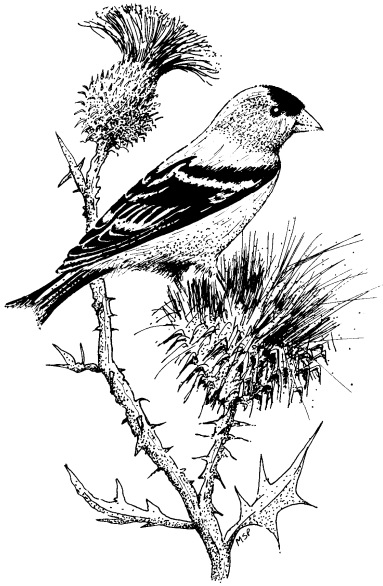


The Goldfinch

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



CLUB MEETINGS - BY JANE GEUDER

Thursday, September 9, 2010 "The Birds of Cuba," by Dr. William Suarez, field ornithologist and curator of paleontology, National Museum of Natural History (Cuba). The speaker's research on fossil birds and current Cuban species has been supported by grants from several museums in North America. He is currently working on his second book, *A Field Guide to the Endemic Birds of Cuba*.

Thursday, October 14, 2010 "How Bugs Help the World Go Round," by Dr. Michael Raupp, Prof. of Entomology, Univ. of Maryland, College Park. Dr. Raupp will discuss the critical role of insects in providing ecological services, including pollination and biologic control. A goal of his research is to lessen reliance on synthetic pesticides, a real help for birds.

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 Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

BY WARD EBERT

Welcome to the 38th year of the Howard County Bird Club. I hope you are looking forward to the activities described in this newsletter and the opportunity to enjoy fall weather outdoors with your fellow birders. Also, I hope you can take pride in the accomplishments of this organization over the past many years. After all, our purpose is not just to engage in a hobby for our own enjoyment; much energy is directed to our charitable and public service efforts. More about that is available on our website in the Members' Corner, Annual Report for 2010. Last spring we set in motion our fall seed sale. Our Board of Directors decided that this year the prof-

its should be directed to help with the repair, preservation, and renewal of habitat damaged by the crude oil washing ashore in the Gulf of Mexico from the accident at the Macondo well. If you have been watching this tragedy unfold and wondering how you might help, we have the answer. Buy some seed for your local birds!

Public outreach is another of our purposes – that means informing, educating, and encouraging other people about birding, nature, and the environment. We have a wonderful website with superb pictures, lots of maps and directions, and volumes of information for all

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

Copy deadline for the November/December 2010 issue is September 25, 2010.

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

SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 – MAY 31, 2010

BY JOANNE SOLEM

Early March found up to six inches of snow in woodlands, while ice remained on ponds, as well as on most lakes, and reservoirs. Passerine migration tended to be slow this season. Notable birds included Cattle Egret, Glossy Ibis, Upland Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, Barn Owl, Alder Flycatcher, and Orange-crowned Warbler.

Canada Geese and Tundra

Swans moved north in large numbers between 3/7 and 3/11 (m. obs.). **Wood Ducks** found conditions at Race Rd Wetlands to their liking as 27 juv. and 5 ad. were counted 5/29 (NM). Peak duck numbers included 10 **Gadwalls** and 50 **Mallards** at Waterford Farm on 3/11, as well as 13

American Wigeons at the McNeal Rd pond (all MW). A male **Blue-winged Teal** at Wilde Lake set a new departure date of 5/15 (BO+). Three **Northern Shovelers** appeared at Wilde Lake 3/8 (3rd earliest–HZ). The only **Red-heads** were a flock of 43 at Stone Lake, Gorman Rd 3/6 (JSm). The **Long-tailed Duck** at Brighton Dam 3/18 was at a usual location; one at Wilde Lake 3/21 was at a less expected site (RLb). The peak **Hooded Merganser** count was 24 at Pigtail 3/12 (M&GMcC). **Common Merganser** numbers at Triadelphia Reservoir (TRIRS) dropped from 800+ at the dam 3/10 (JS) to one female at Pigtail 5/13 (NM). A pair of **Red-breasted Mergansers** at Pigtail 3/17 was the only report (RgB).

A **Northern Bobwhite** at Woodbine 5/8 was a surprise (M&HBrk). A pair of **Ring-necked**

Pheasants in early March along Brookwood Farm Rd continued occasional sightings from that location (KMr). A male pheasant popped up at Dunloggin 3/28 (*vide* KS), and an injured bird was noted along River Rd, Sykesville 5/10 (FLv). The origin of these species is always open to question with known releases occurring within the last few years. The closest known release site was approximately five miles from the River Rd report. **Wild Turkeys** continued to flourish with half a dozen reports near the Patapsco River. Additional sightings came from West Friendship (JCu), Roxbury Rd (BBI), MPEA (JHf), and Burleigh Manor (MKw).

No large flights of **Common Loons** were detected. **Horned Grebes** made a brief appearance between 3/17 at Brighton Dam (1-JCu) and 3/25 at Waterford (2-MW). **Double-crested Cormorants** arrived on 3/20 at both Wilde Lake (1-KJn) and Brighton Dam (1-JCu).

An **American Bittern** was at the University of Maryland Central Farm (UMDCF) 4/30 (JHf, JS+) with two there on 5/15 (2nd latest-BO+). At least 23 of 26 **Great Blue Heron** nests near Lake Kittamaquundi were active on 3/27 (JS). The **Great Egret** peak occurred on 4/27 with seven at Centennial (JTv) and three at Race Rd (NM). Two **Cattle Egrets** spent 5/29 at Fulton Pond (JBI; m. obs.). An adult **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** made an extraordinarily early appearance on 3/23 in the river along the Patuxent Branch

Trail just below Lake Elkhorn (KCK); during May, one was reported frequently at that lake (MSt, BMr+). One or two **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were spotted at Wilde Lake from 4/26 (HZ; JHf) to 5/15; an ad. was present at Sewell's Orchard 5/17 (SN). A **Glossy Ibis** was feeding in the Patapsco River upstream from Daniels 5/2 (JCu, JHf). A flock of 30—an astonishing number for this county—was reported in flight 4/18 near the intersection of MD32/108 (JSh).

The first **Osprey** was spotted over Lake Kittamaquundi 3/21 (DCm). **Bald Eagles** were frequent visitors to the central lakes (m. obs.). Early lone **Broad-winged Hawks** were detected on 4/2 over Centennial (MKw, ph.) and the Patapsco east of MD94 (JHf, JCu). The season's only **Merlin** zipped past an observer at Johns Hopkins APL 5/11 (2nd latest-NM). **Peregrine Falcons** were noted at Lake Elkhorn 3/30 (JCn) and at Alpha Ridge Landfill 4/3 (RC, JHf+).

Rails were scarce with a **Sora** at UMDCF 4/30 (JHf, JS+) and one at Hanover/Race Rds marsh 5/3 (JHf, JS, JCu). An **American Coot** appeared at Centennial 5/1 (MKw), then moved to Elkhorn 5/2 (MSt). One was also reported at Waterford 5/8 (MW).

Overflowing reservoirs made shorebird habitat scarce. Dredging at Lake Elkhorn produced some lovely muck and the island at the east end of Wilde Lake seemed attractive, but neither location pro-

(Records continued on page 3)

(*Records continued from page 2*)
 duced any unusual species. On 4/11 at UMDCF, a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was glimpsed and **Wilson's Snipe** numbers peaked at 20 (**BO+**). **American Woodcock** were reported from seven locations; the last report was 5/21 along Hipsley Mill Rd (**NM**). An **Upland Sandpiper** at the landfill 4/3 was the star shorebird of the season (**RC+**).

A **Laughing Gull** over Rocky Gorge Dam 5/21 was an unusual spring sighting (**JBy, JHf**). Despite intensive searches, **Bonaparte's Gulls** were almost missed—the sole record was a flock of 20 about 4/1 at Wilde Lake (**HZ**). A **Caspian Tern** arrived on 3/29 at Wilde Lake (2nd earliest-**JHf**); the high was eight at the pond east of the intersection of MD99/Woodstock Rd on 4/10 (**NM**).

A **Barn Owl** was found dead on MD144 near the entrance to Woodmont Academy 3/24 (**RFm**). A **Great Horned Owl** nest with two young was discovered in the Savage Business Park 4/28 (**TMr**).

The season's first **Common Nighthawk** was spotted over Martin Rd, w. Col. 4/30 (**JHf**). The peak day was 5/20 with three reports: 14 (season's high) at Sandchain, E. Col. (**J&TDC**), three at MPEA (**JHf**), and one at Font Hill Wetland Pk (**MKw**). **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were seen for a month with the first at MPEA 4/30 (**SBg**) and the last along Florence Rd 5/31 (**NM**). Two **Olive-sided Flycatchers** turned up on 5/8 (May Count) with one near Woodbine (**M&HBk**) and the other at MPEA (**KHf, KDy**). The latter bird stayed until 5/12 (**JSz**). **Alder Flycatchers** are not re-

ported annually. One was noted on 5/15 at the landfill (**RC, BO, NM, JHf+**) near the northern fence line. The following day one was reported from nearby Alpha Ridge Pk (**KS+**). A silent "**Trail's**" **Flycatcher** was present along the river at MPEA 5/17 (**JHf**). On 5/18, two flycatchers were present at the same location. One remained silent, but the other vocalized an Alder's song (**JHf+**). It stayed until 5/21 (**DCm**). **Least Flycatchers** were seen in a brief window: 5/12 MPEA (**JSz**) and 5/12-15 Gorman NRA, Eden Brook (**NM+**).

Early vireos were a **White-eyed Vireo** at Centennial 4/12 (tied 3rd earliest-**JCu**) and a **Blue-headed Vireo** at Brush Run, E. Col. 4/6 (3rd earliest-**JW**). Twenty-four **Red-eyed Vireos** were counted on 5/8 at Schooley Mill Pk (**NM**). Two **Common Ravens** were spotted in the Ellicott City area 3/28 (**ABw**). There were no other reports until late May when up to six were seen over Rocky Gorge Dam. At that site, birds flew over Howard Co. from 5/21 (**DHs**) to 5/23 (5-**RR**). **Cliff Swallows** returned to nest at Brighton Dam, Rocky Gorge Dam, the MD32/Sykesville bridge, and the US29 bridge over Rocky Gorge.

Red-breasted Nuthatches continued their intermittent winter appearances into April at S. Trotter Rd (**WE**), Mt. Albert Rd (latest 4/17-**M&GMcC**), and Thornbrook Rd (**JCu**). Other sightings were Narrow Wind Way, E. Col. 3/20 (**TEv**) and Diversified La. 4/6 (**KHf, KDy**). The season's only **Marsh Wren** appeared at Meadowbrook 5/1 (**KOx**). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** twice set new late dates: 5/18 Sandchain, E. Col.

(**J&TDC**) and 5/19 Henryton, PVSP (**JHf+**). (The previous late date was 5/17/67.)

Rapid warming in late March encouraged some **Eastern Bluebirds** to start egg-laying the last week of the month, among the earliest in almost 40 years of county records (**MW**). Although no fallout of **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** was detected, singles were seen from 5/8 along the south side of the Middle Patuxent, Kindler Rd (**JMcK**) to 5/19 at Henryton on a HCBC field trip (**JHf+**). **Swainson's Thrushes** were well reported from 4/23 at Brush Run, E. Col. (1-**JW**) to 5/21 at Annapolis Rock (1-**NM**) with identical highs of six at MPEA 5/7 (**JCu, JHf**) and 5/15 (**KS**).

A **Northern Mockingbird** near MD108/Snowden River Pkwy 5/28 startled listeners with a **Whip-poor-will** call—odd from an area that has had no known resident whips for decades (**SMu**). The earliest **Brown Thrasher** was noted 3/26 at W. Friendship (**JCu**). **Cedar Waxwings** remained scarce until early May with 95 tallied at five sites on 5/15 (Big Day-**BO+**).

Early warblers were few. A **Prairie** at Mt. Pleasant 4/17 (2nd earliest-**KS**) and a **Prothonotary** at Lake Elkhorn 4/15 (2nd earliest-**EH**) were the record setters. Birders grumbled about the slow arrival of many species and the low numbers of most. Warbler migration appeared to reach a peak the middle of May. High numbers included 16 **Black-throated Blue Warblers** at MPEA 5/15 (**KS**) (a 5/29 departure date at Marriottsville tied the 2nd latest- **NM**), 8 **Pines** at Annapolis Rock 5/21 (**NM**), 10 **Prai-**

(*Records continued on page 4*)

(Records continued from page 3)

ries at Annapolis Rock 5/21 (2nd highest count-NM), 10 **Canadas** at MPEA 5/15 (KS), and 7 **Louisiana Waterthrushes** at Henryton 5/16 (2nd highest count-KS). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** at MPEA 5/12 was the only report (3rd latest-JSz). Birders had a tough time finding **Black-throated Green Warblers** this season. Just one was tallied on 5/8 (May Count). There were no “western” **Palm Warblers** among the 10 reports identifying sub-species. **Bay-breasted Warblers** are seen sparingly in the Mid-Atlantic in spring so multiple birds (some at eye level) were a treat with three at W. Friendship 5/15 (BO+), three at Centennial 5/16 (MKw), and two at Henryton 5/19 (JHf+).

American Tree Sparrows left early with the last one at W. Friendship 3/7 (JCu). Two **Vesper Sparrows** at the landfill 4/3 constituted the only spring report (RC+). **Savannah Sparrow** numbers were low. The high count of nine **Fox Sparrows** at MPEA 3/29 was also their late date (BO; KS). **Lincoln’s Sparrows** are a special spring bird. On 5/13, three were counted at MPEA (KS) and two at Gorman NRA, Eden Brook (JCu, JS). One of the latter remained until 5/20 (tied 3rd latest date-SAr, JHf).

An estimated 75 **Bobolinks** were in a field along Underwood Rd 5/4 (D&MHv). **Eastern Meadowlarks** were reported from the landfill (RC+), UMDCF (BO+), and Mt. Pleasant (MKw). Searches for **Rusty Blackbirds** resulted in just two sightings: Race Rd 3/29 (4-NM) and W. Friendship 4/27 (2-JCu, JHf). A **Brown-headed Cowbird** laid three eggs in a

House Finch nest on a porch at Narrow Wind Way, E. Col. (TEv). The last sighting of a wintering **Baltimore Oriole** at Sharp Rd was 3/30 (RSm, CRo).

Like other irruptives this season, **Purple Finches** were few. One finch was singing at Brush Run, E. Col. 3/28 (JW) and a brown one appeared briefly at Mt. Albert Rd 4/25 (M&GMcC). A **Pine Siskin** visited a feeder at Gateway Business Pk very intermittently 4/23 to 5/4 (KCK, ph.).

Exotics: One **Black Swan** was still present at Moxley’s Pond, MD144 on 3/20 (JCu).

Observers: **SAr** – Stan Arnold, **SBg** – Scott Berglund, **JBl** – John Blaisdell, **BBl** – Bill Blum, **HBrk** – Hilton Brake, **MBrk** – Marcia Brake, **ABw** – Amy Burwein, **JBy** – Joe Byrnes, **KCK** – Ken Clark, **JCn** – Jon Corcoran, **JC** – Jane Coskren, **TDC** – T. Dennis Coskren, **RC** – Ralph Cullison III, **DCm** – David Cummings, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **KDy** – Karen Darcy, **WE** – Wes Earp, **TEv** – Tracy Eve, **RFm** – Ricky Flemming, **RGb** – Ron Gutberlet, **DHs** – Dan Haas, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **DHv** – Dave Harvey, **MHv** – Maureen Harvey, **KHf** – Kevin Heffernan, **EH** – Emy Holdridge, **KJn** – Kye Jenkins, **MKw** – Mike Kerwin, **FLv** – Felicia Lovelett, **RLb** – Rosa Lubitz, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **KMr** – Kathy Mariano, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **MMcC** – Mike McClure, **JMcK** – John McKitterick, **BMr** – Barry Miller, **TMr** – Tom Miller, **SMu** – Sue Müller, **SN** – Sue Neri, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **KOx** – Kevin Oxenrider, **RR** – Robert Ringler, **CRo** – Clyde Robinette, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JSh** – Jay Sheppard, **RSm** – Romayne Smith, **JS** – Jo Solem, **JSm** – John Sommerer, **MSt** – Michelle Stewart, **JSz** – Jim Stasz, **JTv** – June Tveekrem, **MW** – Mark Wallace, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson, **HZ** – Helen Zeichner.

SEED SALE FUNDS AT WORK

BY KURT SCHWARZ

Recently, I received a letter from the American Bird Conservancy thanking the Howard County Bird Club for its \$800 donation to their Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative. This initiative seeks to restore reclaimed coal mines. Our \$800 was spent in Alleghany County in the George’s Creek watershed. The money paid for the tilling of 11 acres that was otherwise too compacted by heavy equipment in the reclamation effort to support tree seedlings. In April, more than 7,000 trees were planted at the site by volunteers from a wide variety of organizations. This included 150 chestnuts donated by the American Chestnut Foundation, a mix of American, Chinese, and American/Chinese crosses. This will ultimately provide additional breeding habitat for Cerulean Warblers.

Details of the 2010 Seed Sale can be found on page 10 of this newsletter and on the website. This year, we plan to devote the proceeds to reclamation of habitat in the Gulf of Mexico.

KINGFISHER NEST PREDATION

When Tim Ray observed an Eastern Ratsnake in a Belted Kingfisher nest entrance along the Patapsco River, he set up his camera. Photographs taken over a two-hour period document the nest predation. Check www.howardbirds.org in the Photo Gallery. Click on Belted Kingfisher to see the story unfold.

(Welcome continued from page 1)

to see. Our field trips are open to the public and I would encourage you to bring a friend sometime, or perhaps a youngster. Speaking of youth, we are continuing our efforts to interest them in birding with an art contest. We have two more prizes (binoculars, books, and more) provided by the state-level youth birding program which we hope to have in the hands of enthusiastic artist-birders in time for the fall migration.

I hope to see all of you at our first fall meeting, September 9th.

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.

September 23, Thursday

Wes Earp
6480 South Trotter Road
Clarksville, MD 21029
410-531-3197

October 28, Thursday

Kevin Heffernan
9775 Diversified Lane
Ellicott City, MD 21042
410-418-8731

RESULTS OF FIFTH ANNUAL HOWARD COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT

BY JUNE TVEEKREM

Despite the marginal weather (cloudy in the morning, light rain in the early afternoon), the count was marvelously successful. We found an all-time high of 52 species! Our previous maximum was 44 species.

The event, co-sponsored by the Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks, attracted 32 participants. Participants came from Howard, Carroll, Montgomery, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Frederick counties. Nine people did the dragonfly count for the first time this year.

Six groups of observers, plus two individuals not in a group, fanned out throughout the county. The county was divided into five territories or areas: 1-west, 2-north, 3-central, 4-south, 5-east.

A late afternoon tally rally at June Tveekrem's house provided a festive end to the day.

Some of the better finds were Swamp Spreadwing, Appalachian Snaketail, Brown Spiketail, Mocha Emerald, and Autumn Meadowhawk. The Autumn Meadowhawk was months earlier than

expected! Slender Bluets seemed unusually abundant this year, although that may have been due to a mass emergence at one pond. Overall, we counted 2705 individuals, which is higher than we've seen in most previous counts. The complete results are posted online at <http://southern spread-wing.com/odes/count2010/>.

I'd like to thank our group leaders: Sue Muller (area 1), Wes and Sue Earp (area 1), Bob Ringler (area 2), June Tveekrem (area 3, and overall count coordinator), Bob Solem (area 4), and Jo Solem (area 5).

In addition to the group leaders, participants were: Pat Caro, Ken Clayton, Alicyn Cross, Mia Dubin, Rena Dubin, Damian Eckenrode, John Fisher, Sherry Fisher, Beth Johnson, Paul Koehler, the Kutt family (4 people), Brooks Langley, Mike MacConnell, Nancy Magnusson, Deanna Marquart, Grazina McClure, Mike McClure, Helen O'Connell, Richard Orr, Linda Roberts, Bill Sherman, and Robin Todd.

Next year's dragonfly count will be on Saturday August 20, 2011. We invite you to join us next summer!

2010-2011 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB OFFICERS

President: Ward Ebert
Vice-President: Wes Earp
Secretary: Chuck Stirrat
Treasurer: Emy Holdridge

Chapter Directors: Jim Lubitz (1st year)
Jeff Culler (2nd year)
State Directors: Mary-Jo Betts
Karen Darcy
Kate Tufts

FALL FIELD TRIPS BY BONNIE OTT & JOE HANFMAN

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 trips 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 that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

 **BUTTERFLIES THROUGH BINOCULARS – LAKE ELKHORN POWER-LINE** Sept. 4, Sat. 9:30 a.m. (2-3 hours) *Meet at Elkhorn Garden Plots, Oakland Mills Road opposite Dasher Ct.* Enjoy searching for late-summer butterflies, and receive expert instruction on their identification. Dick will add information about caterpillar host and adult nectar plants as we encounter various species. Easy walking in the garden plot and on paved paths near the right-of-way alongside open, flowery wet meadows and brushy hillsides. Bring close-focus binoculars to view nectaring behavior; Dick will also use net and jars to provide brief close-up examinations. Cancelled if raining or overcast. No facilities. *Leader - Dick Smith 410-997-7439.*

MIDDLE PATUXENT ENVIRONMENTAL AREA Sept. 5, Sun. 7:30 a.m. (half day) *Meet at the Clegg Meadow entrance off South Wind Circle.* Moderate walking through wooded trails and along the river. Great area for migrants of all species. Field edges and thickets provide sparrow habitat. If time and birds warrant, we will also do the Trotter Rd. Loop Prepare for wet grass and mud on the trails. No facilities. *Leader – Joe Hanfman, auk1844@comcast.net or 410-772-8424.*

ROCKBURN BRANCH PARK Sept. 11, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (half day) *From the Montgomery Road entrance,*

meet in the parking lot on the left just past the restored schoolhouse. Moderate walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park looking for migrants. Paths may be muddy. Facilities available. *Leaders - Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com.*

HENRYTON ROAD, PATAPSCO VALLEY STATE PARK Sept. 15, Wed., 8:00 a.m. (half day) *Meet at bottom of Henryton Rd at the dead end.* Walk along the Patapsco River looking for fall migrants. Mature woodlands provide excellent habitat for migrant thrushes. This is prime migration time and many species of forest birds expected. Plan for moderate walking and possible muddy trails. No facilities. *Leader – Jeff Culler, cullersfuls@hotmail.com, 410-465-9006.*


FALL COUNT September 18, Saturday (See page 7 for details.)

WESTERN REGIONAL PARK Sept. 25, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (half day) *Meet at Carr's Mill Road lot.* Moderate walking along field edges and woodland trails. Opportunity for warblers, sparrows, thrushes and flyovers. Small pond may host shorebirds. Facilities available. *Leader - Bonnie Ott, bonieott@verizon.net, 410-461-3361.*

BON SECOURS SPIRITUAL CENTER Oct. 5, Tues. 8:30 a.m. (2 hours) *Meet at visitors' parking lot.* Easy walking through the grounds

of this spiritual retreat. Woods, fields, and hedgerows provide opportunities for a variety of birds. Facilities available. *Leader - Michele Wright 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.*

 **MT. PLEASANT FARM - HOWARD COUNTY CONSERVANCY** Oct. 9, Sat., 8:00 a.m., (2-3 hours) *Meet at parking lot.* Easy walking through the fields of Mt. Pleasant Farm. Tree lines, hedgerows, and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Prime time for sparrows. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available. *Leader - Scott Berglund, 410-750-2568 or Business250@yahoo.com.*

 **ELKHORN GARDEN PLOTS** Oct. 11, Mon. 8:30 a.m. (2 hours) *The plots are on the east side of Oakland Mills Road opposite Dasher Ct.* The garden plots offer excellent opportunities for unusual sparrows, migrant passerines, and interesting late season butterflies. No facilities. *Leader – Jim Wilkinson, wilkinson8@verizon.net or 410-381-9250.*

SPARROW BIG DAY

Oct. 16, Sat. (all day)
Limit: 12 people
Search the wetlands and dry fields in this intensive search for as many sparrows as possible. Going for 12 species! Previous years have turned up non-sparrow rarities! Expect difficult walking for most of the

(Field Trips continued on page 7)

(Field Trips continued from page 6)

day. Knee boots a must. Facilities at some spots. Contact Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 410-461-3361 to sign up and get info.

DAVID FORCE PARK

Oct. 21, Thurs., 8:00 a.m., (2 hours) Meet at the sign on Pebble Beach Drive. Easy walking through the wooded trails and fields of this Howard County Open Space. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. No facilities. Leader - Michele Wright 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.

LAKE ELKHORN

Oct. 23, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours) Meet at the dock. Easy walking along the lake and to Forebay Pond. Migrants will be moving through. Warblers are generally in abundance. The lake can turn up interesting surprises. Hawks are also possible flying over. No facilities. Leader - Tom Miller BirderTWM@verizon.net or 410-795-7005.

WEST FRIENDSHIP PARK

Oct. 24, Sun., 8:00 a.m. (half day) Meet at shopping center just west of MD 32 and MD 144. Will carpool to nearby park. Moderate walking along field edges and through stream valleys. Small ponds may have some surprises. Expect wet areas. Rustic facilities. Leaders - Jeff Culler, cullersfuls@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006 and Joe Byrnes 410-730-5329 or LBRoller@verizon.net.

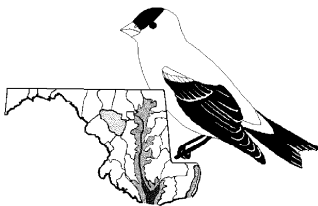
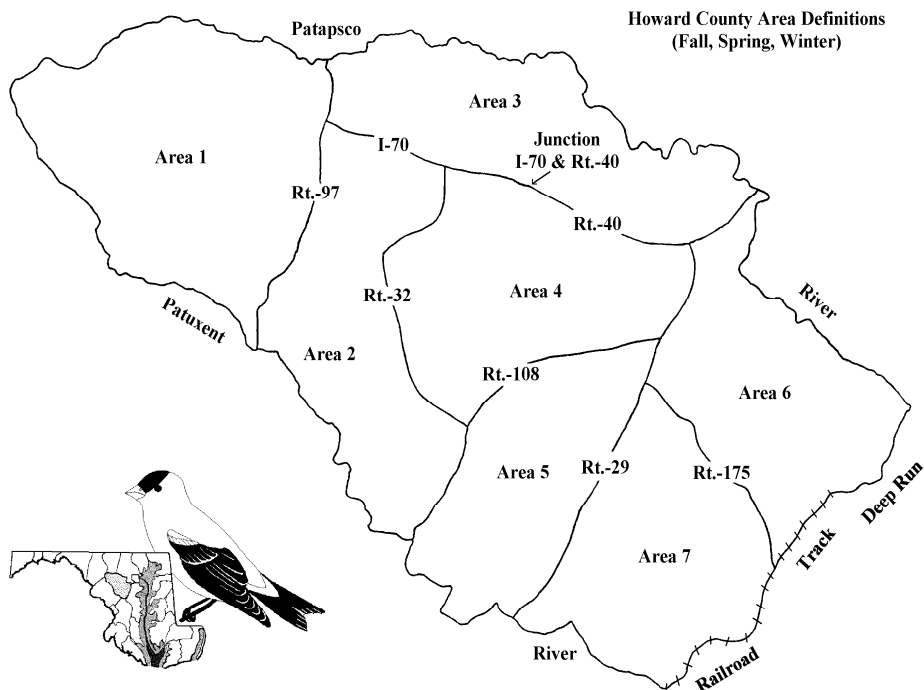
SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL FALL COUNT

BY MICHAEL MCCLURE

The Howard County Bird Club's annual Fall Count, scheduled each year on the third Saturday of September, will be on September 18th. **Mike McClure** 410-531-2780 and **Chuck Stirrat** 410-531-2417 are the county co-coordinators. Prior years have set an average of 124 species of birds identified on the count. Spend the day birding with us and help raise the average! Birders of all skill levels are encouraged to participate. Ask to be put with an experienced individual if you do not wish to have your own territory. The county is divided into seven areas (shown below) which are used for all annual counts. A fall season field sheet for Howard County is available on the Club's website. Species that require a writeup include those identified with a double asterisk (**), as well as any writeins. Others that may require a writeup or oral amplification (*), as

well as those that are early or late dates (@), are indicated.

The following area coordinators have been named: Area 1: Mark Wallace 301-725-6370 and Wes Earp 410-531-3197; Area 2: Jeff Culler 410-465-9006; Area 3: Karen Darcy & Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731; Area 4: Bill & Karan Blum 410-489-9197; Area 5: Kurt Schwarz 410-461-1643; Area 6: Bonnie Ott 410-461-3361; and Area 7: Eva Sunell 410-995-0029. You may call an area or county coordinator to volunteer, or check at the September meeting. **Martha and Don Waugh** will host the tally rally at 9522 Angelina Circle, Columbia, MD, 410-381-8841. The potluck dinner will be served at approximately 7:00 pm, call them by Sept. 17th, to reserve space, choose a food to bring, and if necessary obtain directions.



Did you know the Howard County Bird Club has a Facebook page? Become a fan!

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT, MAY 8, 2010

BY KEVIN HEFFERNAN

Sixty-three birders participated in the 63rd annual May Count which was held on May 8, 2010. The day was partly cloudy with temperatures in the upper-60's to low-70's however the wind picked up mid to late morning and made the birding very slow. The 139 total species and the total number of birds (15,515) seen during the count are both the lowest in the last 10 years. Seventy-eight species have been seen every year while 23 species have been seen only once. No species was seen for the first time this year.

Yellow-crowned Night Heron was seen for only the third time on May Count. Ring-necked Duck and Pied-billed Grebe were seen for the 7th time and American Coot and Red-headed Woodpecker for the ninth time. Great Egret was seen for the tenth time including the last seven years in a row. Olive-sided Flycatcher was also seen for the 10th time including six of the last ten years.

Four species had or tied all-time high counts: Canada Goose, Black Vulture, Eastern Screech-Owl, and Northern Rough-winged Swallow. An additional five species had or tied 10 year high counts: Northern Bobwhite, American Coot, Red-headed Woodpecker (each tied with only a single bird seen), Greater Yellowlegs, and Bank Swallow. Three species had or tied all-time low counts: American Kestrel, Brown Thrasher, and Hooded Warbler. Only a single American Kestrel was seen for the third year in a row. This species has been seen every year on May Count but

could easily lose that status in the near future.

Forty-five species had 10 year low counts including 15 species of warblers, all three mimics, and 4 sparrow species. The total number of warbler species (25) and the total number of warblers seen (1088) were also ten year lows. The good news is that Rock Pigeon, Brown-headed Cowbird, and House Sparrow also had the lowest numbers in the last 10 years. Woodpecker numbers were approximately half of those from last year except for Pileated, which was the same as last year. Carolina Wren numbers dropped from 347 last year to 139 this year probably due to the severe winter.

A compilation spreadsheet of the May Count data from 1974, the first year it was organized by the Bird Club, until this year can be found on the Howard County Bird club website.

Many thanks to our compiler, Chuck Stirrat. His tireless efforts and attention to detail make this task much easier than it would otherwise be. I also want to thank the Area Coordinators: Wes Earp, Chuck Stirrat, Mike McClure, Karen Darcy, Bonnie Ott, and Jo Solem. Finally, I want to give a special thanks to June Tveekrem for again volunteering to host the tally rally. Her hospitality is, as always, very much appreciated.

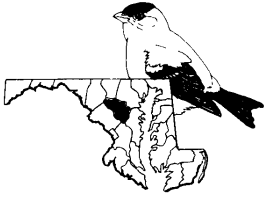
And to the following participants, a big thank you, without you, these counts could not happen: Randy Beaton, Dana Berglund, Scott Ber-

glund, Hilton Brake, Marcia Brake, Jim Brinkley, Marilyn Brinkley, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis Coskren, Jane Coskren, Jeff Culler, Ralph Cullison, Karen Darcy (Area 5 coordinator), Sue Earp, Wes Earp (Area 1 coordinator), Ward Ebert, Tom Feild, Jeff Friedhoffer, Scott Guzewich, Joe Hanfman, John Hayes, Kevin Heffernan (Area 2 coordinator), Bill Hill, Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Diane Johns, Geraldine King, Kim Knox, Dave Kubitsky, Mike Leumas, Kathie Lillie, Felicia Lovelett, Nancy Magnusson, Grazina McClure, Mike McClure (Area 4 coordinator), John McKitterick, Elayne Metter, Jeff Metter, Barry Miller, Tom Miller, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Peter Osenton, Michael O'Sullivan, Bonnie Ott (Area 6 coordinator), Ron Polniaszek, Susan Polniaszek, Sue Probst, Clyde Robinette, Jay Sheppard, Romaine Smith, Bob Solem, Jo Solem (Area 7 coordinator), Michelle Stewart, Chuck Stirrat (Area 3 coordinator), Tom Strikwerda, Marcy Stutzman, Eva Sunell, Kate Tufts, Ginny Walker, Mark Wallace, Michele Wright, and Paul Zucker.

The Second Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas publication date has been moved up to mid-November by Johns Hopkins University Press. Go to the club website for information about pre-publication discounts. Plan your holiday giving and save money!

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS - MAY 8, 2010

Canada Goose	1,184	Pileated Woodpecker	43	Chestnut-sided Warbler	5
Wood Duck	52	Olive-sided Flycatcher	2	Magnolia Warbler	5
Mallard	177	Eastern Wood-Pewee	129	Blk.-throtd. Blue Warbler	27
Ring-necked Duck	1	Acadian Flycatcher	85	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	95
Wild Turkey	3	Willow Flycatcher	4	Blk.-throtd. Green Warbler	1
Northern Bobwhite	1	Eastern Phoebe	70	Blackburnian Warbler	2
Common Loon	3	Great Crested Flycatcher	82	Pine Warbler	5
Pied-billed Grebe	1	Eastern Kingbird	119	Prairie Warbler	18
Double-crested Cormorant	22	White-eyed Vireo	89	Palm Warbler	1
Great Blue Heron	48	Yellow-throated Vireo	15	Blackpoll Warbler	153
Great Egret	3	Blue-headed Vireo	1	Black-&-white Warbler	28
Green Heron	15	Warbling Vireo	29	American Redstart	37
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1	Red-eyed Vireo	367	Worm-eating Warbler	10
Black Vulture	200	Blue Jay	328	Ovenbird	139
Turkey Vulture	270	American Crow	363	Northern Waterthrush	3
Osprey	10	Fish Crow	72	Louisiana Waterthrush	31
Bald Eagle	4	crow species	173	Kentucky Warbler	8
Northern Harrier	1	Horned Lark	12	Common Yellowthroat	221
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Purple Martin	43	Hooded Warbler	5
Cooper's Hawk	7	Tree Swallow	233	Canada Warbler	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	46	N. Rough-winged Swallow	123	Yellow-breasted Chat	18
Broad-winged Hawk	5	Bank Swallow	5	Eastern Towhee	197
Red-tailed Hawk	38	Cliff Swallow	55	Chipping Sparrow	262
American Kestrel	1	Barn Swallow	417	Field Sparrow	50
American Coot	1	Carolina Chickadee	300	Savannah Sparrow	29
Killdeer	27	Tufted Titmouse	274	Grasshopper Sparrow	14
Greater Yellowlegs	9	White-breasted Nuthatch	40	Song Sparrow	111
Lesser Yellowlegs	9	Carolina Wren	139	Swamp Sparrow	1
Solitary Sandpiper	54	House Wren	85	White-throated Sparrow	20
Spotted Sandpiper	18	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	Scarlet Tanager	118
Semipalmated Sandpiper	9	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	239	Northern Cardinal	732
Least Sandpiper	19	Eastern Bluebird	189	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	3
Wilson's Snipe	5	Veery	15	Blue Grosbeak	13
Ring-billed Gull	4	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	Indigo Bunting	245
Rock Pigeon	68	Swainson's Thrush	17	Bobolink	87
Mourning Dove	263	Hermit Thrush	1	Red-winged Blackbird	736
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	Wood Thrush	218	Eastern Meadowlark	9
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	4	American Robin	869	Common Grackle	356
Eastern Screech-Owl	4	Gray Catbird	531	Boat-tailed Grackle	
Barred Owl	13	Northern Mockingbird	200	Brown-headed Cowbird	167
Chimney Swift	207	Brown Thrasher	14	Orchard Oriole	69
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	18	European Starling	928	Baltimore Oriole	189
Belted Kingfisher	8	American Pipit	5	House Finch	118
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	Cedar Waxwing	243	American Goldfinch	338
Red-bellied Woodpecker	209	Blue-winged Warbler	3	House Sparrow	226
Downy Woodpecker	67	Nashville Warbler	1	Total Birds	15,515
Hairy Woodpecker	20	Northern Parula	174	Total Species	139
Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	34	Yellow Warbler	96		



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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Columbia, MD 21044

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SEED SALE WILL BE HELD AT THE WILDLIFE AUTHORITY

BY KEVIN HEFFERNAN

The Wildlife Authority has recently reopened with a new owner, Kevin Cassidy. Kevin has graciously agreed to host our seed sale this year. The sale will be held on October 2nd from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and will feature a *larger selection of seeds than we have ever had*. The prices are *very* good and there will be a 15% discount on most items in the store on the day of the sale. In addition, Kevin has agreed to offer the same 15% discount December 5 - 12 for everyone who purchases seed through the Bird Club seed sale. In early September an order form will sent by mail, by email, and will be posted on the Howard County Bird Club website.

As usual, the profits from the seed sale will be contributed to conservation causes. This year the profits will go to help the birds affected by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico area. Over the years, the Howard County Bird Club has contributed over \$63,000 to various conservation organizations. The vast majority of these funds have come from the seed sales. Since Kevin gets a volume discount when purchasing the seed, he has agreed to pass on to the Bird Club a larger percentage of the gross (on a graduated scale) depending on the volume sold. So please stock up on seed and help the birds.

We thank all of you who have supported the sale over the years particularly during the last few years when the seed sale has been in transition. We also thank Sherry Tomlinson who has recently stepped down from the position of seed sale chair. Her hard work, organization, and leadership skills over the past few years have been essential in keeping the seed sale going and are greatly appreciated. Michael O'Sullivan has agreed to take on this responsibility for the club. We hope to see you on October 2nd.