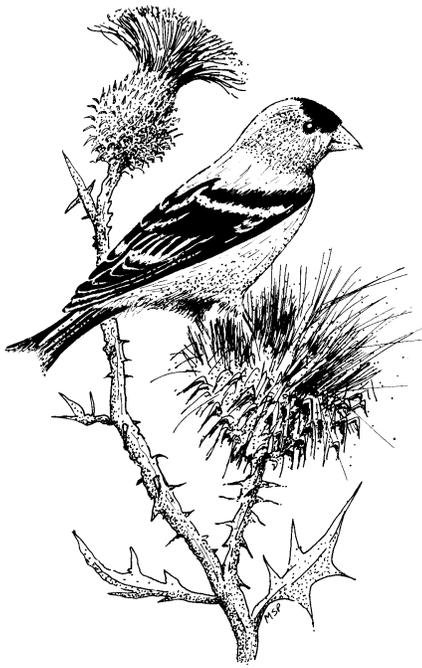


# The Goldfinch

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



## TWENTIETH ANNUAL MIDWINTER COUNT BY EMY HOLDRIDGE AND JO SOLEM

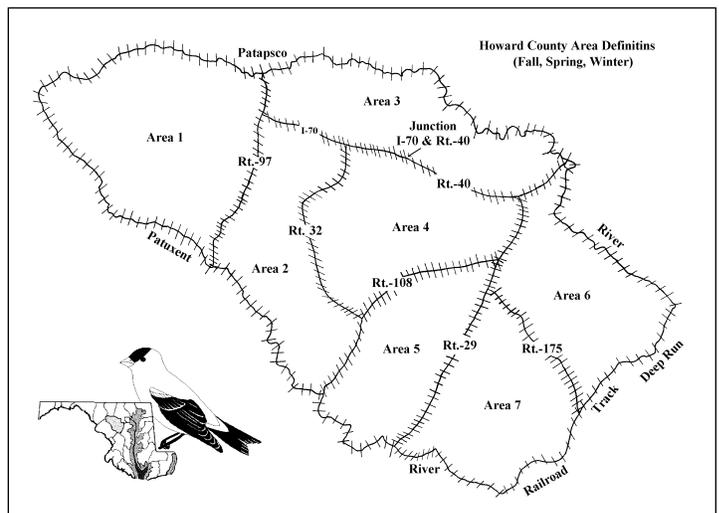
Join the Howard County Bird Club's Twentieth Annual Midwinter Count on Saturday, February 5, 2005. Emy Holdridge (410-964-0196 or holdridge@erols.com) and Jo Solem (301-725-5037 or odenata@msn.com) are the count coordinators. You may volunteer to participate by signing up at a meeting, by calling Emy, or by contacting one of the area coordinators:

- |        |                       |              |
|--------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Area 1 | Mark Wallace          | 301-725-6370 |
| Area 2 | Ward Ebert            | 301-490-5807 |
| Area 3 | Maureen & Dave Harvey | 410-795-3117 |
| Area 4 | Mike McClure          | 410-531-2780 |
| Area 5 | Kevin Heffernan       | 410-418-8731 |
| Area 6 | Bonnie Ott            | 410-461-3361 |
| Area 7 | Kurt Schwarz          | 410-461-1643 |

A fitting and much anticipated conclusion to the day is the evening potluck tally at Martha and Don Waugh's (9522 Angelina Circle, Columbia 21045; 410-381-8841). It is an opportunity to compare your special birds with those other people sighted—or to commiserate about your misses. The club furnishes the main dish. Please call the Waughs by Wednesday, February 2 to reserve space, to sign up for a vegetable, salad, or dessert, and to obtain directions. If you cannot make it to the meal, you are welcome to drop in about 7:30 p.m. for the tally.

Unfortunately, a count during this season may coincide with a major snow or ice storm. Safety is more important than counting birds. If there is a question about the weather, we will try to make a decision the night before. Do not hesitate to call your area coordinators, Emy or Jo, between 5:00 and 6:00 a.m. if you are unsure of the status of the count.

If you have covered a particular location for many years, you may call the coordinator of the area and indicate your desire to cover it again. If you wish to be placed with a more experienced birder, be sure to let the coordinator know. Beginning birders are always welcome, as are individuals who wish to count only for part of the day. A checklist for the count is included with this newsletter. If you wish to count only at your feeder, call Emy or Jo and request a feeder form.



### Inside This Issue

20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Midwinter Count . . .	1
Annual Potluck Dinner . . . . .	2
NWF Habitat Stewards™ . . . . .	2
MOS Scholarship Program . . . . .	2
Your E-mail Address . . . . .	2
Programs and Field Trips . . . . .	3
MOS Conference 2005 . . . . .	3
Annual Lists Due . . . . .	3
Conservation Column . . . . .	4
Board Meetings Schedule . . . . .	4
Midwinter Count Checklist	

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

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](http://www.howardbirds.org)**

## ANNUAL POTLUCK DINNER

BY SUE PROBST

The annual potluck dinner will again be held at the Owen Brown Community Center on Saturday, March 19, 2005. The social hour starts at 6:30 p.m. and the dinner starts at 7:00 p.m. All club members and their guests are invited to share in the fun, the food and the program. The club furnishes beverages, social hour snacks, rolls and eating utensils. Those attending may bring a main dish, a salad, a vegetable or a dessert. Be sure to mark your dishes and any accompanying serving implements with your name so we can get them back to the right person. If you cannot cook, other arrangements can be made. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the "slide show," so bring your nature slides or digital photo presentations. (The club will provide both a conventional slide projector and a multimedia projector. You must bring your own "notebook" computer. For more information contact **Tom Miller** (410-880-4259, or [tmiller778@aol.com](mailto:tmiller778@aol.com).)

You MUST reserve in advance so we can arrange for sufficient beverages, etc. You may sign up at either the January or February club meeting, or contact **Sue Probst** by Friday, March 18, 2005 at 410-992-3489, or [sprobst@comcast.net](mailto:sprobst@comcast.net). You will need to specify the number of attendees and what food you are bringing. Let Sue know if you would like to come early to help set up, help clean up afterwards or help in any other way. If you are a new member, or if you have not attended our dinner before, we strongly encourage you to come and get to know others who share your passion for birds and birding. There will be many delicious dishes, great slide presentations and other surprises. So mark your calendars and come join the fun!

*Directions: The Owen Brown Community Center is located on the east side of Columbia at 6800 Cradlerock Way, off Broken Land Parkway from Route 29. There is ample parking.*

### MOS SCHOLARSHIPS: MAINE, MINNESOTA, OR WISCONSIN?

By Tom Strikwerda, MOS Scholarship Chairperson

As announced in the September-October *Yellowthroat*, the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) is once again sponsoring 10 to 12 scholarships for week-long summer Audubon Camps in Maine, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Maine camps typically address field ornithology, the 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 a position to pass on knowledge gained to young people—teachers, park rangers, naturalists, community volunteers or environmental educators (it is not necessary to be an MOS member). 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](http://www.mdbirds.org); go to "Education" and click on "Scholarships." For further information, please contact Jeff Friedhoffer at 410-997-5366; [jafried@ieee.org](mailto:jafried@ieee.org), or me at 301-942-2841; [tstrik@earthlink.net](mailto:tstrik@earthlink.net); 9806 Culver Ct, Kensington, MD 20895. I encourage MOS members to pass this information along to possible candidates.

## Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks Offering National Wildlife Federation's Habitat Stewards™ Training

By Brenda Belensky

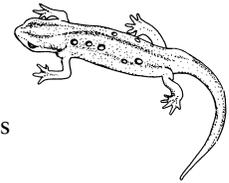
To help communities create and enhance wildlife habitat, Howard County Recreation & Parks, the National Wildlife Federation, and Wild Birds Unlimited will be offering Habitat Stewards™ training in Spring 2005.

### A Habitat Stewards™ Volunteer is:

Someone who is interested in wildlife, ecology, gardening and habitat conservation, and believes in hands on, experiential learning. A Habitat Steward is also someone who is available to assist members of their community to create an environment that is beneficial for humans and for wildlife by helping others develop and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards and other private and public areas.

### Training Topics Include:

- Discovering Native Plants
- Local Natural History
- Butterflies & Insects
- Birds, Mammals & Amphibians
- Site Inventory & Mapping
- Gardening for Wildlife
- Water features in the Garden



The series will be offered at Recreation & Parks Headquarters March 15—March 31. The program fee is \$35.00.

Contact Brenda Belensky, Natural Resource Manager for Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks for additional information:

Howard County Recreation & Parks  
Attn: Brenda Belensky  
7120 Oakland Mills Road  
Columbia, MD 21046  
410-313-4724  
e-mail [bbelensky@co.ho.md.us](mailto:bbelensky@co.ho.md.us)



### Do We Have Your Correct E-mail Address?

On January 10, 2005, the Howard County Bird Club will send a special e-mail to all members who have provided an email address. This message is to verify that we have your correct e-mail address in our files. A separate e-mail will go to members who are on the Rare Bird Alert to verify their e-mail addresses. If the e-mail is returned because of delivery failure, we remove your e-mail address from the system.

If you receive the e-mail(s), you need not do anything; the system works. But if you want to receive these e-mails and did not receive one, send an e-mail to [ODENATA@MSN.COM](mailto:ODENATA@MSN.COM) and ask to have your email address added (or corrected). Remember, this service is only available to members.

## CLUB MEETINGS—NEW LOCATION!

BY JANE GEUDER

Don't forget, club meetings are now 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.

**Thursday, January 13 "Fifty Years of Birding,"** by spice buyer, Hank Kaestner. Hank will share highlights from his many trips all around the world in his quest for rare birds.

**Thursday, February 10 "Raptors Rule: A Visit with Live Birds of Prey,"** by Mike Callahan. Join naturalist and raptor enthusiast Mike Callahan for a close-up visit with live, non-releasable raptors. His program is interactive and geared for both children and adults. He will bring a captive Red-Tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, and Barn Owl. Photography is encouraged.

## MOS CONFERENCE 2005

Next year's annual Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) conference—the organization's 60<sup>th</sup>—will take place on May 20, 21, and 22 at Solomons in Calvert County. This is only the second time an MOS conference will be held in Southern Maryland. As in 1999, it will convene at the Holiday Inn Select. State Coordinator Janet Shields is looking for suggestions for a keynote speaker, as well as locations for 2006 and 2007 (hopes for Cecil County have been dashed, since the Sandy Cove Ministries site is booked with return groups each year). Janet can be contacted at 301-416-7109 or janetbill@prodigy.net

MOS Artists are invited to enter the 2005 Conference Pin Design Contest. The deadline is January 17, 2005. The basic rules are simple: entrants must be MOS members, and the design must contain a bird appropriate for the conference site (Solomons) and the phrases "MOS" and "2005." The back of each entry must carry the artist's name, address and chapter affiliation, and identify the species represented. The pin can be any shape. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules and more tips about designing pins, see the MOS website <http://www.mdbirds.org/activities/conference/contest.html> or contact John Malcolm at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.

## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB 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](http://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](mailto: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.

### "START YOUR 2005 LIST"

**January 1, 2005, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. (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: 410-461-3361 for information.

### MIDWINTER COUNT AND TALLY-RALLY

**February 5, Saturday.** (See article on page 1.)

### NORTH CENTRAL MARYLAND

CO-SPONSORED WITH CARROLL COUNTY

**February 26, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. (All day.)**

*Leaders—Jim Wilkinson and Bill Ellis.*

*Meet at Rte. 32 & I-70 park and ride.* Spend the day touring rural areas near Taneytown. NE Frederick County and fields south of Gettysburg, NE Carroll County, and York County PA are possible spots we'll visit. Farm fields, woodlots, streams, ponds and feeders will be visited. Expected species are wintering hawks, waterfowl, sparrows, Horned Lark, pipit and Red-headed Woodpecker. Chances for winter rarities including Rough-legged Hawk, Short-eared Owl, shrikes and Lapland Longspur. We will plan a lunch break at a local restaurant. Facility stops planned. Bring snacks, drinks and dress very warmly. Walking will be moderate. Call Jim: 410-381-9150 for information.

### HOWARD COUNTY ANNUAL LISTS

**DUE FEBRUARY 28, 2005**

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 by February 28, 2005. 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.



**HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB**  
*Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society*  
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 Columbia, MD 21044  
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**January/February 2005—Inside This Issue:**

20 <sup>th</sup> Annual Midwinter Count	Programs & Field Trips
Annual Potluck Dinner	MOS Conference 2005
NWF Habitat Stewards™	Annual Lists Due
MOS Scholarship Program	Conservation Column
Your E-mail Address	Board Meetings Schedule

Midwinter Count Checklist

## CONSERVATION COLUMN BY KURT SCHWARZ

As you may have heard, the State is considering selling almost 3,000 acres of state park and forest lands. These properties have been deemed “excess.” None of the properties concerned are in Howard County, but they do include parts of Patapsco Valley State Park, as well as Deep Creek Lake; places we all have birded. For details of the proposed sale, see <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/drnews/pressrelease2004/111604.html> and <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/drnews/pressrelease2004/111604a.html>. Also see the front page story from the Baltimore Sun on November 13; “Portions of Parks Slated for Sale.” The article can be viewed at the following website; [www.baltimoresun.com](http://www.baltimoresun.com), which requires registration and isn’t especially easy to navigate. If you wish, you can contact me for a copy (krschwa1@comcast.net).

To register a complaint, you can send an email to Governor Ehrlich at [governor@gov.state.md.us](mailto:governor@gov.state.md.us). Be sure to include your name and full mailing address.

You may also be aware that, for the last two State budget cycles, the administration has cut 75% of the funding from Program Open Space. The funds for this program come from a tax on real estate transfers, and are supposed to be for the purchase of open space. Some of those funds have been replaced with revenue from general obligation bonds. This, however, is not cost effective (interest has to be paid on those bonds) and to divert the funds from their stipulated purpose is a violation of public trust. With the hot real estate market in Howard County, a large portion of those funds are coming from here, and being diverted to other purposes. Contact the Governor and your state legislators to express your disapproval. I can provide a sample text if you wish. You can contact Governor Ehrlich at 100 State Circle, Annapolis, MD 21401-1925 or the email address shown above. To find your state legislator, go to this website: <http://mdelect.net/>. Make your voice heard, preserve more habitat!

**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.

**January 27, Thursday**  
 Kevin Heffernan  
 9775 Diversified Lane  
 Ellicott City, MD 21042  
 410-418-8731

**February 24, Thursday**  
 o Solem  
 10617 Graeloch Road  
 Laurel, MD 20723  
 301-725-5037

*Illustrations on pages 1 and 2  
 © M. Suzanne Probst*