com](mailto:sparrowdamsel@gmail.com), 443-285-3302.

### **CENTENNIAL PARK**

March 18, Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. *Meet at west end parking lot off Centennial Lane.* Easy walking around the lake on paved path. Waterfowl expected, woodland trails for passerines. Facilities available.

Leaders - Karen and Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 or [KJHeff122@gmail.com](mailto:KJHeff122@gmail.com)

### **WATERFOWL SEARCH**

March 24, Saturday, 8:00 a.m., (half day). *Meet at Lake Elkhorn Broken Land Pkwy parking lot.* We'll carpool to search the Howard County waterways for ducks, grebes, mergansers and loons. Chance of an early migrant.

Leader - KurtSchwarz, 410-461-1643, [krschwal@verizon.net](mailto:krschwal@verizon.net)

### **CENTENNIAL PARK**

March 25, Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. *Meet at west end parking lot off Centennial Lane.* Easy walking around the lake on paved path. Waterfowl expected, early migrant passerines possible. Facilities available.

Leader - Mike Kerwin, [m63kerwin@verizon.net](mailto:m63kerwin@verizon.net), 410-461-2408

### **ALPHA RIDGE LANDFILL**

March 31, Saturday, half day. *Meet at Alpha Ridge Park at 7:45 a.m. to carpool to landfill.* Carpooling required. Moderate walking over hills and fields of the landfill. Vesper Sparrow and other field birds possible. Meadowlarks, kestrels, and other open country birds expected. Rarities possible. Facilities at Alpha Ridge Park.

Contact Joe Hanfman, [auk1844@gmail.com](mailto:auk1844@gmail.com), 410-772-8424.

### **SHARPS AT WATERFORD FARM**

April 7, 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 required for part of walk.

Leader - Wes Earp, [wesandsue@gmail.com](mailto:wesandsue@gmail.com), 410-531-3197

### **MT. PLEASANT FARM - HOWARD COUNTY CONSERVANCY**

April 21, Saturday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. Earth Day Walk in conjunction with the Howard County Conservancy. *Meet at parking lot near the barn.* Easy walking through the fields of Mt. Pleasant Farm. Tree lines, hedgerows and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available.

Leader - [Anthony VanSchoor, tonyvanschuur@gmail.com](mailto:AnthonyVanSchoor.tonyvanschuur@gmail.com)

### **MT. PLEASANT BEGINNERS' WALK**

April 28 Saturday, 8.00 am (2-3 hours). *Meet in parking lot.* Gentle ramble around rough pastures, brushy thickets and stream valleys. Early migrants arriving and resident birds starting to nest. Good chance for beginners to learn bird ID and habits before the spring migration brings in a profusion (= confusion) of later migrants. Facilities available.


Leaders - John Harris, [jaybee.harris@gmail.com](mailto:jaybee.harris@gmail.com), 240-755-0183) and Robin Todd, [totnesman@aol.com](mailto:totnesman@aol.com), 410-491-5333

### **WESTERN REGIONAL PARK**

May 6, Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. *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.

Leader - David Sandler, [detour65@gmail.com](mailto:detour65@gmail.com) 410-370-0747

 = Wheelchair accessible

 = 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 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 May/June 2018 issue is March 25, 2018.

Howard Patterson, *Editor*  
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

Geese were noted at four sites beginning with one at Dawn Acres, MD 144 on 11/1 (JCu, JHf), with a high of four along Carr’s Mill Rd 11/4 (JSz).

Tundra Swans are mainly November migrants with this year’s peak 11/8 to 11/11; as usual, many flocks were heard at night. The largest group of Wood Ducks was 31 on 10/20 in a pond within the Broken Land Pkwy/US 29 cloverleaf (JHf). A Gadwall appeared at Lake Kittamaquundi 10/26 (JHf); one or two continued to 11/10 (CKc). Blue-winged Teal are early migrants. Two were at Centennial Pk (CENPK) 8/24 (HPt), with a pair at Race Road Wetlands 9/27 (AVS). Somewhat surprisingly, Northern Shovelers were noted much of the season with a high of 10 at Race Rd 11/19 (DCm). A female Black Scoter at CENPK 11/9 (JCu) was one of the season’s stars.

The car-chasing Wild Turkey on Daisy Rd met an untimely end 11/17 when it was hit by a vehicle and then collected (illegally) according to a Facebook post passed along (CKc). Turkeys can turn up anywhere in the county. According to local residents, seven were present at lightly-birded Atholton Pk on 11/18 (fide EHs).

Two Horned Grebes were present on Wilde Lake 11/26 (TRc). Two Black-billed Cuckoos lingered at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA) until 9/22 (MEk). Common Nighthawks at Mt Pleasant’s (MTPLT) SkyWatch garnered attention on 8/30. Four hundred flew over at 6:20 p.m., followed by 300 at 6:45 (BO). Both groups were heading NORTHEAST. Less than a mile away on Cavey La, 122 of those birds were also noted flying in the same direction (RRf)—the largest reverse migration of this species ever recorded in the county! Chimney Swifts nested in chimneys at Wynfield Rd (RCu) and at So. Trotter Rd (WSE). The last Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were recorded at Timberleigh: a female on 10/14, a male on 10/15 (DNg). A few American Coots filtered through in November with one at CENPK 11/5 (Ke/KaHf). Rails were in short supply with one Sora at CENPK 10/21 which called in response to hand-clapping (AVS).

Among the few notable shorebirds this season was a Stilt Sandpiper at Brown’s Bridge (BRNBR) 9/9 (KHf, HPt). Two Pectoral Sandpipers were there 9/4 (DCm). An American



Stilt Sandpiper at Brown’s Bridge

by Howard Patterson

Woodcock resting on the mulch at the SkyWatch the morning of 8/26 was the most unusual bird that day (MKw). Five migratory woodcock reports were an excellent number: Granite Hill Rd (SMu) and Cavey La (RRf) on 11/4, MTPLT 11/6 (KS), River Rd/Sykesville 11/20 (FLv), and MTPLT 11/27 (RRf).

Six Bonaparte’s Gulls were spotted from Brighton Dam 11/9 (JSh); on the same date a high of 30 flew over CENPK (DSn). A Laughing Gull visited Jackson Pond briefly on 8/8 (AVS), while nine were caught over Cavey La 9/10 (RRf, JHf, HPt). Two Caspian Terns were spotted over Lake Elkhorn (LKElk) 9/5 (KS).

A distant Red-throated Loon was verified from a photo as it flew over Cavey La 11/10 (RRf). On 11/26, 59 Double-crested Cormorants were documented on Wilde Lake, an exceedingly high number for any local lake (TRc).

Autumn usually produces a maximum of one to three American Bittern reports; in contrast, the NFC setup on Cavey La recorded one on six nights in September, plus one on 10/4, and one on 11/10 (RRf). A Green Heron at Race Rd on 10/21 was the latest (CKc). Black-crowned Night-Herons were noted at four locations (none late). An adult Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was present at LKElk 8/1 (JHf). A flock of six Glossy Ibis on 8/22, seen from MD 108 west of Centennial La dropping onto Clark’s Elioak Farm, was a seasonal highlight (SE).

Bald Eagles continue to be well-reported. At least one adult continued at the U of M Central Farm so perhaps the pair will repair that nest. Eighteen migrated over Cavey La on 11/10 (RRf), an excellent count away from the reservoirs. A female No. Harrier seen in summer at Underwood Rd was recorded there again 8/5 (RRf). A harrier entertained observers at the SkyWatch on 10/20, interacting for some minutes with crows, alternately chasing and being chased (RCu, JS). Broad-winged Hawks began to move in earnest on 9/10 when 400 were counted over the SkyWatch (BO), but the peak wasn’t reached until almost two weeks later. On 9/22, 102 flew over the SkyWatch (DSn); on 9/23, at Meadowbrook Pk, 1,596 were counted (MKw+) and the same day 640 were tallied at the SkyWatch, both mostly during the morning (JHf, JHr+); the following day 162 spiraled over Burleigh Manor (MKw) and 25+ drifted over Stone Hill Dr (KLz). A lovely count of 21 Red-tailed Hawks at Cavey La 11/10 (RRf) portended the approaching end of raptor migration. Golden Eagles were autumn’s most exciting raptor. On the cold, blustery morning of 11/10, an immature Golden was photographed as it interacted with an immature Bald Eagle at the SkyWatch (HPt, DCm, JHr). In mid-afternoon, an adult was spotted over Cavey La (RRf)—the county’s first record of two Golden Eagles in a single day!

During the last few decades, as breeding and hunting locations for Barn Owls have dwindled, reports have dropped dramatically. This season a screaming bird was reported at Martin Rd during the night of 11/28 (JHf), while the NFC setup on Cavey La picked up single calling birds flying over on 9/7, 9/9, and 10/25 (RRf). Eastern Screech-Owls were noted at River Rd/Sykesville 9/16 (FLv), Timberleigh 11/23 (DNg), and Cavey La 11/26 (RRf).



Eastern Screech-Owl in Cavey Lane Nest Box by Russ Ruffing

**Red-headed Woodpeckers** were well-reported during the season. The pair at Fox Chase nested successfully a second time and at least one adult was still present in late November (JCu). Jeff documented the nesting with a sequence of photos: [http://www.howardbirds.org/photo\\_page/member\\_photos/RHWO\\_nesting/index.php](http://www.howardbirds.org/photo_page/member_photos/RHWO_nesting/index.php). An **American Kestrel** perched along McKendree Rd was a pleasant surprise on 10/18 (LCg); five went past the SkyWatch 9/23 (JHf, JHr+). A **Merlin** over Manahan Dr 8/13 was the third earliest ever (BO); two, on both 11/27 and 11/28 at Cavey La (RRf), were a fine number. **Peregrine Falcons** were reported from five locations including birds on three different dates at Cavey La (RRf) and one at lightly-birded Wincopin Trail 10/12 (PNm). The most stunning report was five within a few minutes at Blandair on 10/28 (two perched, three flying) (AVS).



Red-Headed Woodpecker at Fox Chase by Jeff Culler

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Cavey La 8/30 (RRf). Did the same bird remain undetected until 9/4 when it was seen again? It is likely that the latter bird was the one photographed at nearby MTPLT 9/6 (MEk). The last **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was picked up at Cavey La on 10/11 (RRf). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was reported at MTPLT 8/26 (JHf).

One was also found there on 9/10 (AVS, ph.) in the area east of the community gardens; later that day it moved to the mature conifers near the upper part of the driveway (BO; HPt) and was found there again on a field trip 9/13 (DCm+); by 9/15, it had returned to its original location (AVS). Identification was eventually verified (JHf, BHb, MHf, MLg). Another was at Cavey La 9/24 (JHf, RRf). A **Least Flycatcher** on 10/1 at Cavey La (RRf, ph.) established a new late date [9/29/72].



Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Mt. Pleasant by Anthony VanSchoor

No vireos lingered into late date territory. **Philadelphia Vireos** were reported from at least five sites from 9/3 at CENPK (KS) to 10/2 at Martin Rd (JHf).

A flock of 150 **Fish Crows** flushed from a field at Waterford Farm 11/11 (WE, JHr+). **Common Ravens** continue to be seen regularly, particularly in the northern portion of the Pataspc Valley and at Annapolis Rock. A **Bank Swallow** was spotted at Underwood Rd on 9/4 (RRf). That was also an intriguing location for **Cliff Swallows**: one on 8/5 (ALw) and six on 9/4 (RRf).

A **Sedge Wren** was photographed at MTPLT on 9/23 (DCm); another was spotted there on 10/13 (TFe). The latter bird (photo on page 5) stayed until 10/16 (JHf)—to the delight of dozens of patient birders. A **Marsh Wren** was noted near one of the ponds at Fulton schools 9/16 (KS); other singles were at MTPLT along Davis Branch 10/3 (DCm, TFe, HPt), U of M Central Farm swale 10/14 (ALw), and the front pond at Schooley Mill Park 10/15 (ALk).

The second latest record for **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was a moving target. On 10/16, one was spotted in the Mt. Hebron area (JCu), but that record didn't last. On 11/9, one was noted at Meadowbrook (JW), moving the date by several weeks. That bird hung on until 11/12 (JHr), changing the record once again.

**Eastern Bluebirds** were highly successful in a box at Talbots Ldg where a third brood was still present on 8/26 (JRGr). A



Sedge Wren at Mt. Pleasant

by Wendy Crowe

late **Veery** was recorded on 10/13 at Cavey La (**RRf-NFC**). One **Gray-checked Thrush** was seen at LKELK 9/26 (**ALw**) and several were reported from Cavey La (**RRf**); there were also a scattering of reports from MPEA, with the last heard there the morning of 10/20 (**KS, HPt**), seen and photographed that afternoon (**Ke/KaHf, JS**). Eye-opening was the fact that **NFC** equipment at Cavey La picked up nocturnal **Gray-**



Gray-checked Thrush at MPEA

by Kevin Heffernan

cheeks almost every night from 9/10–10/4 (**RRf**)! It also picked up a **Swainson's Thrush** on 8/1 (**RRf**), more than a month before the previously accepted early date [9/2/07 B. Ott/N. Magnusson]. Four **Hermit Thrushes** were present

among the pines at Annapolis Rock 11/21 (**JSh**). Eight hundred **American Robins** were counted at Blandair 11/8 (**AVS**).

Both **Gray Catbirds** and **Brown Thrashers** occasionally winter. This year, the latest autumn catbird was seen 11/26 at CENPK (**RPr, JHr+**) with the last thrasher 11/30 at Blandair (**JW**). Two flyover **American Pipits** at MTPLT 10/22 were the first of the season (**RRf+**).

By the end of autumn, there were only limited indications of boreal visitors with one **Purple Finch** spotted at MTPLT 10/30 (**JW**), one brown at Dunloggin Ct 11/19 (**KS**), and two at Twilight Ct 11/25 (**JSk**).

Warbler migration was unusually good according to a number of observers. At Stone Hill Dr, it was the best “since I began keeping records” (nearly 20 years ago) (**KLz**). On 9/1 at MPEA, 1.5 hours in the afternoon produced 15 warbler species in a flock of dozens with perhaps only half examined (**MRg**).

A lingering **Worm-eating Warbler** was noted at MPEA on 9/16 (**KS**). **Orange-crowned Warbler** dates were consistent with their normal late migration: LKELK 10/26 (**JHf**), MTPLT 11/5 (**NTe**), and Meadowbrook 11/11 (**BO**). A **Northern Waterthrush** at MTPLT 8/19 was the third earliest (**Hpt**). The final **Blue-wingeds** were both reported on Fall Count 9/16: Blandair (**AVS**) and Western Regional Pk (**B/GHi**). Although it is hard to tell when fall migration begins for some scattered locally breeding species, the **Black-and-white Warbler** at MTPLT 8/4 (**EHs**) did not nest there and probably had wandered from the Patapsco Valley. A **Prothonotary Warbler** was reported along Henryton Rd 8/29 (**AVS**); another was seen west of MD 97 on 9/16 (**SE**). Both locations are in the northern section of the Patapsco Valley. **Tennessees** are much more common in fall than in spring. As usual, they were seen over a long period from one at Manahan Dr 8/24 (**BO**) to one near the pond at Broken Land Pkwy/US 29 on 10/28 (**AVS**), tying the third latest record. **Connecticut** were spotted at Cavey La 9/24 (**RRf, JHf**) and at MTPLT on both 10/1 (**AVS**) and 10/15 (**THg**). Equally sought-after **Mourning Warblers** were detected at Cavey La 8/26 (**RRf-NFC**) and at Western Regional Pk 9/7 (**AVS**). The **Kentucky** at MTPLT 10/2 (**THg**) tied the latest date. A **Common Yellowthroat** at MPEA 11/5 (**JHr**) was not unexpected for this late-departing species. A late **Hooded** was tallied at Blandair 10/1 (**AVS**). An **American Redstart**, picked out at Font Hill Wetlands Park 8/29 (**NWt**), was either a post-breeding wanderer or an early migrant. A group of 35 redstarts in one tree along Edgar Rd 9/15 (**AVS**) produced a new county high, while the last one on 10/15 at LKELK (**ALw**) was the second latest record. A **No. Parula** at MTPLT 10/22 was the second latest (**RRf+**). **Magnolias** were well reported from 8/24 on Cavey La (**RRf**) to a high of 15 on 9/1 at MPEA (**MRg**), with the final one at CENPK 11/5 (**SRm, Ka/KeHf+**), for the third latest record. The first **Bay-breasted** was notched at MPEA on 9/1 (**MRg**); numbers peaked on 9/4 with two at Fox Chase (**JCu**) and one at MPEA (**J/MHr**). Seven was the season's high count of **Blackburnians** reached at MPEA 9/1 (**MRg**). **Blackpolls** slipped through from 9/1 at MPEA (**MRg**) to 10/5 at LKELK (**ALw**). Maximum **Palm Warbler** numbers of 29 easterns and

6 westerns were counted on the yearly trip to the U of M Central Farm on 10/14 (WE, JHf+). The first Canada arrived at Cavey La 8/24 (RRf) and the last skulker was reported at MPEA 9/22 (MEk). A Wilson's showed up at MPEA 9/1 (MRg), one was at MTPLT 9/23 (MEk), and one was spotted at Lake Kittamaquidi 10/26 (JHf), near the end of the normal migration period. It was not found again despite searches, but on 11/14 that bird either reappeared or a different late Wilson's was noted there (CKc). It remained until 11/18 (C/SPr). (There are a few records for this species into January.)

Twenty-four Chipping Sparrows were counted at MTPLT on 10/4 (KS). For an infrequent, hard-to-identify species, Clay-colored Sparrows were unusually cooperative. Two at MTPLT on 10/1 (BO) beat the arrival date by a day [10/2/13 - B. Ott]. At least one was seen for two months, with the final sighting 11/2 (JW), the third latest. Vespers were first detected at MTPLT 9/27 (AVS). They were also seen on 10/22 at W. Friendship Pk (JCu), 10/27 at Cavey La (RRf), and 11/11 at Waterford Farm (WE, JHr+). The final Grasshopper Sparrow of the season was picked up at MTPLT 10/29 (HPt, ALw), the second latest record. A pale Nelson's appeared in the swale at MTPLT on 10/2 (THg; DCm). A leucistic Song Sparrow with a white head at Fox Chase 10/18 (AVS) and again 11/30 (JCu) was a striking bird. As usual, Lincoln's were well-reported with the four at Meadowbrook 10/2 (BO) the high; three at MTPLT 10/3 were close behind (JHf). The high count of Swamp Sparrows was 50 at U of M Central Farm 10/14 (WE+). The spike to 70 White-throats at MTPLT 10/22 (RRf+) was an indication that winter was on its way.



Clay-colored Sparrow at Mt. Pleasant

by Bonnie Ott

Six Scarlet Tanagers were counted at Cavey La 9/10 (RRf, JHf, HPt). Four Rose-breasted Grosbeaks showed up at Martin Rd on 9/17 (JHf). The Dickcissel colony along Underwood Rd successfully produced fledglings in a second brood. On 8/5, the count was three males, two females, and three fledglings (RRf). Special thanks to Russ Ruffing and Mike Kerwin who kept close tabs on the colony through the summer and into autumn. The final four were counted as the farmer mowed his field on 9/4 (RRf, CSt, JS) bringing this memorable experience to a successful conclusion. Elsewhere, a Dickcissel was noted at MTPLT 10/20 (THg); a female was spotted at Meadowbrook 10/21 (KS); while their calls were



Juvenile Dickcissel

by Bonnie Ott

picked up the nights of 8/17 and 9/30 over Cavey La (RRf-NFC).

On 8/6 at Underwood Rd, one Bobolink was present (BO), tying the second earliest date. The high was 20+ there on 8/31 (RRf). Two Eastern Meadowlarks at Oxford Square 9/11 in the eastern part of the county were a surprise (JW). Just one was tallied at Waterford 11/11 (WE, JHf+). Four Rusty Blackbirds were picked out at

MTPLT 10/28 (NTE), and one was photographed at Elkhorn Garden Plots 11/26 (ESm). A flock of ~4,000 Common Grackles streamed over Cavey La 11/19 (RRf); likely the same flock of ~3,000 was counted over Dunloggin Ct 11/21 (KS).

Many thanks to Joe Hanfman, Nancy Magnusson, and Howard Patterson for editing this material and to Russ Ruffing for verifying early/late records.

Observers: LCG - Lisa Colangelo, JCu - Jeff Culler, RCu - Ralph Cullison III, DCm - David Cummings, SE - Sue Earp, WE - Wes Earp, MEk - Mary Erickson, TFe - Tom Feild, JGr - Jane Geuder, RGr - Ralph Geuder, MHf - Matt Hafner, JHf - Joe Hanfman, JHr - John Harris, MHR - Meg Harris, KaHf - Karen Heffernan, KeHf - Kevin Heffernan, BHi - Bill Hill, GHi - Gayle Hill, THg - Tim Houghton, BHB - Bill Hubick, EHs - Ed Huestis, MKw - Mike Kerwin, CKc - Clayton Koonce, ALw - Allen Lewis, KLz - Kathy Litzinger, ALk - Anne Looker, FLv - Felicia Lovelett, MLg - Mikey Lutmerding, SMu - Sue Muller, DNg - Diane Nagengast, BNk - Bea Newkirk, PNm - Phil Norman, BO - Bonnie Ott, CPr - Cynthia Parr, SPr - Steve Parr, HPt - Howard Patterson, RPr - Richard Peters, TRc - Tim Reichard, MRg - Matt Rogosky, SRm - Sarah Romero, RRF - Russ Ruffing, DSn - David Sandler, KS - Kurt Schwarz, JSh - Jay Sheppard, ESm - Eddie Smith, JS - Jo Solem, JSk - Jonathan Sprinkle, JSz - Jim Stasz, CSt - Chuck Stirrat, NTE - Nathan Tea, AVS - Anthony VanSchoor, NWt - Nancie Waterman, JW - Jim Wilkinson, NFC - Night Flight Call

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## MOS SCHOLARSHIPS

Heidi Osterman and Anna Schrad, both members of the Howard County Bird Club, won two of the eight Maryland Ornithological Society scholarships to the National Audubon Society's Hog Island camp in Maine. Heidi will attend Sharing Nature: an Educator's Week. Anna will attend the Field Ornithology camp. See the January/February edition of The Yellowthroat for additional information on all eight scholarship recipients.

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## ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER

Join your friends at the Club's annual potluck dinner at Robinson Nature Center on March 17, 2018. See the [January/February Goldfinch](#) for details.

## 2017 ANNUAL LIST FOR HOWARD COUNTY

BY JOE HANFMAN

**B**irders reported a total of 228 species for Howard County in 2017. This total tied the fifteenth highest total in the last 39 years. The top birds of the year were the county's fourth year for Ross's Goose, the third year for Trumpeter Swan, first ever King Eider, the third year for Swallow-tailed Kite and a bonus Snowy Owl.

Other highlights included two first cycle Iceland Gulls, five Mississippi Kites at a single location, our twelfth year for Golden Eagle, and a long-staying Clay-colored Sparrow.

166 of the 307 species that have been seen in the county, have been seen in each of the last 39 years. 216 of the 307 species that have been seen in the county, have been seen 20 or more times in the last 39 years.

Examine the complete list at [http://www.howardbirds.org/records/Howard\\_County\\_Annual\\_Bird\\_List.htm](http://www.howardbirds.org/records/Howard_County_Annual_Bird_List.htm)

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

**Trumpeter Swan**  
Sewell's Orchard Pond, 12/12/17



*by Joe Hanfman*

**Greater White-fronted Goose**  
Centennial Lake, 12/30/17



*by Joe Hanfman*

**THE HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB  
WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS,  
DECEMBER 2017-JANUARY 2018**

Judy Goldfarb  
Victoria Mannina  
Theodore Pope  
Patricia Smith  
Dave Ziolkowski

**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. If directions are required, please call the hosting board member.

March 22, 2018  
Mary Lou Clark  
5153 Morningside Ln  
Ellicott City MD 21043  
doctorfx\_99@yahoo.com  
410-465-4061

April 26, 2018, 5:00 p.m.  
Howard County Conservancy  
10520 Old Frederick Road  
Woodstock, MD 21163



## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*

P.O. Box 1323

Columbia, MD 21044-1323

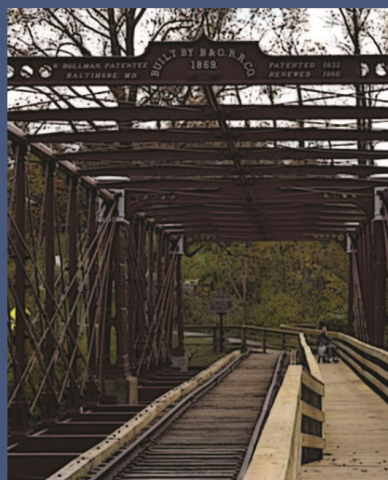
### March/April 2018 - Inside This Issue

Club Meetings  
Spring Field Trips  
2017 Annual List  
MOS Scholarships

Autumn Bird Records  
Annual Potluck Dinner  
New Member Welcome  
GreenFest

Howard County  
**GreenFest** 

Saturday, April 21, 2018  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Howard Community College  
[HCGreenfest.org](http://HCGreenfest.org)



**EXPLORE • CONNECT • ACT**