

HOWARD

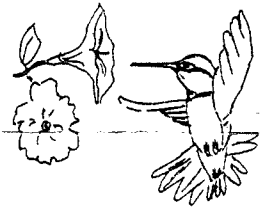
MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
MAY - JUNE 1982 VOL. 10 No. 6

OFFICERS FOR 1982-1983 ELECTED AT APRIL MEETING

The following officers were elected to lead the Howard County Chapter of MOS for the coming year: President: Jane Farrell; Vice-president: David Pardoe; Secretary: Maud Banks; Treasurer: Don Randle; State Trustees: Max Casper and Paul Zucker. Committee heads (who with elected officers make up the Board of Directors) will be announced in the next newsletter. The club thanks the Nominating Committee which consisted of Eileen Clegg, ch., Don & Janet Randle and Martha Waugh for their work in obtaining this fine slate. Thanks are also due the outgoing officers and committee heads who provided capable leadership during the past year.

35th ANNUAL MAY COUNT FEATURED LOVELY WEATHER

The 35th annual Maryland Ornithological Society bird count was held on Saturday, May 1, 1982. Because it was as early as it can ever be, there were still some lingering winter species, but spring migrants were few in number and many species had not yet arrived. According to Paul A. Zucker, Howard compiler, no records will be broken this year. When he has tallied the results a compilation will be sent to all participants. Remember that next year the count will be on May 7 which is as late as it can be. The last time (1977) it was scheduled for that date we set an all time high for species. Circle that Saturday for next year and resolve to help.



Our thanks to the Randle's for hosting the tally potluck, especially to Jan who coordinated the meal. We hope Don recovers quickly from his emergency surgery. We know birding can be strenuous, but not THAT strenuous.

LATE SPRING PROVIDES CHANCE TO EXTEND WILDFLOWER DATES - Bob Solem

Spring has been late this year which makes it the ideal time to try to extend blooming dates of wildflowers. Following are some of the species reported in the Howard County Spring Wildflower Checklist which have blooming dates ending in May: Trout Lily, Perfoliate Bellwort, Sessile Bellwort, False Hellebore, Moccasin Flower, Large Yellow Lady's Slipper, Showy Orchis, Early Meadow Rue, Mayapple, Yellow Corydalis, Dutchman's Breeches, Slender and Cut-leaved Toothworts, Early Saxifrage, Violet Wood Sorrel, Sweet White Violet, Birdsfoot Violet, Smooth and Downy Yellow Violets, and Virginia Bluebells.

It may also be possible to extend dates on Golden Club, Wild Lily-of-the-valley, Wild Pink, Wood Anemone, Trailing Arbutus, Blue Phlox, Downy Phlox, Wild Comfrey, and Coltsfoot.



MOS WORK WEEKEND AT CAREY RUN SANCTUARY - David Pardoe

Saturday, April 24th, was a work day at the Carey Run Sanctuary. The Allegany County chapter provides the normal manpower to maintain this sanctuary. This year Dan Folk offered an opportunity for a day--or weekend--of work and recreation for MOS members throughout the state. Over 40 people responded including members from the Baltimore, Montgomery, Carroll, and Allegany County chapters as well as Howard. The Howard contingent included Marty Chestem, Max Casper, and the Pardoe family.

We arrived Friday evening and after finding the dirt roads, log bridge, locked gate and finally the house, we discovered a note from Marty to the effect that the water was out of order and she had departed for a more civilized setting. We discovered that the water problem had been resolved, but it was apparent that a contingent of squirrels had enjoyed a comfortable winter in the house for they had left sunflower seed hulls and assorted debris in their wake. The wood stoves worked fine and soon began to raise the temperature above the mid-thirties to a good sleeping bag temperature.

The next day the work crew arrived and transformed the place. The house was cleaned and scrubbed; cabinets, dishes, stove, etc. were all rescued from the squirrels' onslaught; and fresh paint was applied to window frames, a ceiling, and other appropriate areas. Various sources of nesting material for squirrels and mice were pitched out of the windows to be piled with other contributions for the county dump. An old three-walled shed in precarious condition was demolished and its covering of aged barn siding stacked for future stove wood. Two of the beams were hauled off to become a foot bridge on the blue trail. The roof of an old spring house was likewise removed and added to the woodpile while the rotted framework was retained to provide a pattern for a new roof. Meanwhile other eager souls were pruning shrubbery around the house and along the lengthy winding trails on the sanctuary.

All was not work. After a filling lunch provided by MOS, the work crew faded off along the trails to search for the elusive "whatever." A few individuals stayed behind to rest on the lawn. They were able to report triumphantly to returning birders that a Wild Turkey had flown right across the lawn. In general it was a bit early for exciting birding in Garrett County, although we did hear a Ruffed Grouse drumming. On Sunday as we were leaving, we parked the car near the blue trail and took a last walk to show our daughters the yellow violets we had seen the day before. As we were walking through a hemlock grove near a stream, our oldest daughter spotted a Ruffed Grouse walking along like a slightly startled chicken--a great end to a delightful weekend.

DID YOU SEE THE NORTHERN LIGHTS?

"Kris," Marcia and Anú Krishnamoorthy observed a spectacular display of Northern Lights the evening of March 1 at about 10:30 p.m. In this latitude sightings are usually few in number and/or quite limited in scope. These ranged from the northern horizon to above the observers' heads and were predominantly pink rather than blue or green. The period of greatest intensity lasted about 10 minutes.

SPRING ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DATES NEEDED FOR MD BIRDLIFE

Please mail or telephone spring arrival and departure dates to Jo Solen, 10617 Grae Loch Rd., Laurel, MD 20707 (725-5037) no later than June 15, 1982, so that they can be compiled and forwarded to Bob Ringler for inclusion in Maryland Birdlife.

C A L E N D A R

PROGRAMS - 7:45 p.m. Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Drive, Columbia.

May 13 - Thur. - "Raptor Research" - Dr. Mark Fuller, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. Dr. Fuller will detail the status of various birds of prey in the Eastern U.S. and possibly other areas. He has also recently returned from an international conference on the subject which may provide interesting information.

FIELD TRIPS - Field trips leave from the Grempler Realty Building parking lot (across from Flier building) on Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia unless otherwise indicated. Roy Trudel, 465-9398 (h) is Field Trip Chairman. Severe weather conditions may result in trip cancellation at the leader's discretion. If in doubt, call. Carpooling continues with riders sharing gas and toll costs. Please make an effort to arrive on time. Dress for field work with stout, reasonably waterproof footwear. Trips do not always follow marked paths.

May 15 - Sat. - BIRDING TRIP IN HOWARD COUNTY. Leaders: John & Eileen Clegg, 730-4362. $\frac{1}{2}$ day. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Grempler Realty. This trip should provide many species during a prime migration period.

May 16 - Sun. - CENTENNIAL HABITAT WALK. Leaders: Eva Sunell 995-0029 & Bill Eckert. Co-sponsored by How. Co. Rec. & Parks. Another in the seasonal series examining the flora and fauna of this park. Meet at 12:30 p.m. at Grempler or at 1:00 p.m. in the small parking lot on the east side of Centennial Lane 0.3 mile north of Rt. 108. $\frac{1}{2}$ day.

May 23 - Sun. - SAVAGE PARK WILDFLOWER WALK. Leaders: Bob & Jo Solem. Meet at Grempler at 1:00 p.m. $\frac{1}{2}$ day. Puttyroot (a native orchid) and One-flowered Cancerroot should be in bloom. ~~(Sawtooth & rain)~~

June 5 - Sat. - RECREATION EXPO AT COLUMBIA MALL. See announcement elsewhere in this newsletter. Call Eileen Clegg 730-4362 to volunteer.

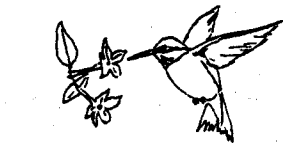
June 6 - Sun. - MUNRO PROPERTY FOR BIRDS & WILDFLOWERS. Leader: Rosamond Munro. Meet at 1:00 p.m. at Grempler. $\frac{1}{2}$ day. Probability of two species of wild orchids including Loesel's Twayblade.

June 12 - Sat. - BLAIR'S VALLEY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA & POTOMAC RIVER, WASHINGTON COUNTY, MD. Leader: Chuck Dupree 796-1086 (h). Exceptional assortment of breeding birds including Golden-winged & Blue-winged Warblers, Common Raven, many swallows. Possibility for Wild Turkey & Ruffed Grouse. Excellent wildflower area in early spring. Whole day. Bring lunch. Meet at Grempler at 7:30 a.m.

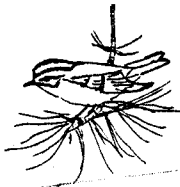
July 18 - Sun. - CENTENNIAL HABITAT WALK. Leaders: Eva Sunell 995-0029 & Bill Eckert. Co-sponsored by How. Co. Rec. & Parks. One of a series to examine the natural history of this park. See meeting information under May 16th above. $\frac{1}{2}$ day.

Aug. 15 - Sun. - MIDDLE PATUXENT WADE. Leaders: Marty Chestem & Bill Eckert. Co-sponsored by How. Co. Rec. & Parks. Revival of a trip which used to be an annual club event. 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (app.) Meet at Grempler at 10:40 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. at the parking lot adjacent to the Atholton Shopping Center, Old Columbia Pike northeast of Rts. 29 & 32. No fee but registration necessary; call Rec & Parks 992-2483. Bring lunch in waterproof bag (all refuse must be carried along). Do NOT bring binoculars unless willing to risk dunking. Wear old sneakers (footgear required), denim jeans or cutoffs, & old shirt. Minimum age 12; anyone under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. This can be strenuous but it is different, wet, & fun. Questions? Call Marty 730-1527.

BOARD MEETING - A joint Board Meeting of all outgoing and incoming Board members will be held on Thursday, May 20 at Jane Farrell's, 6324 Sandchain Rd., Columbia, Md. Call 596-6350 for directions. All elected officers & appointed committee chairmen should attend.



B I R D B E A T - Grazina McClure



This column is designed to share birding experiences and sightings in the county. If you have information you would like included, please call Grazina or Mike McClure at 286-2780.

This has been a slow, late spring. In central Howard County Red-winged Blackbirds and Spring Peepers began calling on 3/11. By 3/15 the willows were greening and the maples budding. Around 4/18 the number of Purple Finches at feeders increased and the number of House Finches decreased. Cardinal numbers seemed to be up. As of 4/27 many people were still seeing Fine Siskins, a few juncos, and White-throated Sparrows at feeders.

Alice Grant watched a Sharp-shinned Hawk chasing sparrows in her yard on 3/10. On 4/11 she saw a Northern Harrier at the central library. The Botsais had robins on 3/9. Frances Ehlers also had a Sharpie on 3/10 and had phoebes nest-building on 4/1. Two Pileated Woodpeckers were in her yard on 4/13. On 3/28 the Rhinelanders had 2 Canada Geese on their pond. Chuck Dupree saw a Greater Yellowlegs on 3/28 in Patapsco State Park. Russell Chandler had a Purple Martin on 4/10, while he and Jon K. Boone observed a White-eyed Vireo and a Palm Warbler on 4/17. The Boones saw a Cliff Swallow, Winter Wren, Rough-winged Swallow and Chimney Swift near Marriottsville on 4/18. Jo Solem also had a C. Swift on that date. Rosamond Munro had an early Blue-gray Gnatcatcher on 4/14 and still had Fox Sparrows 4/9. On 4/13 the Randles saw a Chipping Sparrow, W. Wren, and Louisiana Waterthrush in the woods behind their home. They also had a Northern Oriole on 4/27.

The Eackers have seen a Mallard 2/25, Wood Ducks 3/12, and Great Blue Heron 4/13 on their pond. The Clelands had 6 Evening Grosbeaks 4/6-4/13. As of 4/19 the Cleggs still had a Red-breasted Nuthatch. On 4/12 Mike Leumas spotted an American Bittern on a pond on Rt. 175 near Tamar Dr. This species has been seen in only 4 of the last 25 years in Howard County. The Pardoes had bluebirds nesting on 4/12. On 4/19 they saw 16 male P. Finches, a Sharp-shin on 4/10, and on 4/19 Dave saw an American Redstart on the Montgomery County side of Patuxent R. State Park on Georgia Avenue.

Jane Farrell had a Common Merganser on 3/23 on the Middle Pat. River. On 4/12 she saw a G.B. Heron close to Sand Chain Rd. while on 4/18 she spotted a Green Heron and Blue-winged Teal in Columbia. The McClures had robins on 3/9. A flicker began early morning drumming on their gutters on 3/18 and returned regularly until 4/20. On 4/3 the first breeding plumaged goldfinch came to their feeders, while on 4/5 Mike saw a Red-headed Woodpecker at APL.

Anne Walsh had Common Redpolls at her feeder 3/9 and she saw at least 6 flocks of Whistling Swans land on a neighbor's pond on the same date. On 3/22 she saw a phoebe and on 4/7 a male and female Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Also around this time she found a Flying Squirrel in a roosting box. On 4/5 she had 6 Fox Sparrows, on 4/4 a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and a Black-and-white Warbler on 4/18. By 4/20 she had a male and female Pileated Woodpecker, 30-40 E. Grosbeaks, 12 male P. Finches, and a R.b. Nuthatch.

Marty Chestem saw a Tree Swallow on 4/1 and a Barn Swallow on 4/6. She had P. Martins and a L. Waterthrush on 4/10 while on 4/17 had a Prairie, Palm and Yellow-rumped Warbler.

The people who went on the 4/18 wildflower walk along the Little Patuxent River in Columbia saw several nice birds in addition to the flowers: a B-&-w and Northern Parula Warbler, Brown Creeper, B.g. Gnatcatcher and Northern Harrier.

The Eackers have a phoebe nest in their carport, the Clelands have a chickadee nest with 6 eggs and gnatcatcher nests have been observed by the Eackers, McClures, and Rhinelanders. Nan says the one they saw is in a good position for photographs at a height of 15-18'. Call her if you're interested at 286-2427.

Keep an eye out for the rest of the warbler species and other migrants as they move through the area. Also, take note of nesting birds and fledglings. Call and relay your bird sightings so that they can be included in the next column and in that way shared with other bird club members.

RECREATION EXPO AT COLUMBIA MALL ON SATURDAY, JUNE 5

The Chapter again plans to participate in Recreation Expo, Saturday, June 5, an event which allows clubs in the county to advertise themselves. Our display of specimens and nests always attracts attention. We "man" a table from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Anyone who wishes to donate an hour to stay with the display and chat with those who stop should call Eileen Clegg, 730-4362, by May 24th. Often she is able to arrange to have two people working at the same time so that those individuals who are hesitant to volunteer because they are afraid they will be unable to answer questions will be paired with someone who has helped before. Those members who served at the exhibit last year, June 6, 1981, were Carole & George Cleland, Sheila & Jonathan Glanz, Alice Grant, Jane Farrell, David Holmes, Grazina & Mike McClure, Jan & Don Randle and Eva Sunell. Thanks to each of them.

THANKS FOR FEEDER TRIP

The Club thanks Georgia & Jim Eacker, Alice Fazekas, and Mary Hall for opening their homes to participants on the winter feeder trip. Several members of the Montgomery MOS Chapter participated in this field trip. Special thanks to Mary Hall who provided not only a tour of her historic home but dessert during a social period.

DO YOU BIRD IN FARAWAY PLACES?

Jan Randle has volunteered to begin a file to help traveling birders from the Howard Bird Club. She asks that when you visit national and state parks, sanctuaries and other good birding areas you bring back for the file copies of maps, bird lists, directions and other useful information. This could be an enormous help whether you are planning a lengthy family vacation or have only a few free hours while on a business trip. Jan can be contacted at any meeting in the Bookstore or you can call her at 531-6296.

URBAN WILDLIFE RESEARCH CENTER RECEIVES GRANT

The Urban Wildlife Research Center, Inc. has received a \$100,000 grant from the Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh, PA, to investigate the use of urban wetlands for stormwater management and wildlife enhancement. Dr. Lowell W. Adams, the Center's Research Director, is principal investigator of the study.

NASSAWANGO PRINT DRAWING

The last newsletter announced a drawing for a photograph that had been presented to the club by The Nature Conservancy for our contribution to the fund to preserve Nassawango Creek. All individuals who had contributed were eligible for the drawing which took place at the March meeting. The lucky winners were Brenda and John Bell.



WOODPECKER PROBLEM LEADS TO HUMOROUS CORRESPONDENCE - Jo Solem

During the spring, members of the Howard Bird Club are frequently asked how to deter or eliminate woodpeckers which use downspouts and ridge poles for courting or which drill into wooden portions of buildings. The problem is reported so often that hints on the subject were included in the club publication Attracting Birds in the Maryland Piedmont. No deterrent is foolproof so I continue to look for solutions to the problem.

Last summer New Jersey Audubon carried an item labeled "Woodpeckers." It was reprinted from Workbench magazine in answer to a query of how to stop woodpecker damage. The letter was written by Leland S. Devore, past president of the Harford Chapter of MOS. His "solution" ran as follows:

"To properly and permanently stop woodpeckers from drilling holes in houses we must understand that they have long and sensitive tongues, as well as strong beaks. Capitalizing on this, we make a slurry of flour and water into which we mix finely chopped jalapeno peppers, chopped cayenne peppers, a small bottle of Tabasco sauce and just a touch of turpentine. This mixture is painted over and around the vulnerable sections of the house.

"When an errant woodpecker attacks your house and his sensitive tongue touches this mix, HE STOPS! He not only stops but he leaves you, your house and probably your neighborhood strictly alone.

"There are two other benefits derived from this 'cure.' First, it is unlikely there will be any mildew on the paint where this mixture is applied. Second, any leftover mix can be used as a dip with barbecue flavored potato chips at a cocktail party where there are unwelcome guests. It is quite probable they also will no longer bother you."

The whole concoction sounded strange to me, but after reading (and preparing) any number of equally peculiar recipes to feed birds I was willing to check further. His final sentence sounded vicious but I chalked it off to a warped sense of humor and, fortunately, decided to check with the author before publication.

I received the following letter from "Lee" Devore in which he answered my questions. It quickly became obvious that I had swallowed his concoction lock, stock and turpentine. Since the tone of so many birding articles is factual and sober, I thought our readers might enjoy Devore's reply:

"1. THE MIX: A very highly spiced and seasoned dual purpose concoction, equally effective at repelling either woodpeckers or guests of whom you are not unduly fond....

2. WHO ORIGINATED THE MIX: This is lost in the fog of antiquity. It is first mentioned with relation to the near crisis facing the English army the night before the battle of Ginsburg in 1671 when a flock of enemy-trained woodpeckers descended on the English encampment and began devouring their long-bows which would have spelled defeat. They quickly painted their bows with this self-same mixture and went on to rout the Teutons.

3. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN IN USE: Precisely 300 years, as 1981 is the anniversary of the little-known battle of Ginsburg. (Although it may have been retained as a secret weapon by the crafty English prior to that time).

4. SPECIES OF WOODPECKERS OBSERVED WHICH THE MIX STOPPED: There has been absolutely NO trouble with red-cockaded woodpeckers since this mix has been used....

5. BIRD'S TYPICAL REACTION: Similar to a 220 volt shock. Bird looks startled, flies in small concentric circles for 30 seconds, then takes off like a scalded cat, never to be seen again.

6. FREQUENCY OF APPLICATION OF MIX: Once per nesting season, except in West Virginia where the 'peckers are so used to white lightning' that they have developed some immunity. Apply every hour on the hour in West Virginia.

7. HAVE I TRIED THE MIX WITHOUT TURPENTINE IN IT? Would you serve ham without eggs at 0730 hours? Certainly not!"

BIRD INFORMATION FURNISHED BY CHAPTER MEMBERS USED IN DIRECTORIES

Byron Publishers, Inc., of Columbia publish a series of regional telephone directories. They decided to feature birds in several directories during the 1982-1983 period. The Howard Chapter was contacted for material. Special informational and feature items were put together, much of it taken from articles that had been published in the HOWARD newsletter. The Crofton Directory has just been distributed which was the first in which the material was used. The Howard Directory and possibly that for Columbia will contain the same information but will not be released until early 1983. Members who contributed to this publicity were Martha Chestem, Rosamond Munro, Bea Newkirk, Nan Rhinelander, Jo Solem and Eva Sunell. Each directory will use a different cover featuring one or more local birds. If any of our readers have one or more slides which they would like to have considered for a cover for one of the other directories, contact Jo Solem, 725-5037 by July 1. The slide should be as close as possible to full frame of the bird, should not be obviously handheld, and should be a species that nests in the area. Vertical shots are preferred.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK NESTING NEAR DOYLE'S

The last weekend in April Bob Doyle reported a Red-shouldered Hawk on a nest near Plum Tree Branch close to his home in the north central part of the county. Woody Martin may band the young sometime in May. Let Bob know, 465-4883, if you would like to be advised when the banding will take place. (It is usually between 5:00 and 6:30 p.m. after Woody leaves the Patuxent Research Center.)

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED DURING 1981-1982



Each year the Howard County Chapter of MOS presents slide shows and demonstrations to community and school groups using specimens and nests. The following compilation begins with April 3, 1981 and continues through April 26, 1982.

Those persons presenting one or more programs include Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, Chuck Dupree, Bill Eckert, Marcia Krishnamoorthy, Nan Rhinelander, Jo Solem, and Cathy Williamson. Jon K. Boone and Frank Griffin borrowed specimens for personal study and Jane Geuder used a box of specimens for a display.

Items in the Howard collection were used in presenting the following programs: Palotti High School mini-course, Montessori Children's House, Brownie Troop at Phelps Luck Elementary, Boy Scout Troop #361, Atholton Elementary first graders, Col. Thomas Dorsey Chapter of DAR, Talbott Springs Elementary 3rd & 4th grades, Armchair Travelogue Series for Howard Co. Rec. & Parks (2 presentations), Brownie Troop at Dasher Green neighborhood center, Women's Interest Group (Fulton), 2 biology classes at Centennial High, Women's Club of Towson, Elkridge Elementary mini-course, DIG Garden Club, Howard Rec. & Parks Feeder Workshop as well as a Teens & Sr. Citizens Get-together, Longfellow Garden Club, Phelps Luck Elementary 3rd & 4th grades, Running Brook Elementary 3rd & 4th grades, Brownie Troop at Stevens Forest Elementary, Scout Troop #749, Goddard Garden Club, Cross-country Garden Club, Howard Co. Rec. & Parks birding classes (several sessions). In addition specimens were displayed at most chapter meetings, at the two seed sales, for three weeks in a display case at Centennial H.S. and at Recreation Expo at the Columbia Mall. Presentations were made to at least 1,000 people. If you are interested in helping to present these programs or wish to borrow specimens, slides or nests contact either President Jane Farrell 596-6350 (evenings) or Jo Solem 725-5037.

Drawings in this issue are the work of Grazina McClure. Art work and articles are always welcome. Submissions for the September-October newsletter should reach Jo Solem, 10617 Graeloch Rd., Laurel, MD 20707 by August 15, 1982.

Howard County MOS
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Laurel, MD 20707

