

# Howard County Bird Club

## A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS)

### Field Trip: Saturday, February 21, 2009

**Trip Leader:** Sheppard, Jay

**Date of Trip:** Saturday, February 21, 2009

**Location:** Patuxent River State Park: Annapolis Rock Road

**Details:** After a lesson on owl pellets (see photo below), we found only the Northern Saw-whet Owl. But that did not deter some of the group, who came back at dusk (see Comments).

**Number on trip:** 30

(Numbers of individuals are shown if they were recorded.)

- Northern Saw-whet Owl: 1
- Long-eared Owl: 2
- American Woodcock: at least 12
- Winter Wren: 1

#### **Comments:**

Three of us returned to Annapolis Rock at about 5:30. We walked in to where the woods open up enough to let you see the western horizon (we had found a Winter Wren near here before supper). Starting at about 6:00 we started our vigil for American Woodcock. At about 6:10 we started hearing woodcock "peenting", 3-4 birds at first. Then the show started for real, we had several aerial courtship displays against the western sky and multiple low passes overhead. Conservatively there were at least a dozen birds (saw many more sightings but no way to know how many were repeats). As that show slowed down about 6:30 we picked up two large birds silhouetted on the horizon flying above the deciduous trees to the west. All three of us got on them for a brief view as they flew off to the left (south) and out of sight. They had broad long wings and the distinctive slow "moth-like" wing beat of Long-eared Owls. The look was sufficient to clearly identify them; we still were wishing they'd come back into view, but no such luck. We finally gave up at around 7:00 PM but enjoyed the clear night stars on way out trying to identify some of the constellations.