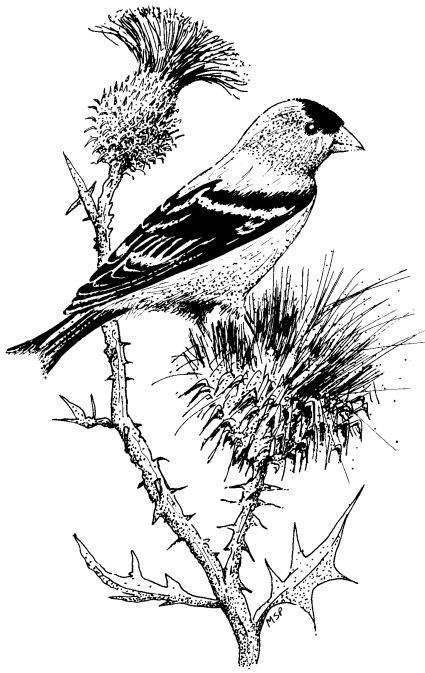


The Goldfinch

Newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club • A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society



Inside This Issue

11 th Annual Fall Count.	1
Letter from the President.	3
Summer Bird Records	4
Holiday Shopping Ideas.	5
Your List Counts!.	5
MOS Scholarship Program.	6
Conservation Column	6
Renewal Feels Good	6
Programs & Field Trips	7
Board Meetings Schedule	8

The Goldfinch, newsletter of the *Howard County Bird Club*, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the January/February 2005 issue is November 25, 2004.

Dave Holyoke, *Editor*
Suzanne Probst, *Graphic Artist*
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed, or e-mailed to Dave Holyoke
3557 Conchita Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21042
david.holyoke@ssa.gov
Please visit the Club's website at
www.howardbirds.org

SUMMARY OF THE 2004 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT

BY MIKE McCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT

The eleventh annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on September 18, 2004. All field counters agreed it was a very slow day of birding. We observed a total of 108 species, setting a new fall count record low. Comparison totals for the prior 10 years are a high of 136 on 9/19/1998 and the old low of 113 on 9/20/1997. The average is 124 species.

The number of participants and parties, 47 and 26 respectively, showed a slight variation from last year's, 49 and 30. The totals for party miles and hours are shown on the tally sheet. The participants provided about 130 hours of field count time compared with an average of about 184 hours (21% decrease). The mileage was slightly above last year's, although less than the average. The total of individual birds tallied to 9,293 and sets a new record low. Comparisons to prior years: high, 26,651 on 9/17/1994; old low, 10,036 on 9/20/2003; and average, 17,938 birds. Finally, there were 13 warbler species identified (new record low) compared to prior years: high, 30; old low, 18; average, 25 species.

These decreases are most likely due to the passage of Hurricane *Ivan* Friday night; many people opted to stay home, there were continuous winds and there was no significant migration reported during the days prior to the count. Hurricane *Ivan* presented a difficult decision for the count coordinators; hold the count or cancel? However, since the 4:00 p.m. Friday forecast called for "periods of rain and thunderstorms, mainly before

8:00 a.m.," the decision was made to proceed. Saturday's daylight temperatures were in the middle 60s with comfortable humidity, thanks to the passage of a cool front. Continuous winds during the day ranged from 2 to 8 mph from the north with gusts of 20 mph and above. These winds kept the small birds hidden in the vegetation, and the soaring birds perched in the trees. Finally, to add to the challenge there were two periods of rain: the first was moderate to heavy morning rain totaling 1.63 inches. Fortunately, the cloud cover began to break up around 12:30 p.m. with mostly sunny conditions during the afternoon.

The accompanying table presents the count data. There were 18 species for which there was only one bird sighted countywide, and 4 species for which there were only two birds sighted. Species showing moderately high numbers were Canada Goose, 779; and European Starling, 2,111 (up 700 from last year). For the third time during the fall count, Northern Rough-winged Swallow was sighted. The honor for this sighting goes to the counters in area 1. New to fall count was Western Sandpiper, sighted in area 2, with a total 6 birds. This was also only the eighth time Western Sandpiper had been sighted in Howard County since record-keeping began.

While this eleventh fall count was enjoyable, it did prove to be a difficult time in the field. This made the camaraderie at the evening tally rally

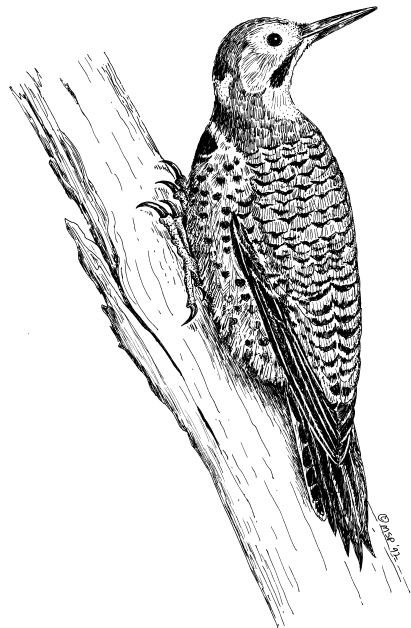
(Fall Count Summary continues on page 3.)

HOWARD COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT - September 18, 2004

Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Double-crested Cormorant		5		10	3			18	Ruby-crowned Kinglet				1		1	1	3
Great Blue Heron	3	4	2	9	8	4	3	33	Eastern Bluebird	26	12	23	5	2	15	7	90
Great Egret	1	1		1	2	5	2	12	Swainson's Thrush			2					2
Green Heron	4		1	5			1	11	Wood Thrush		4	6	2	6	1	1	20
Blk-crowned Night-Heron					4		1	5	American Robin	732	6	9	26	23	100	46	942
Glossy Ibis		6						6	Gray Catbird	7	4	32	85	50	9	40	227
Black Vulture	17	3	32	20	8	12	4	96	Northern Mockingbird	10	12	20	9	9	8	21	89
Turkey Vulture	78	24	52	18	5	24	7	208	Brown Thrasher	1				2	1	1	5
Canada Goose	59	33	7	277	53	263	87	779	European Starling	234	293	1,220	152	93	62	57	2,111
Mute Swan							1	1	Cedar Waxwing	3		2		1		2	8
Wood Duck	12						4	16	Blue-winged Warbler					1			1
Mallard			26	58	57	13	82	236	Nashville Warbler							1	1
Ring-necked Duck	1							1	Northern Parula					2		1	3
Osprey	1	4			2	4	1	12	Chestnut-sided Warbler			1		2		1	4
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]		1			1		2	4	Magnolia Warbler			6	1	1	1	2	11
Northern Harrier	1			1				2	Blk.-throtd. Blue Warbler			5		1			6
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1		1	4		6		12	Yel.-rump'd Warbler					1			1
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	4			1	1	8	Blk.-throtd. Green Warbler	1		1	1				3
<i>accipiter species</i>	1						2	3	Pine Warbler					1		1	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	3		2	6		2	3	16	Black-&-white Warbler			5	6	4	1	6	22
Broad-winged Hawk	1	1	14	79	1	12	3	111	American Redstart		4	6	4	4	1	4	19
Red-tailed Hawk	2	1	8	4	3	2		20	Ovenbird			1			1	1	3
American Kestrel	4		4				1	9	Common Yellowthroat	3		24	4	3	5	6	45
Merlin						1		1	<i>warbler species</i>		2		4	2		1	9
Peregrine Falcon			1					1	Scarlet Tanager					1	2		3
Killdeer	4			25	8		1	38	Eastern Towhee	3	1	6	1	2	2	8	23
Lesser Yellowlegs	1				3			4	Chipping Sparrow	19	12	51		5	31	3	121
Solitary Sandpiper	2	1						3	Field Sparrow	3	1	9					13
Spotted Sandpiper		1					2	3	Song Sparrow	2		7	4	1	2	4	20
Semipalmated Sandpiper		5			6			11	Swamp Sparrow	3							3
Western Sandpiper		6						6	White-throated Sparrow							1	1
Least Sandpiper		12		5	23		2	42	<i>sparrow species</i>	2							2
American Woodcock	1							1	Northern Cardinal	84	24	68	105	59	47	92	479
Laughing Gull							1	1	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1		2	3	2	2		10
Ring-billed Gull				2		2	2	6	Blue Grosbeak	3		1			2		6
Herring Gull		2						2	Indigo Bunting	27		34	15			2	78
Caspian Tern					1			1	Bobolink			1					1
Rock Pigeon	6	29	5	78		104	6	228	Red-winged Blackbird							1	1
Mourning Dove	137	28	57	57	10	20	34	343	Eastern Meadowlark			11					11
Eastern Screech-Owl						1		1	Common Grackle	4			200		4	3	211
Great Horned Owl			1					1	Brown-headed Cowbird	8		6			31		45
Common Nighthawk						1		1	<i>blackbird species</i>				20				20
Chimney Swift		4	79	13	7	166	14	283	House Finch		6	8	7	14	15	21	71
Ruby-thr'ted Hummingbird		2	4	3	1	1		11	American Goldfinch	15	35	49	34	9	40	51	233
Belted Kingfisher	4	1	2		3	2	5	17	House Sparrow			4	10	9	17	137	177
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5	1	21	1	17	14	8	67	Area Total Birds:	1,704	669	2,247	1,683	710	1,243	1,037	9,293
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker						1		1	Area Total Species:	61	48	65	54	65	61	68	108
Downy Woodpecker	6	1	12	5	13	18	9	64	Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Hairy Woodpecker	1		5		4		5	15	Supplemental Data								
Northern Flicker	1	3	15	4	3	8	10	44	Time Start:	6:45 a	7:15 a	7:15 a	7:00 a	7:00 a	6:30 a	7:00 a	12:15 a
Pileated Woodpecker	1	2					3	6	Time Stop:	11:45 a	3:30 p	4:50 p	5:00 p	3:45 p	5:00 p	5:45 p	8:00 p
Eastern Wood-Pewee	1		6		2	1	1	11	Hours on Foot:	16.0	2.0	16.7	18.0	11.8	9.7	19.5	93.7
<i>Empidonax species</i>			1		2			3	Hours by Car:	9.8	.8	4.4	2.0	2.5	3.7	1.5	24.7
Eastern Phoebe	8	5	4	3	3	4	5	32	Miles on Foot:	13.5	2.0	15.0	8.5	10.0	10.5	16.1	75.6
Eastern Kingbird				1				1	Miles by Car:	75.0	36.0	51.0	7.0	48.0	26.0	32.0	275.0
White-eyed Vireo	2				1			3	Hrs Feeder Watching:		2.0			1.0	4.5	2.0	9.5
Red-eyed Vireo			3	2	1		2	8	Hours Stationary:	2.0	4.5						6.5
Blue Jay	48	22	65	75	25	21	53	309	Hours "Owling":						.5		.5
American Crow	14	14	59	108	8	7	15	225	Miles "Owling":						.5		.5
Fish Crow	1		1		3			5	Area Code:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
<i>crow species</i>	47	8	33	27	23	8	9	155	Tot. Observers in Area:	6	5	4	9	5	7	11	47
Tree Swallow		7	8	15	4	27		61	Total Parties in Area:	4	2	3	3	3	5	6	26
N. Rough-winged Swallow	4							4	Total Feederwatchers:								
Barn Swallow	2							2	Total Party-Hrs (Reg.):	25.8	2.8	21.1	20.0	14.3	13.4	21.0	118.4
Carolina Chickadee	10	7	35	20	35	31	60	198	Tot. P'ty-Hrs (Feeder):		2.0			1.0	4.5	2.0	9.5
Tufted Titmouse	4	3	34	26	31	29	31	158	Tot. P'ty-Hrs (Station'y):	2.0	4.5						6.5
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	3	6	4	3	10	7	35	Total P'ty-Hrs (Owling):						.5		.5
Carolina Wren	11	5	17	16	12	13	25	99	Total Party-Hours:	27.8	9.3	21.1	20.0	15.3	18.4	23.0	134.9
House Wren		1	2		1	1	2	7	Total Party-Miles:	88.5	38.0	66.0	15.5	58.0	37.0	48.1	351.1
Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals

even more of a treat, and we are indebted to Don and Martha Waugh for another wonderful get-together. Please plan to join us on a future seasonal count and tally rally. Next year, the fall count will be held on 09/17/05, the third Saturday in September.

Thanks to all participants and those who acted as **area coordinators (shown in bold)** for the count: Joe Adkins, Stan Arnold, **Karan & Bill Blum (Area 4)**, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis Coskren, Jane Coskren, Jeff Culler, Ralph Cullison, **Karen Darcy (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**, Erin Eve, Tracy Eve, **Kevin Heffernan (Area 3 Co-coordinator)**, Gayle Hill, Bill Hill, Emy Holdridge, Mike Leumas, Brigitte Lund, Grazina McClure, **Mike McClure (County Co-coordinator)**, Elayne Metter, Jeff Metter, Barry Miller, **Bonnie Ott (Area 6)**, Jeremy Pearse, **Ron Polniaszek (Area 2)**, Susan Polniaszek, Suzanne Probst, Clyde Robinette, **Kurt Schwarz (Area 5)**, Susan Setterberg, Craig Sholley, Philip Smith, Romaine Smith, Bob Solem, Jo Solem, Lisa Stevens, **Michelle Stewart (Area 7 Co-coordinator)**, **Chuck Stirrat (County Co-coordinator)**, Tom Strikwerda, **Eva Sunell (Area 7 Co-coordinator)**, Robin Todd, June Tveekrem, Marilyn Veek, **Mark Wallace (Area 1)**, Jim Wilkinson, Orrey Young, Paul Zucker.



A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY JEFF FRIEDHOFFER

Dear Howard County Bird Club Members,

This is a great time of the year. We are now well into the fall migration and I hope everyone is enjoying the "confusing fall warblers." I am again sitting on my porch, enjoying the birds and contemplating another trip to Cape May. The last one, a tern workshop I attended with Kurt Schwarz, was great and I certainly recommend the Cape May Bird Observatory workshops to all.

Our club has a strong line-up of trips over the next two months and I encourage all of you to take part in them. More importantly, I hope you will invite nonmembers to attend, making them aware of the opportunities to bird with our club. At a recent board meeting, we discussed the possibility of a longer distance birding trip; for example, a trip to Texas, Costa Rica or some other great birding location. The club could organize the trip and contract with a birding tour group to provide guides and other services. If you would be interested in such a trip for either spring or fall/winter, 2005, please contact me so that we get a count of possible participants.

Those of you who attended our September and October meetings now know that our new location is really superb. The Howard County Recreation and Parks building is a good venue and I would like to thank Kurt Schwarz for finding this meeting place. We are further indebted to Kurt, Bob and Jo Solem, and Bonnie Ott for volunteering to conduct programs for Recreation and Parks to defray the expense of the meeting room.

Like most volunteer organizations, we are always looking for new volunteers; we have a few positions to fill. Both the local chapter and the state organization need publicity chairs. The local publicity chair sends announcements to the local newspapers and becomes a member of the Howard County board of directors (good snacks at these meetings). We also need a person to be the point-of-contact (POC) for the state sanctuary committee. If you are interested in becoming involved, or would like more information please contact me.

Finally on behalf of the entire club I want to wish Joe Byrnes, a speedy recovery from neck surgery.

Good birding to all, have a great fall and don't forget to order your bird seed from the seed sale!

Sincerely,
Jeff Friedhoffer
President, Howard County Bird Club

SUMMER BIRD RECORDS JUNE 1 TO JULY 31, 2004

BY JOANNE SOLEM

A cool, wet summer prolonged the above-average precipitation trend well into the second

year. Ample rainfall coupled with the emergence of periodical cicada Brood X produced lush vegetation and a superabundance of food. Atlasers continued their excellent efforts for a third year and, along with other observers, made some notable finds including a King Rail, breeding Virginia Rails, a male Dickcissel on territory, and a June Upland Sandpiper.



A late spring Pied-billed Grebe lingered at Lake Elkhorn until 6/6 (SN), while an early fall migrant showed up there 7/24 (MSt). Summer Double-crested Cormorants are now expected and were reported from three lakes (SN+;EH). The high Great Egret count was 8 at Fore Bay Pond 7/29 (EP). Two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons appeared at Lake Elkhorn 7/7 (MSt,BMi). The seasonal high for Black-crowned Night-Herons was 3 (2 ad.) at Wilde Lake (CN). Of the 5 Green Herons at Lake Elkhorn 7/3, at least 2 were juveniles (SN). Of special interest was a nest of this species in a one-third of an acre yard in Burleigh Manor, less than a mile from Font Hill Wetland Park. For the second consecutive year, a pair nested raising 2 young (SL). Atlasers along the Patapsco River on 7/16 found a large nestling in a Turkey Vulture nest on the ground among rocks (JBy,JCu,PSm).

A male Ring-necked Duck summered on the Larriland farm ponds along

MD 94 as noted 6/27 and 7/25 (EH,JS). A male Bufflehead, which arrived at Lake Elkhorn 5/30, was last seen 7/13 (SN;JW;MSt;EH). A Hooded Merganser (either a female or well-grown juvenile) was spotted on Lake Kittamaquundi 6/6 (KH,KD); a pair appeared at Lake Elkhorn 7/8 (MSt). A Hooded Merganser appeared at Alpha Ridge landfill 7/24 (RC). A male Common Merganser lingered until 6/16 at Browns Bridge (EH).

The only summer Osprey report was 7/18 at Pigtail (JWi). The outcome of the Bald Eagle nest on each of the two reservoirs is uncertain, although a pair of adults attended the Triadelphia nest for months so it is likely that that nesting was successful (NM;EH;JS). A secondhand report (*vide* KD,KH) indicated a nestling present in the Duckett nest. A fledgling Cooper's Hawk in a yard in Hammond Village marked at least the sixth consecutive year the species has nested in the area (GC). Intense atlasing along a portion of the Patapsco finally turned up Broad-winged Hawks in safe dates: 7/8 (JCu) and 7/9 (JBy,JCu,PSm). The sightings were 4 1/2 miles apart.

The UMDCF habitat restoration adjacent to the Middle Patuxent River continued to prove its worth. This summer 2 Northern Bobwhites appeared (BO,EH). Most exciting was the nesting of a pair of Virginia Rails. On 6/19, 2 adults and 1 large chick were present (BO,EH). An adult was photographed* on 6/21 (JTv). The only previous verified county nestings were in 1974 and 1992. A hen Wild Turkey was seen west of Watersville

Rd 7/6 (JCu). On 6/27, a King Rail was seen and heard in the beaver-created wetlands at Schooley Mill Park—a very special county bird (BLg). A Solitary Sandpiper 7/10 at the Fulton schools tied the early arrival date (JS). The first Spotted Sandpiper was noted 7/18 at Wilde Lake (EH). The Upland Sandpiper at Alpha Ridge landfill 6/19 is the only June county record (RC). One (the same one?) was also seen there 7/19 (RC).

A Caspian Tern 7/8 at Centennial was more than a week earlier than any previous county date (JTv). On 7/5, a Black-billed Cuckoo was heard at Fore Bay Pond, but it did not remain (JW). Yellow-billed Cuckoos, which have been scarce the last few years, appeared in numbers this year and, like many other species, seemed to benefit from the cicada emergence. On 6/3, 5 were calling at Centennial (GA). Breeding was reported 7/3 at UMDCF (BO,EH) and 7/6 along Forsythe Rd (D&MH).

A family of Eastern Screech-Owls fledged in June on Tall Ships Rd (JMCK). Young Belted Kingfishers were reported from Wilde Lake the third week of July (AMcE). A nest of Pileated Woodpeckers with large young was photographed* 6/16 not far from Browns Bridge (GW).

Three Horned Larks were observed in a field on Roxbury Rd 6/13 (JW). A Swainson's Thrush present at Belmont 6/1 was the second latest departure date (SAR). Despite heavy pedestrian traffic at Centennial, Cedar Waxwings built a nest near the path on the south

SUMMER BIRD RECORDS (Continued from page 4.)

side of the lake which was spotted 6/16 (TR). On 6/20, an adult waxwing was feeding fledglings at Warfield's Pond Park (B&GHi). They also confirmed breeding Yellow Warblers and Common Yellowthroats that day in the same small park! On 6/19, a Yellow-breasted Chat was feeding young at Fore Bay Pond (JW).

Thirty Grasshopper Sparrows on 6/26 and 18 Eastern Meadowlarks on 7/3 were counted at Alpha Ridge landfill (RC). Although a late White-throated Sparrow attracts attention, as did one on 6/29 in Swansfield (JTv), it is interesting to note that the county has eight previous summer records. A white Northern Cardinal (with red at the tip of its tail) 7/18 at Meadowbrook must have been an arresting sight (TSh)!

Among the species Brown-headed Cowbirds parasitized this summer were Warbling Vireo (BO,EH), Northern Cardinal (JMc;JS), Chipping Sparrow (BO), and Song Sparrow (JS). Blue Grosbeaks fledged at least 2 young near Fore Bay Pond. Because the male was a first summer bird, it was possible to track the family for several days (JW;SN+).

A male Dickcissel was spotted 6/22 on a wire at a farm along Old Frederick Rd (JCu,JBy,PSm). The singing perch was over a fallow field which was excellent potential nesting habitat. Atlasers made numerous trips to confirm nesting—without success. Efforts were hampered by percolation tests being conducted in the field. (The only previous county nesting dates to 1974.) The bird was last reported 7/5 (JW).

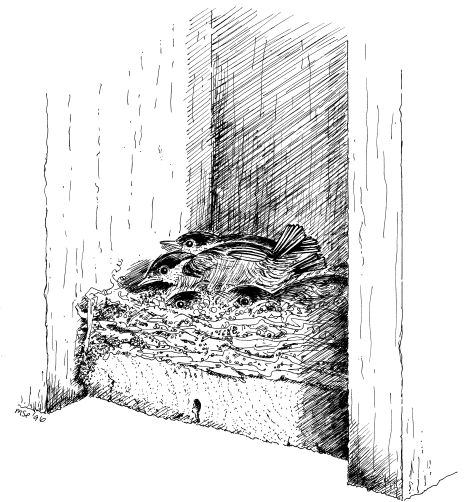
Although the calendar still said mid-summer, fall migration was well underway with the observation of 23 Orchard Orioles (no males) 7/17 at the landfill. By 7/24, not one could be found (RC).

Observers: SAR—Stan Arnold, GA—Glenn Austin, JBy—Joseph Byrnes, GC—George Chase, JCu—Jeff Culler, RC—Ralph Cullison, III, KD—Karen Darcy, D&MH—Dave & Maureen Harvey, KH—Kevin Heffernan, B&GHi—Bill & Gayle Hill, EH—Emy Holdridge, BLg—Brad Lanning, SL—Suzanne Lisiewski, JMcC—Jenny McClintock, AMcE—Anne McEvoy, JMCK—Janet McKegg, NM—Nancy Magnusson, BMi—Barry Miller, SN—Sue Neri, CN—Carol Newman,

BO—Bonnie Ott, EP—Elaine Pardoe, TR—Tim Ray, TSh—Tracy Shaw, PSm—Phil Smith, JS—Jo Solem, MSt—Michelle Stewart, JTv—June Tveekrem, GW—Ginny Walker, JW—Jim Wilkinson, JWi—Jordan Wilkerson.

UMDCF—University of Maryland Central Farm

*photograph posted at www.howardbirds.org



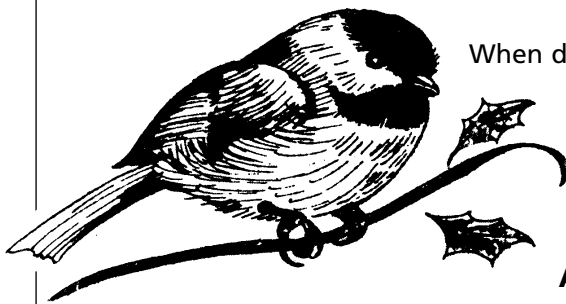
Carolina Chickadee nestlings

YOUR LIST COUNTS!

BY JANE COSKREN

A list of all the birds seen in the county during the 2004 calendar year is being compiled for the 25th consecutive year. Did we break any records this year? Only you can help us decide. Assemble your sightings for the year (even if the list was compiled in your neighborhood or your yard) and mail to Jane Coskren, 6324 Sandchain Road, Columbia MD 21045 any time after December 31, but not later than March 3, 2004. The length of the list isn't important because your list may contain the bird that will make 2004 a year for the record books.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING?



When doing your holiday shopping, why not consider a few purchases from the club's bookstore? If you have something in particular you are searching for, contact

Ann Marie Raterman

(301-847-1958) and ask if she can get you that perfect item.

MOS SCHOLARSHIPS: MAINE, MINNESOTA, OR WISCONSIN?

BY TOM STRIKWERDA, SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRPERSON
MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (MOS)

As announced in the September/October *Yellowthroat*, MOS is once again sponsoring 10 to 12 scholarships to week-long summer Audubon Camps in Maine, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Maine camps typically address field ornithology, natural history of the Maine coast and workshops for educators. Minnesota Audubon programs cover lakes, rivers and wetlands, and ecology. The Wisconsin camp is called "Wade into Ecology." Specific programs and dates for the 2005 sessions have not yet been finalized. Each MOS award is valued at \$700 to \$1,000 and covers tuition and room and board.

Candidates should be individuals in positions to pass on the knowledge they gain to young people: teachers, park rangers, naturalists, community volunteers, or environmental educators. They do not have to be MOS members. Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and submit a letter of intent, a current resume and two letters of recommendation; one from an MOS member or chapter. The deadline for receipt of applications is January 31, 2005.

Information is available on the MOS website, www.mdbirds.org. Go to "Education" and click on "Scholarships." For further information, please contact your local MOS chapter president [Jeff Friedhoffer] or me at 301-942-2841; tstrik@earthlink.net; 9806 Culver Ct., Kensington, MD 20895.

I encourage MOS members to pass this information along to possible candidates.

CONSERVATION COLUMN "AN UNEXPECTED ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTANT"

BY KURT SCHWARZ

Some of you may have already heard of the precipitous die-off of vulture species on the Indian subcontinent. Three species have been involved: Indian White-Backed, Slender-Billed, and Indian Vultures. Populations of these three species of the genus *Gyps* have fallen by 95 percent, leading to fears of possible extinction. Researchers were mystified and the usual suspects were blamed: habitat loss, persecution, etc. The Peregrine Fund began investigating and found the cause to be much more mundane. The vultures were dying from kidney failure. This resulted from consuming the carcasses of livestock that had been treated with a common pain reliever and anti-inflammatory, Diclofenac. When the animals died, sufficient Diclofenac remained in their tissues to poison the vultures, resulting in an annual decline rate of 30%.

Several less-than-wholesome consequences have resulted from the vulture decline. Without competition, fox populations have increased, with a corresponding rise in rabies. Also, the Parsi religious sect, a variety of Zoroastrianism, has been compelled to find other ways to dispose of their dead, which traditionally were exposed to scavengers.

There are several lessons to be learned from this episode. One being that the choices we make every day can have profound consequences for the environment, many quite unexpected. The other is, those using heavy-duty analgesics should exercise extreme caution!

For further details, see the March, 2004 issue of the American Birding Association's *Winging It* newsletter, or the Peregrine Fund's description at http://www.peregrinefund.org/conserve_category.asp?category=Asian%20Vulture%20Crisis.

RENEWAL FEELS GOOD!

Don't forget, if you have not already done so, it is time to renew your membership. Please complete and return the membership application that was included in the last issue of the newsletter. If you need another copy of the application, contact Bob Solem (301-725-5037) or download a form from the Howard Bird Club web page (<http://www.howardbirds.org/PDF/application.pdf>)

CLUB MEETINGS—NEW LOCATION!

BY JANE GEUDER

Club meetings are being held at a new location:

**Howard County
Recreation & Parks Headquarters
7120 Oakland Mills Road
Columbia, MD 21046**

If schools are closed for the day or close early due to snow and/or ice, all indoor facilities are closed for the day. You can check on the status of programs and facilities by calling the recorded program status line at 410-313-4451.

Hospitality and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m.
Meeting/Program begins at 8:00 p.m.
For further information call Jeff Friedhoffer, 410-997-5366.

PLEASE NOTE THAT NOVEMBER'S MEETING WILL BE HELD ON NOVEMBER 4 INSTEAD OF NOVEMBER 11 (WHICH IS VETERANS' DAY).

Thursday, November 4, "The Broader View: What to Look for After You've Nailed the Family," by David Holmes. We always enjoy the helpful bird identification presentations of club member and bird bander David Holmes. His talk will cover the major bird families which can be seen in Howard County.

Thursday, December 9, "Wildlife of Northern Canada: Gyrfalcons to Grizzly Bears," by Bob Schaefer. Bob Schaefer is a club member who has canoed the taiga and tundra of the vast Canadian wilderness for more than 30 summers.

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB FALL/WINTER TRIPS

BY BONNIE OTT

FIELD TRIPS are a great way to improve birding skills, explore new places and meet other birders. Plan to arrive at the meeting area with enough time to be prepared to begin birding at the designated time. Carpooling is encouraged. Come prepared with appropriate footwear and gear (the trip description will offer advice). The leader has the option to cancel due to inclement weather. Directions for trips not on ADC maps may be found on the howardbirds.org website. If you have questions, call or e-mail the trip leader at the number/ address listed in the trip description, or field trip coordinator, **Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361** or bonnieott@verizon.net

To help make trips successful please stay behind the leader, keep talking to a minimum and stay with the group. Don't hesitate to ask questions or alert the leader to something you've spotted. Howard Bird Club members will be given priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.



WEEKDAY WALK AT BON SECOURS
Nov. 3, Wednesday. 8:30 a.m. (2 hours)
Leaders—Michele Wright and Eva Sunell
Meet in the visitor's parking lot
Easy to moderate walking on the grounds of this lovely spiritual center. Woodlands and fields provide diverse habitat. Excellent view of the sky for flyover hawks. Great for beginners.
Facilities available
Call Michele: 410-465-6057 or
Eva: 410-995-0029 for information



CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 14, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leaders—Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan
Meet at the West end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners.
Facilities available
Call Karen: 410-552-9342 or
Kevin: 410-418-8731 for details.



CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 21, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader—Jane Coskren
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners.
Facilities available
Call Jane for information: 410-381-7344



CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 7, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader—Kurt Schwarz
Meet at the West end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners.
Facilities available
Call Kurt for information: 410-461-1643

**SANDY POINT STATE PARK
(WITH ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY)**
Nov. 20, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. half day
Leader—Hal Wierenga
Meet at Rt. 100 & Long Gate Parkway park-and-ride to carpool to meet the Anne Arundel club. We will join them to visit Sandy Point and the "Westinghouse Pond" and Northrop Grumman property. Moderate walking. Bring scopes if possible and expect a \$1-\$2 entrance fee. Snow Buntings and waterfowl are expected highlights. Facilities available.
Call Bonnie: 410-461-3361 or Al Haury: 410-923-0881 for information



CENTENNIAL PARK
Nov. 28, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Leader—Richard Orr
Meet at the west end lot off Centennial Lane. Easy walking on the paved path around the lake. Great for beginners.
Facilities available
Call Richard for information: 410-730-7290

=Great for beginning birders

(Field Trips continues on page 8.)



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB
Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
 6007 Flywheel Court
 Columbia, MD 21044
 ADDRESS SERVICE SUGGESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 COLUMBIA, MD
 PERMIT NO. 452

November/December 2004—Inside This Issue:

11 th Annual Fall Count	MOS Scholarship Program
Letter from the President	Conservation Column
Summer Bird Records	Renewal Feels Good
Holiday Shopping Ideas	Programs & Field Trips
Your List Counts!	Board Meetings Schedule

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB FALL/WINTER TRIPS
 CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

BLACKWATER WILDLIFE REFUGE
Dec. 4, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. (all day)
Leader—Stan Arnold
Meet at MD 32 & Broken Land Parkway park-and-ride (the north side)
 Plan to stop in the a.m. at McDonalds in Easton for a pit stop/quick breakfast. Will stop at the Choptank River Bridge and Oakly Road to look at the waterfowl. The majority of time will be spent at the refuge. We'll end the day at Shorter's Wharf Road to look for Short-Eared Owl and Rough-Legged Hawk. Pack plenty of food and drinks and dress very warmly. Facilities available at certain spots. Call Stan for information: 410-768-0155

"START YOUR 2005 LIST"
January 1, 2005. Saturday 8:00 a.m.
(2-3 hours)
Leader—Bonnie Ott
Meet at Centennial Park boat ramp
 Easy walking on paved paths and woodland trails. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Facilities available. Call Bonnie for info- 410 461-3361

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS
 Board meetings are held the *fourth* Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted, at the home of the board member listed. If directions are required, please call the hosting board member.

November 20, Thursday
 (Note: this is the **third** Thursday.)
 Kurt Schwarz
 9045 Dunloggin Court
 Ellicott City, 21042 • 410-461-1643

December: No board meeting