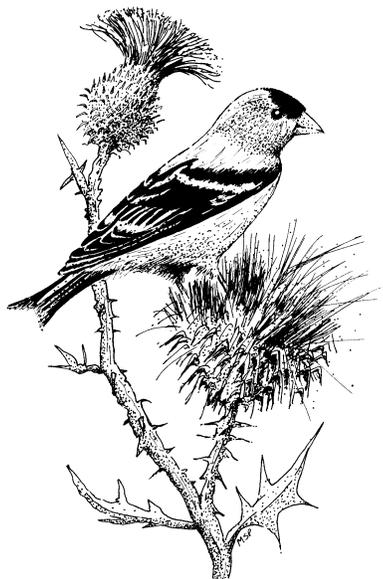


The Goldfinch

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



CLUB MEETINGS - BY JANE GEUDER

Thursday, May 14, 2009 "The Falklands, South Georgia, and the Antarctic Peninsula," by Michelle Stewart and Barry Miller. Photos from two trips to the bottom of the world include seven species of penguins as well as mammals and fantastic scenery. Barry and Michelle travel three to four times a year to various countries around the world for adventure and bird photography. Barry has had photos published in *Birder's World*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Wildbird* and several textbooks.

Meetings are held at Howard County Recreation & Parks Headquarters 7120 Oakland Mills Road, Columbia, MD 21046. Hospitality and club bookstore at 7:30 p.m. Meeting with program begins at 8:00 p.m. For further information call Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

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WINTER BIRD RECORDS: DECEMBER 1, 2008 – FEBRUARY 28, 2009

BY JOANNE SOLEM

Although below average snowfall and the driest February ever were memorable, Howard County birders will remember this winter not for its weather, but for its outstanding birds. Headline species included Greater White-fronted Goose (4th county record), Red-throated Loon (11th), Golden Eagle (12th), Short-eared Owl (9th), Long-eared Owl (~12th), Lapland Longspur (11th), and White-winged Crossbill (6th).

most winters, but numbers rarely top six. During the Triadelphia Christmas Count on 12/20, one party watched a flock of 123 over Md108/Sheppard La (**W&SE, M&GMcC**) and another observer caught probably the same flock over Waterford Farm, Jennings Chapel Rd (**MW**). Equally interesting were 50 Snows in a flock of 500 Canadas in a field across from the fairgrounds on Md144 on 2/23 (**MKw**). **Cackling Geese** were noted at Centennial 12/23 (**JCu, NM+2**) to 1/31 (**MKw-1**); at Brighton Dam 12/28 (**NM-7** a new high), and at Warfields Pond Pk 1/11 (**NM-1**). The top **Gadwall** count was 10 at Race Road Wetlands 2/11 (**NM**). Single **Northern Shovelers** were at Centennial 12/16 (**JHf**) and at the University of Maryland Central Farm

(Records continued on page 2)

A **Greater White-fronted Goose** toyed with birders much of the winter. It was first observed in a large flock of **Canada Geese** at Centennial Pk 12/23 (**NM+**). Despite intense searching, it was not seen again until 1/24 at Brighton Dam (**JHf,NM**), and was logged a final time at Centennial 2/3 (**KS**). A few **Snow Geese** are detected

The Goldfinch, newsletter of the Howard County Bird Club, is published five times per year.

Copy deadline for the September/October issue is July 25, 2009.

Amanda Witt, *Editor*
Joanne Solem, *Proofreader*

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders.

Copy may be sent to:

Amanda Witt
8865 Purple Iris Lane
Elkridge, MD 21075
amanda.witt@yahoo.com

Please visit the Club's website at www.howardbirds.org

(*Records continued from page 1*)
 (UMDCF) 12/20 (**W&SE, M&GMcC**). Two were there 2/11 (**BO,EH,JS**); they continued at nearby Woodmark Lake through 2/16 (**JHf**). A m. **Redhead** at Brighton Dam 12/13 (**SAr,BHi**) was 2008's first; the winter's high was 12 at Centennial 1/26 (**NM,KS**). Three **Greater Scaup** appeared 12/23 at Brighton Dam (**NM,JCu,JHf,JS**). The species' next appearance was at Centennial 2/3 (**KS; EH-2 f.**); at least one m. could be found there until 2/12 (**KS**). A f. **Long-tailed Duck** at Wilde Lake 1/14 was a surprise (**ROR**); two stayed at Centennial from 2/12 (**DHv; KS**) to 2/15 (**BO; JW**). **Common Merganser** numbers built to ~1,000 as late as 2/2; then most of Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) froze. By 2/7, only two mergs were present in a hole in the ice. After a Feb. thaw, 1,100 were counted on 2/28 (**NM**).

A flock of 10 **Wild Turkeys** was seen along US40/Greenway Dr (**MaWr**). Others were reported from Annapolis Rock, Alpha Ridge Park and the nearby landfill, West Friendship Park (*vide* **PNm**), and Md108/Wainwright La (**MCl**).

A **Red-throated Loon** on TRIRS 12/7 was the first since 1999 (**JHf**). A **Red-necked Grebe** at Brighton Dam 1/26 (**GMk,BCp**) was seen intermittently through Feb. The Vantage Point **Great Blue Heron** colony had four birds standing on nests on 2/8 (**EH**). **Bald Eagle** numbers peaked at 14 on 1/2 at TRIRS (**NM**). During the season, one or two adult **Bald Eagles** were reported at the central lakes by many observers. An eagle, outfitted with a transmitter, was observed 12/28 and 12/29 at Brighton Dam (**NM**). There were

just four **Northern Harriers** reported of which two were on HCMC (**J&MBr**). An adult **Golden Eagle** cruised over the UMDCF 12/22 (**NM**). Four **Merlins** and three **Peregrine Falcons** were fine winter reports. Two **Wilson's Snipe** at UMDCF 2/11 were the season's first (**BO,EH,JS**). **American Woodcock** reached an early peak of 12 at Annapolis Rock 2/21 (**CSt,W&SE**)—the same day the winter's only **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was spotted there (**JSh+**). Late **Bonaparte's Gulls** were over TRIRS 12/2 (5) and 1/16 (2) (**JHf**). Five hundred **Ring-billed Gulls** at UMDCF 12/28 was an unusually high number (**NM**); 250 were present 2/11 (**BO,EH,JS**). A **Great Black-backed Gull** was seen briefly on three occasions: 1/11 Centennial (**MKw**), 1/18 Brighton Dam (**KS**), and 2/9 Centennial, a second-winter bird (**JHf+**). Four **Short-eared Owls** at Alpha Ridge Landfill (**RC**) were a highlight of HCMC.

There were two **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports: one bird at Hipsley Mill/Annapolis Rock 1/25 (**RR**) and three near Md99/Morgan Station Rd 2/7 (**W&SE, B&GHi**). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were scarce with widely scattered reports from late Dec. into late Feb. A **House Wren** appeared at Schooley Mill Pk 2/28 (**NM**). A **Gray Catbird** at Centennial was reported from 1/2 (**MKw**) through 1/19 (**JHf**). HCMC turned up three wintering **Brown Thrashers**: Mt. Pleasant (**KS,JFn, STm-1**); Woodmark Lk (1) and pipeline property (1) (**MMcC, RSm,CRb**). A new high of 250 **Cedar Waxwings** at Warfields Pk 12/13 (**NM**) was interesting because the species was generally

scarce the rest of the winter. **American Tree Sparrows** were fewer than usual with a meager three on HCMC. Six **Chipping Sparrows** were tallied on HCMC: UMDCF (**CSt,RBt,MMcC-4**) and Wynfield Dr (**RC-2**). A **Lapland Longspur** was heard over the fields along Underwood Rd 1/31 (**JW**). A leucistic **Red-winged Blackbird** (small amount of black on shoulders and in tail feathers) appeared at a feeder in Fox Valley Mede 2/20 (**JSm**). The **Eastern Meadowlark** high was 11 at the landfill 2/14 (**RC,NM+**). There were just two **Rusty Blackbird** reports: Old Frederick Rd w. of Underwood Rd 2/7 (**DHv-1**) and Centennial 2/13 (**JHf-1**). Again this year, a **Baltimore Oriole** m. wintered. Sightings were 12/6 Longfellow, W. Col. (**SPr**), intermittently 1/17–2/28+ Burleigh Manor (**JHp**), and 2/11 Carillon Dr (**JHl**).

There were scattered **Purple Finch** reports, generally one to five birds. They were regular during Jan. and Feb. at Hunt Ridge with repeated highs of 12 (**CSt**). **White-winged Crossbills** stole the show this winter and put the county on Maryland's ornithological map. Crossbills were first reported in three locations on 1/25: Hipsley Mill Rd/Annapolis Rock Rd (**JHb,DPw-10+**), Jennings Chapel Rd (**BHi-~20**), and Font Hill (**JW-5**). These records were just the beginning. Although subsequent reports included Duvall Rd (**KTf**), Patuxent Branch Trail (**SCl**), Mt. Albert Rd (**M&GMcC**), Jackson Pond (**MO'S**), Simpsonville (**JHz**), and Schooley Mill Pk (**NM**), the majority of Feb. (and later) sightings were in Douglas firs near the south entrance of Centen-

(*Records continued on page 3*)

(Records continued from page 2)

nial Pk. (For a lovely array of photos and a summary grid of sightings prepared by Jim Wilkinson, check howardbirds.org.) **Pine Siskins** also invaded, and numbers built from one at Brush Run, E. Col. 12/12 (**JW-1**) to peaks in Feb. Their presence was seldom predictable and often brief, although a few locations attracted dozens. HCMC tallied 456, of which a mind-boggling 258 were at Wynfield Dr (**RC**). We should probably be grateful to Ralph for his jolt to the economy. For three weeks, he was going through 40 lbs. of thistle per week; by the end of Feb. that had dropped to 20 lbs when *only* 150+ siskins were present. It was definitely, a winter to remember!

f. – female; m. - male

HCMC – Howard County Midwinter Count, 2/7

TRIRS – Triadelphia Reservoir

UMDCF – University of Maryland Central Farm

Observers: **SAr** – Stan Arnold, **RBt** – Randy Beaton, **JBr** – Jim Brinkley, **MBr** – Marilyn Brinkley, **MCl** - Michael Caulkins, **SCI** - Steve Collins, **BCp** - Barry Cooper, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **RC** – Ralph Cullison, III, **SE** – Sue Earp, **WE** – Wes Earp, **JFn** – John Finedore, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **DHv** – Dave Harvey, **JHI** – Joyce Halasz, **JHp** – Jim Happel, **BHi** – Bill Hill, **GHi** – Gayle Hill, **EH** - Emmalyn Holdridge, **JHz** – Judy Holzman, **JHb** – John Hubbell, **MKw** – Mike Kerwin, **GMk** – Gail Mackiernan, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **MMcC** – Mike McClure, **PNm** - Phil Norman, **ROr** – Richard Orr, **MO'S** – Michael O'Sullivan, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **DPw** – Dave Powell, **SPr** – Suzanne Probst, **RR** – Robert Ringler, **CRb** – Clyde Robinette, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JSh** – Jay Sheppard, **JSn** – Joan Simon, **JS** – Jo Solem, **RSm** – Romaine Smith, **CSt** – Chuck Stirrat, **STm** – Sherry Tomlinson, **KTf** – Kate Tufts, **MW** – Mark Wallace, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson, **MaWr** – Martha Wright.

SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

BY BONNIE OTT

Field trips are a great way to improve birding skills, explore new places, and meet other birders. Arrive at the meeting site ready to leave at the designated time with appropriate footwear and gear. Carpooling is strongly encouraged. The leader may cancel due to inclement weather/hazardous driving conditions. Directions for locations not on ADC maps are on the Club's website. Questions? Contact the trip leader or Field Trip Coordinator Bonnie Ott at bonnieott@verizon.net. HCBC members receive priority on trips with a limited number of participants. No pets.

BIG DAY

May 2, Sat. Limit: 12

All day listing extravaganza! Plan to spend the day hiking around the county in search of as many species as possible. All types of footwear needed. Bring food and drinks. Brief lunch stop planned.

Facilities in some spots. *Call Bonnie to sign up 410-461-3361.*



DAVID FORCE PARK

BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

May 3, Sun. 8:00 a.m. (3 hours)

Meet in gravel lot off Turf Valley Road across from the country club. Easy walking through the woodlands and along field edges. Learn basic techniques of binocular use. Learn to identify birds by sight and sound. No facilities. *Leader- Michelle Wright 410-465-6057.*

MAY COUNT

May 9 (See article on page 7)

WEEKDAY WALK AT HENRYTON ROAD

May 13, Wed. 8:30 a.m. (2 hours)

Meet at end of Henryton Road. Easy

walking along the river. This area of Patapsco Valley State Park is a nesting area for Yellow-throated, Worm-eating and Cerulean warblers. No facilities. *Leaders- Joe Byrnes 410-730-5329 and Jeff Culler 410-465-9006.*

PATAPSCO SHRUBLAND

May 23, Sun. 7:30 a.m. (half day)

Meet at 735 River Road (up long drive take right-hand split & park by house).

Starting in the shrubland, we'll look for warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other edge species. Depending on conditions, we may continue into the woods. Moderate to possibly difficult walking; steep trails with several stream crossings, so wear appropriate footwear. Facilities available. *Leader - Felicia Lovelett 410-489-7169 or c5nest@gmail.com.*

DRAGONFLY COUNT

July 25, Sat. (See article on page 7)



= Great for beginner birders

CORRECTIONS TO 2008-2009 DIRECTORY

Please note the following corrections to the Howard County Bird Club 2008-2009 Directory:

1. Larry & Margaret Brammer: email address is Lbramer@wmata.com
2. Shiras & Bill Guion: new address is 604 Redcoat Circle, Canton, GA 30114
3. Kathie Lillie: email address is Katharine.lillie@fda.hhs.gov
4. Sherry Tomlinson, Susan Sandburn: correct last name is Sanborn.

TWENTY-FOURTH HOWARD COUNTY MIDWINTER COUNT, FEBRUARY 7, 2009

BY JOANNE SOLEM AND JOSEPH BYRNES

An excellent day to survey wintering birds! Temperatures ranged from 21°F to 61°F, skies were partly cloudy much of the day, and winds were mostly south and west from calm to 10+ mph. There was no snow cover, but remnant ice from a late January storm made walking challenging in some areas. Streams and rivers were partly open; ponds and reservoirs were up to 95% frozen.

Seventy-four observers recorded 91 species (tied third highest) and added two new species to the cumulative list: Red-necked Grebe and White-winged Crossbill—all 33 of them! A new county high of four Short-eared Owls was unexpected; one Peregrine Falcon, and 456 Pine Siskins were also excellent additions.

Unfortunately, the low counts outnumbered the highs. High numbers for species recorded on at least 12 previous counts were Pine Siskin 456 (smashing the previous record of 64 in 1988) and American Goldfinch 533. There were eight all-time lows: Lesser Scaup 1, Bufflehead 1, Common Merganser 2, Wild Turkey 1 tied (t), Herring Gull 2, Eastern Phoebe 1 (t), European Starling 2,492 (good news providing observers were not ignoring them), and American Tree Sparrow 3.

Six species recorded the second highest totals: Ring-necked Duck 228, Red-shouldered Hawk 111, Red-headed Woodpecker 3, White-breasted Nuthatch 285, Eastern Bluebird 420, and Brown Thrasher 3 (t). Second lowest totals num-

bered eight: Ruddy Duck 2, Northern Harrier 2, American Coot 2, Killdeer 2, Great Horned Owl 2, Red-breasted Nuthatch 2, Northern Mockingbird 183, and Eastern Meadowlark 4 (t).

Ice-covered lakes, ponds, and reservoirs reduced waterfowl numbers and species—the most dramatic illustration was the Common Merganser total. This year it was two, compared to 1,080 in 2008! Ice forced many of the county's Canada Geese to spend the night adjacent to a few partly-open ponds or in fields, as well as on reservoirs and the larger lakes. This further complicated the usual “best guess” goose totals. After eliminating some potentially double-counted flocks, the total may have been almost 10,000 (give or take a few thousand) wintering locally. It is a depressingly large number considering their impact on water quality and vegetation. Ice probably reduced wintering Bald Eagle numbers. Five American Kestrels were down from last year's 10. Carolina Chickadee and Tufted Titmouse totals rebounded nicely from their 2004 lows. Not all northern irruptives moved south in large numbers this winter. Red-breasted Nuthatches were scarce with just two, Purple Finches totaled 12, and Northern Saw-whet Owls were not found. Carolina Wrens (363) survived the first half of winter well. Six Chipping Sparrows were nice; on the other hand, American Tree Sparrow numbers dropped to a disappointing three after last year's 46. During the last decade, Eastern Meadowlarks have become increasingly difficult to find (zero in five

of those years). With constantly decreasing habitat, perhaps this year's four is as good as it's going to get. No crow or blackbird roosts were located, so totals for those species were modest. Last year, a male Baltimore Oriole, wintering in the Centennial Lane area, failed to appear on Count Day; this year, one in the same vicinity pulled an identical disappearing act.

Feeder counters were valuable in adding four Hairy Woodpeckers, one Brown Creeper, one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, one Golden-crowned Kinglet, two Chipping Sparrows, and 313 Pine Siskins (out of a total of 456). That's 68.6% of the siskins—way to go! For complete comparative 24-year totals, go to howardbirds.org and look under Seasonal Counts.

The total number of deer reported was 127.

The count was once again efficiently and carefully orchestrated by Co-compiler Joe Byrnes. He coordinated area leaders (boldfaced below) and feeder watchers, while completing all pre-count paperwork. Local observers received substantial help from birders from several adjoining counties. Everyone anticipates good food and fun at the tally at Karen and Jeff Culler's, our gracious and highly organized hosts. Chuck Stirrat transfers the results to a spreadsheet; it is a time-consuming job which he does efficiently and cheerfully. Many thanks to each of you for your essential role!

(Count continued on page 5)

Howard County Midwinter Count - February 7, 2009.

Totals		Totals		Totals	
Snow Goose	4	Belted Kingfisher	20	White-crowned Sparrow	46
Canada Goose	9,391	Red-headed Woodpecker	3	<i>sparrow species</i>	20
Wood Duck	7	Red-bellied Woodpecker	282	Dark-eyed Junco	1,255
American Wigeon	17	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	27	Northern Cardinal	966
American Black Duck	93	Downy Woodpecker	223	Red-winged Blackbird	1,914
Mallard	659	Hairy Woodpecker	31	Eastern Meadowlark	4
Canvasback	10	Northern(Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	103	Rusty Blackbird	1
Redhead	9	Pileated Woodpecker	47	Common Grackle	2,049
Ring-necked Duck	228	Eastern Phoebe	1	Brown-headed Cowbird	239
Greater Scaup	2	Blue Jay	599	<i>blackbird species</i>	695
Lesser Scaup	1	American Crow	1,497	Purple Finch	12
Bufflehead	1	Fish Crow	208	House Finch	445
Hooded Merganser	53	<i>crow species</i>	1,033	White-winged Crossbill	33
Common Merganser	2	Horned Lark	35	Pine Siskin	456
Ruddy Duck	2	Carolina Chickadee	753	American Goldfinch	533
Wild Turkey	1	Tufted Titmouse	738	House Sparrow	774
Red-necked Grebe	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	Area Total Birds:	35,430
Great Blue Heron	15	White-breasted Nuthatch	285	Area Total Species:	91
Black Vulture	183	Brown Creeper	13	Supplemental Data	
Turkey Vulture	388	Carolina Wren	363	Time Start:	4:15 a
Bald Eagle	7	Winter Wren	25	Time Stop:	11:50 p
Northern Harrier	2	Golden-crowned Kinglet	53	Hours on Foot:	196.5
Sharp-shinned Hawk	15	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	8	Hours by Car:	51.9
Cooper's Hawk	11	Eastern Bluebird	420	Miles on Foot:	163.1
<i>accipiter species</i>	5	Hermit Thrush	10	Miles by Car:	508.9
Red-shouldered Hawk	111	American Robin	450	Hours Feeder Watching:	25.9
Red-tailed Hawk	97	Northern Mockingbird	192	Hours Stationary:	1.6
American Kestrel	5	Brown Thrasher	3	Hours "Owling":	10.5
Peregrine Falcon	1	European Starling	2,492	Miles "Owling":	34.0
American Coot	2	Cedar Waxwing	92	Totals	
Killdeer	2	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	25	Tot. Field Obs. in Area:	66
Ring-billed Gull	529	Eastern Towhee	47	Tot. Field Parties in Area:	44
Herring Gull	2	American Tree Sparrow	3	Tot. Feederwatchers:	8
<i>gull species</i>	188	Chipping Sparrow	6	Tot. Feederwatch Parties:	8
Rock Pigeon	857	Field Sparrow	111	Total Observers in Area:	74
Mourning Dove	755	Savannah Sparrow	10	Tot. Field Pty-Hrs (Reg.):	248.4
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	Fox Sparrow	3	Total Party-Hrs (Feeder):	25.9
Great Horned Owl	2	Song Sparrow	633	Tot. Pty-Hrs (Stationary):	1.6
Barred Owl	12	Swamp Sparrow	26	Total Party-Hrs (Owling):	10.5
Short-eared Owl	4	White-throated Sparrow	1,439	Total Party-Hours:	286.4

(Count continued from page 4)

We continue to be grateful to the many private landowners who grant permission to bird their property; we also thank the following for land access: Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, Howard County Conservancy, and Dept. of Recreation and Parks.

Make a note to save February 6, 2010 for the 25th count!

Observers: *Area 1.* Mark Wallace, Wes Earp, Jim Brinkley, Marilyn Brinkley, Lisa Colangelo, Susan Earp, Bill Hill, Gayle Hill, Marshall Howe, Brenda Kidera, Kathie Lilli, Diane Nagengast (f), Jay Sheppard, Marcy Stutzman, Kate Tufts; *Area 2.* Ward Ebert, Jessica Gorzo (f), Nancy Magnusson, Peter Osenton, Tom Strikwerda; *Area 3.* Dave & Maureen Harvey, Joe Byrnes, Ralph Cullison III, Karen Darcy (f), John Finedore, Amy Hoffman, Felicia Lovelett, Tom Miller, Sherry Tomlinson, Will Tress, Robin Tress; *Area 4.* Mike McClure, Randy Beaton, Bill Blum, Karan Blum, Mike Leumas, Grazina McClure, Clyde Robinette, Romyne Smith, Chuck Stirrat;

Area 5. Kevin Heffernan, John Blaisdell (f), Carol Newman, Karla Pearce, Marie Skane, June Tveekrem, Ginny Walker, Michele Wright; *Area 6.* Bonnie Ott, Ralph Geuder, Emy Holdridge, Bob Lund, Jr., Brigitte Lund, Janet Lydon (f), Elayne Metter (f), Jeff Metter (f), Richard Orr, Suzanne Probst; *Area 7.* Kurt Schwarz, Mary Ann Beverly (f), Tracy Eve, John McKitterick, Barry Miller, Sue Neri, Andrea Robbins, Chandler Robbins, Jane Robbins, Melissa Robbins, Bob Solem, Jo Solem, Michelle Stewart, Eva Sunell, Jim Wilkinson. *Those counting in more than one area or both field/feeder are listed just once.*

POTLUCK THANKS

BY SUE PROBST

Thanks to everyone who helped to make the 2009 Potluck Dinner a wonderful success! As in past years, I had a lot of great volunteers, but I want to give a special "thank you" to several members who volunteered their services to help make it so much fun for the rest of us. Thanks to Marty Chestem who, once again, produced those wonderful "bird cartoon" placemats which have truly become a potluck tradition. And I want to thank Monika and Rod Botsai who graciously took care of the sodas, ice, and floral centerpieces. I'd also like to thank Tom Miller who presided as our "master of ceremonies," and Sherry Tomlinson who brought the three bags of bird seed for our door prizes (donated by Pennington Seed).

I'd like to express my gratitude to Bob and Jo Solem for their very informative presentation about wild mushrooms. And thanks to everyone else who brought slides to share with us. "Hats off" to June Tveekrem for her technical expertise in running our slide show!

Many thanks also go to so many club members who were kind enough to come early to set up the room and/or stay late to clean up. This annual event could not run as smoothly as it does without all of your help. I truly look forward to joining all of you at next year's potluck dinner!

WHAT TO DO WITH STYROFOAM

BY KURT SCHWARZ

If you have ever bought a new appliance, electronics, or the latest volume of Handbook of Birds of the World, the dilemma always arises of what to do with all that Styrofoam packing material. Lacking alternatives, I have broken it up, and placed it in the trash, where it ends up being shipped to a landfill in Virginia.

But recently, an alternative has appeared: recycling! Alas, it lacks the convenience of curbside recycling we enjoy here in Howard County, but with a little effort you, too, can keep this stuff out of the landfill. The Alliance of Foam Packaging Recyclers maintains a website, which lists resources, such as drop off locations, or how to mail the material. See <http://www.epspackaging.org/>.

Oddly enough, this organization does not list its own offices in Crofton as a drop off location, but they welcome drop offs! They

maintain normal business hours, 9-5 Monday-Friday, but their Managing Director says it can be left outside their door in a bag at any time.

Contact Information: Diana L. Gentilcore, Managing Director, Advocacy, Alliance of Foam Packaging Recyclers, 1298 Cronson Blvd, Suite 201, Crofton, MD 21114, Phone: (410) 451-8340 Fax: (410) 451-8343, www.epspackaging.org

So save up a bag, find a good birding spot in the Crofton area, and drop the stuff off on the way to or from. You can build your Anne Arundel County list, and help prolong our landfill. And an interesting aside, *The Washington Post* reported during the second week of March that Loudoun County was predicting the economic downturn would give its landfill an extra year and a half to two years of life. Howard County exports its trash to Virginia, but not to the Loudoun County landfill.

BACKPACKS FOR YOUTH WINNERS

Congratulations to Andrew Colangelo and Sarah Vogel, the winners of the Youth Birding Equipment Contest. Andrew is a fourth grader at Bushy Park Elementary School. Sarah is a home-schooled eighth grader. The backpacks were presented to the winners at the March meeting. Copies of the winning essays and pictures of the presentation are available on the club's website, www.howardbirds.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

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.

May 28, Thursday
Tom Miller
6404 Glasgow Circle
Eldersburg, MD 21784
(410) 795-7005

MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2009

BY KEVIN HEFFERNAN

The Howard County Bird Club holds three bird counts annually: Fall Count, Midwinter Count, and May Count. May Count, which is timed to coincide with the peak of spring migration, is held on the second Saturday in May. This year it is on May 9th. This is by far the most exciting time of year for birding. Spring migrants are passing through on their way north; summer residents are back; and some of the winter migrants are still hanging around. This is the time of year when you will see or hear the largest number of species. Over the last ten years, we have tallied an average of 147 species county-wide during May Count.

For the count, Howard County is divided into the seven areas shown on the map. Each area has an Area Coordinator (name and phone number listed below) who communicates with the counters, assigns territories, and compiles area results. If you are a beginner, ask to be paired with a more experienced birder. Since the point is to tally every individual bird, extra eyes and ears are helpful. If you want to see a particular species, give me a call (410-418-8731) and I will try to place you in a location where you might have a good chance of seeing that bird. At the end of the day, all of the

Area 1	Kate Tufts	410-489-7052
Area 2	Kevin Heffernan	410-418-8731
Area 3	Chuck Stirrat	410-531-2417
Area 4	Mike McClure	410-531-2780
Area 5	Karen Darcy	443-857-1789
Area 6	Bonnie Ott	410-461-3361
Area 7	Jo Solem	301-725-5037

counters are invited to a tally rally at June Tveekrem's house to share what was seen and come up with the county totals. It is a great opportunity to relax, swap stories of the day, and find out what everyone else has seen. (Directions to June's house will be provided by the area coordinators.) Please call June in advance (410-715-3979) and let her know how many are coming from your party and your choice of food or beverage to bring. Dinner will begin at 7:00 p.m. and the tally will start at 8:00 p.m. The completed checklist must be turned in to the area coordinators at the tally rally. If you cannot make it, be sure that your checklist gets delivered or gets called in by 7:00 p.m. We will find out what rarities were seen and often go out the next day to try to relocate them.

Come join us. This is a great chance for beginning birders to see many new and beautiful species of birds as they pass through in their spring plumage.

FOURTH ANNUAL HOWARD COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT

Saturday, July 25, 2009

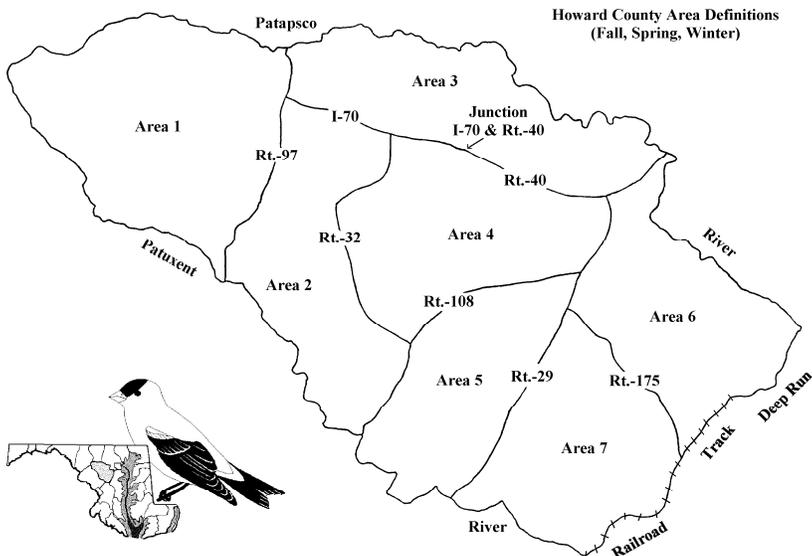
No experience needed!

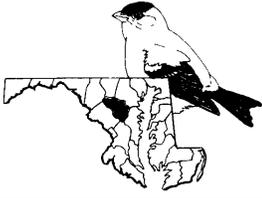
Join fellow birders, naturalists, and other enthusiasts in enjoying these colorful insects.

Each group of observers, with an experienced leader, spends one day visiting ponds and rivers in an assigned region of the county. The group identifies and counts every dragonfly and damselfly seen.

To see results and photos from previous counts please visit www.southernspreadwing.com.

Tally and snacks 4:00 p.m. at June Tveekrem's. To sign up or get more information, contact June at 410-715-3979 or June@SouthernSpreadwing.com.





HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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ANNUAL LIST OF BIRDS TO APPEAR

BY WARD EBERT

You can look for a new feature posted on our website: the list of species seen in Howard County each year. Following on the work originally started by David Holmes and maintained for more than 15 years by Jane Coskren, we have updated the county list through 2008. In 2008, we recorded 231 species which compares well with previous years. The record high of 236 was reached twice, in 1994 and nearly again in 2001. In the recent 20 years the number has stayed above 220 with one exception in 1998 when only 218 species were tallied.

Data is gathered from field trip

reports and seasonal summaries; no individual submissions will be needed, except for corrections/additions. Totals may be adjusted or updated as reports are accepted by the Maryland/DC Records Committee, as splits occur, or mistakes are corrected. Each year's list will appear after the end of the year – it will not be a “running tally” during the year.

Rare bird reports not yet accepted will be shown in the table with a different symbol and will not be included in the total count. We have just recently heard that the Eurasian Collared-Dove – see the Nov/Dec issue of *The Goldfinch* –

has been accepted, so it is included in the count for 2008. However, the Least Tern sighting in 2006 is shown as not yet accepted and is not in the 2006 total. Similarly, some hybrids will be noted, such as Brewster's Warbler, but will not be included in the total.

We are not collecting any other tallies such as personal lists or yard lists as part of this effort. Your part in this is unchanged – keep providing your prompt inputs for the seasonal reports, and keep your eyes open and your records of rare sightings well documented.