

President's Corner

Youth, Birds, and Children Left Inside

by Wayne Bell

On a sparkling August 20 I represented MOS at a Maryland "No Child Left Inside Coalition" rally. The nearly 300 teachers, school children, and government officials who attended were on a mission. What is NCLI and what does it have to do with birds?

Chesapeake Bay has long placed Maryland in the forefront of environmental education (EE). Since 1990, an EE Bylaw requires each school system to "provide a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary program... at least once in the early, middle and high school learning years." But rigorous adherence to this requirement has been seriously eroded, and the problem is not limited to the schools. Young people are spending less time outdoors, whether for reasons of safety or the ready availability of electronic entertainment. Many teachers concur that the federal No Child Left Behind legislation has had the unintended consequence of de-emphasizing EE programs and field trips, as schools invest in subjects and activities that directly relate to state performance accountability.

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The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008

VOL. 28, NO. 5

NEW AT MOS: A TRAVEL PROGRAM

Welcome to the Maryland Ornithological Society's Travel Program. Designed to let MOS members share in unique birding experiences around the world, our tours—developed in conjunction with Tropical Birding—will offer diverse itineraries, provide comprehensive pre-and post-tour information, and handle logistics smoothly. Our guides are first-rate field ornithologists, knowledgeable of the local habitats and highly skilled at finding birds and showing them to all members of the group. From beginning birder to seasoned veteran, we believe all will enjoy our tours.



programs, conservation programs and direct land purchase, they believe that they can help protect habitat, save birds, and promote birding for future generations. For more information on their conservation efforts, visit their web site at

<http://www.tropicalbirding.com/tropicalbirdingdifferent.html> under the heading Conservation and Youth Birding. Proceeds from our tours will also help at home, directly supporting MOS's scholarship, education, and conservation programs.

As this is a new initiative, we are starting off small, offering *two trips in 2009*.

OAXACA, MEXICO: LEGENDARY BIRDS AND TEMPLES

Our first trip will be to Oaxaca, Mexico, in January 2009. Oaxaca has the biggest bird list of any Mexican state, and of the nearly 700 species recorded here, about 97 are Mexican endemics. With impressive ruins, a bustling capital city rich in commerce and architecture, a vibrant native culture, and some of the world's most beautiful beaches, Oaxaca offers even the non-birder much to write home about. If you're looking for a trip that's also good for a non-birding partner, we highly recommend this one. On many of the days, afternoon birding is optional, and those wishing to take it easy may do so.

(MOS Travel Program continues on page 3)

In addition to creating itineraries that balance great birding with reasonable prices, it's our job to make your tour as free of concern as possible. The tours include all meals (with a ready supply of field refreshments from our coolers on most tours) and accommodations that are clean and comfortable. We also understand that being unreasonably crowded does not make for a memorable birding trip, so most of our tours are limited to eight participants. To help with logistics, each tour will be co-led by an MOS member.

We selected Tropical Birding as our partner because this company not only offers world-class tours at reasonable cost, it is also active in all aspects of bird conservation. By supporting education programs, youth

President's Corner (continued from page 1)

MOS SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH

Twice each year MOS awards grants—generally less than \$2,000—for ornithological research to be conducted in the state of Maryland. The next deadline for applying for a research grant is December 1. For application guidelines and further information, write or e-mail the Research Committee Chair:

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Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by November 20, 2008 for the January/February 2009 issue.

*Illustrations pages 1 and 10 © M. Suzanne Probst.
Photographs pages 9 and 13 © George Jett.*

This criticism may be unfair; students have plenty of diversions that keep them inside and there is always the Internet as a source of information.

Environmental educators have found their voice in a 2005 book by Richard Louv, *Last Child in the Woods, Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Louv documents the decline of outdoor experiences, quoting one fourth-grader, "I like to play indoors 'cause that's where all the electrical outlets are." He then delves into research showing that lack of creative play in nature actually reduces learning capacity and contributes to anxiety disorders. The book is a disturbing read until the final chapters, where he writes of a growing movement to counter these trends. That movement has become NCLI.

Two bills in Congress (H.R. 3036, S. 1981), collectively called the NCLI Act, would authorize \$100 M annually for states to carry out EE initiatives in teacher professional development and collaborative outdoor programs. In order to qualify for funding, the states must develop plans to ensure that elementary and secondary students are environmentally literate. Why? Ostensibly, environmental literacy contributes to critical thinking on today's complex environmental issues, inspires the next generation of scientists, and better prepares tomorrow's responsible citizens and civic leaders. But environmental literacy has also been shown to improve student learning across all disciplines and to contribute to the mental as well as physical health of young people as they have more creative outdoor experiences. The NCLI Act is backed by a national coalition of 546 organizations representing over 42 million

people. MOS has joined the Maryland NCLI Coalition and become part of the national movement.

MOS through its local chapters has so much to offer. Birds provide not only an opportunity to visit a nearby park or nature preserve but also a chance to experience and learn about the ecology of the neighborhood working landscape—the farms, wood lots, and even the suburban lawns and urban habitats that should be part of a child's familiar outdoor world. Every bird walk and every bird, familiar or not, affords a potential teachable moment. As the posters at the last MOS annual conference showed, bird populations are also superb subjects for outdoor research by science-minded school-age and college students.

As befits Maryland's leadership, the House version of the NCLI Act is sponsored by John Sarbanes (D-3). An Executive Order, "Maryland Partnership for Children in Nature," has created an 18-member commission co-chaired by the Secretary of DNR and the Superintendent MSDE to prepare the state's program in environmental literacy. YMOS can bring our own collective expertise to NCLI. At the last MOS Board of Directors meeting, George Radcliffe gave each Chapter a backpack containing binoculars and field guides to help some lucky young persons get started. (See page 12.)

On Sept. 18, 2008, the House approved the NCLI Act with bipartisan support, 293 to 109. I pledge my effort on behalf of MOS to see this legislation through to ultimate success. Let's turn our youth inside out.

More information and links are at www.mdncli.org.

IRISH GROVE WEEKEND

A fall work weekend has been scheduled at Irish Grove, the MOS sanctuary in Somerset County, for November 1 and 2. Dotty Mumford, who is heading up the effort, says that the focus will be on much-needed trail work. Even if you can only come for part of a day, your help would be very much appreciated! Dotty will be there a few days prior to the weekend, so you are welcome then, too.

Irish Grove is a 1,600-acre gem, mostly marsh land, but with about 10 acres of fields, situated along the "famous" Rumbly Point Road. There are several trails and canoe access. The house is in good shape for its age and has overnight accommodations. Short-eared Owls are possible at this time of year, and Chincoteague is not far away. More information, a bird checklist, and directions are available from the MOS web site, www.mdbirds.org.

Let Dotty know if you can come: dottymum@comcast.net

MOS TRAVEL PROGRAM (continued from page 1)

A TASTE OF TEXAS

In April 2009, we will travel to Texas for an 8-day whirlwind tour along the Gulf Coast and in the Rio Grande Valley. The big draw for this tour is covering areas along the Gulf Coast and in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, both in one trip. Our tour visits many of the varied habitats of the region—migrant traps on High Island, inland pineywoods, coastal beaches and marshes, and the riparian ecosystem of the Rio Grande. We start with a boat trip to find the endangered Whooping Crane and continue south to Laguna Atascosa NWR. Then we will head to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. In addition to an astonishing concentration of more widespread birds, the Lower Rio Grande Valley is home to nearly 30 bird species found nowhere else in the U.S. We will finish our loop back on the Gulf Coast, with a visit to the world-famous Anahuac NWR and Bolivar Flats to add to our burgeoning list of marsh and shore-birds. Before we get on the plane, we will have a chance at a parting gift of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

To sign up or for itineraries and information about these trips, contact Marcia Balestri (mebalestri@comcast.net). She will check your membership with MOS (non-MOS members add \$25 to price) and e-mail you a booking form. You will then send the form DIRECTLY TO TROPICAL BIRDING along with your deposit. (Using their form and signup procedures will allow us to take advantage of Tropical Birding's liability insurance. You should have your own medical and/or travel insurance). **MAKE SURE YOU PUT "MOS TRAVEL PROGRAM" ON YOUR BOOKING FORM TO RECEIVE THE MOS DISCOUNT.** Marcia will work closely with you to ensure you have the proper pre-tour information, remind you about deadlines, and answer any questions. She will be in contact with Tropical Birding to make certain that they receive information on airline flights, special needs, etc. from participants.

CONFERENCE 2009: FREDERICK HOLIDAY INN FRANCIS SCOTT KEY CONFERENCE CENTER MAY 15-17

Our 2009 conference will be hosted by the Frederick Bird Club and headquartered at the Holiday Inn Francis Scott Key Conference Center. It's been a long time since we've been to Frederick—1995.

Doug Tallamy, chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at University of Delaware, has agreed to be our keynote speaker. Doug has been conducting research on the interaction between native plant species and native wildlife since 2000. With every study, he is further convinced that healthy local ecosystems aren't important just for wildlife but for people, too. His topic will be "Native Plants, Insects, and the Future of Biodiversity in Suburbia."

Sparrows will be the focus of Friday's workshop. We are lucky to have James Rising coming from the University of Toronto to conduct the workshop. Jim has written the classic *Sparrows of the United States and Canada* (1996), and, again collaborating with David Beadle, published *The Photographic Guide* version in 2003. He will be leading a half-day field trip

on Saturday morning, ably assisted by Bonnie Ott.

Kathy Calvert (Kathycalvert1@comcast.net or 301-698-1298) has already started setting up trip destinations. Anyone interested in leading a field trip should contact Kathy. With its central location, Frederick will provide us with four counties for birding. Expect trips to Carroll, Montgomery, and Washington counties as well as Frederick.

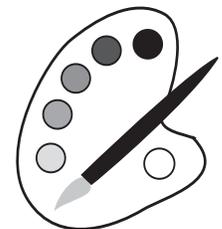
Maryanne Dolan (Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com) will again mastermind the Silent Auction and Raffle. We can count on Maryanne to do an excellent job, but she needs help. She is looking for items for the Silent Auction and Raffle. Please contact her if you have items or services to donate.

With all of this happening, there is no doubt that we will be having an outstanding Frederick County conference. Come and enjoy. As always, contact me, janetbill@prodigy.net, if you have questions.

—Janet Shields, Chair
Conference Committee

Calling All Artists

The 2009 Pin Contest deadline will be here before you know it—January 15, 2009. The rules are simple: The bird must be appropriate for the conference site (Frederick County), it must contain the phrases "MOS" and "2009," and the artist must be a member of MOS. Put your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, chapter affiliation, and the species on the back of each entry. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules and more tips about designing pins for the contest, visit the MOS web site, or contact John Malcolm at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.



MINUTES OF THE MOS BOARD MEETING JUNE 14, 2008

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

Atlas: Jane Coskren
Birding Trail: Marcia Watson
Conference: Janet Shields
Conservation: Maureen Harvey
Development/Publicity: Russ Kovach
Investments: Martha Waugh
Records Committee: Phil Davis
Sanctuary: Brent Byers
Scholarship: Tom Strikwerda
Statewide Education Activities:
 Mike Bowen
Yellowthroat: Lydia Schindler
Youth Programs: George Radcliffe

Allegheny: *not represented*
Anne Arundel: Linda Baker,
 Phil Davis, David Gillum
Baltimore: Brent Byers
Caroline: Danny Poet
Carroll: Maureen Harvey
Cecil: Maryanne Dolan,
 Sean McCandless, Marcia Watson
Frederick: Helen Horrocks,
 Mike Welch
Harford: Thomas Congersky,
 Russ Kovach, Randy Robertson
Howard: Jane Coskren,
 Tom Strikwerda, Kate Tufts,
 Martha Waugh, Paul Zucker
Kent: Walter Ellison, Nancy Martin
Montgomery: Brad Beukema,
 Mike Bowen, Judy McCartney,
 Jim Nelson, Lydia Schindler
Patuxent: Fred Fallon
Talbot: Danny Poet,
 George Radcliffe
Tri-County: *not represented*
Washington: Shirley Ford,
 Anna Hutzell, Ann Mitchell

President Marcia Balestri called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She thanked the Cecil Bird Club for hosting the meeting at Colchester Farms in Georgetown, MD. Wayne Bell introduced Charlotte Staelin, manager of Colchester Farm. Charlotte gave us a history of the farm, which goes back to the 1700s.

The land has been conserved through a series of environmental easements.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved with the following correction. Under New Business, Travel Program, line 7, starting "Marcia also contacted" should read: "Marcia also contacted Field Guides, Vent and Wings, asking them to bid on particular trips. Only Wings, aside from Tropical Birding, answered back. Basically, Wings offered a 15 percent discount. Marcia used catalog prices for groups for Field Guides and Vent and handed out a comparison chart." The last three sentences remain.

Treasurer's Report: Emmalyn Holdridge's quarterly Treasurer's Report was submitted. Board members were also given copies of the Annual Report that was distributed via e-mail for the Business Meeting during the conference.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Montgomery: Jim Nelson announced they are close to publishing the new edition of the Montgomery Birding Site Guide.

Caroline & Talbot: Danny Poet said that, with the help of Caroline and Talbot Bird Club members, Tuckahoe State Park has been recognized as an Important Bird Area with a dedication ceremony on May 25.

Howard: Howard Bird Club published a Howard County Birding Site Guide and recouped their costs from its sale. Therefore, Jane Coskren said that they are currently updating the information and making it available on-line at no charge.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Atlas: Jane Coskren announced they are working on publishing the Atlas. The writing is going more slowly than they hoped. Hopkins has been asked for an extension of the November deadline. Walter Ellison mentioned that the Atlas data is still available online.

Birding Trail: Mike Bowen is in charge of the site nomination process, for which a form has been developed. Marcia Watson said they are close to getting their process going. Each chapter will be invited to submit nominations for sites to be included in the birding trail using the form. Chapter presidents will organize this on a chapter level. They are also inviting other birding organizations, such as Audubon, to submit nominations. The decision was made to include sites in Washington, DC. At this point, it is not known how many sites will be included. Currently, the committee has decided not to hire an outside consultant as long as the guide maintains a manageable size. That decision could change depending on the final number of sites to be included. Marcia Balestri announced at the conference that the board has decided to name the birding trail in honor of Chan and Eleanor Robbins. The official name will be the Chan and Eleanor Robbins Maryland/DC Birding Trail.

Conference: Janet Shields announced that 252 people attended the Harford Conference. This was one of the best conferences she has attended. There were over 100 volunteers. Attendees were very pleased with the location, the field trips, and the local people, according to evaluations and notes. It was a very successful conference. Preparations are already starting for next year. The conference will be held May 15-17, 2009, in Frederick.

Conservation: Acting Chair Maureen Harvey noted that, after testifying on the use of state land for wind power, she received a thank you letter from the governor. She also received a letter from the Government Services Administration for a resident goose management plan at the White Oak Federal Center. The company that applied for a wind power facility at Black Rock and got permission withdrew their permit; Maureen thinks they will probably reapply. MOS wrote letters to Maryland's Gov. O'Malley thanking him for saying

“no” to permitting commercial wind power facilities on state land and to ask for a halt to horseshoe crab harvesting in Maryland. MOS signed on to the following letters prepared by others: The No Border Wall Coalition to urge the U.S. Congress to enact an immediate moratorium on border wall construction; The American Bird Conservancy’s Bird Conservation Alliance to urge early reauthorization of the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act; The Georgetown University Law Center Institute for Public Representation to comment on the National Park Service’s Rock Creek Park Wireless Telecommunication Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Development/Publicity: Russ Kovach has started to develop a pamphlet to guide people towards making donations to MOS. He has contacted several non-profits to discuss this. He would like to talk with anyone involved with fund-raising or non-profits in the past and work with them to develop a plan to approach individuals or organizations. The pamphlet would introduce MOS as a worthy recipient of their funds. Russ will be getting in touch with Maryland United Way and non-profits for suggestions. It was also suggested that he talk with EFM. He still strongly encourages all chapters to incorporate in their newsletters the state MOS symbol. He would also like to generate a list of individuals who can be contact points for media within the state. Marcia Balestri explained that this has previously been discussed by the Executive Council and the Council felt that the MOS President and the Development Chair should be the points of media contact and have the list of statewide contacts to use for reference rather than have a list on the web site. Russ agreed that this was a good idea and that the Chapter Presidents would make excellent contacts. Russ will get in touch with the Chapter Presidents about this.

Investments: Martha Waugh handed out her latest Investment Committee Report, which gave portfolio values for the years 2004-2008. She noted

that the 2008 value is down from the 2007 amount, reflecting the U.S. economic situation for the last year. But she also pointed out that the income still increased from 2007 to 2008, even with market problems. Martha noted that the MOS money is divided into seven funds and gave their portfolio values for 2004-2008. There is a different investment strategy for each fund.

Records: Phil Davis, Secretary of the Records Committee, gave an update. No new species for Maryland or DC but there are some potential new species under consideration. They may be found on the web site. Changes were made in March to the review list. The minutes of their annual meeting in March will be posted on the web site. In 1997 they started really working on their historical records. They have pushed to research the literature. There was a lot of literature to consult: *MD Birdlife*, *North American Birds*, *Audubon Naturalist Newsletter*, etc., and their journals published in the 1940s, 50s and 60s. They have just about finished and have a good handle on what has been published. Within the next year this project will be done. Since Phil took over as Records Secretary, he has made an effort to capture all the committee data in the database. He has been working towards culminating all of this effort into some kind of project. He passed around a copy of the book, *Rare Birds of California*, and plans to use this as their model of what will be done with their data. At the Records Committee meeting in March, they agreed this is what should be done. Janet Millenson, Bob Ringler, Paul O’Brien, and Phil will meet next month to begin the planning. When the plans are ready to be presented, they will be brought to the Board. It’s a big project that will probably take 4-5 years and will eventually be published.

Sanctuary: Brent Byers said the Carey Run work day has been rescheduled from June 1 to June 28. There will be spraying for invasive species again this year. At Irish Grove, you recall that there was a piece of property

MOS bid on in March. Our \$6,000 was the high bid. The sale is still pending, and they are going through the process of finalizing the sale. There was a storm at Irish Grove this spring. It missed the house but did some minor damage to windows and removed some shingles from the roof. Brent has been sent a draft of the deed to the Piscataway property in Prince George’s County. They are ready to transfer the property to us—approximately 82 acres. Because of the economic downturn, Green Vest will not be putting in a fence, road, or parking lot for us as they had promised. It’s been about four years since we have been to the property. Brent thinks we should go back to check out its current condition and the easements should be checked. Brent feels we need an attorney to review the documents before we agree to take possession. Marcia Balestri feels we should select a local attorney to review the easements and deed. Brent will contact Jim Stasz to recommend a local attorney to handle this for us and to see if he has any updated assessments of the property and the local situation. Brent has received a letter from a company interested in mineral and mining rights in one of our Allegany properties, not named. We’re not sure if it is the Wilson Track or Carey Run. Brent will look into this.

Scholarship: Tom Strikwerda announced that 14 scholarships were awarded. One person is unable to go this year. Twelve of the remaining people are going to Maine and one to Minnesota. Tom would like us to think about offering some money to the winners for travel.

Statewide Education Activities: Mike Bowen reported that for the previous two years he has come up with our own workshops using MOS people, but not this year. This year Michael O’Brien, from Cape May, NJ, gave a workshop on birding by ear and a field trip associated with that. They were inundated with people wishing to attend. It was a very successful workshop and field trip. Mike

BOARD MINUTES (continued from page 5)

announced that he is stepping down as committee chair.

World Series of Birding: Marcia Balestri announced that Matt Hafner was unable to attend the competition and was replaced by Mikey Lutmerding. The team did win at Cape May in their category with 187 species in Cape May County.

Yellowthroat: Lydia Schindler announced the next *Yellowthroat* deadline is July 11.

Youth Programs: George Radcliffe said the World Series of Birding was successful for YMOS. They took two teams to WSB; there were high school and middle school teams. They already are getting recruits for next year. They had a good link-up with kids from the Eastern Shore and Harford County at the conference. The Talbot Bird Club provided a scholarship to the Maine camp for one student. YMOS will offer a statewide scholarship next year. They still have the problem of trying to find kids from around the state. To help with this problem, they are going to put together two packs—a youth pack and a teacher pack. George hopes to have them put together by September. The packs will contain an acceptable pair of binoculars from Eagle Optics for about \$40. A field guide will also be included which will be Bill Thompson's Youth Guide. A youth packet and a teacher packet will be given to each chapter and left to them to determine to the people who should receive them. George also asks that the chapters give them free chapter memberships and give the contact information to him. YMOS will then network with the teachers and kids. The information will be in the next *Yellowthroat*.

OLD BUSINESS

Manual of Operations: Paul Zucker explained the issue of Executive Secretary has been resolved as have several other issues that have come up. Some new descriptions have been added. We still need descriptions for the Development Committee and the Youth Programs Committee. You can look on the web site for the manual. Paul would like to close it out and

put out an updated version as soon as he can.

George DuBois's New Challenge: Marcia Balestri doesn't want you to forget George DuBois's new challenge. If MOS comes up with \$1,500 for rain forests, he will match it. Please get your donations in to Emmalyn Holdridge by December 1.

NAB Discount: We do have a North American Bird discount. This is an online service that costs \$40 but you can get it for \$25 through MOS. Check with Emmalyn Holdridge.

Travel Program: Marcia Balestri just sent out an e-mail on the MOS listserver on the first trip. Marcia was contacted by High Lonesome Tours. They are interested in doing some trips to Alaska. Marcia would like input on destinations for international trips.

Vacancies: We need a Statewide Education Chair, a Conservation Chair, a Scholarship Committee member, a Nominating Committee member. We also need a Budget Committee member; Paul Zucker volunteered to fill this position.

Wind Energy/Alternative Energy Policy Statement: Wayne Bell will be setting up a committee to formulate an MOS policy statement on wind energy and alternative energy. Wayne will be in touch with potential members.

Maryland Birdlife: The next issue will be coming out in a couple of weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial Investment Strategy: Marcia Balestri announced that the Executive Council is proposing consolidating the Ferris Baker Watts investment accounts. Currently, there are five different investment accounts with one each for atlas, education, research, scholarship, and sanctuary plus an operational account and a non-designated account. We are proposing not to consolidate the endowments or committees but to consolidate the actual money accounts currently at FBW. It's been discussed by the Executive Council with the Investment Committee. Other organizations such as Nature Conservancy and some of our EFM partners have also been contacted as to their practices. We also

met with Ferris Baker Watts, our broker. The proposal is that we combine the actual money accounts. The endowments will be kept track of in our ledger sheets by Emmalyn Holdridge. On a quarterly basis, it would be determined what interest was made and it would be reapportioned to the individual accounts on a pro rata basis. The FBW quarterly report sent to Martha Waugh of the investment committee will be combined with a quarterly reapportionment report from the Treasurer, Emmalyn Holdridge, and distributed to the committee chairs. Marcia said a legality question arose in the discussions, which was discussed with the FBW broker and a MD nonprofit attorney. In both cases we were assured there were no legal problems with making this change. As to specific donations, bookkeeping will ensure proper accounting and it will be confirmed in the quarterly reports. A motion was made to accept the proposal to consolidate the FBW investment accounts. After considerable discussion, this motion was withdrawn. It was decided to give people time to consider the proposal and bring it before the board again in September.

President Marcia Balestri adjourned the meeting at 12:45p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
—Janet Shields, Secretary

New Officers

President Wayne Bell announces that:

Paul Zucker is replacing **Shiras Guion** as Budget chair; Shiras worked on and presented the society's budgets for 2007 and 2008.

Kurt Schwarz has agreed to become the new Conservation chair, taking over from the remarkable **Maureen Harvey**.

Martha Waugh has resigned as Investment chair, a position she has handled so capably for the past several years. That position is currently vacant.

MARYLAND/DC RECORDS COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT AS OF SEPTEMBER 22, 2008

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 packages 116-117 and 119-120.

MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. New “state” birds added to the official lists are highlighted with an asterisk; they include Cape Verde Shearwater and Western Meadowlark for Maryland and Long-tailed Jaeger for DC. Updated official species totals are 435 for MD and 329 for DC.

More information on the MD/DCRC, including the “official lists” and the “review lists” for MD and DC, can be found on the committee’s web pages:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>.

MD RECORDS ACCEPTED:

- Pacific Loon**, *Gavia pacifica* [MD/2007-055]
Herrington Manor State Park, Oakland, Garrett County
14-Apr-2007
- ***Cape Verde Shearwater**, *Calonectris edwardsii*
[MD/2006-264]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
21-Oct-2006
- White-faced Ibis**, *Plegadis chihi* [MD/2007-067]
West Ocean City pond, Ocean City, Worcester County
22-Jun-2007 through 24-Jun-2007
- Fulvous Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna bicolor*
[MD/1997-337]
Blackwater NWR, Cambridge, Dorchester County
07-Dec-1975 through 13-Dec-1975
- Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, *Dendrocygna autumnalis*
[MD/2007-085]
Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Lothian,
Anne Arundel County
01-Aug-2007
- “**Common**” **Teal**, *Anas crecca crecca* [MD/2006-002]
Queenstown, Queen Anne’s County
08-Apr-2005
- Swallow-tailed Kite**, *Elanoides forficatus* [MD/2005-028]
Indian Head, Charles County
30-Jul-1992
- Mississippi Kite**, *Ictinia mississippiensis* [MD/2007-106]
California, Saint Mary’s County
08-May-1999
- Swainson’s Hawk**, *Buteo swainsoni* [MD/2007-150]
Hurlock Wastewater Treatment Plant, Hurlock,
Dorchester County
18-Dec-2007
- Yellow Rail**, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* [MD/2007-054]
Rumbly Point Road, Marion Station, Somerset County
13-Apr-2007

- Long-tailed Jaeger**, *Stercorarius longicaudus* [MD/2003-340]
Lilypons Water Gardens, Buckeystown, Frederick County
07-Sep-1996
- Long-tailed Jaeger**, *Stercorarius longicaudus* [MD/2006-068]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
26-Aug-2006
- Great Black-backed Gull**, *Larus marinus* [MD/2006-032]
Sandy Hook, Washington County
19-Mar-2006 through 31-Mar-2006
- Roseate Tern**, *Sterna dougallii* [MD/2003-123]
North Beach, Calvert County
19-Sep-2003
- Bridled Tern**, *Onychoprion anaethetus* [MD/1997-255]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
26-Sep-1976
- Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-091]
Violette’s Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County
02-Sep-2006
- Sooty Tern**, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-093]
Violette’s Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County
02-Sep-2006
- Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2006-040]
South Point, Berlin, Worcester County
19-Apr-2006 through 03-May-2006
- Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2006-268]
Hooper Island, Fishing Creek, Dorchester County
19-Nov-2006 through 21-Jan-2007
- Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2007-061]
Lapidum Road, River Hills, Harford County
22-Apr-2007
- Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2007-069]
Pecktonville, Washington County
28-May-2007
- Eurasian Collared-Dove**, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2007-119]
South Point, Berlin, Worcester County
10-Nov-2007 through 24-Aug-2008
- White-winged Dove**, *Zenaida asiatica* [MD/2007-064]
BWI Airport, Hanover, Anne Arundel County
09-May-2007
- Calliope Hummingbird**, *Stellula calliope* [MD/2007-116]
North Beach, North Beach, Calvert County
21-Oct-2007 through 23-Oct-2007
- Fork-tailed Flycatcher**, *Tyrannus savana* [MD/2007-115]
Eastern Neck NWR, Rock Hall, Kent County
21-Oct-2007
- Cave Swallow**, *Petrochelidon fulva* [MD/2007-120]
Rum Pointe Golf Course, Berlin, Worcester County
11-Nov-2007

RECORDS COMMITTEE (continued from page 7)

Cave Swallow, *Petrochelidon fulva* [MD/2007-121]
Assateague Island, Berlin, Worcester County
11-Nov-2007

Loggerhead Shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus* [MD/2007-145]
Smoketown Road, Sharpsburg, Washington County
21-Dec-2007 through 25-Dec-2007

Painted Bunting, *Passerina ciris* [MD/2007-147]
Ferry Farms, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
18-Dec-2007 through 12-Apr-2008

Bachman's Sparrow, *Aimophila aestivalis* [MD/1999-178]
Kensington, Montgomery County
29-Apr-1896

Harris's Sparrow, *Zonotrichia querula* [MD/2007-125]
North Branch, Allegany County
26-Oct-2002

*Western Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta* [MD/2006-115]
Adamstown, Frederick County
26-Jan-1992 through 30-Jan-1992

MD RECORDS ACCEPTED—GROUP:

Selasphorus species, *Selasphorus sp.* [MD/2003-146]
Bethesda, Montgomery County
06-Nov-2002 through 11-Nov-2002

MD RECORDS ID OK?? ORIGIN:

Southern Lapwing, *Vanellus chilensis* [MD/2006-051]
West Ocean City, Ocean City, Worcester County
17-Jun-2006

MD RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:

"Scopoli's" Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea diomedea*
[MD/2006-041]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
24-Aug-1946

Barrow's Goldeneye, *Bucephala islandica* [MD/2007-012]
Hooper Island, Fishing Creek, Dorchester County
14-Jan-2007 through 15-Jan-2007

Swainson's Hawk, *Buteo swainsoni* [MD/2006-003]
Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Prince George's County
12-Jan-2006

Lesser Black-backed Gull, *Larus fuscus* [MD/2006-033]
Sharpsburg, Washington County
24-Mar-2006

Bridled Tern, *Onychoprion anaethetus* [MD/2006-105]
Russett, Laurel, Anne Arundel County
02-Sep-2006

Loggerhead Shrike, *Lanius ludovicianus* [MD/2005-027]
Boonsboro, Washington County
05-Mar-2005 through 24-Mar-2005

Painted Bunting, *Passerina ciris* [MD/2007-053]
Friendship, Anne Arundel County
12-Apr-2007

Western Meadowlark, *Sturnella neglecta* [MD/2006-116]
Oldtown, Allegany County
10-Jun-2006

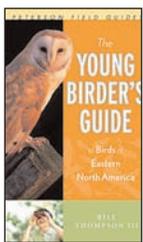
DC RECORDS ACCEPTED:

Hudsonian Godwit, *Limosa haemastica* [DC/2006-144]
Rock Creek Park
30-Aug-2006

*Long-tailed Jaeger, *Stercorarius longicaudus* [DC/2006-114]
Hains Point
02-Sep-2006

BOOK REVIEW

The Young Birder's Guide to Birds of Eastern North America, Bill Thompson, III • *Peterson Field Guides*, 2008.



I first encountered this book last June on a field trip I was leading for The Backyard Naturalist. We were a small group, just two other adults and 8-year-old

Caroline, who had her own binoculars and field guide. Her grandmother told me that she bought these at Cape May Bird Observatory as part of a "youth birding" package. The binoculars were Leupold Green Ring Yosemite, an inexpensive but highly rated optic for young people, and the field guide was the newest in the

Peterson Field Guide series, aimed at kids 8 to 12 years old.

As we birded the trails at Blue Mash Nature Trail and approached a bluebird box inhabited by Tree Swallows, I asked Caroline to look them up in her book. I was happy to see that the swallows' use of white feathers in nest-building was highlighted in both words and illustration, so that when we opened the box and looked at the nest, it really made an impact on her. And this book had made an impact on me!

Written by Bill Thompson, himself a father of two budding young birders, and beautifully illustrated by

his wife Julie Zickefoose, this guide is the first of its kind geared specifically toward kids.

The first 40 pages make up the introduction, an important part of any field guide, but particularly so for this book. In it, Thompson covers everything from a definition of birding to basic gear, identification basics (parts of a bird, size, range, etc.), tips for using your field guide, field skills, and birding manners.

The next 200 pages form the bulk of the guide, with accounts of 200 species representative of eastern North American birds. Some of his choices seem out of place for this

AUTUMN HUMMERS

Hummingbirds are fascinating animals. As of October 6, I still had at least two hatch-year Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (RTHU) feeding in my Waldorf backyard. (Hatch-year birds are those born this summer.)

RTHU generally start leaving our region during the second half of September and are usually gone by the second half of October. Adult males typically leave first, followed by adult females, and then hatch-year birds last. All my adult birds flew south in September.

Hatch-year birds are easily told from adults. Adult males are distinctive, of course, with their ruby-red throat patch. Adult females tend to give birders more of a problem, but by this time of year adult females should show signs of molt or feather wear. If your bird is in fresh plumage, you likely have a hatch-year bird. Male hatch-year birds have dark spotting on the throat, females do not.

Hummingbirds can be easily attracted by putting out an artificial feeder—and I recommend leaving your hummingbird feeders out until January 1, 2009. There is no evidence that having feeders out will delay the birds' migration; hummingbirds leave when the available daylight triggers chemicals in the brain to tell them it is time to move along, and this occurs around the equinox, when periods of daylight and darkness are equal.

During the breeding season, I usually mix one part (cup) sugar to four parts (cups) water, boil, cool, and add to a clean feeder. You don't need to color the water. During migration, I up the octane by adding more sugar, one part sugar to three parts water. Sugar and water will freeze around 20 degrees,



The first state record of Anna's Hummingbird, Calypte anna, arrived in Waldorf, at the home of Millie Krielmeyer—where she had left her feeder out—on November 11, 2004.

so to prevent damage to your feeder when ice expands inside it, fill it just two-thirds full. If a hard freeze is expected, it is best to bring the feeder in at night; when you put it out in the morning it will be nice and warm for any birds using it.

Leaving your feeder out until migration is complete could provide the extra boost of energy (sugar) to make the difference in survival in less than ideal migration conditions, such as the recent hurricane events in the east, and we want to see these fascinating critters return next April. Ruby-throats winter from southern Mexico to northern Panama, and often cross the Gulf of Mexico to get there. A few winter in southern Florida, and some may winter in Cuba.

Also, this is the time of year to seriously start looking for out-of-season, out-of-range hummingbirds. The Maryland state list numbers four species: RTHU, Rufous, Calliope, and Anna's. We

also had Black-chinned in DC in 2003. October and November are the best times to expect the non-RTHU to show up, and the records of non-RTHU increased when people started leaving out their feeders longer.

Please make sure your feeder is clean, the food is fresh, and the feeder is located where you can see it easily and check it on a daily basis. This way you will know when you have a potential non-RTHU. If you get a hummingbird to your feeder after October 30, contact me at 301-843-3524. You can also e-mail me at gmjett@comcast.net.

Good birdwatching.
—George Jett

beginner's book (Greater Roadrunner, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Yellow-headed Blackbird), being uncommon or local in most eastern states. Others—such as his choice of waterfowl and thrushes—seem well chosen.

Each species account consists of a photograph or two of the bird (while I generally dislike photo-type guides, these images are of good quality) and four short paragraphs of description and range: Look For, Listen For, Remember, and Find It. On the middle of each page, a half-dollar-sized circle contains a WOW factor—some tidbit of information designed to grab a kid's attention. Next to this are Julie

Zickefoose's wonderful illustrations, often showing habitat as well as another fact to reinforce the WOW factor. A range map at the bottom of the page, a check-off box, and date-seen line complete each account.

This is a nicely done book, well organized and well written with not an overwhelming amount of information. One thing I would like to have seen is the use of bird silhouettes on the endpapers, something Peterson used to great advantage in the original field guide and something I found very helpful as a beginner. Also, I think most bright 6- or 7-year-olds could use this guide, but by age 12

many kids will want something more advanced.

Having worked with kids in birding for a number of years, I know they prefer having their own "gear" rather than hand-me-down adult stuff. This book, and a pair of Leupold Yosemite binoculars, less than \$150 for the set, can start a young person on the road to a life-long hobby. If you have a grandchild, a niece or nephew, or just a friend of a friend, I hope you will take the opportunity to introduce them to the joys of birding.

—Rick Sussman



ANNE ARUNDEL

During the second week of August, *Bobbi* and *Pete Reichwein* enjoyed a week at Raquette Lake in the Adirondack Mountains in NY. “Of course there were the usual birds, calling Common Loons, Common Merganser, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds at the feeders above our heads, Cedar Waxwings, Kingfisher, Double-crested Cormorant. The exciting part about seeing the Kingfisher was that a Merlin was chasing it. In fact there was a pair of Merlin nesting on Bluff Point, the Great Camp where we stayed. For the first time since 1976, I saw an Osprey. A Bald Eagle showed up the afternoon of our departure. A walk in the forest yielded Black-and-white Warbler, Downy Woodpecker, Junco, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Brown Creeper. There were many species of mushrooms—so many that we are calling this year, the Year of the Mushroom, a mycologist’s dream come true. The Merlin and Osprey are two new birds for the Bluff Point yard list.”

—*Bobbi Reichwein*

CAROLINE COUNTY

Debby Bennett and seven others visited the Foreman’s Branch Bird Observatory Banding Station on Sept 14. The scorching heat that day greatly reduced the number of banded birds. However, that gave Jim Gruber and his team more time to spend with us, answering questions and taking us around some of their 100 nets.

This station is now part of a non-profit organization called **Chester River Field Research Center**. It depends on donations to pay for nets, supplies, and salaries for two paid

staff. Jim and the rest of the crew volunteer their time, but the volume of work requires full-time staff. They send all their data to Patuxent Research Center and also gather ticks removed from birds to send to another research group at Harvard.

Any group may contact them (PO Box 421, Chestertown, MD 21620) to schedule a time to visit and observe. They band in fall and spring.
—*Debby Bennett*

FREDERICK

On an August trip to Ecuador, *Marcia* and *Bob Balestri* and *Mike Welch*, along with some folks from Montgomery County, were standing in the pre-dawn dark at the property of Angel Paz, the farmer who has “tamed” antpittas. A couple of other figures were waiting in the gloom there, too. Then Marcia cried out, “Julie! Scott!” It was indeed fellow Frederick birders *Julie Maynard* and *Scott Edie*. And yes, they all got to see Antpittas—Great, Yellow-bellied, and Moustached—as well as the likes of Toucan Barbet, Golden-headed Quetzal, and Velvet-purple Coronet.

HARFORD COUNTY

Dennis and *Jean Kirkwood* led a trip to Yellowstone and the Tetons. HBC participants included *Tom Congersky*, *Marty Crouse-Farley*, *Volney Ford*, *Tom Gibson*, *Margie Heagy*, *Bob* and *Susan Hood*, *Sue Procell*, *Randy Robertson*, *Macrina Seitz*, *Joe* and *Melody Stevens*. The spectacular 10-day trip ended with 119 species of birds and 20 mammals, including grizzly and wolves. Best birds were Black Rosy-Finches, Ferruginous Hawk, Northern Three-toed Woodpecker, and Pine Grosbeak. This is a place everyone should visit at least once in their life.

—*Dennis Kirkwood*

Les Eastman’s yard is a haven for hummers. For the second year Bruce Peterjohn has been banding the hummers in Les’s yard. On 9/13, after banding only 9 hummers, they thought the season was over. However, Les was still seeing good numbers through the week, so they

decided to give it another shot on 9/20. Were they ever glad they did! In all, Bruce banded 30 new birds. All were hatch-year birds—18 males, 9 females, and 3 that they couldn’t sex by measurements or plumage. This brings the total catch for the year at Les’s house to 224 new birds. In addition, they recaptured 25 or 30 that were banded last year. Les is hoping that banders down south will catch a few of these birds and let him know how they are doing. Les heard somewhere that hummers leave on migration about mid-morning. On Sept 13 the action ceased about 9 AM and on Sept 20 it was 10 AM, so that idea would seem to be supported.

HOWARD COUNTY

Erin Eve, an active member of the Howard County Bird Club since 2004, was selected to receive a University Scholarship from Frostburg State University based on her outstanding academic record. The University Scholarship represents a part of Frostburg’s commitment to acknowledge academically talented students. Erin, a graduate of Hammond High School, will be majoring in Wildlife and Fisheries with a Wildlife Biology option. Since joining the club, Erin has participated in most of the seasonal counts, helped with the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas project, and helped with a site guide for Howard County. Erin is also a volunteer for Howard County Recreation and Parks as a Nest Box Monitor, an Odonate Surveyor, and an observer for Frogwatch USA. She also volunteers for the Patuxent NWR, where she co-leads bird walks, owl prowls, and herpetological searches.

—*Amanda Witt*

In early June, *Joe Hanfman* birded for 10 days in Alaska. Anchorage highlights were black bear, moose, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and Barrow’s Goldeneye. A military dog out for a jog helped him find a Spruce Grouse. He spent 5 days in Gambell, on the northwest tip of St. Lawrence Island, where tens of thousands of murrelets, puffins, auklets, and

kittiwakes were constantly flying just off the shore. Joe saw 4 of the 5 species of loon (missing Common), and enjoyed great looks at Steller's, Spectacled, King, and Common Eiders. The land bird stars were Jack Snipe, Siberian Rubythroat, Eastern Yellow Wagtail, White Wagtail, Red-throated Pipit, Lesser Sand-Plover, and Common Ringed Plover. Joe reported that walking on the gravel could be difficult but you could always catch an ATV ride from a friendly villager for \$7. During 3 days in Nome, the Kougarok Road produced Rock and Willow Ptarmigans, nesting Northern Goshawk, Golden Eagle, Gyrfalcon, Artic Warbler, Bluethroat, Hoary Redpoll—and musk ox. A walk up a mountain near Coffee Dome rewarded him with great looks at his most-desired bird, Bristle-thighed Curlew. (A previous group had had to call off its search because of the appearance of a brown bear.) The Council Road from Nome yielded Emperor Goose, Bar-tailed Godwit, Slaty-backed Gull, Aleutian Tern, and Northern Wheatear. It was such a great trip he plans to return for fall migration.

This past August *Joe Byrnes* and *Jeff Culler* spent 8 days in the White Mountains of Arizona, an area that offers a wide diversity of life zones, from juniper grassland to spruce-fir forest. Nesting species in the higher-elevation mixed conifer and spruce-fir forests included Gray Jay, Dusky

Grouse, and Three-toed Woodpecker. The lower areas often attract interesting migrants in the late summer and fall, as well as some sought-after nesters like Pinyon Jay and Lewis's Woodpecker. The highlight of the trip for both birders was a juvenile Dusky Grouse, found after three days of searching along Green's Peak and Big Lake Lookout. The Dusky Grouse was Joe's life ABA #759. Jeff added 22 lifers, including American Dipper, American Three-toed Woodpecker, and Gray and Pinyon Jays. Congratulations, Joe, on #759!

—*Kate Tufts*

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

It was while she was standing on the canopy tower at Ecuador's Sacha Lodge that *Helen Patton* ticked life bird #3,000—a red-wattled Spix's Guan. Back in Quito, Helen, along with *Linda Friedland*, *Anna Urciolo*, and *Lydia Schindler*, had a nice get-together with *Howard Youth*, who is starting a 3-year stint in Ecuador's capital with his family. During their 2 1/2-week trip, they and their friends from Frederick (see above) collectively saw 450 species—more than a dozen parrots, more than a dozen toucans, 47 hummingbirds, 57 flycatchers, 70 members of the tanager family, and six antpittas, plus such stunners as Andean Condor and Cock-of-the-Rock, and they were serenaded by Andean Solitaire and Musician Wren.

Bottom line: the field guide illustrations do not begin to do justice to the brilliance and beauty of these birds.

TRI-COUNTY

Sam Dyke, President of Tri-County, along with member *Joann Wilbur* and her husband *Paul*, enjoyed a fantastic 3-week experience in the High Arctic this July. After flying to Norway, they boarded a Russian oceanographic research vessel for a 10-day trip through the Svalbard archipelago. They circumnavigated the island of Spitzbergen, where they were only 700 miles from the North Pole. The experience of nature was awesome as they were immersed in the immensity of the area and the silence. They observed constant changes of ice movement, cloud cover and fog. The birding highlight of this part of the trip was watching a Polar Bear feasting on a dead whale while 3 Ivory Gulls flew around him. Their next destination was Iceland, where they enjoyed a self-guided tour, including a boat trip through the fjords. Here they sighted a White-tailed Sea Eagle on a nest with 3 chicks. Iceland also produced Gyrfalcon, Black-tailed Godwit, and Common Redshank along with fabulous sea colonies.

The Club is looking forward to their program this Fall which will include their photographs, some taken from a Zodiac.

—*Carol Broderick*

Audubon Summer Camps

Isn't there someone you know who would like to attend an Audubon camp for free? Each year MOS makes available a dozen or more scholarships to persons who work with young people—teachers, park rangers, camp counselors—and who intend to make nature education a part of their careers. Awardees have a choice of week-long programs at Audubon camps in Maine and Minnesota.

All chapters are urged to publicize this program and to recruit likely candidates. The application deadline for 2009 scholarships is January 30. For details, consult the MOS web site and/or contact Tom Strikwerda, Chair of the Scholarship Committee: 301-942-2841, tom.strikwerda@verizon.net.





Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- As Tropical Storm Hanna swept through our region on September 6, local birders braved the rain and wind in good numbers in hopes of finding birds carried along by the tempest. On behalf of at least six other birders, Jim Brighton of Talbot Co reported some very rewarding sightings from the Ocean City Inlet in Worcester Co. A 17-bird JAEGER show was the highlight. All 17 were probably PARASITIC JAEGERS, although only four gave good enough views for definitive ID. At one point a CORY'S SHEARWATER was blown close enough to shore to be seen well as it arced in and out of the waves. Additional enjoyment was provided by SOOTY TERNS (6), BLACK TERNS (15), and one lone BRIDLED TERN. Large numbers of SANDWICH, CASPIAN, ROYAL and COMMON TERNS were present through most of the day.
- SOOTY TERNS from Tropical Storm Hanna showed up September 6 at two locations along the Potomac River. In mid-afternoon Dave Czaplak spotted two adult birds from Hains Point in DC, a site he was sharing with Paul Pisano and Mike Bowen. Word was promptly passed to Sherman Suter of Alexandria, VA and others who were watching the action over the Potomac from the Virginia side. Within minutes that group viewed two other SOOTY TERNS (1 adult, 1 juvenile) above the Potomac near Fort Washington, Prince George's Co. In Montgomery Co, Ed Patten observed a single SOOTY TERN at Riley's Lock. Elsewhere in Maryland, Jennifer Elmer found four SOOTY TERNS at the Pocomoke Sand Pits in Worcester Co. On September 7, Patty Craig checked the early-morning bird traffic at Point Lookout SP in St. Mary's Co and recorded several SOOTY TERNS.
- Two other quite special storm-driven birds were observed in our region on September 6. Kevin Graff spotted a juvenile LONG-TAILED JAEGER from the fishing pier of North Point SP in Baltimore Co. Possibly the most surprising bird of the day was a SABINE'S GULL that showed up in Sandy Point SP in Anne Arundel Co. This bird gave Leo Wiegant excellent views two times about an hour apart, as it hung suspended in the winds of the storm. The fact that this species from the far north happened to get caught in the flow of a tropical storm is truly astonishing.
- On August 17 Jim Stasz of North Beach found a WHITE-WINGED DOVE while birding at Truitt's Landing in Worcester Co. The bird landed on a snag near Truitt's Landing Road and stayed long enough for a photo-op before flying off toward the northwest. It was not seen again.
- During the first week of September, former MOS member Dick Homan, visiting from Arizona, discovered a WESTERN KINGBIRD perched in the sunshine at Pennyfield Lock, Montgomery Co. Dick waited for some time, hoping in vain for a birder or two to come along, and eventually the bird flew away.
- On August 31 Bill Hubick of Pasadena and four others located a WESTERN MEADOWLARK on the grounds of a turf farm south of Hurlock, Dorchester Co. The bird was identified with the help of its soft but distinctive "chuck" call. Excellent photographs were obtained. Within a few days, the bird was independently found again by two other birders and additional photographs were taken. If accepted, this will become only the second record for this species in Maryland.



YMOS Backpacks: Cultivating New Birders

The youth division of MOS is embarking on a new venture to try to sow a few birding seeds in the next generation. At the last business meeting, each chapter was given a YMOS Backpack to award to some young birder.

Each backpack contains:

- Eagle Optics Triumph **binoculars**;
- A **lens pen** for cleaning the binoculars;
- A signed copy of Bill Thompson's *Young Birder's Guide* (see review page 8);
- A couple of used **birding books** donated by MOS members.

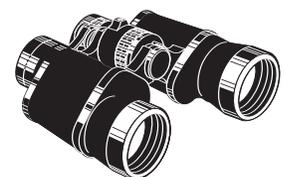
In addition, the young birder will be given membership in that chapter for the year and will be recognized as the chapter sees fit. Each chapter can choose its own criteria for presenting the award.

Eagle Optics is helping sponsor the project—which we expect to be an annual event—and giving us these nice binoculars at one-third of their usual cost. Bill Thompson, III generously gave us the books at cost.

Wanted: Old field guides that can be passed on to young birders in future YMOS backpacks. Give these to chapter presidents, who then can deliver them to me at future meetings of the Board.

Any questions should be e-mailed to me at radclifg@qacps.k12.md.us.

George M. Radcliffe
 Web site:
www.qacps.k12.md.us/cms/sci/RADCLIFF.HTM
 Centreville Middle School
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Rara Larus

Above, Black-headed Gull taking flight. Hybrid (inset photo) shows characteristics of both Black-headed Gull and Ring-billed Gull. Both photos taken August 30, 2008, courtesy of George Jett.

On August 11, Fred Shaffer went kayaking in the Patuxent River, putting in at Trueman's Landing in Eagle Harbor in southern Prince George's County. While out in his kayak, Fred found an adult winter-plumage Black-headed Gull (BHGU). He also found a hybrid gull, which may have BHGU and Ring-billed (RBGU) parentage. The BHGU was still being seen from Trueman's Landing as of September 1.

BHGU is an unusual bird in Maryland, where it has been seen in 14 counties. It is normally found here only in winter, from late November thru early April; Fred's bird may be the first summer record for Maryland. Although BHGU, as the name implies, has a black or dark brown head in breeding, key field features for winter (basic) plumage are reddish bill and legs, a pale mantle (back), black wing tips, white underparts, a black spot behind the eye. In flight, it displays a bold white wedge in the upper primaries, similar to Bonaparte's Gull. BHGU (16 inches) is slightly smaller than RBGU (17-1/2 inches).

The hybrid may be the more interesting of the two. Looking at the image of the hybrid, you can see characteristics of both BHGU and RBGU. It has a faint hood pattern, and white and black wing pattern similar to BHGU, but the bill and legs are yellowish. The bird was similar in size to RBGU (although this can't be seen in the photo). Most of the gull experts who viewed this image agreed on the suspected parentage of BHGU X RBGU. Further discussion is for the more initiated and generally would bore most *Yellowthroat* readers, so I have spared you—this time. Gulls often hybridize, but I don't know of another example of hybridization of these two species.

For potential gull geeks, I refer you to two of the better references on gulls: *Gulls of North America, Europe, and Asia*, by Klaus Malling Olsen and Hans Larsson, Princeton University Press, and *Gulls of the Americas*, by Steve N. G. Howell and Jon Dunn, Houghton Mifflin Company. If you are interested in furthering your studies on this very complex and interesting groups of birds, do a Google search.

Thanks to Fred for his keen interest in gulls, and for sharing this great find with us.

—George Jett

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS: 2008 MARYLAND/DC LOCALITY LISTS

Each year, the MOS compiles and publishes totals from members' state and local bird lists. **Forms for submitting your 2008 locality lists are provided on the MOS web site.** You are invited to submit your totals for any of the following list categories:

STATE/COUNTY CUMULATIVE LISTS

This category is for lifetime species totals identified anywhere in the state of Maryland, in DC, or within any of the 23 Maryland counties. Please submit only totals that exceed 50% of the maximum number for each locality. (The form contains the latest maximums and the 50% thresholds.) If you claim a MD life list in excess of 349 species, you **MUST** list all species added to your MD life list in 2008. If you don't fill in this box, your list will not be entered into the database.

STATE/COUNTY 2008 ANNUAL LISTS

This category is for total species identified for the same localities as above, but in 2008 only. These totals may be reported at any threshold.

YARD LIST

This category is for cumulative yard list totals and for 2008 yard list totals. You may count any species you have identified while in your "yard" (that is, property contiguous to your home). "Flyovers" and other birds identified from your yard (even if they were not in your yard) also count.

ALL-COUNTY LIST

This category covers the number of species you have identified in every one of Maryland's 23 counties. For example, if you have identified a Northern Mockingbird, an American Crow, a Downy Woodpecker, and a Red-tailed Hawk in all 23 counties, your list total would be 4.

TOTAL TICKS

This category is the sum of all your Maryland County list totals. The maximum possible is 7,022. We will accept all-time-high submissions at any level greater than or equal to 2,300 (an average of 100 species per county). Total Tick levels for 2008 will be accepted at any level.

ALL-TIME-HIGH ANNUAL LISTS

This category tracks all-time-high annual lists from the current and previous years. Annual totals for prior years may be submitted. For Maryland, submitted totals should equal or exceed 297 (70% of the maximum possible number). For individual counties, totals submitted from previous years should exceed either 50% of the maximum possible or exceed one of the top totals previously published for that county.

SPECIES PHOTOGRAPHED IN MD

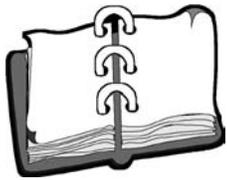
As the name implies, tell us how many bird species you have photographed (recognizably!) in Maryland. There are no lower limits.

Members' totals that have not been updated within the previous five years (2003-2007) will be dropped from the listings (but not from the database).

If you have any questions, please contact Norm Saunders at marshhawk@verizon.net or (410) 228-5066. Please return the form **BEFORE January 21, 2009** to: **Norm Saunders, 107 Sailors Lane, Cambridge, MD 21613.**

We hope that all who have participated will do so again, and that others will join in, especially those from localities that are currently less than well represented. If you have any comments, thoughts, or anecdotes, please include them. If you have any other categories of Maryland bird lists that are appropriate (for example, all-time or 2008 state/county "Big Day" totals), send them in. We'd like to hear from you. And remember, this is for fun!

—Norm Saunders



MOS Calendar

November-December 2008

Saturday, November 1

ANNUAL BIRD CLUB BANQUET.

Allegheny/Garrett. Keynote Speaker *Greg Kearns* from the Patuxent River Park will present "Of Rice and Rails: A Report on Rail Populations at Jug Bay and the Importance of Wild Rice." The banquet starts at 5:30 PM at the Frostburg United Methodist Church Social Hall, 48 Main St, Frostburg. Please call Charlotte Folk at 301-689-6587 to make reservations. Cost for the dinner is \$13 (students \$10), including tax and gratuities. Please send payment to Charlotte Folk at 179 Mt. Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532.

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

H Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. 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.

H Washington. Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding with Steve Huy. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Last-minute cancellation possible due to wind or rain. Meet at the Boonsboro P&R next to Thompson's Gas at 9:15 PM. Call Anna, 301-797-8454, to participate.

Sunday, November 2

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. 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 and lingering migrants likely. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361. Facilities available.

H Talbot. Wye Island. Waterfowl, raptors, and winter sparrows. Leader Danny Poet will also show us the 275-yr-old holly tree. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 7 AM. No scheduled breakfast, but can eat out if group would like. Contact Danny at 410-827-8651 for more info.

Wednesday, November 5

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scopes useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, sleet, snow, fog, etc.). Directions: From I-695 southwest of the city, take exit 11/I-95 north towards the city. Get off at exit 55, Hanover St. Turn right (east) on McComas St, left (north) on Key Hwy. Take first left onto Lawrence St and turn left onto Fort Ave; continue through gateway into the park. Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "Birding in Majorca" by *Dave Harvey*. Majorca, Spain's largest island, lies in the Mediterranean Sea. 7:30 PM at Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Info: Bill Ellis, 443-520-8809.

Thursday, November 6

MEETING. **Frederick.** Local hawk bander *Tom Humphrey* will provide tips on identification of raptors and observations on behaviors "not in the books." 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

H Patuxent. Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia Natural Area Park. The Prince George's Audubon Society (PGAS), along with members of the Patuxent

Bird Club, will host mid-week bird walks from approximately 4:00-5:30 PM every 1st and 3rd Thursday at the newly-dedicated Luther Goldman Birding Trail. Meet 4 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Friday, November 7

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

Saturday, November 8

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

H Frederick. Town Hill Overnight. We will stay at a local B&B on Saturday and visit the famous (in MD, anyway) Hawk Watch. This time of year is good for Northern Goshawks and Golden Eagles. For info and reservations, contact David Smith at 410-549-7082.

H Harford. Eden Mill Park, Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding. Come see our smallest eastern owl

H Indicates Field Trip

during its peak migration time. Meet at the mill on Eden Mill Rd at 7 PM. Contact leader Mark Johnson at 410-692-5978 for more info.

Sunday, November 9

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 2 listing for details. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Leaders: Jeff Culler and Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329.

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

H Talbot. Easton WWTP. In search of waterfowl, Bald Eagles, winter sparrows, gulls, and maybe an oddity. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 7 AM. No scheduled breakfast, but will eat out if group would like. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-822-8132.

Tuesday, November 11

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. "Birding the Bering Sea: Western Alaska Specialties and Asian Vagrants." *Phil Davis* presents a multi-media show based on his 12 birding trips to the islands of western AK, known for numerous endemic seabirds and exciting strays from Eurasia. Directions: From I-695, take Exit 29A/Cromwell Bridge Rd and turn north (away from the city) onto Cromwell Bridge Rd. At 1.4 miles, turn left at sign for "Sherwood Farm." Follow entrance road, then turn right after bridge and follow loop as it curves left, right, and left again to parking on the right. Walk further along the road through the stone arch to the Sherwood House entrance door on the left. Inside the door, refreshments will be in a room on your left, library and lecture room on your right. Doors open at the Sherwood House at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:45 or 8 PM. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

MEETING. **Kent.** *Pierre Henkart* will present "Birds of Queensland and New Zealand, Including Penguins." 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** *Greg Kearns* will talk about Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Greg, a Park Naturalist at Patuxent River Park, will compare the natural history, beauty, flora and fauna, and special features of each of these world-famous parks. The formal program begins at 7:30 PM, but doors open at 7 PM for informal conversation, refreshments, and exchange of birding news. Location: College Park Airport Annex. For more info, call Maureen Blades at 301-262-5148.

Wednesday, November 12

MEETING. **Cecil.** Presentation by *Laura Balascio* on the Elkton Christmas Count. Laura is the compiler for the Elkton Christmas Count, which will be held on December 14. Laura will share data from the count in past years and show changes that have occurred over time. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. Info: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, November 13

MEETING. **Howard.** "Patuxent Wildlife Research Center's Whooping Crane Recovery Program," by *Kathleen O'Malley*. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

MEETING. **Talbot.** Speaker TBA. 7 PM at William Hill Manor Auditorium, Easton. Info: Cathy Cooper, coopercw@goeaston.net.

Saturday, November 15

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

H Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. A continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. See Nov 5 listing for details. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

H Carroll. Piney Run Park. Moderate walking around Piney Run Lake for early waterfowl and in mixed forest and along open field-edge for late migrants and winter residents. Meet 8 AM at parking lot outside the gate to Piney Run Park on Martz Rd. Call Bill Ellis at 443-520-8809 for more info.

H Cecil. Avalon Sea Watch. Full day. Meet 7 AM at Big Elk Mall, Elkton at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot area. Trip Coordinator: Richard Donham, 610-932-0634 or donhamr@zoominternet.net.

H Howard. Howard Waterfowl Search. 8 AM to 2 PM. Plan to visit Columbia lakes and search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterfowl. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Meet 8 AM at Broken Land Pkwy parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Leader: Stan Arnold, 410-768-0155.

H Kent. Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (Horsehead), Kent Island. Varied habitat from wood-edge to marsh and protected cove provide shelter for birds of the pine woods, waterfowl, and other late-season migrants. Bring lunch. Meet 7 AM; contact leaders for location. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

H Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations are required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

MOS Calendar (continued from page 15)

Sunday, November 16

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

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 2 listing for details. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Leaders: Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 and Karen Darcy, 410-552-9342.

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

H Talbot. Pickering Creek Audubon Center. In search of waterfowl, Winter Wren, wintering sparrows, and other grassland birds. Leaders: Karen and Bill Harris, 410-770-8303. Depart Easton Acme parking lot 7 AM. Breakfast Host: Patty Allen.

Wednesday, November 19

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Finding Birds on Your Own in Costa Rica" by *Doris and Phil Brody*. Phil and Doris can't promise you the Harpy Eagle they saw in 2003 but, after 6 trips to Costa Rica, they can give you some idea of where to find good birds without going on an organized tour. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Steve Pretl at stevp@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, November 20

MEETING. **Caroline.** "Bird Song Grammys" presented by *Jeff Gordon*. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

H Patuxent. Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia Natural Area Park. See Nov 6 listing. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Saturday, November 22

H Anne Arundel. Blackwater NWR. Waterfowl and eagles. Meet 8 AM at the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot. Bring lunch. Leader: Bobbi Reichwein, 410-798-5940.

H Baltimore. Blackwater NWR. Day-long trip to see ducks and thousands of Canada and Snow Geese. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl possible in late afternoon. Bring lunch. Meet at Nursery Rd P&R at 7:30 AM or at the Blackwater Visitor Center at 9:30 AM. No reservations necessary. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

H Frederick. Queen Anne's County. We will visit birding spots across the bay bridge; the exact itinerary will depend upon what has been reported. Please call Lois Kauffman, 301-845-6690, if you are coming.

H Harford. Bombay Hook. Visit one of the best birding spots in the East for waterfowl, migrants, and shorebirds. Meet at the MD 155/I-95 P&R at 7 AM. Contact leaders Randy Robertson and Tom Congersky at 410-273-9029 for info.

H Tri-County. Bombay Hook NWR. Waterfowl, sparrows, geese, etc. Meet 7:30 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Contact leader Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853, for more info. Bring lunch and drinks.

Sunday, November 23

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 2 listing for details. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Leader: Richard Orr, 410-730-7290.

H Montgomery. Lilypons/New Design Road. Half day. Wintering fieldbirds, targeting Fox and American Tree Sparrows, possibly Sora and American Bittern. Reservations required. Leader: Gail Mackiernan, 301-989-1828.

H Talbot. Matapeake and Camp Wright on Kent Island. This new field trip location has a mixture of habitats including fields, woodlands, and bayfront. Leaders: Chuck Mock, 410-943-8201, and Bill Harris. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Breakfast hosts: Nancy and Marty O'Conner.

Monday, November 24

MEETING. **Tri-County.** *Larry and Jean Fry* will present a program on their trip to Panama. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, November 25

MEETING. **Washington.** 7:30 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. *David Blazer*, MD Project Director for Bluewater Wind, will give an overview of offshore wind towers as a viable energy alternative. Call 301-797-8454 for further info.

Saturday, November 29

H Caroline. Trip to Chincoteague, VA. Meet at the Roses Store parking lot off of Rte 404 at 7 AM. For add'l info, contact Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com.

H Cecil. Eagles at Conowingo Dam. Half day. Meet 9 AM at Fisherman's Park lot below dam. Leaders: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net, and Charley Gant.

H Harford. Conowingo Eagle Watch. Celebrate the Thanksgiving weekend with great looks at our national bird as well as other surprises. Meet at Fisherman's Park at the base of Conowingo Dam off of Shures Landing Rd at 8 AM. Contact the leader, Dennis Kirkwood, at 410-692-5905 for more info.

H Patuxent. Piscataway Creek. One of the top waterfowl locations in Prince George's County. Meet 7:30 AM at the Beltway Plaza parking lot. Contact Dave Mozurkewich at 301-459-3375 for add'l info.

Sunday, November 30

H Talbot. Destination TBA. Leader Dave Palmer, 410-820-4707. No scheduled breakfast, but group may decide to eat out.

Tuesday, December 2

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evenings at Cromwell Valley. Show and Tell Night. Come prepared to share your favorite birding stories, pictures, or other tidbits of interest. You can illustrate this with old-fashioned slides, brief PowerPoint file, or any other object. Slide projector and LCD projector will be available. See Nov 11 listing for details. Info: Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, December 3

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Nov 5 for details. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. "Rails" by Greg Kearns of Patuxent River Park. Learn about these vocal but hard-to-see marsh-wandering birds. 7:30 PM at Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Info: contact Bill Ellis, 443-520-8809.

Thursday, December 4

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND MEETING. Frederick. Hank Kaestner, who travels the world in search of birds while checking out spices for McCormack, will entertain us with "In Search of My Zornis" (whatever that means). Dinner will be held at the COZY Restaurant in Thurmont at 6 PM. \$14.50/person. Please make reservations with and send money to Treasurer Nancy Parker before Nov 26.

Friday, December 5

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "In Search of Glorious North American Waterbirds." Middleton Evans, MD-based photographer and author of *Rhapsody in Blue: A Celebration of North American Waterbirds*, will present many of his best photos. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Saturday, December 6

H Baltimore. Southern Maryland. All-day trip to Point Lookout and other locations. Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Great Cormorant, Bald Eagle, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Brown Pelican, and gannet all possible. Birding near cars with minimal walking. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R. Bring lunch. Scopes useful. Bundle up for cold weather and wind. Leaders: Kevin Graff, whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com, and Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Carroll. Liberty Lake. Wintering waterfowl return to Liberty Lake for the night starting in late afternoon. Loons, grebes, and gulls are also possible. We will bird until dark (sunset 4:45 PM, twilight ends 5:15 PM). Meet 3:30 PM at the end of Oakland Rd in Eldersburg. Directions: Go north from Liberty Rd, Rte 26 on Oakland Mills Rd about 1 mile. Turn right on Oakland Rd and go 0.75 mile to the end and park. Leader: Bob Ringler, 410-549-6031.

MOS BOARD MEETING. Board of Directors meeting hosted by Caroline County Chapter. 10 AM to Noon at Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton. Contact Janet Shields at janetbill@prodigy.net for more info.

H Howard. Blackwater NWR. Full day. We will bird the Choptank River Bridge before going to the refuge. Targeting waterfowl and wintering raptors with the likelihood of Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl. The spectacle of huge flocks of Snow and Canada Geese worth the trip! Meet 6:30 AM at Rte 32/Broken Land Pkwy P&R north lot. Pack lunch, snacks, and beverages. Scopes useful. Leader: Stan Arnold, 410-768-0155. Facilities at some stops.

Sunday, December 7

H Anne Arundel. Sandy Point SP and vicinity for wintering waterfowl. For details, contact Hal Wierenga, 410-647-7439.

H Cecil. Cecil Waterfowl. Half day. Perryville Town Park, at the head of the Chesapeake Bay, annually plays host to a wide variety of wintering waterfowl that are generally easy to see, up close and personal. Meet 9 AM at Big Elk Mall, Elkton at Dunkin' Donuts parking lot area. Leader: Marcia Watson, mww@udel.edu.

H Montgomery. Southern Maryland. Half-day late waterfowl trip with Gwen Brewer and George Jett. Locations to be determined based on the waterfowl concentrations. Possibilities include Piscataway or along the Mattawoman Creek. Some walking required. Dress for the weather and bring food and drinks. Scopes useful. Limit 12. For reservation and directions, contact George or Gwen at gmjett@comcast.net.

Tuesday, December 9

MEETING. Kent. David Brinker, MD DNR, will present a talk about Northern Saw-whet Owls. 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info, contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

HOLIDAY PARTY. Patuxent. 6:30 PM at the Watkins Park Visitor Center. Call Maureen Blades at 301-262-5148 for add'l info.

Wednesday, December 10

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

Thursday, December 11

MEETING. Howard. "Wildlife of the Galapagos," by Steve Kendt. Steve and his wife, Rachel, visited all of the major islands in the archipelago during a two-week trip in Oct 2007. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

MOS Calendar (continued from page 17)

SPRING PLANNING MEETING AND POTLUCK DINNER. **Talbot.** Please bring ideas for our spring 2009 schedule and a covered dish, salad, or dessert to share. Host: Cathy Cooper, 410-822-3451.

Saturday, December 13

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Baltimore Harbor.**

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. See Nov 5 listing for details. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Harford. Delmarva Shore Trip. A visit to hotspots on the Delmarva peninsula for rarities and shore specialties. Meet at the MD 155/I-95 P&R at 7 AM. Contact leader Dave Ziolkowski at 410-679-6765 for more info.

Washington. Explore the Fort Frederick/Big Pool area with Doris Berger. Call her well in advance at 301-739-8907 for details.

Sunday, December 14

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Elkton.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Catocin.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Lower Kent County.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Seneca.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Salisbury/Tri-County.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Jug Bay.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Port Tobacco.**

Wednesday, December 17

MEETING. **Montgomery.** Club member *Suzanne Dater*, an accomplished photographer, will give an illustrated talk featuring her breathtaking pictures of a two-week summer photography birding trip to Iceland in July 2008. On this beautiful island thousands of seabirds nest on high headland cliffs above the pounding surf. 7:30 PM. Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For info, contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

Saturday, December 20

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Allegany County.**
CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Oakland/Garrett.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Caroline/Denton.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Triadelphia.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington, DC.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Wachapreague.**

Sunday, December 21

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Bowie.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **St. Michael's.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Point Lookout.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Nassawadox/Brownsville.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chesterville.**

Friday, December 26

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Blackwater/Southern Dorchester County.**

Saturday, December 27

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Crisfield.**

Sunday, December 28

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Harford/Rock Run.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Ocean City.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Central Loudoun.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Patuxent River.**

Monday, December 29

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Washington County.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Chincoteague.**

Tuesday, December 30

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Cape Charles.**

Thursday, January 1

Baltimore. Loch Raven. Start the New Year Birding. Varied habitats including woods, fields, and the reservoir. Probably also other sites for a "Big Day" in the Baltimore vicinity. Meet 8:30 AM. See Nov 8 listing for directions. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

Howard. Start Your 2009 List. Half day. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. Meet 8 AM at boat ramp of Centennial Park. Expect moderate walking. Possibility of lunch stop depending on the

weather. Facilities at some spots. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

Montgomery. Earliest Bird Walk—Georgetown Reservoir and DC Hotspots. Half day. Start the New Year right. Meet 8 AM at Georgetown Reservoir by the gate leading to the dike between the pools. Reservations required. Limit: 20. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

Friday, January 2

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.**

"Confessions of a Spice Merchant and World Class Birder" by *Hank Kaestner*. Come hear about rare and exotic birds. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville.

Sunday, January 4

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Annapolis/Gibson Island.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Sugarloaf.**

CHRISTMAS COUNT. **Fort Belvoir, VA.**

Kent. Kick off your birding year with a half-day at Eastern Neck NWR for waterfowl and winter landbirds. Meet 8 AM. For location, contact leaders Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Wednesday, January 7

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Nov 5 for details. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, January 8

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Clive Harris*, an expert on gull identification from Montgomery Co, will help us identify those tricky gulls. 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Saturday, January 10

Montgomery. Introduction to the Winter Shore: Ocean City to Broadkill Marsh. Full day. We'll brave winter's icy blasts for the chance to see some seasonal specialties: scoters, eiders, Harlequin Duck, loons, Bonaparte's Gull, and Purple Sandpiper. New members and new birders are encouraged but all are

welcome. Meet at 8:30 AM at the Ocean City Inlet parking lot. Limit 12. Car pooling strongly encouraged. Reservations required. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY. Carroll. Once again hosted by Splinter and Sue Yingling at 70 Ridge Rd in Westminster. If you've never attended before, now's the time to start. Everyone has a good time. 7:30 PM until ? For more info and to coordinate your potluck dish, contact Sue Yingling at 410-857-0902 or syingling@mac.com.

Sunday, January 11

COVERED DISH DINNER AND LECTURE. Baltimore. 5 PM at BYKOTA Center in Towson (formerly Towson ES). Guest speaker *Hank Kaestner*, birder and world traveler extraordinaire, will share his latest foreign adventures in a slide presentation, "The Search for My Zornis. . . . Birdwatching Adventure at Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary in the Restricted Access Areas of Extreme Northeastern India." High adventure and unusual birds! For reservations and food coordination, contact Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or Whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

AUDREY CARROLL MID-WINTER COUNT. Frederick. Meet at the Sanctuary at 6:30 AM. Dress warmly with waterproof boots. Call David Smith, 410-549-7082 for info.

Tri-County. MD and DE Coast. Full day. Search for winter specialties and perhaps a rarity from recent CBCs. Bring a lunch. Meet 7:30 AM at Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497 for directions and more details.

Remembering Dick Kleen

With the passing of Dick Kleen in July 2008, Maryland birders lost an inspiring leader and dedicated friend. Born in Brooklyn and raised on Long Island, in 1951 Dick found his way to Maryland, where he began a teaching career that lasted 39 years. During those years he shared an appreciation for all of nature, but particularly for the birds, with hundreds of students as well as with countless adults who either birded with him or took birding trips that he led. Dick was one of the founders of the Talbot County Chapter of MOS and served as president of the chapter for many years. In 1956 he was elected president of the Maryland Ornithological Society, and in 1992 he received the society's achievement medal for introducing so many of his students to the study of birds.

Shortly after coming to St. Michaels High School in 1951, Dick established a Natural Science Club for 7th and 8th grade students. Several charter members of that club went on to illustrious careers in the natural sciences, and some of them are still amongst the leaders in the Talbot Bird Club. Each year the Natural Science Club would visit local birding spots and, in autumn, go to Hawk Mountain to watch the hawk migration. Dick started leading out-of-state trips as soon as the Talbot Chapter was formed, and he took club members to great birding places all around the nation; the Texas Gulf Coast was a favorite. He eventually birded in all 50 states and in 32 countries. His North American species list grew to 718, and quite late in life, challenged by a friend, he did a "Big Year" that garnered 600 species.

Dick loved being a teacher, and much of his joy in life came from seeing his students move on to successful and meaningful careers. But teaching was not his only non-birding interest. Gardening was another source of joy; at one time he had over 300 varieties of iris thriving in his yard. He loved to play bridge, and his circle of friends included some who had played contract bridge with him for decades. He was also an avid collector, having started an extensive collection of political memorabilia when he was 9. By the time he was 14, he had obtained autographs of all of the active U.S. senators and many other political figures. Throughout his life he collected stamps, political buttons, and all of the McDonald's happy meal toys. In later years his collecting extended to bird paintings by some of the finest artists of the nation. Over the years he assembled an extensive library of books about birds and birding. Most of his books were donated to the reading room of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. Blackwater was always a favored birding place for Dick and his students, and as a refuge volunteer, he donated more than 2,000 hours of his time.

—Les Roslund

2008/2009 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS**Saturday, December 13**

Baltimore Harbor. Birders of all levels of experience urged to participate. For area assignment, contact compiler: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Sunday, December 14

Salisbury/Tri-County. Take a break from the holiday rush and join this traditional Christmas birding event. Compiler: Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497.

Port Tobacco. Compiler, Gwen Brewer, 301-843-3524 or Glbrewer@comcast.net.

Lower Kent County. Full day of counting, followed by countdown dinner. Contact compiler Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568, for area assignments or more info.

Elkton. Compiler: Laura Balascio, avocet@udel.edu or 302-456-0914.

Catoctin. Call Mike Welch, 301-874-5828, to participate.

Jug Bay. Compiler: Sam Droege, 301-497-5840 (w), 301-390-7759 (h) or sdroege@USGS.GOV.

Seneca. Compiler: Mark England, 240-252-4218 (h), 240-375-4500 (m) or markengland@canamcontractors.com.

Saturday, December 20

Allegany County. To participate and get an area assignment, contact J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223 or jchurchi@atlanticbb.net. Tally will be at the Frostburg United Methodist Church Social Hall, 48 W Main St at 7 PM. Bring a covered dish to share.

Oakland/Garrett To participate, contact Connie Skipper at connieskipper@hohnet.com or 301-387-5227.

Caroline/Denton. Coordinator: Steve Westre, 410-479-0338 or swestre26@comcast.net.

Triadelphia. Compilers: Jay and Diane Jones, 301-670-0516 or jayrjones@juno.com. Novice and experienced birders welcome.

Washington, DC. Compiler: Larry Cartwright. Info: Rachel at ANS, 301-652-9188 x10.

Wachapreague. Compilers: Paul and Ann Smith, smith24399@verizon.net.

Sunday, December 21

St. Michaels. Compiler: Wayne Bell, wayne.bell@washcoll.edu. Potluck dinner at Christ Church Parish Hall, St. Michaels. Contact Wayne for details.

Nassawadox/Brownsville, VA. Third year of a new count in the area between Chincoteague and Cape Charles. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Point Lookout. Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 410-394-1300, 410-610-5124 (m) or bobboxwell@Hotmail.com.

Bowie. Contact: Fred Fallon, 301-249-1518 or fwfallon@earthlink.net.

Chesterville. Contact: Maren Gimpel at funkyfloss@yahoo.com or 912-660-1541. Come out for the second year of this count centered north of Chestertown on the upper Eastern Shore (Kent and Queen Anne's Counties). The circle includes parts of Sassafras and Millington WMAs as well as all of Chino Farms. All skill levels welcome.

Friday, December 26

Blackwater/Southern Dorchester County. Compiler: Chan Robbins, crobbs@usgs.gov.

Saturday, December 27

Crisfield. Compiler: Compiler: Paul Bystrak, shrike@comcast.net, 410-572-9950 or 443-783-1268 (m).

Sunday, December 28

Harford/Rock Run. If you are interested in participating, contact Jean Wheeler, 410-879-7424 or jswheeler44@msn.com.

Patuxent River. Compiler: Andy Brown, 410-535-5327 or brownaj@co.cal.md.us.

Central Loudoun. (This count includes 5 miles along the C&O Canal in MD near White's Ferry). Compiler: Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rcn.com.

Ocean City. Compiler: Jay Sheppard, 301-725-5559 or JMSheppard@aol.com.

Monday, December 29

Washington County. Contact Dave Weenser at 717-498-0347 to participate.

Chincoteague NWR. Compiler: Dick Roberts, 757-336-1799 or bandbird@verizon.net.

Tuesday, December 30

Cape Charles. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com

Sunday, January 4

Sugarloaf. If you can help out, contact Helen Horrocks (Frederick), 301-831-6315, or Janet Millenson (Montgomery), 301-983-9337.

Fort Belvoir. MD area Compiler: Carol Gheblian, 301-753-6754. VA Compiler: Kurt Gaskill, 703-768-2172 or kurtcapt87@aol.com.

Annapolis/Gibson Island. Coordinators: Sue Ricciardi, 410-647-9513, and Hal and Lynn Wierenga, 410-647-7439.

POSTMASTER: TIME-DATED MATERIAL—PLEASE EXPEDITE!

LAST CALL

...for contributing to the **2008 Rainforest Challenge**, deadline December 15. Send your check, made out to MOS and indicating Rainforest Challenge, to Emy Holdridge, 5812 Harness Ct, Columbia, MD 21044.

...for **Research Grant applications**, deadline December 1. See page 2.

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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