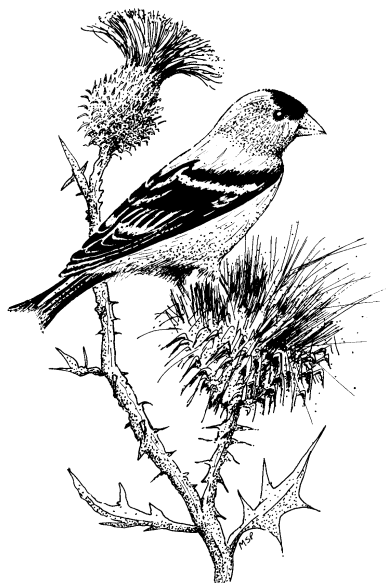


The Goldfinch

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



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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 2011 issue is September 25, 2011.

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:

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

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

CLUB MEETINGS - BY [JANE GEUDER](#)

Thursday, September 8, 2011 "National Wildlife Refuges: Great Birding Made Even Better," by Paul Baicich. His presentation will explain the role of refuges in bird conservation history, show some of the "most-wanted" birds found on refuges, and give examples of how our refuges strive to become better birding destinations. **Meeting is at Howard County Recreation & Parks Headquarters**, 7120 Oakland Mills Rd, 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.

Thursday, October 13, 2011 "Cape May Capers," by Kurt Schwarz. Southern New Jersey is best known for its annual fall hawk migration. But other good birds show up as well. Kurt will review the major birding sites and some lesser known ones as well with photos of expected and rare species he has found. **Meeting is at the Robinson Nature Center**, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044. 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 40th year of the Howard County Bird Club. Much has been changing for us, most notably the move of our monthly meetings from the Recreation and Parks Headquarters to the new James and Anne Robinson Nature Center at 6692 Cedar Lane in Columbia. As this issue goes to press we expect that our October 13th meeting will be held in the auditorium at the Nature Center, but you would be wise to check our website in early October to be sure.

We again have an exciting calendar of events for birders of all skill levels. As I look back at how the club

helped my interest and skills in birding, I recall both the benefits of being out in the field with experienced people who were willing to explain things to me, and the many fine Thursday night programs where I learned about behavior of birds and about their relationships to habitat. I'm hoping we can attract others to the club who will benefit and enjoy these activities as I have.

This newsletter and our website will lead you to descriptions of all these opportunities. Be on the lookout for the Seed Sale and the annual Fall Count among our early

(Welcome continued on page 5)

SPRING BIRD RECORDS: MARCH 1 – MAY 31, 2011

BY [JOANNE SOLEM](#)

Headline species for spring included [Cattle Egret](#), [Mississippi Kite](#), Least Tern, [Black-capped Chickadee](#), [Summer Tanager](#), [Dickcissel](#), [Common Redpoll](#), and [Evening Grosbeak](#). In addition, [Common Ravens](#) were found nesting on Rocky Gorge Dam (active nest on the Prince George's Co. side, used nest on the Howard side) verifying a new nesting species.

Forty **Snow Geese** over Annapolis Rock 3/5 was the season's high (**JSz**). At least 675 **Tundra Swans** rested on TRIRS 3/5 (**BHi; KS**). Two (1 m.) **Gadwalls** were last seen at Lake Elkhorn 4/5 (**JW**). **Blue-winged Teal** were reported three times: 3/30 Race Rd wetlands 4 (2 m.) (**JHf**), 4/9 Meadowbrook Park 2 (1 m.) (**BLd**), and 4/24 UMDCF 1 (**BO+**). Two (1 m.) **Redheads** were present at Centennial from 3/7 (**KS**) to 3/20 (**JBy+**), with 4 m. at TRIRS 3/9 (**JHf**). Four (2 m.) **Greater Scaup** were at Camden Meadows Pond 3/11 (**NM**). TRIRS hosted two **Long-tailed Ducks** 3/8 (**BHi**), a **Common Goldeneye** 3/14 (**ROw**), and a high of 847 **Common Mergansers** 3/5 (**KS**). **Red-breasted Mergansers** were reported from 3/7 at Centennial (2 m.) (**CSt**) to 4/27 at Brighton Dam (**BHb, ROw, ECl**).

The **Wild Turkey** count continues to rise. The flock of 25 along Triadelphia Rd 3/6 established a new high (**ROw**). They were reported several times from E. Columbia, including one photographed on a Rustling Leaf rooftop (*vide MWg*)! Spring's first **Double-crested**

Cormorant was spotted at Wilde Lake 3/8 (**EH; CNw**), with a high of 28 there on 3/26 (**JCu**) and 3/28 (**EH**).

An **American Bittern** at a pond on Forsythe Rd 3/26 was the third earliest record (**DHv, ph, CSt+**); another was at Fox Chase w. of MD32 on 5/1-5/5 (**JCu+**). **Great Blue Herons** again nested at Vantage Point with 25-30 occupied nests on 3/13 (**JS, EH**). An ad. **Little Blue Heron** was at Race Rd 5/10 (**JHf**); two (1 im.) were present 5/14 (**BO, EH**). A **Cattle Egret** visited Fulton Pond 5/3 (**DCm; m. obs.**) An ad. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** showed up at Wilde Lake 4/7 (**HZ**), and an ad. **Yellow-crowned** appeared at Loyola Pond, E. Col. 5/1 (**SN**). On 5/24 it moved to Lake Elkhorn (**MO'S**) and remained there.

A pair of **Black Vultures** mated in a deciduous tree in an Ellicott City neighborhood 3/27 (atlas skills still useful) (**DAg**). An ad. **Mississippi Kite** was spotted over Brush Run, E. Col. 5/2 for the county's sixth record (**JW**); it (or another) was seen 5/29 over Manahan Dr. (**BO**). Two sightings in one season is a first! **Bald Eagle** numbers reached a modest high of four im. at Brighton Dam 3/5 (**KS**). Single **Northern Harriers** were reported from 4/9 at I-95/MD216 (**W&SE**) to 5/14 at W. Friendship (**JCu, JHf, DCm**). The season's first **Broad-winged Hawks** were three over Burleigh Manor 4/11 (**MKw**); the high was eight at Cavey La 4/17 (**RRf**). A **Merlin** zipped over Brush Run 5/28, a new late date (**JW**).

Spring's only **Virginia Rail** appeared at UMDCF 4/10, setting a new early record (**BO+**). **Soras** were found at UMDCF 4/24 (**BO+**) and at Western Regional Park 5/10 (**DCm**). The latter bird remained until 5/14 (**B&GHi**). **American Coots** hit a high of eight at Centennial 3/1 (**SN**).

Semipalmated Plovers were seen at four sites from 5/6 at Fulton Pd (**DCm-1**) to 5/30 at W. Friendship (**JCu-1**). Single **Spotted Sandpipers** on 4/7 at Waverly Pd (**JCu**) and at Wilde Lake (**JOd**) tied the second earliest arrival date. Besides **American Woodcock** reports from Annapolis Rock and MPEA, four flew over a W. Friendship yard 3/12 (**LCg**). A consistent courtship site this year was Mt. Pleasant where at least three displayed from 3/5 (**WMk**) to 3/14 (**KS**).

Two **Laughing Gulls** at Western RP 5/15 were the second latest spring record (**EHn**). **Bonaparte's Gulls** first appeared on 5/1 at Larriland Pond, MD94 (**DCm-3**) and at Wilde Lake (**JCu, JHf-4**). A compact flock of 160+ flew over delighted observers at UMDCF 4/10 (**BO, NM, JHf, JS+**). Two **Caspian Terns** at Wilde Lake 3/30 were the third earliest record (**RRf**). One of the season's special birds was a **Least Tern** which circled a pool at Race Rd 5/11 before heading west, the county's second record (**JS, EH, KDy**).

Cuckoos were extremely scarce and late. No **Black-billed** were

(Records continued on page 3)

(*Records continued from page 2*) reported, while the first **Yellow-billed** was not detected until 5/14 at Elkhorn (**ALw**). **Eastern Screech-Owls** were noted from four sites. A pair at a cavity near Harmel Dr, W. Col. was watched 4/27 to 5/11 with food delivery noted. A business trip interrupted visits until 5/22+ — at which time there was no activity (**TRy**). Based on **Ward Ebert's** experiences with box-nesting owls, young may have fledged by late May. Very few **Common Nighthawks** were tallied with four the high at Cavey La 5/25 (**RRf**). Four **Red-headed Woodpecker** reports were from 4/22 at W. Friendship (**JCu**) to 5/27 at Hobbs Rd (**B&GHi**).

One **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at MPEA 5/12 (**DCm**); the first **Eastern Wood-Pewee** showed up at Daniels 5/1 (**NM**); while two **Acadian Flycatchers** at MPEA 4/27 were the second earliest ever (**KDy, GMcC, JS**). **Least Flycatchers** were logged at Schooley Mill Pk 5/10 (**JMo**), Hipsley Mill 5/14 (**TFe, GKg**), and Mt. Pleasant 5/15 (**RRf**). A **Great Crested Flycatcher** 4/19 at Brush Run was the second earliest (**JW**); his **Eastern Kingbird** on 4/12 at Centennial tied the third earliest and a **Blue-headed Vireo** 4/4 at Brush Run was the third earliest (**JW**). A **Warbling Vireo** at Cavey La 4/19 tied the early date (**RRf**).

A new nesting species is always noteworthy. On 3/31, a **Common Raven** nest with two attending adults was observed on the Prince George's Co. side of the face of Rocky Gorge Dam. (**JSh, ph., JS, JBn**). A used nest (judging from the amount of whitewash below it) was observed on an identical concrete pillar on the Howard Co.

side. Sightings away from the dam were one at MD99/Union Chapel Rd 3/5 (**JFh**) and one at Florence Rd/Shafferville Rd 5/5 (**DCm**). Swallow arrivals and numbers were unremarkable, although 75 **Rough-winged Swallows** over the river at Marriottsville on 4/16 was an unusually large number for that location (**NM**).

Two **Black-capped Chickadees** lingered to set records. One at Annapolis Rock 4/2 tied the third latest departure (**KS, DCm**). The second latest record (4/3) was a bird that had arrived at Thornbrook Dr. 11/2/10 and was enjoyed for "153 wonderful days." It was photographed repeatedly and seen by dozens of birders, thanks to **Jeff and Karen Culler's** hospitality. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were reported from MPEA 3/19 (**KS**), Duvall Rd 4/18 (**KTf**), Allview 4/23 (**JMcK**), Diversified La 4/3-4/25 (**KDy, KHf**), and Annapolis Rock 5/1 (**RRf-2**). A pair of **White-breasted Nuthatches** was observed nest-building at Forebay 3/27, an excellent Piedmont date (**SN**). The only **Marsh Wren** this spring was reported from UMDCF 4/24, the second earliest record (**BO+**).

Thrush migration was disappointing with late arrivals and low numbers. Single **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** were detected at Schooley Mill Pk 5/11 (**DCm**) and Gorman Stream Valley NRA 5/14 (**JMcK**). An **American Robin** at MPEA 3/5 showed areas of white in the wings and around the eyes (**DCm**). Two **Gray Catbirds** visited suet feeders. One at Sandchain, E. Col, 4/16+ ate plain suet (**J&TDC**), while the one at Diversified La enjoyed peanut butter-flavored (**KDy, KHf**). **Cedar**

Waxwings seemed in no hurry to nest. On 5/29, a group of six were at Gateway (**SN**) and 14 were at Brush Run (**JW**).

A surprising number of warbler species were early, although seasonal numbers were often low. A **Chestnut-sided Warbler** at MPEA 4/24 was the second earliest record (**BO, EH, DCm**), as was the **Black-throated Blue** at Marriottsville 4/17 (**TDC**). A **Black-throated Green** at Elkhorn 4/7 (**ALw, EPd**) and 4/9 (**ALw**) set a new arrival date (previous record 4/8/89 **JC, NM**). Second earliest records included a **Blackburnian** at Lake Kittamaquundi 4/21 (**DCm, m. obs.**), three **Black-and-whites** at MPEA 4/5 (**JHf**), and a **Common Yellowthroat**, River Hill, W. Col. 4/7 (**W&SE**). A **Canada** at Daniels 5/1 tied the third earliest date (**NM**), as did the **Yellow-breasted Chat** at Annapolis Rock 4/24 (**DCm**). Highs were **Northern Parula** 11 at Woodstock 5/29 (**KS**), **Pine** 10 at Elkhorn 4/7 (**ALw, EPd**) and 6 there 4/5 (**JW**), **Prairie** 7 at Annapolis Rock 4/29 (**RRf**), **Bay-breasted** 6 at Cavey La 5/15 (**RRf**), **American Redstart** 12 at Cavey La 5/15 (**RRf**) and 10 at Woodstock 5/30 (**KS**). **Ceruleans** were reported from four locations: Hipsley Mill 4/28 (**DCm**), Daniels 5/1 (**NM**), Marriottsville 5/10 (**JCu**), and Woodstock 5/30 (**KS-2, ph.**) The only **Prothonotary** was spotted at Blooms La 5/14 (**WE**).

One **Vesper Sparrow** was at the Alpha Ridge Landfill 4/2 (**RC+**). **Fox Sparrow** highs were 11 at Schooley 3/12 (**NM**) and 10 at Forsythe Rd 3/26 (**DHv+**). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Woodstock 4/6 was the second earliest (**RRf**).

(*Records continued on page 4*)

(Records continued from page 3)

Two **Summer Tanagers** (both first year males) were seen: Waterloo Pk 4/26 (**SMu, HMz**, ph.) and Wynfield Dr 5/18 (**RC**). A **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** showed up at a Mt. Albert feeder 4/27 (**G&MMc**). Four eating black locust flowers at Brush Run, E. Col. 5/5 were of particular interest (**JW**). Third earliest records were a m. **Blue Grosbeak** at the same Mt. Albert feeder 4/26 (**G&MMcC**), and a m. **Indigo Bunting** at a Stone Hill Dr. feeder (**KLz**). A **Dickcissel** at UMDCF 5/14 was a good find (**G&MMcC**), while 20 **Bobolinks** there on 4/24 were the second earliest ever (**BO+**). There was one **Rusty Blackbird** record in each of the spring months (all **JCu**); his two birds at W. Friendship 5/8 tied the third latest date.

Purple Finches (mostly mid to late April) and **Pine Siskins** were widely reported. Two choice winter finches at feeders were **Common Redpoll** 2/28 (**SHs**, 1 m.), 3/1-2 (**JHf+**, 1 m.), 3/3-6 (**JHf**, m. obs., 1 f.) south of Underwood Rd/Old Frederick Rd, and a female **Evening Grosbeak** at Cavey La 4/25-26 (**RRf**, ph.).

Note: The tagged **Ring-billed Gull** at Long Gate Shopping Center 2/12/11 had been banded and

tagged in Worcester Co., Mass. 10/29/10 (**JGr**).

MPEA – Middle Patuxent Environmental Area
 TRIRS – Triadelphia Reservoir
 UMDCF – University of Maryland Central Farm
 f. – female, m. – male, ad. – adult, im. – immature, m. obs. – many observers, ph. -photograph

Observers: **DAg** – Dianne Aguilera, **JBn** – Jim Benton, **JBy** – Joe Byrnes, **ECl** – Ed Carlson, **LCg** – Lisa Colangelo, **JC** – Jane Coskren, **TDC** – T. Dennis Coskren, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **RC** – Ralph Cullison III, **DCm** – David Cummings, **KDy** – Karen Darcy, **SE** – Sue Earp, **WE** – Wes Earp, **TFe** – Tom Feild, **JFh** – Jared Fisher, **JGr** – Jane Geuder, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **DHv** – Dave Harvey, **KHf** – Kevin Heffernan, **EHn** – Elaine Hendricks, **BHi** – Bill Hill, **GHi** – Gayle Hill, **EH** – Emmalyn Holdridge, **SHs** – Scott Houston, **BHb** – Bill Hubick, **MKw** – Mike Kerwin, **GKg** – Geraldine King, **ALw** – Allen Lewis, **KLz** – Kathy Litzinger, **Bld** – Brigitte Lund, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **GMcC** – Grazina McClure, **MMcC** – Mike McClure, **JMcK** – John McKitterick, **WMk** – Woody Merkle, **HMz** – Helen Metzman, **JMo** – Jim Moore, **SMu** – Sue Muller, **SN** – Sue Neri, **CNw** – Carol Newman, **JOd** – Jeanne Odermatt, **MO'S** – Michael O'Sullivan, **ROw** – Robert Ostrowski, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **EPd** – Elaine Pardoe, **TRy** – Tim Ray, **RRf** – Russ Ruffing, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JSh** – Jay Sheppard, **JS** – Jo Solem, **JSz** – Jim Stasz, **CSt** – Chuck Stirrat, **KTf** – Kate Tufts, **MWg** – Martha Waugh, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson, **HZ** – Helen Zeichner.

SISTERS WIN ART CONTEST

BY [KATE TUFTS](#)

The Howard County Bird Club's 2011 Student Art Contest garnered 75 submissions this year from students around the county. Judge Brenda Kidera had her work cut out selecting the twelve most outstanding pictures. Ms. Kidera designed this year's Wine-in-the-Woods poster.

Interestingly enough, two sisters each took first place in their respective categories. Ada Troung, a fourth-grader at Centennial Lane Elementary School, won for her pastel drawing of an Ovenbird and her older sister, Jocelyn Troung, took first place among the fifth and sixth-graders for her pastel of a Yellow Warbler. Eleven-year-old Jocelyn attends Burleigh Manor Middle School.

Each of the girls received a backpack donated by MOS. The packs contained a pair of Eagle Optic binoculars and field guides. Ward Ebert presented the packs to the girls at their respective schools.

The winning pieces may be seen at the Club's website on this page: http://www.howardbirds.org/Back-pack_contest_2011_winners.htm.

Enclosed is the 2011-2012 Membership Application. Don't forget to complete and return it!

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

October 27, Thursday
 Kurt Schwarz
 9045 Dunloggin Court
 Ellicott City, MD 21042
 410-461-1643

2011-2012 HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected Officers

President	Ward Ebert
Vice President	Wes Earp
Secretary	Chuck Stirrat
Treasurer	Emy Holdridge
Past President	vacant

Elected Directors

1 st Year Chapter Director	Sherry Tomlinson
2 nd Year Chapter Director	Jim Lubitz
State Directors	Kate Tufts
	Jeff Friedhoffer
	Karen Darcy

Appointed Committee Chairs

Field Trips – Chair	Bonnie Ott
Field Trips – Assistant Chair	Joe Hanfman
Ornithological Data/Records	Jo Solem
Conservation	Kurt Schwarz
Newsletter	Amanda Witt
Webmaster	Bob Solem
Potluck Dinner	Kathie Lillie
Programs	Jane Geuder
Seed Sale	Michael O’Sullivan

(Welcome continued from page 1)

fall events. We made very good use of our seed sale profits last year through an American Bird Conservancy-sponsored habitat restoration project with a matching-funds offer, aimed at repair of island nesting sites damaged by the Macondo oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. The upcoming 2011 Seed Sale is a great opportunity to support birdlife and attract birds to your yard.

Please encourage others to be aware of our many opportunities for fellowship and participation. I hope to see all of you at our first fall meeting, September 8th.

ELECTRONIC DISTRIBUTION

You may have noticed a few changes to this issue of The Goldfinch. Email addresses for the field trip leaders are active hyperlinks. Some of the birds in the seasonal records are linked to their photo pages on the website. Many of the field trip locations are linked to their site guides.

Why were these changes made? Because starting with the November/December issue, you will have the option to receive The Goldfinch via email. If you are interested in doing so check the box on the enclosed membership form.

EVERGREEN MUSEUM FIELD TRIP

BY [KURT SCHWARZ](#)

The Howard Bird Club conducted an unusual field trip on June 25. Jim Lubitz arranged for us to visit the Evergreen Museum and Library in Baltimore. Built in 1857, it was later bought by railroading fortune scion John Work Garrett, who assembled vast art and book collections. The library is home to some fabulous bird books, which Dr. Havens, Johns Hopkins University rare book curator, showed us. We were privileged to view John Gould's books on hummingbirds, birds of paradise, and Himalayan birds. We were also shown Edward Lear's volume on parrots, and the Audubon Double-Elephant Folio. A special treat were two of Audubon's original water colors, specifically Bell's Vireo and what I believe was a Swamp Sparrow. We also were shown some earlier European works, with very crude and un-lifelike illustrations, e.g. some oddly proportioned shrikes. As Dr. Havens noted, these early volumes were fine examples of how NOT to do a bird book! We also enjoyed a volume on lepidoptera of Georgia.

Originally only scheduled to last an hour, Dr. Havens entertained us right up to closing time, a phenomenal hour and three quarters amongst some fabulous bird books. And we learned the Peabody in downtown Baltimore houses a significant natural history collection. Perhaps a future field trip is in the offing.

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 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT STUDY TRACT

Sept. 3, Sat., 9:30 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Meet at Elkhorn Garden Plots, Oakland Mills Rd opposite Dasber 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, but Dick will also use net and jars to provide brief close-up examinations. Cancelled if raining or overcast. Rustic facilities. *Leader - Dick Smith, 410-997-7439.*

MIDDLE PATUXENT ENVIRONMENTAL AREA

Sept. 4, Sunday, 7:30 a.m. (half day)
Meet at the Clegg Meadow off South Wind Cir, Columbia, MD 21044. Moderate walking on 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, 410-772-8424 or auk1844@comcast.net.*

ROCKBURN BRANCH PARK

Sept. 10, 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.*

FALL COUNT

September 17, Saturday (See page 10 for details and go to the following link to sign up. <http://howardbirds.org/howard/counts.htm>)

HENRYTON ROAD, PATAPSCO VALLEY STATE PARK

Sept. 21, 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 areas. No facilities. *Leader – Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329, LBRoller@verizon.net.*

WESTERN REGIONAL PARK

Sept. 24, 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, 410-461-3361 or bonnieott@verizon.net.

BON SECOURS SPIRITUAL CENTER

Oct. 4, Tues., 8:00 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. 8, 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.*

LAKE ELKHORN

Oct. 15, Sat., 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours)
Meet at Dockside Parking lot. 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 – Allen Lewis, al-lenrlewis@gmail.com.*

(Field Trips continued on page 7)

(Field Trips continued from page 6)

DAVID FORCE PARK

Oct. 20, Thurs., 8:00 a.m., (2 hours) 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. No facilities. Leader - Michele Wright, 410-465-6057 or WrightM_29067@msn.com.

SPARROW BIG DAY

October 22, Saturday (all day)
Limit: 12 people
Search the wetland 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 day. Knee boots a must. Facilities at some spots. Contact Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net, 410-461-3361 to sign up and get info.

WEST FRIENDSHIP PARK

Oct. 23, 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@botmail.com, 410-465-9006 and Joe Byrnes, LBRoller@verizon.net, 410-730-5329.

 = Great for beginning birders

I BOUGHT A HOUSE WREN NEST BOX

BY [JEFF CULLER](#)

Wow, what a deal! Great sunflower seed, no filler, and at a good price. Yes, The Howard County Bird Club seed sale delivered last year. Recently I had an occasion to enjoy that relationship once again. Along with the seed came a discount coupon for future purchases at the Wildlife Authority in Ellicott City. I used mine to buy more seed and a House Wren nest box. I made the purchase never expecting to be successful with the nest box. I considered it more ornamental because it was so darn good-looking.

Following the instructions, I placed the box where I thought it might do best. Low and behold on April 23rd, my wife Karen advised me that there were birds at the nest box. I couldn't believe it, there were two House Wrens inspecting the nest box. I think I was more excited than the wrens although their wing quivering is hard to beat. The next day I watched as the wrens carried stick after stick into the nest box. Is it their real nest or a dummy? I don't know, I'm just happy to enjoy the views.



UPCOMING SEED SALE BY [AMANDA WITT](#)

Kevin Cassidy, the owner of The Wildlife Authority, has agreed to again host our seed sale. The sale will be held on October 1st. In early September an order form will sent by mail, by email, and will be posted on the Howard County Bird Club website. Seed can be picked up from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Wildlife Authority, 3275 Bethany Lane, Suite B, Ellicott City, MD 21042.

As usual, the profits from the seed sale will be contributed to conser-

vation causes. 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. So please stock up on seed and help the birds.

We thank all of you who have supported the sale over the past years. We hope that you will support this year's sale as well. See you on Saturday, October 1st!

HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT RESULTS

BY [KEVIN HEFFERNAN](#)

Sixty-six birders participated in the 64th annual May Count which was held on May 14, 2011. The day was cloudy and overcast with periods of light rain and temperatures in the 60's. The 139 total species was the same total as last year and is again the lowest in the last 10 years. The total number of birds (16,228) was the second lowest in the last 10 years. A total of 228 species have been seen over the 38 years that the bird club has directed the count. Seventy-eight species have been seen every year while 21 species have been seen only once. No species was seen for the first time this year. Common Raven and Dickcissel were seen for only the second time.

Sora was seen for the 5th time including 3 of the last 4 years. Wild Turkey was seen for the 12th time including 6 of the last 7 years and 10 of the last 15. Great Egret has been seen 11 times including the last 8 years in a row. Semipalmated Plover was seen for the 9th time including 5 of the last 7 years.

Six species recorded or tied all-time high counts: Little Blue Heron, Black Crowned Night-Heron, Great-crested Flycatcher, Warbling Vireo, Common Raven, and Dickcissel. An additional three species had or tied 10 year high counts: Red-headed Woodpecker, Purple Martin, and Eastern Meadowlark.

One species, Yellow-rumped Warbler, had an all-time low count. Twenty-five species had 10 year low counts. Several of these may have been due to the late May 14th

count date (Common Loon, Broad-winged Hawk, Wilson's Snipe, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, White-Throated Sparrow, and Bobolink). Several others may have been due to the poor raptor flight conditions (Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel). Broad-winged Hawk was missed for only the third time. Only a single Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen. They were mostly absent from the area until late May. Eastern Screech-Owl was missed for the first time in 10 years and Great Horned Owl for the second (last two years). For the first time, there were more Black Vultures seen than Turkey Vultures. For the fourth year in a row, only a single American Kestrel was seen. This species has been seen every year on May Count but could easily lose that status in the near future.

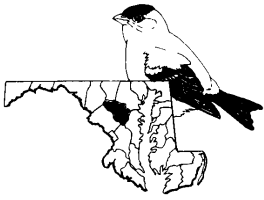
A compilation spreadsheet of the May Count data from 1974 to the present can be found on the Howard County Bird Club's [website](#).

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, Ward Ebert, 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 cannot happen: Randy Beaton, Hilton, Marcia, and Regan Brake, Jim and Marilyn Brinkley, Joe Byrnes, Lisa Colangelo, Dennis and Jane Coskren, Carolyn Cradler, Jeff Culler, Ralph Cullison, David Cummings, Sue Earp, Wes Earp (Area 1 Coordinator), Ward Ebert (Area 2 Coordinator), Tom Feild, Ralph and Jane Geuder, Joe Hanfman, Kevin Heffernan (May Count Coordinator), Bill and Gayle Hill, Emy Holdridge, Mike Kerwin, Geraldine King, Dave Kubitsky, Shashi Lengade, Mike Leumas, Alan Lewis, Kathie Lillie, Felicia Lovelett, Rosa Lubitz, Brigitte Lund, Nancy Magnusson, Grazina McClure, Mike McClure (Area 4 Coordinator), John McKitterick, Woody Merkle, Tom Miller, Sue Muller, Sue Neri, Peter Osenton, Michael O'Sullivan, Bonnie Ott (Area 6 Coordinator), Karla Pearce, Ron and Susan Polniaszek, Sue Probst, Emily Reed, Clyde Robinette, Matt Rogosky, Russ Ruffing, Jay Sheppard, Romayne Smith, Jo Solem (Area 7 Coordinator), Chuck Stirrat (Area 3 Coordinator), Tom Strikwerda, Eva Sunnell, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts, Ginny Walker, Mark Wallace, Michele Wright, and Paul Zucker.

Did you know the Howard County Bird Club has a [Facebook page](#)? Become a fan!

Canada Goose	770	Eastern Phoebe	58	Blackburnian Warbler	9
Wood Duck	23	Great Crested Flycatcher	108	Pine Warbler	4
Mallard	168	Eastern Kingbird	115	Prairie Warbler	27
Wild Turkey	1	White-eyed Vireo	61	Bay-breasted Warbler	2
Double-crested Cormorant	8	Yellow-throated Vireo	24	Blackpoll Warbler	124
Great Blue Heron	46	Blue-headed Vireo	2	Cerulean Warbler	4
Great Egret	3	Warbling Vireo	41	Black-&-white Warbler	32
Little Blue Heron	2	Red-eyed Vireo	452	American Redstart	85
Green Heron	32	Blue Jay	316	Prothonotary Warbler	1
Black-crowned Night-Heron	3	American Crow	400	Worm-eating Warbler	15
Black Vulture	112	Fish Crow	60	Ovenbird	173
Turkey Vulture	63	<i>crow species</i>	198	Northern Waterthrush	9
Osprey	4	Common Raven	1	Louisiana Waterthrush	39
Bald Eagle	1	Horned Lark	22	Kentucky Warbler	18
Northern Harrier	1	Purple Martin	55	Common Yellowthroat	282
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Tree Swallow	200	Hooded Warbler	11
Cooper's Hawk	4	N. Rough-winged Swallow	108	Wilson's Warbler	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	29	Bank Swallow	2	Canada Warbler	19
Red-tailed Hawk	13	Cliff Swallow	45	Yellow-breasted Chat	19
American Kestrel	1	Barn Swallow	504	Eastern Towhee	169
Sora	1	Carolina Chickadee	241	Chipping Sparrow	352
Semipalmated Plover	2	Tufted Titmouse	318	Field Sparrow	62
Killdeer	18	White-breasted Nuthatch	56	Savannah Sparrow	25
Greater Yellowlegs	4	Carolina Wren	222	Grasshopper Sparrow	19
Lesser Yellowlegs	5	House Wren	89	Song Sparrow	156
Solitary Sandpiper	83	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Swamp Sparrow	2
Spotted Sandpiper	49	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	217	White-throated Sparrow	9
Semipalmated Sandpiper	4	Eastern Bluebird	159	White-crowned Sparrow	6
Least Sandpiper	64	Veery	26	Scarlet Tanager	136
Ring-billed Gull	1	Gray-cheeked Thrush	1	Northern Cardinal	750
Rock Pigeon	132	Swainson's Thrush	12	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	11
Mourning Dove	314	Wood Thrush	275	Blue Grosbeak	13
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	American Robin	863	Indigo Bunting	285
Barred Owl	19	Gray Catbird	660	Dickcissel	1
Common Nighthawk	1	Northern Mockingbird	175	Bobolink	40
Chimney Swift	269	Brown Thrasher	41	Red-winged Blackbird	728
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	15	European Starling	705	Eastern Meadowlark	18
Belted Kingfisher	20	Cedar Waxwing	670	Common Grackle	427
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	Blue-winged Warbler	9	Brown-headed Cowbird	191
Red-bellied Woodpecker	309	Tennessee Warbler	3	Orchard Oriole	86
Downy Woodpecker	80	Nashville Warbler	2	Baltimore Oriole	185
Hairy Woodpecker	34	Northern Parula	117	House Finch	151
Northern (Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	40	Yellow Warbler	125	American Goldfinch	339
Pileated Woodpecker	47	Chestnut-sided Warbler	23	House Sparrow	270
Eastern Wood-Pewee	113	Magnolia Warbler	34	Total Birds	16,226
Acadian Flycatcher	135	Blk.-thrt'd. Blue Warbler	20	Total Species	139
Willow Flycatcher	12	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	11		
Least Flycatcher	1	Blk.-thrt'd. Green Warbler	14		



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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Columbia, MD 21044

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EIGHTEENTH 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 17th. 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) Ward Ebert 301-490-5807; Area 3) Karen Darcy & Kevin Heffernan 410-418-8731; Area 4) Mike McClure 410-531-2780; 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. The potluck dinner will be served at approximately 7:00 p.m. Contact them at fletcherw@msn.com or 410-381-8841 by Sept. 16th, to select a food to bring, reserve space, and if necessary obtain directions.

