



# Howard County Bird Club

**A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society**

## *In Memoriam*

### **John Clegg (1948 - 2000)**

Former Howard Bird Club President John Clegg died unexpectedly of a heart attack at age 52 in late July while on a business trip abroad. His loss will be felt keenly, not only by his family and friends, but by the community groups for which he worked so generously.

John and his wife, Eileen, long shared an interest in birds; his first birding trip was his honeymoon, which was spent in Alaska with a tour which ended on the Pribilof Islands in spartan circumstances. As might be expected, the Cleggs became members of the Howard County Bird Club almost as soon as they arrived in Columbia in 1976.

John was a strong supporter of bird club activities, especially its conservation projects. His keen eyes were an asset on field trips and bird counts, while his calm personality and sense of humor made him a pleasant birding companion. Many long-time members remember him accompanied on field trips by his son, Andrew. Family weekends at Cape May and Chincoteague were favorites, while longer trips to Florida and areas of the West always featured natural history, helping Andrew develop a sense of wonder for the natural world.

John's leadership qualities were well recognized, for he was elected to various club offices: president (1978-79 and 1985-87), vice-president (1977-78), and state director (1979-80). Ever since the bird club initiated seed sales, John was an essential part of their success. He helped load seed and always carted extra bags home for people who were unable to make their pickup. In the late 1970's, he helped build the initial storage cases for the club's mounted specimen collection.

Few birders enjoy writing supporting details for unusual species. John was no exception. At tallies, he was often heard to remark half-jokingly, "If I have to write it up, I didn't see it." (Presumably he bent that rule when he and Dave Harvey found two Upland Sandpipers in a pasture along Simpson Road on May Count 1985.)

The bird club extends its deepest sympathy to Eileen and Andrew. For those who knew and shared John's friendship, birding fellowship, and commitment to careful observation, his memory will long remain bright.

—Joanne Solem