



The Goldfinch

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

www.howardbirds.org



CLUB MEETINGS - BY [JANE GEUDER](#)

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Thursday, May 8, 2014 "Owls of the U.S. and Canada, and Population Dynamics of the Western Burrowing Owl," by Steve Sheffield, professional biologist with professorships at Bowie State and Virginia Tech. Steve is an avid MOS birder and has done almost 100 Christmas counts and mid-winter migratory bird counts since 1986. His new book on mammals of the Mid-Atlantic region will soon be published.

Meetings are at the **Robinson Nature Center**, 6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia MD 21044. Hospitality at 7:30 p.m. Meeting with program begins at 8:00 p.m. Nature Center doors unlocked at 7:15 p.m. and locked again at 8:15 p.m. There is no admission charge. For further information call Wes Earp, 410-531-3197.

WINTER BIRD RECORDS: DECEMBER 1, 2013 – FEBRUARY 28, 2014

BY JOANNE SOLEM

No matter the weather Howard birders turn up excellent species. This winter Ross's Goose was the star of the season. Other notable species were Red-necked Grebe, Black-capped Chickadee, Lapland Longspur, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole.

A blue phase **Snow Goose** at Glenwood 1/1 was a good way to start the new year (**RR**). Four **Ross's Geese** (second county record) were spotted at the beginning of a snowstorm in the mid-afternoon of 1/2 along Daisy Rd, just south of MD 144 (**RRf**). Over the next few days several dozen birders were able to view these unusual visitors despite often challenging weather conditions. They stayed in the vicinity through 1/5 before disappearing. Interestingly, four Ross's Geese were spotted briefly at Piney Run in Carroll Co. on 1/12 (**D&MHv**). Although a **Cackling Goose** was picked out of a goose flock flying over Annapolis Rock at dusk 12/21 (**RRf, HFk, MRg**), one was noted at Cattail Creek Golf Course ponds 1/4 (**JHf**), and two were seen at Florence Rd/MD 94 on 2/8 (**NM**), the most frequently reported individual visited Centennial Park (CENPK) 12/18 (**KS**) to 2/20 (**KS**).

American Black Ducks hit a high of 30 at the Quarry Pond 1/8 (**KS**). **Northern Pintails** are often early migrants; one was photographed at CENPK in early Feb. (*fide* **Hpt**). Which way was it headed? There was no question that the flocks of 11 and 31 on 2/23 over Cavey La. were heading north (**RRf**). **Gadwalls** reached a high of 23 in open water at Race Rd. on 1/2 (**KS, Hpt**); a month later on 2/1, four remained standing on ice (**BO**,

[Records](#) continued on page 3)

Did You Know?

If you had gone on every HCBC field trip in the county during 2013 and seen every bird on those trips, by the end of the year you would have seen 160 species.

SPRING FIELD TRIPS BY JOE HANFMAN & 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 trips not on ADC maps are on the Club's website. Questions? Contact the trip leader or Field Trip Coordinator Joe Hanfman at auk1844@gmail.com or Bonnie Ott at bonnieott@verizon.net. HCBC members receive priority on trips that are limited by number of participants. No pets.

PIGTAIL – TRIADELPHIA

May 3, Saturday, 8:00 a.m. (2-3 hours). In conjunction with WSSC. *Meet at the Green Bridge Rd parking lot which is off Triadelphia Mill Rd.* The cove is bordered on three sides by deciduous and coniferous woods. Extensive mudflats may exist with the possibility of shorebirds. Facilities available (rustic).

Leader - Joe Hanfman, auk1844@gmail.com, 443-745-7378

MAY COUNT

May 10, Saturday. See announcement on [page 8](#).

FIELD TRAINING FOR BUTTERFLY SURVEYS

May 15, Thursday. See announcement on this page.

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY CONFERENCE

May 16 - 18. See announcement on the MOS web site <http://www.mdbirds.org/activities/conference/annual.html>

HOT SPOTS FOR RED KNOTS

May 24, Saturday, all day.

Meet at the Meadowbrook Park & Ride at 5:45 a.m.; we will depart promptly at 6:00 a.m. Our first stop will be the Dupont Nature Center at Mispillion Harbor, where we have seen hundreds of Red Knots and other shorebirds in the past. We will go north to Ted Harvey Wildlife Management Area and Bombay Hook NWR. Expect shorebirds, late waterfowl, and gulls. Facilities are available at Dupont Nature Center, and Bombay Hook. Short walks from the cars. Mud is possible. Bring bug repellent, drinking water, bug repellent, food, bug repellent, sunscreen, and bug

repellent. The itinerary is subject to change based on scouting trips and rare bird reports. The trip will be limited to 16 persons in 4 cars. We will permit 2-3 cars from other chapters to meet us at the Dupont Nature Center at 8:30 a.m. Limits will be strictly observed. Reservations required. To reserve a spot, contact Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net, 410-461-1643

PATAPSCO SCRUBLAND

May 31, Saturday, 7:30 a.m. (half day)

Meet at 735 River Road (up long drive take right-hand split & park by house). Starting in the scrubland, 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, c5nest@gmail.com, 301-802-1969

ANNUAL DRAGONFLY COUNT

August 16, Saturday. See announcement on [page 5](#).

 = Great for beginning birders

FIELD TRAINING FOR BUTTERFLY SURVEYS

Meadowbrook Park

May 15, Thursday, 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Leaders: Richard Smith and Linda Hunt.

Dick Smith will demonstrate how to recognize a variety of butterfly habitats as well as how to search them in order to maximize the species seen. Bring a digital camera if you have one. Moderate walking; waterproof boots recommended as the group will not remain on paths. After exiting at US29/MD100, continue past the large park-and-ride lot to the park entrance. Go to the back of the parking lots (between a pavilion and a ballfield). If it is raining (not just cloudy) the trip will be postponed to Thursday, May 22. Anyone interested in learning about butterfly habitats is welcome. Registration required so any change of plans can be communicated: e-mail Linda Hunt at raven10322@hotmail.com. Questions may be directed to Linda Hunt at 410-733-5255.

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Copy may be sent to Howard Patterson
4209 Hermitage Dr
Ellicott City MD 21042
howard21042@verizon.net

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(Records continued from page 1)

EH). **Northern Shovelers** hit a high of eight at Race Rd on 1/2 (**KS, HPt**). A male **Green-winged Teal** spent weeks at the small opening in the ice at Wilde Lake from 12/18 on (**KS**). On 1/9, he was sharing the cramped quarters with at least 135 **Mallards** (**JS**). **Redheads** do not appear every winter so a flock of 20 at Brighton Dam 1/4 and 1/5 (**NM**), a dozen at Fulton Pond 1/17 (**MW**) rising to 14 on 1/19 (**JW**), seven at Woodmark Lake 2/18 (**GMcC**), along with a few at the Quarry Pond, CENPK, and Lake Elkhorn, brightened the season. **Ring-necked Ducks** hit 115 at CENPK 1/6 (**KS**). A female **Greater Scaup** appeared at CENPK 12/18 (**KDy, HPt**), while another was spotted at the Quarry 1/12 (**JHr, RHI**). A **Common Goldeneye** at the Quarry 1/6 was a choice find (**HPt, KDy**); two were present 1/13 (**DCm**). At least 53 **Hooded Mergansers** were counted at CENPK 12/20 (**KS**). **Common Merganser** numbers at Triadelphia Reservoir are often among the highest in the state. This year they reached a peak of well over 2,000 on 12/14 on the north side of Brighton Dam (Howard side only, probably close to 3,000 in both counties) (**JHf, DGI**). By 1/2, that number had dropped to *one* in mostly frozen water (**KS, HPt**). On Midwinter Count 2/1, open water countywide was so scarce (even the Quarry Pond was frozen) that not a single Common Merg was found. A few **Red-breasted Mergansers** are always seen within the large flock of Commons at Brighton Dam; the first two were spotted 12/18 (**KS**). The species was also noted at the Quarry 12/28 (**DCm-1**) and at CENPK 2/16 (**POs-4**). Sightings of **Tundra Swans** were few; the flock of 30 at CENPK on 1/9 was the high (**MRg**).

On the rainy morning of 2/3, two **Wild Turkeys** fed in a field at the intersection of US 29/Murphy Rd, oblivious to commuter traffic (**DAG**). **Red-necked Grebes** were one of the season's special species. The Great Lakes largely froze by early Feb. which moved considerable numbers of grebes east. During these large movements, certain weather conditions may ground some migrants in inappropriate locations. Once down they are in a precarious situation for they need an extended amount of open water in order to take off. A local incident with a happy ending involved a grebe that came down the night of 2/6 (see article page 5). A second Red-necked Grebe was photographed 2/12 at CENPK (**KLz**) and identified by (**BO**). Although initially the hole in the ice did not offer sufficient room for takeoff, even when the hole expanded near the end of Feb. the grebe remained. It was still present at the end of the season.

Bald Eagle numbers peaked at 20 at Brighton Dam 12/21 (**RRf, HFk, MRg**). Eleven at Fulton Pond 12/7 were unexpected (**MKw**)—a refuse pit on the turkey farm was attracting the attention of these large predators. Eagles are mainly scavengers, but they are also opportunistic. At CENPK on 1/25, a Bald Eagle stooped on three **American Coots** present at the edge of the ice. It missed, which gave the coots a chance to run for cover to a small patch of greenbriar. The eagle then dropped to the ground and began a chase on foot. Despite appearing ungainly on land, the

coots managed to keep vegetation between them and the eagle who eventually gave up and flew away (**MRg**). An observer along Scaggsville Rd on 12/18 watched a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at full tilt chase a small passerine into a mature Eastern Red Cedar. Almost immediately the Sharpie burst out the opposite side of this extremely dense tree with empty talons. Inside the cover of the tree, the small bird had quickly made a sharp right turn safely emerging 90° from the hawk's exit point (**BNw**).

Shorebirds were scarce; however, four **Wilson's Snipe** were reported from Fulton Pd 1/5 (**JW**) and one was at Alpha Ridge Landfill 2/1 (**RCu, JHf**). An **American Woodcock** was flushed from the pines at Annapolis Rock 2/8 (**JHr, JSh, HPt**). Despite the snow and cold, woodcock began trickling in the last week of Feb: 2/22 Annapolis Rock (courtship flights) (**DCm**), 2/22 Ailenford, MD 99 (**RTd**), and 2/24 Duvall Rd (**JCn**). **Killdeer** also were noted during that same period: Old Frederick Rd 2/25 (**JW-2**) and Waverly Pond 2/27 (**JHf-1**).

Bonaparte's Gulls were still drifting through during Dec. with the last two at Brighton Dam 1/9 (**RRf, ALw, DCm**). **Great Black-backed Gulls** at Jessup peaked at 19 on 12/16 (**KS**). A single **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was located at Annapolis Rock 2/8 (**JSh+**). Although there were occasional reports of **Snowy Owls**, none was sufficiently well documented to count which was disappointing.

An adult **Red-headed Woodpecker** was a bright spot at feeders at Linden Church Rd from 12/18 to the end of the season (**HFk, m. obs.**). Wintering **American Kestrels** may have increased a bit from numbers in most recent years, but there was scarcely cause for optimism. Three were reported in Dec. (**RRf+; LCg; JHf**) with five on HCMC 2/1. **Merlins** were spotted near Alpha Ridge Park, MD 99, 1/3 (**KDy, KHf**), at Florence Rd/MD 94, 2/8 (**JCu, JHf**), near Browns Bridge 2/1 (**JGr**), at Underwood Rd 2/9 (**EHs**), and at CENPK 2/25 (**EHs**). A **Peregrine Falcon** spent part of the winter in the vicinity of Underwood Rd, reported on 12/9 (**BHi**), 1/4 (**RRf; DCm**), and 1/27 (**EHs**). **Eastern Phoebes** lingered through Dec. with one still present at Old Annapolis Rd 1/17 (**JW**) and one at Dunloggin 1/24 (**KS**); none on HCMC 2/1. **Common Ravens** were reported from nine sites from mid-Dec. to late Feb., most in north central and western parts of the county. Since no sightings were anywhere near the known nest site at Duckett Dam, the question is, where were they coming from? **Horned Lark** flocks were consistent in the vicinity of Underwood Rd with high counts of 125 on 12/10 (**JHf**) and 120 on 12/11 (**KS**).

Black-capped Chickadees are erratic winter visitors. One visited feeders on Cavey La. from 1/5 through at least 2/27 (**RRf, ph.**). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** made a fleeting appearance at Swansfield, W. Col. on 1/26 (**JTv**). **American Robins** were widespread in early Feb. with 1,093 reported on HCMC 2/1, the third highest

(Records continued on page 4)

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count ever. A **Gray Catbird** was still present at Lake Elkhorn 1/5 (**ALw**), while at least three **Brown Thrashers** lasted into mid-Feb.: 2/10 Florence Rd silage pit (**JHf**), 2/16 Triadelphia Rd (**POs**), and 2/17 Owen Brown, E. Col (**DSd**). Fulton Pond produced 21 **American Pipits** on 12/11 (**JW**), while six were seen at Gateway 12/10 (**DCm**). **Lapland Longspur** is a choice county species. They were reported at two different times at Underwood Rd: 12/10 (**Mkw**), 12/11 (**BHi**); and 1/22 (**JW**-1st winter male), 1/23 (**RRf**-1st winter female). **Pine Warblers** were picked out at Blandair 12/3 (**JW**-2) and at Annapolis Rock Rd. 1/16 (**JW**-1). **American Tree Sparrows** were noted most of the winter at at least half a dozen sites although numbers were usually three or fewer; the high was 12 at Mt. Pleasant 2/22 (**BO**). One or two **Chipping Sparrows** spent the winter at Wynfield (**RCu**); Chipmunks were also reported from Blandair 12/3 (**JW**-1), Middle Patuxent Env. Area 12/4 (**BO**-1), and Linden Church Rd. 1/3 (**HfK**-3; 1/4 **JHf**-4). Fourteen **Field Sparrows** were counted at Western Reg. Pk. 2/26 (**JW**). A few **Savannah Sparrows** were present in low numbers at half a dozen sites, as were **Swamps**. Thirty **White-crowned Sparrows** were counted at a farm on Roxbury Rd 12/15 (**MW**).

An **Indigo Bunting** at Western Reg. on 1/2 was a winter surprise and one of the unusual species this season (**KDy**). A flock of 11 **Eastern Meadowlarks** wintered at Alpha Ridge Landfill 2/1 (**RCu**, **JHf**); singles were noted at Old Frederick Rd 12/10 (**JW**) and at Mt. Pleasant 1/1 (**BO**+). Before severe weather became the norm, a **Rusty Blackbird** was seen at a Roxbury Rd farm 12/15 (**MW**). A slight break in the weather in early Feb. produced three at the Florence Rd silage pit 2/10 (**ALw**), with as many as five on subsequent days (**JHf**, **HPt**, **KDy**). No large flocks of blackbirds have been reported in recent years; however, on 2/27, a mixed flock including probably tens of thousands streamed over Cavey La (**RRf**). A pale (leucistic) **Red-winged Blackbird** female was seen in Allview 2/15 and perhaps the same bird visited Manahan Dr. feeders in late Feb. (**BO**). A **Baltimore Oriole** spent 1/31 to 2/4 at a feeder in W. Columbia (**ECg**).

This was not a winter to expect northern visitors. Two **Pine Siskin** reports, both on 1/4 (Burleigh Manor – **Mkw**; Mt. Albert Rd – **M&GMcC**) and a few scattered **Purple Finch** sightings in Dec. (**BO**, **JHf**, **RRf**) as well as intermittent Jan/Feb visits at a Hunt Ridge Rd feeder (**CSt**) constituted the winter records.

HCMC – Howard County Midwinter Count.; **CENPK** – Centennial Park.

Observers: **DAG** –Dianne Aguilera, **ECg** –Eric Chang, **LCg** – Lisa Colangelo, **JCu** – Jeff Culler, **RCu** – Ralph Cullison, III, **DCm** – David Cummings, **KDy** – Karen Darcy, **HfK** – Harry Fink, **DGI** – Doug Gill, **JGr** – Jim Green, **JHf** – Joe Hanfman, **JHr** – John Harris, **DHv** – Dave Harvey, **Mhv** – Maureen Harvey, **KHf** – Kevin Heffernan, **BHi** – Bill Hill, **RHI** – Russell Hillsley, **EH** – Emy Holdridge, **EHS** – Ed Huestis, **Mkw** – Mike Kerwin, **ALw** – Allen Lewis, **KLz** – Kathy Litzinger, **NM** – Nancy Magnusson, **GMcC** – Grazina

McClure, **MMcC** – Mike McClure, **BNw** – Bea Newkirk, **BO** – Bonnie Ott, **HPt** – Howard Patterson, **RR** – Robert Ringler, **MRg** – Matt Rogosky, **RRf** – Russ Ruffing, **DSd** – David Sandler, **KS** – Kurt Schwarz, **JSh** – Jay Sheppard, **JS** – Jo Solem, **CSt** – Chuck Stirrat, **RTd** – Robiin Todd, **JTv** – June Tveekrem, **MW** – Mark Wallace, **JW** – Jim Wilkinson

ANNUAL LIST FOR THE COUNTY

BY JOE HANFMAN

Birders reported a total of 238 species for Howard County in 2013. This was the third highest total in the last 35 years. The top county bird of the year was the county's first **Black Rail** 5/2. A recording is on the web site at http://www.howardbirds.org/photo_page/member_photos/BlackRail.htm.

The county's second record of **Rufous Hummingbird** showed up at a feeder in Ellicott City on 10/23. Thought at first to be a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, it was banded and identified on 11/16. See a photo at http://www.howardbirds.org/photo_page/member_photos/RufousHummingbird.htm.

An immature **Golden Eagle** was found at Brighton Dam on 10/26. On 10/28, probably the same Golden Eagle was observed stealing a Pied-billed Grebe from a Bald Eagle. A **Glossy Ibis** found on 5/07, at Fulton Pond, was the 19th record.

2013 was the best gull year since the closing of the county landfill. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, **Iceland Gull**, **Glaucous Gull**, **Great Black-backed Gulls**, and a **Laughing Gull** were all found.

A **Short-eared Owl** on 10/12 was the highlight of a trip to the Alpha Ridge Landfill. A rarely seen **Lawrence's Warbler** (hybrid) was found at Cavey Ln.

A female **Summer Tanager** overwintered in Columbia being seen numerous times from 11/24/12 – 3/02/13. She was observed visiting feeders in two different yards that are 300 yards apart, as the tanager flies.

Examine the complete list at: <http://howardbirds.org/records/HowardCountyAnnualBirdList.htm>

Thanks and congratulations to all those who spent many hours scouring the county, finding birds, and sharing their sightings.

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.

May 22, 2014
Kathie Lillie
4102 Roxbury Mill Rd.
Glenwood, MD 21738
(410) 489-5262
killie3@verizon.net

RED-NECKED GREBE RESCUED IN HOWARD COUNTY

BY JOANNE SOLEM

On Thursday, February 6, 2014, Matt Lopez found a Red-necked Grebe outside the front door of the Sears Logistics Building at Gateway. Initially, it was thought to be dead, but when he attempted to move it the bird half-ran, half-flew under a nearby tractor trailer. He left it there thinking it would soon be able to leave.

The grebe had apparently landed the previous night on the ice and snow-covered roof mistaking the flat, light expanse for open water. This happens to grebes occasionally under certain weather conditions. Unfortunately, once down, they cannot take off without an extensive stretch of open water (150-180 ft.) along which they can run in order to become airborne.

Friday morning the grebe was still under the truck so Matt, with the help of John Wade, made contact with Judy Holzman of All Creatures Great and Small Wildlife. Eva and Augie Sunell, who sometimes assist Judy, volunteered to pick up the bird and transport it to her. They had not realized that the bird was still free; fortunately, they had with them both a box with a lid and a towel. John took the towel, spread it out, and walked slowly toward the bird while Eva positioned herself on the opposite side of the truck facing the grebe in order to distract it. It was successfully captured.

Once the bird was in Judy's hands she didn't find any major injuries, but took it that afternoon to a veterinarian she was seeing for another creature. Dr. Williams examined and x-rayed the grebe verifying there were no major problems other than extremely minor scrapes on the bottom of the feet. Its most pressing need was water and food before it could be released.

The grebe quickly took to life in Judy's bathtub while it was being rehydrated, downing minnows and goldfish. It was alert and called occasionally. Once it became certain that it would recover the more challenging question was where to release it.

With the winter's low temperatures, most of the county's lakes and reservoirs were frozen over or contained limited open water; a further complication was that there was usually ice at the shoreline instead of open water in which to place the bird. Jo Solem,

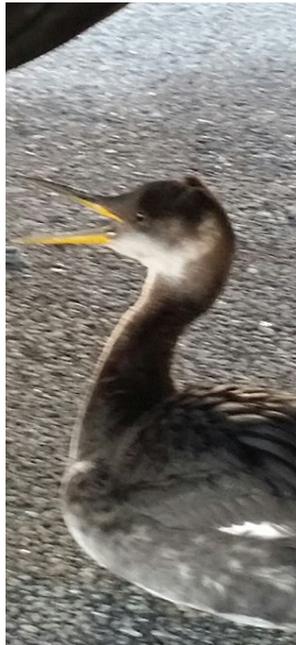


photo by Matt Lopez

who had initially identified the grebe, was enlisted to find a release site. The area behind Brighton Dam is usually open, but it is rather small, although the open river below could serve for take-off. After the incident Joe Hanfman had witnessed in November of eagles coordinating efforts to kill a Pied-billed Grebe just above that dam, it didn't seem prudent to place this unusual species in harm's way at a spot where eagles were known to feed. During Midwinter Count a week earlier, the area behind Duckett Dam had been open so that was considered a reasonable release site. WSSC personnel were highly cooperative in providing permission for the potential release but, in the end, Judy opted for Sandy Point State Park with its extensive open water adjacent to the shoreline. The grebe was released on Monday, February 10, with the cooperation of park manager Steve McCoy. Rangers Alison and Dorna drove Judy around to find the best release point. More photographs and a video (including its haunting call) can be seen at http://www.howardbirds.org/photo_page/member_photos/RedneckedGrebe.htm.

Annually, the HCBC supports Judy's efforts with a portion of the proceeds of the seed sale. To watch a bird of this scarcity locally (the last record was from Triadelphia Reservoir in 2011), be rehabilitated successfully was especially gratifying.

9TH ANNUAL HOWARD COUNTY DRAGONFLY COUNT

The 9th Annual Howard County Dragonfly Count, co-sponsored with the Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks, will be held this year on Saturday August 16, 2014.

No experience is necessary to participate. Join fellow birders and naturalists in enjoying these beautiful insects. Each group of observers, with an experienced leader, visits sites within the county. The group identifies and counts every dragonfly and damselfly seen. Beginners and photographers are welcome.

For prior year count data, see http://www.howardbirds.org/odonates/OdonateCounts/odonate_count_results.htm. For other historical information, visit the club's website, www.howardbirds.org and click on the Dragonfly links for a preview of Howard County odes.

If you are interested in participating, leading a group, or assisting in some other way, please contact count coordinator, Beth Johnson, at bajohnsonjohnson@verizon.net.

HOWARD COUNTY MIDWINTER COUNT, FEBRUARY 1, 2014

BY JOE HANFMAN

A relatively mild and overcast day with temperatures 25 – 48° F. The reservoir and ponds were 100% iced over and streams were 10 – 30% iced. We recorded 80 species which is ten below the average of the last 28 years. The total number of individual birds was 32,945 which is 21,330 below the average.

Common Raven and Black-capped Chickadee were found for only the second time. Cackling Goose was found for only the third time. An all-time high count of four was recorded for Cackling Goose.

Black-capped Chickadee



photo by Russ Ruffing

The all-time low count of 24 was recorded for Common Grackle. Fifty-five of the 80 species tallied have been seen on all 28 Midwinter Counts; 76 of the 80 species tallied have been seen on at least 50% of all 28 Midwinter Counts.

The birds that have been seen on more than half of the counts but missed this year were Snow Goose, Mute Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, Lesser Scaup, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Black-backed Gull, Eastern Screech-

Owl, Eastern Phoebe, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Gray Catbird, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskin.

Many people contributed to the success of the day. Sixty-six observers spent 194.2 hours and covered 126.5 miles on foot and 504.8 miles by car. Another 7.0 hours were spent feeder watching, plus 4.2 hours stationary and 1 hour of owling.

As co-compiler, Joe Byrnes did the preparatory work for the count. As usual, he handled multiple details with precision and care. Chuck Stirrat updated the taxonomic order, summarized the area worksheets, and provided field and feeder checklists. Area leaders arranged coverage, did follow-up if necessary, and compiled area totals. Their names are in boldface below (*anyone who counted in more than one area or also at a feeder is listed just once*). Once again, we thank Karen and Jeff Culler for generously serving as hosts for the tally and welcoming us into their home.

Land permission from Howard County Dept. of Recreation and Parks, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and many private property owners assure good coverage—we are extremely grateful.

Observers: *Area 1.* **Mark Wallace, Wes Earp**, Jim & Marilyn Brinkley, Lisa Colangelo, Trish Cope, Sue Earp, Ron Griffin, Kathie Lillie, Woody Merkle, Jay Sheppard, Marcy Stutzman, Robin Todd, Kate Tufts; *Area 2.* **Ward Ebert**, Peter Osenton, Cindy & Steve Parr, Ron & Susan Polniaszek, Tom Strikwerda, Paul Zucker; *Area 3.* **Dave & Maureen Harvey**, Ralph Cullison, John Fine-dore, Joe Hanfman, Felicia Lovelett, Tom Miller, Renee, Richard, & Ryan Peters, Russ Ruffing, Kurt Schwarz, Will & Robin Tress; *Area 4.* **Mike McClure**, Mike Kerwin, Mike Leumas, Grazina McClure, Chuck Stirrat; *Area 5.* **Karen Darcy, Kevin Heffernan**, Jim Green, Nancy Magnusson, Howard Patterson, Ginny Walker; *Area 6.* **Bonnie Ott**, Emy Holdridge, Jane & Ralph Geuder, Dave Kubitsky, Suzanne Probst, David Sandler, Tex Wilkins; *Area 7.* **Kurt Schwarz**, John Harris, Kim Knox, Allen Lewis, Rosa Lubitz, Janet Lydon, Maz Mansoor, John McKitterick, Sue Neri, Ben Newton, Jo Solem, Eva Sunell.

2014 POTLUCK THANKS BY KATHIE LILLIE

The Bird Club's Annual Potluck Dinner was held March 29th at the Robinson Nature Center. Thanks to everyone for another successful event! In spite of the relentless rain, 35 intrepid souls showed up with good food, good photos, and good cheer. I wish to thank the many people, including Bird Club new members and guests, who arrived early to help with the set-up and stayed late for take-down. Thanks once again to Marty Chestem for her "bird cartoon" placements. Thanks also to John McKitterick for coordinating and running the slide show, and Ward Ebert and Bill

Williams for handling power strips and electrical cords. Although Robinson Nature Center employees Emily and Kim had to stay upstairs at the front desk, we were honored that two other employees, Pam and Meagan, were able to attend the event. Thank you to everyone who contributed photos to the slide show, which took us to various interesting birding adventures in many places, including and not limited to New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and (yes) Howard County.

Howard County Mid-Winter Count - February 1, 2014

Totals		Totals		Totals	
Cackling Goose	4	Hairy Woodpecker	38	White-crowned Sparrow	40
Canada Goose	11,230	Northern(Yellow-sh'd) Flicker	86	<i>sparrow species</i>	4
Gadwall	5	Pileated Woodpecker	52	Dark-eyed Junco	1,023
American Wigeon	36	American Kestrel	5	Northern Cardinal	705
American Black Duck	15	Merlin	1	Red-winged Blackbird	444
Mallard	357	Blue Jay	506	Eastern Meadowlark	11
Canvasback	4	American Crow	2,098	Common Grackle	24
Redhead	8	Fish Crow	150	Brown-headed Cowbird	58
Ring-necked Duck	186	<i>crow species</i>	671	House Finch	212
Bufflehead	1	Common Raven	1	American Goldfinch	215
Hooded Merganser	29	Horned Lark	30	House Sparrow	339
Wild Turkey	4	Carolina Chickadee	721	Area Total Birds:	32,945
Great Blue Heron	11	Black-capped Chickadee	1	Area Total Species:	80
Black Vulture	212	Tufted Titmouse	580	Totals	
Turkey Vulture	212	White-breasted Nuthatch	262		
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	9	Brown Creeper	9	Time Start:	6:45 a
Northern Harrier	1	Winter Wren	16	Time Stop:	5:30 p
Sharp-shinned Hawk	9	Carolina Wren	288	Hours on Foot:	147.5
Cooper's Hawk	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet	45	Hours by Car:	46.7
<i>accipiter species</i>	3	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Miles on Foot:	126.5
Red-shouldered Hawk	79	Eastern Bluebird	452	Miles by Car:	504.8
Red-tailed Hawk	64	Hermit Thrush	6	Hours Feeder Watching:	7.0
<i>buteo species</i>	1	American Robin	1,093	Hours Stationary:	4.2
American Coot	3	Northern Mockingbird	178	Hours "Owling":	1.0
Killdeer	5	Brown Thrasher	1	Miles "Owling":	6.0
Wilson's Snipe	2	European Starling	5,217	Totals	
Ring-billed Gull	528	Cedar Waxwing	36	Deer Seen	225
Herring Gull	47	Yel.-rump'd (Myrtle) Warbler	15	Tot. Field Obs. in Area:	65
<i>gull species</i>	23	Eastern Towhee	44	Tot. Field Parties in Area:	43
Rock Pigeon	494	American Tree Sparrow	10	Tot. Feederwatchers:	1
Mourning Dove	561	Chipping Sparrow	1	Tot. Feederwatch Parties:	1
Great Horned Owl	7	Field Sparrow	137	Total Observers in Area:	66
Barred Owl	5	Savannah Sparrow	33	Tot. Field Pty-Hrs (Reg.):	190.7
Belted Kingfisher	21	Fox Sparrow	4	Total Party-Hrs (Feeder):	7.0
Red-bellied Woodpecker	258	Song Sparrow	762	Tot. Pty-Hrs (Stationary):	4.2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	16	Swamp Sparrow	25	Total Party-Hrs (Owling):	1.0
Downy Woodpecker	243	White-throated Sparrow	1,590	Total Party-Hours:	206.4
Totals		Totals		Totals	



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

**10970 Millbank Row
Columbia, MD 21044**

May/June 2013 - Inside This Issue:

Club Meetings	Winter Bird Records
Spring Field Trips	Butterfly Survey Training
Annual List	Red-necked Grebe Rescued
Dragonfly Count	Midwinter Count Results
Potluck	May Count

MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2014

BY KEVIN HEFFERNAN

After this long, cold, and snowy winter, spring is finally here and with spring comes May Count. May Count is always the second Saturday in May, timed to coincide with the peak of the spring migration. This year it is on May 10th. For beginning birders, this is an excellent opportunity to be paired with more experienced birders and to see and hear a number of both residents and spring migrants. Think warblers, vireos, thrushes, shorebirds, etc. This is the time of year when you will see or hear the largest number of species. The spring migrants are passing through headed north, the summer residents are back and some of the winter migrants are still around. Over the last 10 years across the county, we have tallied an average of 146 species during the May Count. Last year's total of 152 was the 4th highest in the 40 years that we have been conducting the count.

For the count, Howard County is divided into seven areas. 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 would have a good chance of seeing that bird.

Area 1	Bill Hill	410-442-5512
Area 2	Tom Strikwerda	301-942-2841
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	John McKitterick	410-997-3122

At the end of the day, all of the counters are invited to a tally rally at Kathie Lillie'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 Kathie's house will be provided by the area coordinators.) Please call Kathie in advance (301-807-3785) 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, gets called in, or emailed to Ralph Lillie ralphlillie@verizon.net 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 birder's to see many new and beautiful species of birds as they pass through in their spring plumage.