



The Goldfinch

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

Founded 1972



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- [Club Meetings](#) 1
- [President’s Message](#) 1
- [Field Trips](#) 2
- [Spring Bird Records](#)..... 3
- [BBA3](#) 6
- [World Series of Birding Winners](#).... 6
- [Board of Directors Meetings](#) 6
- [Fall Count](#)..... 7
- [Welcome New Members](#) 7
- [Renew Your Membership](#) 7
- [May Count Results](#) 8
- [Young Birders Event Summary](#) .. 10

CLUB MEETINGS - BY MARY LOU CLARK

Thursday, September 12, 2024 “An Introduction to Birding in the New World Tropics” by Dave Ziolkowski. Central and South America offer some of the most exciting birding on the planet! Join us as biologist and natural historian, Dave Ziolkowski, provides an intro to the region and its fascinating wildlife, describing why every nature lover should want to go there, and giving tips for an easy, successful trip.



Dave is the director of the USGS’s North American Breeding Bird Survey and has been actively involved in wildlife research for over 30 years, both in the U.S. and abroad. His childhood interests drew him to graduate studies in tropical biology, and he has taken and led many natural history trips to tropical ecosystems around the world.



Thursday, October 10, 2024 “Marbled Murrelet Research” by Josh Ward. In 2023, Josh was stationed in Roseburg, Oregon to conduct Marbled Murrelet surveys. This talk will not only be about this research, but will cover the rich bird life of Oregon and the natural environment of Oregon in general.

Josh graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in wildlife conservation. He is a passionate poet, birder, and all-around naturalist, and has worked on several seasonal field jobs across the United States.

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.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: CHIRPS TO THE FLOCK

BY GREGG PETERSEN

We are starting our 53rd year! For a good review about what we did in the past year, I encourage you to read my annual report that you can find on our website under *About Us* heading: “Our 2023-2024 Year.”

I especially welcome all our new birders to the club who have joined in the last 12 months. We are so pleased to have you in our club, and we hope you are enjoying your membership. I want all our members to know that our Howard County Bird Club board and working groups have been toiling hard to make improvements so your experience with this great club is a fun and rewarding one. You should have all received a membership satisfaction survey orchestrated by our long-time webmaster Bob Solem recently. We really appreciate those who responded to the questionnaire, and that amounted to 17% of you. The HCBC board, with the help of some of your fellow members, have immediately begun to act on your feedback to make our club better. According to the survey, our two most highly rated offerings were our Rare Bird Alerts and our website.

With regard to Rare Bird Alerts, in case new members are not aware, in addition to emailed Newsgram Rare Bird Alerts, we also have two text groups on the GroupMe App: a Howard Bird Discussion thread (Joe Hanfman, auk1844@gmail.com, can register you) and a Howard County Rare Bird thread (Russ Ruffing, russruffing@gmail.com, can register you), to provide timely birding information and answer questions. One nice aspect of the App is that you can also use it to coordinate short notice meetings with other birders, or get better directions on sites of interest.

Despite the lofty rating for our website, some members felt that it needed improvement, and new board member Guy DiRoma led a focus group to do just that. We hope you like the new look and arrangement to our home page.

Continued on [page 6](#)

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.

B R Beat the Heat Summer Beginner Field Trip

August 17, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. *Location provided after registration.* One mile, slow paced walk through pastures bordering a variety of habitats on private property in western Howard County. Find residents, migratory breeders, and juveniles. Limited to 8 people per session. Contact trip leader for details and to reserve a spot. Leader – Val Swan, valnjeff55@gmail.com

[Middle Patuxent Environmental Area](#)

August 24, Saturday, 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 and Meg Harris, jaybee.harris@gmail.com

Dick Smith Memorial Butterfly Walk

September 1, 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

B R Beyond Field Guides - Introduction to Birding Using Apps and Websites, [Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

September 7, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. Join Terri Berkheimer and Val Swan for a bird walk over mowed paths followed by a presentation in the Nature Center classroom. Learn about online resources to help you identify birds, discover birding locations, and participate in the local, regional, and global birding community through participatory science opportunities. Resources covered will include Cornell Lab's All About Birds, eBird, Project FeederWatch, Merlin Bird ID, and BirdCast. Limited to 25 people. Contact trip leader for meeting location details and to reserve a spot. Trails may be muddy. Facilities available.

Leaders – Terri Berkheimer and Val Swan, valnjeff55@gmail.com

[Rockburn Branch Park](#)

September 8, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. Half day. Montgomery Road entrance. *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 R Fall Migrants at Dunloggin Wetlands Beginner Field Trip

September 15, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. *Park at Dunloggin Middle School.* Opportunity to see early fall migrants (especially warblers) and to learn the details of local woodpeckers. Limit 8 people. Contact trip leader for details and to reserve a spot.

Leader – Ben Costello, bcostel3@gmail.com

B Fall Count

September 21, 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 23, Monday, 9:30 a.m. (Rain date September 24, 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. No trip leader designated. Join friends during a peak migratory period.

B R Sparrows for Beginners, [Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

September 25, Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. 2-3 hours. *Meet at the barn.* Bonnie Ott will go over the basics of sparrow identification and how to differentiate sparrows from other "LBJs." Easy walking on mowed paths that may be wet with dew. Limited to 8 people. Contact trip leader to reserve a spot.

Leader – Bonnie Ott, sparrowdamsel@gmail.com

B R Birding Optics Demonstration Event, [Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

September 28, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. *Event located in the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center.* New to birding? Curious about what to look for in binoculars, spotting scopes, or other optics? Or are you an experienced birder who would like to test drive different equipment? The Howard County Bird Club will host an optics demonstration and hands-on trial event with a presentation covering equipment basics. Club members will be available to help you try out their gear. A short slide show about birding optics will run continuously inside the Conservancy's Gudelsky Environmental Education Center. Although people can come and go as they please, space is limited indoors at any given time, so please contact the event leader to register to attend.

Leader – Tom Seivert, tomseivert@verizon.net

R Sparrows and Spiders, [Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

October 9, Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. Half-day. *Meet at the barn.* Join Bonnie Ott for an advanced sparrow search and learn more about our common spider species. Hoping for some of the sparrow rarities and Bolas Spider. Gaiters or waterproof pants recommended as we will go into tall grass. Limited to 8 people. Contact trip leader to reserve a spot.

Leader – Bonnie Ott, sparrowdamsel@gmail.com

B R Bird Identification Explained - Beginner Field Trip, [David Force WMA](#)

October 12, Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. *Meet at Pebble Beach Dr. entrance across from Concord Ct.* Walking through wooded trails. May be muddy. Limited to 8 people. Contact trip leader for details and to reserve a spot.

Leader – Kristin Trouton, kristing4420@gmail.com

[Skywatch, Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

October 19, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Half day. *See September 23 entry.*

Leaders – Mary Lou Clark and Lynn Gregg.

[Skywatch, Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

October 28, Monday, 9:30 a.m. Half Day. *See September 23 entry.* No trip leader designated. Join friends during a peak migratory period.

[Mt Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy](#)

November 2, Saturday. *Two trips are scheduled: one beginner trip, beginning at 9:00 a.m. (reservations required), and one Skywatch trip, beginning at 9:30 a.m. See the HCBC website [Calendar](#) for details. Further details will also be provided in the November/December issue of The Goldfinch.*

B = Good for beginning birders

W = Wheelchair accessible

R = Reservations Required

SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 – MAY 31, 2024

BY [JOANNE SOLEM](#)

The warmest winter on record preceded an early spring. Hot days and warm nights in late April/early May were followed by almost two weeks of mostly cool, overcast, showery weather, extending peak migration into the third week of May. Birders were rewarded with one of the best passerine migrations in decades.

The star of the season and of May Count was an immature **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (a new verified county record) at the Circle D Club, Carr's Mill Rd on 5/11. This was the 259th species recorded in the county during the month of May, the most of any month. Lisa Colangelo's photos, videos, and written description established the record—a just reward for 20+ years of seasonal count coverage of that private property.

Two Wilson's Phalaropes, three Western Cattle Egrets, and four Mississippi Kites were also exciting. Additional noteworthy species were Long-tailed Duck, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Virginia Rail, Sora, Pectoral Sandpiper, an early *Tringa* shorebird, Caspian Tern (early date), American Bittern, Little Blue Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron (tied early date), Glossy Ibis, Lapland Longspur, Golden-winged Warbler, and Cerulean Warbler.

Although the first significant northward push of **Canada Geese** took place on 2/26, major migration continued into early March: 3/3 Woodmark Lake (**JKy**-multiple flocks heading NW); 3/4 Cavey La (**RRf**-3,000+); Middle Patuxent Environmental Area (MPEA) (**BO**-6,000); 3/5 Cavey La (**RRf**-3,541); 3/8 Skywatch, Mt Pleasant (SW-MTPLT) (**LGg**-845: eight flocks in three hours); Dorsey's Search Loop (**MRg**-500 in 40 min); Driver Rd (**CSt**-600 heading N in 2.5 hrs.); and Joey Dr (**JCh**-210). The first downy young were spotted at Howard Community College 4/15 (**SLk**).

The majority of **Tundra Swans** departed the first half of March, most the first five days. *A reminder*: The two swans at Turf Valley Resort are **Whooper Swans**. They are purchased exotics and are not countable birds. *Do not include them on eBird lists.*

Wood Duck females (f.) with varying numbers of downy young were noted: Centennial Park (CENPK) 4/24 (**MNT**-15), Race Road Wetlands (RACRW) 5/3 (**JW**-6), Alpha Ridge Landfill (ALRGL) 5/14 (**RCu**-6), Daniels, Patapsco Valley SP 5/16 (**STz**-6), and Big Branch 5/17 (**SMu**, **KS**-7). The season's first **Blue-winged Teal** was at ALRGL 3/13 (**JHf**) and the last at Fulton Pond 4/17 (**JW**); four other sites hosted the species; all records were four or fewer. **Northern Shoveler** numbers topped out at 13 at RACRW 3/7 (**JWd**). A **Gadwall** appeared at Wilde Lake (WILLK) 3/24 (**JHf**); the last at Brighton Dam 5/19 (**RVg**, **VLi**, ph.), with a high of 12 at the Jessup Trash Transfer Stat. 4/1 (**JHf**). The earliest **Mallard** ducklings were seven with a f. at Waverly Pond 4/13 (**LGg**).

The few **Greater Scaup** sightings were clustered the last half of March. A male (m.) **Long-tailed Duck** was present at CENPK 3/3 (**MNT**), with three there 3/8 (**DMs**); a small flock was caught live on Night Flight Call (NFC) equipment over Cavey La 3/22 (**RRf**); and two were at Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) 3/31 (**DCm**). Forty-two **Buffleheads** were counted at ALRGL 3/4 and 3/12 (**RCu**); the f. that remained there through 5/31 and continuing (**RCu**) was never seen flying. A f. **Hooded Merganser** with 11 downy young appeared at a stormwater pond at Cedar La/MD 32 on 4/16 (**J/MHr**); various numbers in the brood were reported

through 4/20 (**J/MHr**; **TRy**). Interestingly, a f. with 12 ducklings showed up on the same pond 4/23-24/2022 (**J/MHr**). An unusual number of **Red-breasted Merganser** were at TRIRS in early April, from 17 on 4/4 (**DCm**) to 34 in five groups on 4/5 (**RSI**); the last two were sighted on 5/5 (**JHf**). The final four **Ruddy Ducks** were at CENPK 5/10 (**MNT**).

Wild Turkeys were reported throughout the county. The high was 16 along Clarksville Pike 4/27 (**RBy**).

A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** over Cavey La 4/29 was heard live on NFC (**RRf**), followed there by a **Black-billed Cuckoo** on 5/1, and one heard calling in the yard 5/20 (**RRf**). A **Common Nighthawk** over Starward Farm 5/8 (**JWd**) was the first. All nighthawk sightings were low single digits. An **Eastern Whip-poor-will** was heard on a path to Longfellow swimming pool, WILLK 4/8 (**CMa**).

A **Virginia Rail** was heard at MTPLT 4/8 (**MKw**) in the Davis Branch wetland; later, a recording was obtained. A **Sora** at Waterford Farm (WATFD) 4/17 (**RRf**) flushed from vegetation at a pond edge near the Flats. One **American Coot** was spotted at WATFD 4/24 (**ALw**, **DSn**, **KS**).

The good news this spring was that Waterford Flats and adjoining wetlands, the HCBC's shorebird habitat project at WATFD, attracted a variety of waterbirds. Along with the more expected shorebirds, the area logged the season's last **Least Sandpiper** 5/25 (**YYL**), a **Pectoral** 4/24 (**ALw**, **DSn**, **KS**), and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** 5/18 (**KS**).

Two **American Woodcock** delighted 40 people during the Hippley Mill field trip 3/1 (**MLC**, **SMu**). At least eight were notched there 3/3 (**KS**, **TSv**, **MPw**). A **Wilson's Snipe** at Belmont 4/9 (**GPn**, **MBw**) was at an infrequent location. The first **Spotted Sandpiper** appeared at BRDAM 4/6 (**BCs**). One of the most bizarre sightings of the season was a **Solitary Sandpiper** at an in-ground birdbath at Stone Hill Dr 4/20 until a robin chased it into a patch of lilies-of-the-valley (**KLz**)!

An early **Tringa** shorebird at Meadowbrook Pk 3/7 (**BCs**) was likely a yellowlegs. The 18 **Lessers** at WATFD 5/4 (**RRf**) were the high there. The season's first **Greater Yellowlegs** showed up on the Flats 3/25 (**GPn**, **RRf**); the last was spotted at ALRGL 5/28 (**RCu**).



Two Wilson's Phalaropes (left) and a Lesser Yellowlegs (right). by Kurt Schwarz

Two **Wilson's Phalaropes** at WATFD 5/10 (**KS**) were a seasonal highlight. Spotted shortly after noon in a flooded area adjacent to the Flats, they stayed till early evening; at 5:20 p.m., Bill Hill pointed them out to farm owner, Chuck Sharp. They were the county's sixth record; only the second record in the previous 33 years, and the first record since 5/8/12 Fulton (J. Green-1).

(Records continued on page 4)

(Records continued from page 3)

Caspian Terns drifted through from one at CENPK 3/24 (JHf; MLC, JHR+-1) to two at Lake Kittamaqundi 4/14 (TFy), the majority were at TRIRS. Occasional **Bonaparte's Gulls** were at TRIRS and CENPK the first half of April; the high was 45 at TRIRS 4/5 (GPn, VSw).

An **Am Bittern** at MTPLT 4/8 (RRf, ph.) was a pleasant surprise; NFCs of single birds were also heard over Cavey La, on 4/27, 4/28, 5/13 (RRf). The **Great Blue Heron** colony count at Vantage Pt 3/15 netted 18 active nests, plus two early-stage nests (SMu, JS). There was an undiscovered nest (or attempt) along the Patapsco River as three adults (one carrying a stick) were seen flying east at Marriottsville 4/21 (J/MHr). On 5/24, a short distance upstream at Henryton, PVSP (HENPV), a flying heron was carrying a stick (CSt, ALw, DSn). Nesting along that section of the river was last verified in 1994.

An immature **Little Blue Heron** was a good find at Big Branch 5/17 (SMu, ph.). Three **Western Cattle Egrets** near the Columbia Mall 5/8 (SBk, ph., *fide* LCK) were one of the season's special sightings. This record was obtained when photos were posted to Facebook. The last previous record was at Fulton Pond 4/17/17 (J. Wilkinson-1).

The first **Green Heron** arrived at WATFD 4/1 (GPn). A record-tying early **Black-crowned Night-Heron** over Brush Run 3/21 (JW) was, unfortunately, "heard only." A **Glossy Ibis** made a cameo appearance at WATFD 4/25 (CHm; DCm, ph.), staying from mid-a.m. to shortly after noon (GPn, KS).

Ospreys arrived on 3/8: CENPK (ELp; SLk) and late afternoon over the SW (LWf); a high-flying migrant was still winging northward over an Ellicott City yard on 5/23 (BCs). This season multiple birders reported watching the **Bald Eagle's** locked-talon courtship display.

Mississippi Kites were a spring highlight beginning with a well-documented bird over Joey Dr, Valley Mede 5/14 (JCh); it was followed by one at HENPV 5/19 (RVg, VLi). One at Cavey La ~8:00 a.m. on 5/24 (RRf) was later spotted flying low and carrying a stick toward the Patapsco Valley (JHf, ALw, DSn). Although it was both an atlas confirmation and a county first for this species, it may be years before a nest is found. Spring's last kite was one flying north to south over Martin Rd 5/26 (JHf).



Mississippi Kite

by Russ Ruffing

A **Broad-winged Hawk** was spotted over Joey Dr 4/8 during the partial eclipse (J/MCh). The MTPLT field trip 4/20 logged 14, a nice spring number for this county (GPn, KS, DZk), and, at the SW 5/21, two high-flying birds were moving north (LGg, ph., JHf). Two concurrent successful nests of **Red-tailed Hawks** were verified at ALRGL 3/8 (RCu).

An **Eastern Screech-Owl** was observed in a knothole at MPEA 3/14 (KS). Ralph Cullison played both adult and juvenile calls at Barley Field Way the night of 5/21. He received a response from a juvenile, but almost instantly was hit on the side of the head by an adult (the third time he'd been hit at this location). There was no blood as the bird appeared to use "balled" talons. For those who attempt to call in owls, be aware of the risks, especially when juveniles are present.

This was a banner spring for **Red-headed Woodpeckers** as potential nesters. Single adults or pairs were verified at several sites. Because they are relatively late nesters, the success rate is, as yet, unknown. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** noted in Area 1 on 5/11 (BKd, RJk) was the last of the season. **Peregrine Falcons** were reported at five sites, a typical number for spring.

An early **Great Crested Flycatcher** was picked up at Walt-Ann Dr 4/21 (MLn, LCK). **Leasts** were slow to arrive and were in very low numbers overall, with the earliest along the PATBT 5/8 (FMg). **Red-eyed Vireos** topped out at 44 at MPEA 5/17 (JHf)

Blue Jay mimicry can fool more than birders. On 5/29, a jay was observed producing a Cooper's Hawk call; "... Merlin IDd it as a Cooper's Hawk." (KCn). **Common Ravens** nested again on the Dorsey's Search cell tower 4/28 (AAL, ph.); a family of five was noted near a nest under the I-95 bridge at Wincopin Neck 5/31 (AAL, video), five were counted near the Woodstock bridge (a known nesting site) (RTd); and seven soared together over ALRGL 5/20 (RCu).

Bank Swallows were scarce. One was present at WATFD 5/4 (RRf—all six swallow species were present that day). **Purple Martin** migration continued into early summer. Good counts of kinglets were 38 **Ruby-crowneds** at Gorman-Kindler 4/21 (TFy) and 28 **Golden-crowneds** at HENPV 4/5 (GPn). **Cedar Waxwing** numbers peaked in mid-May with 100 at both Cavey 5/18 (RRf) and HENPV 5/19 (GPn).

A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at RACRW 3/21 (RVg) tied the early record [3/21/12 N. Magnusson]. The high was 31 at CENPK 4/16 (RSI). A brood of three-day old **Carolina Wrens** in a Guilford Rd, Clarksville box on 3/22 was unusually early (MW). A **Marsh Wren** was heard in cattails at a Fulton school pond 5/11 (JW).

The first **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was picked out in a Woodbine yard 5/6 (PPn, ph.). The peak wave of 30 **Wood Thrushes** arrived at MPEA 5/17 (JHf). A Shaffersville field held 28 **American Pipits** 4/28 (DZk); infrequent pipit locations included Schooley Mill Pk 5/5 (SLk-1) and MPEA (JHf-20).

Purple Finch numbers were low and reports scattered. Three were at Starward Farm 3/4 (JWd), with the last one at Rockburn Branch Pk 5/11 (BO). The few **Pine Siskin** records topped out at 10 at Starward Farm 3/22 (JWd).

A well-described **Lapland Longspur** at ALRGL 3/12 (RCu) was a seasonal highlight and the county's second latest spring record (3/21/93 UMcF S. Atkinson). On 4/15, there were no **Grasshopper Sparrows** at ALRGL; on 4/18, 10 were present with several on territory (RCu); they also nested at New Cut Landfill (BO). The **Field Sparrow** high count was 18 at MTPLT 3/26 (J/MHr). None of the few American Tree Sparrow reports had documentation, an increasing necessity for a frequently misidentified declining species. The last **Dark-eyed Junco** was spotted at the north end of TRIRS 5/17 (BHi, ph.). The seven **Vesper Sparrow** sites reported included Belmont 4/9 (GPn, MBw+-2) and How-

(Records continued on page 5)

(Records continued from page 4)

ard Community College 4/15 (SLk-1), both infrequent locations. Nice counts of **Savannah Sparrows** were 42 at New Cut Landfill 4/6 (DZk) and 22 at ALRGL 4/18 (RCu). **Lincoln's Sparrows** are less common in spring than fall, but sharp eyes picked them out at seven sites. In contrast to fall 2023, **Bobolinks** were plentiful and widespread. Forty in one tree at the Lisbon Fire Dept 5/6 (SMu) was a memorable sight. That same day brought ever-increasing Bobolink numbers to New Cut Landfill from 36 in the a.m. (JCh) to a peak of at least 99 in late afternoon (MLn, JWf). That evening Dave Ziolkowski had 78 before watching most of them depart north in a large flock.

The **Baltimore Oriole** that spent its fifth winter at Mt. Hebron was last seen 4/15, the same date as 2023 (JCu). The wintering LKELK bird was still present 3/18 (JHf). A male appeared at a Barberry Way feeder intermittently from 3/2 to 4/8 (VSw, ph.). Two **Brown-headed Cowbird** fledglings were being fed by at least one adult **Song Sparrow** at Lake Kittamaquidi 5/15 (TGRy). Small numbers of **Rusty Blackbirds** appeared at a dozen sites from RACRW 3/15 (JWd-1) to Meadowbrook Pk 4/26 (BO-1).

Warm to hot late April/early May days brought a teaser of warblers. Showers and drizzle the first two weeks of May produced the best spring passerine migration in recent memory and an above-average May Count. The third week of May brought another surge of migrants with an unusual number of species and variety for so late in the season.

A m. **Golden-winged Warbler** at MPEA 4/28 (SLk, ph.) was a special species not seen every year. Single **Tennessees** appeared on 5/1 at both MPEA (J/MHr) and at W. Friendship Pk's field trip (LCg+). **Prothonotary Warblers** turned up at five sites; all appeared to be migrants. As usual, **Mourning**s were few and elusive with one during a Western Regional Pk field trip 5/4 (TDC, FMg, rec.); four on May Ct 5/11 (JMCK-2, RRF-1, RTd, LWf-1); Cavey La 5/19 (RRf), and MPEA 5/20 (TSv). An early **Nashville** was spotted at MPEA 4/26 (LCk, YYL, JLg).

Hooded Warblers were noted on 4/28 at MPEA (J/MHr-1) and at Cattail Crk, TRIRS (GPn-1). At MPEA, two males, at this formerly regular nesting location, stayed through the season (J/MHr). A rather early arrival was a **Cape May** at MPEA 4/29 (KS)

Scarce **Cerulean Warblers** thrilled birders at two sites: New Cut Landfill 4/30 (RSI), where an individual sang all afternoon, and one (or more) were present at HENPV 5/23 (KS; JHf). Normally uncommon **Bay-breasted**s were tallied at more than 20 sites with the first at MPEA 5/1 (J/MHr); a flowering black locust tree was a backdrop for five at Rockburn Branch Pk 5/8 (DTr). A **Blackburnian** at Barberry Way 5/19 (VSw) was the 150th species on these eight acres in 20 years. An early **Yellow** appeared at Burleigh Manor 4/11 (MKw, des.).

Blackpoll Warblers often dribble into June. In contrast, the first spring **Palm** appeared at WILLK 3/31 (SMY); the high count was a modest 20 at Driver Rd 4/15 (DRs). (Thanks to those observers who differentiated their sightings as W (Westerns) or Y (Yellows). **Pines** are among the earliest warblers to arrive; one at Gateway 3/3 was the first non-feeder report (JW).

Local **Yellow-throated Warblers** nest in floodplain sycamores; however, in migration they may be widespread and were seen at eight sites outside their favored Patapsco Valley. **Wilson's** were reported from well over 20 locations, almost double the normal number; two were reported from at least three sites (LCg; WCr; RRF). The first was present at Gorman-Kindler 4/30 (TFy); the

last at WATFD 5/25 (VLi).

The first **Summer Tanager** was heard at Marriottsville 5/8 (JW). One or more were at nearby HENPV, the last on 5/22 (ASm). A dozen **Scarlet Tanagers** were counted at Cavey La 5/13 (RRf).

The first **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was detected at Sewell's Orchard 4/20 (BMy). Despite extended rainy weather, there were few reports of multiple grosbeaks at feeders, although an occasional **Blue Grosbeak** dropped in.

One m. **Dickcissel** was spotted at Bowling Green Farm, Underwood Rd 5/11 (VSw, CSt); it continued through 5/22 (WCr). With its departure, the small colony that had bred at that location in recent years probably has come to an end.

Solar Eclipse: During the 2.5 hours encompassing the solar eclipse of 4/8/2024, Ben Costello entered multiple eBird lists from his Ellicott City home. Watch for his summary article in the Nov/Dec *Goldfinch*.

Appreciation: Many thanks to Joe Hanfman and Russ Ruffing for comments, corrections, and editing. Their assistance, as well as input from eBird reviewer, Tim Carney, was essential.

Observers: AAl – Annette Allor, MBw – Mike Bowen, SBk – Sue Bullock, RBy – Rod Burley, RCp – Rome Campagna, JCh – Jane Chandler, MCh – Mark Chandler, MLC – Mary Lou Clark, LCg – Lisa Colangelo, KCn – Kathy Colston, TDC – T. Dennis Coskren, BCs – Ben Costello, LCK – Lauren Crocker, WCr – Wendy Crowe, JCu – Jeff Culler, RCu – Ralph Cullison III, DCm – David Cummings, TFy – Tim Frye, LGg – Lynn Gregg, CHm – Cathy Hallam, JHf – Joe Hanfman, JHr – John Harris, MHR – Meg Harris, BHI – Bill Hill, RJk – Richard Joklik, JKY – Joyce Kelly, MKw – Mike Kerwin, BKd – Brenda Kidera, MLn – Meghaan Lane, ELP – Ellen Lathrop, YYL – Yi-Ying Lee, JLg – Jessica Leung, ALw – Allen Lewis, VLi – Vitus Li, KLz – Kathy Litzinger, SLk – Steve Luke, CMA – Chris Ma, KMD – Kay Madsen, DMs – Dean Mahlstedt, JMCK – John McKitterick, SMY – Susan Moody, FMg – Frank Morgan, BMy – Brian Moyer, SMu – Sue Muller, BO – Bonnie Ott, PPn – Pam Perna, GPn – Gregg Petersen, MPw – Mary Prowell, GRy – Grace Ray, TRy – Tim Ray, DRs – David Richardson, MRg – Matt Rogosky, JHR – John Henri Rorabeck, RRF – Russ Ruffing, RSI – Ryan Salsman, DSn – David Sandler, KS – Kurt Schwarz, TSv – Tom Seivert, ASm – Andy Smith, JS – Jo Solem, CSt – Chuck Stirrat, VSw – Val Swan, DTr – Denise Tester, MNT – MarkNhu Tewell, RTd – Robin Todd, STz – Steven Tomaszewsk, RVg – Roshan Vignarajah, MW – Mark Wallace, JWf – Jayden Ward, JWd – Josh Ward, JW – Jim Wilkinson, LWf – Laura Wolf, 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 2024 issue is September 25, 2024.

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

MARYLAND/DC BREEDING BIRD ATLAS 3, 2020-2024

BY SUE MULLER

It is hard to believe the Breeding Bird Atlas 3 (BBA3) is coming to the finish line. December 31st marks the end of the five-year study mapping the distribution of breeding birds across the state of Maryland and District of Columbia. It is not too late to contribute to records! Think about it. Since January 1st, 2020, have you documented any nesting activity? Think hawk nests, warbler nests, hen turkey with poults, martin colonies, immature begging calls of owls, hummingbirds collecting nest material, etc. So many possibilities! BBA3 wants your records. Visit the club website for more info at: <https://howardbirds.website/birding/breeding-bird-atlases/bba3/>.

If you need help submitting records, just contact your County Coordinators, Dave & Sue, at: howard@mdbirds.org.

HCBC YOUTH MEMBERS ON WINNING WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING TEAMS

Four of the Howard County Bird Club's youth members competed on winning teams in the 2024 World Series of Birding, a competition in New Jersey to tally as many species as possible within a 24-hour period. Roshan Vignarajah and Vitus Li, members of team No rEgrets, won first place in the Level 3: Division B (Grades 6 thru 8) competition, with an astonishing 190 species tallied. Colin Moynihan and Teddy Maeri, members of team Snap, Grackle & Pop, won second place in the Level 3: Division A (Grades 1 thru 5) competition, with an equally impressive 142 species. Congratulations, Roshan, Vitus, Colin, and Teddy!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

The September 26 and October 24 board meetings will be held in a hybrid format. All members are welcome to attend in person or virtually. If you have input, questions, or would like to attend, please email Gregg Petersen at sig29@aol.com.

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

Our field trip program organized by Joe Hanfman got a high overall mark too, but with so many new birders in our club, our beginning field trip program score was not as highly rated. Our great vice president, Val Swan, greatly expanded our beginner program last year, planning more trips and training more beginners walk leaders. But we know that you want more field trips, especially beginner walks, and Val has coordinated many more beginner walks for this fall. Joe and Val have also been coordinating more basic field trips to fill in our calendar to the extent we can find more trip leaders, and our existing trip leaders sign up to lead additional walks to include some additional trips outside of the county. **I would also ask our beginning birders to consider attending our general field trips.** Our leaders ask at the start of each basic walk for new birders to identify themselves, and the leaders gear their efforts to try to ensure everyone gets to see as many birds as possible.

In addition to our club trips, you should check in at the Wild Birds Unlimited (WBU), Columbia store (formerly Mother Nature's) for free walks in and around our county led by Brian Rollfinke. WBU has plans for their own bird trips in September, October and November, as well as an invitation for "Coffee with the Birds" at their Columbia store. And don't forget to shop at our other partner, The Wildlife Authority, if you are in the neighborhood. As you may recall, your HCBC membership entitles you to a 10% discount at both stores.

When winter comes around, look for a couple of weekend dates on our calendar for the Wingspan board game, organized by member John Henri Rorabeck and board member Mary Lou Clark, at some warm, welcoming, indoor venue.

We will also have several special events to augment our members' skills and equipment choices. Member Steve Luke and board member Lauren Crocker will again be teaching their highly acclaimed Merlin App class that they developed last year, Young Birder Work Group leader Terri Berkheimer will teach Beyond Field Guides about birding apps and websites in early September, and new board member Tom Seivert has scheduled the first Birding Optics Demonstration event in a few years for late September for birders to test out varied binoculars and scopes from different manufacturers and to talk to the equipment owners.

Thanks to survey and email comments from our parents requesting a young birder field trip effort. Members Terri Berkheimer and Ryan Salsman have volunteered to help guide parent-organized, young birder-led field trips. Terri and I led the Young Birder field trip start-up event on June 15th at Howard County Conservancy, and consequently, our first parent-organized, youth-led event took place on August 3 at Schooley Mill Park. We will continue to facilitate more of these trips at the request of parents for our youngsters.

Several survey respondents voiced desire to share their bird and other Howard County nature photos on Facebook. By the time you read this letter, board publicity chair Kelsey Wellons will have established a "Howard County Birds, Butterflies and Nature Group" Facebook site, where members can post their photos and banter about related interests just like they have done on other state birding organizations' sites. The difference in our case is our site will be more inclusive of all county nature interests beyond birds to include butterflies, plants and other animals in our environment. Board member Lauren Crocker is also working to set up an Instagram feed for our club.

Help wanted: We love volunteers: bird counts; butterfly walk and field trip leaders and co-leaders; bird count tally rally hosts; MOS Convention support; assistant webmaster; and anywhere else you may have skills to assist the club. We would love to have your help, and you will have fun doing it. Let me know (sig29@aol.com) or use the website contact form. In the near future, most especially, please try to join a team for the Fall Count on September 21st. You will have a GREAT time! See the details in the Fall Count article in this Goldfinch edition ([pg. 7](#)).

OK, that's it for this welcome. I look forward to seeing you out in the woods enjoying Howard County, or at our meetings. Thanks especially for taking the time to provide your feedback to share your suggestions to make us better.

Warm regards,

Gregg Petersen

THIRTY-FIRST 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 21st, 2024. Mike McClure 410-531-2780 / McCluMD2@hotmail.com and Chuck Stirrat 410-531-2417 / stirrcr1@gmail.com 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, prudence suggests that limited interaction is warranted.

1. Participants will be expected to obey current official guidance on Covid-19 practices.
2. Those concerned about their health and Covid-19, be advised, the county coordinators and all area coordinators strongly recommend wearing a high-quality N-95 mask.
3. The Country and Howard County in specific are currently experiencing an increase in the prevalence of Covid-19 cases which may or may not continue into the fall timeframe. Please watch the Club's Website in early September for the latest plans.

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. People who count in their neighborhoods or watch their feeders are welcome. The county is divided into seven areas (shown on the map to the right) which are used for all annual counts. A **2024 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.

We are hoping to hold an in-person/hybrid tally, but we need a volunteer to host. If you have questions or are interested, please contact the county coordinators. Final details will be available from your area coordinator and on the club website.

The following area coordinators have volunteered:

Area 1) Mark Wallace 301-725-6370 / ABCXYZ5@verizon.net and Wes Earp 410-531-3197 / wesandsue@gmail.com

Area 2) Russ Kovach 443-386-4787 / russell.kovach@gmail.com

Area 3) Gregg Petersen 202-256-8166 / sig29@aol.com

Area 4) Mike McClure 410-531-2780 / McCluMD2@hotmail.com

Area 5) Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643 / krschwal@verizon.net

Area 6) Tom Seivert 410-926-9237 / tomseivert@verizon.net

Area 7) Meghaan Lane 410-829-6192 / meghaanlane@gmail.com

You may email/call an area or county coordinator to volunteer.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Kathleen Buckley	Rachel Johnsen	Carla Reverse
Peili Chao	Mike Kerwin	June Santoro
Klaus Christensen	Scott Larson	Kathryn Seaman
Dawn Courtney	Kathryn Mattingly	Maeve Shalleck
Alvin Cucina	Sam McDonald	Sue Shen
Annette D'Amico	Hehta Meher	Sanvi Singh
Wesley DiGuilio	Laura Miller	Michael Small
Adil Fahkri	Natalie Rose Moore	Mariana Straathof
Kelly Fiona	TC, Sean, &	Danny Tang
Renjifo Florale	Colin Moynihan	Zachary Towne
Sharon, Eugene, &	Kirk Nabors	Susan Tucker
Declan Fodor	Alexander Pellegrini	Edith Vargo
Michael Graber	Joseph Phelps	Maria Villarrol
Tim Hamilton	Menaal Riaz	Radhika Wijetunge
Sharon Hogue	Debra Ricigiano	

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

It is time to renew your membership in the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Howard County Bird Club for the 2024-25 season. Click on the [Join Us](#) link at the top of the HCBC website home page for details.

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS, May 11, 2024

BY GREGG PETERSEN

One hundred and one birders participated in the May Count on May 11th, an increase of 22 observers from last year and the highest number of observers for any May Count! It is heartening to know that almost one fourth of our membership mobilized to support this count.

The event was the 77th statewide and 51st compiled by the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC). It was a great day for the bird count. The day started overcast, but predawn at 5 a.m., the clouded sky was incredibly bright, and the temperature was 44°F with no wind. The temperature rapidly rose to a comfortable 52° at mid-morning with mostly clear skies showing and a slight wind. The temperature steadily rose to 66° by dusk with complete overcast, a freshening 8 mph wind with a steady light rain beginning at 6:30 p.m., and it was steadily falling by 7:00 p.m.

We tallied 143 total species, which is ten more than last year, and three more than our overall average, the highest number in the last eight years, but only the 25th highest count in our 51-year history. The total number of birds observed (17,245) ranked 12th highest for that period. A total of 233 species have been seen in the years since 1974, 76 every year, while 23 have been seen only once. No species was missed for the first time this year, but one species was seen for the first time this year: Lisa Coangelo photographed a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher on the Circle D private farm. Because of its private location and brief appearance, others were not able to get a look at it.

This year's additional exceptional bird sightings for the last ten-year period included a Herring Gull and Dark-eyed Junco for the first time, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Marsh Wren, and Mourning Warblers (4) for the second time, and a Purple Finch and Bufflehead (2) for the fourth time in the last ten years.

We had many species with all-time May Count high numbers including several predators: Osprey (45), Bald Eagle (26), Red-shouldered Hawk (134), Eastern Screech-Owl (5), and Barred Owl (25). The Bald Eagle continues its remarkable resurgence after being seen just once prior to the 1992 May Count. This species has been seen 33 years in a row in ever greater numbers.

The other species with all-time highs were Eastern Bluebird (328), White-breasted Nuthatch (161), Great Crested Flycatcher (202), Least Flycatcher (6), Eastern Phoebe (117), Downy Woodpecker (137), Hairy Woodpecker (60), Fish Crow (121), Common Raven (13), Carolina Wren (505), Wild Turkey (18), Tennessee Warbler (23), and Mourning Warbler (4).

Finally, after having seen Sharp-shinned Hawks for 42 of the 51 years of the count, we have not seen them for the last four years.

As for warbler species, we observed 28 total, which is three more than last year, but that number is still short of the average number of 30 species for the 51 years of the count.

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 Stir-

rat, 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), Tom Seivert (Area 5), John Harris (Area 6), and Meghaan Lane (Area 7), who arranged their respective coverage, did follow-up, and compiled area totals.

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 101 participants who spent 283.3 hours observing and covering 197.4 miles on foot and 337 miles by car. They spent another 11.5 hours feeder watching, plus 7.2 hours stationary and 7.2 hours owling. I highly encourage our count leaders and teams to continue to endeavor to increase your time spent owling. Our observed numbers this year were rewarded by a good faith effort to get out early.

At the end of the day, my wife, Shirley, and I hosted this year's hybrid Tally Rally and potluck at our house. Many thanks to all who attended and to Shirley for helping me with planning and hosting!

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.** Bill Hill & Gayle Hill, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Donna Carollo, Lisa Colangelo, Susan & Wes Earp, Richard Joklik, Brenda Kidera, Kathie Lillie, Connie McRill, Kent Middlekuff, Pam Perna, Mary Prowell, Lisa Troutman, Mark Wallace; **Area 2.** Russell Kovach, Ben Costello, Jeff Culler & Karen Culler, Tiffany Fisk, David Holmes, Yi-Ying Lee, Gregg Petersen, Kurt Schwarz, Ashley Tipton; **Area 3.** Chuck Stirrat, Dianne Aguilera, Jane & Mark Chandler, Ralph Cullison III, Bob & Jan Depuy, Guy DiRoma, Steve Jones, Felicia Lovelett, Woody Merkle, Stephanie Oberle, David Richardson, Russ Ruffing, Valerie Swan, Robin Todd, Laura Wolf; **Area 4.** Mike McClure, Stephanie Coakley, Sandra H. French, Mike Leumas, John Henri & Melody Rorabeck; **Area 5.** Thomas Seivert, Peter Ashley, Debbie Belchis, Teresa & George Berkheimer, Tom Berkheimer, John Blaisdell, Mary Lou Clark, David Cummings, Ann Finneran, Joe Hanfman, Clayton Koonce, Sabrina Lovell, Mary Maxey, David Sandler, Michelle Scherer, Sherry Tomlinson, Jim Wilkinson; **Area 6.** John Harris & Meg Harris, Jillian Adams, Karan Blum, Jill Cairns-Gallimore, Ralph Geuder, Brigitte Lund, Janet Lydon, Kevin Omland, Bonnie Ott, Steve Parr, Suzanne Probst, Clare Sebok, Cathy Staropoli, Tim Thompson, Michele Wright; **Area 7.** Meghaan Lane & Patrick Lane, Megan Bolcar, Ken Clark, Dennis Coskren, Lauren Crocker, John McKitterick, Barry Miller, Frank Morgan, Brian Moyer, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Jo Solem, Brittany Parsons, Teresa Spencer, Michelle Stewart, and Eva Sunell.

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS - MAY 11, 2024

Canada Goose	703	Least Flycatcher	6	Savannah Sparrow	18
Wood Duck	13	Empidonax species	3	Song Sparrow	235
Mallard	52	Eastern Phoebe	117	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Bufflehead	2	White-eyed Vireo	31	Swamp Sparrow	2
Wild Turkey	18	Yellow-throated Vireo	38	Eastern Towhee	197
Rock Pigeon	67	Blue-headed Vireo	5	Yellow-breasted Chat	13
Mourning Dove	417	Warbling Vireo	35	Bobolink	143
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7	Red-eyed Vireo	491	Eastern Meadowlark	18
Common Nighthawk	1	Blue Jay	404	Orchard Oriole	92
Chimney Swift	243	American Crow	455	Baltimore Oriole	127
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	18	Fish Crow	121	Red-winged Blackbird	745
Killdeer	24	crow species	130	Brown-headed Cowbird	244
Least Sandpiper	9	Common Raven	13	Common Grackle	209
Spotted Sandpiper	26	Carolina Chickadee	261	Ovenbird	183
Solitary Sandpiper	41	Tufted Titmouse	418	Worm-eating Warbler	7
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	Horned Lark	7	Louisiana Waterthrush	21
Herring Gull	1	Tree Swallow	126	Northern Waterthrush	28
Common Loon	9	N. Rough-winged Swallow	63	Blue-winged Warbler	1
Double-crested Cormorant	15	Purple Martin	45	Black-&-white Warbler	70
Great Blue Heron	29	Barn Swallow	317	Prothonotary Warbler	1
Green Heron	17	Cliff Swallow	33	Tennessee Warbler	23
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	11	Mourning Warbler	4
Black Vulture	149	Cedar Waxwing	355	Kentucky Warbler	4
Turkey Vulture	260	White-breasted Nuthatch	161	Common Yellowthroat	242
Osprey	45	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	235	Hooded Warbler	4
Northern Harrier	3	Carolina Wren	505	American Redstart	131
Cooper's Hawk	16	House Wren	183	Cape May Warbler	13
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	26	Marsh Wren	1	Northern Parula	161
Red-shouldered Hawk	134	Gray Catbird	432	Magnolia Warbler	57
Broad-winged Hawk	5	Brown Thrasher	48	Bay-breasted Warbler	13
Red-tailed Hawk	36	Northern Mockingbird	272	Blackburnian Warbler	12
Eastern Screech-Owl	5	European Starling	694	Yellow Warbler	65
Great Horned Owl	6	Eastern Bluebird	328	Chestnut-sided Warbler	49
Barred Owl	25	Veery	24	Blackpoll Warbler	95
Belted Kingfisher	21	Gray-cheeked Thrush	4	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	39
Red-headed Woodpecker	7	Swainson's Thrush	52	Pine Warbler	8
Red-bellied Woodpecker	333	Hermit Thrush	1	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	46
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Wood Thrush	197	Prairie Warbler	30
Downy Woodpecker	137	American Robin	706	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	39
Hairy Woodpecker	60	House Sparrow	336	Canada Warbler	33
Northern Flicker	88	House Finch	300	Wilson's Warbler	10
Pileated Woodpecker	60	Purple Finch	1	Scarlet Tanager	127
American Kestrel	4	American Goldfinch	304	Northern Cardinal	974
Great Crested Flycatcher	202	Grasshopper Sparrow	21	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	17
Eastern Kingbird	111	Chipping Sparrow	342	Blue Grosbeak	21
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	1	Field Sparrow	46	Indigo Bunting	214
Eastern Wood-Pewee	158	Dark-eyed Junco	1	Dickcissel	1
Acadian Flycatcher	65	White-crowned Sparrow	11	Total Birds:	17,245
Willow Flycatcher	3	White-throated Sparrow	93	Total Species:	143



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

P.O Box 1323

COLUMBIA, MD 21044-1323

September/October 2024 - Inside This Issue:

Club Meetings	Board Meetings
President's Message	Fall Count
Fall Field Trips	Welcome New Members
Spring Records	Renew Your Membership
BBA3	May Count Results
World Series of Birding	Young Birders Event

FLOCK OF YOUNG BIRDERS SPOTTED AT MT. PLEASANT, HOWARD COUNTY CONSERVANCY ON JUNE 15, 2024

BY TERRI BERKHEIMER

The Young Birder “Meet and Bird” event, led by Terri Berkheimer and Gregg Petersen on June 15 at Mt. Pleasant, attracted 13 participants of varying ages and birding experience (both juvenile and their accompanying adults). Despite being the first day of summer for county students, these young birders were ready for an early morning start! After some brief club comments and birding tips from Gregg, we headed to the Skywatch. The participants came outfitted with their equipment of choice - binoculars, camera, or both. We also had loaner binoculars on hand for family members that did not have their own. In no time, the names of birds were being called out from throughout the group. We had several keen observers with us! In addition to seeing over 40 species of birds, there was also time for participants to swap stories about their favorite birding spots and to share tips. We also encountered HCBC members Lynn Gregg and Meg and John Harris on the property, who were happy to lend assists on IDs with their scope, as well as point out some interesting finds like a tanager with puzzling plumage hanging out by the farmhouse, respectively. The splotchy juvenile tanager made us all dig deep on our identification skills. After initial hopes that it might be a rare Summer Tanager, the group determined that the bird was a Scarlet Tanager after review of our reference pictures for the two birds, and listening carefully to its scratchy song. The most remarkable display of the day was seen from the Skywatch: two Eastern Kingbirds were strafing a Red-shouldered Hawk carrying a dangling Eastern Ratsnake! Thanks to the quick reaction and skill of one of our young participants, we have a photo of it. The photo of the interaction, including others from the trip, can be found here: <https://howardbirds.website/birding/field-trip-reports/20240616youngbirders/>.

The bird club is encouraging our young birders and their parents/guardians to meet informally every month or so. Terri Berkheimer will serve as their point person should they need assistance with communications, picking a date/location or need support from the bird club (ex: loaner binoculars). Our hope is that the more experienced young birders will lead the bird walks. This is a new endeavor, so we'll see what direction it takes, as we focus on fostering a sense of community among the young birders and point them to available resources as needed.

If you know a Young Birder (ages 7-17) that would like to be added to the HCBC Young Birder mailings, please contact Terri Berkheimer (tgtberk@gmail.com).