

## **Fifty Years of Howard County Bird Club History**

### **1972-1973**

November 1, 1972. Nanine Rhineland gathered a group of ~15 people to organize a Howard County chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS). They met at a Century Plaza office in Columbia. David Holmes is the only member of this formative committee who is still a member of the Howard County Bird Club (HCBC).

December 14, 1972. First public meeting of the new chapter in a Century Plaza room. Featured speaker was Chandler S. Robbins, "Winter Birds of Howard County." Unexpectedly high turnout required finding a new meeting site for future meetings. David Holmes and Joanne Solem are the only two individuals present at that December meeting who are current HCBC members.

December 1972. First issue of newsletter published. Editor: Martha Chestem. This issue contained "Bird Notes," a sampling of recent sightings, a focus of the club from its inception. These articles continued intermittently for a decade with Joanne Solem providing some bird sightings articles. With the March/April 1982 issue, they continued for several years as the "Bird Beat" series by Grazina McClure.

Club Bookstore established. Dee Van Velzen, manager. The bookstore was a way to provide income beyond membership dues. The manager purchased books (mostly field guides), tapes, checklists, etc. at wholesale prices and resold them to members for less than retail. Stock was available at all meetings.

December 16, 1972. Initial HCBC field trip to Sandy Point State Park and Kent Island. David Holmes, leader.

December 23, 1972. Members encouraged to participate in the 25th Triadelphia Christmas Count. This is the only count circle that includes any significant part of Howard County.

January 11, 1973. Meetings moved to Swansfield Elementary School. They continued there through June 1979.

Montgomery County/Howard County Breeding Bird Atlas was in progress and continued. Members of the new Howard County MOS chapter were invited to participate. This county-level atlas tested various protocols for atlasing. Montgomery County was divided into blocks based on topographic maps, while in Howard County the blocks were further divided into quarter-blocks testing the value of a finer grid.

March 13, 1973. Bird Photography Workshop. Robert (Bob) Herndon, organizer.

Atlas Workshops: April 25, 1973 - "Breeding Warblers" by Kathleen Klimkiewicz and May 9, 1973 - "Hawks, Owls, and Night Singers" by Jay Sheppard and Larry Hood.

May 5, 1973. May Count. Members encouraged to participate. For Howard County, individual results were sent to MOS. They were not compiled on the county level.

May 13, 1973. Picnic at Pat and Dudley Jackson's, Trotter Road, following a walk along the Middle Patuxent River led by Aelred Geis. In subsequent years, a picnic substituted for the June meeting.

July 21, 1973. Four-mile hike along the Middle Patuxent River from MD 32 to MD 108. Larry Hood, leader. This became an annual event. Although in its initial year it was billed as a "hike," much of the time was spent in the water. For that reason, in subsequent years it was referred to as a "wade." After the first trip, attendees were warned to wrap their lunches and photographic equipment in waterproof material. This trip continued with Larry as the leader through 1975, Cathy and Leroy Williamson led it in 1976, and Bob Herndon in 1977. Trips were then dropped for a few years, but were revived in 1982.

### **1973-1974**

Junior Activities. Erwin Klaas, leader. Initial project was to map all nesting county Barn Owls.

Birders kept up with Maryland rare bird sightings by calling the taped "Voice of the Naturalist" provided by the Audubon Naturalist Society, Chevy Chase. The tape was changed once each week.

March 2, 1974. Birder's Workshop at Rhineland's, Folly Quarter Road. Multiple topics during an afternoon. "Winter Birds of Howard County" slide program created to be used for outreach, publicity, and education.

Education Chair Donna Herbst presented a dozen programs on several bird topics during the year.

May 5, 1974. May Count. Howard County participants sent results to MOS compiler, Doug Hackman.

Frances Ehlers reported nesting bluebirds and chickadees in her boxes. This was an early indication of an emphasis on cavity nesters that has continued. Frances became one of the leaders of the HCBC's cavity nester program.

May 15, 1974. Trip to Elliott Island for Black Rails. Jay Sheppard, leader (Patuxent Bird Club).

June 22, 1974. Picnic and members' slide show in late afternoon at the Rhinelander's.

### **1974-1975**

Second slide program completed, "Birds of the Del-Mar-Va Peninsula Refuges."

March 1, 1975. Workshop '75. Jointly sponsored by HCBC and Patuxent Bird Club, Glenelg Country School.

Joanne Solem, organizer. An afternoon with a dozen one-hour topics. Presenters: Lawrence Murphy, Richard Rowlett, Paul Bystrak, Jay Sheppard, Aelred Geis, Robert Herndon, Kathleen Klimkiewicz, Joanne Solem, and Jon E. Boone. These workshops were held annually through 1978.

May 3, 1975. May Count. Erwin Klaas, Howard County compiler. Tally and potluck at Rhinelander's. This was the first time Howard County compiled their own data. The Rhinelanders continued to host the tally through 1982.

Club slides and other bird programs were presented to 15 groups during the year.

June 14, 1975. Picnic at Pat and Dudley Jackson's. They hosted the event annually through 1980.

### **1975-1976**

September 19 and October 20, 1975. Members participated in statewide "Moonwatches." Bob Herndon, organizer. This was a count of birds passing the face of the full moon during fall migration.

March 1, 1976. Membership tops 100 for first time.

March 6, 1976. Birding '76 Workshop. Glenelg Country School. Jointly sponsored by HCBC and Patuxent Bird Club. "Birds of Prey" was the featured topic presented by Bill Clark, Larry Hood, and Jay Sheppard. Paul Bystrak covered MOS sanctuaries, and landscape architect Joseph Ondrajko discussed landscaping to attract birds.

April 25, 1976. Outdoor Workshop, Old Camp Woodbine (private property on Patapsco River). 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Walks, talks, and banding demonstrations. Lucille Peters, organizer. Larry Hood, bander.

June 1976. Howard County Rare Bird Alert authorized by HCBC Board of Directors (BOD). David Holmes named initial contact. Contact method was a telephone tree.

Last membership year that 10 issues of the newsletter were published.

### **1976-1977**

Newsletter issues reduced to five per year to control rising printing and postage costs.

Spring wildflower slide program completed. Like the bird shows, it was used for public presentations.

March 19, 1977. Birding '77 Workshop, Glenelg Country School. Jointly sponsored by HCBC and Patuxent Bird Club. Presenters: Kathleen Klimkiewicz featured habitat birding, Steve Simon covered bird biology, the HCBC's recently completed spring wildflower slide show was unveiled, plus there was a session with Eileen Clegg designed for children. An arts and crafts display and sale was added this year.

Education Committee continued to expand presentations. Anita Conron and Joanne Solem presented the majority.

Late winter 1977. Multi-page questionnaire covering bird feeding and plantings for wildlife was circulated to HCBC and members of MOS chapters in adjoining counties. The results were to serve as the basis for a HCBC publication. Joanne Solem.

Mark Wallace began placing bluebird boxes in western Howard County. Within a few years his box numbers grew from a few dozen to hundreds. He is still the resident expert having devoted his life to this project. He continues to monitor boxes scattered in numerous locations. For many years his boxes routinely fledged more than 1,000 birds each year. Frances Ehlers and Joe Seuss were the two enthusiasts with whom he worked most closely.

June 1977. HCBC received federal and state permits to salvage birds and nests. Joanne Solem was the license holder.

### 1977-1978

September 1977. HCBC began building a mounted bird specimen and nest collection.

Autumn 1977. Seasonal county bird sightings compiled for first time for MOS' quarterly publication *Maryland Birdlife*. Joanne Solem, compiler.

October 1977. American Goldfinch named as the official Howard County Bird. The county's executive branch had asked the HCBC to choose an appropriate bird. Members nominated species (year-round, native, countywide). Of the species nominated, Carolina Wren and American Goldfinch received the most votes with the goldfinch prevailing in a run-off. The membership voted to purchase a painting by Jo Dye to be presented to the county to be hung in the new Howard County office building in Ellicott City.

March 1978. Spring wildflower checklist project begun. It tabulated a list of species, their blooming dates, and varied locations. Chuck Dupree and Joanne Solem, leaders.

David Holmes continued as head of Rare Bird Alert. He received calls and then contacted Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, and Joanne Solem to activate a telephone tree.

April 8, 1978. Birding '78 Workshop, Glenelg Country School. Jointly sponsored by HCBC and Patuxent Bird Club. Presentations: "Sparrows by Sight and Sound" by David Holmes, "Eastern Bluebirds" by Lawrence Zeleny, and "Purple Martins" by Kathleen Klimkiewicz. John Clegg described Piedmont nesting birds; Eileen Clegg presented the Club's spring wildflower slide show; and Nanine Rhinelanders discussed wildlife landscaping.

April 19, 1978. "An Introduction to the Natural History of Howard County" class taught by Eileen Clegg and Joanne Solem at the Howard Community College, part of their Community Education Program. Eight sessions. Taught again in 1979.

May 1-3, 1978. Resource Conservation Week, Columbia Mall. Club display staffed 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Eileen Clegg, coordinator.

### 1978-1979

Trifold brochure designed by Nanine Rhinelanders. The brochure was created to advertise the HCBC.

March 18 and May 20, 1979. Field Workshops. David Holmes. Fee. HCBC-sponsored.

April 26-28, 1979. Resource Conservation Week, Columbia Mall organized by Howard County Bureau of Environmental Services. HCBC staffed a table.

Eileen Clegg and Joanne Moroney were named to an advisory committee to recommend wildlife plantings for the new Howard County Central Library.

Seasonal habitat walks initiated with at least three each year to the same park/location. Co-sponsored with Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks (HCDR&P). Chuck Dupree and Bill Eckert, leaders. David Force Wildlife Management Area (WMA) was the initial site. Bill was the county representative; Chuck the HCBC's. The series continued through early 1994. In addition to Chuck and Bill, individuals who led one or more trips included Alice Kretz, Marci Krishnamoorthy, Mike and Grazina McClure, Linda McDaniel, Mike and Sandy Meyerhoff, Helen Miller, Bonnie Ott, Nanine Rhinelanders, Bob and Joanne Solem, Eva Sunell, Cathy and Leroy Williamson.

May 18-20, 1979. Joint foray with Brooks Bird Club, West Virginia. Members of the HCBC joined in the last of a series of annual searches for Sutton's Warbler. The search was unsuccessful.

Educational presentations during the year (besides various displays) were made to ~1,100 people by Eileen Clegg, Brenda Ericsson, Marci Krishnamoorthy, Sybil McKennon, Joanne Moroney, and Joanne Solem.

June 7, 1979. Barn Owl banding at Kings Contrivance, Columbia for the fifth consecutive year. Elwood (Woody) Martin, bander. Woody banded seven nestlings in a nest in an abandoned barn on land adjoining the Nahrgang's property at the southwest corner of Guilford Road/Eden Brook Drive (just south of the current

Wildwood elevator townhomes). It was the latest date and the largest brood to date. Nesting and banding were a year-to-year proposition depending on development of that land. (*See also November 5, 1980.*)  
June 15-17, 1979. Columbia Mall. Exhibits featuring clubs in Howard County. HCBC staffed a table the entire weekend.

August 26, 1979. HCBC featured in an article in the *Baltimore Sun*.

### 1979-1980

*Attracting Birds in the Maryland Piedmont* published. Joanne Solem, editor, assisted by committee members Martha Chestem, Linda McDaniel, Rosamond Munro, and Cathy Williamson. A 90-page summary of food, water, and plantings for birds in central Maryland based on a detailed questionnaire distributed in the late winter of 1977. This was a HCBC project that produced revenue through several printings.

September 13, 1979. Meetings moved to Grempler Realty Building, Little Patuxent Parkway, Columbia. HCBC met at that location through May 1981.

In the interest of energy conservation, most field trips were planned within the county.

November 5, 1979. Barn Owl banding. Woody Martin, bander. Five young in the barn in Kings Contrivance, Columbia constituted the latest brood and the latest banding at that site. With seven in the first brood, this must have been a peak year for rodents at this location.

November 10, 1979. First HCBC Seed Sale. Eileen Clegg, organizer. A second sale was held on January 25, 1980. Two seed sales were held each year until 2001.

November 17, 1979. Bus Trip to Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Co-sponsored with HCDR&P. Chuck Dupree and Bill Eckert, leaders. Inaugural trip visited several Eastern Shore locations. Annual trips were run through 1993. Trip destinations included Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Remington Farms, and Little Creek Wildlife Refuge. When Chuck needed a substitute, Martha Chestem filled in. Initially, the bus was a commercial vehicle with a restroom; eventually, as costs rose, a school bus was used instead.

Howard Community College, Community Education. Two classes in the fall season: "Introduction to Ornithology" (a six week field course for beginners) by Bill Hilgartner and "Attracting Birds through Plantings and Feeding" (eight weeks) by Joanne Solem.

January 1980. Annual list of Howard County birds for 1979. David Holmes, compiler. Annual county lists on a statewide level had been created prior to the founding of the HCBC, but had been discontinued. The HCBC revived the list for the 1979 year. David would continue to compile this summary through 1986.

Comprehensive Howard County bird species list compiled. David Holmes, compiler.

June 1, 1980. End of second year of Spring Wildflower Project. Chuck Dupree, Bob and Joanne Solem, compilers.

June 7, 1980. Recreation Expo, Columbia Mall. Eileen Clegg, coordinator. 10:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m. (This event, under several different names, had taken place during a weekend; from this time on, it was reduced to a single day.) HCBC had a table and continued to participate through 1991. In 1986, the event was scheduled for June 7, the same weekend as the MOS convention. Despite that conflict, John Clegg, as coordinator, found individuals to cover the entire day. In 1988, the event was moved to February. Eileen continued to schedule staffing.

### 1980-1981

September 1980. Columbia Waterfowl Committee merged with the HCBC as a committee. As such, they had representation on HCBC's BOD and could continue their own field trips and waterfowl surveys of the Columbia lakes.

Bird identification series initiated in newsletter. Martha Chestem wrote the first one.

Banded Barn Owl found dead in Pennsylvania. One of the nestlings Woody Martin had banded in the Kings Contrivance barn in June 1977 was found dead in a barn in Wexford, Pennsylvania. Poisoning was suspected. HCBC was asked to create a bird list for the Howard County Central Library.

Special issue of the newsletter featured bird behavior by Venkataramap "Kris" Krishnamoorthy.

January 1980. Eva Sunell received a federal permit to possess and rehabilitate injured or ill passerines.

February 15, 1980. Owl trip to Patuxent River State Park. Jay Sheppard, leader. First official owl field trip. Jay had been making unofficial trips with individuals and small groups for a number of years. Initially the field trips explored the MD 97 conifer tract; after several years, the trip was moved to the Annapolis Rock Road tract.

"An Introduction to the Natural History of Howard County" class by Eileen Clegg and Joanne Solem at Howard Community College, Community Education. Eight weekly classes.

"Selected Spring Arrival and Departure Dates" published. Joanne Solem, compiler.

In celebration of its upcoming tenth anniversary, the HCBC chose to raise funds for The Nature Conservancy's new Nassawango Sanctuary on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

June 21. Laurel Raceway Pond. On June 18, 1981, Paul Leifer found a Common Gallinule nest with eight eggs in cattails in the pond in the center of the harness track at the corner of US 1/Gorman Road. He did not see the bird nor did he recognize the eggs so three days later he went back with five people including Bob Patterson, Hal Wierenga, and Joanne Solem. The observers' jobs were twofold: identify the bird leaving the nest and decoy the male of a nesting pair of Mute Swans while Paul and Bob waded into the cattails, examined the nest, and measured the eggs. A Common Gallinule was seen leaving the cattails. It alternately flapped and ran to the edge of the pond and up onto the track. It stayed on the opposite side of the track until an exercising horse with sulky trotted along the track. The bird flipped over the steel railing and was not seen again while observers were present. This is the only county nest record of this species.

Summer. First county Tree Swallow nesting verified.

Summer field trip for Eastern Whip-poor-wills, a nesting county species at the time.

### **1981-1982**

September 10, 1981. Meetings moved to Longfellow Elementary School. The HCBC met at this site until May 2004.

Alice and Clif Grant and Bob and Joanne Solem installed a stone birdbath at the Howard County Central Library. Alice volunteered to keep it filled. A bird feeder donated by the HCBC was initially filled by Eileen Clegg; later Martha and Don Waugh took on the responsibility. The HCBC had also donated a bird feeder to historic Waverly Mansion, but did not assume responsibility for providing seed or keeping it filled.

October 1981. John Clegg and Bob Solem built eight plywood carrying/storage cases for the growing collection of mounted bird specimens.

November 12, 1981. Tenth anniversary celebration began. As the featured speaker, Chandler S. Robbins presented "Forests Are for the Birds." Steve Hamblin from the Maryland chapter of The Nature Conservancy was presented with a \$3,500.00 check for the Nassawango Sanctuary. Martha Chestem, one of the club founders, recalled some of the early events and important people from the initial years. President Mike McClure and Martha cut the cake. Ninety people attended.

February 20, 1982. Annual Potluck and Members' Night moved to a weekend and became an event for adults only. It no longer replaced the February meeting. The site was to be the Rhinelander's, but when snow made their lane impassible, Mike and Grazina McClure stepped in on short notice to host the event.

Bird articles for telephone directories. Byron Publishing Co., Columbia planned to publish a series of telephone directories for towns in Central Maryland. They asked the HCBC to provide one-to-two page anecdotes and information about birds. If successful in selling sufficient advertising, the venture would provide excellent publicity. Contributors were Martha Chestem, Rosamond Munro, Bea Newkirk, Nanine Rhinelander, Joanne Solem, and Eva Sunell. Bird material was grouped at the rear of the volume with attractive black-and-white drawings on each page. The only directory the club ever received was one for Crofton, Anne Arundel County in 1982. Howard County residents never saw evidence that any directory by this company was published for this county.

Repository for North American bird information. Organized trips to special birding sites were becoming popular. To assist members in sharing information, Jan Randle volunteered to keep donated checklists, maps, lodging material, etc. about good birding locations.

“Spring Wildflower Checklist” published. Chuck Dupree, Bob and Joanne Solem, compilers.

Nature library authorized. When the HCBC received a box of nature-related books from a member who was moving, it was suggested that the BOD create a lending library. Since there was no nature center in the county and the HCBC had no physical location, Maud Banks volunteered to chair the effort and keep whatever was donated at her home. People could contact her and borrow volumes. After several years, the library occupied several boxes, but it was difficult to keep the membership apprised of the holdings, plus visiting someone’s home to borrow books was awkward since telephone permission and directions had to be arranged in advance. Ultimately, it was not successful.

March 11, 1982. In thanks for the club’s generous donation, The Maryland chapter of The Nature Conservancy gave the club a framed photograph taken at the Nassawango Sanctuary. HCBC’s BOD decided that, at the March meeting, the names of all those who had donated to the sanctuary fund and all individuals who had worked at the November seed sale (proceeds had been designated for the sanctuary) would be placed in a container and a name drawn to receive the photograph. John and Brenda Bell were the winners.

August 15, 1982. Middle Patuxent Wade. Martha Chestem and Bill Eckert, leaders. This trip from the late ‘70s was revived as an event co-sponsored by HCDR&P. In 1983, it was described as a “slosh,” with Bill Eckert as the leader. In 1986, the River Wade was moved to Savage Park with Bill continuing as leader.

August 1982. Howard County Fair. Initially, the HCBC was given a table in the commercial barn and staffed the table evenings and weekends. The commercial barn was not really the best fit for a nature-oriented non-profit so, in subsequent years, the HCBC’s table was moved to the vegetable barn. The HCBC had an annual presence at that location through 2005. Staffing initially was done by Mike McClure. In later years, other individuals who took over that responsibility included Tom Strikwerda, Darius Ecker, Paula Ecker, Karla Pearce, and Sue Probst.

1982-1983

Jon E. Boone designed a new heading for the newsletter.

October 23-24, 1982. Birding Workshop, Howard County Central Library’s meeting room. Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.; Sunday 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Martha Chestem, organizer. Presenters: Alice Grant, David Holmes, Mike McClure, Bob Solem, Mary Janetatos, Joanne Solem, Martha Chestem, and Chuck Dupree. Topics: identification techniques, optics, photography, bluebirds, field guides, and landscaping.

Autumn wildflower survey begun. Bob Solem, compiler.

January 1, 1983. First Maryland/District of Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas begun. Chuck Dupree and Jane Farrell Coskren, Howard County co-compilers. This five-year atlas ran 1983-1987.

February 1, 1983. “Bluebirds in the Parks” project initiated. Co-sponsored by HCDR&P. Bill Eckert, organizer.

February 12, 1983. Potluck and members’ slides evening. Hosts: Nanine and Fred Rhineland. For the second consecutive year, a snowstorm postponed the event to March 26.

March 1983. Membership reached 233.

David Holmes appointed to the MOS Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee for 1983-1985 term. He served another term from 1994–1997.

Frank Griffin constructed wooden carrying cases for three large mounted birds in the club’s collection.

April 30, 1983. Spring wildflower workshop, Howard County Central Library. 9:15 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Coordinators: Martha Chestem and Joanne Solem. Presenters and field trip leaders: Alice Grant, Eva Sunell, Chuck Dupree, Bob Solem, Bill Eckert, Joanne Solem, and Elise Seay.

May 7, 1983. May Count tally at Jan and Don Randle’s. They hosted this tally 1983–2006!

## 1983-1984

October 22, 1983. Birding workshop, Howard County Central Library. Anne Hart, coordinator. 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Presenters and field trips leaders: Alice Grant, Mike McClure, David Holmes, Mary Janetatos, Joanne Solem, Bob Solem, Chuck Dupree. Displays, presentations, field trips.

November 20, 1983. Reception and dinner honoring Chandler S. Robbins at the Florence Bain Senior Center 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Dinner: Columbia Inn. This event marked the publication of the second edition of *Birds of North America*. Reception included book-signing followed by a dinner for 55 at a local restaurant. Members of seven MOS chapters and four current and past MOS presidents attended along with guests Eleanor Robbins (Chan's wife) and two of his children, Stuart and Jane. President Jane Farrell Coskren presented Chan with a lifetime membership in the HCBC, the only one the club has ever awarded. Jane, along with Jan Randle, arranged the event. (More information is available in an article in the January/February 1984 HCBC newsletter.)

January/February 1984 newsletter. Bird identification feature initiated by Jon E. Boone, illustrated by the author.

March 10, 1984. Annual potluck at the Florence Bain Senior Center. The 60-70 people attending this event had outgrown the Rhinelander's home. It was scheduled in March instead of February in an attempt to avoid snowstorms.

May 1984. "Introduction to Bird Watching" class by Joanne Solem at HCDR&P headquarters (four sessions: two inside, two field).

May 10, 1984. "Butterfly Gardening" program. Robert Mitchell, author of the pocket *Butterflies and Moths* Golden Guide. This marked the beginning of an enhanced interest in butterflies by some HCBC members.

Bea Newkirk took over as Howard County Rare Bird Alert organizer. Rare bird sightings were to be reported to David Holmes, Martha Chestem, Joanne Solem, or Bea to activate the telephone tree alert.

Educational presentations. During the past year, seven people used the mounted bird specimens and slide programs for presentations to 18 groups of school classes and community organizations totaling 1,100 people. This outreach was in addition to workshops, Recreation Expo, and the Howard County Fair.

## 1984-1985

"Letter from the Chapter President." David Pardoe, president. This is the first time a welcome letter appeared in the newsletter at the beginning of the membership year. It has since appeared annually.

September 15, 1984. Butterfly walk. Gerald Einem, leader. The first club-sponsored butterfly walk was held as a follow-up to the May program.

"Attracting Birds" class by Joanne Solem. Three sessions at HCDR&P headquarters.

March/April 1985 newsletter contained the "Cavity Nester Program" summary for 1984. Mark Wallace reported 73 boxes and 170 bluebirds fledged. The top-producing trail belonged to Jon E. and Jon K. Boone; their 59 boxes fledged 201 bluebirds. Tree Swallows were also reported nesting in three boxes: (three clutches, 15 fledged). Within a decade, this species would become a common and widespread species.

March/April 1985 newsletter's identification article featured a comparison of Snow Goose, Mute Swan, and Tundra Swan. At that time, there were no county records of either Ross's Goose or Trumpeter Swan, but a few Mute Swans were still being seen regularly, and small numbers of Snow Geese were expected in winter. That article would have quite a different species mix today.

March 2, 1985. Birding Workshop, Howard County Central Library. Anne Hart, coordinator. 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Presenters: Steve Harsy, Joanne Solem, David Holyoke, David Pardoe, Mike McClure, and Martha Chestem. Field trip: Jane Farrell Coskren.

March 9, 1985. Annual potluck at the Florence Bain Center. Monika Botsai, coordinator. The potluck continued to be held at this location through 1997 with Monika Botsai and Grazina McClure co-coordinating most years; Monika and Helen Zeichner were coordinators in 1996. Monika and Mary-Jo Betts coordinated 1997, the final year there.

May/June 1985 newsletter contained "Preliminary Checklist of Birds of Howard County, 1956-94." Joanne Solem, David Holmes, and Marty Chestem, compilers.

"Preliminary Checklist of Howard County Wildflowers" published. Bob Solem, compiler, assisted by Chris Ludwig and Burton Alexander.

May 15-June 3, 1985. "Intermediate Nature Photography" class by Anneke Davis (Baltimore chapter). Six sessions, three-week class. Zelda Simon, coordinator. Co-sponsored by HCBC. Fee.

### 1985-1986

September/October 1985 newsletter. "Birding Hot Spots" series begun by Chris Ludwig. First featured site: Lake Elkhorn. This series was the precursor to the Howard County site guides in *Birding Howard County, Maryland*.

First "Maryland Wildlife Stamp" and print on sale, authorized by Maryland legislature. Artist John Taylor chose a Baltimore Oriole as the first bird featured. Proceeds from the \$5.00 stamp were designated for non-game wildlife. The project was initiated by Martha Chestem. MOS and the HCBC worked tirelessly to gain passage in the state legislature. There were five annual stamps (with accompanying optional \$35.00 prints). Because the stamps were not required for any activity, sales were relatively low and did not generate the expected funds. After five years, the project was discontinued.

Habitat Walks. This year they were at the as-yet-undeveloped Meadowbrook Park.

September 21, 1985. Ellicott City County Fair, Tiber Place. Linda Harsy coordinated staffing of the HCBC display.

September 28, 1985. Columbia Hometown Fair, Columbia Mall. Cathy Williamson, coordinator. Display staffed 10:00 a.m. – 9:30 p.m.

October 24, 1985. "Lending Policy for Mounted Specimens" adopted by HCBC's BOD.

*Bluebird Booklet*, No. 1 published. Joanne Solem and Mark Wallace, authors.

February 1, 1986. First Howard County Mid-winter Count. David Holmes (compiler) and Joanne Solem (organizer). Jane Farrell Coskren, tally host. This was the first time in Maryland that a countywide count had been conducted during winter. It was an attempt to determine if there were significant differences in species between the annual Christmas Bird Counts and a count conducted in the middle of winter.

"Basic Bird Guide" scrapbook created by Martha Chestem for residents of St. Joseph Nursing Home, Catonsville.

"Attracting Birds in Winter" tip sheet was compiled.

"Cavity Nester Summary." Bob Bogdan, compiler. More than 500 boxes monitored, 1,343 bluebirds fledged. Just one box was occupied by Tree Swallows which fledged five. A map of county nestbox locations was prepared.

Spring 1986. Howard Community College. Adult Education offered a class in "Field Ornithology" by Bill Bridgeland. In addition, HCDR&P sponsored "Introduction to Birding" and "Intermediate Birding" classes by Joanne Solem and "Introduction to Spring Wildflowers" by Bob Solem.

Howard County Rare Bird Alert organizer Bea Newkirk was assisted by 15 callers. List of members to be called was rearranged each year in response to the annual members' questionnaire.

### 1986-1987

September 27, 1986. Town Fair, Columbia Mall. Eileen Clegg, coordinator.

In the early 1980s, recycling was at least minimally profitable. Because there was, as yet, no countywide recycling, one or more private companies collected recyclable material. Citizens took their material to locations where it would be weighed and an amount per pound credited, if so desired, to a community group. For years, many HCBC members faithfully recycled bottles, newspapers, cans, etc. and named the HCBC as the beneficiary. In September, Treasurer Don Randle received a check from the Columbia Recycling Center for \$64.00, a significant sum for the young HCBC.

January 1, 1987. Beginning of the fifth and final year of the Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas.



January 31, 1987. Howard County Mid-winter Count. David Holmes and Joanne Solem, compilers. Tally site: Zelda and Hal Simons' home The first count had been well-received. Results, of course, raised as many questions as were solved so it was planned to continue the count for at least three, probably five years. By the end of that period, the count had become an anticipated annual event. David was the primary compiler 1986—1990. The tally site was the Simons' through 1994. In 1995, it was scheduled there, but weather postponed the count. The Simons were unavailable for the make-up date so Bonnie Ott offered her home. In 1996, it was moved to Martha and Don Waugh's where it remained through 2005. When the Waughs were unable to host the tally in 2006, Jeff and Karen Culler stepped forward to offer their home as the site. It remained there through February 1, 2020, the last major club event before the pandemic. The 2021 tally was held virtually via Zoom.

March 30, 1987. The HCBC was featured in an article in the *Columbia Flier*.

April 11, 1987. Gardening show, Howard Community College. Eileen Clegg, coordinator for HCBC display.

April 17, 1987. Woodcock Field Trip, Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. Aelred Geis, leader. Participants were instructed to wear dark clothing. Each spring for years Al led woodcock walks at MPEA for the club and for the Middle Patuxent Environmental Foundation in an effort to encourage the Columbia Association/Howard County to preserve a significant portion of the Middle Patuxent River Valley.

HCBC began mailing *Maryland Birdlife* for MOS (four issues per year). Tom Strikwerda coordinated this effort. When an issue was received from the printer, up to a dozen volunteers assembled at a designated location. They spent two to three hours stuffing envelopes, affixing address labels, and sorting items by zip code to comply with bulk mailing procedures. To prepare the material for mailing, Tom leaned heavily on Martha Chestem, who had mastered the somewhat arcane postal requirements. Tom then carted the journals to the post office--no small job. Initially, the MOS bulk mail permit was in Baltimore; later, the permit was moved to Columbia. In return for the HCBC's mailing *Maryland Birdlife*, MOS allowed *The Goldfinch* to be mailed on the same permit saving the HCBC the cost of a permit. Martha Chestem was in charge of the physical mailing of the newsletters.

"Boost Bluebirds and Other Cavity Nesters" project. Mark Wallace and Joe Seuss were named co-chairs after Bob Bogdan's resignation in the spring.

May 17, 1987. Field trip to Schooley Mill Park. Joanne Solem, leader. Trip description noted it was an "opportunity to bird an area before it is opened to the public." Trip list included Kentucky, Prairie, and Hooded warblers, Eastern Meadowlark, and Grasshopper Sparrow. All nested in the park at that time.

### 1987-1988

In a continuing effort to practice fuel conservation, President Marty Chestem announced that field trips this year would focus on local parks.

"Flower Feature" begun in newsletter. Wildflower drawings and portions of text by Georgia Morris; Bob Solem also provided material. This feature continued in each issue through March/April 1992.

"Parks Checklist Project." HCBC began an effort to create bird lists for each major county park. Co-sponsored by HCDR&P. Jane Farrell Coskren, coordinator.

All-occasion notecards featuring a Belted Kingfisher drawing by Sue Probst available at club bookstore. Cards had been commissioned by the HCBC.

September 19, 1987. Hometown Fair, Columbia Mall. Eileen Clegg, coordinator for HCBC.

October 1987. HCBC Memorial Fund established.

November 12, 1987. Fifteenth anniversary celebrated. Half a dozen long-time members were featured speakers.

Mark Wallace built a five-cell display wooden case for cavity nester nests. The top and front were Plexiglas with hinged wood covering those sides. It had a carrying handle. It was valuable for educational presentations.

February 13, 1988. Eagle nest search, Patapsco Valley State Park (PVSP), vicinity of Ellicott City. Karen Skuldt, leader. After several sightings of eagles in her atlas block during the breeding season, including birds carrying

sticks, state biologists encouraged Karen to search for a nest after leaves had dropped. The search became a field trip and, unfortunately, was unsuccessful. Karen also led an equally unsuccessful second search on February 11, 1989 to a slightly different eastern area of the Patapsco Valley. This was the beginning of the resurgence of nesting eagles away from the Chesapeake Bay. It would be almost two decades before there were more than one or two nests in the county, and eagles would become a regular sight at county reservoirs and lakes.

March 5, 1988. Annual potluck, fifteenth year celebration. Florence Bain Senior Center. Monika Botsai and Grazina McClure, coordinators. President Martha Chestem presented the first two HCBC Valued Service Awards to Eileen Clegg and Joanne Solem. The award had been recently created by MOS to recognize outstanding volunteer contributions on a chapter level.

March 12, 1988. "Beginning Birding and Cavity Nesting Birds Workshop." Miller Branch Library 10:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m. Martha Chestem, coordinator. "Introduction to Birding" by David Holmes was the featured topic. Chuck Dupree narrated the North American Bluebird Society slide program; Joe Suess and Mark Wallace were present to answer questions about bluebirds.

"1987 Annual Howard County Bird List" produced. Jane Farrell Coskren, compiler. She would continue to compile through 2006.

On three spring evenings, Chandler Robbins directed volunteers from the HCBC in a search of regional ornithological journals for material about Maryland species that could be used by atlas authors. Assisting were Chuck Dupree, Jane Farrell Coskren, Martha Chestem, Michele Wright, Marjorie Mountjoy, Elise Seay, Joanne Solem, Maud Banks, Eileen Clegg, and Kevin Gillen.

April 24, 1988. Sarah Haviland Memorial Wildflower Walk. Bob Solem, leader. Middle Patuxent River east of Shaker Drive.

"Wildflower Checklist Project" continues. Bob Solem, compiler.

May 14, 1988. May Count date changed. After extended discussion, MOS experimentally moved the annual count from the first to the second Saturday in May. It has remained on that date, now as part of the North American Migratory Bird Day.

May 28, 1988. HCBC's BOD adopted five-year goals. The list included "Establish a hawk watching site in the county." This finally came to fruition with the Skywatch Project at Mount Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy, dedicated to the memory of Chandler S. Robbins, April 21, 2018. (The five-year goals are listed in the September/October 2013 newsletter.)

Over the course of the first 15 years, volunteers had presented at least 284 educational programs in 37 schools, to 24 garden clubs, and to 58 Scout and 4-H groups.

### **1988-1989**

Habitat Walks, Cedar Lane Park. Chuck Dupree and Bill Eckert, leaders. Co-sponsored with HCDR&P. This was the tenth year of the jointly-sponsored walks. The first half dozen years Chuck Dupree was the HCBC's representative and co-leader; in the last few years, 12 additional club members served as a co-leader at least once. These walks continued through the winter season of 1994.

Effort to determine a location for a county hawkwatch site continued. Ralph Geuder coordinated observations during fall migration at several locations this year. In the following two decades, daylong hawkwatch field trips were held at Rockburn Branch Park, Meadowbrook Park, Carr's Mill Landfill in Worthington, and Mount Pleasant. The majority over several decades were led by Ralph, but Kurt Schwarz, Harry Fink, and Charles Swift led at various times at Meadowbrook Park.

September 23-24, 1988. Hometown Fair, Columbia Mall. Eileen Clegg, HCBC coordinator.

All-occasion notecards featuring a Barred Owl drawing by Sue Probst available in club bookstore.

Commissioned by HCBC.

Tenth year of seed sales. There were two sales each year until 2001. Proceeds from the sales were donated to bird conservation and habitat preservation projects.

April 1989. Sunday morning walks at Centennial Park. Co-sponsored with HCDR&P. Although they were not co-sponsored after November 1995, the popular Sunday walks for a month each spring and fall remain on the field trip calendar and usually draw a dozen or more people.

“Cavity Nester Summary.” Mark Wallace and Joe Suess, compilers. A record 1,563 bluebirds were fledged based on data submitted by 68 people.

The “1988 Annual Howard County Bird List” hit a record 220 species in its tenth year. Jane Farrell Coskren, compiler.

“Hot Spot” feature in *The Goldfinch* was continued by Charles Swift after Chris Ludwig moved out of state. Soon, it was authored by individuals who had responsibility for the bird list of a site, i.e., Schooley Mill Park by George Chase and Nancy Magnusson.

Membership surpassed 300 entitling HCBC to an additional MOS State Director.

“Centennial Park Bird Checklist” begun. Charles Swift, compiler.

Educational programs using mounted bird specimens or slide programs were presented by 22 people during the year.

May/June 1989 newsletter included a Lyme disease alert. It was the newsletter’s first mention of this disease.

### 1989-1990

September/October 1989 newsletter contained one month of the “Birding Year in Howard County” feature by Joanne Solem. The article had a summary of some expected bird species along with breeding and migratory activity. All months were eventually covered.

“Introduction to Birdwatching” class, co-sponsored with Howard County Library system. Two sessions at Miller Branch by Joanne Solem.

“1989 Annual Howard County Bird List” tallied a record 223 species. Jane Farrell Coskren, compiler.

April 22, 1990. Dedication of nature information board at Centennial Park donated by the HCBC. The board is attached to the office building at the park’s South Entrance. Howard County Executive Elizabeth Bobo and HCBC Vice-president Joanne Solem unveiled the board. Director of HCDR&P Jeffrey Bourne attended. The original intent was for material to be posted by the HCBC and the park. Because only a park employee had the key, it was difficult to keep material current. In 2008, Jeff Culler volunteered to be responsible for the content of the board (and still is); the key was transferred to him on December 1, 2008. He changes the display seasonally using his own photos and adding information about dozens of species. Bird photos are featured, but turtles, snakes, and insects may be posted. In summer, butterflies are featured.

Announcements of HCBC activities are updated regularly.

April 28, 1990. Spring wildflower walk along Savage Mill Trail. Bob Solem and Sue Muller, leaders. Co-sponsored with HCDR&P. First co-sponsored wildflower trip.

May 6, 1990. Butterfly Walk, Daniels, PVSP. Richard Smith, leader. During this year, he began bringing cases of butterfly specimens to club meetings. He also organized a project to census butterflies at Centennial Park.

“Centennial Park Bird Checklist” published. Jane Farrell Coskren was the project coordinator for county parks, and Charles Swift was the compiler for Centennial Park. Coordinated with and printed by HCDR&P.

Connie Bockstie wins MOS convention pin competition with a Canada Goose in flight.

### 1990-1991

September 1990. “Centennial Park Butterfly List” published. Richard Smith, compiler.

Club’s yellow brochure was revised and redesigned with a new American Goldfinch cover drawing by Sue Probst.

American Kestrel nest box display constructed by Mark Wallace. Atypically, eggs in this nest were laid atop a used European Starling’s nest. One of the prey items included was a leg of an Eastern Bluebird with a band.

The band identified the bird as one Mark had banded in a box one-half mile from the kestrel box.

Spring 1991. Centennial Park Manager Bob Linz constructed a wooden box to hold 8½ x 11-inch sheets for bird sightings and attached it to the wall adjacent to the HCBC’s information board. The intent of the “sightings

sheets” was to boost the park’s bird checklist. Connie Bockstie volunteered to collect the sheets and keep the binder filled. In 1996, Norma Petersen took over responsibility for the sheets.

Sue Probst’s Common Yellowthroat design won the MOS annual convention pin competition.

During the year, nineteen people presented educational programs at 45 events (for example, Eileen Clegg spoke to every student at Swansfield Elementary School over a three-day period).

Breeding Bird Census plots at MPEA. Gerald Einem, surveyor, revived the surveys on the census plots Chandler Robbins and others had surveyed 1971—1976. Gerald also conducted surveys in 1991, 1992, and 1993. Interestingly, most Neotropical migrants in 1991 did not show a drop with the exception of Cerulean Warbler. That species has not been documented as nesting at MPEA since C. S. Robbins’ last survey in 1976.

First week of June 1992. The HCBC was featured on a local cable channel program, “Howard Weekly.” Appearing or assisting were Sue Earp, Mark Wallace, Jane Farrell Coskren, Kathy Mariano, and Joanne Solem.

June 18, 1992. Centennial Park butterfly walk. Richard Smith, leader. Annual butterfly walks at this park. This was the first year the trips were co-sponsored by HCDR&P.

August 1992. Two tri-fold display boards created by Martha Chestem were used for the first time at the Howard County Fair display.

### **1991-1992**

Martha Chestem created a bird display for each meeting featuring the special/rare birds that had been seen the previous month.

To reduce the county deficit, thermostats in schools were set back after students left. In winter, this made the meeting room uncomfortably cold. Predictably, it led to a drop in attendance at meetings.

Mark Wallace became the sole bluebird project coordinator with the death of Joe Seuss.

### **1992-1993**

September 1992. Susan Setterberg named newsletter editor.

October 8, 1992. Celebration of twentieth anniversary. Featured speaker: Chandler S. Robbins, “Forest Fragmentation and Nesting Birds.” During the HCBC’s first two decades, at least 175 monthly meetings and 500+ field trips had been held.

Leaderless walks. Experimental series of walks on rotating days of the week.

*The Bluebird Handbook for Howard County, Maryland II* by Joanne Solem and Mark Wallace. 28-page booklet.

January 1993. Soon after the first of the year HCBC member Gerald Elgart called Joanne Solem. Conversation with a WSSC employee indicated there was an active Bald Eagle nest at Triadelphia Reservoir. On January 29, Ranger Tony Frye called Joanne to ask when the last previous Howard County eagle’s nest had been recorded. There were no records. He verified the nest’s existence in a live oak in a cove between Pigtail and Big Branch. Nancy Magnusson and Jane Farrell Coskren observed an adult incubating on February 27 and March 7, 1993. Later, two young were seen in the nest, but only one was presumed to have fledged. One nestling was found dead beneath the nest tree by WSSC employees. This was the first verified county nest in decades. (An article in the September 21, 1995 *Baltimore Sun* claimed that a successful nest at Triadelphia Reservoir that year was the first in the county. That was obviously an error.)

May 1993. “The Butterflies of Howard County, Maryland: A Biological Summary and Checklist” by Richard Smith was published. This ground-breaking, compact summary of the county’s butterfly species depicted the flight period, habitat, nectaring plants, and larval host plants on two sides of a single 8½ x 11-inch page as a trifold. It was updated 2/2000, 2/2011, 3/2014, and 8/2016 (the last revision was published after the author’s death in August 2016). The cover drawing of an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail was by Connie Bockstie.

May 23, 1993. Twentieth anniversary breakfast. This event was held at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab pavilion. In addition to the meal, there was a walk on a trail on Lab property along the Middle Patuxent River. “Bluebird/Cavity Nest Program.” Mark Wallace, compiler. A total of 1,043 boxes fledged 1,503 bluebirds plus an assortment of other cavity nesters.

Connie Bockstie wins MOS convention pin competition with Northern Saw-whet Owl design.

### 1993-1994

October 3, 1993. Birds and butterflies walk, Centennial Park. Bonnie Ott and Richard Smith, leaders. First HCBC field trip using binoculars only (no nets) to identify butterflies.

Butterfly checklist for Centennial Park project inaugurated. Richard Smith, compiler.

Howard County plant list available. This version included woody plants.

“Checklist of the Birds of Howard County, 1956–1993” published. Joanne Solem, David Holmes, and Martha Chestem, compilers.

March/April 1994 newsletter contained “Autumn Bird Records.” Joanne Solem, compiler. Seasonal records had been compiled for more than a decade for *Maryland Birdlife* and *North American Birds*. The HCBC’s BOD requested that a summary for each season appear in the chapter newsletter. The seasonal summary has continued to the present.

April 1994. New member packet authorized. HCBC began sending a packet of informational material to each new member.

April 1994. HCBC has displays at the Howard County Garden Club Festival and also at the Soil Conservation Field Day.

Connie Bockstie’s Marsh Wren wins MOS convention pin competition.

### 1994-1995

September 17, 1994. Fall Count. Mike McClure and Charles (Chuck) Stirrat, compilers. This was the first autumn seasonal count held in Howard County. It has become an annual event. Tally site: Don and Martha Waugh’s home. They hosted this tally each year through 2013. It was then moved to Eileen Clegg’s in 2014; June Tveekrem was the hostess 2015–2017, and Mary Lou Clark held it in 2018–2019. No tally of any kind was held in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic.

November 11, 1994. Mark Wallace received an Individual Achievement in Bluebird Conservation Award from the North American Bluebird Society. It was presented at the November meeting by Executive Director Mary Janetatos.

Jane Farrell Coskren tallied 304 bird species in Maryland in 1994. She was believed to be just the second woman to reach 300 Maryland birds in one year.

“Rockburn Branch Park Bird Checklist” published. Bonnie Ott, compiler.

August 1995. Howard County Fair. Tom Strikwerda, coordinator. The following items were added to the display: a box of discarded fishing line, hooks, and sinkers birders had collected along reservoir and lake edges illustrating the danger these items posed to birds, and a touchable display of natural objects—this item was popular with children.

### 1995-1996

*Birding Howard County, Maryland* was published. Joanne Solem, author. Proceeds to HCBC.

HCBC members asked to suggest a name for the newsletter.

October 2, 1995. Hawkwatch at Rockburn Branch Park. Ralph Geuder, leader. Part of the continuing effort to locate a suitable site in Howard County.

Fall Centennial Park walks. These were the last ones co-sponsored with HCDR&P. This popular series of twice-a-year trips continues to the present as HCBC field trips.

January 1, 1996. “Start Your Year List” field trip begun. Bonnie Ott, leader. This trip has been run annually. Bonnie was the leader through 2016; since then, Kurt Schwarz has led. The pandemic forced cancelation of the 2021 trip. It is again scheduled for 2022 with Kurt leading.

January/February 1996. “The Electronic Goldfinch” website and message board created. Darius Ecker, designer and first webmaster.

Chuck Stirrat began computerizing the results of each of the seasonal counts in a standardized format. This proved to be a major boon for seasonal count compilers.

## 1996-1997

September/October 1996 issue. The HCBC newsletter was renamed *The Goldfinch*.

Multi-year county odonate survey begun by Richard Orr. He led a dragonfly walk at Centennial Park on August 16, 1997.

August 26, 1997. HCBC was featured in a *Baltimore Sun* article.

## 1997-1998

October 9, 1997. Twenty-fifth anniversary celebrated at October meeting. "The Dark Side of the Loon: Migration and Winter Biology of the Common Loon" by R. Spitzer.

Howard County Rare Bird Alert adds electronic distribution. Alerts could be sent to an email address or to a telephone number. Bea Newkirk and Bob Solem, coordinators.

"Columbia Lakes Bird Checklist" published. Martha Chestem and Helen Zeichner, compilers. Jane Farrell Coskren, list project coordinator. Ruddy Duck cover drawing by Sue Probst. Data compiled by the HCBC; checklist designed, published, and distributed by the Columbia Association.

February 28, 1998. Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration at the annual potluck. Owen Brown Community Center. Mary-Jo Betts, coordinator. Special door prizes were a feature. In addition to the usual members' slides, Founder Nanine Rhineland was a special guest. Martha Chestem had created 60 unique place mats depicting the club's history in photos. In subsequent years, she continued creating individualized place mats for the potluck, drawing on an extensive personal collection of bird cartoons. The potluck was held at this location through 2010 with Mary-Jo Betts coordinating through 2003. Sue Probst became the coordinator from 2004 through 2010. Kathie Lillie served as coordinator from 2011 through 2020. In 2012 the potluck was moved to the Robinson Nature Center (RNC), where it was held until the potluck was cancelled in 2020 because of Covid-19. In 2021, Sherry Tomlinson and Linda Hunt took over and members' photos via Zoom substituted for an in-person potluck.

March 6, 1998. A copy of the *Atlas of Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia* was presented to Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). Howard County Atlas Co-chair Jane Farrell Coskren along with HCBC President Maud Banks presented the volume to Watershed Protection Supervisor Larry Iager and Corporal Bart Pitts at the Brighton Dam office. It was given in appreciation for WSSC's permission to survey their property surrounding two reservoirs during the five-year atlas.

June 27, 1998. Twenty-fifth anniversary picnic brunch at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab. Mary-Jo Betts, coordinator. This all-day celebration was the final event marking the 25th anniversary year. Food, conversation, and bird walks were part of the day's activities.

## 1998-1999

"Beginning Birding Class" at Howard Community College, Adult Education by Joanne Solem. Three sessions.

"Beginner's Corner" series by Bonnie Ott begun in *The Goldfinch*.

Newsletter article by Don Waugh mentioned all-time high membership of 371 "several years ago."

December 3, 1998. HCBC featured in *Howard County Times* article.

May 1, 1999. Howard County Big Day field trip. First unofficial "Big Day." Darius Ecker, planner. Bonnie Ott, leader. These unofficial Big Days were held annually through 2013.

## 1999-2000

October 17, 1999. "Big Sit" at Centennial Park. Kurt Schwarz, organizer. This was the HCBC's initial participation in this organized event. Official Big Sits continued to be held through 2003; a few unofficial Sits were held in later years at the University of Maryland Farm Open Houses.

February 5, 2000. Howard County Mid-winter Count. Joanne Solem and Mary-Jo Betts, compilers.

May/June 2000 newsletter published results of the first five years of the Howard County odonate survey. Joanne and Bob Solem, compiler.

“Field Checklist of Birds of Howard County, MD” published. Martha Chestem, Jane Farrell Coskren, David Holmes, and Joanne Solem were the compilers.

### **2000-2001**

October 14, 2000. Hawkwatch at Meadowbrook Park. Ralph Geuder, leader. Part of the continuing search for a county hawkwatch site. An attractive knoll at the west edge of the park was used off-and-on for several years, then other sites were explored. (See 2006—2007 for additional explanation.)

Bob Solem named webmaster. HCBC BOD approved a new web hosting provider. Bob incorporated new features into the website.

“Schooley Mill Park Bird Checklist” published. Nancy Magnusson and George Chase, compilers.

Seasonal bird records now may be submitted either on a paper form or by email.

January 27, 2001. HCBC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks transferring HCBC’s mounted bird and nest collection to them. In the spring of 2000, HCBC was notified by the U.S. Department of the Interior that their license would not be renewed. New regulations required that any group possessing bird specimens or nests had to display them publicly. With neither a headquarters building nor an available nature center in the county, it was a challenge to find a new home for the club’s extensive collection. A county nature center was planned eventually, but not within the 60 days allowed by the federal agents. HCDR&P came to the rescue. They agreed to receive the collection and display specimens in the lobby of the headquarters building on Oakland Mills Road. The MOU required that the HCBC supply a display cabinet. An additional necessity for license renewal was a drastic limitation of the number of individuals who could borrow any portion of the collection for any reason. The dozen people whose names were supplied to the U.S. Department of Interior in order to obtain a “license to possess” became a static list. Birds not on display were stored in their carrying cases and retained in the HCDR&P headquarters building. When the RNC was built, arrangements for rodent-proof/insect-proof storage were included in the building’s design. When the center opened September 10, 2011, the collection was transferred there.

“Outdoors Maryland” featured Bonnie Ott’s backyard. Bonnie’s townhouse yard with multiple feeders, water, plantings and community open space was part of the Maryland Public Television “Backyard Wildlife Habitat” series.

June. Dedication of “John C. Clegg Memorial Meadow” at Middle Patuxent Environmental Area.

### **2001-2002**

September 2001. Howard County Conservancy headquarters property (Mount Pleasant on MD 99) opened on a limited basis to birders. Instructions for access to this property included calling two days ahead of planned use and leaving a phone message with your name, a contact number, and an indication of when you would be on the property. Bonnie Ott began compiling a bird list for this property.

Western Regional Park was undeveloped county land planned as parkland. HCBC birders received permission to bird the fallow farmland in order to census the bird population. Surveyors were required to keep their distance from a rented house fronting on Carr’s Mill Rd.

Marjorie Mountjoy bequest received. HCBC’s BOD designated these monies to be used for expenditures that enhance the ability of the club to perform its mission. An example was the purchase of a slide projector that could be used for presentations to groups.

HCBC brochure revised.

Single seed sale for first time. With a reduction in orders and tonnage, the seed sale dropped to a single fall date and has continued to the present.

January 1, 2002. Second Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas begun with Joanne Solem and Bonnie Ott as Howard County co-compilers. Five-year project. The MOS State Atlas Committee Chair was Jane Farrell Coskren. On January 4, nineteen HCBC members spent the day at Jane’s house putting multiple pieces of atlas material into 1,000+ kraft envelopes (one for each topographic quadrangle in Maryland). The

completed packets were sorted and boxed by county. Each would soon be delivered to the coordinator for the appropriate county. Amazingly, the volunteers completed the task in one long day.

Membership exceeded 300.

Bonnie Ott elected to term on Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee, 2002—2005.

### **2002-2003**

With the January/February 2003 issue of *Goldfinch*, Dave Holyoke was named editor, and Sue Probst became its graphics designer.

August 2, 2003. “Dragonflies through Binoculars” field trip joined annual butterfly trip. Richard Orr, leader.

### **2003-2004**

October 4, 2003. Sparrow Big Day field trip. Bonnie Ott, leader. First of 11 annual Sparrow Big Day field trips, 2003–2013. A Lark Sparrow at Western Regional Park was an auspicious beginning.

October 12, 2003. Big Sit, Centennial Park. Kurt Schwarz, leader. This was the fifth and final year of this official count. The nine counters in the course of the day amassed 41 species, two above the all-time low of 39 in 2002. The high species count was 55 in 2000. Several unofficial Big Sits were held later during University of Maryland Open Houses.

October 26, 2003. Hawkwatch at Mount Pleasant adjoining the parking lot. Ralph Geuder, leader. Observers used the field south of the parking lot in the continuing search for a county hawkwatch site.

January 25 and February 28, 2004. Identical informational meetings for atlas participants at Columbia East Branch Library; presented by Joanne Solem, Bonnie Ott, and Jay Sheppard.

February 7, 2004. Mid-winter Count. First time a species was substantiated with a video-taped record: Lapland Longspur by Robert Ringler.

Spring Centennial Walks date changed. Pedestrian traffic and special events were creating increasing challenges for weekend bird trips at this park, so the four spring trips were moved to the last two Sundays in March and the first two in April. The earlier dates, unfortunately were often much colder, and, as expected, produced fewer spring migrants. Nevertheless, in 2006 the club chose to schedule all spring Centennial walks on March Sundays.

May 8, 2004. May Count. Paul A. Zucker, compiler. Species total of 153 was one shy of record high of 154 reached in 1977 and 1984.

### **2004-2005**

September 9, 2004. Meetings moved to HCDR&P headquarters building. In return for using the meeting room, Kurt Schwarz, Bob and Joanne Solem, and Bonnie Ott agreed to present a series of programs for the department.

September 2004. Kurt Schwarz became Conservation Chair. He continued in this position through the 2021-2022 membership year.

May 14, 2005. May Count. Jeff Friedhoffer and Emy Holdridge, compilers.

August 2005. The last year there was a HCBC display at the Howard County Fair, completing a 24-year run. (The Fair management stopped providing space.)

### **2005-2006**

October 8, 2005. Seed sale at The Wildlife Authority, US 40. When a Laurel pickup site became impractical, owner Cathy Franklin stepped in to offer the store’s parking lot. This location enabled the pickup time to be extended to the entire day.

November 10, 2005. Windfall sale of suet cakes and bird feeding supplies at November meeting. When Sherry Tomlinson’s employer, Pennington Seed, decided to discontinue carrying bird feeding supplies, she asked if the remaining stock could be given to the HCBC rather than dumped in a landfill, and the company agreed. Included were 400+ boxes of suet cakes (12 to a box), 160+ suet holders, and 35 other feeders. In addition to



offering the items to HCBC members, all were made available to members of MOS. Individuals from several other chapters purchased suet and feeders at the purposely low prices (\$5.00 per box of suet cakes) to resell at a higher price in support of the statewide atlas. (At least \$400.00 was raised this way.) HCBC sales alone netted \$1,000 for habitat preservation. In addition, suet cakes and holders were donated to county nature centers and to those in surrounding counties, as well as to Patuxent Research Refuge and the largest Howard County parks. A dozen people stored, hauled, or delivered items locally or to other parts of the state. The sale was an exceptional team effort and a win on many levels. Money was raised for several bird-related causes, members saved money, the company earned goodwill, and useable items were saved from a landfill.

2005 - Tenth Year of Odonate Summary. Joanne and Bob Solem, compilers. Besides the regular county field work that year, educational efforts went well beyond the county's borders: June Tveekrem led an odonate field trip at the MOS convention; Bob and Joanne led workshops at Meadowside Nature Center in Montgomery County and Adkins Arboretum in Caroline County; and a survey of a wetland in Carroll County was conducted by the Solems and Bob Ringler. Sue Muller, while attending an Audubon camp in Wisconsin, introduced campers to these amazing insects.

Informational signs designed for Meadowbrook Park. HCBC members worked with HCDR&P personnel to design four of the series of informational signs (two for birds, two for dragonflies) planned for placement along the paved paths. Bonnie Ott, Bob and Joanne Solem, June Tveekrem, and Sue Probst were the HCBC's part of the team. The signs remain in their original locations in the park.

Early 2006. Bird photo gallery added to the HCBC website. In subsequent years, photo galleries were added for amphibians and reptiles, butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies, fungi, lichens, and mosses.

February 9, 2006. The HCBC featured in the Washington Post's Howard section.

July 29, 2006. Howard County Odonate Count. June Tveekrem, compiler. Co-sponsored with HCDR&P. First of 12 annual counts rotating among June, July, and August to sample odonates in three warm-season months. All adult individuals seen were tallied. An attempt was made to cover a wide variety of habitats. Twenty-eight people from six counties found a total of 36 species in that first year. The count was held annually for a dozen consecutive years allowing for each "summer" month to be sampled four times. In 2011, Beth Johnson became the compiler through 2013, Beth and June compiled for two years, and June was sole compiler for the final two years.

## **2006-2007**

September 23, 2006. Hawkwatch at Meadowbrook Park. Kurt Schwarz, leader. HCBC again tried this location as a permanent hawkwatch since this new park seemed to offer several advantages. The elevated location on an artificially created knoll at the west end of the park offered excellent views of the sky, ample nearby parking, and restrooms. It was such a promising site that the HCBC designated it as the "official county hawkwatch site." There was every expectation that it would be a permanent location despite the disadvantages of traffic noise from nearby US 29 and air pollution from vehicle exhaust on calm days. Although managers at HCDR&P had assured the club that use of that location for hawkwatching would be an excellent use of the knoll, not all decisions in the department were synchronized. Within a year or two, plantings appeared so that shrubs along with deciduous and coniferous trees dotted the north and south slopes. During the first few years after planting, the woody vegetation was low so it did not interfere with sight lines. In a few years, this woody vegetation's growth almost obscured the horizon to the north, northeast, and northwest which were the most important viewing directions. Although the site was used for several years (with at least one field trip continuously through 2008 with Kurt leading, and again in 2012—2014 with Harry Fink leading), the HCBC continued looking for a location which would allow expansive permanent views of the sky.

November 2006. At the BOD's request, Joanne Solem worked with Project Manager Wes Daub, Utility Design Division, Howard County's Department of Public Works, to protect the nesting Great Blue Herons at Vantage Point, Columbia during installation of a sewer line along the Little Patuxent River. Daub stated that every effort would be made to provide a 1,000-foot buffer between the nest trees and the construction site, and

no construction could take place between mid-February and mid-May. Dave Brinker, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, examined maps of the area and agreed with the requirements. Construction began the summer of 2009. The company adhered to the requirements as much as possible, the sewer pipes were installed, and the heron colony produced young during each of the years of construction.

April 14, 2007. Warbler Identification Workshop. Glenelg Community Center. Kevin Heffernan. The original presentation was made at the 2006 MOS convention. The stunning images and accompanying text were made available to all chapters so individuals who had not attended the convention could benefit from the material. Kevin volunteered to present the program on a Saturday morning.

Spring 2007. *Birding Howard County, Maryland* revision. This book was published in 1995 and, after 12 years, definitely needed revision. The BOD determined that it should be revised and the revised version posted on the HCBC's website rather than reprinting it in hard copy.

### **2007-2008**

January 2008. The HCBC and the Howard County Conservancy began co-sponsoring occasional fee-based programs in the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center, Mount Pleasant.

April 5, 2008. First annual GreenFest. Sponsored by HCDR&P at Howard Community College. Sue Muller, county organizer. HCBC participated with a display each year until 2020 when the pandemic forced cancellation.

"Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour" map published. The Howard County Tourism Council and HCDR&P were among the creators of a full-color map depicting a driving tour of wildlife locations in the county. These sites were judged to be among the best bird, mammal, or herp locations for potential county visitors. Sue Muller, HCDR&P, provided much of the information. Joanne Solem provided bird and odonate data from HCBC records. The club was listed as a cooperator in the project.

### **2008-2009**

Annual List compilation resumes with Ward Ebert, compiler. Ward updated the compilation through year 2008. From this point on, a small highlights article appeared in *The Goldfinch* annually, and the complete species list was posted online. Ward continued to compile the annual Howard County bird list through 2011. Joe Hanfman became the compiler for 2012 and has continued to do so.

January/February 2009 newsletter. A site digest of a location featured in *Birding Howard County, Maryland* was included with *The Goldfinch* for the first time. It has been an annual feature in this issue since then.

February 21, 2009. "Owl Search." Jay Sheppard, leader. Since 1980, Jay led both informal and scheduled trips in Howard County to search for wintering owls. By 2009, a scheduled field trip entitled "Owl Search" or "How to Find an Owl" became an annual February event. It continues to the present. The trip is usually conducted in the pine stands at Annapolis Rock, Patuxent River State Park and is as much a workshop as a field trip. It consists of a.m. and p.m. searches of the area's pines, particularly the White Pines. Usually, before beginning any search, the group gathers in the horse trailer parking lot and receives verbal and written information on what owl pellets look like and how to look for them. The group also learns how to distinguish Saw-whet Owl "whitewash" from that of other birds. Jay circulates owl pellets among the attendees and describes the prey each species prefers. The trip often ends with some of the afternoon group staying until sunset to listen for courting woodcock or to listen for rarely vocal Northern Saw-whets and other owls.

Essay contest for youth. Kate Tufts, coordinator. The MOS made backpacks containing binoculars and books available to each chapter to be awarded to young birders. The HCBC's BOD used an essay contest to determine the winners. A contest was also held in 2009—2010. Backpacks continue to be supplied to each chapter to be given to young birders.

Spring 2009. Mount Pleasant trails open to the public dawn to dusk. The Howard County Conservancy announced that the public was welcome to walk the trails on the property without prior arrangement. This quickly vaulted Mount Pleasant into one of the county's most popular birding locations.

## 2009-2010

November 12, 2009. The HCBC meeting was held at Glenwood Community Center. Because a conference was taking place at the HCDR&P's Oakland Mills Road headquarters (the normal HCBC meeting location), the Glenwood Center was made available as an alternative. A significant advantage to this temporary change of venue was that many members living in the western part of the county, who normally did not attend meetings in East Columbia, were in attendance.

January 1, 2010. Five-year Maryland Reptile and Amphibian Atlas begins. Sue Muller, HCDR&P, Howard County coordinator. An Amphibian and Reptile Photo Gallery was added to the HCBC website to assist the effort. This was the first comprehensive survey of herps ever conducted in Maryland. Since the topographic blocks were identical to those of the breeding bird atlases with which birders were familiar, it was an easy transition for many HCBC members to volunteer to assist as block leaders or with data collection. In this atlas, definitive photographs were required except for the most common species. Although the project officially ended in 2015, Howard County's maps remain on the website and continue to be updated with additional records as they are verified.

February 6, 2010. Twenty-fifth Mid-winter Count cancelled. Joanne Solem and Joe Byrnes, compilers. A major snowstorm began the day before the count forcing a one-week postponement. When a second major storm arrived before the first had been cleared, the count was cancelled. In the May/June 2010 issue of *The Goldfinch*, instead of the usual count summary, Joanne summarized the first 24 years of the count including some unexpected changes in species' occurrence.

2009 Annual Howard County Bird List set a record high. Ward Ebert, compiler. As anticipated, based on early findings, a new record of 241 bird species was recorded for the year. Astonishingly, it was well above the previous 236 total. Among the special species that had been recorded to reach this stunning total were Greater White-fronted Goose, Sandhill Crane, Red-necked Grebe, Upland Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Iceland Gull, Black Tern, Short-eared Owl, Sedge Wren, Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspur, Harris's Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Painted Bunting, and White-winged Crossbill.

Youth art contest. Kate Tufts, coordinator. During spring, an art contest for young birders was announced with the MOS backpack as the prize. For three years, this replaced the essay contest.

May 27, 2010. The BOD authorized Amanda Witt to establish a Facebook account for the HCBC. Amanda monitored the account until June 2015, Anthony VanSchoor served until September 2020, and Kristin Trouton became the monitor in October 2020.

## 2010-2011

*Second Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia* was published. Joanne Solem and Bonnie Ott, co-compilers for Howard County. In the introductory material under "Effort" on page 28, the following statement appears: "Howard County is recognized for achieving the most effort hours, and along with that, the most atlas confirmations per block." Quarter-block results were summarized and illustrated in Appendix C. Those five years were truly an outstanding team effort.

Annual bird seed sale continued at The Wildlife Authority under the new owner, Kevin Cassidy.

Joe Hanfman elected to a term on Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee, 2010—2013.

March 21, 2011. A copy of the above atlas volume was presented to WSSC. President Ward Ebert and Atlas Co-chair Joanne Solem presented the book to WSSC Watershed Manager Jim Benton at the office at Brighton Dam in appreciation for land access during the five-year atlas.

## 2011-2012

October 13, 2011. First HCBC meeting at the RNC, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia. Meetings were held in the auditorium on the lower level. In exchange for using this room nine times each year, the HCBC agreed to provide leaders for four RNC scheduled programs/activities/walks each year.

November/December 2011 issue of *The Goldfinch* announced that a pdf form of the newsletter was available.

November 10, 2011. Sharp's at Waterford Farm field trip. Wes Earp, leader. This was the first HCBC field trip to this large farm. There were annual trips in fall for a number of years and then a spring trip was added. These trips continued through 2019 when they were interrupted by Covid-19.

February 24, 2012. A copy of the recently published atlas was presented to Facility Manager Michael Dwyer, University of Maryland Central Facility in appreciation for land access during the five-year project. The presentation was made by President Ward Ebert and Howard County Atlas co-chairs Joanne Solem and Bonnie Ott.

March 24, 2012. The HCBC potluck was held at the RNC for the first time. Kathie Lillie, organizer.

Before each meeting at the RNC, a wall-mounted television screen displayed several dozen images taken by a HCBC member. Wes Earp, organizer. This half hour of photos comprised a mini-show enabling attendees to appreciate photographic talents, interests, and travels of fellow members. It proved to be a popular part of each meeting.

Evergreen Museum and Library Visit, Baltimore. Jim Lubitz, organizer. A special tour of this private collection included examination of rare bird prints and books.

May 10 meeting. HCBC Bookstore closed. Manager Ann Raterman sold off the final stock at the May meeting. It closed after more than 40 years of serving the membership. Changes in the way people bought books, and the rise of web-based resources reduced sales to the point where maintaining the stock and bringing it to each meetings was no longer viable.

### 2012-2013

September 15, 2012. Fall Count. For the first time, participants were invited to count butterflies and dragonflies in addition to birds. The value of adding those organisms was apparent immediately when Tom Feild turned up a Silvery Checkerspot, a butterfly species which had only been recorded a few times in the county.

October 6, 2012. HCBC at the University of Maryland Central Facility Open House. Wes Earp, organizer. The regular HCBC display was placed on a table under the large tent. Several birders led bird walks during the day as requested by farm management. HCBC participation in this event continued for a number of years. In subsequent years, there was an early-morning bird walk along the swale. After this first year, Wes suggested the club request a location at the northeast corner of the tent adjacent to a large lawn where an unofficial "Big Sit" could be set up after the walk for the rest of the day. Birders scanned the sky, trees, and farm fields. Wes brought a small table where a sampling of binoculars and field guides were displayed. One or two telescopes were set up so people could get good views of perched hawks and eagles—or take their first-ever look through a telescope. A whiteboard tally was constantly updated with the bird species seen during the "Big Sit." The pandemic suspended the event.

November 8, 2012. "Garage" sale at meeting. Jim Lubitz, organizer. From 7:00–8:00 p.m. members were invited to bring birding equipment (not clothes) to sell or trade. There was no charge to participate. This was a one-time event that generated a good deal of interest. Optics and other birding equipment exchanged hands to the satisfaction of many sellers and customers.

"An Amazing Butterfly Year." Richard Smith." Butterfly activity for 2012 was summarized in *The Goldfinch*. The article described an epic year that produced four new county records and an additional 12 butterfly species considered rare in the county. To illustrate just how phenomenal the year was, Richard noted that the three previous new county records had occurred in 1994, 1995, and 1998—the most recent addition had been 14 years earlier! He credited the number of remarkable sightings in a single year to a combination of the weather (very early spring and hot summer), an unusual number of southern species, and the creation of the "Butterfly Photo Gallery" on the HCBC website. The latter project encouraged photographers, not just butterfly enthusiasts, to submit excellent photos of butterflies taken in the county hoping to have one of their images added to the gallery. Building on the enthusiasm created by the astonishing 2012 year, in May 2013, Richard, Sue Muller, and Joanne Solem worked with HCDR&P to create a five-year "Butterfly Survey Project." With Richard as the compiler. It was designed to gain a better understanding of the species existing

in the county, as well as to establish occurrence periods for each species. The first year was intended primarily as a time of testing to determine protocols and areas to survey. Initially, eight people volunteered to conduct surveys: Linda Hunt, Allen Lewis, Kathy Litzinger, Sue Muller, Sue Probst, Jay Sheppard, Kate Tufts, and Jim Wilkinson.

Nancy Magnusson elected to a term on Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee, 2013–2016.

May 11, 2013. First official Howard County Big Day. Team of Russ Ruffing, Harry Fink, and Matt Rogosky set an official Howard County one-day record of 122 species in 17.5 hours of birding.

#### **2013-2014**

Russ Ruffing elected to a term on Maryland/District of Columbia Records Committee, 2014–2017.

May 24, 2014. “Hot Spots for Red Knots.” Kurt Schwarz, leader. This was the last of seven annual spring trips beginning in 2007 (none in 2013) to Delaware for shorebirds. The first six were co-sponsored by the Montgomery County MOS chapter with Cynthia Loeper as the co-leader.

#### **2014-2015**

Late winter/spring. Emy’s Meadow established. After Treasurer Emmalyn Holdridge died in January 2015, the HCBC worked with HCDR&P to determine a suitable memorial. Contributions were put toward a three-acre site in the southwest section of Centennial Park to be planted as a pollinator meadow. Richard Smith planned the seed mix for maximum butterfly use both in the larval and adult stages. Emy’s Meadow has matured into valuable habitat for a variety of organisms.

#### **2015-2016**

September 10, 2015. Meeting time changed so the social hour began at 7:00 p.m. and business meeting and program at 7:30 p.m. This change was made for several reasons: numerous commuting HCBC members requested an earlier ending time and RNC’s staff wanted to be able to secure the building and leave by 9:30 p.m.

November 7, 2015. Hawkwatch at Mount Pleasant. Russ Ruffing, leader. This specialized trip for Golden Eagles continued the search for a suitable county hawkwatch site.

January 1, 2016. Member Nancy McAllister began a “Mom’s Big Year.” In her roles as wife and mother of three children while holding two part-time jobs, she spent a year attempting to tally a maximum number of bird species in the United States.

Spring 2016. Skywatch at Mount Pleasant. The HCBC and the Howard County Conservancy planned a joint initiative for a skywatching site at Mount Pleasant. After decades of searching for a satisfactory site, a location in a field north of the Montjoy Barn at Mount Pleasant had finally been fruitful. The HCBC agreed to pay for the creation of a woodchip-covered site rimmed by wooden timbers. All maintenance, benches, and signage were the HCBC’s responsibility and required the approval of the Conservancy. Basic construction was completed in the fall of 2016.

#### **2016-2017**

November 10, 2016. “My lifelong Quest for Extinct and Vanishing Birds.” Chandler S. Robbins. This was Chan’s last public program. He was HCBC’s only Honorary Life Member, an honor bestowed on him at a dinner and reception on November 20, 1983. He died on March 20, 2017 at age 98.

“2016 Butterfly Survey Summary.” Linda Hunt, compiler. After Richard Smith’s unexpected death in August 2016, Linda, who had been assisting Richard, became the compiler. This was only partway through the planned five-year project. Because the surveys had not yet reached a point at which he could begin drawing conclusions from the data, there was some uncertainty as to how to proceed. Butterfliers responded enthusiastically, and the project continued as an enduring legacy to Richard.

Spring and early summer 2017. Bee study at Emy’s Meadow by Richard Orr, entomologist and HCBC member. He identified 53 species during a limited season. Unfortunately, his summer traps were destroyed by mowers.

June 2017. The HCBC leased 11+ acres along Underwood Road to preserve nesting Dickcissel habitat. When several Dickcissels were discovered in late May in a fallow field at Bowling Green Farm, the Jones family was approached about the possibility of allowing the birds to nest. They agreed to forego use of that field if they were compensated for lost revenue. A lease covering the nesting season into early September was signed, and breeding was successful. The arrangement was renewed in 2018 allowing the small colony to expand slightly. In 2019 and subsequent years, the land was no longer available.

August 5, 2017. Twelfth (and final) Howard County Dragonfly Count. June Tveekrem, compiler. This twelfth countywide count completed four cycles (one in each of the three warmest months).

August 11, 2017. Martha Chestem bequest received.

### **2017-2018**

September 3, 2017. "Dick Smith Memorial Butterfly Walk." Linda Hunt, leader. The walk was held at the Lake Elkhorn Garden Plots, the site of the most recent annual butterfly walks Dick had led for HCBC. Beginning with this year, an annual walk was held in his memory.

November/December 2017 print issue of *The Goldfinch* was produced in color for the first time.

November 16, 2017. All responsibility for the mounted bird and nest collection was transferred to the Robinson Nature Center by the HCBC's BOD. Because the federal and state permits had not been in the HCBC's name for years, this simply made the ownership official.

January 10, 2018. Chestem bequest committee report. Cindy Albright, Kevin Heffernan, Sue Muller, and Joanne Solem, chair. The committee recommended that monies be used to accomplish the HCBC's mission of furthering the educational, scientific, and charitable pursuits relating to birdlife in Maryland, including conservation of essential ecosystems.

February 2, 2018. "Howard County Annotated Bird Records" was completed by Russ Ruffing, compiler. Available on the HCBC website under the "Birding" dropdown menu, this document combines a bar graph depicting the relative detectability of each species with early and late migration dates (if they can be determined). Dates, locations, and observers are listed for unusual species as well as for extreme dates. Preferred habitats for all species is described. This enormous undertaking combined known county seasonal records compiled for decades by Joanne Solem, county records in Bob Ringler's statewide database, and eBird entries. Nancy Magnusson and Joanne Solem proofed the material. Russ updates data regularly, and every effort is made to validate records. This compilation is a rare, underappreciated, resource. Few, if any, other counties, can boast of such a comprehensive document encompassing 65+ years of records!

March 17, 2018. Annual potluck at RNC. President John Harris presented a Certificate of Appreciation and framed photos of nesting Dickcissels to Tim and Mitzi Jones of Bowling Green Farm for their support of Dickcissel breeding habitat.

April 21, 2018. On Earth Day, the HCBC dedicated the Chandler S. Robbins Skywatch at Mount Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy. Preceding the dedication ceremony, Joe Hanfman led a bird walk on the property. In attendance at the dedication were members of Chan's family, representatives of the Howard County Conservancy, and officers and members of the HCBC. The ceremony began with an introduction by event organizer Nancy McAllister. These were followed by remarks by HCBC President John Harris, Howard County Conservancy Executive Director Meg Schumacher Boyd, and charter member of the HCBC, Joanne Solem. Two of Chan's children, Jane Robbins and George Robbins, shared memories of their father. The family unveiled two signs, one with information about Chan, the other an identification guide to expected raptors.

### **2018-2019**

September 13, 2018. President Mary Lou Clark presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Dan Ellis family for hosting at least 100 Maryland birders when a Wood Stork appeared in their yard.

September 15, 2018. Twenty-fifth Annual Fall Count. Mike McClure and Chuck Stirrat, co-compilers.

January 2, 2019. The BOD authorized a major overhaul of the HCBC website based on the report of the ad hoc committee established in December 2018 to evaluate the existing website. The committee, consisting of Cindy Albright, Mary Lou Clark, Meg Harris, Kevin Heffernan, Anne Looker, David Sandler, Chuck Stirrat, and Bob Solem, webmaster, recommended that the new website be based on a modern content management system. This would provide several operational advantages as well as making it easier to find a replacement for the current webmaster when that becomes necessary. The redesign proceeded in two stages. The first stage (reorganize the major topics in the existing website) was completed in January 2019. The second (selecting a vendor to build a new website) culminated in the board evaluating proposals and selecting a vendor at their March 24 meeting. Commercial vendors were deemed too expensive, so the board chose the offer by Bob for him to select a new web hosting provider and implement a new website based on WordPress. He released the new website for testing in October 2019 and rolled over the existing site to the new one in December 2019.

February 2, 2019. Mid-winter Count. Joe Hanfman, compiler. The 96 species total was the highest recorded in the 34 years of the count.

“2018 Butterfly Summary.” Linda Hunt and Kevin Heffernan, co-compilers. Kevin joined Linda as co-chair of the “Butterfly Group” (which later became the “Butterfly/Pollinator Group”). The year was notable for adding two species to the county list: a Brazilian Skipper (caterpillar) by Jim Wilkinson and a Henry’s Elfin (adult) by Linda Hunt.

March 9, 2019. “Birding Basics Class” at Mount Pleasant jointly sponsored by HCBC and the Howard County Conservancy. The free (registration required) morning class with optional field trip a week later, met in the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center. Topics included birding ethics, equipment, identification methods, field guides, and introductory technology. John Harris, Kevin Heffernan, Allen Lewis, Woody Merkle, Joanne Solem, and Chuck Stirrat were the presenters.

July 9, 2019. Skywatch at Mount Pleasant refurbished. Woody Merkle, supervisor. The project was initiated and overseen by a volunteer crew of a dozen people. This team removed the remaining layer of wood chips, put down landscape fabric for weed control, replaced chips, as well as added and spread additional chips.

## 2019-2020

January 1, 2020. Third Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas begun. Sue Muller and Dave Ziolkowski, Howard County co-compilers. Data collection in this atlas is through a portal on eBird. Blocks covered by each county were assigned by an eBird algorithm, so the number of blocks assigned to Howard County is fewer in this atlas than in previous ones. There are no quarter-blocks surveys. Because of the changes in methodology and in the type and amount of data collected, comparisons with the two previous atlases will be more difficult and, in some cases, less valid—even if the blocks assigned had been the same. The mass of data, however, may be even more valuable for research purposes.

“2019 Butterfly Summary.” Kevin Heffernan and Linda Hunt, co-compilers. The original five-year survey ended in 2018. After extensive discussion, the project was extended indefinitely. Enthusiasts continued surveys, while 62 people contributed incidental sightings. The year’s highlights included the county’s first adult Brazilian Skipper (in 2018, a caterpillar) by Jim Wilkinson and the finding of a Dainty Sulphur, an infrequent county visitor, by Kathy Litzinger and Annette Allor.

Howard County joined “Bee City,” an initiative of the Xerxes Society. Kevin Heffernan represents the Butterfly/Pollinator Group and the HCBC as a member of the county’s “Pollinator Committee.” He is a member of two subcommittees: “Sustainable Landscape and Ground Maintenance” and “Native Plants.”

March 15, 2020. Triadelphia Reservoir was reopened to the public after 2½ years of repairs to Brighton Dam and reservoir improvements. Birders, thrilled to once again have access to this unique location, flocked to various viewing sites. Unfortunately, the rapidly expanding pandemic forced the closing of the reservoir on March 23. It would remain closed for the remainder of 2020, reopening in 2021.

March 12, 2020. The regular March meeting was cancelled because of the pandemic. From mid-March on, all group activities of HCBC were either cancelled or subject to cancellation. Without the ability to predict the

extent, severity, or length of the pandemic, meetings, the potluck, and the “Beyond Birding Basics” class were cancelled. This MOS chapter also cancelled participation in May Count. Later, MOS decided to run an individualized count giving members the option of counting in their own neighborhood, and some HCBC members participated.

By the end of this membership year, HCBC, since its founding in 1972, had donated a total of \$100,000 to habitat preservation and conservation causes.

### **2020-2021**

September 2020. The continuing pandemic forced cancellation of in-person meetings. Monthly meetings and BOD’s meetings were held virtually. Initially, field trips were held at the discretion of the leader. If trips were held, they were limited to 10 people, masks were required, social distancing was practiced, and carpooling took place only with family members. In the fall of 2020, all field trips were cancelled; they did not resume until September 2021.

September 19, 2020. Fall Count. Mike McClure and Chuck Stirrat, co-compilers. Because of the pandemic, a modified count was held. There was no post-count tally.

Annual seed sale for 2020 was cancelled—then revived. With the retirement of Jeff Friedhoffer in the spring of 2020, (he had collected checks and tabulated orders), a search for a replacement was unsuccessful. In late August, the BOD reluctantly cancelled the sale after a run of 40 years. Customers were notified in early September. Unexpectedly, the sale was revived. Kevin Cassidy, owner of the Wildlife Authority and host of the sale for the last decade, came up with a last-minute solution. He designed an on-line ordering and payment system that precluded a need for any HCBC member to handle checks and orders. A sale period was posted with a specified discount. With any seed order, Kevin offered to match any donation up to \$25.00. Despite the late revival of the sale, there was a fine response. Kevin utilized the same highly successful system in 2021.

“2020 Annual Howard County Bird List.” Joe Hanfman, compiler. Although there had been severe limitations of both club activities and personal interaction due to Covid-19, the yearly total of 234 was higher than that of the past several years. Most surprisingly, Howard County added Clapper Rail and White-winged Dove to its total bird species list. The two species illustrate two extremes in rare bird sightings. The rail was found dead on April 14 near Lake Kittamaqundi by Bryan Strotkin, who photographed the specimen and sent the photograph to Anthony VanSchoor for identification. In contrast, the White-winged Dove showed up in the yard of an avid birder in Mount Hebron on June 23. Jeff and Karen Culler invited birders to visit the neighborhood to appreciate the highly cooperative individual. It was last seen on June 25. More than 100 people were able to view this wildly out-of-range bird.

February 13, 2021. Mid-winter Count modified. Joe Hanfman, compiler. Groups were limited to two people and a virtual Zoom tally was held in the evening.

March 30, 2021. Initial meeting of Fiftieth Anniversary Committee via Zoom. Joanne Solem, chair. Members included Mary Lou Clark, David Holmes, Mary Maxey, David Sandler, Kristin Trouton, and Kelsey Wellons. As webmaster, Bob Solem was an ex officio member.

April 1, 2021. Opening of “Waterford Flats at Sharp’s of Waterford Farm.” Wes Earp, shorebird committee chair. This was a joint project by the HCBC and the farm owners to create shorebird and waterbird habitat. It was the HCBC’s first venture into habitat creation and management. At the owners’ request, visitors were required to be HCBC members and view a training video prior to their first visit. Visits were restricted to April 1–June 15 and July 15–September 30 from 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. The training video is accessed on the HCBC website’s home page by scrolling down to the “Birding” section. Wes Earp described the project for *The Goldfinch*: “An interest in scaling-up the club’s habitat endeavors grew out of the Dickcissel nesting effort. The spark came from learning of successful partnerships with California farmers managing for shorebirds. With some of the funds bequeathed by Martha Chestem, the club only needed a site with an enthusiastic owner. They were fortunate to find such a location at Sharp’s at Waterford Farm in Brookeville. The history of Waterford Flat’s creation includes designs, permits, contractors’ bids, and a Memorandum of



Understanding (MOU) between HCBC and Sharp's at Waterford Farm. In addition to a thousand-foot dike, the work required installation of water control pipelines, a drainage ditch, and diversion to exclude storm water. The design work was performed by the Howard Soil Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Sharp's at Waterford handled soliciting bids but let the HCBC select the contractor. Mark D. Hereth Construction LLC was chosen as the builder and the work was performed in the fall of 2020. Funding was provided by the HCBC and NRCS – Environmental Quality Incentive Program." The pool began filling late last fall [2020] for the waterfowl season, but not too late to attract two Greater Yellowlegs and a flock of 45 Killdeer. The current MOU is for five years and farm access is based on MOU guidelines. First time visitors must view the training video. Once they have learned the routine, they are free to visit this unique Howard County shorebird habitat. Members of the Shorebird Committee are Chair Wes Earp, John Harris, Russ Ruffing, Brian Moyer, Mary Maxey, Mary Lou Clark, Kristin Trouton, and David Sandler. Russ Ruffing and John Harris developed the concept; Wes Earp coordinated with the owners and did the engineering for the site; John Harris developed the Memorandum of Understanding; the committee, with the farm owners, established protocols for accessing and managing the site; and Kelsey Wellons provided technical support for the training video.

April 22, 2021. At the HCBC's BOD meeting, Steve Luke expanded on his idea suggesting the club provide more emphasis and material on the club's website for the beginning birder, a category in which Steve placed himself. The board concurred and asked that he provide a detailed proposal at the May BOD meeting. At that meeting, Steve provided a mockup of a web page illustrating some of his ideas. The BOD appointed an ad hoc committee of Steve Luke, chair, Jeff Culler, Sarah Romero, Sharon Smith, and Bob Solem, webmaster. The committee corresponded via email, then completed a beta version that was sent to volunteers to evaluate. On August 11, they unveiled the completed section, "For the Beginning Birder," which was added to the home page of the HCBC website with links to the new material.

May 8, 2021. May Count. Amy Anderson and Gregg Petersen, new co-compilers. An evening Zoom tally was held.

May 10. Big Day team sets new official county record. The team of Russ Ruffing, Kristin Trouton, Gregg Petersen, and Steve Luke set a new Howard County one-day record of 129 species during almost 18 hours of birding. A good many factors aligned to produce a total that was a significant increase from the previous record of 122 set in 2013. This record may stand for some time.

May 11, 2021. President Mary Maxey presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Hank Stanton for his extraordinary efforts in enabling a Rufous Hummingbird to survive the winter.

## **2021-2022**

Autumn 2021. Monthly meetings continued to be held virtually via Zoom. Field trips were held with social distancing; other requirements were at the discretion of individual leaders. Fall Count was again held with limitations on party size. No post-count tally was held.

Bird Strike Remediation Project. Mary Lou Clark summarized this joint project in the January/February 2021 issue of *The Goldfinch*. Safe Skies Maryland and the Howard County Conservancy partnered to install Accopian Bird Savers (paracords) on a large window of the Gudelsky Environmental Education Center at Mount Pleasant. The two organizations then turned to the HCBC for volunteer and financial support for additional installations. The largest portion of the project required designing and installing custom and standard film on windows along with accompanying signage. The film design was created by Daria Parsa. Installation took place during the fall of 2020. Pandemic restrictions complicated the volunteer effort by limiting the number who could work at one time. Assisting in the installation were Carolyn Parsa, Afshin Parsa, Daria Parsa, Will Decker, Woody Merkle, and Mary Lou Clark. Funding was provided by the Martha Chestem Fund.

October 2021. Tee-shirt design contest. With the celebration of the HCBC's 50th anniversary anticipated in 2022, the committee sponsored a contest among members for a shirt design. Sue Probst was the winner. An

impressive design by another contestant, Pam Perna, was chosen for use on the website's 50th anniversary page.

November 9, 2021. Waterford Flats report. Wes Earp, chair. The initial year of this joint shorebird habitat project with Sharp's at Waterford Farm was challenging. After initial positive results during the spring season, the attempt to dry the area for discing in summer to loosen soil and eliminate sprouting vegetation, along with several technical problems impacting the water level required constant adjustment of expectations. With the committee's combined expertise and creative thinking, the coming season should provide answers to some questions.

November 2021. Purple Martin tower (house and gourds) was installed at Mount Pleasant, Howard County Conservancy After Russ Ruffing discussed the project with personnel at the conservancy and received permission for the HCBC to create the nest site, he picked a location at the west side of the front meadow overlooking Davis Branch. Kristin Trouton researched items that needed to be purchased, ordered the kit, and labeled parts prior to assembly. Installation was a multi-step project requiring planning and teamwork. On November 13, Russ and his son, Luke, moved cement and equipment to the site, dug a hole, mixed and poured concrete, and installed the base support post, carefully aligning it vertically. On November 21, a team of Russ, Eric Trouton, Kristin Trouton, and Mary Lou Clark assembled and erected the main pole and the martin tower. Mary Lou provided photos of the team at work. Russ added gourds December 12.

Compiled by Joanne Solem from historical records of the Howard County Bird Club for the Fiftieth Anniversary year.