

President's Corner
Birds and the Working
Landscape
 by Wayne Belli

I thank Marcia Balestri for her vision and dedication as MOS President. I introduce myself as her successor using a theme to be revisited on occasion in future President's Corners.

When I became the first Director of the Washington College Center for the Environment and Society in 2000, I decided to take the name (not my invention) quite literally. The Center's new education and research programs delved into the history of land use on the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Students and I learned that people have been intimately associated with these lands for thousands of years, predating the arrival of the colonists and continuing to this day. Mankind has been an integral part of these lands and waters: people have modified them and they in turn have modified us by defining our economy, our culture, and the very communities in which we live. This is a working landscape, and people are as much a part of the system as the diversity of bird species we enjoy today.

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HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

On Sunday, June 15, I left the house about 6:30 AM and headed toward Hunting Quarter Road and then on to Hughes Hollow. Forty-five minutes later I was leaving Hughes Hollow; I already considered it a good day. I had seen a flyby Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (after countless previous misses this year); nine Great Egrets (a personal high at Hughes); and seven immature Hooded Mergansers, the outcome of successful breeding earlier in the spring.

My primary goal that morning was to drive the "Back Roads of Montgomery County" to update a chapter that I had written for the first edition of the county's birding site guide. (My revisions were already two weeks late.) The trip begins at the intersection of River Road and Sycamore Landing Road and continues along River Road extended, all the way up to White's Ferry. It is a route I have driven many, many times and seldom vary.

After just two-tenths of a mile, I made a spur-of-the-moment decision to take different roads up to White's Ferry, just for a change of scenery, and make my notes for the site guide on the way back. So I turned right on Willard Road and headed zig-zag toward White's Ferry. My route took me through farm fields, pastures, and wooded areas. I had all of the windows down and drove slowly, stopping whenever I saw or heard something interesting.

Without giving it much thought, I turned onto Club Hollow Road, where I soon saw the fenced off "U. S. Government—No Trespassing"



Henslow's Sparrow photographed by Bill Hubick on June 16, 2008.

signs of the NIH Animal Center. At the top of a small hill, I heard a bird that I did not recognize. I stopped and listened for a minute or so and scanned the tall grass field inside the fence with my binoculars. Seeing no movement and somewhat frustrated, I moved on.

I drove about a quarter-mile down the road, trying to figure out what I had heard; I was sure it was a grassland-type species, but the song just did not seem familiar. I turned around and parked. As soon as I got out of the car, I could hear the bird. It was singing every five seconds or so, and it would continue singing for several minutes before stopping and then starting up again. I stood there for a good half hour without ever seeing any movement, except for a Grasshopper Sparrow. (I did not have any type of song-playing or recording device with me.) Eventually I returned to my car and continued on.

I made it to White's Ferry, then started for home on the usual back roads, taking some notes for the

(Happy Father's Day continues on page 2)

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY (continued from page 1)

site guide as I went. I was still curious and baffled as to what I had heard. (I never even considered Henslow's Sparrow).

Back home, I started playing my Stoke's CD of Eastern birds. After several futile choices, I tried Henslow's. "That's it!" I yelled to my wife, Nancy. I played it several time more and became convinced. Even the timing on the CD between songs seemed about five seconds or so, which I had noticed in the field.

I had heard Henslow's Sparrows in Garrett Co for years before I managed to see this nemesis; about six years ago I finally found a cooperative bird and was able to study it in the scope. My recollections from that and subsequent encounters were of having to strain to hear the bird's slight "hiccup," a sound that always seemed so softly quiet and subtle. (Just a week earlier I had seen a Henslow's on Old Legislative Road

but did not hear it sing at all). I had not considered Henslow's on Club House Road because the bird's song seemed much louder than what I was accustomed to.

Before I started calling birders left and right, I wanted to find someone who would go back to the site and confirm the species. Dave Powell was working and could not break away. I called Don Simonson (an NIH employee who sometimes worked at this facility) and Mike Bowen and Lydia Schindler and several others, but nobody was home. After all, it was Father's Day. I told Nancy that I needed to try to confirm this species and that our family BBQ would need to be pushed back later in the day; she said no problem. (What a great wife!)

I finally got hold of Andy Martin; I told him of my possible find and asked if he had any experience with Henslow's Sparrow. No, it would be a life bird for him. Yes, he could break away. He picked me up and we headed to Club Hollow Road, listening to the tape as we went.

For the first ten minutes on Club Hollow Road, we heard nothing but Grasshopper Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks in the field. The ten minutes seemed like an hour to me. Finally I heard the song; Andy could hear it, too. He concurred that it was the song on the tape. For the next ten minutes it continued to sing but without ever showing itself.

I jumped on the cell phone, calling back Dave Powell and several others. Andy meanwhile had gotten out his nighttime recording equipment and was attempting to record the song. I called Rick Sussman and gave him the address of the closest house so that he could post it on MDOsprey. I called several other people and then turned my attention back to Andy, because Andy had finally seen the bird move.

Initially the bird was near the lone thistle blooming in the swale on the hill. We got short, quick views, but each time the bird dropped into the grass and out of sight. However, it was slowly making its way closer to

the fence. NIH security came by, and I warily approached them and gave my best explanation of why and what we were up to. They were very cooperative and wished us good luck. (A sigh of relief as I headed back to Andy.)

The Henslow's Sparrow was now about 25 feet from the fence, and it finally nestled in on a tuft of grass where it could be seen from a certain angle. It sat there and sang off and on without moving for 10 or 15 minutes. Over the next hour we both had great views of the bird through my scope. We left the site in the early afternoon. (Andy had left his oldest child in charge of his younger brother and sister. "After all, it is Father's Day," he said. "What a great gift for Father's Day: a life bird!")

On the way home we continued to spread the news with our cell phones. And I re-called those I had left messages with, to confirm the sighting. I told Don Simonson that, since he worked at NIH, he was in charge of halting the mowing. I was both serious and joking; the adjacent field had already been mowed and baled. A special thanks to Jim Crowell, who works at NIH, and any other birders for getting NIH to postpone the mowing. Last but not least, kudos to the people at NIH who made the correct decisions to hold off mowing so that others could share this Maryland-endangered species.

I went to the Henslow's Sparrow site five or six times, always with success. I believe that the last day I heard the bird was June 26. (I was not able to visit after I started vacation on June 28.) I talked to a birder who did not see or hear it on July 1. NIH ultimately decided not to mow this field at all the rest of the summer—great news for the Grasshopper Sparrows and Eastern Meadowlarks! Jim Nelson, Montgomery County Chapter president, has sent a letter thanking and praising the NIH decision-makers for their actions. Now, if only the singing male could have attracted a mate. . . .

—Jim Green

The Maryland Yellowthroat Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

Editor:	Lydia Schindler lydiaschindler@verizon.net 301-977-5252
Designer:	Suzanne Probst msprobst2@verizon.net 410-992-3489
Calendar Editor:	Andy Martin apmartin2@comcast.net 301-294-4805
Chapter Chatter:	Jean Wheeler jswheeler44@msn.com
Proofreader:	Ann Weeks annweeks@erols.com
Mailing list:	Helen Horrocks hlh_37@yahoo.com 301-831-6315
MOS web site:	http://www.mdbirds.org
Webmaster:	Taylor McLean taylormcl@comcast.net

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by October 20, 2008 for the November/December 2008 issue.

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Photograph page 14 © David Curson.

2008 MOS CONFERENCE

MAY 30–JUNE 1 • EDGEWOOD, MD

Our first-ever conference in Harford County was very well attended, with 252 registrants. Harford's **Dave Webb** did an outstanding job of masterminding the field trips, introducing us to many new locales. Combined with trips to Bombay Hook and Hart-Miller Island, a photography trip, a butterfly trip, and a banding station visit, the choices were many. The kayak and canoe trips proved to be very popular. There were also listers' trips for Harford and Cecil Counties. Dave provided local guides to accompany each field trip led by an out-of-county birder, a masterly touch. Counting our local guides, field trip leaders, Silent Auction/Raffle helpers, etc, for the first our volunteers numbered more than 100.

Mike Bowen did his usual great job of arranging our by-now-traditional Friday afternoon workshop. This year's "Birding by Ear," presented by **Michael O'Brien**, proved to be extremely popular, with a waiting list even after we expanded capacity from 40 to 60. A lucky 20 birders joined Michael and Mike on a follow-up field trip to Perryman Peninsula.

Friday night began with a welcome by **David Craig**, Harford County Executive. Keynote speaker **Bill Thompson**, the editor of *Bird Watcher's Digest*, took on "The Perils and Pitfalls of Birding." It proved to be an entertaining and very funny talk. Accompanying himself on the guitar, Bill regaled us with "Momma, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowbirds;" many of us will never again see a cowbird without thinking of this song.

Maryanne Dolan and her cadre of volunteers were much in evidence at the Silent Auction and hawking raffle tickets. This proved to be the year of books; several MOS members were downsizing and donated some outstanding selections, including a signed copy of a Roger Tory Peterson guide and an Alexander Wetmore classic. [See Chan's letter, page 9.] Thanks to

Maryanne's expertise and showmanship, the Silent Auction and Raffle raised over \$2,730 for the Harford Land Trust.

Thanks also go to **John Sala**, owner of Wild Bird Centers in Timonium and Gaithersburg, and **Joan Hellman** for bringing wonderful birding items from their stores to share with us. The display of scopes and binoculars and related items, arranged by **Garry Lang**, Chesapeake Optics owner, was enjoyed by all.

After a thunder-and-lightning Saturday afternoon, the sun shone over the vast white tent where we gathered to celebrate **Chan Robbins's** upcoming 90th birthday. It provided a time to relax and personally wish Chan "Happy Birthday" and thank him for all of his help and contributions over the years.

The Research Poster Session featured nine outstanding posters. It was most encouraging to have two young people presenting posters, one a YMOS member and the other a Harford middle school student.

Bob Ringler did his usual excellent job of wrapping up the conference for us on Sunday. The final tally was 173 species, including a great variety of breeding warblers. Swan Harbor Farm Park probably scored as the best field trip location, with sightings of Least Bittern, King Rail, Virginia Rail, and Sora.

The evaluations returned to me were unanimous in pronouncing this an outstanding conference. People were impressed with Harford County and the friendly local volunteers. Everyone very much enjoyed the field trips.

As to whether to hold the 2011 conference at Wisp or Rocky Gap, it was essentially a draw, with Rocky Gap coming out ahead by one vote. So it will come down to which venue gives us the better deal.

Finally, thanks to all of the volunteers who made the conference possible.

—Janet Shields
Conference Chair

President's Corner (continued from page 1)

Self-evident? Consider priorities for conservation. We usually work to set aside "preserves" to minimize human influence. But the history of our working landscape suggests that words like "pristine" or even "restore" do not apply. Conservation of bird life requires conservation of the working landscape itself. The appropriate strategy is to sustain our lands and waters—to keep them productive, economically viable, and aesthetically pleasing into the indefinite future.

As birders, we need to understand and appreciate the relationship between bird species diversity and the local working landscape. Parks and preserves are important, but we will save more land as bird habitat by promoting environmental programs that keep the landscape working. An example that pertains to more than half of the land use on the Eastern Shore: Saving farmland is not the same as saving farming. Many of us are increasingly concerned with the declining opportunities for youngsters to participate in authentic outdoor experiences. In countering that trend in our schools and environmental centers, we should encourage programs that foster those experiences on the local working lands. This will not only connect tomorrow's generation with the local ecology; it will also reconnect these young people with their local communities. George Radcliffe succeeded in doing this by enlisting young people in the MD-DC Breeding Bird Atlas field work. Thanks to a high level of parental encouragement and support, some of the finest young birders in YMOS began as inveterate Atlasers!

In 2002 Royce Hanson, then chair of the Maryland Environmental Trust, wrote, "A working landscape is one that maintains and works to enhance the responsibility of private land owners, individually, to improve the land for successive generations of those who work it and, collectively, to pass on to each new generation a landscape that is a greater environmental asset than they received." This is a wonderful definition and a wonderful challenge to all of us who would leave a rich birding legacy for the next generation of MOS members.

MINUTES OF THE MOS BOARD MEETING MARCH 1, 2008

President: Marcia Balestri
Vice-President: Wayne Bell
Treasurer: Emmalyn Holdridge
Secretary: Janet Shields
Past President: Janet Millenson

Atlas: Walter Ellison
Birding Trail: Marcia Balestri
Budget: Shiras Guion
Conference: Janet Shields
Conservation: Maureen Harvey
Investments: Martha Waugh
Sanctuary: Brent Byers
Scholarship: Tom Strikwerda
Statewide Education Activities:
 Mike Bowen

Allegany: *not represented*
Anne Arundel: Linda Baker,
 Susan Zevin

Baltimore: Brent Byers
Caroline: *not represented*
Carroll: Maureen Harvey,
 Bob Ringler

Cecil: *not represented*
Frederick: Gayle Bach-Watson,
 Helen Horrocks

Harford: Thomas Congersky,
 Mark Johnson, Randy Robertson
Howard: Mary-Jo Betts, Shiras Guion,
 Tom Strikwerda, Kate Tufts,
 Martha Waugh, Paul Zucker

Kent: Walter Ellison, Nancy Martin
Montgomery: Mike Bowen,
 David Gray, Judy McCartney,
 Helen Patton

Patuxent: Fred Fallon
Talbot: Wayne Bell
Tri-County: *not represented*
Washington: Shirley Ford,
 Anna Hutzell

President Marcia Balestri called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She thanked the Harford Bird Club for hosting the meeting at the Anita Leight Estuary Center.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Emmalyn Holdridge's quarterly Treasurer's Report was submitted.

Bluewater Wind Presentation

Dave Blazer, Maryland Project Director for Bluewater Wind, gave an overview of off-shore wind towers as a viable energy alternative. Presently Bluewater Wind is pursuing projects in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and New York. They are also investigating North Carolina, Virginia, and Michigan. Bluewater Wind has been in existence since 2001 and recently merged with Babcock and Brown, one of the largest wind developers in the world. Bluewater presently does strictly off-shore development. Babcock and Brown have both off-shore and on-land wind, with most of their holdings in Europe. With wind power having been found to be a viable source of energy, Dave, while taking questions throughout his presentation, explained how Bluewater develops their off-shore wind turbines and the advantages of using this type of energy.

CHAPTER REPORTS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Atlas: Walter Ellison reported that they are working on the book. The format has been worked out.

Awards: Marcia Balestri reminded the Board that John Malcolm needs to be notified soon if chapters want him to develop awards for them by their final spring meetings.

Birding Trail: Marcia Balestri reported there was a meeting of the committee. In order to apply for grants they need to have a non-discrimination statement. The following statement has been drafted and was read to the Board and Marcia asked for its adoption. The board voted to adopt the statement below.

Whereas the Maryland Ornithological Society and its Chapters seek to study birds among the broadest possible group of people, and

Whereas, MOS and its Chapters believe that all people can benefit from the study of birds and nature and likewise can contribute to such studies,

Therefore, be it resolved that MOS and its Chapters adopt the following statement of non-discrimination participation for all operations and programs:

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) and its Chapters foster interaction and exchange of information among people interested in wild birds in order to encourage the study and enjoyment of birds in the natural world. In doing so, MOS and its Chapters seek to bring the enjoyment of the study of birds to all those who are interested and welcome the contributions that all can make to bird study. Membership with MOS Chapters is open to all upon payment of annual membership dues and MOS encourages broad public participation in its programs. MOS-sponsored and Chapter-sponsored activities such as field trips, workshops, meetings, and educational presentations are open to the public and are generally free of charge. MOS and its Chapters do not discriminate in any of their programs, procedures or hiring practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. Indeed, MOS knows that a mutual enjoyment of birds and nature can provide a shared experience with those from diverse backgrounds.

Work on the trail is proceeding at a good pace. A site nomination form is being developed and will shortly be sent to Chapter Presidents, Presidents of Audubon Societies, and other bird-associated groups. They are looking into obtaining grants from DNR, State Highways, Office of Tourism,

and private foundations. The minimum cost estimate of the project is \$110,000, but this is subject to change depending on the format chosen. The first round of grants will be written over the spring and summer.

Budget: Shiras Guion announced that there is a vacancy on the Budget Committee which needs to be filled. The Budget Committee moved that the budget for 2008-2009 be accepted as presented. It was approved by the Board.

Conference: Janet Shields announced that Dave Webb, Field Trip Coordinator, has completed a third of the field trips with descriptions, times scheduled and trip leaders assigned. Descriptions, scheduling, and tentative trip leaders have been assigned for another third. The last third need to be completed. The Birding by Ear Workshop on Friday has 32 people signed up with a total of 50 spaces. The Workshop Field Trip on Saturday, with 20 spaces, is filled and has a waiting list. The canoe trip is full with a waiting list. The kayak has 10 people signed up.

Marcia Balestri reported that Chan Robbins's 90th birthday is in July. It was decided to do something special for him at the Conference. Details are still being worked out but there will be a tent set up for a reception for Chan during the Saturday Wine & Cheese.

Conservation: Maureen Harvey read some of her testimony at the January 31 hearing on the use of public land for wind power: "In short, we believe that it is completely inappropriate for the DNR to lease or otherwise allow our public lands to be used for commercial development purposes." She has just heard about the gas compressor planned at the base off South Mountain in Middletown Valley, Frederick County. The Citizens for the Preservation of Middletown Valley is asking MOS to contact state and local government officials in opposition. Information is available online at www.tellmetoday.com. The Mattawoman Watershed Society is asking MOS to sign on to a letter requesting a full-study Environmental Impact Statement for the planned

extension of the Charles Co. Cross-county Connector. In the Maryland Legislature there is a Global Warming Solutions Act that mandates reductions in global warming impacts but doesn't actually have "solutions." American Bird Conservancy is launching a Bird Collisions Campaign. ABA added a full-time staff member to focus on collisions issues, particularly building strikes, Karen Cotton, kcotton@abcbirds.org. MOS sent comments opposing US Forest Service proposed changes to the Colorado Roadless Area Rule, which weakens protection given to roadless areas by the national Roadless Area Conservation Rule adopted in January 2001. The Delaware Audubon Society is having a birdathon to raise money to purchase some land adjacent to Prime Hook. Maureen is going to ask the Conservation Committee if they can use their project money to support this effort.

Development/Publicity: Marcia Balestri informed the Board that Chair Russ Kovach is working on a brochure explaining how potential contributors can contribute to MOS. Anyone with ideas on content should get in touch with Russ.

EFM: Gayle Bach-Watson announced that it's been a relatively good year for EFM but there are more problems with United Way. People have not been sent thank you notes because Montgomery County and other jurisdictions in the area are no longer sending donor reports to the organizations. So we no longer know who is sending us donations through EFM. EFM meet and greet events were cut back; this last year they only had the opportunity to attend 25.

Consequently, Gayle is asking MOS members for names of Human Resources officers at their local workplace organizations. This will enable her to arrange with them to go and do a set up or brown bag lunch resulting in a much larger percentage of donations.

Investments: Martha Waugh handed out her latest Investment Committee Report and noted that our current valuation is down. Not surprising

with the current market unrest. But our income is up.

Nominating: Helen Patton announced that the Nominating Committee is pleased to present a slate of officers for the coming year, 2008-2009: Wayne Bell as President, Emmalyn Holdridge as Treasurer, Janet Shields as Secretary. And we are very pleased to announce that the candidate for Vice President is Mark Johnson, a Harford Chapter member.

Sanctuary: Brent Byers said that there will be a work day at Carey Run the last weekend in April. In addition, there is a special work day for the weekend of June 7-8 to help remove Autumn Olive sprouts. Dave Brinker's Boy Scout group will be doing most of the work but needs some assistance. PG County Piscataway Sanctuary property people contacted Brent this week and it is still in progress. Brent also had a call from an attorney in Denton about a potential property in Ocean City area on the Sinepuxent Bay, north of 65th Street, north of the causeway, Parcel 6634. It is 67 acres under water. Marcia Balestri viewed it but we are not sure of the configuration of the property. She found reed beds and there were birds. Phragmites are present. In the event the property was accepted, it is not know if the phragmites would have to be removed and it is also not known what has been dumped there. If they want to give it to us and indemnify us from any pollutants, etc., then we could consider it. Paul Bystrak has contacted Coastal Bays to see if they are interested. Susan Zevin will check out the Sinepuxent Bay property that has been offered to MOS and report on it.

Brent discovered last week that there is property going to auction at Irish Grove. It's nine acres on Rumbley Point Road, Parcel 169. The Sanctuary Committee would like to purchase this property. Paul Bystrak will be there when the land goes up for auction. It was moved that MOS submit a bid on this property not to exceed \$25,000, which can come out of the Sanctuary fund. The motion carried.

BOARD MINUTES (continued from page 5)

Scholarship: Tom Strikwerda has thirteen scholarship applicants this year. There are applicants from the Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, Montgomery, Tri-County, and Washington Chapters.

World Series of Birding: Marcia Balestri announced that Jim Brighton will be leading the fundraising efforts for the WSB this year, substituting for Matt Hafner. Mikey Lutmerding will take Matt's place on the team.

Yellowbook: Bob Ringler told the board that he and Matt Hafner finished the preliminary work revising drafts. It's now been passed on to Norm Saunders to do the graphs. Norm is busy with other projects now and it will be several months before he can get to it. Marcia announced that we just had 1,000 copies of the previous edition of the Yellowbook printed. You can obtain the books from John Malcolm. John will be setting a price for the book.

OLD BUSINESS

Manual of Operations: Marcia Balestri said that we are still working on it.

George DuBois's New Challenge:

George DuBois has renewed his challenge for \$1,500 for rain forests. Please get your donations in to Emmalyn Holdridge by December 1.

NEW BUSINESS

BNA Discount: Individuals can subscribe to Birds of North America online for \$40. Marcia Balestri contacted BNA and they will give MOS a discount, charging \$25 per individual for one year. Send your check made out to MOS to Emmalyn Holdridge. The deadline is March 15.

Virginia Crocker Bequest: Virginia Crocker left MOS \$5,000. We are currently working with her attorney and should receive the bequest in May.

Insurance: Our liability insurance has come up for renewal. Marcia has it out on bid and is waiting for responses.

Travel Program: Marcia Balestri went to ABA international conference in Ecuador and was approached by one of the owners of Tropical Birding interested in arranging trips for MOS. He would put together a schedule of programs for MOS. An MOS person

would be the leader of each trip in addition to a guide from Tropical Birding. The MOS guide would not be paid but would travel for free in exchange for handling the logistics and the interaction with Tropical Birding. Tropical Birding would provide one of their regular tours with a guide. We would go under their insurance. MOS would get a discount from the regular trip price. Marcia also contacted Field Guides, Vent, and Wings, asking them to bid on particular trips. Only Wings, aside from Tropical Birding, answered back. Basically Wings offered a 15 percent discount. Marcia used catalog prices for groups for Field Guides and Vent and handed out a comparison chart. By and large, Tropical Birding came out ahead. Marcia proposed that we give Tropical Birding a chance and develop with them one overseas and one local MOS trip. The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paul Dumont's memorial service will be held at Woodend, April 11 at 10:00 a.m.

NEW ACTION ITEMS**CHAPTERS**

- Chapters in need of Yellowbooks can obtain newly reprinted copies from John Malcolm (price TBA).
- Chapters and individuals are encouraged to match George DuBois's \$1,500 Rainforest Challenge again this year. Send checks to Emy Holdridge.

COMMITTEES/INDIVIDUALS

- Don't forget to send in your registration and make your hotel reservations for the Conference May 30 – June 1 in Harford Co. The Birding by Ear workshop still has openings but the field trip is full and has a waiting list.
- The Conservation Committee asks members to send e-mails to Maryland public officials opposing the planned gas compressor to be built near South Mountain.
- Susan Zavin will check out a Sinepuxent Bay property that has

been offered to MOS by a developer and report on it.

- Members are invited to help remove Autumn Olive sprouts at Carey Run during the weekend of June 7-8. There will also be the usual workday at Carey Run at the end of April.
- Contact Gayle Bach-Watson (MOS liaison to the Environmental Fund for Maryland) if you know the names of Human Resources officers at local workplace organizations.
- Russ Kovach (Development/Publicity) is working on an informational brochure describing how to contribute to MOS; please contact him if you have experience in this area.
- Paul Bystrak will place a bid for MOS to purchase Parcel 169 at Irish Grove for \$25,000 (from the Sanctuary Fund).
- The deadline is March 15 for interested members to subscribe to Birds of North America Online at a discounted rate. Send checks for \$25 (made out to MOS) to Emmalyn Holdridge.
- Anyone interested in helping MOS develop an official policy on alternative energy should contact Wayne Bell.
- Maureen Harvey is leaving the chairmanship of the conservation committee. A new chair is needed, so please volunteer if you would like the job.
- Budget committee is looking for a new member. Again, consider volunteering.

President Marcia Balestri adjourned the meeting at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
—Janet Shields, Secretary

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT, APRIL 30, 2008

Operating Fund	
Income	
Membership Dues	\$27,192.50
World Series of Birding	494.00
Sales	675.75
Environmental Fund of MD	3,368.05
Interest/Other	6,501.11
Rainforest Conservation	3,025.00
Donations	5,090.00
Birds of North America Online	225.00
Conference 2007	(2,341.28)
Total Income	\$44,230.13
Expense	
Affiliations, Memberships	\$ 150.00
Audit & Tax Preparation	7,150.00
Awards	237.04
BNA Subscriptions	225.00
Bulk Storage	3,024.00
Chapter Reimbursement for Board Mtg	100.00
Conservation	750.00
Development & Environmental Fund	33.25
Liability Insurance	3,496.00
Library	222.00
Maryland Birdlife	4,372.88
Maryland Yellowthroat	7,910.54
Membership Data Base Management	250.00
Membership and List Serve	293.57
MOS Website	153.00
Office Suppl, Postage, Copies, Training	1,128.71
Other Publications	2,346.31
Outreach	253.49
Rainforest Conservation	3,000.00
Records Committee	22.15
Sales Tax	168.99
Telephone	937.86
World Series of Birding	720.34
Total Expense	\$ 36,945.13
Atlas Fund	
Income (includes Non-designated Fund)	\$ 76,163.48
Expense	\$ 42,269.91
Education Fund	
Income (includes prior-year carry-over)	\$ 21,526.50
Expense	\$ 1,879.44
Research Fund	
Income (includes prior-year carry-over)	\$11,885.88
Expense	\$ 7,495.00
Sanctuary Fund	
Income (includes prior-year carry-over)	\$66,547.60
Expense	\$23,901.16
Scholarship Fund	
Income (includes prior-year carry-over)	\$22,120.11
Expense	\$13,690.00
Conference 2007 (Total)	
Income	\$37,044.00
Expense	\$39,385.28

E. Holdridge
MOS Treasurer

HELP WANTED

Chair, Conservation Committee

The five-member Conservation Committee advises the President on conservation issues of concern to the MOS. It reports at quarterly meetings of the Board of Directors and to the MOS membership when so directed. Each MOS Chapter has designated a contact person for conservation issues (or the Chapter President by default). Recent activities have included reviewing proposed state and federal legislation that directly affects birds or their habitats and preparing letters of comment, to be reviewed by the President, prior to being forwarded to the appropriate legislative or regulatory authorities.

Chair, Statewide Education Committee

This four-member committee is responsible for the development and operation of certain state-sponsored activities such as programs, workshops, and field trips. These activities are designed to give members special opportunities to learn about birds and birding in Maryland, while encouraging them to interact and cooperate with other members across the state. Recent activities have included bird identification workshops and associated field trips at MOS Annual Conferences.

Member, Budget Committee

The five-member Budget Committee includes the MOS Vice President and Treasurer. It is responsible for preparation of the annual budget for the ensuing fiscal year, beginning May 1, which is submitted to the Board of Directors at the final Board meeting preceding May 1. Guidelines for considering budget allocations for the various committees and funds are detailed in the MOS Manual of Operations. The Budget Committee chair is currently Shiras Guion.



Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- Amongst a number of fascinating sparrow sightings this spring, one highlight was a brief visit by a LECONTE'S SPARROW to Greenbury Point near Annapolis. Bill Schreitz spotted the bird early on the morning on May 7 and posted some photographs; Matt Haffner helped confirm the bird's identity. Later that day Matt and a few others relocated the bird and got good views of it. Attempts to find the bird later in the week were not successful.
- On April 5, Matt Hafner and Jim Stasz located a WHITE-FACED IBIS at the Berlin Sewage Treatment Plant, Worcester County. Later in the afternoon the bird moved to Skimmer Island in Ocean City, where it disappeared into a small flock of GLOSSY IBIS. A WHITE-FACED IBIS, possibly the same bird, was reported at West Ocean City Pond on April 19 by students from Centreville Middle School and Centreville High School.
- In early May, the golf course at Hain's Point in DC became a haven for vagrant FRANKLIN'S GULLS. At least three different birds were thoroughly observed and enjoyed by birders over a 32-day span. Paul Pisano of Arlington, VA, started the ball rolling with an adult bird on May 4. On May 9, Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper discovered a first-summer FRANKLIN'S GULL, also on the Hain's Point golf course. On May 12, Gary Allport visited the site and found yet another FRANKLIN'S GULL, this one in second-summer plumage. The final report came from Barry Cooper, who found a first-summer FRANKLIN'S GULL in the same area on June 5, possibly the same bird that had been seen on May 9.
- Another DC visitor rewarded attentive birders during the month of May. This was a CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, first reported on May 1 by Marc Ribaud of VA, who works in DC. Rob Hilton of Bethesda spotted the report on the VA hotline and brought it to the attention of DC and MD birders. The bird—initially



LeConte's Sparrow photographed by Bill Schreitz on May 7, 2008.

noticed because it was singing with vigor—favored the edge of Constitution Gardens near the north side of the World War II Memorial. Sightings of this bird were regular for the next few days; then, after several days' absence, it showed up one more time on May 17.

- Other special spring sightings: On May 18, Helen Patton of Silver Spring caught a great view of an AUDUBON'S YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER while birding in Idylwild WMA, Caroline County. Also in Caroline County, Ron Gutberlet of Salisbury briefly sighted a RUFF in the Tanyard Marsh just east of the Choptank River on April 20. On May 4, a slightly out-of-normal territory BLACK SKIMMER skimmed past Jim Stasz's house on the Chesapeake Bay in Anne Arundel Co; Jim quickly alerted Matt Hafner, who managed to catch the same bird 20 minutes later as it continued upstream. To the surprise and joy of several area birders, an AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN rode storms into the Fairfield region of Baltimore City on June 5, where it was first reported by Christopher Smith, who works in that area. Jim Peters and others were able to relocate this bird from a Fort McHenry viewpoint on June 12 and 13—but not later.

PHOTO-PORTRAITS OF MARYLAND AND DC

The Breeding Bird Atlas Committee has launched a new photo contest, this one seeking color habitat photos to illustrate a Habitat Gallery in the introduction to the Atlas, and possibly to accompany various species accounts. The goal is to find pictures that emphasize the diversity of Maryland habitats. Possibilities include:

Wetlands: Saltmarsh, Wild rice, Cattail pond, Pocomoke Swamp

Grasslands: Pasture, Hayfield, Golf course, Cornfield

Shrublands: Bog, Managed powerline, Regenerating clearcut, Hedgerow

Forest: Loblolly Pine, Mature hemlock, Northern Hardwoods, Oak/Beech

Shoreline: Open beach, Dunes

Each contestant may enter only two photographs per specific habitat. Some habitats may be best depicted as a broad panorama, while others require a narrower aspect. Winners will be selected on the basis of technical execution and their potential for helping readers gain an appreciation of the various habitats in Maryland and DC. Photos must have been taken in Maryland or DC. Each photo used will carry a credit line with name of photographer and locality.

The contest is open to all Maryland and DC residents and to MOS members. A panel of editors will choose the winners. In the event of a tie, preference will be given to a photographer who is a member of MOS. The deadline for submission is November 30, 2008. Look for details on the MOS web site, www.MDBirds.org.

MARYLAND FALL COUNT 2008

The annual Fall Seasonal Count sponsored by MOS will take place in the Maryland/DC area on the traditional third weekend of September, either Saturday, September 20 and/or Sunday, September 21. (The MOS Board has left the choice of day to local chapters and coordinators.)

In areas without an identified coordinator, individual parties submit their results directly to the statewide coordinator for inclusion.

Everyone is urged to participate, regardless of skill level. Identification is only part of the challenge; you have to spot the bird first, so every pair of eyes helps. Besides, it is great fun.

The guidelines for this count are the same as those used for all seasonal counts. Local coordinators will assign volunteers to areas, honoring requests whenever possible. Party leaders are responsible for tracking party miles and times, names of participants, and documentation for unusual sightings.

A checklist compilation form is available on the MOS web site, in the "Annual Counts" section:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/counts/fall/fallcounts.html>

The list includes the species one would expect to find in Maryland during this season. Those species requiring further written documentation are noted with asterisks.

All write-ins require full details.

County coordinators who have volunteered so far are listed on the MOS web site. Anyone already organizing a count or interested in volunteering as a coordinator for a county without a coordinator is encouraged to contact the state Coordinator.

If you don't have web access or you are interested in counting in a county without a coordinator, you can contact the state Fall Count Coordinator directly. Individual parties or other groups (e.g., Hawk Watch sites, field trips) who count in areas without a coordinator, but have data for the count period, are asked to submit their data, along with details on the area that was covered, participants, and coverage statistics directly to the state Fall Count Coordinator by **October 18**.

Deadline for submitting completed reports to your county coordinator is no later than October 10, 2008. County compilers are asked to submit compilations to the state coordinator by November 1.

Please plan to join the fun and have a great day birding!

Chuck Stirrat,
Fall Count Coordinator
13318 Hunt Ridge, Ellicott City, MD 21042-1155
Home phone: 410-531-2417
E-mail: ChuckS@msualum.com

June 1, 2008

Dear Marcia and Janet,

I don't know whose idea* it was to celebrate my ninetieth birthday at the 2008 Annual Conference, but it turned out to be the fanciest birthday celebration of my life, and I have to thank you and all the other folks who did all the planning for it. It was great fun having the time to sit down and relax after the wet Saturday afternoon field trip and chat with so many friends. The big cake with the cardinal and its nest with eggs that topped the desert list for Saturday's dinner was such a cute idea! One of the staff presented us with a big piece containing the nest and eggs to take home as a souvenir and share with the family.

George Jett and I had been bidding against each other on Part 3 of my great friend Alexander Wetmore's *Birds of the Republic of Panama* at the silent auction. George ended up buying it and presenting it to me as a birthday present. I already owned bound copies of Parts 1, 2, and 4 but I did not have Part 3, which is the big one containing all the subspecies. Every year I find some fantastic buys at the silent auction. This year they included Aldo Leopold's classic *Sand County Almanac* and Thomas Nuttall's (1891) *Ornithology of Eastern North America* with its extensive accounts of Carolina Parakeets and Passenger Pigeons.

The whole Conference was remarkably well organized and executed this year. The field trips were extraordinary with great leaders. I wish I could have gone on all 34 of them. The trip I was asked to help lead was the Sunday morning one to Swan Harbor, which was a completely new site for me, and it was a real thrill for me to see Least Bittern several times during the morning as well as to repeatedly hear three species of rails: Virginia, King, and Sora.

The poster papers also were outstanding.

The birding trail sounds exciting. I know there have been some very successful ones in some other states, and I am looking forward to hearing more about plans for one in Maryland. I know Eleanor would have been very interested as well.

My sincere thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the 2008 Conference such an outstanding success.

Chan

*[The bright idea originated with Janet Millenson.]



ANNE ARUNDEL

After *Leo Weigant* retired on March 1, 2007, he decided to try for a “Big Year.” By December 31 he wound up with a “Pretty Big Year”—492 of the 500-bird goal he’d set. Highlights included: Best Day: 5 alcids off Maryland with Paul Guris in early February. Longest Overdue Lifer: Yellow-green Vireo in Brownsville, TX (with a big thanks to former MOSer Mary Gustafson who scouted it out the day before). Toughest ID: August, 98 degrees at Falcon Dam, TX—a nondescript tan little bird with a triangular bill deep in a small tree, finally confirmed with a ranger as a female Varied Bunting. Rarest Bird: a hypoleucus/“southern” Xantus’s Murrelet in Monterey Bay. Most Thrilling: as Leo sat on a residential curb in McAllen, TX, at sundown, waiting for some parakeets, three Lesser Nighthawks started buzzing close overhead; one fluttered down on the pavement 25 feet away, so close its blinking eyelid was visible in the streetlamp’s light.

Since *Ron Ketter* moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, a few months ago, he’s picked up 13 life birds. One of those, a Townsend’s Solitaire, was #400. But his biggest thrill was seeing the Greater Prairie Chicken. Two other favorites were Bullock’s Oriole and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

Visiting family in Illinois in June/July, *Pat and Juanita Tate* managed a Sunday morning birdwatching trip to Medwain, an old Joliet arsenal. They saw lots of Bobolink, Dickcissel, Field Sparrow, E. Bluebird, and Indigo Bunting. No Blue Grosbeak, but they did find Rose-breasted Grosbeak and

Summer Tanager. Not bad for one day of birding!

Tom and Sharon Bradford spent the first week of May in British Columbia and the northern Cascade area of Washington. Tom was running a marathon in Vancouver; he has run one in all 50 states and is now working on Canadian provinces. The Bradfords also they wanted to enjoy a few days in the Okanagan wine country. Of course, they did manage to squeeze in some birding time and enjoyed seeing western species such as Yellow-headed Blackbird, California Quail, Say’s Phoebe, Black-billed Magpie, White-winged Crossbill, and Golden-crowned Sparrow. The birding highlight was a Tufted Duck in a park outside Vancouver, a North American first for the Bradfords.

—*Bobbi Reichwein*

HARFORD COUNTY

Eileen and Bob Fry traveled with Boundless Journeys to Seward and the Kenai Peninsula in Alaska. Although this wasn’t a birding trip per se, Eileen spotted Tufted and Horned Puffins, Marbled Murrelet, Red-faced Cormorant, and Varied Thrush. The Frys also enjoyed the orca and humpback whales and the lovable sea otter. Next they journeyed on their own to Denali, where they found Willow Ptarmigan and Golden Eagle along with foxes, Dall sheep, and bear. They had the good fortune of viewing Denali in its entire splendor in the sunlight for all three days they were in the park.

Jean Wheeler hiked for two weeks in England: “The first week in Cornwall was on coastal paths through farms and meadows blooming with heather and foxglove. Stonechat, Linnet, and Pied Wagtail were frequently seen along the way. A look toward the sea usually found Gannet, Cormorant, Common Gull, and Kittiwake. In St. Ives, a Herring Gull swooped out of the air and swallowed my ice cream cone whole! (I hate gulls! Sorry, Gene Scarpula.) The second week, in the Yorkshire Dales near Malham, we walked through rolling fields enclosed

by ancient stone walls. The skyward song of Skylarks surrounded us. Curlew, Oystercatcher, and Lapwing were everyday finds. It’s a bit difficult to bird while walking with a group 9 to 11 miles a day. But I managed a few good sightings.”

HOWARD COUNTY

Kate and Dick Tufts welcomed in May with a trip to southern California. One of their first stops was the Torrey Pines Preserve Annex, where the wildflowers were in full bloom. A life bird, the Western Scrub Jay, followed them along the trail, as did a myriad of butterflies. The next stop was the Niland area of the Salton Sea. Temps of 105 degrees in the shade (there was no shade) did not daunt the birders. The Tufts met a group of birders from Minnesota and together found the Black-tailed Flycatcher and Burrowing Owl. Joshua Tree National Park was spectacular with the Joshua Trees in bloom as well as the ocotillo and other desert flowers. Black-chinned Sparrow and Western Tanager abounded. A raven’s nest with young provided a special treat at the Cottonwood Spring oasis. No lifers at the Morongo Canyon Conservation Park, but still plenty of beautiful birds. Their binoculars were up the entire time.

In late February, *Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan* spent a week at Panama’s Canopy Tower Lodge, where they saw ~240 species of birds and 13 species of mammals. Highlights were an army ant swarm on Pipeline Rd., great views of Great Tinamou, Streak-chested Antpitta on nest, Pheasant Cuckoo, Great Jacamar, Golden-collared Manakin, Rosy Thrush-Tanager, Great and Common Potoos, 7 species of antbird including Oscellated, 5 species of trogon, 10 hummingbird species, and a baby three-toed sloth.

Texas called this spring and *Gayle and Bill Hill* answered with their first birding trip to southern Texas. Starting in the Hill Country (where else?), they got good looks at Black-capped Vireo

and Golden-cheeked Warbler. That night they watched Cave Swallows maneuvering to enter the Frio Cave near Concan as millions of Mexican Free-tailed Bats streamed out on their nightly exodus. Then they worked their way down through many of the Lower Rio Grande Valley hotspots and managed to see almost all of the available LRGV specialties. Some of the highlights included Muscovy Duck, Hook-billed Kite, Gray and White-tailed Hawks, Aplomado Falcon, Groove-billed Ani, Green and Ringed Kingfishers, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Clay-colored Robin, White-collared Seedeater, Botteri's, Cassin's and Olive Sparrows, and Audubon's and Altamira Orioles. A side trip to the San Miguelito Ranch near Raymondville yielded walk-away looks at a pair of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls. The Hill's scheduled stay in Corpus Christi illustrated the benefit of being in the right place at the right time: They managed to see a Piratic Flycatcher that had been discovered just two days earlier and would not be seen again. Overall, they bagged 49 life birds and saw 211 species.

—Kate Tufts

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Texas Hill Country drew an MBC group, too. *Linda Friedland, Ann Lucy, Helen Patton, Gemma Radko, and Lydia Schindler* got fine looks at Black-capped Vireo and Golden-cheeked Warbler at Kerr Wildlife Area, watched the swallows and bats (and hawks) at Concan, and swam in the Rio Frio at Neal's Lodges. Then it was west to the rugged terrain of Big Bend, where they compared notes with an ANS group that included co-leader *John Bjerke* and Frederick's *Barbara Gordon*. A long trudge up to Laguna Meadow brought them within sound if not sight of Colima Warbler. Very high winds (and storms) on their last day kept most birds quiet but also brought a big surprise: a Baird's Sparrow hunkered down in a roadside ditch at Rio Grande Village. Other trip highlights: Common Black-Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawk, Lucifer Hummingbird, Gray Vireo.

Congratulations to *Mike Bowen*, who was elected to the ABA's Board of Directors at the organization's conference in Utah in June. He will join former member *Erika Wilson* on the Board. Also tracking those Utah specialties at the conference was *Lou DeMouy*, as were Frederick members *Marcia and Bob Balestri* and *Kathy Calvert*. Also check out Mike's amusing take on birder-types, "A Primer for the Neophyte Field Trip Leader," in the September issue of *Birding*. Recognize anyone?

SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Hearty congratulations are in order for *Gwen Brewer*. The U.S. North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) Committee and the Association of Joint Venture Management Boards have awarded Gwen one of their prestigious 2008 Bird Conservation Awards. Gwen, Science Program Manager with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, was honored for her outstanding work for bird conservation at the regional level: "She has shown tremendous leadership and dedication to protecting and restoring populations and habitats of North American birds by increasing the effectiveness and coordination of integrated bird conservation in the Atlantic Flyway region."

TRI-COUNTY

In early June, nine members of Tri-County Bird Club assisted in a Piping Plover Nesting Survey at Assateague Island for the National Park Services. *Jean and Larry Fry, Carole and Charlie Stegman, Ceil and Pete Zerhusen, Carol Broderick, Chris Dominic, and Betty Pitney*, along with several NPS staff, counted more ticks than birds, but the final tally of 114 Piping Plovers was declared a good year.

As soon as the weather warms up, our club members take to the skies. The *Stegmans* explored Zion National Park in May, while *Betty Pitney* covered Point Pelee, Crane Creek, and Kirkland Warbler territory. June saw *Mike Walsh* and

Chris Dominic at the ABA Convention in Utah. *Jean and Larry Fry* struck out for Newfoundland, while *Carol Broderick*, followed by *Ron and Carol Gutberlet*, searched Alaska for rarities. While at the Pribilofs, Carol B. was one of the lucky few to see the first Rufous-tailed Robin reported in North America. Some members are already planning next year's treks.

—Carol Broderick

REMEMBRANCES

Kent County Bird Club lost a long-time, faithful member: **Clara Ann Thomas Simmons** passed away on April 27, after a short illness. Clara Ann was highly regarded as a contributing member of the Chestertown and Queen Anne's County communities for nearly 58 years. She was a native Pennsylvanian and graduate of Miami University of Ohio. Her versatility spread throughout the local area through a personal business, a children's clothing store, and extended to the Smithsonian Institution, where she worked in the archives. Clara Ann delighted in her hobby of "birding," often hosting the Kent County club at her property on a creek off the Chester River. She had served as Secretary, Treasurer, and President of the Club. Her pleasant demeanor, positive attitude, and gracious persona made her a lady who will long be remembered for her caring contributions. She leaves two daughters, Elisabeth and Ellen.

—Pat Wilson

Dick Kleen, a founder of the Talbot Bird Club, former president of MOS, and mentor to many Maryland birders, passed away July 9. Look for reminiscences of this great friend of the birding community in the next *Yellowthroat*.

WORLD SERIES OF BIRDING MAY 10, 2008



The competition opened at 12:01 a.m. with a calling Yellow-breasted Chat. Then an Ovenbird gave its flight song and a Great Horned Owl started to call, followed by a night flight Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Least Sandpiper. It was another great start to an exciting World Series of Birding for the MOS Yellowthroats.

Back in December, when Matt Hafner (our fearless Captain of the previous three World Series) told us that he was not able to participate this year, Bill Hubick, Zach Baer, and I faced a dilemma: Do we just limit ourselves to three members, or do we try to find a replacement for Matt? Then, one freezing morning in February, Mikey Lutmerding, Bill, and I were standing in the middle of the North Branch Spray Fields in Allegany County waiting for nonexistent Short-eared Owls, when we popped the question to Mikey: Do you want to be a Yellowthroat? We had our fourth.

As the series drew closer, our strategy sessions grew more frequent and our plan of attack began to take shape. Mikey went up to Cape May and scouted the entire week prior to the competition. Zach and Bill followed on Tuesday night; unfortunately I wasn't able to get up to New Jersey until Wednesday night. Mikey had spent most of the time scouting northern Cape May County and had staked out our secret dawn spot. Zach hit the ocean side and marshes, searching for lingering waterfowl, and Bill scoured Cape Island, hammering down the breeders and migrants we would need.

Just to give an example of what a day of scouting entails: Finding out what time the Little Blue Herons leave the marshes to roost in the afternoon.

Finding breeding meadowlarks in not just one place but in back-up spots; then you need to know what time they sing. You need to know how late the woodcocks call so you don't get to the woodcock spot too late. You need to make sure that the King Rails are calling at the time we need them—a very early hour. When you find a singing Kentucky Warbler in Belle Plain State Forest, you rejoice—until you come back the next day and it is not singing. Where are the migrants hanging out? Are they sticking in the same spots each day? What happens if there is a fallout? Thousands of questions run through your head as you try to keep track of everything you are seeing and what the time is.

Thursday night the four of us joined up and went bird-by-bird down the New Jersey Audubon checklist. If we were not sure about the location for a certain bird, it got an X. Of the 220 relevant birds on the list, there were not that many with X's. We felt good. With all of our scouting, we were down to only a few questions and they could all be answered in the morning.

Friday we wrapped up a few last-minute scouting details and ended back at the hotel around 5:30 p.m. Before we could try for a few hours' sleep, we needed to write out our route times—how long we were going to be at each place and how long it would take to drive to the next spot, so that we wouldn't lose track of time during the competition. All the teams have great birders; it is the teams who have the best routes and manage their time correctly that win.

When the alarm went off at 11 p.m. Friday, four very groggy but excited guys stumbled out of bed, grabbed

their gear, and headed to the Wawa to fill up the car and grab candy bars, cookies, turkey wraps, and energy drinks. And then it began.

We had an incredible night. Four species of rail, moorhen, woodcock, Least Bittern, four species of owl all ticked off. By the time we had hunkered down at our secret dawn spot, we already had 32 species. By the time we left our dawn spot an hour later, the count was up to 58. Birds just kept coming our way. Breeders and migrants were sticking, so all we had to do was drive slowly hear them call and Bill would tick them off the list. By 7 a.m. we hit the 100-species mark. Tough birds like bobwhite, kestrel, bluebird, and Green Heron were seen and heard, and excitingly every so often we kept picking up migrants like Blackburnian and Black-throated Green Warblers.

By mid-morning it started to rain, so instead of doing our hawk watch we decided to spend time at Cape May Meadows. It was a good call. Five species of swallow, a Bonaparte's Gull, Blue-winged Teal, and Royal Tern were all ticked. Unfortunately, Mikey was the only one to get on a Black Tern, so it wasn't countable.

By noon we were leaving Cape May Island with more than 160 species. The Ocean marshes treated us well with kingfisher, harrier, and a Bufflehead that Zach had spotted while scouting. Next were Harlequin Duck and Long-tailed Duck, also found by Zach earlier in the week. By the time we headed back inland, we were up to 177 species.

Luck just kept smiling on us. White-faced Ibis, Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruddy Duck, and Gull-billed Tern all fell into place. We also finally heard a flicker (it was really starting to bother us that we didn't have one). By 6 p.m. we had 184 species. We spent the next five and half hours getting three more birds—Black Skimmer, Chuck-will's-widow, and our last bird, at 11:30, a night flight Veery. We felt good turning in our checklists with 187 species, but we knew we had stiff competition. Fortunately, we won by three birds. The Cornell Team turned in 184.

It is awesome to be able to compete in any tournament where you have so much respect for your fellow competitors. The Cornell team and Michael O'Brien and Louise Zemaitis and the Tropicbird kids all were competing in our class. All the teams shared scouting information, and even though the competition was fierce, we all had a great time.

The Yellowthroats would like to thank MOS for sponsoring the team. We are definitely looking forward to next year. (We will try not to miss Hairy Woodpecker!)

—Jim Brighton

BIRD-A-THON

The Delaware Ornithological Society's May 2008 Bird-A-Thon—supported by MOS and many MOS members—was a great success. It drew more than 430 participants, 28 business sponsors, and support from 17 states and seven ornithological organizations. It raised more than \$38,000 for the purchase of bayshore lands, putting them off limits to the horseshoe crab harvest. Its Best Bird was a winner, too: Wood Sandpiper!

Who Wants to Go to Camp? 2009 MOS Scholarships

Each year MOS awards a dozen or more scholarships to folks who work with young people—teachers, park rangers, camp counselors—and who intend to make nature education a part of their careers. Awardees have a choice of week-long programs at Audubon camps in Maine and Minnesota. All chapters are urged to publicize this program and to recruit likely candidates. For details, consult the MOS web site and/or contact Tom Strikwerda, Chair of the Scholarship Committee: 301-942-2841, tom.strikwerda@verizon.net.

Telling Tales

Last January Dave Czaplak was standing at his favorite spot at Violette's Lock on the Potomac. "As usual, there were a number of duck hunters shooting from the shore rather than from boats. One of them walked up to me and pointed at the flotilla of Ruddy Ducks that had been hanging out there for a while (getting far too used to people walking the towpath) and asked me if they were ducks. I told him they were Pied-billed Grebes, and he went on his way."



PIN CONTEST ALERT

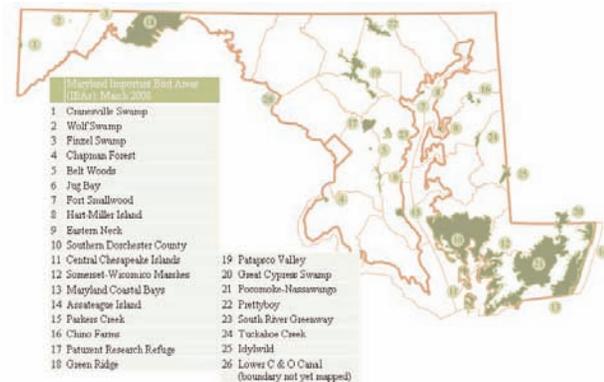
MOS Artists!! It's time to start working on your **2009 MOS Conference Pin Design Contest**. The deadline is January 15, 2009. The basic rules are simple: Entrants must be a member of MOS; the design must contain a bird appropriate for the conference site (Frederick County) and the phrases "MOS" and "2009." On the back of each entry the artist shall put name, address, chapter affiliation, and the species represented. The pin can be any shape. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules and more tips about designing pins for the contest, visit the MOS website, or contact John Malcolm at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.

NEW MARYLAND-DC IBAS IN 2008

BY DAVID CURSON

Thanks to the success of the first statewide season of Bird Blitz Surveys (see the March/April *Yellowthroat*), Maryland now has six new Important Bird Areas (IBAs). In addition, other sites were identified as IBAs from existing data, including data from the recently completed Maryland-DC Breeding Bird Atlas project, 2002-06.

Another great stride forward for the Maryland-DC IBA Program over the past year has been the mapping of IBA boundaries, using a GIS (Geographic Information System). This mapping service was kindly provided pro bono by Bill Richkus of Versar, Inc., who serves as Chair of the Audubon Maryland-DC Board. A map of Maryland-DC's IBAs is shown below.



Following is a brief summary of the newly identified IBAs. More details on each site, as well as the statewide IBA map, are available on the Maryland-DC IBA website at http://www.audubonmdc.org/SciCon_IBAs.html.

Lower C&O Canal IBA: Identified as an IBA for breeding Prothonotary Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, and wintering Rusty Blackbird. Bird Blitz surveys by teams in Montgomery County and Frederick County showed that both of these stretches of the canal qualify. These lengths were combined in a single IBA; the exact boundary has not yet been determined (so this site is not yet mapped). This site includes McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area, one of the few sites in Maryland where large flocks of Rusty Blackbird regularly occur.

Prettyboy IBA: Identified for a diverse assemblage of forest-interior-dwelling species. Significant numbers of Louisiana Waterthrush and Worm-eating Warbler. This site includes the forested watershed of Prettyboy Reservoir, the Harford section of Gunpowder Falls State Park, and some adjacent private lands.

Tuckahoe Creek IBA: Identified for breeding Prothonotary Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Louisiana Waterthrush. This site includes Tuckahoe Creek State Park and Adkins Arboretum. This IBA was publicly recognized at a ceremony organized by Wayne Bell on May 25, 2008.



Dedication ceremony for Tuckahoe Creek IBA. From left to right: Neal Herrick, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; David Curson, Audubon Maryland-DC; Ellie Altman, Adkins Arboretum. Photo courtesy of David Curson.

Idylwild IBA: Identified for significant populations of Northern Bobwhite, Whip-poor-will, Prothonotary Warbler, and a diverse assemblage of both forest-interior-dwelling species and shrubland/early successional birds. This site includes Idylwild Wildlife Management Area and adjacent areas of similar habitat.

South River Greenway IBA: Identified as an IBA for forest-interior-dwelling species. Near-significant numbers of Kentucky Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Worm-eating Warbler. This site includes mostly private lands as well as areas owned by Maryland Environmental Trust and Anne Arundel County.

Somerset-Wicomico Marshes IBA: Identified for breeding Least Bittern, Black Duck, Northern Bobwhite, Northern Harrier, Black Rail, King Rail, Common Moorhen, American Oystercatcher, Chuck-will's-widow, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Seaside Sparrow, Coastal Plain race of Swamp Sparrow, and wintering Short-eared Owl. This site includes all of the saltmarshes in Somerset and Wicomico Counties. Most are publicly owned, eg., Deal Island and Fairmount Wildlife Management Areas, but some are private, including the Maryland Ornithological Society's Irish Grove Sanctuary.

Pocomoke-Nassawango IBA: Identified for Northern Bobwhite, Whip-poor-will, Chuck-will's-widow, Red-headed Woodpecker, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Wood Thrush, Prairie Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, a diverse assemblage of forest-interior-dwelling species, and exceptional concentrations of migrant landbirds. This landscape-scale IBA includes not only the swamp forests along the Pocomoke River and Nassawango Creek but also the extensive adjacent upland loblolly forests. It includes The Nature Conservancy's Nassawango Creek Preserve, Pocomoke State Forest, and Pocomoke State Park.

Great Cypress Swamp: Identified for Wood Thrush, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Kentucky Warbler, and a diverse assemblage of Forest-Interior Dwelling Species. This site straddles the state line, with most of the swamp lying in Delaware.

MARYLAND BIRDING TRAIL: GET SET TO NOMINATE YOUR FAVORITE SITES

Chapter Presidents will soon be asked to recommend birding sites in their parts of Maryland for possible inclusion in the planned **Chandler and Eleanor Robbins Maryland/DC Birding Trail**.

The birding trail committee, headed by Marcia Watson, has adopted a set of criteria for judging nominated sites. The committee is currently preparing a site nomination form that will be distributed to Chapter Presidents in the fall of 2008.

Among the criteria to be employed to assess a site are:

1. Habitat and species diversity, noting any species that are rare or unusual for Maryland or DC.
2. Accessibility, reasonable opening hours, and ease of obtaining any necessary permits or making any required fee payments.
3. Range and quality of on-site facilities, such as visitor centers, rest rooms, kiosks with bird lists, and educational displays.
4. Degree to which the site is attractive for birding in all seasons of the year.
5. Existence of facilities for handicapped birders and absence of features that might threaten personal safety, such as sites in high crime areas or sites with potentially hazardous walking conditions.

The planning group has not set a number for the maximum number of sites on the new trail and may not do so for some time yet. However, it seems clear that not every site to be nominated will be successful. Chapter Presidents are urged to start planning now for an effective nominating process—perhaps by naming a small group from the chapter to spearhead the chapter's response.

Individuals wishing to nominate a site are being asked to do so via their MOS chapter. Contact your President or other chapter officer, and maybe volunteer to help your chapter with nominations.

A small number of non-MOS organizations, such as a few Audubon Society chapters in Maryland as well as ANS in DC, will also be given the opportunity to make site nominations.

Please direct any questions to Marcia Watson, mww@udel.edu.

—Mike Bowen
Birding Trail Committee

2008 AWARDS

At the Harford Conference, President Marcia Balestri presented the following awards:

Valued Service Award: Emy Holdridge, Mike Bowen;
Certificate of Appreciation: John Bjerke, Cyndie Loeper;
Blood, Sweat & Tears Award: Helen Horrocks,
Les Roslund;
Distinguished Service Award: Gwen Brewer,
Maureen Harvey.

Both the Sanctuary Committee and the Harford Chapter were honored for their achievements. So were the three MOS youth teams to the World Series of Birding: **the Monster Tridders, the Chuckle-Heads, the Timber Doodles** (all bird names—look 'em up) as well as the senior team, the Maryland Yellowthroats. (See page 12.)

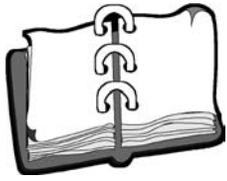
Representing the Conference Committee, **Janet Shields** gave *Kudos Awards* to **Lydia Schindler** and **Dave Webb**, as well as a “Heartfelt Thanks” to the **Harford Bird Club**.

Janet herself—who wears so many hats—received a colorful framed drawing depicting a very, very busy octopus.

GRANTS FOR RESEARCHERS

MOS offers grants—usually limited to less than \$2,000—to support ornithological research to be conducted in the state of Maryland. If the research is to be done at or near one of the MOS sanctuaries, the society may be able to provide accommodations at a nominal cost. Proposals are reviewed twice annually, with deadlines of December 1 and June 1; award notification usually follows within eight weeks. For application guidelines and further information, write or e-mail

Dave Ziolkowski
USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
12100 Beech Forest Rd
Laurel, MD 20708-4038
dziolkowski@usgs.gov
301-497-5753



MOS Calendar

September-October 2008

Saturday, August 30

H Howard. Butterflies through Binoculars. 2-3 hrs. Meet 9:30 AM at Meadowbrook Park east lot. Enjoy expert instruction on butterfly identification. Easy walking on paved path by fields and marshes. We will study some butterflies in hand. Close focus binoculars helpful. Leader: Dick Smith, 410-997-7439. Facilities available.

H Kent. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. Shorebirds, herons, and saltmarsh birds. Full day, bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Sunday, August 31

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. First in a series of casual fall walks. Meet 8:30 AM at the Mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Beginning birders welcome. Expect to find a variety of migrant and resident birds. Directions: From I-695, go south on I-83/Jones Falls Expwy. Take Northern Pkwy exit west (right). Move to left lane and turn left onto Cylburn Ave, left (south) onto Greenspring Ave, turn left almost immediately at stone gate; follow drive to circle in front of mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave. If access is blocked by construction, return to Greenspring Ave and turn right (north), then right on Cylburn Dr and right again on new driveway up the hill to the back of the grounds, and proceed towards and around the main, big mansion house to the front porch. No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Tuesday, September 2

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. First in a series of weekly walks to follow the progress of Fall migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and

marsh. This park has an impressive bird list, including songbirds, herons, shorebirds, and raptors. Meet 8:30 AM on footbridge. Directions: From I-695 take Jones Falls Expwy/I-83 south to Northern Pkwy exit, and go east (left) to next light, Falls Rd. On Falls Rd turn left (north). After third light (Lake Ave), take immediate right (before Falls Rd bridge), then curve left and right again (avoid Light Rail entrance) and go 0.5 mile to the dam. Park and walk to footbridge. Leader: Joan Cwi, 410467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "The Path Taken by an Avian Researcher." *Dr. Kim Derrickson*, Prof. of Biology at Loyola, describes his research on Wood Thrushes in MD, Dusky Antbirds in the Neotropics, and other fascinating bird subjects. Directions: From I-695, take Exit 29A/ Cromwell Bridge Rd, and turn north (away from the city). At 1.4 miles, turn left at sign for "Sherwood Farm." Follow entrance road, then turn right after bridge and follow loop as it curves left, right, and left again to parking on the right. Walk further along the road through the stone arch to the Sherwood House entrance door on the left. Inside the door, refreshments will be in a room on your left, library and lecture room on your right. Doors open at the Sherwood House at 7 PM for socializing and snacks; show starts about 7:45 or 8 pm. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, September 3

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in bad weather (rain, sleet, snow, fog, etc). Directions: From I-695 southwest of the city, take exit 11/I-95, north towards the city. Get off at exit

55/Hanover St. Turn right (east) on McComas St, left (north) on Key Hwy. Take first left onto Lawrence St and turn left onto Fort Ave; continue through gateway into the park. Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

H Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. Automatically cancelled in rain, fog, etc. See above listing for directions, except meet 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

H Montgomery. Western Montgomery Mixed Bag. Half day. Start 7 AM at Violette's Lock with a scan of the river and then drive north along River Rd, stopping at polo grounds, Hughes Hollow, Sycamore Landing Rd, and Patton Turf Farm. Expect warblers and other migrants, with Buff-breasted Sandpiper and American Golden-Plover a possibility. Scopes recommended but not required. Reservations not required. Leader: Dave Powell, 301-540-8776.

Saturday, September 6

MOS BOARD MEETING. Hosted by Howard Bird Club. 10 AM. Place TBD. Info: Janet Shields, janetbill@prodigy.net.

H Baltimore. Cromwell Valley Park. Diverse habitat includes stream, woods, and fields. Expect to see a variety of resident and migrant birds. Meet 8 AM. Directions: From I-695 take Exit 29A/Cromwell Bridge Rd north (away from the city). At 1.4 miles, turn left at the "Willow Grove Farm Entrance." Follow entrance road, then turn left after bridge and park in lot on left. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

H Cecil. Turkey Point Migrants and Hawk Watch Kickoff. Half day. Meet 7 AM at Turkey Point parking lot. From North East, take Rte 272 south about 11 miles. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

PICNIC. Harford. Annual Fall Picnic at the home of Tom and Nancy Congersky. Starts 1 PM, food served at 2 PM. Call Tom Congersky, 410-658-4137, for reservations and directions.

H Montgomery. Patuxent River Park. Half day; joint trip with ANS. Driftboat on Patuxent River followed by trail walk. Migrant and resident songbirds and waterbirds; Sora likely. Meet 6:30 AM at park entrance gate. Park fee \$5 per person. Reservations required. Limit: 15. Call leader, Paul Baichich, 410-992-9736, for more info and to make reservations.

Sunday, September 7

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. 8:30 AM at Mansion's front porch. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Caroline/Talbot. Tuckahoe SP (Tuckahoe Creek IBA). Cosponsored by the Caroline and Talbot Bird Clubs. Meet 8 AM at the Woods Trail parking lot near the lake. Info: contact Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com.

H Howard. Beginner's Bird Walk at Wilde Lake. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8:30 AM at gravel lot by barn. Combination of water, woodland, and stream should provide a wide variety of species. Easy walking on path along the lake and woodlands. Learn tips on bird identification. Learn which species of birds are common to our area. Glean advice on binocular and field guide selection and use. No facilities. Leaders: Mike and Grazina McClure, 410-531-2780.

H Montgomery. Hugh Mahanes Presidents' Walk. Our traditional Presidents' Walk was renamed last year in honor of Past President Hugh Mahanes. Half day. Participation of all former Chapter Presidents is encouraged and everyone is welcome. Bring lunch for a post-walk picnic. Meet at 7:30 AM at the parking lot at the end of Riley's Lock Rd off River Rd. Reservations not required. For more info, call Jim Nelson at 301-530-6574.

Tuesday, September 9

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. *Jon Boone* will present "Roger Tory Peterson and the Artful Science of Field Guides." Jon will discuss Peterson and the evolution of the modern field guide. Bring your favorite field guides from any and all authors to enrich the discussion, which will be (in part) an informal question and answer session. 7 PM at Deep Creek Lake SP Discovery Center, 898 State Park Rd, Swanton. Contact Barbara Gaffney at 301-895-4646/ gaffneyg@mindspring.com or J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223/ jchurchi@atlanticbb.net for more info.

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or gt5s@bcpl.net.

MEETING. Kent. *Glenn and Juli Dulmage* will give an account of their recent trip to Costa Rica, "Hummingbird Banding and Other Adventures in Costa Rica." 7:30 PM. Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

Wednesday, September 10

H Baltimore. Greenmount Cemetery. The first of two cemetery walks to investigate bird life in Baltimore City. These pockets of green space are relatively undisturbed and unexplored. Meet 9:30 AM at the cemetery, 1501 Greenmount Ave. Directions: From I-83, take North Ave exit. At light, turn left (east) onto North Ave. Go 10 blocks. Turn right on Greenmount Ave and go 4 short blocks. At Oliver St turn left into main gate and park. Leader: Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

H Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. See Sep 3 listing for directions to the Fort, but meet 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

MEETING. Cecil. Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

H Howard. David Force Park. 2 hrs. Easy walking through the wooded trails and fields of this Howard Co Open Space. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. Migrant warblers, thrushes, and other passerines likely. Good view of the open sky for fly-over hawks. Meet 8 AM at the sign on Pebble Beach Dr. Grassy mown trails may be wet. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057. No facilities.

Thursday, September 11

MEETING. Howard. "Area Hawkwatching: The Sites and Sights," by *Ralph Geuder*. Learn more about several major eastern raptor migration sites and the people and organizations behind the counts. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

H Washington. Fort Frederick. Meet 7 AM at the P&R next to the DMV. Contact Linda or Bruce Field at 301-797-6189 to participate.

Saturday, September 13

FALL COUNT. Allegany/Garrett. Chuck Hager will be the compiler for the 19th annual Fall Count. Contact Chuck at 301-689-5344 for area assignments. Tally rally to be held during the Annual Club Picnic the following day (Sep 14).

H Anne Arundel. Patuxent River Park. Boat trip to look for waterfowl and rails. Depart 6 AM, Parole P&R for this half-day boat trip. Boat fee \$6. Number of passengers is limited. Contact Tom Bradford, 410-987-0674, for more info and to make reservations.

MOS Calendar (continued from page 17)

Sunday, September 14

ANNUAL PICNIC. Allegany/Garrett. 1 PM at Carey Run Sanctuary in Finzel. Something different this year: we'll hold our Fall Count tally at the picnic (and help the compiler to collect our results). Even if you didn't count, come out to meet and socialize with some of your fellow bird club members. The club will provide a meat platter and some drinks. Please bring a covered dish. Annual dues are due at this time, so bring your check-book. If you know of someone who might be interested in joining the bird club, this is a good opportunity to bring them along. Contact Barbara Gaffney at 301-895-4646/gaffneyg@mindspring.com or J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223/jchurchi@atlanticbb.net for more info.

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Baltimore. Chimney Swifts at Dusk, Druid Hill Park Conservatory (Greenhouse). Join the BBC SwiftWatch Team for "Swift Night Out" as Chimney Swifts pour into the Conservatory chimney. Swifts are counted and results, nationwide, are posted at www.chimneyswifts.org. Baltimore has some of the highest counts in the nation. Meet 7:30 PM (come at 7:15 PM if the weather is cloudy or gray) at the Conservatory. Directions: The Conservatory is located at Auchentoroly Terr and Gwynns Falls Pkwy. From I-83, exit at 28th St. Follow signs to "Druid Park Lake Dr" (go along edge of the park). Turn right at 5th traffic light, Gwynns Falls Pkwy. See the Conservatory (a historic Victorian glass greenhouse) on your right. Leader: Carol Schreter, 410-664-5151.

H Caroline. Bird-Banding Demonstration in Chestertown with Jim Gruber, Bander. 8:30 AM. Great for kids. Adults welcome, too. Rain date is Sep 21. Contact Danny Poet to register and for directions, 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com. For

carpooling, meet at Roses parking lot, Denton, at 7:30 AM.

F FALL COUNT. Harford. Contact Mark Johnson, 410-692-5978, for count details and recording sheets.

H Harford. Susquehanna SP. Enjoy the fall migration at a popular birding location. Meet 7 AM at the Rock Run Mill on Stafford Rd. Contact Les Eastman at 410-734-6969 for info.

H Howard. Rockburn Branch Park. Half day. Moderate walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park, an excellent place to find a wide variety of species. Warblers, vireos, flycatchers, thrushes, and other passerines likely. Hawk flyovers easy to see. Meet 8 AM in parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse. Facilities available. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731.

H Montgomery. Pennyfield to Violette's Bird Stalk. Half day. Meet 7 AM at Violette's Lock parking lot. We will carpool to Pennyfield Lock and walk up the C&O Canal towpath to Violette's. This walk should net an interesting mix of late warblers, landbird migrants, and probably a few first-show winter visitors, as we scan the skies and river for raptors and waterbirds. If you plan to attend, contact leader: Jim Nelson, kingfishers2@verizon.net or 301-530-6574.

Tuesday, September 16

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Ruth Culbertson, 410-825-1379.

H Baltimore. Rain date for Chimney Swifts at Dusk, Druid Hill Park Conservatory (Greenhouse). See Sep 14 listing.

Wednesday, September 17

H Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. See Sep 3 listing for directions, but meet 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

H Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. Urban birding at its best. One-third day. Migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd, 1/2 mile below Nature Center). For reservations (required) and directions, call leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

MEETING. Montgomery. "Birding Uganda: The Pearl of Africa." *Gail Mackiernan*, MBC. The small country of Uganda, an increasingly popular birding destination, bridges the faunal zones of East and Central Africa and has one of the continent's largest bird lists. Gail and Barry Cooper recently spent 25 days visiting most of Uganda's major game and national parks, where they recorded almost 550 species of birds. Gail's talk will combine slides and video of their trip. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Thursday, September 18

MEETING. Caroline. "Cape Henlopen Osprey Project" presented by *Ray Bivens*, Chief of Interpretation and Environmental Education, DE SP. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, September 20

F FALL COUNT. Baltimore. We will tally all birds seen within the city and county during this calendar day. Birders of all levels of experience are welcome and urged to participate. To avoid duplication of counting, contact compiler Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or gt5s@bcpl.net for assignment.

H Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Sep 3 listing for directions. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, etc). Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

F FALL COUNT. Caroline. If you would like to participate, please contact Debby Bennett (Coordinator) at 410-479-1343 (work) or firefly5845@hotmail.com.

H Cecil. Fall Season at Fair Hill. Our walk will take us through woods, stream valleys, and fields in search of migrant warblers, flycatchers, vireos, and more. Be prepared for a longish hike over trails that are narrow and may be steep and muddy in places. Meet at the Covered Bridge Parking Lot at Fair Hill at 8 AM. From Rte 273, go north on Rte 316 (Appleton Rd) for about 1 mile and then enter Fair Hill at Black Bridge Rd on left. Follow this gravel road for about 2 miles to the Covered Bridge parking lot. Parking fee; bring small bills to pay (\$3 MD residents, \$4 nonresidents); honor system. Wear shoes or boots good for walking. Leader: Ken Drier, kdrier@zoominternet.net.

FALL COUNT. Howard. Compiler TBD.

H Montgomery. Upper Watts Branch Park. Half day. Migrant warblers, vireos, thrushes, and assorted woodland residents. Meet 8 AM at corner of Princeton Pl and Fordham St. Reservations required. Limit: 12. Leader: Paul O'Brien, 301-424-6491.

FALL COUNT. Washington. Contact Coordinator Doris Berger at 301-739-8907 for more info.

Sunday, September 21

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Harford. Walk along Winters Run Rd for fall migrants. Meet 7 AM at the Rte 24/I-95 P&R. Contact leaders, Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis, 410-569-8319 for more info.

H Montgomery. Lois Y. Green CP. Half day. Explore the varied habitats of this new 204-acre Mont Co park. Migrant/resident songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd, Gaithersburg. For detailed directions and reservations (required), call leader, Mark England, 240-252-4218 (h) or 240-375-4500 (cell).

Monday, September 22

H Howard. Beginner's Walk at Lake Elkhorn. 2-3 hrs. Easy walking on paved path around the lake to learn tips on bird identification. Learn which species of birds are common to our area. Advice on binocular and field guide selection and use. Combination of water, woodland, and fields should provide a wide variety of species. Meet 8:30 AM at Broken Land Pkwy lot. Leader Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329. No facilities.

Tuesday, September 23

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Dot Gustafson, 410-584-9509 or dotsg7@verizon.net.

MEETING. **Washington.** 7:30 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Program TBA. Call 301-797-8454 for further info.

Wednesday, September 24

H Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Meet 7:30 AM to bird some of the trails of Little Bennett for migrant and resident birds. Expect to walk 2-3 miles on gravel and dirt trails, with some uphill. Beginners welcome. Reservations required. Limit: 10. For reservations and directions, contact leader: Claire Wolfe, 301-972-4278.

Saturday, September 27

H Cecil. Cape May: Hawks or Hawk Food. Car-pool with fellow club members for any easy 2-hr drive to Cape May, NJ, one of the nation's premier fall hawk watch sites. Spend some time on the hawk watch platform with the best in the hawk ID business. When you get tired of watching hawks, step onto the Boardwalk Trail for a look at some of the things the hawks are eating. Meet 7 AM near Dunkin' Donuts at Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213 in Elkton. Bring breakfast, lunch, and snack (or money to buy food on the way). Dress and pack for a long day in the sun. Scope helpful. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net. Rain date is Oct 4.

H Harford. Otter Point Marsh. Canoe the Otter Point Marsh from the Anita Leight Sanctuary for waterbirds and shorebirds. Donation of \$5 per person for use of the canoes. Or you may bring your own boat. Meet at the Sanctuary on Otter Point Rd at 8 AM. Call Sue Procell for reservations at 410-676-6602.

H Kent. Turkey Point. Travel to Elk Neck SP and walk to the Turkey Point Lighthouse, overlooking northern Chesapeake Bay. We'll look for land-bird migrants (and butterflies) along the walk and spend some time at the hawk watch during peak raptor migration. Full day. Bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Sunday, September 28

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. 8:30 AM. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Howard. Western RP. Half day. Moderate walking along field edges and woodland trails. Opportunity for warblers, sparrows, thrushes, and flyovers. Small pond may host shorebirds. Meet 8 AM at Carr's Mill Rd lot. Facilities available. Leader: Ralph Cullison, 410-442-2181.

Tuesday, September 30

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Matilda Weiss, 410-337-2732.

Wednesday, October 1

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. See Sep 3 for details. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MOS Calendar (continued from page 19)

Friday, October 3

MEETING. Anne Arundel. “Birding the Bering Sea: Western Alaska Specialties and Asian Vagrants,” by *Phil Davis*. Phil discusses and shows photos of many bird species found in Alaska, where he has spent the equivalent of more than six months leading birding tours in the western Alaska Aleutian islands and the Bering Sea islands. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Contact Pierre Henkart, 410-849-5343, for more info.

Saturday, October 4

H Harford. Swan Harbor Farm. A great trip for shorebirds and migrant sparrows. Meet at the park on Oakington Rd at 8 AM. Contact leaders, Colleen Webster and John Gallo, at 410-459-4577 for more info.

H Howard. Mt. Pleasant Farm. Half day. Easy walking through the fields of the farm. Tree lines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Prime time for sparrows. Great opportunity for flyovers. This area has public access on weekends. Meet 8 AM at parking lot. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643.

H Kent. Beginner’s Bird Walk at Heron Point, Chestertown. Meet 9 AM in the main parking lot for a leisurely walk along the river, looking for fall migrants: flycatchers, warblers, vireos, sparrows, and hawks. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

H Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Everyone welcome, especially new birders. Late warblers and vireos, early sparrows, and some raptors possible. For reservations, time, and meeting place, contact the leader: Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

Sunday, October 5

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. 8:30 AM. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Howard. University of Maryland Farm. Half day. Enjoy the opportunity to bird this privately owned area. Difficult walking through (and in) the fields and wetlands. Sparrows are the target species but wetland birds are likely. Knee boots and waterproof pants recommended. No facilities. Limit: 12. Call Bonnie Ott for meeting time and place and to sign up, 410-461-3361.

Tuesday, October 7

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. “Do Extramarital Affairs Make Mountain Bluebirds Blue?” *Dr Scott Johnson*, Prof. of Biological Sciences at Towson, discusses his research on the breeding behavior of Mountain Bluebirds in the high country of Wyoming. See Sep 2 listing for directions and details. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, October 8

MEETING. Cecil. Business meeting and general social. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

H Howard. Bon Secours Spiritual Center. 2 hrs. Enjoy the opportunity to become familiar with the public grounds of this lovely area. Easy walking. Woodland paths, fields, and hedgerows provide opportunities for a variety of birds. Hawkwatching is optimal, with wide views of the sky. Meet 8:30 AM at Visitor parking lot. Facilities available. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057.

Thursday, October 9

H Harford. Mariner Point Park, Joppatowne. A trip for novice and experienced birders to sample the local birdlife. Meet at the park on

Kearney Dr at 8 AM, in the last parking lot. Contact the leader, Tom Gibson, at 410-734-4135 for more info.

MEETING. Howard. “The Songs of Insects—A Celebration of these Amazing Musicians,” by *Wil Hershberger*. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

Saturday, October 11

H Cecil. Turkey Point Migrants and Hawk Watch. A walk through the woods and fields for migrant songbirds, plus a stop at the hawk watch station to see what is flying. Be prepared for a round-trip hike to the Point, a distance of about 2 miles. The pace will be leisurely. Most of the walking is on a gravel road with good footing, but there are hilly sections. Wear comfortable shoes/boots for walking. Bring drinks and/or snacks. Meet 7 AM at the Turkey Point parking lot. From the town of North East, go south on Rte 272 about 11 miles. The road ends at the parking lot. Trip Leader: Leslie Fisher, gonbrdn@dol.net.

H Howard. Elkhorn Garden Plots. 2-3 hrs. Easy walking through garden plots, which can host sparrows, warblers, and other fall migrants. Meet 8:30 AM. From the intersection of Snowden River Pkwy and Oakland Mills Rd, travel 0.9 mile to a right turn at a metal gate on a gravel road. Park anywhere along the garden plots on the right. No facilities. Leader: Jim Wilkinson, 410-381-9250.

H Montgomery/Frederick. Lilypons Water Gardens. Half day. Joint trip to this southern Frederick hotspot. Target species include American Bittern, Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Lincoln’s Sparrow, and a variety of raptors. Meet at Lilypons at 7:30 AM. For reservations (required) and directions, contact leader: Mike Welch, 301-874-5828 or manddwelch@comcast.net.

H Indicates Field Trip

Sunday, October 12

BIG SIT. Anne Arundel. Big Sit at Kinder Farm Park. Take part in this nationwide competition and learn how to identify birds that are in your own backyard. How many birds can we see and hear from within a 17-foot circle? Come for one hour or 10. Contact Tom Bradford, 410-987-0674 or tabslab@aol.com, if you would like to participate.

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. 8:30 AM. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

BIG SIT. Cecil. Turkey Point. Birding's most sedentary event. Our Big Sit count circle will be based at the big cedar tree near the lighthouse at Turkey Point. Sean McCandless and Chris Starling will be official counters. All are welcome, so pack some food and drink and come out to join us. Sean and Chris will start at 4:30 AM, but you can come whenever you like and stay for as long as you want. It is not necessary to contact the leaders before this event, just show up. For info, contact Sean at seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

H Howard. West Friendship Park. Will carpool to nearby park. Moderate walking along field edges and through stream valleys. This is a great area for sparrows. Small ponds may hold some surprises. Expect wet areas. Meet 8 AM at shopping center just west of Rtes 32/144. Leaders: Jeff Culler, 410-465-9006 and Lisa Colangelo, 410-489-428. No facilities.

BIG SIT. Kent. Join us at the observation platform at Tubby Cove, Eastern Neck NWR, to help tally all the birds seen from this single location. Drop by any time from first light to mid-afternoon and stay as long as you like. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

BIG SIT. Montgomery. Join the Sitting Ducks at Black Hill RP, starting at dawn and continuing until ??? Come

for the day or just a few hours. Meet at the dike across the road from the park boat ramp. Leader: Rick Sussman, warblerick@aol.com.

Monday, October 13

H Harford. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. Take a federal holiday and bird one of the East Coast's most famous raptor migration spots, something every birder should experience at least once. Meet at Rte 1 P&R at Castleton Rd in Darlington at 7 AM. Call leader, Dennis Kirkwood, for details: 410-692-5905.

Tuesday, October 14

MEETING. **Allegany/Garrett.** *David Curson*, PhD, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon MD-DC will present "The Brown-headed Cowbird—A Conservation Challenge." 7 PM at Deep Creek Lake SP Discovery Center, 898 State Park Rd, Swanton. Contact Barbara Gaffney at 301-895-4646/ gaffneyg@mindspring.com or J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223/ jchurchi@atlanticbb.net for more info.

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

MEETING. **Kent.** Speaker TBA. 7:30 PM. Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

Wednesday, October 15

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Birding the Bering Sea: Western Alaska Specialties and Asian Vagrants" by *Phil Davis*. Phil just completed his 12th trip to Western AK and has compiled a multimedia presentation on the birding locations and the key target species of the region. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac.

Thursday, October 16

Meeting. **Caroline.** "Birds of Costa Rica," by *Gary Van Velsir*. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Friday-Sunday, October 17-19

H Anne Arundel. Three-day trip to Chincoteague, Kiptopeke, Eastern Shore NWR, Fisherman's Island, and CCBT islands to look for late migrants and early waterfowl. Trip includes visiting the hawk watch and bird banding station at Kiptopeke. Contact Steve Hult, 410-956-3392, no later than Oct 5 for more info and reservations.

Saturday, October 18

H Baltimore. Northampton Furnace Trail. Level walk through mixed woods and brushy habitats to edge of Loch Raven Res. Good chance for Winter Wrens, lingering robins, and waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at Dulaney Valley Rd and Chapelwood Ln, 2 miles north of I-695, exit 27. Leader: Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

H Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Sep 3 listing for directions. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, etc). Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

H Harford. Eden Mill Park. Join the banding crew for up-close looks at migrant birds. Meet at the Vangrin banding pavilion on Eden Mill Rd at 8 AM. Contact Mark Johnson at 410-692-5978 for more info.

H Howard. Sparrow Big Day. All day. Search wetlands and dry fields in this intensive search for as many sparrows as possible. Going for 12 species! Previous years have turned up non-sparrow rarities. Expect difficult walking for most of the day. Knee boots a must. Call Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361, to sign up and get info. Limit: 12. Facilities at some spots.

Sunday, October 19

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. 8:30 AM. For details, see Aug 31 listing. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H Howard. Hawk Watch at Meadowbrook. Full day. This recently dedicated park is at the southeast corner of US 29 and MD 100. Bring a chair and sustenance for however long you plan to stay. Nearby ponds and field edges might turn up some non-hawk species. Learn tips and techniques for separating hawks in flight. Meet 9:30 AM. Park either in the P&R lot adjacent to the tot lot or continue west on Meadowbrook Ln to lots inside the park entrance (which are closer). Follow the paved path west toward MD 29 to the high knoll behind the baseball diamond. The site is marked by several large rocks. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643.

Tuesday, October 21

H Baltimore. Lake Roland. 8:30 AM. See Sep 2 for details. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

Thursday, October 23

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hrs. Easy walking on paved path around the lake. This park always has the potential for some surprises. Meet 8 AM at west end lot. Leader: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329. Facilities available.

Saturday, October 25

H Allegany/Garrett. Town Hill Hawk Watch. Meet Ray Kiddy at a time of year when there is good hawk diversity but still an opportunity for interesting birds like Golden Eagle (with favorable weather conditions). Meet 7:30 AM at the Mason's Barn P&R, exit 46/E Cumberland off I-68. Bring lunch and a drink. Call Ray at 301-729-1972 for info.

H Cecil. Buteos at the Turkey Point Hawk Watch. A walk through the woods and fields will bring you to the Hawk Watch station to see if buteos are flying. Learn to tell the difference between immature and adult plumages, or to ID a bird that is a mere speck in the sky. See Oct 11 listing for similar trip details. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net. Rain date for trip is Nov 1.

H Harford. Harford Glen. A very popular area for a variety of resident and migrant birds. Meet at the Glen at 7:30 AM. Contact Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis, 410-569-0504, for more info.

H Howard. Dickey Farm. Half day. Joint trip with Carroll Co club. Will carpool a short distance to this privately owned farm. Moderate walking through the woodlands and field edges. A couple of ponds provide chances for some waterbirds. Great habitat for sparrows. Expect wet grass and primitive paths. Meet 7:30 AM at Rte 32/I-70 P&R. Leaders: Dave and Maureen Harvey, 410-795-3117. No facilities.

Sunday, October 26

H Anne Arundel. Hawk Mountain, PA. Learn how to identify migrating hawks at one of the nation's most famous hawkwatching sites. Depart 5 AM, Severna Park P&R, for this all-day trip. Contact Larry Zoller, 410-987-9354, for more info.

Tuesday, October 28

POT LUCK DINNER AND MEETING. **Washington.** Bring a dish to share along with your own plate, utensils, and drink for the 6 PM dinner. Meeting starts at 7:30. Program TBA. All activities at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-797-8454 for further info.

Friday-Sunday, Oct 31-Nov 2

H Harford. Waggoner's Gap Weekend. Enjoy hawkwatching during the day and owling at night. For accommodations and meeting location, contact Dave Webb at 410-939-3537.

Saturday, November 1

ANNUAL BANQUET. **Allegany/Garrett.** Keynote Speaker: *Greg Kearns* from Patuxent River Park. The banquet starts at 5:30 PM at the Frostburg United Methodist Church Social Hall, 48 Main St. Please call Charlotte Folk at 301-689-6587 to make reservations. Cost for the dinner is \$13 (students \$10), including tax and gratuities. Please send payment to Charlotte Folk

at 179 Mt. Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532.

H Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash. Blue Mash is a good place to work on the basics of sparrow ID. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Half day. For reservations, time, and directions, contact leader: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252 or lydiaschindler@verizon.net.

Wednesday, November 5

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. 8 AM. See Sep 3 for details. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Friday, November 7

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Goshawks: Driven by their Prey!" by *David Brinker*, Regional Ecologist, MD DNR Natural Heritage Program. Why are goshawks important to us and are they still increasing in the Central Appalachians? Mr. Brinker has studied goshawks since 1977 and will have answers to these questions and more. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Contact Pierre Henkart, 410-849-5343, for more info.

Saturday, November 8

H Baltimore. Loch Raven. Waterbirds and landbirds. Possible Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, and Common Loon. Scopes useful. Two-mile level walk. Meet 8 AM. Directions: From I-695, take exit 27/Dulaney Valley Rd north, go several miles, cross large bridge over reservoir, and bear right immediately. Continue to first left, Stone Hill Rd. Go about 100 yards, turn around, and then park on your right. All cars need to park on the same side of the road. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

H Harford. Eden Mill Park. Saw-whet Owl Banding. Come see our smallest eastern owl during its peak migration time. Meet at the Mill on Eden Mill Rd at 7 PM. Contact leader Mark Johnson at 410-692-5978 for more info.

H Indicates Field Trip

Sunday, November 9

H Montgomery. Blue Mash. Half day. Relatively new and surprisingly birdy site near Olney. Meet 7:30 AM at Zion Rd parking lot. Limit: 8-10. For reservations and directions, call the leader, Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

Tuesday, November 11

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "Birding the Bering Sea—Western Alaska Specialties and Asian Vagrants." *Phil Davis* presents a multimedia show based on his 12 birding trips to the islands of western AK, known for numerous endemic seabirds and exciting strays from Eurasia. See Sep 2 listing for directions and program details. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, November 12

MEETING. Cecil. Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Saturday, November 15

H Anne Arundel. DE Mystery Tour. Trip to look for various waterfowl and woodland birds. Depart 7 AM at the Bay 50 Shopping Center. Contact Bobbi Reichwein, 410-798-5940, for more info.

H Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Sep 3 listing for directions. Meet 8 AM in Visitor Center parking lot. Cancelled in bad weather (high winds, fog, rain, etc). Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

H Cecil. Avalon Sea Watch. Join us for a carpool trip to Avalon, NJ, a town on a barrier island at a point where the shoreline bulges outward into the Atlantic—and where thus it is possible to get fantastic looks at a steady stream of migrating seabirds. This is a great opportunity to plump up your Life List with seabirds, all from the comfort of land. This trip involves no walking at all; pull your car up to the seawall and take out

your lawn chair, blanket, scope, and hot drink, and settle in for a day of scanning the seas. Meet near Dunkin' Donuts at Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213 in Elkton, at 7 AM. Bring scope if you have one. Dress for possible extreme cold and windy conditions. Also bring money for tolls and gas. Leader: Richard Donham, donhamr@zoominternet.net.

Sunday, November 16

H Harford. Harford Waterfowl Tour. Search for common and rare ducks, geese, and other waterbirds. Meet at Swan Harbor Park near Havre de Grace at 7:30 AM. Contact Russ Kovach at 410-457-4274 for more info.

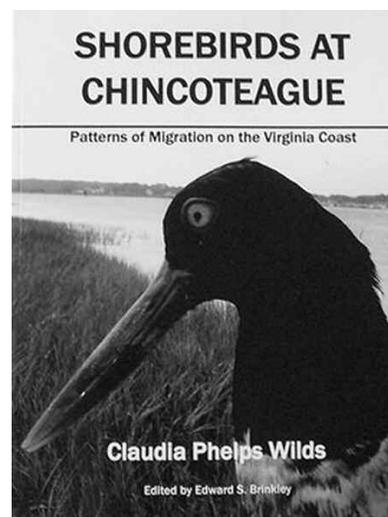
H Montgomery. Occoquan NWR, VA. Bring lunch and warm drink. We will look for sparrows and other fieldbirds and early waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at the refuge car park. Reservations required. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

CLAUDIA WILDS'S SHOREBIRDS

Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory has just published *Shorebirds at Chincoteague: Patterns of Migration on the Virginia Coast*—the manuscript written by the late Claudia Wilds and now edited by Ned Brinkley. Claudia, a noted authority on shorebirds—and other birds—and a longtime MOS stalwart, had conducted 15 years of extensive surveys at Chincoteague. However, she died in 1997, before the text could be finally organized. Ned (author of the *National Wildlife Federation Field Guide to Birds of North America* [2007], editor of *North American Birds* magazine, and worldwide field trip leader) also penned the Introduction, pointing to Claudia's role as "teacher . . . role model . . . modern birder and old-fashioned naturalist" and one who sought the "elevation of our common understanding of birds and the application

of our increased knowledge in the arena of bird conservation." Brian Harrington of Manomet Bird Observatory wrote the Foreword, adding that "the information she has collected . . . has been of immense use to shorebird conservation research."

The 90-page book is full of charts, graphs, maps, species accounts, descriptions of census areas, bird-finding information, and much more. The book contains a great photo of Claudia as well as Claudia's Chincoteague photo of Virginia's only record of Mountain Plover. The book is available for a donation of \$10, plus \$2 postage. It would be an excellent addition to any birder's or researcher's collection, as well as a great gift for birders or researchers or bird clubs to give to their local libraries and schools. Ask about discounts for orders of 5 or more.

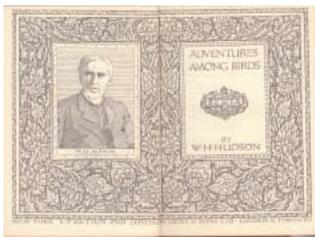


To obtain copies of the book, contact Brian Taber at Taberzz@aol.com or 103 Exeter Court, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

—Brian Taber
Coastal Virginia Wildlife
Observatory

BOOK REVIEW

Adventures Among Birds, W.H. Hudson • E.P. Dutton and Company, 1920. Illustrations reproductions of original woodcuts from A History of British Birds by Berwick (1826)



This is not a current publication, as you can see, but the name W.H. Hudson gives it a currency of which we would do well to take notice. W.H. (William Henry) Hudson (1840–1922) grew up in Argentina of U.S. parentage, later becoming a British

citizen. Known as “the first literary environmentalist,” he authored dozens of books, ranging from ornithological studies such as *Argentine Ornithology* and *British Birds*, to a popular suite of books on the English countryside, to exotic “romances;” his most famous novel, *Green Mansions*, features Rima the Bird Girl.

To quote from the foreword of a 1915 edition of *Green Mansions*, “The expert knowledge which Hudson has of nature gives to all his work backbone and surety of fibre, and to his sense of beauty an intimate actuality.”

The copy of *Adventures Among Birds* reviewed here is from a collection of books still on the shelves at Cylburn, put there by a former librarian who may have rescued it from the obscurity of little-circulated books at Pratt. Moving it to Cylburn only assured its obscurity further, for it still had many uncut pages.

It was the author’s name that drew my attention. We’ve probably all read the truly unforgettable *Green Mansions*. In the years since, I have also read *Afoot in England*, *Letters in the Ornithology of Buenos Aires*, and now this. And if ever find W.H. Hudson’s name among the stacks of books anywhere, I shall read that, too.

Hudson introduces his essays in *Adventures Among Birds* with an apology for having written another book about birds. An acquaintance of his observed that, having written as many as he had, he must have already told all he knew about the subject. Hudson need not have apologized. While many of his chapters are about common birds found in abundance—goldfinches, nightingales, ravens—his poetic sensitivity makes his telling ever fresh and vivid.

Can I persuade you to lay aside those glossy Sibleys, RTPs, and Kenn Kaufmans and slip back one hundred years to read the way a classical author tells it? As I grow older in my association with the Baltimore Bird Club, I find it just as satisfying (more?) to read Hudson’s *Adventures Among Birds* as to confront the planet’s transportation system to pursue the real thing.

If you can’t find a copy on the Internet, let me know. I’ll dust off *Adventures Among Birds* and lend you the copy that’s been languishing on our shelves for so long.

—Joy Wheeler
Baltimore Bird Club

On discovering the Marsh Wren: “He left me . . . to experience that rarest delight of the bird-seeker, the making the acquaintance of, and growing hourly and daily more intimate with, a new species. In this instance it was nothing but a plain little brown bird . . . but in virtue of its melody of a lustre surpassing . . . any shining bird of the tropics.” *Adventures Among Birds*.

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

ACTION LINE

- Oct 10: Fall Count Data
- Nov 30: Atlas Contest: Habitat Photos
- Dec 1: Research Proposals
- Dec 15: Rainforest Challenge
- Jan 15: Pin Design Contest
- Jan 20: Annual Bird List Submissions
- Jan 30: Scholarship Applications

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