



**Howard County Bird Club**  
**A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society**  
**Board of Directors Meeting - Minutes**  
Thursday, October 26, 2023

**Attendance** [In-person presence indicated by (√), virtual attendance by (#), Voting Member by (\*)]

**2023-2024 Club Officers:**

President:\* Gregg Petersen √  
Vice-president:\* Val Swan √  
Secretary:\* Chuck Stirrat #  
Treasurer:\* Tim Thompson #  
Chap. Directors:\* Lauren McDougle (1<sup>st</sup> yr.) √  
Nancy McAllister (2<sup>nd</sup> yr.)  
State Directors:\* Donna Carollo  
John McKitterick √  
David Sandler #  
Sherry Tomlinson  
Past President:\* Mary Maxey √

**Standing Committees:**

Records:\* Jo Solem #  
Publicity/Outreach:\* Kelsey Wellons #  
Programs:\* Mary Lou Clark #  
Newsletter:\* Megan Bolcar  
Habitat:\* Sue Probst #  
Butterflies:\* Kevin Heffernan  
Field Trips:\* Joe Hanfman  
Conservation:\* Robin Todd #

**Working Groups**

Webmaster/Membership: Bob Solem √  
Potluck: Sherry Tomlinson  
BBA3: Sue Muller #

**Others:**

**General Notes**

The meeting was held in a hybrid format with the in-person portion held at the home of Mary Maxey. The total number in attendance was 15. Attendance (in person & by Zoom) at the regular club meeting held October 12, 2023 was 58 people. Larry Zoller gave a program entitled “The Wildlife of India's National Parks.”

**Officer’s Reports**

**President’s Remarks** (Petersen): Gregg said that there were three applicants for chair of the Habitat Committee interviewed by Chuck, Val, and him, and that Sue Probst was recommended as Chair of the Habitat Committee. The other two have agreed to serve on the committee. Howard County has appropriated money for decals to make the windows on the Robinson Nature Center “bird-proof;” County Council person Deb Jung (who had requested the funds be included in the appropriation) was interested in seeing that the decals were installed. On a different matter, Gregg pointed out that MOS has a Valued Service Award and indicated the criteria (attached). Gregg had forwarded the attached summary of the coin awards, with eight individuals receiving a coin since the last board meeting.

**Vice-President’s Remarks** (Swan):None

**Review of Minutes/Secretary** (Stirrat): Chuck had reported that there were a couple of corrections needed to the draft version of the minutes. The header for the list of officers at the top has been wrong for many months as it was 2020-2021. Corrected sentence that stated Gregg presented a coin to Shannon Davis at the RNC open house, to reflect it was Val who presented the coin. In a couple of places changes were made to make it clear that only “members” who attend the Beginner classes are offered the opportunity for a personal walk with a mentor, In the discussion of Waterford Flats a change was made to make it “seed mix” vice “pollinator mix” and “legumes such as white clover” vice “legumes and white clover.” In the same paragraph the correct spelling of Val’s contact’s name is “Kristal” vice “Krystal.” In the discussion of RNC windows treatment, the section was modified to reflect the request for photos to make appliques has been expanded beyond birds to include butterflies, herps, insects, and flower/plant photos, and Gregg is working with club photographers to fulfill this request with a goal of satisfying it by October 14. Lastly multiple reviewers made note that spell checker had inserted “manor” when the intent was “manner.”

The minutes were accepted as modified.

**Treasurer's Report/Treasurer** (Thompson): Tim will use his name and phone number for the Maryland retail tax exemption certificate since one is required for it to be authorized for use in purchases by the club. He indicated that the club's new accountant planned to have the Form 990s completed in a week or so. The Treasurer's Report for September is attached.

## Standing Committee Reports

**Records** (Jo Solem): Jo said she would include a link to David Ziolkowski's eBird report that he prepared after Tropical Storm Ophelia was passing in the fall season report for *The Goldfinch*. In his report was a count of over 100 White-rumped Sandpipers and high numbers of half a dozen other shorebird species. He used a panoramic photograph to obtain some of the counts. Jo's report is attached.

**Publicity/Outreach** (Wellons): Gregg complemented Kelsey's efforts to include text and photos of so many of the recent club activities.

**Programs** (Clark): Mary Lou said that attendance at the Howard Community College Sustainability Day was modest at best because of the signage and publicity. Sue was also at the table and said she did have extended conversations with some of those attending.

**Newsletter** (Bolcar): Not present. The "Mud" article in the Sep-Oct issue of *The Goldfinch* was favorably and sympathetically noted by several.

**Habitat** (Probst): There will be an emphasis on granting funds for habitat projects this next year. Val pointed out that the seed mixture used at Waterford Farm should be referred to as "herbaceous mix." See her attached report on completion of this effort. The water control structure diversion ditch has now been completed (primarily because Gregg spent time digging it). See attached report. He will now pursue discussions with Chuck Sharp opening the Flats to all MOS current members.

**Butterflies** (Kevin Heffernan): Not present; no report.

**Field Trips** (Hanfman): Not present; no report. Gregg said there is no need for a separate Education Committee since nearly all the classes/workshops held have involved outdoor birding activities and have been adequately covered by several people. Joe H. will handle coordination of these efforts in the future. Gregg suggested to Bob that he use Google doc (vice Adobe pdf) when referencing a link to a field trip/workshop (such as the Merlin Bird ID workshop) because the former is much more readable in most browsers; Bob agreed and will do so in the future. The matter of club purchase and provision of several sets of binoculars on field trips (particularly for families with young children) was brought up again. The topic was deferred to a future board meeting.

**Conservation** (Todd): No report.

## Work Group Reports

**Webmaster** (Bob Solem): Work group will be named "Webmaster/Membership." Bob reported only routine changes to the web were needed but said there were a lot of changes involving membership. Current members received an email with the link to the Nov-Dec issue of *The Goldfinch* using the proposed new email provider. Bob said the evaluation has been successful and he will switch the account to MailerLite. There have been four new members since the last report. More importantly, there have been 297 renewals, leaving 70 who have not renewed. After he receives the updated membership list from Tom Strikwerda in early November, he will forward the list of those who have not yet renewed to the Chapter Directors so they can personally email those on the list; he and the Chapter Directors will report the results at the December board meeting.

He also requested that HCBC adopt the MOS policy of providing free membership to those who have been members of MOS for 50 or more years and are currently HCBC members. Three members qualify for this. They are David Holmes, Jo Solem, and Jay Sheppard. The board moved/seconded/passed the motion.

**Potluck** (Tomlinson): Not present. The next potluck will be March 23, 2024, 6:30-9:00 p.m. and managed by Sherry and Meghaan Lane.

**Breeding Bird Atlas 3/Safe Skies** (Muller): The emphasis next year (the final year of the atlas) will be going to other counties to help in blocks where the lead coordinator has been unable to get the task done. In Howard, there will be an emphasis on owls since the safe dates will soon begin. Gregg with a very short deadline, gathered from active listers/GroupMe/butterfly surveyors a folder of pictures of wildlife to be used for the Robinson Nature Center decals. See attached.

**State Board Meeting** (Petersen, Carollo, McKitterick, Sandler, Tomlinson, Todd, etc.): There were no MOS Board meetings since our last meeting but see attachment “MOS News-2 items.” John reported that the next MOS convention will be November 22-24, 2024, in Ocean City. He also said that MOS is negotiating with a new insurance provider for liability insurance, which covers not just MOS activities but also activities of the chapters.

### **Old Business**

The RNC/HCBC MOU is still in the hands of the county lawyers and has not been finalized. [*Secretary’s note: On Friday, October 27, the MOU was signed.*] The duties of the State Directors as shown in an old MOS document have been reviewed and clarified. Responsibilities assigned to Chuck Stirrat, Joe Hanfman, and Bob Solem remain unchanged, but Gregg has assigned other duties in the report to the State Directors (such as seeking out and creating “Chapter Chatter” reports for HCBC members who make out-of-state/country birding trips). Kelsey is researching the purchase of a remote microphone linked to the camera used to create videos; she will report at the next meeting. The remote microphone/speaker used at this board meeting is acceptable and will continue to be used at future board meetings. Gregg will have information about the new organization chart (definition of responsibilities and reporting) for the December meeting.

Summary of Board Actions Taken between Regular Board Meetings: None.

### **New Business**

A request to purchase a table scarf and a tri-fold poster board for the butterfly tabling events was presented (attached). An additional request to purchase more window clings and magnets was broached (attached). These proposed expenditures were combined into a consolidated new “Improvements to club functioning” line item for \$1400 for the remainder of this fiscal year that will be added to future budget proposals. The board moved/seconded/passed the motion and indicated that the “Mountjoy Fund” should be considered the primary source of funds.

The creation of several kinds of “swag” remains under discussion; Mary Lou proposed adding a jacket to the list and Val mentioned an orange hat for visibility while birding during hunting season. These items would be provided by individual vendors (as the 50th anniversary shirts were) so that HCBC would not be responsible for handling the retail transactions. Gregg said he is considering a YMOS Western Shore Steering Committee but said this should be an MOS responsibility. Motus Wildlife Tracking System stations remain under consideration.

### **Review of Prior Action Items:**

- Review the “Duties ....” document and establish a “division of labor” – State Directors, Bob, Chuck, Joe – DONE
- Review and edit the club information card when it is sent to the board – All – ONGOING
- Recruit help for the Community College Sustainability Day and include in NEWSGRAM – Mary Lou, Bob – DONE
- Research and propose the purchase of a microphone for video recording – Kelsey – ONGOING
- Bring & test a conference speaker/microphone to the October Board meeting – Gregg – DONE
- Prepare a formal proposal on “Carbon footprint as a Birder” for consideration – Conservation Committee – ONGOING
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg – ONGOING

### **New/Continuing Action Items:**

- Review and edit the club information card when it is sent to the board – All
- Research and propose the purchase of a microphone for video recording – Kelsey
- Prepare a formal proposal on “Carbon footprint as a Birder” for consideration – Conservation Committee
- Continue to develop a detailed implementation of the restructured organization – Gregg

### **Around the Room**

Mary Lou said they will consider having a table at the Howard Community College Sustainability Day next year. Jo complimented the Waterford Flats Committee (especially Gregg) for their efforts in making the project successful. Val said she has enjoyed using “[Coffee] Beans for Birds” and recommended it.

### **Board Meeting Schedule**

Board meetings are generally held 4th Thursday of month at 7:30 PM (hybrid)

|                    |                           |   |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---|
| September 28, 2023 | - Gregg Petersen          |   |
| October 26, 2023   | - Mary Maxey              |   |
| November 2023      | - NO MEETING              | (moved to the first Thursday of December to avoid |
| December 7, 2023   | - Val Swan (Gregg absent) | Thanksgiving & even out time between meetings     |
| January 25, 2024   | - Mary Lou Clark          |   |
| February 22, 2024  | -                         |   |
| March 28, 2024     | -                         |   |
| April 25, 2024     | - John McKitterick        |   |
| May 23, 2024       | -                         | (Joint meeting with new and old members)          |

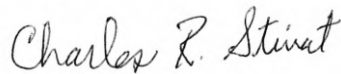
### **Attachments** (Copies of handouts provided at meeting and club correspondence filed with original minutes)

- Agenda – October 26, 2023
- Treasurer’s Report – September 1-30, 2023
- Records Committee Report, October 26, 2023 (September 26 – October 23) – Joanne Solem
- Background Paper – MOS Awards – Focus: Valued Service Award
- HCBC Coin Award Program Record – Oct. 24, 2028
- Completion of Herbaceous Buffer Plantings at Sharp’s Farm – October 7, 2023
- Waterford Flats at Sharp’s Flat Summary as of Oct. 25, 2023 – Water Control Structure Focus
- Robinson Nature Center Safe Skies Update - As of Oct 25 23
- MOS News – 2 Items
- Need for Table Scarf and Trifold for Howard Butterfly Tabling Events
- Pricing for Replacement Window Clings and Magnets

Minutes prepared by: Bob Solem:

My thanks to Bob for taking the minutes when I was only able to attend via Zoom while on vacation.

Minutes submitted by:



Charles R. Stirrat  
Secretary, Howard County Bird Club

Howard County Bird Club Board Agenda  
October 26, 2023

Topic: HCBC Board Meeting - Oct. 26 @ 7:30

Time: Oct 26, 2023 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83146569985?pwd=THdWZU1KN3VZTUlVdIBzaGFIOVpDQT09>

Meeting ID: 831 4656 9985

Passcode: 112126

**Agenda**

- **President's Remarks** – Gregg Petersen
  - 2 reminders: 9pm conclusion and 347 membership goal
  - Welcome to new Habitat Committee Chairman Sue Probst!
    - Committee Structure-Chairpersons are enablers for resource provision and focus.
  - Safe Skies Commemoration with Del Hill, Sen Lam, and County District 4 Councilmember Deb Jung
  - Appreciation Coin Update (Record attached-2)
  - Service Awards (Discussion/Criteria attached-3)
- **Vice President's Remarks** – Val Swan
- **Review of Minutes**-Bob Solem for Chuck Stirrat (minutes enclosed-4)
- **Treasurer's Report**-Tim Thompson (report enclosed-5)
  - Tax exemption phone number
  - 2021/2022 Filing correction update
- **Standing Committee Reports**
  - Records-Solem (attached-6)
  - Publicity/Outreach-Kelsey Wellons (Nothing to report...website has been VERY active!)
  - Programs-Mary Lou Clark
    - Sustainability Day at HCC
      - Needs for note pads also some items for Butterfly table set up.
  - Newsletter-Megan Bolcar (Nothing to report-good feedback on the mud article)
  - Habitat-Probst/Petersen Alpha Ridge/New Cut Update
    - Waterford Flats-Petersen
      - Seed buy and planting Val Swan update @\$600 vice \$4500 (summary enclosed-7)
      - Deck install & follow on water diversion to Horseshoe (summary enclosed-8)
  - Butterflies-Heffernan (Nothing to report)
  - Field Trips – Gregg for Joe Hanfman
    - Results of Skywatch beginner, MPEA intermediate, and Merlin classes

- Binocular resource question?
  - Possible education efforts included under this committee.
  - How do we generate more beginner and intermediate classes?
    - How many more do we need?
  - Conservation-Robin Todd (on travel)
- **Work Group Reports**
  - Webmaster/Membership – Bob Solem
  - Potluck-Sherry Tomlinson w/Meghaan Lane                      March 23, 2024
  - Safe Skies-Sue Muller
  - Breeding Bird Atlas 3 /Safe Skies-Sue Muller (Safe Skies Update-9)
- **State Board Director Reports**-New President/VP/ & validation of Past President, 2024 MOS Convention Planning (enclosed summary-10)
  - Tentatively Ocean City November 22 - 24, 2024
- **Old Business**
  - Robinson Nature Center MOU/Safe Skies-Petersen
  - Education Update-Swan/Petersen (see field trips above)
  - WSSC Access-Petersen
  - Need Hosts for Board Meetings-Petersen
    - Feb, Mar, Apr, & May open
  - State Director Task Review-State Directors
    - 2 of 4 directors responded.
    - No takers on Chapter Chatter-Russ Ruffing working on a trip summary
  - Club Information Card Update-Clark
  - Equipment needs-Kelsey Wellons
    - Microphone buy @ \$200
    - Speaker/Table mike for board zooms \$23.99
- **New Business**
  - Approve and Order Butterfly table scarf & table trifold (see enclosure-11)
    - **Total: \$420:** Up to \$120 for table scarf and \$300 for tri-fold display & bag
  - Reorder
    - **Total: \$700:** Clings & magnets (see enclosure 12)
    - Note pads.
  - Swag
    - Possible Frederick source-members order direct.
      - Baseball hats & T-shirts
      - Polo shirts
      - Other?
  - YMOS Committee Formation?
  - MOTUS Tower?
- **Review of Prior Action Items**
- **New/Continuing Action Items**
- **Around the Room**
- **Upcoming Schedule**
  - Sep 30, Safe skies event HCC on Saturday – Gregg, Val, & Kurt Schwarz attended.

- Oct 27 Beginner Trip Centennial Val Swan and Kurt Schwarz
- Oct 30 HCC Leaderless Skywatch
- Nov 1 Beginner Trip Centennial Boat Ramp Bonnie Ott
- Nov 4 Sky Watch HCC Russ Ruffing
- Nov 4 Intermediate Workshop HCC John Harris
- Nov 6 HCC Leaderless
- Nov 8 HCC Leaderless trip
- Nov 11 Beginning Birder Centennial Val Swan
- Nov 5, 12, 19, 26 Centennial Kovach, Peters, Holmes, Ziolkowski
- Dec 2 MOS Board Meeting
- **December 7 Board Meeting-Val Swan host**
  - Need hosts for highlighted HCBC Board Meetings (attendance @6-8 people)
    - (No November meeting)
    - December 7, 2023-Val Swan host (Petersen absent)
    - January 25, 2024 – Mary Lou Clark host
    - February 22, 2024
    - March 28, 2024
    - April 25, 2024
    - May 23, 2024 (Swan absent)

# Howard County Bird Club - Treasurer Report

Printed: 10/25/23 6:36 PM

Financial information for period

Starting:

1-Sep-2023

Ending: 30-Sep-2023

## Financial Account Balances

| Account              | Balance             | Net Change           | Comment         | Date |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------|
| PNC Bank             | \$3,147.22          | \$1,229.86           | See sheet below | 9/29 |
| Vanguard             | \$464,300.15        | (\$22,984.93)        | See Notes 3     | 9/30 |
| <b>Current Total</b> | <b>\$467,447.37</b> | <b>(\$21,755.07)</b> |                 |      |

## Virtual Fund Balances

### Operating Funds

| Date (Latest Update) | Fund (Code)                           | Balance     | Comment   |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|---|
| 9/30/23              | Operations Fund (O)                   | \$8,886.99  | Implied balance (Total Financial Accounts - Sum of 6 other virtual funds) |
| 5/15/23              | Habitat Fund (H)                      | \$7,846.92  | no activity   |
| 10/21/21             | Butterfly Fund (B)                    | \$740.00    | no activity   |
| 9/30/23              | Unrealized Vanguard Market Change (U) | \$22,326.30 | virtual fund tracked in the right most columns of Vanguard tab            |

### Gift Funds

|         |                         |              |             |
|---------|-------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 7/17/23 | Mountjoy Fund (M)       | \$3,068.48   | no activity |
| 6/12/23 | Chestem Estate Fund (C) | \$14,578.68  | no activity |
| 1/1/23  | Ponce Estate Fund (P)   | \$410,000.00 | no activity |

## Income Activity

1-Sep-2023

to

30-Sep-2023

| Description                               | Purpose   | Method | Amount            | Code        |
|---|---|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY Income as of Prior Report</b> |   |        | <b>\$460.00</b>   | <b>FYTD</b> |
| MOS Dues                                  | Membership Dues/Donations for May - August 2023 | Dep    | \$1,662.73        | O           |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
|   |   |        |                   |             |
| <b>Income for this Period</b>             |   |        | <b>\$1,662.73</b> |             |
| <b>Total Income - Fiscal Year To Date</b> |   |        | <b>\$2,122.73</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |

## Expense Activity

1-Sep-2023

to

30-Sep-2023

| Description                                      | Purpose   | Method           | Amount            | Code        |
|--|---|------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <b>Total FY expenses as of prior report</b>      |   |                  | <b>\$1,906.82</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
| Newsletter                                       | Brown & Associates for September-October newsletter | CK               | \$65.00           | O           |
| Honorarium                                       | Speaker Honorarium September Program                | CK               | \$100.00          | O           |
| Gregg Petersen                                   | Refreshments for Fall Count tally rally             | CK               | \$267.87          | O           |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
|  |   |                  |                   |             |
| <b>Expenses for this Period</b>                  |   |                  | <b>\$432.87</b>   |             |
| <b>Total Expenses - Fiscal Year To Date</b>      |   |                  | <b>\$2,339.69</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |
| SEE note 2                                       |   |                  |                   |             |
| <b>Income over Expenses for Club Fiscal Year</b> |   | 5/1/23 - 4/30/24 | <b>(\$216.96)</b> | <b>FYTD</b> |



**Additional Remarks/Comments:**

1. The Operating Income/Expense Report includes transactions from the Operations Fund, Habitat Fund, and Butterfly Fund. Transactions for the three Gift/Investment Funds, if any, are reported separately below.

2. Club Fiscal Year is May 1 - Apr 30.

3. Net monthly change of Vanguard account is net of

o No dividend for VESGX

o Month dividend from VMFXX \$178.67

o Month **decrease** in market value of VESGX (Global ESG Select Admiral Fund) **-\$23,163.60**

**4. Vanguard Performance To Date**

o Total Deposits since established \$ 440,000.00

o Total Account Balance as of 9/30/2023 \$ 464,300.15 (including unrealized market changes)

Note 3 is updated with September data

**Gift Funds Activity**

1-Sep-2023

to

30-Sep-2023

**Mountjoy Fund Transactions**

No Activity

**Chestem Fund Transactions**

No Activity

**Ponce Fund Transactions**

No Activity.

**Compute PNC Net Change**

Current Balance

\$3,147.22

Prior Month Balance Net Change

\$1,917.36

Manual Entry Required from Prior Month Statement

\$1,229.86

## Records Committee Report, October 26, 2023 (September 26 – October 23) – Joanne Solem

As detailed in the September report, the first half of the fall season was memorable; fortunately, good birding continued.

Generally, waterfowl were limited in numbers and variety. A few migrant flocks of Canada Geese were detected in early October, but peak numbers are still building. Green-winged Teal peaked at 39 on 10/15 at Triadelphia Reservoir, one of the highest-ever counts.

Chimney Swifts were noticed roosting in several chimneys. The high count of 220 occurred on 9/27 at Triadelphia. The last swift was spotted on the relatively early date of 10/11 at Wilde Lake.

The last Ruby-throated Hummingbird to date was visiting flowers in an Allview yard on 10/19. Only an occasional straggler is likely to be reported during the remainder of the month. One of the season's best sightings was a *Selasphorus sp.* hummingbird, probably a Rufous, but, without multiple excellent photos or banding, there is no way to be sure. It was seen 9/15-16 at a private residence one-half mile from last year's Woodmark location.

Two flyover Sandhill Cranes midday at Mt. Pleasant 10/17 were among the notable autumn species.

No shorebird reports this month approached the extraordinary numbers and variety at the Triadelphia mudflats (Big Branch/Pigtail) earlier in the fall. When the September report was written, Dave Ziolkowski had not yet provided totals for the two late afternoon hours he spent at the flats on 9/24, as Tropical Depression Ophelia was moving out of the state. Rain showers alternating with partial clearing produced the kind of jaw-dropping numbers for several species not likely to be recorded again for many years. Flocks of migrating shorebirds dropped in and departed, sometimes after only a brief stay. The September summary noted that 25 White-rumped Sandpipers and 81 Pectorals were all-time highs. Dave's careful counts based on multiple wide-angle photographs altered those numbers to an eye-popping 107 White-rumped and 172 Pecs! This was in addition to 10 Black-bellied Plovers, 7 American Golden-Plovers, 1 Sanderline, 1 Baird's, and some more expected shorebird species. Intriguingly, there was just one Least! Sandpiper present (normally one of our most common peeps). When writing the fall records article for the Goldfinch, I intend to include a link to Dave's checklist. His careful written documentation and multiple photos capture the flavor of this unusual experience. If you had not been aware of the central role weather plays in these rare fallouts, Dave's checklist will enlighten you.

At this time, I have no specifics of the Barn Owl listed as a late September eBird entry, other than it was a flyover reported by two experienced observers.

Marsh Wrens were tallied at four sites, a bit above average. Gray-cheeked Thrushes were reported from about a dozen locations, all numbers were in the very low single digits. Although there may be some good boreal flights later in the season, to date only a few birds have arrived or passed through although sightings are increasing.

At Mt. Pleasant, a Clay-colored Sparrow was photographed or well-described in each of the fall months. Vespers began appearing in mid-October; quite likely, there are more to come. Howard County's reputation for harboring numerous Lincoln's remains secure with a peak count of 12 at Mt. Pleasant on 10/4.

Bobolink were never detected in substantial numbers. Rusty Blackbirds began arriving in mid-October with two reports, both of four birds.

The modest fall warbler migration peaked from the end of September into early October. An Orange-crowned and several Connecticuts were tallied, Palm number were rising by mid-October with 18 at Meadowbrook Park 10/18 and 17 at Alpha Ridge Landfill 10/19.

## Background Paper-MOS Awards

### Focus: Valued Service Award

The following text lifted from the MOS website:

*The MOS has three primary award certificates:*

**1. *The Valued Service Award:* This is our **formal certificate**. It's usually given to someone for outstanding sustained performance in some role or capacity. It has an embossed MOS gold seal in the lower middle center of the certificate. It is presented in an elegant dark-blue presentation folder with the MOS seal in gold on the front. **The award is accompanied by a "Valued Service Award" lapel pin.****

**2. *The Attagirl/Attaboy Award:*** A light-hearted certificate. Usually, it is awarded for performance over a short period of time, and given to recognize hard work, perhaps at a new job, or for a specific task well done. It is usually (but not always) presented in an acrylic "sign holder."

**3. *The Blood, Sweat and Tears Award:*** This is a humorous certificate that recognizes someone who rolled-up their sleeves and tackled a hard, gritty, unglamorous job. It's a comical certificate, torn, stained, and wrinkled. It is usually (but not always) presented rolled-up in an MOS coffee mug and tied with a strip of frayed bandana.

#### **General Criteria (inferred-not explicit in the above published MOS criteria on the website):**

1. People that have consistently contributed to club activities over a long period.
2. "Long" interpreted to mean being an active, contributing member for approximately 8-10 years or more.
3. Does not have to be given each year.
4. Given at the chapter president's discretion.
5. **Usually**, no more than 2 are given each year.

#### **(Known) Prior Howard County Bird Club Winners:**

Eileen Clegg 1981/82; Joanne Solem 1981/82; Martha Chestem; Jane (Farrell) Coskren; Mike McClure Bonnie Ott 2004; Anne Marie Raterman 2006; Chuck Stirrat 2006; Bob Solem 2013; Jane Geuder 2019; Kevin Heffernan 2021; David Holmes 2022; Kurt Schwarz 2022.

#### **President's Goal for 23-24 year:**

1. Consider 2 for award at the April '24 meeting.
2. Submit nominations by the December meeting directly to the President for consideration.
3. Depending on number of nominations, a small committee may be convened at President's discretion to decide recipients.
  - a. Committee composition will consider use of prior recipients of this award.

## Howard County Bird Club Coin Award Record

1. Chuck Sharp 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
2. Wes Earp 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
3. Jo Solem 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
4. Russ Ruffing 8/12/23 Chestem Ceremony by Gregg
5. John Harris 8/31/23 Bird walk by Chuck
6. Meg Harris 8/31/23 Bird walk by Chuck
7. Dave Ziolkowski 9/2/23 Nighthawk watch by Gregg
8. Mary Lou Clark 9/9/23 Bird Walk by Chuck
9. Roshan Vignarajah 9/14/23 by Gregg
10. Peter Kaestner 9/14/23 Club Meeting by Gregg
11. Kimberly Kaestner 9/14/23 Club Meeting by Gregg
12. Kate Tufts 9/15/23 Home Visit by Gregg
13. Chuck Stirrat 9/16/23 Fall Count Potluck by Gregg
14. Sue Probst 9/16/23 by Fall Count Potluck by Gregg
15. Manager Shannon Davis 9/24/23 Robinson Nature Center Open House by Val
16. Maryland State Delegate Terri Hill HCC Safe Skies Legislation Event 9/30/23 by Val
17. Maryland State Senator Clarence Lam HCC Safe Skies Legislation Event 9/30/23 by Gregg
18. Jeff Swan 10/5/23 at Sharp's Farm water structure final installation by Gregg
19. Larry Zoller 10/12/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
20. Sue Muller 10/12/23 at HCBC meeting by Gregg
21. Bonnie Ott 10/18/23 at Beginner Bird Walk by Val
22. Steve Luke 10/21/23 at Merlin Class by Gregg
23. Lauren McDougale 10/21/23 at Merlin Class by Gregg

## Completion of Herbaceous Buffer Plantings at Sharp Farm October 7, 2023

**From:** Val Swan

**Sent:** Saturday, October 7, 2023 11:08 AM

**To:** GREGG PETERSEN; Earp, Wes & Susan; Russ Ruffing; David Sandler; Mary Maxey; Jo & Bob Solem; Charles Stirrat; Val Swan

**Subject:** Completion of Herbaceous Buffer Plantings at Sharp Farm

Hi All,

Here is the update concerning the planting of 2 permanent herbaceous buffers surrounding the Waterford Shorebird Flats.

Chuck Sharp enrolled and was accepted into the MD Dept of Agriculture's, MD Conservation Buffer Incentive Program, Grass Buffers on Watercourses. Mark Fiely and Gabrielle Saulsberry from Ernst Seed Co. along with Wes Earp recommended planting MD Lower Midland FACW Mix- Ernst 723 seed mix, consisting of 85% perennial grass and 15% perennial wildflowers, which is compatible with the soil conditions and our goals. However, to meet the AG program requirement of planting 75% perennial grass and 25% legume, Kristal McCormick, from the Howard Conservation Soil District in partnership with USDA, recommended a modification by adding appropriate amounts of Bromegrass and pre-innoculated white clover, both approved by the MD Dept. of Agriculture's program.

Two plots were seeded surrounding the flats to create permanent herbaceous buffers. The first plot, approximately 3/4 of an acre, between the flats and the lower pond, was planted with the Ernst, bromegrass, clover 75%/25% mix. The land was disced, then seeded with a cultipacker, using multiple passes to ensure good soil contact and seed packing. This was done in the ideal window for Fall planting, just prior to some rain, on a non-windy day. All of the seeds were passing well through the seed box, including any "fluffy" ones.

There was concern about pre-emergent herbicide application in early Spring of 2023 to the 2nd, 6 acre plot, which prompted a different planting. Chuck tested multiple soil samples from the 6 acres and determined that bromegrass would indeed germinate. He also stated that, "planting restrictions warn of worst case scenarios". This plot was planted with 75% Bromegrass and 25% white clover, except for a smaller strip, closer to the flats, which was planted with the Ernst, brome, clover mix.

The cost of the Ernst mix, with shipping, was \$608.89. We now have a tax free account with them, under MOS/Val Swan. The clover was tax free, \$21.49 at Sykesville Southern States, and \$76.19 at Mt. Airey Southern States, where I paid \$4.31 in taxes, rather than wait a day for a manager. Chuck paid for all of the bromegrass.

Many thanks, Val

**Waterford Flats at Sharp's Farm Summary  
as of October 25, 2023  
Water Control Structure Focus**

**Subject: Waterford Flats Water Control Structure Installation Project Summary and Picture Gallery**

In early August 2022, when I was birding at Sharp's Farm, Chuck Sharp stopped to tell me that the bird club had one last project to build as part of the Waterford Flats project. He said he thought it took about \$1000 and just needed a few people for a day or two to get it done to Wes Earp's specifications before the end of September 2022 when his fall tourist season started. 15 months later on Thursday, Jeff Swan helped me complete what we think was one of the last tasks: to swap out the slotted drain pipe for the winter to cause water to flow to the left or north of the flats to form a duck pond at the "Horseshoe" for the winter.

Because of the especially difficult task to free the old pipe had eluded us for 3 days, Jeff Swan, Val's husband, a non-bird club member, volunteered to help me get the slotted pipe swapped out for a solid one. We were successful, resulting in Jeff being awarded a coin and what I think was our final task to complete. Chuck Sharp told me he would consider opening the flats to all MOS birders on completion of this project. So I will be talking to him about this possibility before our next board meeting.

Participants in the work tasks over the 15 months: Waterford Flats Committee Chair Russ Ruffing, Original WF Committee Chair and structure designer Wes Earp, WF committee members David Sandler and Gregg Petersen, HCBC Secretary Chuck Stirrat, and Jeff Swan.

There is a 46-picture gallery at this link that is numbered chronologically from start to finish. Bob, you can pull whatever photos you need for the website... I thought 46 photos were a bit much. I will share the link with the board for the meeting later this month. Kelsey you may want to use the picture of Jeff with his coin.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1\\_SJ7YNe6N3FRiXMaZ4o4vpJMfOGdQeP6?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_SJ7YNe6N3FRiXMaZ4o4vpJMfOGdQeP6?usp=sharing)

We may need to do other tasks and make other investments to make the flats viable for shorebirds in the future, but I thought I would share this archive for your and the board's information.

R/, Gregg Petersen  
President, HCBC

**Update on October 14, 2023**

**From:** sig29@aol.com <sig29@aol.com>

**Date:** Saturday, October 14, 2023 at 7:36 AM

**To:** David Sandler <detour65@gmail.com>, Russ Ruffing <russruffing@gmail.com>, Mary Maxey <maximom11998@gmail.com>, Val Swan <valnjeff55@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Wes Earp <wesandsue@gmail.com>, Charles Stirrat <stirrcr1@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Waterford Flats Update: "Groundhog Week"

A quick summary of this week for the Flats Committee information. Russ has been in the loop all week and I talked to Wes on Tuesday.

I thought we were done when Jeff Swan helped me place a solid pipe in place of the slotted one last week. However, when we completed that action, we could still hear some water flowing into the 8" culvert that drains to the big pond—perhaps at the connecting seam between the structure and the culvert. So essentially, the water was not blocked enough to flow up and around the structure, and then down the hill.

Monday...Chuck Sharp wants to wet down the "Horseshoe" to the north of Waterford Flats where he grew a stand of corn and there was very little water flowing past the water structure down the hill on the north or left side as you face downhill.

Tuesday, I replaced a pipe in the pool of water next to the water structure (to the south) to stop water flowing from the 4 inch pipe into the big pond over the flats (we had pulled the pipe when we did the initial installation/draining for the water structure). There was a large amount of water that had been draining through the 4" pipe to the large pond—that drainage stopped immediately. I hoped that perhaps that water in the pool would then rise, flow to and past the water structure and down the hill on the north side. I made a mark on the upright pipe to see if the water in the pool next to the water structure was rising.

Nope. On Wednesday, Chuck Sharp sent a text to Russ and I saying that water was still trickling out of the 8 inch culvert into the pond over the flats and very little was going down to the Horseshoe. The water had not risen and overflowed the pool next to the water structure as I had hoped.

Thursday... Water had not routed up or around the water structure and downhill. I decided to at least temporarily route the water away from the structure to flow downhill. After the diversion, more water was flowing downhill while the water around the structure drained and lowered the level in the structure excavation. A trickle of water continues to flow through the 8" culvert into the pond.

Friday....I talked to Chuck Sharp and he said that while some water was now flowing down toward the Horseshoe, but it was still a "trickle". The last area to influence flow down the hill was to undo the diversion up the hill we made when we removed the old structure... so called "Dam Which Must Not Be Named". It was hard to find in the long grass, but I found it and the water flow now is back on its original course away from the pool next to the structure and downhill on the north side of the water structure. As I left, I checked the water flow at the diversion pipe all the way down the hill by the under road culvert next to the flats. There was an audible and visible flow of water-progress. It was too soon to see the full results of me undoing the diversion up the hill but there are no other readjustments I know to make from our initial install.

Saturday...rain predicted. I may look at the bottom of the hill to see if the flow is stronger from yesterday's efforts.

R/, Gregg

**Robinson Nature Center Safe Skies Update  
As of Oct 25 23**

**From:** Wilder, Jaimie <jwilder@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 9:59 AM  
**To:** sig29@aol.com <sig29@aol.com>  
**Cc:** Davis, Shannon <shdavis@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** RE: Safe Skies Timeline Update?

Morning, Gregg!

I've included an outline below of the next steps and my time estimates. Of course, please relay the message that the actual timing is variable with approval, production, shipping, etc. The photos have been fantastic, and I am blown away by the talent and passion they translate to. I will be keeping you updated as we move forward and appreciate your patience and support!

1. 10/26 Confirm with staff final design arrangement/photo selection. Education, rentals, maintenance, conservation, and overall interpretation teams will be present to decide
  1. Ensure approval obtained by Shannon and HCRP Superintendent if required
  2. Review with Gregg to ensure photo credits
2. 10/27 submit designs and photos to Feather Friendly and CollidEscape to receive production quotes
  1. Share quotes with HoCo Bird Club and Safe Skies to discuss allocation of funds
3. By 11/2 submit designs to winning company to begin production
  1. Obtain approval from Shannon
4. Production is estimated at 2-3 weeks for either company
5. Installation goal is *early December*. This timeline does account for the best temperatures for application being around 50 degrees F
6. Unveiling/celebration/dedication and all other exciting bits- TBD

Once I receive some real numbers from the companies to review- then we'll really be up and running!

Looking forward to touching base once our designs have been selected and approved!  
Jaimie

Jaimie Wilder (*She/Her*), CPP  
Development & Exhibits Specialist  
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[jwilder@howardcountymd.gov](mailto:jwilder@howardcountymd.gov)  
410-313-0672 (Direct)  
410-313-0400 (Front Desk)  
♻️ I took the EcoPledge 2023



**From:** sig29@aol.com <sig29@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023 7:59 PM  
**To:** Wilder, Jaimie <jwilder@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Cc:** Davis, Shannon <shdavis@howardcountymd.gov>  
**Subject:** Safe Skies Timeline Update?  
**Importance:** High

Good evening, Jaimie!

I have a bird club board meeting Thursday night. All the photos we agreed upon plus others that made sense were placed in the google drive folder as you requested by the 14<sup>th</sup>.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RdewFwS0KyH8o0hEPL1ALTadA31064fO?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RdewFwS0KyH8o0hEPL1ALTadA31064fO?usp=share_link)

Is or are there any other supporting actions we can help you on?

And of course, what is the timeline leading to the art selection, covering purchase, and the ultimate goal: the installation? Could you give me your best estimates on those milestones that I can share with the board on Thursday night please?

R/, Gregg

[Gregg Petersen](#)

President, [Howard County Bird Club](#)

Development Committee Chairman, [Lake Michigan Bird Observatory](#)

Class Agent, [Ripon College](#) Class of '78

Quarterly Water Quality Monitor, [Nature Forward](#)

Watershed Report Card Macroinvertebrate Instructor, [Howard County Conservancy](#)

Aquatic Ecology Instructor, [Maryland Master Naturalist](#) Curriculum

Macroinvertebrate Docent, [Robinson Nature Center](#)

Cell: 202-256-8166

## MOS News-2 Items

### 1. New MOS Vice President: Steve Sheffield

**From:** John McKitterick <john.mckitterick@mdbirds.org>

**Date:** Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 10:46 AM

Dear MOS Board members,

Thanks to your rapid response, the quorum of positive votes by 1/3rd of the Board has been reached: **Steve Sheffield has been approved as vice president and John McKitterick has been re-confirmed as past president.** We understand that the percentage of voters might be higher had we presented a list of several candidates, but that was not the point. These 2 posts really needed to be filled and we had to follow the bylaws of MOS. You will meet Steve at the December Board meeting, we are thankful to him for offering his candidacy, and I am very thankful to John for continuing his essential support.

Evelyn Ralston

President, Maryland Ornithological Society

[President@mdbirds.org](mailto:President@mdbirds.org)

### 2. Planning for 2024 MOS Convention:

**From:** Meg Harris <meg.harris@mdbirds.org>

**Date:** Monday, October 23, 2023 at 4:03 PM

**To:** MOS Board Google Group <mosboard@mdbirds.org>

**Subject:** [MOSBoard] 2024 MOS Convention - Action requested

Good day. The Convention Committee for the 2024 MOS Convention has started its regular meetings. The purpose of this email is twofold. We want the board to know what we have been doing, so far, and we are asking the board if there are any objections to our current project.

There are many permutations of when and where to conduct the convention. I did a lot of research looking across the state for possible venues, focusing on areas we have not been to recently: the center of the state for a May 2024 Convention; and Ocean City for a November 2024 (or possibly February 2025) Convention. Many venues do not have large enough meeting rooms; some already have commitments. I looked at a number of colleges, and the big problem is that we would not be able to get in there until June, which is not as good for birding as May. Furthermore, the last time our Convention was at a college (Washington College) there were complaints about the lodgings. The center of the state is really expensive, the Preakness in May adds competition for venues; and traffic is an ever-present issue; additionally, we had concerns about attendance at a convention held so near to where so many of the MOS members live. We also looked for venues in north-east and in southern Maryland, but there simply aren't any that can support the MOS convention. **We have concluded that holding the convention in Ocean City in November 2024 is our best option.**

There are four possible venues in Ocean City: Ashore Resort, Princess Royale, Grand Hotel, and Holiday Inn (where we held the convention in February 2017). We decided against the Ashore and the Princess. The Ashore Resort is a beautiful venue, has plenty of space, but is the most expensive of the four venues. The least expensive dinner, as an example, is \$59.00 before

tax and fees, and the room rates are at least \$50/night higher than the least expensive venues. We believe that our members would balk at that. The Princess Royale has a severe parking issue and is also more expensive than the last two venues.

While the **Holiday Inn** is a “known quantity”, it is also showing its age. **The Grand Hotel** looks better but is in the same price range as the Holiday Inn for both guest rooms and food. We have been in negotiations with their staff and are reviewing a contract for **November 22 - 24, 2024**. It is the weekend before Thanksgiving but the only available weekend in November at the Grand. There may be more birds later than earlier in the month, especially waterfowl.

**We plan to keep the registration fee the same as that approved by the board in 2023: \$50 for MOS members and \$70 for non-MOS members**, including a one-year MOS at large membership. We will offer the same meal plans as last time as well.

Please reply to this email to let us know if you agree or have any objections to our plan.

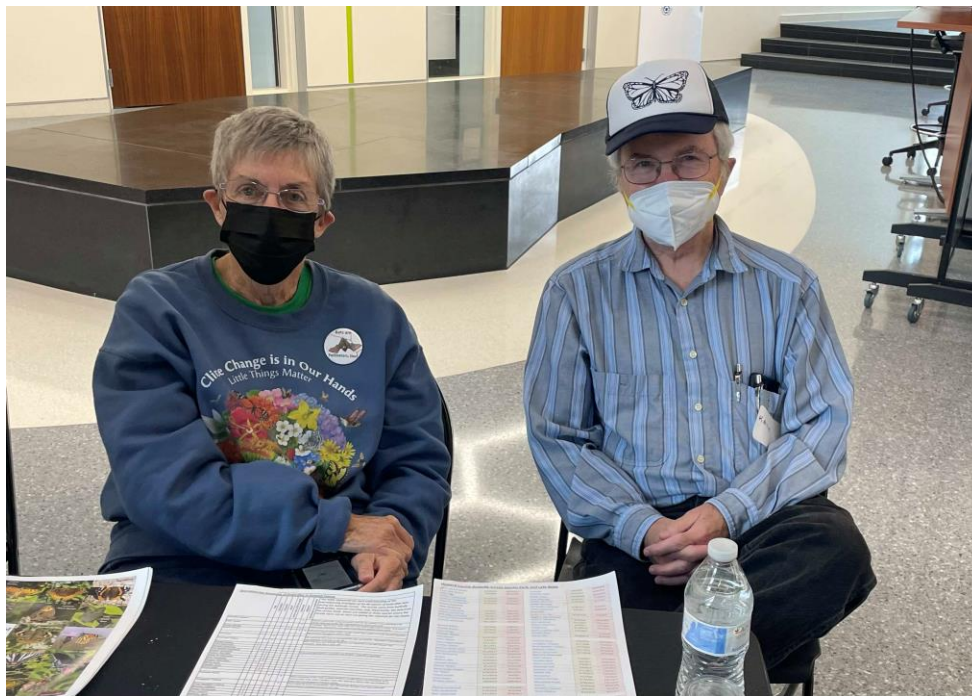
Thank you.

Meg Harris, Chairperson 2024 MOS Convention

## Need for Table Scarf and Tri-fold for Howard Butterfly Tabling Events



**Bird Table**



**Butterfly Table**

- \$25 to \$120 for small to full table scarf and \$300 for tri-fold display (72" x 45") & bag
  - **Total cost estimate: Up to \$420**

### **Pricing for Replacement Window Clings and Magnets**

1. 3" window clings from previous provider = \$424 for 250 plus tax & shipping
  - a. <https://designerysigns.com/static-cling-stickers-best-value-round-full-color.html>
  - b. <https://designerysigns.com/index.html>
  
2. 4" magnets from previous provider = \$240 for 200 (same as previous order)
  - a. <https://www.stickermule.com>

**Total estimated cost for both items: \$700**