



howard county
BIRD CLUB

50th ANNIVERSARY • 1972 – 2022

MEMBERS' MEMORIES

Joe Hanfman

My favorite memory associated with the Howard County Bird Club was finding the Black Rail on 5/18/2013. We had four Sora's and as a joke I played the Black Rail call. On the first "kee-kee-kerr" a real Black Rail responded. I shut off my recording, but it took me a moment to tell the other six folks that it wasn't me playing the recording. The rail called for almost 15 minutes. My second most exciting moment was finding the first Swallow-tailed Kite with Ralph Cullison at Alpha Ridge Landfill. (The 1879 recorded Swallow-tailed Kite at a market in Ellicott City is a bit suspicious.)

I have participated in field trips, bird counts, meetings, potlucks, have been speaker at meetings, have provided rare bird alerts, and compiled the annual list of birds seen. I am currently Field Trip Chair.

My favorite birds for Howard County are Pink-footed Goose, Brant, King Eider, Black Rail, Sabine's Gull, Wood Stork, Swallow-tailed Kite, Snowy Owl, and Western Tanager.

Changes in technology affected the way I bird by having rarities instantly reported. It used to be that rare bird alerts were only updated once a week on the Voice of the Naturalist where you could phone in and listen to a recording. Now it is almost instant notification. This can be a double-edged sword.

I bird every day even when I am doing history and national park tours. (I even have bird lists from a few funerals and weddings!)

My Howard County nemesis bird is Common Tern.

The spark bird that triggered my interest in birding was a Carolina Chickadee that came to my feeder in the first house I bought.