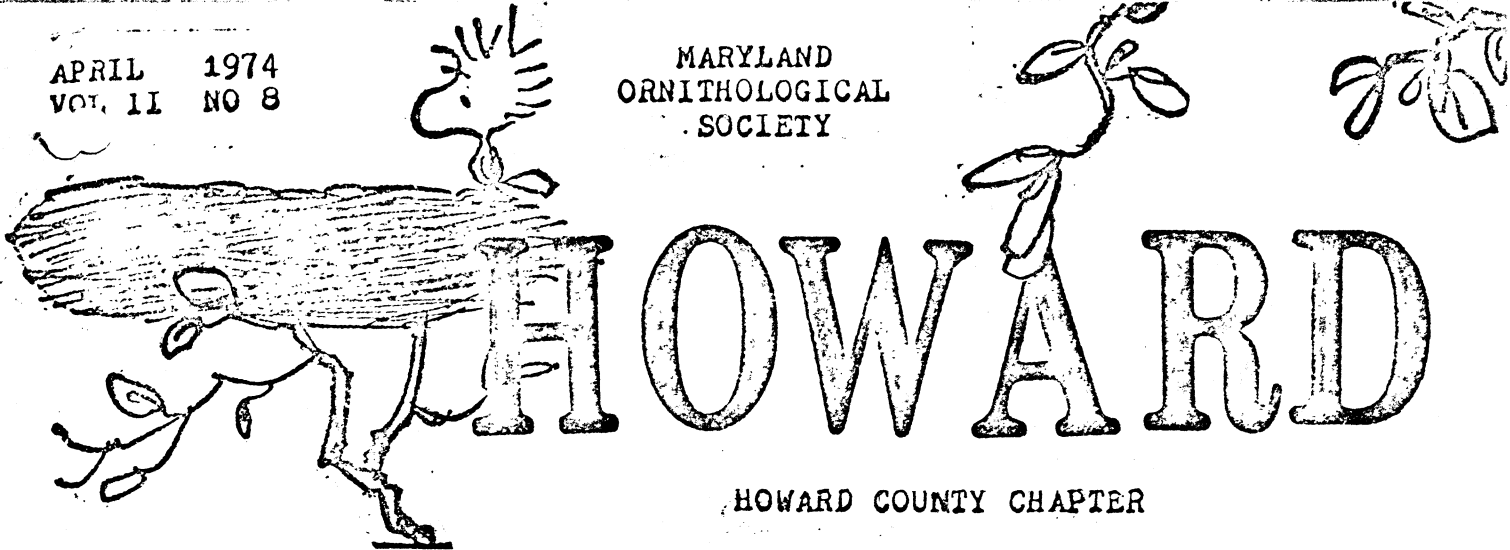


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HOWARD COUNTY CHAPTER

T H E N E W Y E A R

A new year begins for the Howard County Chapter of MOS. Election of officers was the order of business at the March meeting. The new officers are: President: Bob Herndon (730-0942), Vice-President: Erv Klaas (730-7821), Secretary: Lucille Peters (465-6293), Treasurer: Ben Dawson (730-8549) and Trustee: John Healy (465-5737).

Not all chairman of the various committees have been named. Late appointees will be announced next month. Those who have been appointed are: Field trips-- Erv Klaas (730-7821), Newsletter--Marty Chestem, (730-1527), Conservation-- Larry Hood (730-9251); Community Education--Donna Herbst (286-3808), Book Shop-- Frances Dawson (730-8549), Program-- Duncan MacDonald (730-5429).

The Board looks forward to a new year as successful as the last. It hopes that its goals will be realized through your help and support--the phone numbers have been listed above for your convenience. Suggestions and comments are always welcome!

Nan Rhineland, retiring President, first took the initiative to organize the Howard County Chapter of MOS. She located and brought together a small group of persons (few who knew each other before that night) one November evening in 1972. Before the end of that first meeting, temporary officers were selected and the work began. An election was held in March 1973, and Nan became officially the first President. It was mainly through her guidance, enthusiasm, and interest that the very young chapter grew. Thankfully, Nan will continue to be active in all Chapter affairs. But for her work as President this past year the Board wishes to say, "THANK YOU AND WELL DONE!"

G O O D N E W S

Running Brook Elementary School broke ground late in March for a most interesting project. With loaned equipment from the Taylor Rental of Columbia and planning assistance from the Howard County Soil Conservation agent, the school is putting in a garden and creating a bird sanctuary.

The students tilled a strip of land 8 by 50 feet and planted a quick crop of radishes and lettuce. In June, sorghum, millet, wheat and sunflowers will be sown to provide a bird feeding station next fall and winter. Pines were planted to shelter the birds; honey-suckle, autumn olive and dogwood were planted to provide food.

ABOUT THOSE LISTS!

About the first puzzling thing a novice hears after joining a group of birders is all that talk about "lists". Birding is a sport to many and like baseball buffs, the statistics can be fascinating. Besides, there aren't many hard and fast rules, and an enthusiastic birder can keep a list about anything he chooses. The thing is to be consistent and keep lists up to date. A birder will sometimes be surprised at the amount of information he can gather from the data he has collected.

The simplest list perhaps is one kept by owners of yard and balcony bird feeders. It is wise to keep dates, special behavioural notes, and weather conditions. Then there is the field trip list. Species can be checked off a printed field card as they are seen (many varieties are available, National Wildlife Refuges have them at the refuges listing only species regularly seen in the locale) or one can keep a small notebook and also add other information (habitat, weather, etc.). If a trip lasts several days, separate lists may be kept for each day.

Lists showing the number of species seen in a calendar year are popular and many clubs have contests each year to honor the member seeing the largest number of species. It is interesting to compare these lists from one year to the next. There are many who keep spring and fall lists with special reference on arrival and departure dates of migrants. The Patuxent Wildlife Research Center is interested in receiving this type of information and many birders in the area are collecting data for the Center.

The Life List is the one almost every birder keeps and its very important to keep an accurate list. Generally, birders' references to their Life Lists are concerned with the North American birds seen in the territory officially designated by the American Ornithological Union. The rules for keeping these lists vary and sometimes get a bit sticky. Currently, there is much discussion about when, and if ever one can list a species at a banding station since it is in captivity at the point it is captured but then is it cricket to count it as it is released? Many birders keep State lists and of course, world lists or lists by continents.

Stuart Keith, president of American Birding Association, wrote an article for Audubon magazine in the early 1960's in which he stated he had seen over 600 species within the boundaries recognized by AOU as North American bird territory. With the publication of that article, "600" became the magic number with list minded birders everywhere and goals were set to surpass Keith. The Birding magazine (bi-monthly publication of ABA) regularly prints top birders based on their official lists. The Life list is headed by Joe Taylor (N.Y.) with 708 species and the only birder in the 700's; Stuart Keith is No. 16 with 659. In the November-December, 1973 issue State List top birders were listed by state. A number of names on the Maryland list are familiar to MOS members and happily, several Howard County chapter members were recognized. Chandler Robbins has identified 315 species in Maryland which is 87% of the State's total. Others are Kathy Klimkiewicz with 279 (77%), David Holmes with 273 (75%) and Jay Sheppard with 210 (58%).

A birder can make his own books for records from any notebook or he can purchase some very good ones from the bookstore (call Frances Dawson- 730-8549). Larry Hood recommends Combination List for Birds of North America by James Tucker (a Texan with 605). It is designed to keep life list, year lists, state lists and migration records. Birder's Life List and Diary is not as versatile but does leave space for diary like comments. JOIN THE LISTERS!

PLANNING CALENDAR

PROGRAM

MAY 9, THURSDAY, 7:30 P.M. - Swansfield Elementary School. Jerry Longcore with Part 2 of AVIAN ARCHITECTS. Part 1 was a popular program last year and Jerry is bringing more pictures of nests, eggs, and young birds. This program is being rescheduled; it was to have been the April program.

FIELD TRIPS

ON SUNDAYS--APRIL 7, 21, 28 and MAY 5--The Middle Patuxent Valley Association and the Howard County Chapter MOS will co-sponsor bird and nature walks. Meet at 7 a.m. (note the earlier time) on each Sunday morning at Swansfield Elementary School parking lot for car pooling. The walks will last about a half day each. Leaders will be Larry Hood (730-9251) and Erv Klaas (730-7821). An excellent opportunity to get acquainted with the Middle Patuxent Valley through the assistance of knowledgeable leaders.

FIELD DAY

MAY 4, SATURDAY: All day at the Talbot Springs School, 9550 Basket Ring Rd. Oakland Mills. Howard County Chapter will have a booth at this field day with books for sale and a slide show of Howard County birds. In the afternoon, there will be instructors to assist those interested in making 100 bird feeders.

GARDEN CLUB EXHIBITION

The Chapter will have an exhibit at the Federated Garden Club Exhibition at St. John's Episcopal Church in Ellicott City, April 16-18.

FLOWER WALK

APRIL 20, SATURDAY: Spring wild flower hike probably along the Middle Patuxent River (birding strictly secondary on this trip). Meet at 9th and Montgomery in Laurel at 8:30 A.M. one-half day. Sue and Tom Hayward are the leaders. This is a Patuxent Bird Club trip.

MAY COUNT

The date is Saturday, May 4. You may count in the area of your choice. Let Doug Hackman know where you plan to count to avoid duplication. Record the number of species; time spent by car, foot or other; and mileage. No fee charged this time. For further information or to volunteer call Doug at 668-1464. Lists are to be mailed to him, C. Douglas Hackman, 3033 Woodside Ave., Baltimore, 21234.