



Maryland Ornithological Society

APRIL 1976

VOL. IIM NO. 8

HOWARD

CALENDAR

FIELD EVENTS

TUESDAY, April 6 - Woodcock Walk - Jo Solem will lead this trip to the Munro's. Meet at 6:30 at the Swansfield Elementary School for this evening spectacular.

SUNDAY, April 25 - Outdoor Workshop at Old Camp Woodbine. The details and complete program are found further on in the newsletter.

SATURDAY, May 1 - Howard County May Count - please call Kris Krishnamoorthy at 997-5967 or Tom Moyer at 730-0138 to volunteer.

WEEKEND, May 7,8,9, -MOS State Convention at Ocean City. There are walks from dawn to dusk, much conviviality, and state business to attend to. Join the fun.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, April 8 - Spring Warblers - by Chan Robbins at 7:45p, Swansfield Elementary School.

BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, April 29 - Jo Solem's, 10617 Grae Loch Rd. (725-5037)

FAREWELL

It is with great regret that we see one of our most active members, Larry Hood, leaving the area. His wife, Peggy, helped us through our first year as secretary, and Larry has been a leader and speaker par excellence. We will all miss his great humor, tireless enthusiasm and great fund of knowledge. Through him we have had an opportunity to watch hawk trapping and banding at Cape May, wade the Patuxent, and crack a hundred species on the winter weekend trips to Chincoteague.

We wish all the Hood family success and adventure as they move to Anchorage where Larry will be the Federal Wildlife Enforcement Agent for the state of Alaska.

Paris Moore

MAY COUNT

This year's statewide annual May Count will be the 29th consecutive year. Birders canvass an assigned area from dawn to dusk, or until they drop by the wayside, in an effort to determine the migrating, resident, and winter bird resident population. Jokes aside, feeder or backyard tallies are welcome. The more information available the better the year to year results can be used for comparative analysis. Do volunteer to join the crew, don't sit in the poison ivy as I did last year, and join us for a potluck dinner to tally the totals at the Rhinelanders (286-2427). Supper will be about 6:30pm. Please call Lucille Peters after 4:00 pm to let her know how many will be in your party and what you can bring. Even if you can't come for supper do count anyway for as long as is convenient and phone your results to Kris Krishnamoorthy (997-5967).

SIGHTINGS

There has been a rare and unusual sighting in the vicinity of the Howard County General Hospital. This was not an accidental, weighed 7½ lbs. and has been named Anne. You guessed it - the Dawsons are the proud parents of a little girl!

Jo Solem has seen green winged teal, a brown thrasher, a phoebe and a rusty blackbird. A fox sparrow was spotted by the Dawsons and Bob Herndon ~~and~~ whistling swans the second week in March. Kris Krishnamoorthy found four phoebes, three brown creepers, a nest of mourning doves with eggs, and fish crows. Seven blue winged teal and eight ring necked ducks spent time rumping in the Rhinelander pond this last month.

OUTDOOR WORKSHOP - Sunday, April 25

This should be an enjoyable first for the whole family. A day is planned of assorted demonstrations and walks. Camp Woodbine will host the doings with an instructional program running from 9am to 3pm. Bring lunch, a beverage, camera and binoculars as well as bird, tree and or flower field guides if you have them.

A leader will meet you on the west corner of Route 144 and Route 32 at the West Friendship Neighborhood Center at either 8:30am, 11:00am, or 1:00pm to lead you to Camp Woodbine. If you have any questions call Lucille Peters (465-6293) after April 19th. Young and old come and join the fun.

The following is a list of the offerings for the workshop:

- Bird Banding - Kathy Klimkiewics
- Tree Identification - Rhoda Booth
- Wildflowers - Joyce Longcore and Jo Solem
- Nature Photography - Bob Herndon (Birds)
Bob Solem
Ben Dawson
- Habitat - Kathy Klimkiewics and Jo Solem
- Bird Walk and Bird Calls - David Holmes in the morning
Kris Krishnamoorthy
Bob Herndon
- Children's Walk - Nan Rhinelander

CONSERVATION ALERT - Delmarva Waterway Project of the Army Corps of Engineers

The Corps plans to construct a 6-foot deep waterway extending from ~~Lowes~~, Delaware, 150 miles south to Cape Charles, Virginia, as a protected passage for shallow draft vessels (pleasure crafts) as an alternative to the open waters of Chesapeake Bay. Concerned citizens are alarmed at the cost of almost 22 million dollars and at the far reaching impact this would have on the great natural areas of the Eastern Shore. Write Colonel Harry Dutschylshin, Chief, Philadelphia District, Corps of Engineers, 2nd and Chestnut Sts. Philadelphia, Pa. 19106, Gov. Mandel, and Congressmen and Senators. For fuller information and addresses call 286-2427.

ATTRACTING BACKYARD BIRDS

In my research of herb plants and their uses this winter I have come across a surprising number of trees, shrubs, and plants which not only served in years gone by as culinary, medicinal, dye or food plants but which are attractive to birds. Bear in mind that most berrying plants such as blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, cherries and plums can be planted for our own use and for the birds. The high bush blueberry can be found in this area growing in mature deciduous woods so if you should have a shade canopy it ought to be very successful. The small white bell flowers are very pretty in blossom and a handful of berries taste scrumptious in fresh muffins. With the birds around a handful is about all you may be left with!

The poke plant which many consider a nefarious weed with its horrendous tap root grows happily in sun and shade around our farm. We eat the new 6" to 10" growth in spring after it has been brought to a boil in three waters. The birds are delighted with the fall berries. Whatever is left after fall migration shrivels on the plants for hungry winter residents. The dye from the berries is potent as I have discovered when arranging the beautifully colored branches in fall arrangements. As an ornamental plant remember that it grows 6 to 8 feet in height but gives a pretty effect if you like native plants. If any of you are interested with this common Maryland weed I often have a good supply of seedlings plucked by the birds in various gardens.

Strawberries are a highly rated multiuse plant. The leaves can be dried for an herbal tea, and the French varieties make a small floriferous and everbearing border to front down a flower bed or edge a walk. The fruits are smaller than agricultural varieties, quite pointed, and have a delicate flavor. They need full sun. Several varieties are carried by the White Flower Farm, Litchfield 161, Conn. 06759.

Beebalm, *Monarda didyma*, is a somewhat weedy perennial which provides red blossoms in summer for hummingbirds. The leaves were used in colonial times dried as an herbal tea, and the flowers dried make a colorful addition to pot pourri. I have also seen hummingbirds attracted early to pink and red azaleas, wild columbine, lilacs, and the Mimosa tree. As the wild honeysuckle blooms off and on during the growing season summer residents and fall migrants are drawn to its honey.

To get the most out of the spring and summer birds provide brambles, thickets or tangles for a protected nesting area. Hedges such as tall boxwood, yew, and Canadian hemlock have attracted nesting mourning doves around my home. Young white pine, spruce, and spreading junipers have made home sites for robins, mockingbirds, and chipping sparrows. Nest boxes of different sizes will also increase the number of nesting pairs in an area. Even if the bluebirds only check my boxes out the discovery of a family of chickadees makes it all worth while.

The old trip of putting yarn out of different colors, and bits of string or hair, can provide hours of enjoyment as various birds alight to choose their favorites, then fly off to incorporate them in their nests. The Northern oriole took more than anyone else but the yellow warbler preferred the cottony bits off the old grayed kitchen mop, left out on the porch to dry.

A variety of plants, open lawn, thickets, and tall trees needs to be rounded out by a shallow bird bath if there is no natural water close by. A cement shell purchased for \$15 or \$20, kept clean and filled with water does nicely. Even an exterior faucet left to drip into a shallow container works, or for the more sophisticated, a recycling pump can be bought for \$20 to \$25. Electrical power to the fountain is an additional expense. However, I find nothing quite as comical as watching birds splashing about, spraying water to glitter in the sunlight. The low spots in our lane provide mud baths for adventuresome sparrows. Some people extol the virtues of mud packs! Maybe there is something in it after all.

Nan Rhineland