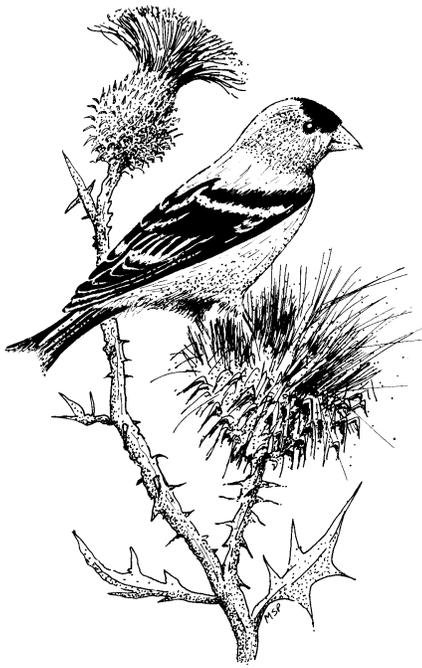


The Goldfinch

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



AUTUMN BIRD RECORDS AUGUST 1 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2004

BY JOANNE SOLEM

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The Goldfinch, newsletter of the *Howard County Bird Club*, is published five times per year. Copy deadline for the May/June 2005 issue is March 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
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Please visit the Club's website at www.howardbirds.org

Autumn is always highly anticipated, with shorebirds and sparrows offering the best possibility for rarities. The remnants of four hurricanes raised water levels considerably so that not until late October, well past peak shorebird migration, did extensive flats emerge. Nevertheless, some notable species were located during the season: **Glossy Ibis**, **American Avocet**, **Western Sandpiper**, **Baird's Sandpiper**, and **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow**.

A non-breeding **Common Loon** turned up on Lake Elkhorn 8/8 (SN), while the season's first migrant loon appeared on Triadelphia Reservoir 9/15 (HH) for a new early record. The final **Double-crested Cormorant** was seen at Old Frederick Rd/Camden Meadows 11/8 (RR,DH). Howard County Fall Count (HCFC) 9/18 logged 12 **Great Egrets**. An immature **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was present at Wilde Lake from 9/2 (SPe,KBo) to 9/4 (KH,KD). Five **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were tallied on HCFC. A highlight of that count was a flock of six **Glossy Ibis** flying past Brighton Dam (R&SPo).

Two **Snow Geese** were at Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab 11/21 (HH). Since **Cackling Goose** has been declared a new species, birders have an incentive to search through **Canada Goose** flocks for the diminutive, small-billed, short-necked, square-headed species. Two were spotted 11/8 at Old Frederick Rd/Camden Meadows (RR,DH); one was also found in western Howard County 11/21 (HH). No **Tundra**

Swans were reported. The 15 **American Black Ducks** at University of Maryland Central Farm (UMDCF) 9/22 were a new early record (BO,EH,JS). A **Northern Pintail** appeared at Centennial Park 10/21 (KH). The male **Ring-necked Duck**, which had summered at Larriland Farm on Rt 94, was still present 9/18 (B&GHi). Three **Greater Scaup** on Triadelphia 10/29 set a new early date (EH,JS); five **Surf Scoters** there 11/22 were a treat (RR,JS). **Long-tailed Ducks** made appearances at Centennial 11/8 (RR,DH-1 male) and Triadelphia: 11/23 (SAr-1 m) and 11/26 (EH,JS-2 females). A pair of **Buffleheads** dropped in at Centennial 11/6 (KS). A maturing male **Common Merganser** appeared at Triadelphia 11/13 tying the second earliest date (EH,JS); by 11/22 nine females were following him (RR,JS)!

The latest **Osprey** was at Triadelphia 11/23 (RR). **Bald Eagles** are a major success story; in fact, there isn't space to list all the sightings (21 observers at 12 sites). WSSC Officer Pitts verified that the Duckett Reservoir nest was successful with two young. The first **Northern Harriers** were two on HCFC. The peak counts of **Broad-winged Hawks** were a moderate 228 at Wynfield 9/19 (RC) and 250 at Rockburn 9/20 (BO). There were five **Merlin** sightings from 9/15 UMDCF (BO,EH,JS) to 11/26 on Rt 108 (FP). The only **Peregrine Falcon** zipped over Mt. Pleasant 9/18, the second earliest ever (KH,KD).

Three **Wild Turkey** sightings were received—all away from the traditional
(Continued on page 2.)

state park locations: singles at Gateway 8/10 (KR) and Manahan Dr 11/3 (BO) and six along Guilford Rd near Pindell School Rd 11/8 (MMcC).

An American Golden-Plover was picked out at Western Regional Park 9/11 (EH). High counts of Killdeer were 55 on 9/12 at Western (KS) and 54 on 10/16 at Browns Bridge (NM,JS). Two American Avocets in a season are unprecedented (fourth and fifth records): the first was at Triadelphia 8/6 (EH+), while the second was present briefly at Larriland 9/28 (LM). The Greater Yellowlegs on the flats at Triadelphia Lake Rd 11/23 was the second latest ever (RR). A Solitary Sandpiper on 10/30 at the landfill tied the latest date (RC), while a Spotted Sandpiper at Fore Bay Pond on 8/14 was a new early date (SN). Upland Sandpipers stopped at the landfill 8/7 (2) to 8/14 (1) (RC). A highlight of HCFC was a group of six Western Sandpipers at Big Branch (PZ,Tst,R&SPo). HCFC also turned up 42 Least Sandpipers, but shorebird numbers overall were low. The most unusual shorebird of the season (and arguably the most beautiful) was a juvenile Baird's Sandpiper in the muddy swale at UMDCF 9/12 (BO,RC,KS) to 9/13 (NM). This was just the second county record. What a coincidence that the only previous sighting was 9/12/82! Over the course of the day more than a dozen people were able to see the bird, and three photographed it (RC,KS,JTv). On 10/23 at the landfill, RC was startled to have eight Pectoral Sandpipers land on a road near him. A Dunlin was discovered at a pond at Rt 1/Country Meadows (JSh+), while a second was at Triadelphia 11/10, the second latest record (EH,JS). The only American Woodcock appeared on HCFC (RT).

Laughing Gulls have become relatively scarce so the 150 on 8/21 at the landfill were a surprise (WE). The only other sightings were 9/1 above Rt 40 (BO,MWr-2) and HCFC (JW-1). Great Black-backed Gulls were at the landfill 11/13 (1) and 11/20 (2) (RC). Caspian Tern numbers were low with the maximum five on Triadelphia 9/6

(KS). Forster's Terns were almost nonexistent with two on 8/1 at Brighton Dam—the sole date and the earliest ever (EH).

Great Horned Owls attracted attention with one west of Kindler Rd 10/29 (TE), and a pair near Bethany La 10/31 (MWr). Barred Owl pairs were reported from Bon Secours 8/15 (RC) and Oakland Mills garden plots 10/27 (JW). Common Nighthawk highs were modest with 10 at West Friendship 8/24 (LC) and 12 at Centennial 9/4 (BO+). A regular site for fall Chimney Swifts is Miller Brothers Chevrolet at Rts 40/29 where about 800 were counted on 8/15 and 460 on 9/12 (KS). More than 500 were present over Oakland Mills H.S. 10/6 (JMCK) and 75 swirled over a house on Old Frederick Rd 10/4 (WE).

The last Ruby-throated Hummingbird was spotted 10/16 near Wilde Lake (CN). Any hummingbird after early October deserves examination. Leave feeders up until late fall to attract potential wanderers from the West—and contact other birders if something different appears. Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported from 9/1 at Mt. Pleasant (1 ad.) (BO+) to 10/23 at Manahan (1 juv) (BO).

The only Yellow-bellied Flycatcher paused at Rockburn from 9/19 (JMrr) to 9/20 (BO). Least Flycatchers were reported from 8/29 near Marriottsville (JTv) to 9/19 at Schooley Mill Pk (BO,JS,KD,EH,KS). Philadelphia Vireos were seen from 9/15 at Schooley (HH) to 10/4 (a new late date) at Middle Patuxent Env. Area (RR). Horned Larks hung around at Western from 9/1 (LC-4) and 9/5 (BO,JS-30+) to at least 11/2 (B&GHI-12+). The 83+ Tree Swallows hawking over Triadelphia 10/21 were late for so large a group (EH,JS).

Red-breasted Nuthatches appeared in small numbers from 9/4 in east Columbia (JMCK) to 11/18 at Worthington (EMe). Two Marsh Wrens were at UMDCF from 9/15 (BO,EH,JS), the second earliest date, to 10/21 (BO+-1). Twenty Golden-



Great Horned Owl

crowned Kinglets were at Rockburn 10/6 (BO,EH,JS) and 30 Ruby-crowned Kinglets at Centennial 10/28 (JTv,C&JmTv). A Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher at Lake Elkhorn on 11/16 was more than a month later than the previous late date (JW). American Robins at Rockburn reached 210 on 9/2 (BO,JS), while 1,000 were estimated 10/25 at Centennial flocking with about 200 Cedar Waxwings (JTv,C&JmTv).

Fall warbler migration was just as depressing as spring's had been: low numbers, missed species, and highs in the single digits. The Chestnut-sided Warbler on 8/16 at Wilde Lake was the second earliest (JMa,DJo). Both eastern and western forms of Palm Warblers were noted though totals were low. A Connecticut Warbler at Gwynn Acres 10/4 was a nice find (EMe). Three Mourning Warbler sightings were spread over a month: 9/1 Manahan (BO), 9/2 Rockburn (BO), and 10/2 West Friendship (BO,EH). The Hooded Warbler on 10/4 at Middle Patuxent Env. Area was the second latest (RR). The fall's earliest Canada Warbler appeared at Talbot's Landing 8/14 (R&JG). A Summer Tanager was present at Rockburn 10/6, a new late date (BO).

A movement of Eastern Towhees 10/10 at Rockburn totaled 18 (KS). Two American Tree Sparrows 11/28 at Bon Secours were not only the

LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT

first, but the only report (RC). High **Chipping Sparrow** numbers were 20 on Trotter Rd 9/16 (WE) and 12 at the landfill 10/4 (RC,BO,JS). A leucistic **Field Sparrow** with a white face and crown stripe was seen at Western 11/6 (KS). The high for that species was 40 at the landfill 10/4 (RC,BO,JS). Two **Vesper Sparrows** were spotted at the Oakland Mills garden plots 10/16 (JW). Two **Savannah Sparrow** at Western on 9/5 were the second earliest ever (BO,JS). Highs were 60 on 10/4 at the landfill (RC,BO,JS) and 70 at UMDCF 10/7 (BO,EH,JS). A **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow** lingered at UMDCF from 10/10 to 10/17 (BO+). A record early **Fox Sparrow** arrived at Mt. Pleasant 10/7 (BO,JS+). **Song Sparrows** hit a high of 200 on 10/10 at UMDCF (BO+). **Lincoln's Sparrows** were reported on seven dates from 9/20 at Rockburn (BO,JMr,JS) to 11/3 at Bon Secours (ES,JCu,AC) with a maximum of five 10/7 at Mt. Pleasant (BO+). The **White-crowned Sparrow** 9/26 at the Dickey Farm on Forsythe Rd set a new early record (BO). More than 60 **Dark-eyed Juncos** were counted at the landfill 11/27 (RC).

A late brood of recently fledged **Indigo Buntings** was seen along the Patapsco at Old Frederick Rd 9/15 (Jsh). The three **Blue Grosbeaks** at the landfill 10/23 were the second latest record, while a **Bobolink** there 8/7 was the second earliest ever (RC). The flock of 16 **Eastern Meadowlarks** at the landfill 10/4 was the season's high (RC,BO,JS).

Purple Finches were reported at 15 locations from early October through late November. Numbers were low with highs of five (ES) and four (MJB;RC). The few **Pine Siskin** reports were from 10/5 (DHo) to 11/28 (RC;J&CW). The high was four at Manahan 11/17 (BO).

HCFC—Howard County Fall Count, 9/18
UMDCF—University of Maryland Central Farm

Jeffrey Friedhoffer
President, Howard County
Chapter of the MOS

Dear Jeffrey:

I am writing to remind chapters—and chapter presidents—of the importance of the Raffle/Silent Auction to a successful conference.

Each year we ask chapters to donate an item to the Raffle. While optics and weekend getaways are always welcome, I want to encourage everyone to “think outside the box.” Perhaps someone in your chapter has a particular talent that he or she might want to share. A top-notch birder might donate a half-day (or even a full day) to showing the winner his/her favorite birding spots. A fabulous cook might donate a lunch or dinner to the winner and a friend or two. Perhaps someone in your chapter is a great baker. Creativity is the key here. And remember, the donor has 12 whole months to negotiate delivery time with the winner.

With your help, I know we can top last year's combined raffle/silent auction total of \$2,355.

I'd be grateful if you publish this letter, or excerpts, in your chapter newsletter and mention it at upcoming board meetings. Anyone with questions can contact me at 202-483-8188, by mail at 1705 Lanier Place NW, Apt 306, Washington, DC 20009, or by email at abtrowbridge@msn.com

Thanks for your help, and I hope to see you at the conference.

Sincerely,

Maryanne Dolan
Silent Auction/Raffle Coordinator

Observers: SAR—Stan Arnold, MJB—Mary-Jo Betts, KBo—Ken Board, LC—Lisa Colangelo, RC—Ralph Cullison III, AC—Al Crawley, JCu—Jeff Culler, KD—Karen Darcy, WE—Wes Earp, TE—Tracy Eve, R&JG—Ralph & Jane Geuder, DH—Dave Harvey, KH—Kevin Heffernan, B&GHI—Bill & Gayle Hill, HH—Hans Holbrook, EH—Emmalyn Holdridge, DHo—David Holmes, DJo—Diane Johns, NM—Nancy Magnusson, JMa—John Maloney, MMcC—Mike McClure, JMck—John McKitterick, EME—Elayne Metter, LM—Lynn Moore, SN—Sue Neri,

CN—Carol Newman, BO—Bonnie Ott, SPe—Sherry Peruzzi, FP—Fred Pierce, R&SPo—Ron & Susan Polniaszek, KR—Kim Reichert, RR—Robert Ringler, KS—Kurt Schwarz, JSh—Jay Sheppard, JS—Jo Solem, TSt—Tom Strikwerda, ES—Eva Sunell, RT—Robin Todd, C&JmTv—Carol & Jim Tveekrem, JTv—June Tveekrem, CW—Carol Wilkinson, JW—Jim Wilkinson, MWr—Michele Wright, PZ—Paul Zucker

CONSERVATION COLUMN

BY KURT SCHWARZ

The threat of global warming is a real one, to most of us. How to solve that problem, however, is complex. A current controversy in Maryland regards one method touted as a possible solution: wind power. Yes, wind power does not generate greenhouse gasses, or any other atmospheric pollutants. Some would have us believe that this alone justifies building wind generation towers across the ridge-tops in western Maryland. While this is a positive environmental impact of wind power, it fails to take into account other, negative impacts, some of direct influence on bird and other wildlife populations.

Aside from the visual aspect, a consequence that some might be able to live with, the construction of the large numbers of windmills necessary to generate a significant amount of electricity will result in fragmentation of habitat. Some species, Scarlet Tanager for example, require large amounts of unbroken canopy to breed successfully.

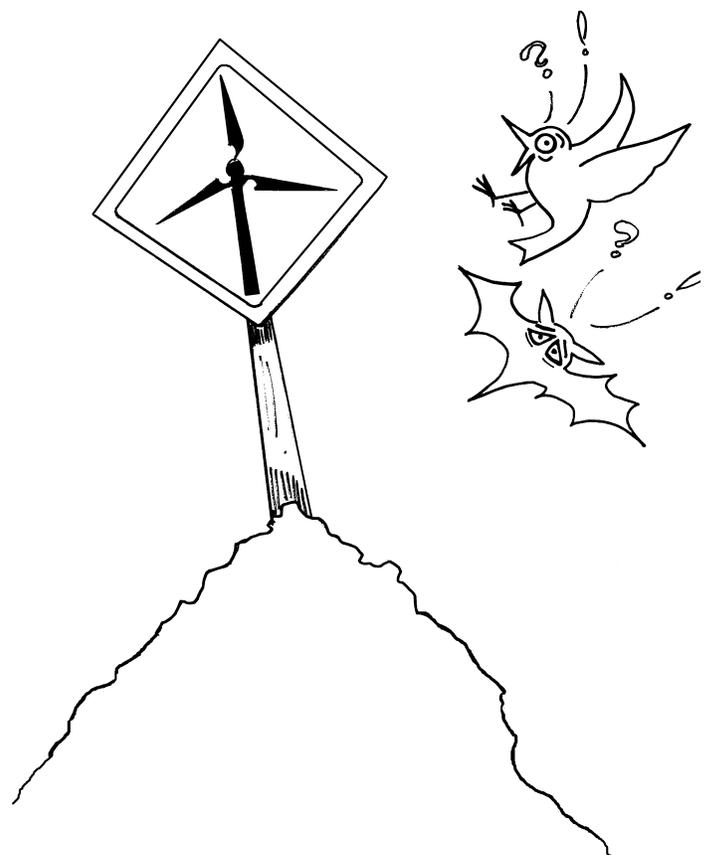
There is an even more direct impact of wind power on bird populations: the windmills actually kill birds. Proponents of wind power argue that the numbers killed are insignificant. One website promoting wind power claims the death rate per turbine can be as low as one or two per year (www.chesapeakeclimate.org). The migration patterns existing in western Maryland, following the ridge lines, make such a low number unlikely. The heavy traffic along those leading lines has been amply documented by our own club member, Chandler Robbins. At best, the issue of wind power's effect on bird migration requires much greater study. These towers need to be placed where they will have minimal impact on migratory birds, including endangered species. The entire population of Kirtland's Warbler migrates through the Appalachians!

In some ways, the impact of wind power on bats, and the wind power industry's concern about this impact, is even more disturbing. The above-cited website contains a sub-heading: "Good News about Bats and Windmills." It referenced a US Fish and Wildlife Service study in northern New York State of a proposed wind turbine farm's impact on a hibernation site some 17 miles away. The study found

no conflict. From this isolated example, it is extrapolated that wind power and bats can peacefully coexist. On the other hand Bat Conservation International has documented higher than expected mortality on ridge-tops in the eastern United States. In the summer of 2003, the deaths of over two thousand bats of seven species were documented. The total of actual deaths was projected as being closer to 4,000.

For a nice overview on the issue, see the October issue of *Audubon Naturalist* (<http://www.AudubonNaturalist.org>). The summer issue of *Bats* covers the bat/wind power issue (www.batcon.org). Guidance for possible action on your part is available at www.responsiblewind.org.

In any case, wind power is not a panacea. Yes, it is green, sort of. But it must be used carefully. The US Fish and Wildlife Service's voluntary guidelines are a good start, calling for a three-year study before construction where concentrations of low-flying migrants occur.



CLUB MEETINGS

BY JANE GEUDER

Don't forget, club meetings are now being held at:

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, March 10 "A Naturalist's Trip Across Peru," by Howard County Bird Club member, Dennis Coskren. Peru is a vast and varied land, ranging from the cold and fertile waters of the Humboldt Current, through stark deserts to the icy peaks of the Andes, and back down through misty cloud forests to the jungles of the upper Amazon basin. The birds, mammals, plants, and geology of all of these habitats were photographed on a 2004 trip.

Thursday, April 14 "Monarch Butterfly Migration Research at Chincoteague NWR," by Denise Gibbs, Naturalist, Black Hills Park. Naturalist/researcher Denise Gibbs will present an illustrated talk about her experiences monitoring the fall monarch migration on Assateague Island, Va. She is engaged in year 9 of this 10-year study to tag migrating monarchs and collect data on their migratory patterns and behavior for Dr. Lincoln Brower of Sweet Briar College, Virginia. Howard County Bird Club member, Kate Tufts, has been a research associate for the project for the last two years.

HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB SPRING 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.

 **HOWARD WATERFOWL SEARCH**
March 12, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Meet at Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkhorn.
 Plan to visit the Columbia lakes, possible western ponds and Triadelphia Reservoir to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons and other waterfowl. Easy walking involved. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available.
Leader—Stan Arnold 410-768-0155.

 **CENTENNIAL PARK**
March 20, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hrs.)
Meet at west end parking lot.
 Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early swallows, Caspian Terns and ducks likely. Facilities available.
Leader—Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643.

 **BEGINNER'S BIRDING BY EAR AT LAKE ELKHORN**
March 26, Saturday. 8:30 a.m. (2 hrs.)
Meet at Broken Land Parkway lot.
 Easy walking around the lake to learn tips on identifying our resident birds by ear. The birds should be vigorously singing on their territories. No facilities.
Leader—Tom Miller 410-795-7005.

 **WEEKDAY WALK AT DAVID FORCE PARK**
March 22, Tuesday. 8:00 a.m. (2 hrs.)
Meet at the sign on Pebble Beach Drive.
 Easy walking through the wooded trails and fields of the Howard County Open Space. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. Listen for Spring Peepers and look for wildflowers. Probable Pileated Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks and Fox Sparrows. No facilities.
Leader—Michele Wright 410-465-6057.

 **CENTENNIAL PARK**
March 27, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hrs.)
Meet at west end parking lot.
 Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Some early spring migrants possible. Facilities available.
Leader—Bonnie Ott 410-461-3361.

 **EVENING WITH THE WOODCOCKS**
March 15, Tuesday (time and meeting place TBA. 1.5–2 hrs. Ages 12 to adult.
 Join naturalist Sue Muller to listen for displaying American Woodcock at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area. Minimal walking involved. Wear dark clothing and bring flashlight. Call Sue to reserve spot. Limit of 15 people. No facilities.
Leader—Sue Miller 301-498-8462.

POTLUCK DINNER
March 19, Saturday. (See January/February newsletter for details.)

 =Great for beginning birders

(Field Trips continues on page 6.)

CENTENNIAL PARK

April 3, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hrs.)

Meet at west end parking lot.

Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available.

Leaders—Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 and Karen Darcy 410-552-9342.

CENTENNIAL PARK

April 10, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hrs.)

Meet at west end parking lot.

Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Facilities available.

Leader—Jeff Friedhoffer 410-997-5366.

UNIVERSITY OF MD CENTRAL FARM AND OTHER SPARROW HOTSPOTS

April 16, Saturday. 7:00 a.m. (half or all day—bring lunch.) *Limit:12 people.*

Search the wetland and dry fields in search of sparrows and early spring migrants. Focus on sparrows with hopes of Vesper. Chance for shorebirds and dabbling ducks. Expect difficult walking for most of the day. Knee-boots a must. Facilities at some spots. *Call Bonnie to sign up. 410-461-3361*

BUTTERFLIES AND WILDFLOWERS AT LAKE ELKHORN

April 17, Sunday. 9:30 a.m. (2 hrs.)

Meet at Cradlerock parking lot.

Easy walking by the lakeside and along the power lines in search of early spring wildflowers and butterflies. We will study some butterflies in the hand. Binoculars helpful. No facilities.

Leaders—Bob Solem 301-725-5037 and Dick Smith 410-997-7439.

WEEKDAY WALK AT WILDE LAKE

April 21, Thursday. 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hrs.)

Meet at barn.

Easy walking along the lake and wooded stream. Focus on birding by ear. Some early warblers possible. No facilities.

Leader—David Holmes. Call Bonnie Ott for info 410-461-3361.

EARTH DAY AT MT. PLEASANT, BEGINNER'S BIRD WALK

April 23, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. (1-2 hrs.)

Meet at shed.

Easy walking through the fields of Mt. Pleasant Farm. Tree lines, hedgerows and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Great opportunity for flyovers. Learn the basics of binocular and field guide use. Facilities available.

Leader—Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643.

ROCKBURN BRANCH PARK

April 24, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (half day)

Meet in parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse.

Moderate but lengthy walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park looking for early migrants. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available.

Leaders—Karen Darcy-410 552-9342 and Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731

AVALON AREA OF PATAPSCO VALLEY STATE PARK AND STAN'S HOTSPOTS

April 30, Saturday. 8:00 a.m. (all day)

Meet at 8:00 at the McDonalds parking lot on US Route1, south of Elkridge.

This all-day excursion will walk areas along the Patapsco River looking for early spring arrivals. Other possible areas include a wetlands area in Elkridge, Belmont Conference Center and Halethorpe pond in Baltimore County (and wherever else Stan takes us!). Plan for moderate to difficult walking and possible wet areas. Will include restroom

breaks and lunch break at fast food place; bring lunch if desired.

Optional Owls 5 a.m. pre-trip to a reliable spot for Eastern Screech-Owls. Call Stan for info and owling details.

Leader—Stan Arnold 410-768-0155 or cell 410-428-7567

HUGG-THOMAS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

May 1, Sunday. 8:00 a.m. (half day)

Meet at gravel lot.

Moderate walking through the woodlands and field edges. Great habitat for warblers, tanagers and vireos. Nesting Hooded, Kentucky, Ovenbird and Louisiana Waterthrush. No facilities.

Leaders—Dave and Maureen Harvey 410-795-3117.

JUG BAY BOAT TRIP

May 7, Saturday. 5:30 a.m (all day)

Meet at Meadowbrook park-and-ride.

Limit 16 people.

Join naturalist Greg Kearns for a morning boat trip through the wetlands of Jug Bay. Over 100 species of birds expected. The boat trip will last approximately 3 hours. Plan for a picnic lunch and then an early afternoon bird walk along the trails. Facilities available. \$5-\$6 dollar fee for the boat per person.

Call Bonnie Ott to sign up 410-461-3361

MAY COUNT

May 14, Saturday.

MOS CONVENTION

May 20, 21, 22.

DELAWARE SHOREBIRDS

May 29, Sunday. (all day)

Joint trip with Montgomery County Chapter. Details to follow.

Leader—Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643

Willet in the surf.



HOWARD COUNTY ODONATE SURVEY 2004

BY JOANNE AND BOB SOLEM

The ninth year of the Howard County odonate survey started well by tying the early date for **Citrine Forktail** on 4/15 (Bob & Jo Solem, June Tveekrem), and finished on a high note by extending the late date for **Autumn Meadowhawk** to 12/8 (JT). Between those two events, however, clubtails were a washout in June, and additional precipitation in July restricted river access. Searches in late summer for Aeshnas (other than **Shadow Darners**) were fruitless. As usual, numerous new locations and late dates were added.

Of the seven sites which have been surveyed intensively from three to nine years, new species were added at the following locations: **Great Spreadwing** was number 51 on the Centennial Park list (JT), while a perched **Springtime Darner** in the Bishop's Gate area brought the WSSC total to 43 (Nancy Magnusson and JS). Western Regional Park (still under development) added **Slaty Skimmer** to raise that total to 24 (BS). Font Hill Wetland Park continues to lead all sites with 54.

Each year brings surprises. In 2004, the explosion in numbers of large, handsome **Great Blue Skimmers** was particularly noticeable. And where was the substantial colony of Vesper Bluets present at Centennial Park in 2003? Despite repeated trips at dusk, the only record for 2004 was two individuals on 6/14 (JT).



Great Spreadwing

The year 2004 was notable for the opportunity to publicize odonates. In February, Sue Muller and the Solems presented an Environmental Awareness lecture, sponsored by Howard County Recreation and Parks, covering county dragonflies. The Solems gave substantially the same program in October at the Northeast Regional Master Gardeners Conference in Baltimore. They also presented a half day workshop for a 4-H group in Reisterstown in June. An August Baltimore *Sun* article featured a Bird Club odonate walk led by Richard Orr. He also wrote a short article for *Argia*, the journal of the Dragonfly Society of the Americas, describing the impact of the emergence of 17-year periodical cicadas on the predation of dragonfly nymphs along the Potomac River. To cap the year, the November cover of *Argia* featured a pair of Halloween Pennants photographed by June Tveekrem.

Howard County individuals who participated in the survey this year—or began looking at these

fascinating creatures: June Tveekrem, Sue Muller (and cooperating water quality monitors), Nancy Magnusson, Sue Neri, Richard Orr, Bonnie Ott, Jay Sheppard, Cheryl Farfaras, Erin and Tracy Eve, Sue Probst, and Michelle Stewart.

We again express appreciation for property permission from many private landowners; cooperation and support from Howard County Recreation and Parks; and land permission from Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.



Great Blue Skimmer

Visit the Club's website www.howardbirds.org for a complete list of county and Maryland odonates, as well as an introductory pamphlet. Photos of Great Spreadwing and Great Blue Skimmer taken by June Tveekrem.



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Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society
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COLUMBIA, MD
PERMIT NO. 452

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**HEADS UP!
JUNE PELAGIC
TRIP**

We are putting together an early June birding trip with See Life Paulagics: <http://www.paulagics.com/>. This will be an all day adventure in Delaware and Maryland waters to look for seabirds, whales and other ocean life. Stan Arnold is coordinating the trip. Watch for full details in the next newsletter!

**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.

March 24, Thursday

Jeff Friedhoffer
10042 Mending Wall
Columbia, MD 21044
410-997-5366

April 28, Thursday

Location to be announced