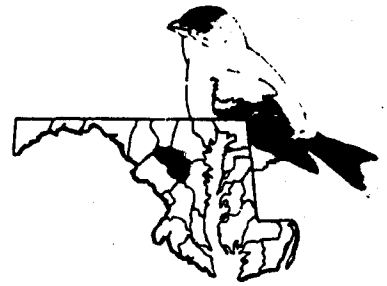




NOV - DEC 1986  
VOL 18, NO. 2

# Howard

A Chapter of the  
Maryland Ornithological Society



## LAWRENCE'S WARBLER IN HOWARD COUNTY - ROBERT RINGLER

While birding in the Triadelphia Reservoir watershed at the Green Bridge boat ramp (Pigtail) area, I observed an adult male Lawrence's Warbler, a recessive hybrid form of the Blue Winged Warbler (Vermivora pinus) and the Golden-winged Warbler (Vermivora chrysoptera) on the morning of Saturday, 6 September 1986. I was alone at the time and, after checking the mud flats for shorebirds which were very few in number, I turned my attention to the small land birds which seemed plentiful on this particular morning.

Within a few minutes I noticed the Lawrence's Warbler in the top of a locust tree, feeding actively. The entire time I watched it (several minutes) it remained in the treetops which were 30 to 40 feet up and was occasionally approached by other warblers but could not be considered with any of them. This was just a mixed species flock feeding after the night's flight.

The bird had the general appearance of a small passerine and was similar in size to the other birds near it (mostly Tennessee Warblers Vermivora peregrina). It had the short pointed black bill of most warblers. The underparts were entirely bright yellow with the single exception of the solid black throat that contrasted sharply with the surrounding yellow. The face was yellow with a triangular black mask, narrow at the lores and broad at the ears. The back was greenish-gray, the tail and wings were gray with yellowish wing bars. The legs were black.

This is the first observation of Lawrence's Warbler in Howard County and the latest report for the state. There are only two other fall records for Maryland: one banded at the Adventure Sanctuary station on 22 August 1977, and one seen by Brooke Meanley at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on 4 September 1942.



## NEW HOWARD COUNTY BIRD RECORDS

The last few months have brought an interesting array of new records as possible additions to the Preliminary Check-list. Several of these sightings are subject to acceptance by the state MOS Records Committee. In addition to the Lawrence's Warbler described above, photographs of a Sandhill Crane were submitted by Debra St. Charles who saw the bird on 28 March 1986 in a field near her home on Old Frederick Road in the Lisbon/Woodbine area. Mark Wallace reported a Piping Plover from the Green Bridge (Pigtail) area of Triadelphia Reservoir on 27 August. Two White-rumped Sandpiper sightings were made during the late summer/early autumn. The first was found on 13 September by Jo Solem and Jane Farrell at Green Bridge. It was verified by Chuck Dupree and Pete Osenton and was later seen by Martha Chestem, Don and Jan Randle. Though placed on the Rare Bird Alert, it stayed barely 24 hours. A second White-rump was reported by Harvey and Marion Mudd who had a bird in juvenile plumage on the Montgomery side of the reservoir which flew over to the Howard side before circling back. (There had been only an unverified report of this species previously.) Unfortunately, few people saw these species. Many sightings are of such limited duration that no matter how efficient a telephone network might be, only a few species will prove cooperative enough to be observed by most people who wish to see them. The Lawrence's Warbler, for instance, although looked for no more than 10 minutes after being initially sighted could not be relocated.

## BIRDING "HOT SPOTS" IN HOWARD COUNTY - CHRIS LUDWIG - WILDE LAKE

Wilde Lake is the last of Columbia's three lakes to be described in our series on Howard County's "hot spots." This lake provides consistently good birding but rarities may be less frequently found here than on the other lakes. The consistency means that almost every trip produces a few unusual birds and makes Wilde Lake an excellent spot for beginning and intermediate birders who are trying to improve their skills.

The logistics: Take Route 29 to the Little Patuxent Parkway (Rt. 175).

Head toward Columbia Town Center; take a right on Vantage Point Road (a stoplight), and a quick left on Hyla Brook Rd. Park on the left in a parking area provided just before the boat house (P on map). Water birds are best observed from the path marked with a dashed line. Note that in the morning the sun will be facing you as you look across the lake.

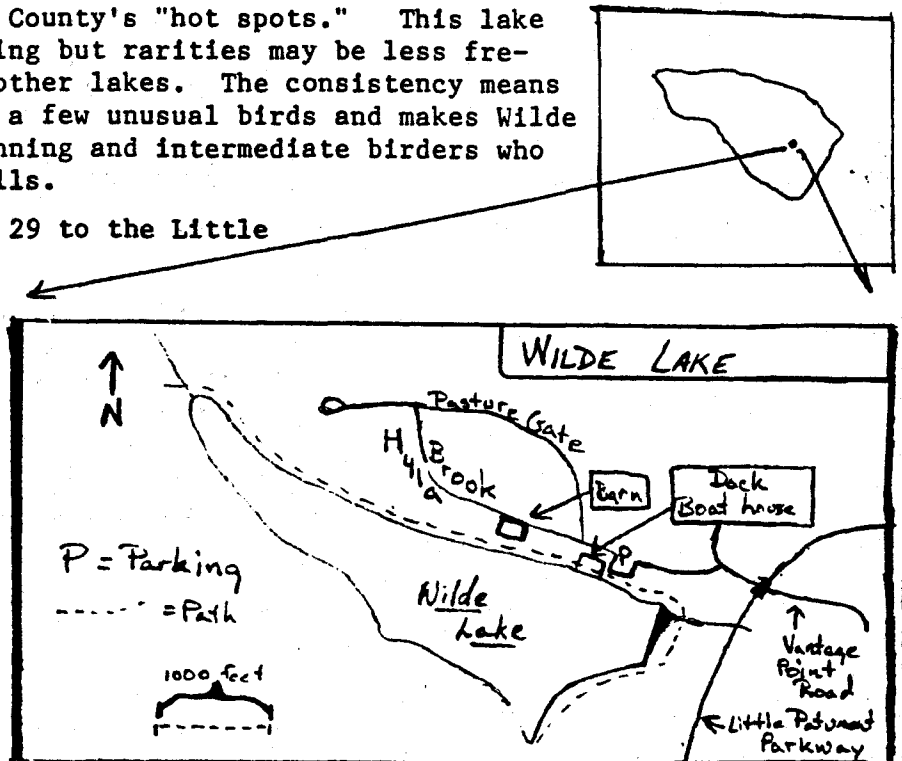
Waterbird population is highest and diversity best from November through March when the lake is not frozen. During periods when the lake is almost ice-covered with a few remaining open spots, birds are concentrated for easy viewing. Mallards, Ring-necked Ducks, Canada Geese, Pied-billed Grebes, Canvasbacks and Ring-billed Gulls can almost always be found in cold weather. Infrequent species include Hooded Mergansers, Common Loons, American Goldeneyes and Buffleheads. Occasional visitors include Shoveler, Horned Grebe, Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, Whistling Swan, American Black Duck, Redhead and, once in a while, a Great Black-backed Gull. The highlight of winter waterbirds found so far at this lake was a Red-necked Grebe found on 10 March 1984 which stayed till the 11th.

From April to October other waterbirds can sometimes be seen: occasional Osprey have been observed fishing in the lake while Belted Kingfishers and Green-backed Herons can be counted on along the shore or over the water. A sediment flat which had formed at the lake's upper end where shorebirds and occasional egrets could be found has, unfortunately, been removed. Birds found on that sandbar included Greater Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Killdeer, Great and Snowy Egrets and Great Blue Herons. Now Spotted Sandpipers should be looked for along the shore. Unusual species which have been reported from Wilde Lake include an adult Bald Eagle in November of 1985, an adult Black-crowned Night-Heron which spent some time perched in the willows in the spring of 1986, and several Black Terns reported, but unverified, some years ago.

Landbirds are not as exciting but check the local feeders near the lake in colder months. Both Orchard and Northern Orioles as well as Eastern Kingbirds nest near the lake. Migrant activity can be good in spring and fall. Be sure to check the willows along the lake edge and the small deciduous woods beyond the bridge. Follow the stream.

Whether you stop at Wilde Lake briefly or bird it along with one or more of the other lakes in Columbia (which we recommend), the experience is bound to be a rewarding one. Thanks to Marty Chestem for providing most of the text for this feature. We hope you find Wilde Lake as enjoyable as many county birders have thus far.

If you have birding or wildflowering areas or spots rich in other forms of natural history that you would like to see featured, contact me evenings at 796-8373.



CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS, FIELD TRIPS, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia, MD. Meeting is cancelled if schools are closed for any reason. Hospitality session at 7:30 p.m. Meeting/program begins at 8:00 p.m. Club bookstore opens at 7:30 p.m.

Field trips leave from Grempler Realty parking lot (across from the Flier building on Little Patuxent Parkway in Columbia) unless otherwise listed. Carpooling is encouraged with riders sharing cost of gas and tolls. Dress for field work with stout, reasonably waterproof footwear and layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. No pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement weather. If you have questions, contact the leader(s) or Field Trip Chairman Roy Trudel 992-7105, evenings.

NOV 13 - "WHALES AND SEABIRDS" - Ron Naveen. Ron is a frequent traveler and trip leader Thursday to the Antarctic. He will spotlight whales, seabirds and, of course, penguins.

NOV 15 - DANIELS AREA, PATAPSCO STATE PARK. Leader: Mike McClure, 531-2780. 1/2 day trip Saturday to a scenic area of easy walking. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Grempler parking lot or at 9:20 a.m. at Daniels lot. Autumn land and water birds.

NOV 23 - WATERFOWL ON THE COLUMBIA LAKES. Leader: Jane Farrell, 596-2630. 1/2 day. Meet Sunday at Grempler at 9:00 a.m. Itinerary to be decided by leader; a stop will be made at Wilde Lake which is featured in this newsletter.

NOV 26-29 THANKSGIVING WEEKEND AT CHINCOTEAGUE N.W.R. Contact Chuck Dupree 796-1086 if Weekend you will be at the refuge during any part of the weekend and would like to meet him.

DEC 6 - BOMBAY HOOK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Leaders: Chuck Dupree, 796-1086 (evenings) Saturday Bill Eckert 992-2464 (days). Co-sponsored with How. Co. Rec. & Parks. Annual trip via motor coach to Eastern Shore for ducks, geese, late migrants. Bus leaves from George Howard parking lot (Ellicott City) at 7:30 a.m.; returns around 6:00 p.m. Take lunch, beverage, layers of clothes. Advance registration required. Call Bill at the above number or complete form in Rec & Parks flyer mailed to all county households. Fee \$12.00.

DEC 11 - "BIRD BANDING ON APPLIEDORE ISLAND, MAINE" - David Holmes. One of our favorite Thursday speakers will include close-ups of fall migrants from his 10 years of banding on this picturesque island.

DEC 27 - TRIADELPHIA CHRISTMAS COUNT. Compiler: Bob Whitcomb, 299-5215 evenings or Saturday 344-2339 days. Dawn to dusk count of all birds seen or heard in the Count circle which includes the western half of Howard County. Feeder watchers needed as well as field participants. \$3.00 fee goes toward publication of results in American Birds.

JAN 10 - NATIONAL ZOO IN WASHINGTON, DC. Leader: Roy Trudel, 992-7105. A 1 1/2-2 hour tour Saturday of either the bird facilities only or a major part of the zoo. Choice to be determined by vote at the November meeting. Meet at Grempler at 8:30 a.m.; return around 1:00 p.m. \$3.00 parking fee so there will be carpooling. Number of participants limited. Register by calling Roy by Dec. 15th. This behind-the-scenes examination of the facilities is excellent for children as well as adults.

BOARD MEETING - ALL OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Dec. 4 - Thur. - 7:30 p.m. at the Farrell's, 6324 Sandchain Rd., Columbia, 596-2630.

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DEADLINE FOR JANUARY-FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 10th. NEWSLETTER ITEMS AS WELL AS AUTUMN MIGRATION DATES (DUE DEC. 15) SHOULD BE MAILED OR PHONED TO JO SOLEM, 10617 GRAE-LOCH RD., LAUREL, MD 20707; TEL. 725-5037.

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If you spot an Osprey with a colored leg band, please send details of where, when sighted and what doing to Dr. Larry Rymon, Osprey Research Program, Dept. of Biology, East Stroudsburg Univ., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301. These birds have been transported from the Chesapeake Bay and were fledged from artificial nests at four locations in the Pocono Mts. of Pennsylvania.

## A BIZARRE OBSERVATION - PETER OSENTON

I work at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. During my lunch break I usually get out for a little birding. Recently, because of the drought conditions, one pond had dried up so considerably that it simulated "mud flats" rather nicely. I checked it quite regularly for shorebirds and was rewarded with Least, Solitary and Pectoral Sandpipers along with Green-backed Herons and an occasional immature Little Blue.

On the sixth of August, I watched what I found to be a fascinating though rather bizarre set of circumstances. While watching shorebirds, I heard a loud squawk nearby. At first I could not locate where the sound was coming from, but then saw a Green-backed Heron in a strange position. My thoughts initially were that it was stuck in the mud since I couldn't see its legs. Surely it could flap its wings and get enough lift to get out. The wader did that, but with no success. Then I started thinking that perhaps a predator had its legs so I continued to watch with interest.

I studied the situation for approximately 25 minutes. During that time the bird gave several squawks and made a few feeble jabs at the water with its bill. As time passed, more and more of the bird disappeared under the oozy surface, but there was still no clue as to what was causing this unusual behavior. In the last few minutes that the heron's head was above water, the bird was still alert. Eventually, the head went under the surface and I can only assume that the bird died by drowning.

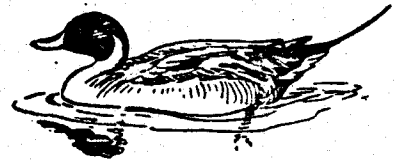
I continued to watch the spot. A few moments later the head of a large snapping turtle emerged from the mud and vegetation and then slowly submerged again. The mystery was solved.



### NEWS ITEMS:

- The revised Constitution and By-laws were adopted at the September 11th meeting. Implementation will begin with nomination and election of officers for 1987-1988.
- Chandler Robbins, who presented the September program, requested that his honorarium be donated to the Breeding Bird Atlas Project. Jim Stasz, our October speaker, specified that his be given to the MOS Sanctuary Fund.
- Recent donors of mounted bird specimens include Bernd and Lucy Kiekebusch-Steinitz (Great Horned Owl), Don and Jan Randle (female Northern Bobwhite), Florence Seiko (female House Finch and Tree Swallow), and Lois Carleton whose donation underwrote half a dozen birds that had been in the collection for several years. Our thanks to all of these individuals for their support of one of the club's most valuable educational tools. Such donations are, of course, tax-deductible.
- The Columbia Home Town Fair on September 27th at the Columbia Mall was a success thanks to the help of faithful volunteers: Mary Fallon, Mildred Fitez, Fran Schoenberger, Marjorie Mountjoy, Helen Thompson, Bob & Jo Solem, Martha Waugh, Michelle Wright, Don & Jan Randle, Eva Sunell, & John Clegg. Eileen Clegg, coordinator.
- Treasurer Don Randle recently received a \$64.00 check from the Columbia Recycling Center now located on Oak Hall Lane (same street as the post office) in the back righthand corner of the Hamilton Avnet building which is the first one on the left; 9-1 on Saturdays. Continue to request that items be credited to the Howard County Bird Club.
- Used motor oil is no longer being accepted by most filling stations. In Howard County you can take it to the Alpha Ridge landfill on Marriottsville Road where they have a tank. They DO recycle it.
- Call the taped Voice of the Naturalist at 652-1088 for information on bird sightings in the Middle Atlantic area. Tape changes on Wednesday.

## SUMMARY OF 1986 HOWARD COUNTY MAY COUNT



by Paul A. Zucker

The 1986 Howard County May Count was conducted from 4:45 AM until 8:00 PM on May 3. There were a total of 55 participants in 23 field parties and 7 feeder parties. The totals for party miles and hours are shown on the accompanying tally sheet. Compared to previous years, this count had a good turn-out and good coverage of the county. A total of 133 species were identified (below average) and 11774 individual birds were tallied. The weather was chilly in the morning (around 40 degrees) and became quite windy by late afternoon (gusts to 30 miles per hour). It was mostly clear, and there was no rain.

Two species were seen for the first time in at least twelve years on this count. They were the Tundra Swan seen by Mark Wallace and the Northern Pintail seen by Dave Pardoe. Other unusual sightings (seen three times or fewer in the preceding twelve counts) are listed below along with the name of the party leader: Cattle Egret (Clegg), Black-Crowned Night-Heron (Leumas), Bufflehead (McClure, Wallace), Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker (Chestem), and Brown Creeper (Waugh).

High count records (compared to the preceding twelve counts) were set or tied for seventeen species: American Bittern, Canada Goose, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-Shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Belted Kingfisher, Barn Swallow, Fish Crow, American Robin, Warbling Vireo, Chipping Sparrow, White-Crowned Sparrow, House Finch, and American Goldfinch.

Notably absent in this year's tally were six species which had been identified in at least ten of the preceding twelve counts. These were the Common Loon, American Woodcock, Acadian Flycatcher, Hermit Thrush, Magnolia Warbler, and Vesper Sparrow.

The following people participated in the May count: Maud Banks, Bob Bogdan, Betty and Mike Caldwell, Robert Campbell, Marty Chestem, Eileen and John Clegg, Florence and Larry Donohoo, Chuck Dupree, Jane Farrell, Alice Fazekas, Jane and Ralph Geuder, Richard Giannola, Sandy Goolsby, Ed Gould, Alex Hammer, Anne and Ken Hart, Dave Harvey, Dick Hegner, Jim Hill, Pat Hirt, David Holmes, Mary Janetatos, Marge Kupiec, Paul Leifer, Mike Leumas, Grazina and Mike McClure, Rosamond Munro, Fran Nahrgang, Bea Newkirk, Dave and Elaine Pardoe, Don and Jan Randle, Fran Schoenberger, Geri Sheahan, Zelda Simon, Bob and Jo Solem, Chuck and Linda Stirrat, Eva Sunnell, Mark Wallace, Don and Martha Waugh, William Welling, Charles Williams, Helen Zeichner, and Paul Zucker (compiler). Thanks for your participation and for making the count such a success.

LOON, COMMON		DOVE, ROCK	259	WARBLER, TENNESSEE	2
GREBE, PIED-BILL		MOURNING	333	NASHVILLE	1
HORNED		CUCKOO, BLACK-BILL	1	PARULA, NORTHERN	66
CORMORANT, DBLE-C.		YELLOW-BILL		WARBLER, YELLOW	66
BITTERN, AMERICAN	2	OWL, COMMON BARN		CHESTNUT-SIDED	5
HERON, GREAT BLUE	7	E. SCREECH		MAGNOLIA	
EGRET, GREAT		GREAT HORN		CAPE MAY	2
SNOWY		BARRED	4	BLACK-THROAT BLUE	8
HERON, LITTLE BLUE		NIGHTHAWK, COMMON		YELLOW-RUMPED	533
EGRET, CATTLE	1	CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW		BLACK-THROAT GREEN	6
HERON, GREEN-BACK	7	WHIP-POOR-WILL	1	BLACKBURNIAN	
BLK.-CR. NIGHT	7	SWIFT, CHIMNEY	170	YELLOW-THROATED	1
IBIS, GLOSSY	1	HUMMINGBIRD, RUBY-T.	6	PINE	2
SWAN, TUNDRA	1	KINGFISHER, BELTED	24	PRAIRIE	7
MUTE	2	WOODPECKER, RED-HEAD		PALM	2
GOOSE, CANADA	109	RED-BELLIED	123	BAY-BREASTED	
DUCK, WOOD	18	SAPSUCKER, YEL.-BEL.	1	BLACKPOLL	
TEAL, GREEN-WING	200 (none)	WOODPECKER, DOWNY	51	CERULEAN	2
DUCK, AM. BLACK		HAIRY	7	BLACK & WHITE	35
MALLARD	237	FLICKER, NORTH.	86	REDSTART, AM.	30
TEAL, BLUE-WING	2	WOODPECKER, PILEATED	7	WARBLER, PROTHONOTARY	1
GADWALL		WOOD PEWEE, EAST.	3	WORM-EATING	3
WIGEON, AM.		FLYCATCHER, ACADIAN		OVENBIRD	33
SCAUP, LESSER		LEAST		WATERTHRUSH, NORTH.	2
BUFFLEHEAD	5	PHOEBE, EAST.	48	LOUISIANA	16
MERGANSER, COMMON		FLYCATCHER, GT. CREST	9	WARBLER, KENTUCKY	1
RED-BREASTED		KINGBIRD, E.	48	YELLOWTHROAT, COM.	48
DUCK, RUDDY		LARK, HORNED		WARBLER, HOODED	6
VULTURE, BLACK	19	MARTIN, PURPLE	20	WILSON'S	
TURKEY	124	SWALLOW, TREE	202	CANADA	
OSPREY	13	N. ROUGH-WING	50	CHAT, YELLOW-BREAST	3
EAGLE, BALD (AD) (IM)		BANK	4	TANAGER, SUMMER	
HARRIER, NORTHERN	4	CLIFF	6	SCARLET	13
HAWK, SHARP-SHIN	8	BARN	58	CARDINAL, N.	464
COOPER'S		JAY, BLUE	274	GROSBEAK, ROSE-BREAST	2
RED-SHOULDER	22	CROW, AMER.	293	BLUE	
BROAD-WING	8	FISH	62	BUNTING, INDIGO	19
RED-TAIL	13	SPECIES	228	TOWHEE, RUFOUS-S.	124
KESTREL, AMER.	16	RAVEN, COMMON		SPARROW, CHIPPING	147
PHEASANT, RN	20	CHICKADEE, BLK-CAP.		FIELD	72
GROUSE, RUFFED		CAROLINA	153	VESPER	
TURKEY, WILD		TITMOUSE, TUFTED	147	SAVANNAH	7
BOBWHITE, N.	8	NUTHATCH, RED-BRSTD.	2	GRASSHOPPER	7
RAIL, KING		WHITE-BRSTD.	19	SONG	196
VIRGINIA		BROWN-HEADED		SWAMP	6
SORA		CREEPER, BROWN	1	WHITE-THROAT	213
MOORHEN, COMMON		WREN, CAROLINA	57	WHITE-CROWN	63
COOT, AM.		HOUSE	66	JUNCO, DARK-EYED	2
POLOVER, BLK.-BEL		MARSH		BOBOLINK	137
SEMPALM.		KINGLET, RUBY-CR.	24	BLACKBIRD, RED-WING	450
KILLDEER	40	GNATCATCHER, BL-GR.	157	MEADOWLARK, EAST.	51
YELLOWLEGS, GREAT.	4	BLUEBIRD, E.	96	BLACKBIRD, RUSTY	
LESSER	10	VEERY	9	GRACKLE, COM.	811
SANDPIPER, SOLITARY	46	THRUSH, SWAINSON'S		COWBIRD, BR.-HD.	147
WILLET		HERMIT		ORIOLE, ORCHARD	7
SANDPIPER, SPOTTED	38	WOOD	59	NORTHERN	18
SEMPALM.		ROBIN, AM.	784	FINCH, PURPLE	30
LEAST	3	CATBIRD, GRAY	66	HOUSE	234
PECTORAL		MOCKINGBIRD, N.	190	SISKIN, PINE	
DUNLIN		THRASHER, BROWN	28	GOLDFINCH, AM.	685
SNIFE, COMMON		PIPIP, WATER		GROSBEAK, EVENING	47
WOODCOCK, AMER.		WAXWING, CEDAR	60	SPARROW, HOUSE	210
GULL, LAUGHING		STARLING, EUR.	939		
BONAPARTE'S		VIREO, WHITE-EYE	53	WRITE-INS (DETAILS MAY BE NECESSARY)	
RING-BILLED	6	SOLITARY	1	NORTHERN PINTAIL	1
HERRING		YELLOW-THROAT'D	14		
GRT. BLK.-BACK.		WARBLING	5		
TERN, CASPIAN		RED-EYED	31		
COMMON		WARBLER, BLUE-WING	8		
LEAST		GOLDEN-WING			

PARTY LEADER PAUL A. ZUCKER, COMPILER ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TIME START 4:45 AM HRS OWLING 2 1/4 HRS ON FOOT 135 1/2 HRS BY CAR 25 3/4 HRS OTHER 16 1/2 (feeders)

TIME END 8:00 PM MILES OWLING 2 1/2 MILES FOOT 733 MILES CAR 444 MI. OTHER 0

WEATHER: AM: TEMP. 35-45 WIND NW 10-15 CLOUD COVER under 5% PRECIP none

PM: TEMP. 55-60 WIND NW 20-30 CLOUD COVER 5-10% PRECIP none

PARTY MEMBERS & ADDRESSES \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL SPECIES: 133

TOTAL INDIVIDUALS: 11,774

PARTICIPANTS: 55 IN 23 PARTIES AND 7 AT FEEDERS

## CAROLYN CRADLER NAMED MARYLAND CONSERVATION TEACHER-OF-THE-YEAR



Howard MOS member, Carolyn Cradler, a science teacher at the Glenelg Country School, was recently recognized by the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts as Conservation Teacher-of-the-Year. In a future newsletter she will provide a brief description of some of the activities on the 90 acre campus that earned her the award. If you would like to nominate a teacher (or apply if you are a teacher), request an application from the Howard Soil Conservation District, 9025 Chevrolet Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043.

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## A GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER NEST IN MY MULBERRY TREE - BEA NEWKIRK

At dusk on 2 July 1985, I went to gather some mulch which was piled at the base of a nearly-dead Red Mulberry tree. As I approached the tree, I heard a loud "wheep." Not knowing what bird had such a distinctive call, I looked up and saw the perfect silhouette of what looked to me to be a large phoebe. A better look and consultation with field guides indicated that it was a Great Crested Flycatcher. I soon realized that it had young in a dead, cracked branch of the mulberry tree. The nest was about 25 feet above the ground. For the next week I observed the parents bringing various food to their brood. Once, a light-colored swallowtail butterfly (probably a Tiger) was taken into the nest with its wings fully extended. Another time a very large, hard-looking beetle was brought. The morning of 10 July the young all left the nest safely. The day after they fledged I climbed a ladder to look inside the cavity to see if a snakeskin had been incorporated into the nest. There was no snakeskin visible, just a small empty cup nest deep inside the cavity.

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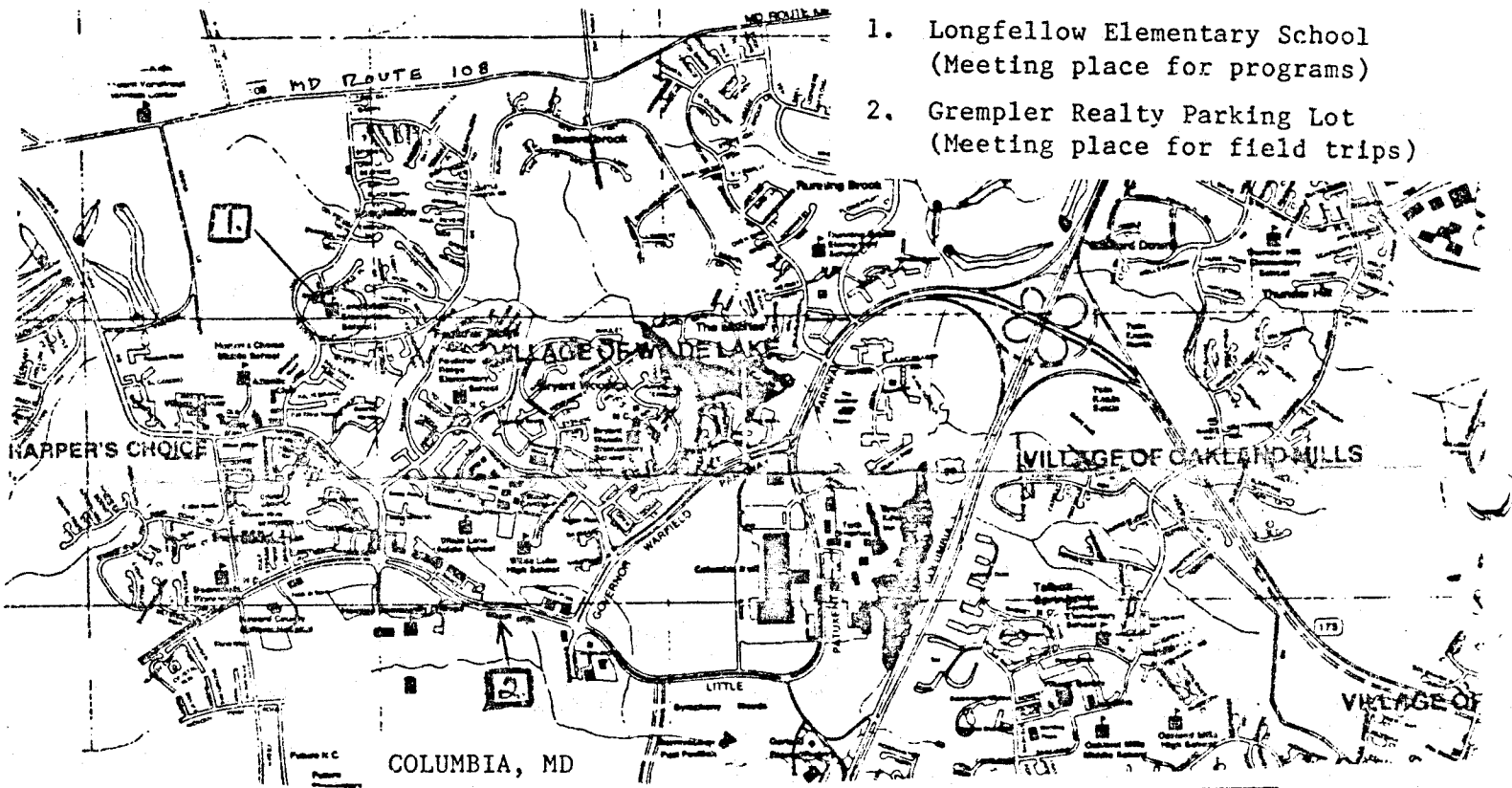
## THE SEDENTARY JOYS OF BIRDWATCHING - JANE H. FARRELL

I was birdwatching with Jo Solem on 13 September 1986, at the Green Bridge area of Triadelphia Reservoir. The water level was low so that extensive muddy/grassy flats usually underwater were exposed. We had been watching shorebirds including Killdeer, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectorals, Least and Semi-palmated Sandpipers and had tentatively identified one bird as a White-rumped Sandpiper. It was feeding vigorously and although it moved from place to place walking or running, it did not fly or raise its wings with any frequency in order to display its distinctive white rump. Since we could not make a positive identification without this field mark, I volunteered to go to the opposite side of the cove to see if I could flush the bird toward Jo. Having been taught that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, I walked back toward the parking area and, as soon as the muddy area appeared firm, I tried to cross the flats to the far side. At first the footing was muddy but firm. Well, I've had muddy shoes before so I continued plodding on sinking a little more as I got closer to the center of the extensive flats. I stepped onto an area where the mud was a lighter shade and when I got both feet into that area, I began to sink, slowly but steadily. At first I felt foolish, but I rapidly realized that my plight might not be comical; in fact, I had visions of sinking completely. I was able to get one foot free to turn to face the area from which I'd come, but with another step I was again sinking rapidly. Soon I was in three-quarters of the way up to my calves and was unable to pull either foot out of the mud. That called for complete panic. I did remember that spreading weight over a wider area would make me sink less, so I threw myself down on my hands and knees. I was then able to pull out my feet--minus one shoe. I crawled to firmer ground rather shaken by my experience.

A bit later Jo and I went back out to the oozy mud by spreading dead branches to distribute our weight. Jo dug in the holes, where I had been stuck but could not find my shoe. While she was digging around with a dead limb, she was able to hit a gravel bottom so I wouldn't have been a goner after all. I would have only sunk to my thighs!

ALMOST 18 TONS AND WHAT DO YOU GET? A SUCCESSFUL SEED SALE - Eileen Clegg

I would like to thank all the enthusiastic helpers who again made one of our primary fund raisers such a success. Loading the 35,000 pounds of seed were Pete Osenton, Bill Phillips, Cleo Karafas, Steve Koziol, Donna Lee, Roy Trudel, Jane Farrell, Rod Botsai, Bob Solem, Joe Suess, Mark Wallace, Mike Leumas, Bernd Kiekebusch, Don Nahrgang, Jim Blanchard, John Clegg and Don Waugh. Inside, Fran Schoenberger and Eva Sunell had set up the Club bookstore. Marty Chestem had a table with the stamps, prints and hummingbird packets to support Maryland's endangered species; mounted birds were displayed; and The Nature Nook had a variety of feeders available. Also working inside in some capacity were Zelda Simon, Pat Jackson, Frank and Harriet Baldau, Don and Jan Randle, Nancy Huting, Liz Regan, Karen Bernstein, Carol Fisher, Jo Solem and Michele Wright. The workers appreciated the tasty baked goods provided by Monika Botsai, Fran Nahrgang, Michele Wright, Eileen Clegg and one unidentified cake-baker.



HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB  
10617 Graeloch Road  
Laurel, Maryland 20707



New County Bird Records  
\* \* \* \*  
1986 May Count Results

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