

The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

VOL. 34, NO. 5



President's Corner

By Tom Strikwerda

Results Oriented -Where I work some individuals are described as “results-oriented”, usually in contrast to “process-oriented”. I like to think that MOS is a results-oriented organization, though we need process, too, to be well-run. A results orientation is in line with our bylaws, which state: “The purpose of this organization is to further educational, scientific, and charitable pursuits relating to birdlife in Maryland.” Every now and then it’s a good idea to highlight some of our recent accomplishments – our results, if you will, towards our purpose. I mention just a sample below across our range of committees and activities.

YMOS -George Radcliff and Wayne Bell established and lead the YMOS, primarily for the Eastern Shore counties. One measure of success is high demand to participate in the World Series birding competition. The enthusiasm, skill and determination of the younger people is amazing and an inspiration for us all. And, slowly but surely, YMOS is taking root in other chapters, thanks to efforts of many of you.

Conservation - Our Conservation Committee, chaired by Kurt Schwarz, stays abreast of local, state, and national issues and files comment letters about projects that effect birds and their habitat. Obviously, we can’t always tell whether our voice was heard on any given issue, but occasionally we hear good news. A prime example is Maryland’s Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) grant program, which is to provide funds to attempt to control feral cat colonies. While I’m not going to wade into this controversial topic within the wildlife and cat communities, I will say that MOS and many members are strongly opposed to TNR. MOS took a strong stance against TNR and the granting board heard our voice and delayed grants until they hear from other Maryland Government Departments on the efficacy and risks. It remains to be seen what becomes of this program, but the delay represents the influence of MOS can have at the state level.

Scholarships -Recently, I met a recipient of an MOS scholarship from when I served as chair of the committee several years ago. I was very pleased to hear she was involved in finding activities to attract young people to birding as part of her job in the county – exactly the type of activity we hope will result from our program. Our program has had many successes such as this and remains strong, thanks to the leadership of Kate Tufts. In fact, the Audubon Camp in Maine looks to MOS to continue to provide

many very well qualified and enthusiastic teachers to keep their programs strong, to great benefit to all who attend.

Research -Because MOS has a number of sanctuaries we’re often asked whether they can be used to wildlife study by university researchers. MOS generally grants them access. Many of you have seen results of their research as posters at our conference, thanks to Dave Ziolkowski’s committee. And at our next conference, our keynote speaker will present his results. With research studies, MOS real estate provides benefits beyond our birding excursions or habitat preservation.

Long Range Plan Survey -I saved this for last for a reason. Our LRP committee, led by Colin Reese and Joan Cwi, has just published the results of the survey they conducted earlier this year. Over 20% of you took the time to reply, making the results meaningful for MOS. The survey will help us measure our results and offer guidance on where we should devote our resources to achieve more results. (See the following article of

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this issue of *The Maryland Yellowthroat* for a summary of the results or go to the MOS website for the full report: <http://www.mdbirds.org/members/LRP.html>).

So what do all these accomplishments say about MOS as an organization? While the individuals or small groups of dedicated individuals have achieved many of these results, they rely on the collective support of everyone in MOS – from individual chapter members to those in leadership positions. And they're achieved with a results-oriented attitude. All of you help make MOS strong and have a voice in Maryland and beyond. Please take the time to read the findings of the LRP survey and don't hesitate to make your voice heard as we determine our future course as an organization.

Long Range Planning Survey Results

By Joan Cwi, Baltimore Bird Club

About a year ago Colin Rees took on the Chairmanship of the Maryland Ornithological Society's Long Range Planning Committee—a post that had long been vacant. He has been working on developing a plan that examines the operation of the MOS and will recommend goals to be achieved for the improvement of MOS in addressing the erosion of bird populations and their habitats. It will also study methods and practices to attain these goals.

As part of this process, Colin wanted to solicit member's opinions on whether or not MOS should become a better recognized and more proactive organization in statewide birding affairs and protection, and if so, how we might go about achieving this goal. To this end, I assisted him in developing the Long Range Planning Survey (LRPS) that was sent to all Society members in May 2014. The survey was included in the mailed copy of *The Maryland Yellowthroat* and also available online.

MOS conducted this survey using Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is a web-based survey company that provides all the online tools for organizations to create, conduct, and analyze survey data. At the time of the survey, MOS had a total of 1353 memberships. In total we received 279 completed surveys resulting in a 20.6 % response rate. Members from all chapters responded to the survey. Overall response rates by Chapter were fairly proportional to Chapter size. More women than men responded (57% vs 43%) and responders tended to be older (77% were aged 55 and older). However, since we don't know the actual gender/age distribution of MOS, we cannot know if these data reflect our actual membership or only responders.

What were the major lessons learned? Below is a brief summary of some of the more salient information that was learned from the 2014 Long Range Planning Survey.

In response to the purpose of the survey, three overall messages strongly emerged.

- It is clear from responders that MEMBERS ARE READY FOR CHANGE. Only 25% “liked things the way they are,” whereas 69% want to see change. Of these, 34% thought there was a strong need to adopt new approaches and become a recognized leader in statewide avian affairs and the remaining 35% would like to see some change, but were not sure how far to go.
- BUT, in question after question, responders cautioned that we are a volunteer organization and members are already stretched to the limit—if we can't do what we set out to do, how can we possibly take on new or increased activities?
- AND another strongly voiced theme was: Don't reinvent the wheel--work with collaborators by forming partnerships with other like-minded organizations. The types of organizations referenced ranged from DNR, American Bird Conservancy, Audubon, and nature centers to girl/boy scouts and schools.

Responses to individual questions provided some interesting information.

- Responders felt strongly about attracting youth to birding. Three themes were repeated across answers referring to youth:
 - Reach out to schools
 - Reach out to Girl/Boy Scouts and other youth groups
 - Reach out to other groups having nature program that work with youth
- Responders in general strongly supported stronger conservation efforts, although a few thought “we are not in the conservation business.” In descending order of importance, responders felt that MOS/Chapters should
 - Exert more pressure on state and local governments in conserving habitat for birds and wildlife
 - Partner with other bird organizations on addressing conservation issues
 - Take more initiative on protecting bird populations from adverse events
- Responders clearly felt that increasing MOS or Chapter advocacy efforts for bird-related issues is important. Almost all types of listed efforts were ranked highly, but comments provided a critical debate among members. Some felt we badly needed more hard-core legislative lobbying either independently or in association with other like-minded groups. Others thought that we are doing a good job now and MOS should not become a hard-core advocacy group, or that we should “just be a bird club,” and not involved in political advocacy.
- An interesting dialogue emerged from the answers to several questions about just what activities are more appropriately undertaken at the Chapter-level or the MOS-level. For example, in response to the question about whether MOS or the Chapters should take part in fund-raising events for these initiatives, it was clear the onus was placed on MOS, especially among the smaller Chapters.

There is much more detail in the full report, which is now available on the MOS website at <http://www.mdbirds.org/members/LRP.html>.

A Note of Thanks

Date: 14 July 2014

From: Mattawoman Watershed Society, PO Box 201, Bryans Road, MD 20616

To: Maureen Harvey, President, MOS

Dear Maureen,

Please accept on behalf of the Maryland Ornithological Society our heartfelt thank you for generously donating the proceeds of your 2014 conference auction to the Mattawoman Watershed Society.

We would appreciate your letting your board and volunteers know that we were quite overwhelmed with MOS's generosity. The funds raised were far beyond our expectations. As an all-volunteer organization, we are especially grateful and will put them to good use. Among other things, the funds will be used for public outreach to protect the forests and waterways that are Mattawoman Creek.

Sincerely,

Jim Long

Bonnie Bick

Dennis Murphy

Debi Krahling

Ken Hastings

Tara Carlson

2015 MOS Conference

May 15 – 17

Clarion Hotel and Hager Hall Conference and Event Center
Hagerstown, MD

We'll be back to Hagerstown in the beautiful foothills of Washington County for our next conference. The last time we were there for a conference was in 2000, when we enjoyed some of their wonderful national and state parks and many great birds. Washington Co. and nearby areas in Frederick Co. will be flush with the incoming spring migrants we all anticipate -- woodland, streamside, and field birds like warblers, vireos, flycatchers, orioles, tanagers, buntings, grosbeaks, bobolinks, sparrows. Right now, we've had our fall counts and still have some hawk watches and fall color to enjoy, then the Christmas and winter counts to look forward to. But for me, spring migration offers the greatest birding.

There is much to anticipate in 2015. I am delighted to announce our keynote speaker will be Tim Schreckengost of Rochester Mills, PA. Tim is a Master's Degree candidate in Wildlife Ecology at University of Delaware, expected in 2015, and holds a B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Penn State. His resume includes a long list of mostly university-sponsored field research on birds in AZ, CO, CA, DE, KY, and PA. He is an avid birder constantly searching for new year, state, and county birds. As a contributor to the Nemesis Bird blog (see www.nemesisbird.com), he enjoys writing about migration, birding, and anything nature related. During October and November of 2013, Tim and a colleague walked a transect through MOS's Mill Creek Sanctuary to survey the birds there; they plan to return this fall to repeat the

effort. The purpose of the survey is to corroborate radar tracking data also collected during fall migration. Because his current research deals primarily with tracking landbird migration using radar, he will talk to MOS about the use of radar to assess landbird migration and the importance of identifying critical stopover habitats to conserve migratory landbird populations.

We need a volunteer to step up to the role of Field Trip Coordinator. Anna Hutzell and other members of the Washington Co. Chapter, who know the territory very well, have provided potential site locations and descriptions and are willing to help develop the field trip schedule. The Field Trip Coordinator's job will be much easier because of this effort. Field trip leaders are also needed, and a few local guides may be available to assist field trip leaders not familiar with the area. The Coordinator's main task will be to solidify the schedule and match leaders to field trips. Please contact me if you are willing to be the Coordinator or a field trip leader.

Maryanne Dolan, MOS Secretary and chair of our Statewide Education Activities, has arranged two excellent workshops for us. Dr. Mark Johnson will refresh our warbler ID skills on Friday afternoon, and Ikumi Kayama will demonstrate and teach sketching on Saturday morning. Ikumi will provide a list of suggested sketching materials to bring, or if requested, she will provide the supplies at her cost (estimated \$20 to \$30). The sketching class will be limited to 15 participants. These are two great opportunities to brush up or develop new skills helpful to birders in the field.

You may be pleased to know Maryanne has also jumped up and begun to solicit enticing donations for the Silent Auction and Raffle, which she ran for many years. Volunteers will be needed to accept donations, arrange the silent auction items, and assist in the room while it's open. This will also include selling raffle tickets. The raffle will be handled differently this year. Each raffle item will have a container for tickets. When you purchase a strip of tickets, you'll get both halves, one half to keep and the other to distribute in the various raffle items' containers. You can put all your tickets in one container or spread them among the items, according to your preference. If you are willing to help, please contact Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com, 202-733-5204.

Two deserving nature-related organizations have been identified to split the Silent Auction and Raffle proceeds -- Project OwlNet's Lamb's Knoll Banding Station and Beaver Creek Watershed Association (BCWA). Project OwlNet (see <http://www.ProjectOwlNet.org/>) was founded in 1994 by Dave Brinker, an ecologist with MD DNR, and is managed by Dave along with Steve Huy in MD and Scott Weidensaul in PA. It has expanded to hundreds of owl migration researchers at approximately 120 banding stations in North America and Canada. The project has three goals: support the continuing expansion of a network of migrant owl banding stations; advocate the use of standardized, comparable netting protocols; and improve communication and coordination among owl migration research stations in North America and beyond. Steve Huy has operated Lamb's Knoll Banding Station in Washington Co. for many years, often maintaining a grueling banding schedule night after night in addition to his full time day job.

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The BCWA was founded in 2002 by concerned neighbors and local fly fishermen. The stated objective is to scientifically restore, protect, and preserve the water quality of the Beaver Creek Watershed (see <http://www.bcwamd.org/>). BCWA has successfully worked with local, state, and federal agencies as well as private organizations to bring their vision to fruition. They have provided fencing and watering systems for livestock, removed dams, sponsored public forums, and trained teachers. They have planted large areas of riparian buffer and designed, implemented, and monitored a complex series of stream restoration projects. DNR monitoring results state that Beaver Creek currently has the largest biomass of wild trout per acre of any stream in Maryland. The restoration area is also used as an outdoor classroom for local students as well as for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We've learned that good habitat for wildlife equates to good habitat for birds.

Our nature store again this year will be managed by Dave & Claire Horvath, owners of the Mother Nature's Store in Columbia, 410-381-4351. They always have a plentiful and interesting supply of products which, of course, will include optics. They have served us well in the past. If you have something particular you wish to see, you may want to contact them before the conference to see if they can bring it.

Ellen Lawler is accepting entries for the pin contest. Please see page 1 of the Sep/Oct 2014 *Yellowthroat* for design requirements and submission details.

As you can see, we are planning another fun and interesting conference for 2015. Don't miss out; come and join us!

Maureen Harvey
Acting Conference Chair
410-795-3117
pastpres@mdbirds.org

Duck Workshop – Ocean City

February 6-7, 2015

The State-wide Education Committee will hold a duck workshop in Ocean City, Maryland, on February 6 and 7, 2015. Mikey Lutmording will lead our workshop with a lecture on ducks of the mid-Atlantic region on Friday evening, February 6, starting at 7 p.m. There will be a light supper beginning at 6:00 p.m. Saturday morning, February 7th, we will practice our newly acquired skills in a field trip. The workshop ends at noon with a round-up of species seen.

All this will happen at the Holiday Inn Oceanfront, 6600 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Maryland. The Holiday Inn will offer ocean front rooms at \$74 a night. They will honor that rate if you wish to stay over Saturday night and make a weekend of the event. For reservations at the hotel, please call 1 800-837-3588. Mention you are with MOS to get the discounted rate.

To reserve a space at the workshop, send a check in the amount of \$20 (per person) made payable to MOS, and send it to

Maryanne Dolan, 1705 Lanier Place NW, Apt 306, Washington, DC 20009. Please make sure a contact telephone number and/or an email address is included. If you have any questions, give me a call at (202) 733-5204, or via email at Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

February in Ocean City is prime time for ducks. We had a similar workshop two years ago and everyone had a wonderful time with killer looks at long-tailed ducks, as well as a nice assortment of dabblers. Don't miss this great opportunity!

Maryanne Dolan
Chair, State-wide Education Committee



Chapter Chatter is written by you, the readers. This is a forum where members learn about what other chapters are doing as well as reading about individual member's trips and adventures. Every chapter should be represented. Each chapter approaches submitting to CC differently. Most have an appointed reporter who gathers news and then submits it to me. In others the President is the reporter. After elections please be sure that someone is responsible for reporting the news to Chapter Chatter. I have a general email list which can only be updated if someone notifies me. If there isn't a reporter for your chapter, perhaps you might like to volunteer. But please know that any member can email me with news. I look forward to hearing from more chapters in the future.

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

When asked, I've always voted the Northern Gannet as my favorite bird. What a joy it was to book a tour that included a visit to the coastal cliffs of Cape St. Mary's, Newfoundland to witness the Northern Gannet nesting colony there. The trip started earlier this summer in St. John's, Newfoundland, which looks a lot like Baltimore.... except on a steep hill and with icebergs in the harbor!

The colony at St. Mary's was estimated to be 15,000 nesting pairs. There were many great photos taken that day... even some close-ups of their splashless dives... but I submit this close-up shot to show you their beauty and the tight quarters on the cliff where each pair lays one egg... and then remembers where they

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put it!

I wish I could leave this memory of a perfect day with these birds intact, but the rangers stationed at the site have reported the colony collapsed in August, as it did in 2012. Rising ocean temperatures made it difficult for the parents to find enough food close in for both themselves and their chicks. It is estimated that a third of the chicks were abandoned. *Christine Stevens*



Northern Gannets at Cape St. Mary's.
Photo by *Christine Stevens*.

CECIL COUNTY

The Cecil Bird Club started their new term off with a bang. Co-President *Sean McCandless* scored big by booking Jeff Gordon, the President of the American Birding Association (ABA), to come and speak at the club's September meeting. The club had a welcoming party for Jeff and his wife as they move the ABA national headquarters next door to Delaware from Colorado. Jeff arrived the night before ahead of the moving van in order to speak at the meeting.

The annual Turkey Point Hawk Watch is once again up and running thanks to the coordination of *Pat Valdata* and Data Collection Specialist *David Kimball*. Ospreys and Eagles have been the main attraction early in the season so far. The Hawk Watch is manned every day from September 1st through November 30th from 9:00-12:00 at Elk Neck State Park. Come out and join the watch. Turkey Point is an excellent spot to pick up the fall warblers in migration as well.

Club member *Ken Drier* and his wife Kimberleigh survived a magnitude 4.5 house-rocking earthquake on their third night while vacationing in the US Virgin Islands on St John. Besides some great snorkeling there was some excellent birding as well. From the rental house overlooking Coral Bay Smooth-billed Anis, Antillean-crested Hummingbirds and Scaly-naped Pigeons were the highlights. Also observed were Brown Boobies, Bananaquits, Bridled Quail Dove, and White-cheeked Pintail Ducks. Though no new lifers were scored, a total of 35 species was seen.

On October 9th CBC members, *Pat Valdata*, *Kristi Eisenberg*, *Susan Peterson* and *Ken Drier* will travel to Cape May. *Kristi*, many years ago, taught out-going Cape May Bird Observatory director Pete Dunne. Pete has invited *Kristi* to put together a group of friends for a private birding tour of the area and Cape May Hawk Watch with him. Should be a great experience

for all.

This past summer CBC members *Van Funk* and family took a three week camping trip out west focusing on Rocky Mountain, Zion and Glacier National Parks. *Joe Funk*, Van's 10 year old son, planned the trip based on the bird range maps in the Sibley's guide. Joe is an outstanding up and coming young birder and we are all proud of him. Five days in Montana produced a list of 90 species including Boreal Chickadee, Sprague's Pipit, McCown's Longspur and Sharp-tailed Grouse. The club is looking forward to seeing Joe's presentation at one of our monthly meetings. *Ken Drier*

CARROLL COUNTY

On a recent August foray to Bombay Hook, the Carroll County Bird Club stopped at Port Mahon where members had good views of Royal Terns and immature Forster's Terns. The most exciting event of the trip, however, turned out to be automotive rather than ornithological. Port Mahon Road is difficult at best. Where the pavement has broken up over the years there can be deep sand. CCBC members were all in four-wheel or all-wheel drive vehicles so this did not present a problem. At one point, however, another vehicle was blocking the road. It had become stuck. Members *Bill Ellis*, *Tom Miller*, *Spike Morningstar*, *Bob Ringler*, and *Don Jewell* got out and started pushing. After a little rocking back and forth, the car managed to pull out and move on.

In the meantime, however, another car tried to pull around the group and it too became stuck in the sand. Again, the CCBC flexed its muscles and pushed that vehicle out as well. *Debbie Terry*, who had joined the group for the day, took some photos of the whole procedure. Looking at them later, one couldn't help but laugh at the fact that some of the members still had their binoculars around their necks. Never wanting to miss a birding opportunity, they were perfectly willing to combine pushing with pushing. *CJ McAuliffe*

HOWARD COUNTY

Kurt Schwarz, MOS Conservation Chair and Howard Chapter member, recently had an article published in the American Birding Association's July/August 2014 edition of Birding magazine. This was his first publication in a major journal. The article was on a new field mark for distinguishing the rare Black-tailed Godwit from the Hudsonian Godwit. (The article should be available on-line by November or December at <http://www.aba.org/birding/>). The article grew out of trip to Chincoteague NWR in Virginia to see that godwit. Kurt subsequently ticked his final godwit, a Bar-tailed, at Chincoteague in August 2013, only yards away from where he had seen the Black-tailed in March 2013. He now only wishes that both species would turn up in Maryland! If White Ibises can wander a few miles north, why not these godwits?

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Tom Kimbis writes that he and twelve-year-old daughter *Kelly*, "our rookie MBC birding team," reached 250 species for the ABA area for the year when sighting a Yellow-throated Vireo on the C&O Canal at Violette's Lock in June. The father-daughter team brought their lifetime global total past 300 during a summer

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vacation in the U.K. and Austria. More than numbers, they're enjoying their newfound hobby and passion with curiosity, dedication and lots of laughs."

Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper joined four other birders on a two-week birding tour of Sabah, Borneo in July, led by Rob Hutchinson of BirdTour Asia. Borneo has a number of unique endemic species, as well as charismatic mammals such as Orangutan. *Gail* writes: "In general, the trip was very successful although not **perfect** because our group missed some important birds, one of which (Bornean Ground Cuckoo) was our #2 most-wanted species. Just 'birding luck,' as Rob's second group, doing the same route two weeks later, saw them easily, while we struggled for hours with no sign... a little like salt into a wound! But, maybe a reason to go back sometime. One tends to think of Borneo as endless wild country, but it is well-developed with good roads and excellent accommodations. Some of the latter are rather over-the-top, the Borneo Rainforest Lodge, for example, is essentially a cruise ship on land but without the evening entertainment or casino! In Sabah, the northern state, much of the jungle has, alas, been converted to oil palm plantations, which extend as far as the eye can see. However there are some large tracts preserved and ecotourism is certainly a major (and growing) factor in the state's economy. We visited four main sites: endangered coastal peat-swamp forest; Mt. Kinabalu and vicinity (at 13,500 feet, Kinabalu is the highest peak between the Himalayas and New Guinea), the Kinabatangan River, and the Danum Valley rainforest reserve. Weather was initially poor at Kinabalu, which cost us some birds, but otherwise we had good weather throughout. Insects were few, the main hazards being two species of leeches in the lowlands; leech socks there are a necessity! Birds are not as abundant in SE Asia tropics as in the New World, and one has to work hard for every sighting. Having said that, we did very well (for us) with 260 bird species seen, including over 40 endemics, and 29 mammals. Top birds for us were the strange and unique Bornean Bristlehead, (in its own family), the brilliant Whitehead's Trogon (plus the Broadbill and Spiderhunter), three of the four endemic pittas (Black-crowned, Blue-headed and Blue-banded) plus Hooded. We also saw a good number of endemic ground and pygmy babbler, and all the possible hornbills and broadbills. We had great views of both Orangutan and Proboscis Monkey but missed the Pygmy Elephant (needless to say, Group Two also saw these!)." *Chris Wright*



Bornean Bristlehead. Photo by *Gail Mackiernan*.

TRI-COUNTY

Barbara Dolan writes: "On my last visit to Glacier National Park in Montana 40 years ago, I spent days hiking in the mountains carrying a 30 pound backpack and nights sleeping on the ground in a tent. Then, I thought birders were old people that wore funny hats. On my most recent trip to Glacier National Park in September 2013, my husband and I pulled a 30 foot 5th Wheel Camper containing the conveniences of home and all my birding equipment (minus the funny hat). Thankfully, we can still hike in mountainous terrain, if only for day trips. The most memorable hike was a 10-mile round trip to Iceberg Lake in the Many Glacier area of the park. Scenery was spectacular—green meadows filled with colorful wildflowers surrounded a brilliant blue lake dotted with small white icebergs that was framed by towering jagged mountain peaks. A sight well worth aching calves and feet! I don't know if it was the time of the year, or if I was distracted by the scenery and many mammals we saw, but I did not have a long list of Western birds. Other than mountain chickadees, ruffed grouse, Steller's jays and common ravens, most of the birds I saw were also common in Maryland.

"Another interesting place we visited in Montana was the Charles M. Russell NWR. We camped at the James Kipp campground and in the evening we took a short drive to a popular local elk-viewing area along the Missouri River. Each evening around 50 pickup trucks and 4-WD vehicles were lined up along the road facing a large meadow that ran parallel to the river. Everyone had coolers and either sat in camp chairs or on the tailgates of their vehicles. It was the Montana version of a tailgate party. What we were watching was as exciting as any sporting event--three elk bulls competing with each other gathering up their "harems" of cows with a lot of bugling, scuffling and chasing. Great free entertainment! As we were the only vehicle that did not have Montana license plates, the locals wanted to know how in the world we found this remote elk viewing area. I wanted to tell them that we were very adventurous and enjoyed traveling off-road looking for new and exciting things, but I truthfully answered 'I Googled it'! Yes, things have certainly changed in 40 years."

Tri County members *Sally* and *Doug Ruby* led their annual birding trip this past April to south Florida. Along with loyal birding friends from PA were club members *Carol Broderick*, *Charlie Stegman* and *Ceil* and *Pete Zerhousen*. The *Rubys* have a knack for sniffing out most of the target birds on all their trips and this was no exception. The Purple Swamp Hen had recently been added to the ABA list so we headed straight from the airport to the Swamp Hen spot and had multiple looks. *Doug* reported to us that the ABA Checklist Committee has accepted the Egyptian Goose as a countable ABA bird. Since *Doug* had insisted we spend time studying this bird it certainly has paid off. Now, if only *Doug* had been able to calm the seas on the sail to the Dry Tortugas; but then life isn't perfect!...

Carol Broderick

Conservation Committee Report June-August 2014

By Kurt Schwarz, Chair

This is an update to Committee activities that were reported on in the Sept/Oct (2014) issue of *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. This hard-working committee includes Rich Dolesh, Fred Fallon, Gail MacKiernan, Les Roslund, George Alderson, Wayne Bell, Chris Toscanao, and Mark Johnson.

The virtually perennial topic of free-roaming cats again was on our agenda. We learned in mid-September that the Spay and Neuter Board was to meet to consider grants on September 18, and that many proposals were for Trap Neuter Release programs. We alerted the Secretaries for Departments of Natural Resources and Health and Mental Hygiene. DNR Secretary Gill wrote Agriculture Secretary Hance on September 17 urging them to not fund TNR, and our notification of DNR was responsible for this. The Dept. of Health also intervened, but we do not know the nature of the contact. Kurt attended the Board meeting, as did a representative from DNR. The Board, as a result of the concerns raised by Maryland Department of Agriculture, the Dept of Health, and MOS, deferred consideration of TNR requests until such time as MDA can address the concerns raised.

In July, we learned of a proposal to put two outdoor firing ranges adjacent to Sugarloaf Mountain. We joined the efforts to the Sugarloaf Alliance, and sent a letter to the Frederick County Planning Board. Kurt also attended the first hearing on this proposal, where the proponents filed a last-minute request for an extension, apparently being surprised by the hall being filled with opponents. The Board met again in August, though Kurt was unable to attend, and 300 people spoke in opposition. The developers dropped their proposal the next day.

On the subject of wind power, in July, Kurt attended a briefing of the Dorchester County Council arranged by the Safe for Somerset group and delivered a briefing on wind power and eagles. The Dorchester Council subsequently adopted zoning regulation banning commercial wind power in the county. In Mid-August we wrote the Somerset County Planning and Zoning Commission on wildlife impacts of wind power. This was at the request of the Safe for Somerset Group. P&Z is drafting new regulations, but wildlife does not actually figure in those regulations. The American Bird Conservancy also wrote to P&Z.

In August, Kurt along with Joan Cwi of the Baltimore Chapter visited Scots Level Branch, a wetland mitigation project run by Baltimore County's Dept of Environmental Protection. This project is funded by grants from the so-called "Rain Tax." The property looked like it had great potential and Kurt documented 16 bird, 1 mammal, 5 odonate, and 5 lepidopteran species, as well as one crayfish and one tadpole of unknown species. This was in mid-afternoon on a hot day. The Department was hoping to establish monitoring of the site on a quarterly basis. Joan agreed to find a volunteer, and Eric Keith Costley agreed to take it on. Kurt provided advice on the Department's plan for owl boxes and bat boxes, informing them that Saw-whet sized boxes would not likely attract any.

On August 25, Kurt attended a meeting of Friends and Family of Sideling Hill with DNR Secretary Gill and Heritage Service Chief Peditto (this is an update of an issue first reported in the Jan/Feb 2014 issue of *The Maryland Yellowthroat*). Secretary Gill was seeking to find the goals of the group in seeking Wildlands

status for Sideling Hill. He noted the group had attained its goal with legislation forever enjoining DNR from putting ORV trails on Sideling Hill. Wildlands status would constrain DNR's hands to manage it, say for early successional habitat and the like (think Golden-winged Warblers!). It is unclear if Friends and Family will seek legislation for designating Sideling Hill as Wildlands. MOS should be happy with either outcome, Wildlands or continuance as a Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

On September 1, we wrote the National Park Service regarding the draft Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan for Cape Lookout National Seashore in North Carolina. We backed a plan that would continue to permit ORV use, but in a limited area, with plenty left for wildlife. We cited Assateague National Seashore as an example of positive balance of interests.

Joint Actions

We joined the Friends of the Earth and other organizations' letter to Congress seeking a ban on neonicotinics (neonics), which have been documented to be harmful to birds as well and pollinators.

Last Call for the 2015 MOS pin contest

By Ellen Lawler

What artist wouldn't like to see their work grace a piece of jewelry worn by hundreds of people? Well, for those of you who love painting birds as well as watching them, now's your chance; the winning entry for the 2015 contest will be featured on the pin given to the attendees at next May's conference in Hagerstown. But time's a wasting, so get to work on your design of a bird appropriate for Washington County! Perhaps an upland forest species such as Wood Thrush, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-pewee or White-breasted Nuthatch? Or maybe a familiar garden bird such as Northern Cardinal, American Robin or Tufted Titmouse? Or perhaps an LBJ – a Song, Field or Chipping Sparrow?

The deadline for the receipt of entries is January 17, 2015. The rules are simple: the bird must be appropriate for the conference site (Washington County); the design must include the phrases "MOS" and "2015"; the artist must be an MOS member and the entries must be in hard copy. Put your name, address, e-mail address, phone number and chapter affiliation on the back of each entry. Send entries to Ellen Lawler, 412 Monticello Ave., Salisbury, MD 21801.

To see the complete rules and tips about designing entries for the contest visit the MOS web site (annual conference pages) or contact Ellen at 410-546-9056 or emlawler@salisbury.edu

Book Review: *Hummingbirds A Life-size Guide to Every Species* by Michael Fogden, Marianne Taylor and Sheri L. Williamson. 20014. Harper Design, 400 pp.

Those of us raised on Alexander Skutch's *The Life of the Hummingbird* with Arthur Singer's memorable illustrations and Sheri Williamson's *Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America* may welcome this book presenting as it does every species known to science. The 262 birds represented in life-sized cut-out photographs are arranged taxonomically with descriptions and basic details on their distribution, habitat, size and status. Following a Foreword by Pete Dunne, the book offers an informative 19-page introduction to hummingbird evolution and taxonomy, color and iridescence, flight, feeding, courtship and nesting, molt, and, migration.

However, far from providing "A Life-size Guide to Every Species", photographs of 76 extant hummingbirds are absent, including common birds such as the plain-capped starthroat. Sad to say, the illustrations (digitally extracted from photographs) are of uneven quality, especially given the high standard of Fogden's previously published work. There are times when the image of the hummingbird is sharp and the flower or background is blurry or vice-versa suggesting composites. The species bereft of photos are grouped together at the end of the book and would have benefited from being interspersed with those portrayed to give more coherence.

As a field guide, the book poses serious challenges: the size of the maps makes them of very limited use; photos for both male and female are provided only for about 30 species; there is very limited, if any, discussion of important field markings or differences between similar species; and, subspecies are listed within the distribution notes, but no references are provided on which subspecies is shown in the photo. Given its weight, the book is best left at home on a coffee table and treated as a beginning resource.

Colin Rees, Ann Arundel Bird Club

Notice: MOS Annual Reports on Web

A new policy decision was made by Mark Johnson and Gene Scarpula the new associate and editor-in-chief, respectively, of *Maryland Birdlife*. They have decided to rejuvenate *Birdlife* as a pure ornithological journal. Thus, future issues will contain articles on bird-related research, studies, surveys and seasonal counts. Articles pertaining only to the activities of MOS will be published solely in *The Maryland Yellowthroat* or on the MOS website. I discussed this situation with Webmaster John Christy and YT Editor Richard Donham, and we decided that because of their lengthiness, the annual reports compiled by the President that include individual chapter and committee activities will migrate to the web in a new section under MOS Publications. Therefore, the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 MOS Annual Reports are now available on the web from this link: <http://www.mdbirds.org/publications/pubindex.html>

Maureen Harvey, Past President
pastpres@mdbirds.org



Birds of Note – by Les Roslund

During most summers birders of our region are entertained by at least a few RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRDS. This year they arrived a bit late for many people, but once they got here their numbers seemed to be normal. Hummingbird host families enjoy all these RUBY-THROATS and have learned to not expect other species until sometime in October. This year that pattern was broken by the Sep 6th arrival of a RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD at the home of Kathy and Bill Green who live near Princess Anne, Somerset County. Kathy, who does not claim to be a birder, knew she had something special with this bird and knew she needed to find a way to pass the word to some birders. Going to the internet for help, she found her way to the Maryland Biodiversity Project and reported it there. Before long she received response from Bill Hubick and within a few days the bird was trapped and banded by Bruce Peterjohn who confirmed it as an immature male. This appears to be the first documented Somerset County record for RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD and is one of the earliest recorded fall visits for the species in Maryland. Photos of the bird can be seen on the Maryland Biodiversity Project web page.

This bird was first seen by the Greens on Sep 6th and was a regular feeder visitor through Sep 15th. The Greens graciously hosted visitors from several states during the latter part of that period. By then, the RUFIOUS HUMMER had staked out one feeder and one tree in the Green's yard and vigorously defended those sites against intrusions by any of the 20 or so RUBY THROATS that the Greens were also feeding.

Lots of very sharp eyes were out watching for birds in our area this summer, even including those of Marshall Iliff who periodically ventures away from New England and elsewhere to visit his family near Annapolis. On Jul 28 quite late in the afternoon he was checking overhead at his home place for swallows when he found what he recognized as a very interesting little bird amongst a small group of PURPLE MARTINS. The special bird was about half the size of the martins. It was blocky-headed, had a perfectly square tail with no notch, pale underparts to the undertail with a very pale but faintly contrasting throat. The available observation time was about 90 seconds. After careful and thorough deliberation, Marshall concluded that he had seen a CAVE SWALLOW, thereby claiming a new personal yard bird and state bird, as well as an unprecedented eBird sighting of a CAVE SWALLOW away from Arkansas during the middle of the summer. Further details of this sighting can be found on Marshall's eBird report for Jul 28 from Anne Arundel County.

On Aug 16 Mike Callahan of Charles County, while out leading a canoe trip, used his sharp eyes to spot and identify a flock of 19 WHITE PELICANS swimming in the Potomac River near the Virginia Shore but still in Charles County, MD. These birds were across from Nanjemoy and Riverside, MD. A similar flock had been seen in 2013 in the same general area. The 2014 flock membership included both adult and immature birds. Though Mike encouraged other birders to be watching for the PELICANS, there were no other reported sightings of these birds.

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Birds of Note continued from page 8

In late August some of the more optimistic birders start looking for first-of-season RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES in our region. This year a few of the optimists were rewarded. On Aug 27 Martin Sneary of DC reported seeing a single bird from the window of his place of work in NW DC. This appears to be the first sighting of the season away from MD locations where the species normally nests. Two days later, on Aug 29, another RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH was seen by several Talbot County birders during a visit to Black Walnut Point on Tilghman Island. Dave Palmer of Easton, Talbot County, provided the report. The same day, Aug 29, Mark Johnson of Aberdeen found two RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES during a highly productive morning of birding at Turkey Point in Elk Neck State Park, Cecil County. A few other sightings of the species have been trickling in during September, but as of Sep 25 there has not been a large irruption of these birds.

Warbler migration in the fall months provides great fun and exciting challenges for many birders of our region. Fast-moving birds in the foliage of tall trees introduces lots of cases of “warbler-neck”. But the beauty of these little birds and the chance for very unusual sightings lead to birders getting out as much as they can. Amongst the unusual sightings, one of the best of the year was of a LAWRENCE’S WARBLER found and photographed by Evelyn Ralston during her Sep 2 visit to Wheaton Regional Park, Montgomery County. Evelyn lives in Bethesda, Montgomery County. She attained some great photographs of the bird, and with the help of birding friends was readily able to firmly establish the identity of this rather rare warbler.

Fall migration also provides some very rewarding shorebird sightings. One such sighting was of a RUFF in a flock of YELLOWLEGS at the Oakwood Turf Farm on Taylor Road, Wicomico County. On Sep 7th Mike Walsh spotted the RUFF and JoAnn Wilbur attained excellent photos of the bird in flight and also while wading in the shallow water of a low spot on the sod of the farm. This flock of birds did not stay around very long, so only a small number of fortunate birders managed to get views of the RUFF.

A second great shore bird sighting was of a HUDSONIAN GODWIT. This bird was found by Dave Palmer of Talbot County on Sep 7th at the Pickering Creek Audubon Center, Talbot County. The bird stayed around until Sep 15th and provided good viewing for many birders during that time period. The GODWIT was usually found feeding in the shallow water of one of the Pickering Creek Wetland Ponds along with several other species of shorebirds.

A third interesting and unusual shore bird sighting occurred on Sep 20th when an AMERICAN AVOCET was discovered by Sharon Schwemmer in a small rain-water pond behind the Hampstead Walmart Department Store in Carroll County. Eileen Wise took some excellent photos of the bird and put them on Facebook to quickly spread news of an AVOCET in this rather surprising location. Their prompt actions brought out many viewers to enjoy the bird. It stayed around the site for the next two days, but was not seen after the evening of the Sep 22nd.

Maryland/DC Records Committee Status Report as of September 26, 2014

by Phil Davis, MD/DCRC Secretary

The MD/DCRC has reached the following record decisions since the last committee status report was published in The Maryland Yellowthroat. This report covers MD/DCRC review package 157. MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of Maryland Birdlife. New “state” species (*) include Cave Swallow for the District of Columbia.

More information on the MD/DCRC can be found on the committee’s web pages at the following URL:
<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>

MD Records Accepted:

Ross’s Goose, *Chen rossii* [MD/2011-129]

Morgantown, Charles County
26-Mar-2011 through 01-Apr-2011

Northern Goshawk, *Accipiter gentilis* [MD/2014-035]

McKee-Beshers WMA (Hughes Hollow), Poolesville,
Montgomery County
11-Feb-2013

Yellow Rail, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* [MD/2014-031]

Swan Harbor Farm Park, Havre de Grace, Harford County
05-May-2014 through 06-May-2014

Eurasian Collared-Dove, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2014-039]

Hagerstown, Washington County
03-Jun-2014 through 21-Jun-2014

MD Records Accepted-Group:

Aechmophorus [Western/Clark’s] grebe, *Aechmophorus sp.*
[MD/2013-090]

Chesapeake Bay, North Beach, Calvert County
15-Dec-2013 through 18-Dec-2013

MD Records Not Accepted:

Tufted Duck, *Aythya fuligula* [MD/2014-008]

Hawkins Point, Baltimore City, Baltimore County
02-Feb-2014

Northern Goshawk, *Accipiter gentilis* [MD/2014-023]

Quarry Lake, Baltimore City, Baltimore County
06-Apr-2014

Swainson’s Hawk, *Buteo swainsoni* [MD/2013-078]

Martin Marietta Aggregates Quarry, Hagerstown, Washington
County
10-Aug-2013

Black-chinned Hummingbird, *Archilochus alexandri*
[MD/2014-030]

Tuckahoe State Park, Queen Anne, Caroline County
28-Apr-2014

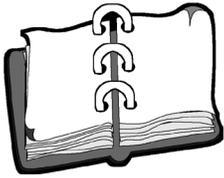
Lazuli Bunting, *Passerina amoena* [MD/2013-075]

Point Lookout State Park, Scotland, Saint Mary’s County
14-Oct-2013

DC Records Accepted:

***Cave Swallow**, *Petrochelidon fulva* [DC/2013-077]

Kenilworth Park
03-Nov-2013



MOS Calendar Nov - Dec 2014 By Andy Martin

Saturday, November 1

ANNUAL BANQUET. Allegany/Garrett. Speaker will be *Dave Webb* and the topic is “Whips in the Night: Nightjar Surveys at Aberdeen Proving Grounds.” Short business meeting, including election of officers. Gathering starts at 5:30 PM, dinner at 6 PM. Details of dinner TBA at a later date. For info contact Mary Huebner at marybrd22@gmail.com.

Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes brushy fields, woods, and hedgerows for a good mix of species. Side trip to freshwater wetland at Horsepen Branch also possible. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

YMOS. Chincoteague NWR. Herons, waterfowl, skimmers, raptors, and thrushes. This is a great opportunity to get a good look at a lot of bird species. Waterfowl will be back, and Chincoteague provides a unique opportunity to explore many types of habitats. Full day, 5 AM to 8 PM. Lodging will be provided either Fri and/or Sat night for students coming from a distance. Contact George Radcliffe, radclifg@gmail.com for details if interested.

Saturday and Sunday, November 1 and 2

MOS. Irish Grove Fall Workdays. Please contact Dotty Mumford, 410-849-8336 for more info and to RSVP. User fees are waived for the workdays.

Sunday, November 2

Anne Arundel. Family Bird Walk at Kinder Farm Park. Meet 8 AM in the parking area next to Visitor Center. Park has paved, level trails. Leader: Stacy Epperson, 410-987-7533 or stac.epperson@gmail.com. \$6/car entry fee.

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leaders: Kevin and Karen Heffernan, 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.

Montgomery. Oaks Landfill. Explore this now-closed landfill adjacent to the Blue Mash Nature Trail. Mostly open terrain on a gravel road, including two pond views and one hill

climb of moderate difficulty. Possible sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl. Leader will have scope for distant birds. We have special permission to enter this “closed to the public” landfill so reservations are essential. Limit: 16. Meet at 8 AM. Contact the leaders for reservations and more info. Co-leaders: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (h) or 240-375-4500 (m), and Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

Talbot. Wye Island. Good time for arriving sparrows, waterfowl and other late fall migrants. We will also make a stop to honor the 290 yr. old American Holly Tree. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot 7 AM or meet Danny at the Wye Island Bridge at 7:30 AM.

Tuesday, November 4

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Tonight: “The Ordinary Extraordinary Junco.” Remarkable biology from a backyard bird. A film produced by the Junco Project at Indiana University. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Info: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 (cell) or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, November 5

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. “Playing Dr. Doolittle: Understanding the Complex Singing of Northern Mockingbirds and the Singing and Social Behavior of Dusky Antbirds and Wood Thrushes” by *Kim Derrickson*. 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster. Contact Don Jewell at jewellgd@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 for more info.

MEETING. Cecil. Program and Speaker: TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. For more info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Washington. Washington Monument Hawk Watch. Trip is co-sponsored with the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Meet Sandy Sagalkin in the upper parking lot near the monument at 9:30 AM. Contact Sandy at monsansagalkin@myactv.net or 240-291-6465. Registration strongly encouraged.

Thursday, November 6

MEETING. Frederick. “Bird Feeders/Boxes/Technology/Optics/Resources” by *Keith and Beth Hamilton, Kathy Calvert*, and others. 7 PM at Homewood at Crumland Farms (7407 Willow Rd) in Frederick. For info contact Tom Humphrey, Pres@

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FrederickBirdClub.org or 301-696-8540.

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 for more info.

Saturday, November 8

H Cecil. Waggoner's Gap Hawk Watch. Waggoner's Gap has been a hawk watching site since 1948. Located near Carlisle, PA, on the ridges favored by migrating hawks, this site is known for an excellent place to see Golden Eagles. Pack a lunch and dress warmly, it can be very windy and cold up there. Also, be aware that this is a steep, rocky outcrop, so strong shoes or hiking boots are helpful, as is a seat cushion. Meet at the North East Food Lion parking lot on Rte 40 at 6 AM for an all-day trip. Leader: Parke John, parke@del.net or 410-287-6037.

H Harford. Rocks SP. Spend the morning on the trails of this Deer Crk woodland to enjoy the late fall avian spectacle. Gather at the ranger station parking area on Rocks Chrome Hill Rd at 8 AM. Leader: Mark Magnani, 410-838-1778 or mwmagnani@gmail.com.

H Howard. Sharps at Waterford Farm. Meet 8 AM at farm parking area, through barns on right. Moderate walking over crop stubble, farm roads, and paths on this working farm. Porta-pots available. Waterproof footwear and clothing advisable in wet weather with one small stream crossing planned. Leader: Wes Earp, wesandsue@gmail.com or 410-531-3197.

H Kent. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (Horsehead), Queen Anne's Co. Varied habitat from wood-edge to marsh and protected cove provide shelter for birds of pine woods, waterfowl, and other late-season migrants. Meet 8 AM at the Dollar General parking lot (off Philosopher's Terr) in Chestertown. Bring lunch. Contact leaders Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin for more info or to sign up: 410-778-9568 or rossgull61@gmail.com or borealdee@gmail.com.

H Washington. Washington County Agriculture Education Center. Join George Warrick at 7:30 AM for birding followed by breakfast at the County Ag Center. Call George at 301-799-9059 for exact meeting location.

Sunday, November 9

H Anne Arundel. Wootens Landing for sparrows. Meet 7 AM at the Parole P&R located on Harry Truman Pkwy, between Riva

and South Haven Rds. Leader: Kathy Lambert, 410-867-4056 or kbert59@yahoo.com.

H Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for early waterfowl, raptors, passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Crk. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM (contact leaders for meet location). Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

H Caroline. Lynch Preserve, Two Johns. Meet 8 AM at the end of Robins Creek Rd. Co-leaders: Debby Bennett, dabennett1996@gmail.com and Danny Poet, 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com. For more info about the preserve, go to: <http://www.eslc.org/2012/07/lynch-preserve-now-open-to-public/>.

H Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net, 410-461-2408.

H Montgomery. Lois Y. Green Park: Remembering Lou. Half day. The second annual walk in honor of former MBC President and all-round naturalist Lou DeMouy who passed away in November '12. The trip will be led by current MBC President Ed Patten. Meet at 7:30 AM. Reservations required. For more info, reservations and meet location, contact the leader: Ed Patten at 301-948-5648.

H Talbot. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (CBEC). We will search open water, ponds, scrub growth, woods and fallow fields for whatever goods they may harbor. Always a good location for a nice mix of diving and puddle ducks. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot 7 AM.

Tuesday, November 11

MEETING. **Kent.** Program and Speaker TBA. 7:30 pm, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

H Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash Nature Trail. Blue Mash is hoppin' with Little Brown Jobs, making it a good place to work on the basics of sparrow ID. We'll look for similarities and differences among the common species, like Song and Field and Chipping, while keeping an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Swamp. This trip is primarily for beginners, but all are welcome. Half day. For reservations, time, and directions, contact the leader: Lydia Schindler at lydiaschindler@verizon.net.

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MEETING. Patuxent. "Project SNOWstorm: Tracking Snowy Owls During the Great Irruption of 2013-14" by *David F. Brinker*. 7:30 PM, College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Dr, College Park. For more info call 301-509-2212 or go to www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html.

Thursday, November 13

MEETING. Howard. "Ethiopian Natural History," by *Gail Mackiernan*. Gail, in a group of four with a driver/guide, spent 25 days in this ancient country which was never colonized. This 2013 trip through dramatic landscape and contrasting ecosystems, yielded over 550 bird species, including all the endemics. Birds were abundant and easy to photograph. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

Friday, November 14

H Washington. Visit Project OwlNet at Lamb's Knoll and observe Saw-whet Owl banding by Steve Huy. Learn about mist netting, audio lures, banding, and the migratory habits of these small, beautiful owls. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Children are welcome. Meet at 9:15 PM at the Boonsboro P&R next to Thompsons Gas. Registration is limited. Last minute cancellation is possible due to wind or rain. Call Anna at 301-797-8454 to register.

Saturday, November 15

H Allegany/Garrett. Shawnee SP, Bedford Co, PA. Contact leader: Melissa Hensel at mjhensel@yahoo.com for all pertinent details.

H Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Wendy Alexander, 410-788-4080 or drbeanes@verizon.net.

H Frederick. Point Lookout. Full day trip. We'll look for early winter waterfowl and other birds. Contact leader, Kathy Brown at 301-865-1369 for all pertinent trip details, including meet place and time.

H Montgomery. Blackwater NWR. Full day (to dusk). Early waterfowl and lingering migrants plus late afternoon marsh watch. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch and drinks. Reservations required. Limit: 12. For meeting place and time, contact one of the Leaders: Mark England at 240-207-3132 (home) or 240-375-4500 (cell) or Ed Patton at 301-948-5648.

H Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes mature woods along the Patuxent River, brushy fields, and a network of freshwater wetlands, ponds and small streams. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge NA. No reservations required. The Natural Area is located on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Sunday, November 16

H Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leaders: Richard and Renee Peters, Richard@rrrrpeters.org.

H Harford. Perryman Area. Phil Powers (410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net) will lead an expedition driving to various locations in the Perryman area known to harbor interesting bird life from Horned Larks and pipits to waterfowl and shorebirds. Depart from the Aberdeen WalMart parking lot off Rte 40 at 8 AM.

H Talbot. Pickering Creek. Leaders will plan the birding as one or two groups. The new fresh water impoundment should be complete and could offer some interesting birds with easy viewing. Wintering birds of field and water are the goal. Leaders: Dave Bent, 410-822-2113 and Les Coble, 410-820-6165. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 7 AM or meet at Pickering at 7:20 AM. Breakfast Hosts: Linda and Pete Yungbluth.

Monday, November 17

MEETING. Talbot. 7 PM at Wm. Hill Manor, 501 Dutchman's Ln, Easton. Speaker: *Marcia Balestri* and topic "Birding Cuba." For more info, contact Terry Allen at pattyallen10@hotmail.com or 410-829-5840.

Wednesday, November 19

MEETING. Anne Arundel. 7:30 PM at the Blue Heron Center at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. "The Galápagos Islands" by *Larry Zoller*, AABC Member and Past-President. More info: Colin Rees, 410-757-8570 or reescolin@hotmail.com.

MEETING. Montgomery. "Hummingbirds of the Mid-Atlantic." Local birders are well aware of the increase in recent years of wintering hummingbirds. *Bruce Peterjohn* from the Patuxent

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Wildlife Research Center will summarize our current knowledge of the status of “hummingbirds of the mid-Atlantic” region with an emphasis on wintering species. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Ed Patten at epatten1022@verizon.net.

Thursday, November 20

MEETING. Caroline. Program: “Hummingbirds of the Mid-Atlantic Region.” Speaker: *Bruce Peterjohn*. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Contact Debby Bennett at dabennett1996@gmail.com for more info.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 for more info.

Saturday, November 22

Anne Arundel. Patuxent North Tract. Leader: Chris Barry, 410-271-4540 or gbarry@us.ibm.com. Meet 8 AM at the Parole P&R located on Harry Truman Pkwy, between Riva and South Haven Rds.

Baltimore. Blackwater NWR, Hooper’s Island, Cedar Creek. All-day trip to see ducks, thousands of geese, Bald Eagles, and Brown-headed Nuthatches. White Pelicans possible. Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl possible in late afternoon. Bring lunch. Meet at 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd/Hammond Ferry Rd P&R. Leader: Kevin Graff, keywest2001@gmail.com.

Carroll. Conowingo Dam and Swan Harbor Farm. From the wild waters of the Susquehanna to the quiet wetlands at Swan Harbor Farm, this trip has a lot of potential. Meet at 7 AM at the P&R lot on Rte 32, just south of Rte 26 in Eldersburg. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-303-2792.

Harford. Sweet Air section of Gunpowder Falls SP. Explore a variety of trails that meander among pines, deciduous woods, open fields, and riparian habitats. Meet 8:30 AM in the Dalton-Brevard Rd parking area west of Rtes 165 and 152. The leader is Susan Hood, 410-937-7552 or Susanhood@comcast.net.

Howard. Waterfowl Search. Meet at Broken Land Pkwy lot, Lake Elkhorn at 8 AM. We’ll carpool to search the Howard Co waterways for ducks, grebes, mergansers, and loons. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643 or krschwal@verizon.net.

Tri-county. Bombay Hook NWR. Ducks, geese, and lingering

shorebirds. Meet 7:30 AM Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853 for directions and more details.

Sunday, November 23

Baltimore. Loch Raven. Two mile level walk to see winter residents on both land and water. Past years have included loons, ducks, grebes, Bald Eagles, bluebirds, Winter Wrens, both kinglets, Brown Creepers, sapsuckers, and occasional rarities of all kinds. Scopes handy for waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at Loch Raven Picnic Trail. Contact leader if directions needed. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

Howard. Centennial Park. Meet 8 AM West end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leaders: Mike Kerwin, m63kerwin@verizon.net, 410-461-2408.

Kent. Kent County Waterfowl. Explore Eastern Neck NWR and other prime Kent Co locations for a variety of geese, ducks, and some non-waterfowl as well. Half day, dress warmly and bring snacks. Meet 8 AM at the Dollar General parking lot (off Philosopher’s Terr) in Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

Montgomery. Occoquan Bay NWR. Half day. Explore the diverse habitats in this one-square-mile refuge at the confluence of the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers in Woodbridge, VA. A variety of migratory ducks and boreal migrants should be present. Meet at the parking lot in the center of the refuge at 8 AM. Reservations required. Limit: 20. For reservations and more info, call one of the leaders: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com, or Gerry Hawkins, 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.

Talbot. Bombay Hook NWR and other DE Coastal Sites. Dress warmly and spend the day along the DE and Atlantic Coasts of Sussex Co. There should plenty of wintering waterfowl, including large flocks of Snow and Canada Geese, along with wintering raptors, sparrows and a few shorebirds. Bring lunch, drinks and snacks. Leaders: Dave Palmer, 410-829-3376 and Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM.

Monday, November 24

MEETING. Tri-County. “Forest Birds and their Habitats: Thirty Years of Change on the Delmarva” presented by *Marshall Boyd*. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance,

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Camden Ave, Salisbury. For more info contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853.

Tuesday, November 25

MEETING. **Washington.** Movie Night. Be transported to the South American rainforest by the film *Jungle Eagle* and learn about the most powerful bird of prey in the world. 7 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center, Hagerstown. Call 301-797-8454 for details.

Friday, November 28

🏠 **Anne Arundel.** Blackwater NWR. Wetlands, waterfowl, and Bald Eagles. Meet 8 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center. Bring lunch. Very little walking is required. Facilities are found at the Visitor Center. Leader: Barbara Ricciardi, 202-230-8492 or Barbararicciardi27@gmail.com.

Saturday, November 29

🏠 **Baltimore.** Patterson Park. Come see what birding action abounds amid the varied habitats of this green oasis in the middle of Balt. Meet 8 AM at the White House just inside the west edge of the park at intersection of S. Patterson Park Ave and Lombard St. For questions, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473. Youth Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (cell), 410-483-6620 (home) or jrobin@jhmi.edu.

🏠 **Cecil.** Eagle Watch at Conowingo Dam. Half day. Meet 9 AM at fisherman's lot below dam. Bring scope if you have one. Optional: lawn chair, blanket, hot drinks, and snacks. Dress for possible extreme cold and windy condition. Leader: Pat Valdata, pvaldata@zoominternet.net.

🏠 **Harford.** Conowingo Eagle Watch. Meet 8 AM at Fisherman's Park below the dam. Expect more than 100 Bald Eagles and possibly Golden Eagle. There will be waterfowl and early winter songbirds. Contact leader Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or newarkfarms@gmail.com for more info.

Sunday, November 30

🏠 **Talbot.** Casson's Neck, Dorchester Co. After such an enjoyable and productive visit to Bill and Sue West's 100 acre + farm this past spring, we have been invited back to see what fall and wintering birds might abound in the wide variety of habitats there. Wear or bring waterproof boots as we may walk through some shallow waters. Leaders: Bill and Jesi West and Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme Parking Lot 6:30 AM.

Wednesday, December 3

🏠 **Baltimore.** First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. A continuing series of monthly morning surveys of bird activity at the Fort and

wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Cape May Capers" by Kurt Schwarz. 7 PM at the Carroll Nonprofit Center, 255 Clifton Blvd, Westminster. Contact Don Jewell at jewelldg@gmail.com or 410-259-4716 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** Program and Speaker: TBA. 7 PM at Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. For more info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, December 4

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND MEETING. **Frederick.** For our annual dinner, our speaker will be *Marcia Balestri* talking on her travels to Brazil. Dinner will be at the Homewood at 6 PM at a cost of \$18 per person. Please make reservations with and send money to Treasurer Nancy Parker before 11/21/2014. For more info, contact Tom Humphrey, 301-696-8540 or Pres@FrederickBirdClub.org.

Friday, December 5

🏠 **Patuxent.** Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes brushy fields, woods, and hedgerows for a good mix of species. Side trip to freshwater wetland at Horsepen Branch also possible. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more info.

Saturday, December 6

🏠 **Anne Arundel.** Sandy Point SP. Late migrants and waterfowl. Leader: Hal Wierenga, 410-647-7439 or hal.lynn@comcast.net. Meet 8 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center. \$3/car fee for the park.

🏠 **Frederick.** Blackwater Trip. Full day trip for wintering waterfowl. Contact leader, Kathy Calvert at 301-810-5677 for all pertinent trip details, including meet place and time.

🏠 **Howard.** Blackwater NWR. Full day. Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly! Entrance fee or Duck Stamp required. Email the leader to reserve a spot and get details, including meet time and location. We will carpool. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, krschwal@verizon.net, 410-461-1643.

MOS. BOARD MEETING. 10 AM. Hosted by Baltimore Bird Club. Location TBD. Contact Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com for add'l info.

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Sunday, December 7

H Harford. DE Coast. Meet at the Rte 155/I-95 P&R at 6:30 AM. This trip will visit several hotspots along the DE Bay for wintering specialties. Contact leader Russ Kovach at 443-386-4787 or russell.kovach@gmail.com.

H Montgomery. Lilypons/New Design Road. Half day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and American Tree Sparrows and possibly Virginia Rail and American Bittern. Reservations required. For more info and reservations, contact the Leader: Clive Harris at clivegharris@yahoo.com.

H Talbot. Cambridge Waterfront and Blackwater NWR. We should have a nice selection of waterfowl at several locations. We need to carpool so we do not lose any cars driving through Cambridge. Leader: Dave Bent, 410-822-2113. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 7 AM or meet leader at foot of Oakley St at 7:30 AM.

Tuesday, December 9

MEETING. **Kent.** Program and Speaker TBA. 7:30 pm, Wesley Hall at Heron Point, off East Campus Ave, Chestertown. If you have questions, please contact Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** Holiday Social and Movie Night: "The Central Park Effect." 7:30 PM, College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Dr, College Park. For more info call 301-509-2212 or go to www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html.

Thursday, December 11

MEETING. **Howard.** "Project SNOWstorm: Tracking Snowy Owls during the Great Irruption of 2013-14," by *David Brinker*, Regional Ecologist, MD DNR. Dave, in partnership with several other naturalists, created the project as a collaborative effort of a diverse group of scientists to study this historic Snowy Owl irruption. His talk will detail the essential findings from the research. Hospitality 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Robinson Nature Center, 6692 Cedar Ln, Columbia. Info: Robin Todd, 410-491-5333.

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. We will walk the paved trail around the lake as well as the trail through the woods along Indian Creek. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212 for more info.

PLANING MEETING AND COVERED DISH DINNER. **Talbot.** Host: Cathy Cooper, 410-822-3451 or coopercw@goeaston.net, 28467

Pinehurst Cr, Easton. Plan on attending and bring a covered dish and ideas for walks and speakers for the spring.

Saturday, December 13

H Baltimore. Youth Birding at the Loch Raven Picnic Trail. Come on our 2 mile level walk to see winter residents on both land and water. Past years have included loons, ducks, grebes, Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and occasional rarities of all kinds. Pre-registration strongly encouraged! Meet 9 AM at the Loch Raven Picnic Trail. Contact leader for directions. Leader: John Robinson, 443-810-9059 (cell), 410-483-6620 (home) or jcrobin@jhmi.edu.

H Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. This preserved area near the upper bay provides prime habitat for waterfowl, song birds, and marsh and field birds. Meet at the parking lot at the end of the driveway. Contact leaders Josh Emm, 410-937-6790 or apistopanchax@gmail.com or Matt Hafner, hafner.matt@gmail.com or 410-971-3203 for further info and meet time.

Sunday, December 14

H Anne Arundel. Conowingo Dam. Gulls and eagles along the river. Meet 8 AM at Cromwell Station P&R on Dorsey Rd and Rte 648. Leader: Kevin Smith, 410-761-0755 or ravens3077@yahoo.com.

H Baltimore. Marshy Point Nature Center. Half-day trip for early waterfowl, raptors, and passerines. Half-mile trail leads to point overlooking Dundee Crk. Boots advisable, scopes useful. Meet 9 AM (contact leaders for meet location). Leaders: Brent and Mary Byers, 410-626-7294 or baypuffin@hotmail.com.

H Carroll. Piney Run Park. Moderate walking around the lake searching for early waterfowl. Continue through mixed forest and field edge in search of late migrants and winter resident species. Meet 8 AM at the parking lot outside the gate to Piney Run Park on Martz Rd off of White Rock Rd. Dave and Maureen Harvey will be leading this trip. Contact them at 410-795-3117.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. Elkton, MD. Full day census of all birds in a circle of 7.5-mile radius centered at Black Hill on Elk Neck. Compiler: Laura Balascio, avocet@udel.edu or 302-456-0914. Tally Rally at McDonald's in Elkton at 4 PM.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. Catocin Mountain, MD. Contact Mike Welch at 301-685-3561 or manddwelch@comcast.net to participate.

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❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lower Kent County, MD.** Covers area from just south of Chestertown and Tolchester to Eastern Neck Island. Full day of counting, followed by countdown dinner. Contact compiler Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@gmail.com for area assignments or more info.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **St. Michaels, MD.** If you can help with all or part of this count, contact compiler/coordinator: Wayne Bell, wbell2@washcoll.edu. Potluck Dinner: 5 PM at Episcopal Parish Hall, St. Michaels. Dinner Coordinator: Margie Steffens, 410-822-1966.

🐦 YMOS. Youth Birding help with the St. Michaels Christmas Bird Count. Contact George Radcliffe, radclifg@gmail.com if interested.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Salisbury, MD.** Take a break from the holiday rush and join this traditional Christmas birding event. Compiler: Mike Walsh, 410-422-0428. Compilation at Carolyn and Charlie Stegman's home, 606 Fountain Rd., Salisbury, MD 21801, 443-783-1396.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Port Tobacco, MD.** Compiler, Gwen Brewer, 301-752-9239.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Seneca, MD and VA.** Compiler: Jim Nelson, kingfishers2@verizon.net (preferred) or 301-530-6574.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Jug Bay, MD.** Compiler: Sam Droege, 301-497-5840 (w), 301-390-7759 (h) or sdroege@usgs.gov.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Southern Lancaster County, PA** (the southern area of this count circle includes a small portion of MD in northern Cecil County). Compiler: Bob Schutsky, 717-548-3303 or info@birdtreks.com.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Manassas-Bull Run, VA.** Compiler: Bob Shipman, ships333@yahoo.com or 703-883-3868.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Charles Town, WV** (Includes a portion of MD in Washington Co). Compiler: Bob Dean, bobdean52@gmail.com.

Wednesday, December 17

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** 7:30 PM at the Blue Heron Center at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. "Project SNOWstorm: The Invasion of Snowy Owls," by *Dave Brinker*, Central Range Ecologist, MD DNR. More info: Colin Rees, 410-757-8570 or reescolin@hotmail.com.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Northwest Atlantic Seabird Surveys." Well known to many birders through the photo quiz in the ABA's Birding magazine, *Tom Johnson* has been working for the last two years as a seabird biologist aboard NOAA ships, where he conducted bird surveys in the ocean. Tom will talk about the birds that are found far offshore in Maryland waters, beyond the range of our local pelagic trips. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Ed Patten at epatten1022@verizon.net.

Friday, December 19

🏠 **Patuxent.** Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Habitat includes mature woods along the Patuxent River, brushy fields, and a network of freshwater wetlands, ponds and small streams. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge NA. No reservations required. The Natural Area is located on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com or David Mozurkewich at mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Saturday, December 20

🏠 **Baltimore.** Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort and wetland. Cancelled in inclement weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. Leader: Ben Poscover, 410 882-1309.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Allegany County, MD** (includes a portion of WV). To participate, contact J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223 or jchurchi@atlanticbb.net to get an area assignment.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Oakland, MD** (includes a portion of WV). To participate, contact Connie Skipper at connieskipper@hohnet.com or 301-387-5227.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Middle River, MD.** Birders of all levels of expertise or experience are welcome and urged to participate. The area being surveyed is a 15 mile diameter circle centered in Middle River, from Fort Howard Park up to Baltimore/Harford Co line at the mouth of the Gunpowder River. Contact compilers: Pete Webb, 443-904-6314 or pete_webb@juno.com or Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com, for area assignment.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Denton MD.** Coordinator: Steve Westre, 410-479-0338 or swestre26@comcast.net.

❖ CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Triadelphia Reservoir, MD.** Compiler: David Holmes, musiclbndr@gmail.com (preferred) or 410-730-7083.

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🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington, DC** (includes portions of MD and VA). Compiler: Larry Cartwright. Info: Carol Hayes at Audubon Naturalist Society, chayas@audubonnaturalist.org or 301-652-9188 x10.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Wachapreague, VA**. Compiler: Marilyn Ailes, imailles@verizon.net.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **York, PA** (the southern area of this count circle includes a portion of MD in northern Carroll County). Compiler: Bernie Frick, 717-843-6675 or bernardfrick@alum.lehigh.edu.

Sunday, December 21

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chesterville, MD**. Covers most of eastern Kent Co and some of northern Queen Anne's. Full day of counting, followed by count down dinner. Compiler: Maren Gimpel at funkymoss@yahoo.com or 912-660-1541.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Point Lookout, MD**. Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 410-394-1300 or 410-610-5124 (m) or bobboxwell@hotmail.com.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Southern Dorchester County/Blackwater, MD**. Compiler: Bruce Peterjohn, bpeterjohn@usgs.gov.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Nassawadox/Brownsville, VA**. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Saturday, December 27

🏠 **Baltimore**. Patterson Park. Come see what birding action abounds amid the varied habitats of this green oasis in the middle of Balt. Meet 8 AM at the White House just inside the west edge of the park at intersection of S. Patterson Park Ave and Lombard St. For questions, contact Patterson Park Audubon Center at ppaudubon@gmail.com or 410-558-2473.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Rock Run/Harford, MD**. Contact the compiler Rick Cheicante, rickcheicante@cs.com or 410-803-2712 to volunteer and be assigned to a group.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington County, MD** (includes portion of WV). Contact Mark Abdy, 301-432-7696 or mjabdy@yahoo.com, to participate.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Central Loudoun, VA** (this count includes 5 miles along the C&O Canal in Montgomery Co, MD). Compiler: Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rstarmail.com.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Crisfield, MD** (the southern area of this count circle includes a small portion of VA across Pocomoke Sound to Saxis Island). Compiler: Paul Bystrak, shrike@comcast.net or 443-783-1268 (m) or 410-572-9950 (h). Tally afterwards at the Bystraks.

Sunday, December 28

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Sugarloaf Mountain, MD**. If you can help out, contact Janet Millenson, 301-983-9337 or janet@twocrows.com.

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Patuxent River, MD**. Compiler: Andy Brown, 410-535-5327 or brownaj@co.cal.md.us.

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Ocean City, MD**. Compiler: Mark Hoffman, wcbirding@comcast.net

Monday December 29

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chincoteague N.W.R., VA**. Compiler: Gerald Tracy, gerald.tracy@verizon.net or 757-442-5237.

Tuesday, December 30

🍁 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Cape Charles, VA**. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Thursday, January 1

🏠 **Baltimore**. Loch Raven. Start the New Year birding. Varied habitats including woods, fields, and reservoir. Probably also birding other sites for a "Big Day" in Balt City and Co. Meet 8:30 AM, contact leader: Kevin Graff, keyweststyle2001@gmail.com or 410-557-2456 for location.

🏠 **Harford**. Perryman Area. Celebrate the new year/recover from New Year's Eve by birding the always productive Perryman Area with leader Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@verizon.net. Depart from the Aberdeen WalMart parking lot off Rte 40 at 8:30 AM.

🏠 **Howard**. Start Your 2013 List! Half day. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Meet 8 AM at Howard Conservancy/Mount Pleasant Farm. Expect moderate walking. Possibility of lunch stop depending on the weather. Facilities at some spots. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 443-285-3302 or bonnieott@verizon.net.

🐦 **YMOS**. Deadline to commit to youth World Series of Birding teams. Contact George Radcliffe, radclifg@gmail.com if interested. Needed: Middle and High School Students loving birds and nature.

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🦋 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Bowie, MD.** Compiler: David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212, mozurk@bellatlantic.net.

Saturday, January 3

🦋 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Inwood, WV.** A count centered near Martinsburg, WV. Compiler: Bob Dean, bobdean52@gmail.com.

Sunday, January 4

AUDREY CARROLL MID-WINTER COUNT. **Frederick.** Meet at the Sanctuary at 6:30 AM. You may want or need waterproof boots. Compiler: David Smith, 410-549-7082.

🏠 **Tri-County.** MD and DE Coast. Full day. Search for winter specialties and perhaps a rarity from recent CBCs. Bring a lunch. Dress for the weather. Meet 7:30 AM Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Ron Gutberlet, 903-714-7589 for directions and more details.

🦋 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Annapolis-Gibson Island.** Coordinators: Sue Ricciardi, 410-647-9513 or susiericc@comcast.net and Hal and Lynn Wierenga, 410-647-7439, or hal.lynn@comcast.net.

🦋 CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Fort Belvoir, VA and MD.** Compiler: Kurt Gaskill, 703-768-2172 or kurtcapt87@verizon.net. MD Sector Leader: Lynne Wheeler, 301-743-3236 or comstockel@aol.com. CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Calmes Neck, VA.** Compiler: Margaret Wester, 540-837-2799 or margaretwester@hotmail.com. This count includes much of far-western Loudoun as well as Clarke

Santorini (Thira) and Thessaloniki, Greece, September By Colin Rees

Dawn was breaking at Macedonia Airport as Valerie and I awaited our flight to Santorini. We appeared to be the only ones aware of that above us numerous Common Swifts were busy gathering insects attracted to the lighting under the cantilevered overhang and doing their best to drown out the noise of aircraft. The swifts performed their usual acrobatics and long dives and we did see a pair zooming back and forth to a nest to feed their young. Our reverie was ended when we were called to board the bus for our flight.

In Santorini we stand on the edge of a steep cliff and have a stunning view of the famous caldera and its islands shimmering in the ultramarine sea. White villages adorn portions of the bowl and mix in with the reddish-brown, black and grey striations of the weathered cliff face. The rattling of locusts and scents of the parched underbrush are borne on a gentle breeze. Below us, Hooded Crows wheel easefully on the rising air. Sometimes they

fly high only to close their wings to dive, wobble and land on a cactus head or ledge. They call repeated harsh “kraas”; they gather; they separate, and then regroup. Sometimes they invade the swimming pools of the cliffside hotels but keep a healthy distance from the guests.

Out to sea gulls fly in the wake of a ferry and I follow them until they disappear in the haze. From time to time, I hear rattling Sardinian Warblers and Chukas calling a noisy chicken-like “chuck-chuck-chukar-chukar”. The latter is a partridge and the adults have a creamy white throat, marked black and white bars on the flanks and a black band running from the forehead across the eye and down the head to form a gorget. This striking attire is accompanied by a light brown back, grey breast, and buff belly with rufous-streaked flanks, red legs and coral red bill. It a shy bird and we were lucky to see a covey of seven scrambling up a cliff path.

Later in the day, in a monastery garden we sit under an olive tree to escape the blistering sun and become aware of a Willow Warbler flitting about its outer branches. It is entirely yellow below and must be a first winter bird on fall (autumn) passage.

Sometimes to cool off, we sit atop the island’s highest peak (Mt. Profitis Ilias) and view the brooding landscape. Before us is the entire caldera and the vineyards, the little villages, and the popular beach resorts to the east. Swallows and martins flash past on their way south. A pair of Whinchats perch high on a bush top facing the breeze and in the oregano bushes below a few Northern Wheatears bounce from mound to mound showing their prominent white rump. They make one of the longest migrations of any small bird. During springtime it migrates from Sub-Saharan Africa over northern and central Asia, Europe, Greenland, parts of Canada and Alaska. In the fall, all return to Africa. Birds breeding in eastern Canada are thought to fly from Newfoundland to the Azores (a distance of 1600 km) before flying onwards to Africa. Other populations from western Canada and Alaska migrate by flying over much of Eurasia to Africa.

On another day, while we ate at the shoreline and enjoyed the lapping sea and setting sun, many Mediterranean and Yellow-legged Gulls bobbed in the water or stood with casual elegance on the rocks. Most of them are beginning to don their winter coats. Close to a harbor wall, a Shag glides past low in the water with a straight neck and upturned head. It draws the attention of some children who remark on its “Loch Ness Monster” appearance. Earlier we saw a Peregrine Falcon take a Rock Dove and dismember it within sight of a well-known restaurant. But the prize had been sight of a White-tailed Eagle performing gigantic circles over the sea before setting a beeline course for its prey which it swept with elan from the sea. Its massive wings contrast with a short wedge-shaped tail and when gliding its long “fingers” are splayed and it droops its head.

Back in Thessaloniki, as we were walking one of its backstreets we heard the melancholy song of a bird and looking up in the entrance of a restaurant found a caged Crested Lark. Its double notes and tremolos were hauntingly beautiful and we recalled a passage from Laurence Sterne’s “Sentimental Journey through France and Italy” when he tore vainly at the wires of a cage and wrote: “I never had my affections more tenderly awakened”.

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.
ANNUAL REPORT, APRIL 30, 2014

Operating Fund

Income

Charitable Campaigns	3,817.38
Direct Donations	206.60
Miscellaneous	1,102.66
Membership Dues	25,240.00
RBC Operating Fund Dividends	5,529.93
Sales	234.25
<hr/>	
Total Income	\$ 36,130.82

Expenses

Affiliations, Memberships & Training	\$ 560.00
Accounting & Legal Services	7,127.50
Awards	182.37
Budget Committee	25.00
Bulk Storage	2,040.00
Chapter Reimbursement for Board Mtg	240.00
Communications Committee	25.00
Conservation Committee	600.00
Donations & Special Project Grants	2,290.98
Equipment & Office Supplies	327.04
Liability Insurance	3,130.00
Library Committee	113.36
Maryland Birdlife	1,759.24
Maryland Yellowthroat	7,853.42
Membership Committee	164.40
Membership Data Base Management	500.00
Miscellaneous	50.00
MOS Website	115.95
Postage	196.89
Sales Tax	111.86
Telephone	675.28
Treasurer Stipend	2,400.00
<hr/>	
Total Expenses	\$ 30,488.29

<u>Special Funds</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
Atlas Fund	\$ 1,698.67	\$ -
Education Fund	1,710.93	1,696.75
Research Fund	2,467.46 (*)	3,050.00
Sanctuary Fund	16,252.22 (*)	17,447.67
Scholarship Fund	8,076.13 (*)	8,067.52
Youth Fund	10,734.77	9,981.48

(*) includes Non-Designated Funds approved by Board of Directors

<u>Conference Finances</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>
Conference 2013	\$ 30,786.50	\$ 30,572.14
Conference 2014	24,131.00	6,585.07

Royal Bank of Canada and Vanguard Investment Portfolios

Increase in Market Value	\$ 137,832.61
Income (additional Non-Designated Fund Dividends)	2,931.56
Expenses (RBC Portfolio Management Fees)	14,365.76

David W. Webb
MOS Treasurer

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL
SOCIETY, INC.
P. O. Box 105, Monrovia, MD 21770-0105

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
at Hagerstown, MD
Permit No. 184

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

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles, photos, or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be e-mailed to Richard Donham by Nov 25, 2014 for the Jan/ Feb 2015 issue.

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