



Founded 1972



The Goldfinch

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

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CLUB MEETINGS - BY MARY LOU CLARK

Thursday, September 14, 2023 "Zero to 9900 - A Lifetime of Birding" by Peter Kaestner. This is a photographic journey of Peter's ongoing quest to see 10,000 species of birds.

Peter is a retired U.S. diplomat and a world-renowned birder who has spent a lifetime sharing his passion for birds. He graduated from Friends School in Baltimore and studied biology at Cornell University. He has lived in 12 different countries and the highlight of his birding career came in 1989 when he discovered in Colombia, South America, a new antpitta (a small passerine) which was named *Grallaria kaestneri* in his honor.



Photo by Kimberly Kaestner

Thursday, October 12, 2023 "The Wildlife of India's National Parks" by Larry Zoller. Join Larry Zoller as he shares photos of a variety of India's birds and other wildlife from a recent trip during a record heat wave. Learn how India manages their parks to conserve their rich natural heritage and encourage responsible ecotourism.

Larry is the Wake Audubon Educational Outreach Chairperson. He taught science and environmental education for 40 years. He is the past president of Anne Arundel Bird Club in MD and Wake Audubon in NC. He is an avid birder and has traveled to all seven continents to see birds.

Club programs are presented in a hybrid format and include a brief business meeting, club announcements, and guest speaker presentation. Attendees may join either in person at the Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044, or online using Zoom. The in-person hospitality session begins, and the Zoom portal opens, at 7:00 p.m, with the meeting beginning at 7:30 p.m. Click on the "Calendar" tab on the HCBC website's Home page at the top of the page for the most recent information.



Photo by Bobbi Reichwein

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: CHIRPS TO THE FLOCK

BY GREGG PETERSEN

It is our 52nd year! First and foremost, thanks to outgoing president, Kristin Trouton, for her kind, steady leadership for the last year as she presided over the culmination of many hours of members' planning, hard work, and conduct of the club's 50th Anniversary Celebration at Howard County Conservancy; led the club as we saw an increase in membership; and supported the expansion of additional birding access for Maryland birders into the Belmont Historic Manor, and significant additional areas of the Triadelphia and T. Howard Duckett Reservoirs. Other thanks for exceptional service to the club go to our outgoing Treasurer Brian Moyer (four years) and Publicity Committee Chairman Allen Lewis.

I have loved birds all my life, but I have only been a "serious" birder and member of the Howard County Bird Club for about four years, so I will be and have been relying on many of you for your experience, advice, and wisdom to guide the club for the next couple years. In that vein, I want to welcome and thank Chapter Director Lauren McDougle, Treasurer Tim Thompson, Vice President Val Swan, and "new" State Director John McKitterick for joining our HCBC Board of Directors. I realize that John McKitterick is hardly new, having most recently been the president, then president emeritus, of the Maryland Ornithological Society while concurrently helping us with hybrid Zoom technology for general membership meetings for HCBC for the last year.

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FALL 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. Depending on the COVID situation at the time, there may be restrictions imposed. 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. HCBC members receive priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets. There is a listing of all previous field trips on the "Calendar" page titled [Previous Field Trips](#). The trips with links have results on a separate page.

Middle Patuxent Environmental Area

August 31, Thursday, 7:30 a.m. Half day. Meet at the Trotter Road entrance. Moderate walking through wooded trails and along the river. Great area for migrants of all species. Field edges and thickets provide sparrow habitat. Prepare for wet grass and mud on the trails.

Leader – John Harris, jaybee.harris@gmail.com

Dick Smith Memorial Butterfly Walk

September 3, Sunday, 10:30 a.m. 2-3 hours

Meet at Elkhorn Garden Plots, Oakland Mills Rd opposite Dasher Ct. Enjoy searching for late-summer butterflies with instruction on their identification. Easy walking on mowed paths around the community garden plots and Elkhorn meadow. We will continue on paved paths and mowed areas near the right-of-way alongside open, flowery wet meadows and brushy hillsides. Bring close-focus binoculars to view nectaring behavior. Cancelled if raining or overcast. No facilities.

Leader – Linda Hunt, raven10322@hotmail.com

Rockburn Branch Park

September 9, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. Half day. Meet in parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse. The park gate is just beyond Rockburn Elementary School. Moderate walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park looking for migrants. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available.

Leader – Mary Lou Clark, doctorfx_99@yahoo.com

B Fall Count

September 16, Saturday. See [p.7](#).

Please go to the following link to sign up. <https://howardbirds.website/birding/seasonal-bird-counts/>

Skywatch, Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy

September 25, Monday, 9:30 a.m. (Rain date September 26, Tuesday.) Half Day. Meet at parking lot or go directly to the Skywatch site. This trip will be a skywatch for migrating raptors and other potential flybys. Broad-winged Hawks should be migrating.

Leader – None designated. Join friends during a peak migratory period.

B R Skywatch, Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy

October 18, Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Meet at the parking lot. Birds in Flight – Learn the basics of identifying birds in flight. Focus will be on hawks. Bonnie and Val will explain the basics of binocular use. This is a stationary trip and benches are available. Feel free to bring a folding chair, snacks and drinks. Limit 15; please email Bonnie Ott (email address below) to reserve a spot. Facilities available.

Leaders – Bonnie Ott, sparrowdamsel@gmail.com; Val Swan

R Improving Your Skills - Advanced Beginner/Intermediate Trip

October 21, Saturday. Location and timing for this morning class provided after registration. Learn techniques for getting the most out of your field time. Exact content will vary, but will include methods to help you see more birds, as well as find less common/rare species. May include simple practice exercises and short walks through natural habitats. Registration required; limit 8. Please email the trip leader (email address below) to reserve a spot. Leader: John Harris, jaybee.harris@gmail.com

B R W Centennial Park

October 27, Friday, 9:00 a.m., 2-3 hours. Beginner Trip. Birding Families and the Art of Identification. Meet at Centennial Park West (off of Centennial Lane). Learn helpful tools to assist you in identifying a variety of bird species. Easy walking on paved pathways at Centennial Lake. Registration required; limit 10. Please email the trip leader (email address below) to reserve a spot. Facilities available.

Leader - Val Swan valnjeff55@gmail.com

B R W Centennial Park

November 1, Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Meet at the boat ramp. Beginners Trip- Birds of the Lake. Bonnie and Val will explain the basics of binoculars and field guides. Easy walking along the open side of Centennial Lake. Registration required; limit 10. Please email Bonnie Ott (email address below) to reserve a spot.

Leaders – Bonnie Ott, sparrowdamsel@gmail.com; Val Swan

R Improving Your Skills - Advanced Beginner/Intermediate Trip

November 4, Saturday. See October 21 listing for details. Registration required; limit 8. Leader: John Harris, jaybee.harris@gmail.com

Skywatch, Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy

November 4, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Half Day. Meet at parking lot. This trip will be strictly a sky watch for late-migrating raptors and other potential goodies. Our main target will be Golden Eagle; while not expected, early November is the best time to catch one flying over Howard County. We will watch the skies and tally the birds as long as conditions are productive. Hope for a north wind! Bring water, lunch, hat, sunscreen, light-colored sunglasses, comfortable lawn chair (recliners are best), binoculars, scope, and camera if you like. Participants can also walk the Conservancy trails if skywatching proves non-productive. Facilities available.

Leader – Russ Ruffing, russruffing@gmail.com

B W Centennial Park

November 5, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. 2-3 hours. (Daylight Saving Time ends) West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved paths around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely.

Facilities available.

Leader – Russell Kovach, Russell.kovach@gmail.com

Additional fall field trips may be added. Check the HCBC website [calendar](#) for updates.

Uncertain about your skill level? Check the "Guidelines for Bird Identification Skill Levels" at <https://howardbirds.website/beginning-birding/what-is-your-skill-level/>.

B = Good for beginning birders

W = Wheelchair accessible

R = Reservations Required

SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 – MAY 31, 2023

BY [JOANNE SOLEM](#)

Spring 2023 produced its share of surprises. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck and Anhinga topped the list, but Virginia Rail, Sora, Sandhill Crane, Black Tern, Little Blue Heron, Glossy Ibis, Mississippi Kite, Barn Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Evening Grosbeak, Lapland Longspur, Summer Tanager, and Dickcissel were also noteworthy. The specialties helped to balance a rather lackluster and somewhat slow passerine migration.

At 10:00 a.m. on 3/31 at Wilde Lake (WILLK), seven **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks** circled briefly above the treetops before heading north (Hpt, desc.). Howard cited the keys to this identification as the duck shape and their black bellies. (Having seen 2,000+ in four states proved to him that travel can be valuable!) This was only the third county record of this accidental mid-Atlantic visitor; the first was also at WILLK 4/25/22, the second at Lake Elkhorn (LKELK) 5/28/22.

Large numbers of **Canada Geese** continued to move the first week of March. The resident goose population's first five downy young were spotted at Brighton Dam 4/10 (GPn). **Tundra Swans** were still migrating in early March with a nice flight on 3/3: I-95 N/near Patapsco River (RHI-75), Barberry Way (VSw-270), Catchfly Ct (AVS-34), and Underwood Rd (MKw-60). A flock of 27 resting on Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) 3/10 (SLk, GPn) drew its share of admirers.

A pair of **Wood Ducks** perched in a tree at the northeast pond at Centennial Pk (CENPK) was a highlight of the 3/12 field trip (RKv); thus, it should have been no surprise when a female with six ducklings appeared on the lake on 4/29 (EBw). At the same lake on 5/8, a female with 13 ducklings was subjected to repeated unsuccessful **Red-shouldered Hawk** dives (MLC; ALw). Adults at cavities or females with young were reported from at least eight additional sites. Relatively uncommon **Blue-winged Teal** appeared at five locations. They were most consistent at Waterford (WATFD) with reports from 3/26 (RRf-9) to 4/28 (GPn-5); the high count was 14 on 4/12 (JHf). The season's last birds were seen on 5/13 at CENPK (MLm-1) and at Pigtail (KS, YYL-2). **Northern Shovelers** topped out at 15 at Race Road Wetlands (RACRW) 3/1 (KS). The last one recorded there was 3/31 (FSf), but four turned up at Fulton Pd 5/5 to complete the season (TFy, ph.). The latter were only the county's fifth May record of that species. The last **American Wigeon** was a female at Broken Land/US 29 on 4/6 (JHf). A late female **Lesser Scaup** was spotted on a WATFD pond 5/1 (DCm).

A large flock of **Long-tailed Ducks** was heard live on Night Flight Call (NFC) equipment at Cavey La ~8:00 p.m. on 3/16 (RRf). **Buffleheads** are known stragglers with at least nine May and five summer records. One appeared at LKELK 5/6 (ALw); it remained into summer (MSt). Because Howard Co. has one **Common Merganser** nesting record, any seen in late April or May are of interest. A pair was noted at Henryton (HENPV) 4/23 (J/MHr, LMcd; VSw) until 5/5, also appearing at nearby Marriottsville (MARPV) where a male was last seen 5/6 (WCr, ph.; RTd). No evidence of breeding was detected. Up to four **Red-breasted Mergansers** are usually found in the large flock of Commons at TRIRS each winter; multiples elsewhere tend to attract attention. Two Red-breasteds at CENPK 3/15 (MNT) stayed until 3/24 (BO). A **Ruddy Duck** that arrived at CENPK 3/22 (MNT) lingered until 4/19 (DSn, ph.)

Wild Turkeys were found throughout the county at more than 30 locations. Let's hope that all those sightings translate into multiple broods.

Two **Pied-billed Grebes** were with the dabbling ducks at RACRW 3/9 (JW). A **Horned Grebe** appeared at CENPK on 5/7 (BO) and stayed through 5/9 (EHd), one of only half a dozen May records ever for the county.

Mourning Doves had eggs in a trumpet vine nest at So. Trotter Rd 3/31 (WE). The first **Common Nighthawks** were not detected until an unusually late 5/8 at Old Roxbury Rd (ATp). In general, numbers were few with the last two at Pointers Run, W. Col. 5/22 (J/MHr). Thirty **Chimney Swifts** used a Vantage Point roost on 5/3 (CKc).

A **Virginia Rail** at the edge of Belmont's main pond 4/24 (BO) was last detected early 4/25 (JHf, GPn). A **Sora** was a fine sighting at WATFD Flats 4/14 (RRf). A single **American Coot** frequented Lake Kittamaquidi (LKKIT) and CENPK 3/17 to 4/12 (CKc; m obs.). The high was four at RACRW 3/31 (FSf)

Multiple **Sandhill Crane** reports were a surprise. Seven were spotted flying north "high and climbing" over CENPK 3/6 (ALw, desc.), and five were photo'd 3/19 over I-70/Marriottsville Rd (JCu). A third credible sighting was a flock of ~35 just north of WATFD in early March (*vide* CSh). Two in the area of the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area's (MPEA) Wildlife Loop Trail on 5/28 (ALf) were featured in a video, a bonus for the website's Bird Gallery. (No, it is not necessary to be out at dawn to see special birds; these cranes were present at 1:35 p.m.)

Four **Semipalmated Plovers** were spotted at Pigtail, TRIRS 5/13 (KS, YYL), with 10 at the Cattail section the same day (GPn, VLi, CCh). Two were also noticed at Gateway 5/14 (JHr). Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at Cattail, TRIRS 5/13 were a good "peep" sighting (GPn, VLi, CCh). **Wilson's Snipe** built to a peak of 39 at Alpha Ridge Landfill (ALRGL) 5/9 (RCu). February **American Woodcock** sightings continued into spring with reports from almost a dozen locations from Cavey La in the north (RRf-2) to Fulton Area South Park in the south (Kck-1), and from RACRW in the east (JHf-2) to Hipsley Mill Rd in the west (MLC-5+). The last bird reported there on 5/9 was almost certainly a breeder (DCm-1); a sighting at MPEA 4/13 (JHf) was just two days short of the safe breeding date; and one on 5/1 (RHI) was an even more optimistic sighting. A **Greater Yellowlegs** at WATFD Flats 4/3 (GPn) initiated migrant shorebird movement at this location.



Black Tern

by Steve Luke

Bonaparte's Gulls hung around TRIRS from 3/10 (GPn, SLk-3) through 3/17. A flock of 39 passed over WATFD on the 4/2 field trip (WE+). Low numbers of **Caspian Terns** were notched from 4/6 at LKKIT (JHf-1, ph.) to 5/14 at Norris La (DZk-2). One of the stars of the season was a **Black Tern** over a pond at WATFD 5/19

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(JHf); this bird tied the county's latest spring record. The species had not been recorded since 2016 and merited a Rare Bird Alert; fortunately, it continued to feed for 3.5 hours enabling many birders to enjoy it.

Twenty-seven **Anhingas** arrived at WILLK ~5:30 p.m. on 4/21 (MOB). There had only been one credible previous record in the county of this accidental vagrant. Within a few days, numbers dropped quickly by half; finally, a single bird remained with the lake's cormorants, and was last seen at 5:47 p.m. on 4/29 (KS). On 5/1, one was reported at CENPK (C/ChMr), remaining through 5/4. At 2:00 p.m. on 5/8, two (m/f) were spotted at CENPK by a surprised Montgomery Co. birder who had come to see the ibis (RHt); the Anhingas were last sighted at 2:30 p.m. (VSw). Likely, these same two individuals were seen over MPEA 5/11 heading northeast (RRf, GPn, VSw).



Little Blue Heron catches a Pickerel Frog for a meal. by Guy DiRoma

At Cavey La the evenings of 3/22 and 4/13, single **American Bitterns** were heard on NFC live (RRf); on 3/25, one was spotted at RACRW (JW, ph.). The **Great Blue Heron** colony at Vantage Point was stable with 19 occupied nests on 3/29 (SMu, JS). One additional nest was built after late March; it contained nestlings in late May (CKe). Although a **Great Egret** was spotted at CENPK 3/31 (MNT), they were rather scarce until early May. Adult **Little Blue Herons** were one of the season's special species. An adult settled in for three days at Waverly Pond 4/15-17 (RRf, ph.); one was spotted at Woodmark Lake on May Count 5/13 (MMcC), and an adult was noted at ALRGL 5/22 (RCu). Unknown, of course, is the number of individuals these three sightings represented, possibly only one.

The first **Black-crowned Night-Heron** showed up at WILLK, a favorite haunt, on 3/29 (JHf, GPn). Two were spotted at CENPK 4/26 (CKe). A **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was a fine sighting at Tarbay Pd 5/15 (J/MHr). A **Glossy Ibis** is a choice find and is not seen every year. One was present at CENPK feeding at the wildlife end of the lake the morning of 5/7 (MNT). It remained until the early evening of 5/8 (M/KPI).

The Robbins Skywatch at Mount Pleasant (MTPLT) caught peak **Turkey Vulture** movement the first week of April with at least 60 on three days; the high was 63 on 4/4 (LGg). Thanks, Lynn, for your hours at the Skywatch this spring! An **Osprey** nest on a cell tower at Larriland Farm, MD 94 on 5/10 (SMu) was a new location. On 4/3, an adult **Bald Eagle** carrying nesting material over Cavey La followed closely by a second adult (RRf) confirmed another nesting pair. A flyover **Mississippi Kite** was the featured bird at CENPK 5/17, spring's only kite (BO, ph.). The first **Broad-winged Hawks** appeared over both the Skywatch (JHf, GPn) and nearby Cavey La on 4/12 (RRf).

A migrating **Barn Owl** was heard screeching as it cruised low over a pasture at Starward Farm, Dayton the evening of 3/26 (JWd). The **Eastern Screech-Owl** that roosted in the Hallmark box much of the winter left on 4/18 with only intermittent visits in May; it may well have been a male (WEb). **Great Horned Owls** started nesting unusually early. A female at ALRGL was on a nest on 1/3 (RCu), using the same nest it had occupied in 2022. By examining photos of the nestlings, Dave Ziolkowski was able to determine that this owl's early egg date was likely prior to any existing published Maryland record! The last **Northern Saw-whet Owl** report was a distant "heard bird"

on 3/5 at Annapolis Rock (GPn), a fitting conclusion to a winter in which this species proved elusive.

Red-headed Woodpeckers attract attention year-round. Spring's first was at Daniels 4/14 (BO), with one confirmed nesting in a Woodbine atlas block on 5/28 (KCK). A May Count surprise was a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at MPEA (NSs, MBc, ph., LHm), just one day shy of the 5/14 all-time late date.

The **American Kestrel** box erected at W. Friendship Pk 3/23 (GPn, BLE) was reportedly occupied on 4/22—by **Tree Swallows** (DCa). Maybe kestrels will move in next year. Five **Peregrine Falcon** reports were received: US 29/ MD 32 on 3/3 (EHs); REI pond 4/22 (BO); Underwood Rd 4/23 (VSw); Font Hill Wetland Pk 5/10 (BO); and HENPV 5/15 (GPn).

Olive-sided Flycatchers are usually few. One was noted at HENPV 5/15 (JMCh, ph.). One was also reported at MARPV (Carroll Co.) 5/19 (TCn); it was relocated slightly downstream on the Howard side early on 5/20 (JHf). **Alders** are among the most difficult identifications. One was recorded twice and well-described at WATFD on 5/18 (GPn; JHr; DCm) establishing its identify. **Leasts** were reported at seven sites in a narrow window from 5/10 at both Gorman-Kindler (GPn) and Blandair (TCn, JHl) to 5/18 at MARPV (JHf). (Kudos to the majority of observers who provided photos/field marks!)

A pair of **Common Ravens** were noted at the Dorsey's Search cell tower on 3/29 (SMu) for the fourth year. On 5/25, an adult feeding two recent fledglings at Wincopin Neck repeatedly laid tidbits, some of which it had regurgitated, on a branch for the open-mouthed young (AAI).



Glossy Ibis

by Gregg Petersen

Swallow migration was unremarkable; and many were late. Exciting news was that at least eight **Purple Martins** showed up the last week of May to establish initial nesting in the club's one-year-old box at MTPLT (KS, ph.). (Note: the box contained four nests with eggs as of the time of this writing.) For the second year, a pair of **Rough-winged Swallows** claimed a **Belted Kingfisher** tunnel as a nest site at Woodstock 4/20 (RCu). The species also appeared to be nesting in a pipe on the underside of a semitrailer at LKKIT 5/10 (CKe). **Bank Swallows** were few with early and late dates at CENPK 4/24 (ALw-1) and 5/24 (BO-2). Some **Cliff Swallows** were slow to begin nesting. Ten at Brown's Bridge were busily refurbishing nests on 5/26 (DCm).

Marsh Wrens were notched at Fulton 5/4 (TFy, ph.) to 5/6 and at MTPLT 5/5 (RRf, ph.) to 5/7. Three **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** at HENPV 3/30 (JHf) were the first. In an unusual situation at Stone Hill Dr the third week of April, two female **Eastern Bluebirds** were

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using one nest box. A male was feeding them and appeared to be mated to both. Eventually, the nest held seven eggs (double the normal clutch); three hatched (**KLz**). One or two **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were noted at about a dozen sites, mostly 5/11 – 5/19. A **Hermit Thrush** managed to obtain suet at a Martin Rd, W. Col. feeder on 3/17 by flying up from the ground, stabbing at the suet, and then dropping down to pick up the fallen pieces (**JHf**). **American Pipit** numbers were low at seven sites, with a measly high of four at ALRGL 4/3 (**RCu**).

Two **Evening Grosbeaks** appeared intermittently at a feeder at Pan Spring Ct, Ellicott City 5/5 (**KMh**, ph.). (The first week of May is consistent with historic late dates.) There was the usual uptick of **Purple Finches** in April, especially during the first week with a high of 20 at Burleigh Manor on 4/7 (**MKw**) and 17 at Duvall Rd 4/3 (**KTf**). One **Pine Siskin** at Gateway 3/11 (**JW**) was the only one of the few spring reports accepted. (With a limited flight this spring, photos or an excellent description were necessary.)

Spring produces flocks of **American Goldfinches**. Sixty-seven were counted at MPEA 4/20 (**GPn**, **LMcD**); a flock of 26 at So. Trotter Rd spent 4/30 picking elm seeds from an asphalt driveway (**W/SE**); and 50+ were in oaks near the schoolhouse at W. Friendship Pk 5/2 (**LCg**). A field trip to ALRGL 3/2 turned up a lone remaining **Lapland Longspur** (**RCu**, **JHf+**).

Eastern Towhees hit a peak of 24 on 4/29 at MPEA - “they were everywhere” (**J/MHr**). **Vesper Sparrows** are always much anticipated. They appeared on 3/27 at both ALRGL (**RCu-1**) and Long Corner (**MPw-3**); continuing at ALRGL till 4/17 with eight on 4/8 (**RCu**, **JHf+**). They were tallied at six other sites as well. The ALRGL flock of **Savannah Sparrows** peaked at 58 on 4/24 (**RCu**); WATFD’s high was 48 on 4/3 (**GPn**, **VSw**); while New Cut Landfill had 34 on 4/19 (**BO**). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** at WATFD 4/14 was the season’s first (**RRf**). **Lincoln’s** were seen at seven sites from 4/21 at WATFD (**VSw**) to 5/19 at MPEA (**RTd**). **White-crowns** dribbled through in April, with early May bringing the usual upswing. A sampling of those reports included WATFD 5/1 (**GPn**), W. Friendship Pk 5/3 (**LCg**), Hunt Ridge 5/6 (**CSt**), Dickinson, E. Col. 5/9 (**MLm**), and Underwood Rd 5/11 (**GPn**, **RRf**, **VSw**).

Bobolinks were scattered in a dozen locations with the first at WATFD 4/30 (**KS**) as well as the last on 5/19 (**FSf-3**); the high was ~100 in the west meadows at MTPLT 5/18 (**LGg**). The male **Baltimore Oriole** that had spent its fourth winter at/near Thornbrook Dr, departed on 4/15. It consistently leaves the second week of April (**JCu**). Low numbers of **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared at almost a dozen locations, with a high of 12 at Oxford Square 4/26 (**JW**).

Prothonotary Warblers were reported from RACRW 4/29 (**DCm**), WILLK 5/7 (**BO**), LKKIT 5/8 (**CKc**, ph.), and MPEA 5/11 (**MCb**). Nest building was verified at River Rd, Sykesville 5/19 (**BO**); however, with no subsequent activity at the site, it was probably a dummy nest. **Hoodeds** were spotted at 11 sites, including two birds at Rockburn Branch Pk 4/24 (**JCh**), where they formerly nested.

In late March birders vie to be the first to spot a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at MARPV; this year’s date was 3/28 (**J/MHr**). Despite the popularity among birders of this location, the species appeared at 13 other sites as well. The Big Day team found a **Mourning** at Jennings Chapel Rd woods 5/11 (**RRf**, **GPn**, **VSw**). The species was also detected at HENPV, MARPV, Belmont, MPEA, and W. Friendship Pk. **Bay-breasteds** and **Wilson’s** arrived the first week of May; both species were last seen 5/22 at MPEA (**DCm**).

A female **Summer Tanager** appeared at Cavey La 5/13 (**RRf**, ph.); a male was seen at MPEA 5/15 (**JHf**).

The immature male **Indigo Bunting** that showed up at Indian Summer 2/22 was last observed 3/3 (**CLm**). Although there is a possibility there may have been a male **Painted Bunting** at the Robinson Nature Center on 5/20, as yet this rarity has not been accepted because the only description was “Bright male, unmistakable.” The statement could be true, but doesn’t describe any field marks seen. One **Dickcissel** returned to the fields along Underwood Rd 5/13 (**CSt**, **VSw**). No breeding has yet been detected.

Bonus: A mink was in the water at Big Branch 3/13 (**MLC**).

Big Day Team Sets New County Record – Russ Ruffing assembled teams that made two May attempts to break the one-day county record. The night before the 7 May attempt lacked a good migratory flight so that effort was aborted midday; 11 May, on the other hand, proved to be an excellent choice and demonstrated how much difference a few days can make. The team racked up 130 species in 18+ hours, beating the 2021 record total by one, and included 28 species of warblers. **Congratulations to Russ, Gregg Petersen, and Val Swan!** For all the details of this record-breaking day, go to <https://howardbirds.website/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/2023-05-11-Big-Day-Summary.pdf>.

Appreciation - Many thanks to Joe Hanfman and Russ Ruffing who provide input during the season and editing of this summary. Their assistance is essential.

Observers: AAl – Annette Allor, EBw – Elizabeth Baldwin, MBc – Megan Bolcar, MCh – Michael Campbell, TCn – Tim Carney, DCa – Donna Carollo, JCh – Jane Chandler, MCh – Mark Chandler, CCh – Chen Chiu, KCh – Ken Clark, MLC – Mary Lou Clark, LCg – Lisa Colangelo, WCr – Wendy Crowe, JCu – Jeff Culler, RCu – Ralph Cullison, DCm – David Cummings, SE – Sue Earp, WE – Wes Earp, TFy – Tim Frye, LGg – Lynn Gregg, JHl – Jacob Hall, JHf – Joe Hanfman, JHr – John Harris, MHr – Meg Harris, LHm – Lisa Helmer, EHD – Elaine Hendricks, RHI – Russell Hillsley, RHT – Rob Hilton, EHS – Ed Huestis, MKw – Mike Kerwin, CKc – Clayton Koonce, RKv – Russell Kovach, BLE – Brenda Lee, YYL – Yi-Ying Lee, ALf – Andrew Lehfeldt, CLm – Connie Lemon, MLm – Mike Leumas, ALw – Allen Lewis, VLi – Vitus Li, KLz – Kathy Litzinger, SLk – Steve Luke, KMh – Kristen Mahorey, MMcC – Mike McClure, LMcD – Lauren McDougle, ChMr – Cherie Miller, CMr – Chris Miller, SMu – Sue Muller, , MOb – Michael Oberman, BO – Bonnie Ott, HPt – Howard Patterson, PPn – Pam Perna, GPn – Gregg Petersen, KPl – Kate Plough, MPI – Matt Plough, MPw – Mary Prowell, RRF – Russ Ruffing, DSn – David Sandler, KS – Kurt Schwarz, NSs – Nancy Schweiss, FSf – Fred Shaffer, CSh – Chuck Sharp, JS – Jo Solem, MSt – Michelle Stewart, VSw – Val Swan, MNT – MarkNhu Tewell, ATp – Ashley Tipton, RTd – Robin Todd, KTf – Kate Tufts, AVS – Anthony VanSchoor, JWd – Joshua Ward, JW – Jim Wilkinson, DZk – Dave Ziolkowski.

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

Megan Bolcar
12136 Gray Star Way
Columbia, MD 21044
howardbirdclub@mdbirds.org

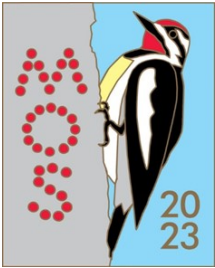
The Goldfinch, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the November-December 2023 issue is September 25, 2023.

Megan Bolcar, *Editor*
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

MOS CONVENTION PIN

BY SUE PROBST

The HCBC would like to congratulate our very own Sue Probst for winning this year's MOS convention pin design contest with a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. She and her mother, Connie Bockstie, have a family history of MOS convention pin designs. Here's what Sue had to say about the history of those wins and her inspiration.



My Mom, Connie Bockstie, and I have had six winning designs over the 30+ years we were in the MOS (outlined in the table below). My Mom is the reason I even got into the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC) in the first place, and I feel like I owe a lot to her for not only encouraging my love of birds, but also for passing along her artistic talent to me. For that, I will always be indebted to her.

As many in the HCBC know, I lost my mom on February 1 of this year. My mom won three contests early in the 1990s with her designs of the Canada Goose, Northern Saw-Whet Owl and Marsh Wren. Together, we attended our first MOS Convention in 1990 at Washington College in Chestertown. It was a very exciting convention for both of us since it was our first one and Mom had won the pin contest! She won again in 1993 for her design of the Northern Saw-whet Owl, which was one of her favorite owls. That same year I won a silent auction prize that allowed us to go to see Kevin Dodge's Northern Saw-whet Owl banding operation. The trip was a real hoot! (I know, I had to say it!) She also won in

1994 with her Marsh Wren design.

When I won this year's pin contest, 30 years after her winning with the Northern Saw-whet Owl, I wanted to dedicate my pin design to her memory, as she had just passed away. Bonnie Borsa was very accommodating and mentioned all six of our winning designs when she presented my award. She also announced that I was dedicating it to my mom, Connie Bockstie.

Unfortunately, Mom didn't get a chance to see this year's design. (She really liked my winning design from last year of the Black-crowned Night-Heron.) I sincerely believe that she "inspired" me when I chose this year's bird, and also while I was creating the artwork. I like to think that she approves of it.

Winning Designs by Sue Probst and Connie Bockstie

Year	Bird	Artist	Convention location
1990	Canada Goose	Connie Bockstie	Washington College in Chestertown, Kent County
1991	Common Yellowthroat	Sue Probst	4-H Center, Montgomery County
1993	Northern Saw-whet Owl	Connie Bockstie	Frostburg State University, Allegany County
1994	Marsh Wren	Connie Bockstie	Sandy Cove Conference Center, Cecil County
2022	Black-crowned Night-Heron	Sue Probst	Solomons Island, Calvert County
2023	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Sue Probst	Wisp Resort, Garrett County

(*"President's Message"* continued from [page 1](#))

When I think of the HCBC, I think of a warm, fun, welcoming community of birders. My first encounter with the club was with members David Sandler and Howard Patterson at Howard County Conservancy, and I have had many such positive visits since then with others of you who are always willing to share your birding tips and recent sightings. I recognize we have a broad spectrum of experience across our membership, and I hope you see that we have programs for beginners and experienced birders alike. The club can always use your help on our activities such as tabling events, hosting potlucks, teaching classes, leading bird walks, or participating on one or all our three counts during the year. Our Fall Count is coming up on September 16th, please get in touch with Mike McClure to help us out (see his article [here](#) in the newsletter). Or, if you just have some advice or would like to see us do something differently, please let me know (sig29@aol.com).

One thing I want us to do this year is to continue to increase our membership, perhaps to the record high of 371 from a few years back. Our member rolls grew to 305 during Kristin's tenure this year. To get more members, we must first keep our current members, plus we all collectively can act as recruiters in the woods to get more members. I ask that you carry our business card with you and pass it on to others who engage you along the lake paths, in the woods, and in the parks. We have plenty of cards to share. As a reminder, folks do not have to be members to go on our bird walks, nor to attend our monthly club meetings, but we often find that after spending some time with us, that those folks join the club. We also have a robust treasury that we can consider applying to worthy birding causes such as habitat preservation or bird houses, thanks to generous bequests from past club members. Please let me know your bird friendly ideas to make birding better in Howard County.

Finally, we have something new this year that I hope will become a tradition: our board has approved an HCBC coin for use to convey thanks to members and community officials who help us advance the goals of the club. A few examples for awardees could include, but are not at all limited to, board service, field trip leaders, potluck hosts, class instructors, and membership recruiters. Many of the awards will be driven by your fellow members' recommendations. If you see someone doing great things for the club, your nominations should be made to club officers (president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) for decision and award.

I think I have overwritten my limit and Mary Lou Clark is going to "chirp" at me. I'll talk to you here some more next quarter. May you have a great birding day.

Warm regards,
Gregg Petersen



THIRTIETH ANNUAL FALL COUNT

BY MIKE MCCLURE

The Howard County Bird Club's annual Fall Count, scheduled each year on the third Saturday of September, will be on September 16, 2023. Mike McClure 410-531-2780 and Chuck Stirrat 410-531-2417 are the county co-coordinators. Holding the count in the presence of the novel coronavirus pandemic causes a few minor changes in how the count will proceed:

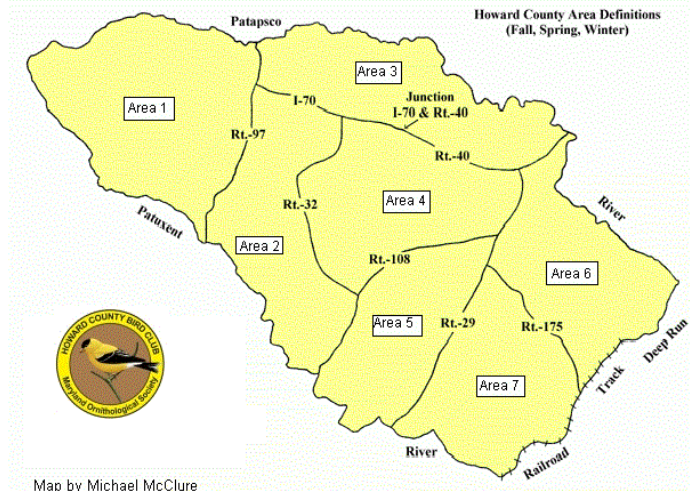
While the risk of contracting the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19 may or may not be remote, participation is at one's own risk and neither MOS, nor its chapters, can guarantee that attendance will not result in contracting this virus. The use of a high quality N95 mask is an excellent addition to your vaccination status to keep you 'Covid free' and should be practiced when with those that are not parts of your normal sphere of exposure (immediate family, etc.). Note, numerous variants of Omicron are out there and looking for you regardless. Prudence suggests that limited interactions are warranted.

1. Most count parties will be of minimum size, preferably one or two persons. If you choose to bird with a larger group or someone outside your sphere of exposure (immediate family, etc.) please employ social distancing, wear masks, hand sanitizer, etc. Please be careful.
2. Parties will email electronic inputs to coordinators (eBird reports, scans or photos of completed field sheets, phone in results to coordinator). Send results directly to Chuck Stirrat, stirrcl@gmail.com, if a coordinator is not available for your area Not-Later-Than [NLT] 9/20.
3. Coordinators will complete the coordinator area spreadsheet for their area. Both an Excel and a non-interactive PDF version of the coordinator input sheet will be available. If they complete the PDF version manually, coordinators can provide a scan or photo of the form sheets to Chuck. NLT 9/26.
4. Meg and John Harris have agreed to host a hybrid tally rally at their home at 6400 Ripe Apple Ln, Columbia, MD 21044. If you plan to attend, please email Meg, mctharris@gmail.com, by 6:00 p.m. on Friday, September 15, that you will be attending, how many in your party, and what you will be bringing (an appetizer, side dish, or dessert). The Harris family will provide meat lasagna and vegetarian lasagna. **If there are late changes concerning the in-person tally rally, they will notify all who have signed up and the changes will be posted on the HCBC website.**
5. This year's tally rally will be preceded by a one hour in-person potluck starting at 6:00 p.m. Unless you are still in the field, please try to submit your checklist to your Area Coordinator by the start of the tally rally at 7:00 p.m. If you cannot attend in person, a Zoom session will commence at 6:45 p.m. allowing you to join the tally. Coordinators will provide the contact information to their parties or you can ask Chuck to send you the information.

Prior years have set an average of 124 species. Spend the day, or however much time you have, birding with us and help raise the average! Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to participate and if you are a beginner or do not wish to have your own territory, let coordinators know. Unfortunately, the number of individuals that will be willing to have others join them may be less than normal due

to the pandemic, however we should be able to find someone more experienced willing to bird with you. People who count in their neighborhoods or watching their feeders are welcome. The county is divided into seven areas (shown below) which are used for all annual counts. **A 2023 fall season field sheet for Howard County is available on the Club's website.** The field sheet is an interactive PDF form that can be opened and completed electronically (save it with a different name). If you prefer you can print the blank form and complete it manually and then scan or photograph it and send that to the area coordinator. Species that require a writeup include those identified with a double asterisk (**), as well as any write-ins. Others that may require a short writeup or oral amplification (*), as well as those that are early or late dates (@), are indicated.

The following area coordinators have been named: Area 1) Mark Wallace 301-725-6370 and Wes Earp 410-531-3197; Area 2) Russ Kovach 443-386-4787; Area 3) Gregg Petersen 202-256-8166; Area 4) Mike McClure 410-531-2780; Area 5) Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643; Area 6) John Harris 240-755-0183; and Area 7) Meghaan Lane 410-829-6192. You may call an area or county coordinator to volunteer.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Peter Ashley	Mark Heikell	Mabry Orndorff
Bruce Ballard	Houng Li	Timothy Orndorff
Marianne & Taylor	Vitus Li	Rima, Wayne, and
Beauchamp	Molly Li	Grace Pavalko
Renate & Charles	Jeannine Helm	Karen and Thai Pham
Beers	John Hoffman, Jr.	Anne Phillips
Michael Campbell	Meghaan Lane	Perrin Reuster
Chen Chiu	Mary Love	David & Nina Sar-
Stephanie Coakley	Jamie Lynch	faraz
Lisa Cole	Debra Macdonald	Thomas Seivert
Patricia Cully	Valerie Malone	Dale Schumacher
Michael DeMusis	Miriam Maloney	Tami Stensland
Richard Deutschmann	Holly Mooney	Ashley Tipton
Terry Haley	Luke Ni	Diana Walker
Alia Heikell	Elliot Noonan	Hilary Yarmus
Ayden Heikell	Luke Orndorff	

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

It is time to renew your membership in the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club for the 2023-24 season. Click on the [Join Us](#) link at the top of the HCBC website home page for details.

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS, May 13, 2023

BY GREGG PETERSEN

Seventy birders participated in the May Count on May 13th. The event was the 76th statewide and 50th compiled by the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC). Overall, the day was overcast with some variable light drizzle starting around noon and continuing to dusk, with a total accumulation .5-inch of rain. With the overcast sky and rain, the temperature started at 63 degrees Fahrenheit in the morning, rose to a high of 69° around noon just before the rain began, and dropped to 65° by sunset.

We tallied 133 total species which is tied for the seventh lowest count in 50 years and the total number of birds observed (12,696) ranked 13th lowest for that period. A total of 231 species have been seen in the years since 1974, 76 every year while 21 have been seen only once. No species was missed or seen for the first time this year, although for just the second year ever, we did not see a Swamp Sparrow on our count day (the first missed year was 2000).

This year's exceptional bird sightings included a Little Blue Heron (the fifth time in 50 years) and a Summer Tanager (the eighth time in 50 years) both for the second year in a row. A Bufflehead was seen for the third time in the last five years after only being seen 11 times total in 50 years and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was tallied for the sixth time ever and the first time in the last ten years. Three total Blue-winged Teal were seen in two areas (observed ten times in 50 years) and finally, a Dickcissel returned to the Underwood Road area south of Sykesville for the second May Count in a row and for only the fifth total time in May Count history.

We had an all-time high number of Red-headed Woodpeckers tallied with eight total birds found in three different areas in the county. The previous high for this species was five recorded two years ago. We also had an all-time high number of Semipalmated Plovers (14) in Area 2 at two locations bordering the Triadelphia Reservoir. This was the first time seeing this species in the last ten years and 11th time in May Count history.

Ten additional species had high counts for the last 10-year period: Canada Goose (810), Wild Turkey (17), Semipalmated Sandpiper (5), Spotted Sandpiper (44), Belted Kingfisher (21), Northern Mockingbird (188), House Sparrow (286), Lincoln Sparrow (3), Eastern Meadowlark (24), and Yellow-throated Warbler (5). After seeing a Bald Eagle just once prior to the 1992 count, this species has been seen 32 years in a row!

Notable low numbers include the second year in a row that not a single Sharp-shinned Hawk was observed. These hawks have been seen in 42 of the 50 annual May Counts. For only the second time in the last ten years, not a single Blackburnian Warbler was counted. The Worm-eating (3), Yellow-rumped, and Black-throated Green (2) Warblers had ten-year low counts. Finally, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks had a ten-year low total of two.

We observed 25 total warbler species for the second year in a row. That is the fifth lowest total observed in 50 years of the May Count (the average number is 30).

Following this article is a table summarizing this year's results. In addition, a table showing results by area for this count and a compilation spreadsheet of the May Count data from 1974 through this year can be found on the Howard County Bird Club's website.

Many, many people contributed to the success of the day. Thanks especially to our long-time HCBC compiler, Chuck Stirrat, for doing the complex work to create, update, and distribute checklists and spreadsheets, and to collect, correct, and compile the data in addition to being Area 3 Coordinator! Special thanks as well to our other Area Coordinators Bill Hill (Area 1), Russ Kovach (Area 2), Mike McClure (Area 4), Kristin Trouton (Area 5), John Harris (Area 6), and newcomer Meghaan Lane (Area 7) who arranged their respective coverage, did follow-up, and compiled area totals. Thanks as well to Allen Lewis, the former Area 7 Coordinator who did such an exceptional transition with Meghaan.

We are also extremely grateful to the Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Howard County Conservancy, and many private property owners for access to their respective properties which helped assure more complete coverage of our county.

Most importantly, thanks to every one of our 70 participants who spent 236.4 hours observing and covering 153.4 miles on foot and 401.3 miles by car. They spent another 13.3 hours feeder watching, plus 8.2 hours stationary and six hours owling. That six hours of owling helped prevent last year's Great Horned Owl shortfall, when our entire team of 72 volunteers only spent 18 total minutes owling.

At the end of the day, Mary Lou Clark hosted this year's hybrid Tally Rally and potluck at her house. She welcomed over 20 of our counters for the traditional potluck with another seven birders participating via Zoom. Many thanks to Mary Lou!

Area leaders' names are in boldface below (*anyone who counted in more than one area or also at a feeder is listed just once*). Thanks to everyone!!

Observers: **Area 1. Hill**, Jim and Marilyn Brinkley, Lisa Coangelo, Wes & Sue Earp, Gayle Hill, Kathie Lillie, Mary Prowell, and Mark Wallace; **Area 2. Kovach**, Chen Chiu, Jeff and Karen Culler, John Finedore, David Holmes, Yi-Ying Lee, Vitus Li, Lauren McDougale, Gregg Petersen, Kurt Schwarz, and Ashley Tipton; **Area 3. Stirrat**, Ralph Cullison III, Guy DiRoma, Lynn Gregg, Steve Jones, Felicia Lovelett, Woody Merkle, Russ Ruffing, David Sandler, Val Swan, Robin and Hyacinth Todd, and Laura Van Faasen; **Area 4. McClure**, Mike Leumas; **Area 5. Trouton**, Debbie Belchis, Megan Bolcar, Mary Lou Clark, Lisa Helmer, Clayton Koonce, Shashi Lengrade, Steve Luke, Mary Maxey, Nancy Schweiss, and Sherry Tomlinson; **Area 6. Harris**, Meg Harris, Janet Lydon, Bonnie Ott, Steve Parr, Suzanne Probst, Ryan Salsman, Clare Sebok, Cathy Staropoli, and Tim Thompson; **Area 7. Lane**, Dennis Coskren, Allen Lewis, John McKitterick, Barry Miller, Brian Moyer, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Ben Newton, Brittany Parsons, Jo Solem, and Michelle Stewart.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

The September 21 and October 26 board meetings will be held by teleconference or videoconference. If you have input or questions, please send an email to Gregg Petersen at sig29@aol.com.

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS - MAY 13, 2023

Canada Goose	810	Eastern Wood-Pewee	142	Savannah Sparrow	12
Wood Duck	63	Acadian Flycatcher	69	Song Sparrow	217
Blue-winged Teal	3	Willow Flycatcher	4	Lincoln's Sparrow	3
Mallard	80	Least Flycatcher	1	Eastern Towhee	148
Bufflehead	1	Eastern Phoebe	67	Yellow-breasted Chat	12
Wild Turkey	17	White-eyed Vireo	35	Bobolink	15
Rock Pigeon	31	Yellow-throated Vireo	18	Eastern Meadowlark	24
Mourning Dove	373	Blue-headed Vireo	3	Orchard Oriole	55
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	5	Warbling Vireo	26	Baltimore Oriole	122
Chimney Swift	111	Red-eyed Vireo	274	Red-winged Blackbird	648
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	19	Blue Jay	353	Brown-headed Cowbird	207
Killdeer	23	American Crow	301	Common Grackle	127
Semipalmated Plover	14	Fish Crow	70	Ovenbird	90
Least Sandpiper	27	<i>crow species</i>	48	Worm-eating Warbler	3
Semipalmated Sandpiper	5	Common Raven	4	Louisiana Waterthrush	26
Spotted Sandpiper	44	Carolina Chickadee	143	Northern Waterthrush	12
Solitary Sandpiper	33	Tufted Titmouse	214	Blue-winged Warbler	2
Lesser Yellowlegs	2	Horned Lark	3	Black-&-white Warbler	10
Greater Yellowlegs	1	Tree Swallow	133	Tennessee Warbler	3
Double-crested Cormorant	33	N. Rough-winged Swallow	27	Kentucky Warbler	8
Great Blue Heron	49	Purple Martin	85	Common Yellowthroat	199
Little Blue Heron	1	Barn Swallow	319	Hooded Warbler	5
Green Heron	24	Cliff Swallow	32	American Redstart	78
Black Vulture	48	Cedar Waxwing	298	Northern Parula	100
Turkey Vulture	62	White-breasted Nuthatch	69	Magnolia Warbler	4
Osprey	11	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	155	Bay-breasted Warbler	6
Northern Harrier	1	Carolina Wren	316	Yellow Warbler	22
Cooper's Hawk	6	House Wren	151	Chestnut-sided Warbler	4
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	9	Gray Catbird	329	Blackpoll Warbler	68
Red-shouldered Hawk	32	Brown Thrasher	47	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	28
Broad-winged Hawk	1	Northern Mockingbird	188	Pine Warbler	6
Red-tailed Hawk	4	European Starling	606	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	13
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	Eastern Bluebird	220	Yellow-throated Warbler	5
Great Horned Owl	4	Veery	7	Prairie Warbler	21
Barred Owl	10	Gray-cheeked Thrush	3	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	2
Belted Kingfisher	21	Swainson's Thrush	28	Canada Warbler	3
Red-headed Woodpecker	8	Wood Thrush	185	Wilson's Warbler	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	303	American Robin	551	Summer Tanager	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	House Sparrow	286	Scarlet Tanager	71
Downy Woodpecker	106	House Finch	163	Northern Cardinal	778
Hairy Woodpecker	27	American Goldfinch	237	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	2
Northern Flicker	41	Grasshopper Sparrow	20	Blue Grosbeak	18
Pileated Woodpecker	41	Chipping Sparrow	259	Indigo Bunting	177
Great Crested Flycatcher	139	Field Sparrow	44	Dickcissel	1
Eastern Kingbird	123	White-throated Sparrow	24	Total Birds:	12,684
Eastern Wood-Pewee	142	Savannah Sparrow	12	Total Species:	133



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

P.O Box 1323

COLUMBIA, MD 21044-1323

September/October 2023 - Inside This Issue:

Club Meetings	President's Message
Field Trips	Spring Records
Convention Pin Design	Fall Count
Welcome New Members	Renew Your Membership
Board Meetings	May Count Results
BBA3	Beginner Birder's Corner

MARYLAND/DC BREEDING BIRD ATLAS 3, 2020-2024

BY SUE MULLER

Breeding Observations Wanted! The MD/DC Breeding Bird Atlas (3) is now in the final half of the fourth year of this five-year survey, mapping the distribution of breeding birds across Maryland and DC. So many birds yet to document! Late summer is a great time for fledglings. Be on the lookout for fledglings begging or following adults around.

It is not too late to contribute records from your yard this past summer. Did you have a Purple Martin colony? Vultures nesting in a shed or barn? Turkey poults in your backyard? Hawk nests? See any Red-headed Woodpeckers? Chimney Swifts in your chimney? Backyard pond with Mallard ducklings? See or hear any owls? If you answered yes to any of these and you have not submitted these observations into eBird through the atlas portal, please contact your County Coordinators (Dave & Sue) at: howard@mdbirds.org. We want your records!

We now have 100 species confirmed breeding in Howard County. This year we finally confirmed a Pine Warbler nest and we have added more Osprey nests too.

Are you new to atlasing? No worries, just contact your County Coordinators, and they will get you started! We have one more year of atlasing left in this study and we want your help!

You can also read more information about the atlas on the club website at <https://howardbirds.website/birding/breeding-bird-atlases/bba3/>.

BEGINNER BIRDER'S CORNER

BY MEGAN BOLCAR

Did you know the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC) provides resources specifically for beginner birders? If you are new to birding, check out the "Beginning Birding" section of the HCBC website (<https://howardbirds.website/beginning-birding/>). There you will find guidance on learning how to bird; an overview of terminology and basic concepts about birds; and a list of excellent resources about common tools to help you find and identify birds.

One of the best ways to improve birding skills is to get out in the field! Bonnie Ott and Val Swan are leading field trips this fall designed for beginners. Bonnie and Val's beginner-oriented trips will include instruction on identification as well as how to use helpful tools including binoculars and field guides. These trips are limited in size to ensure attendees are able to get the most out of the experience, and reservations are required. See the "Field Trips" list on [page 2](#) and look for the trips led by Bonnie and/or Val with a red "**B**" for trip descriptions and how to register. In addition to the fall beginner series, our Goldfinch newsletter and HCBC website always identify trips that are well-suited for beginners with the red "**B**", so those are great to look out for in all of our Goldfinch issues.

Do you have a question you've always wanted to ask as a beginner birder, or a topic on which you would like more information? Feel free to send it to howardbirdclub@mdbirds.org and we will consider it for future editions of Beginner Birder's Corner! All submissions will remain anonymous.