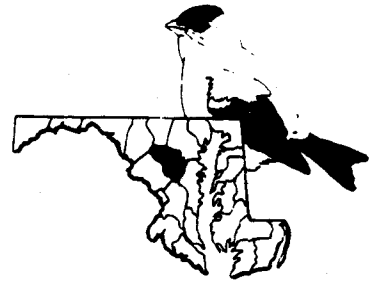




Vol. 17, No 5
May-June 1989

Howard

A Chapter of the
Maryland Ornithological Society



1989-1990 OFFICERS ELECTED AT APRIL ANNUAL MEETING

At the April 13th annual meeting, the following individuals were elected to lead the Howard County Bird Club for the coming year: President-Tom Strikwerda; Vice President-Ralph Geuder; Treasurer-Nancy Magnusson; Secretary-Marci Krishnamoorthy; State Directors-Marty Chestem, Jane Farrell, Helen Zeichner, Paul Zucker; Chapter Director-Linda Stirrat (Michele Wright will be completing the second year of her term). The Nominating Committee consisted of Tom Strikwerda, Marci Krishnamoorthy, and Maud Banks, ch.

\$2500 DONATION TO NATURE CONSERVANCY'S "APPALACHIAN CAMPAIGN"

As announced in the Jan-Feb 1989 newsletter, a plan was outlined to donate a minimum of \$5000.00 to The Nature Conservancy for habitat preservation by our twentieth anniversary in 1992-93. The profits from our winter seed sale were earmarked for this purpose and donations were invited from members and friends, many of whom responded generously. A total of \$880.00 in individual donations was received. The Board voted to add the profit from the seed sale as well as an additional amount to total \$2500. Many thanks to individual donors (listed below) and seed sale customers who are in this way helping to preserve four choice areas in western Maryland.

James & Susan Allen
Ida Anthony
Ruthe Bowie
Rod & Monica Botsai
Larry Brammer
Lois Carlton
Marty Chestem
Steve & Mary Clarkson
Wes & Susan Earp
Frances Ehlers

Jack & Jane Farrell
Margo Garner
John & Sue Greer
Roger Handwork
Lynn & Linda Holley
Gus & Cleo Karafas
Carl & Eleanore Klitzke
Raymond Kruhn
Russell Lange
Nancy Magnusson

Raymond & Rose Martin
James Mayer
Don & Frances Nahrgang
Louis Palmieri, Jr.
Charles & Suzanne Price
Robert & Rosamond
Ridgley
Clyde Robinette &
Romayne Smith

B. G. & W. G. Skaggs
David & Elizabeth Smith
Bob & Jo Solem
Chuck Stirrat
John Tam & Pat Hirt
Helen Thompson
Melinda Upp
Norman & Lois Weissert
Jane Zuke

These individuals contributed speaker's honorarium:

Sam Droege
Chuck Dupree

Dave Harvey
Chuck Stirrat

Tom Strikwerda

Mark Wallace

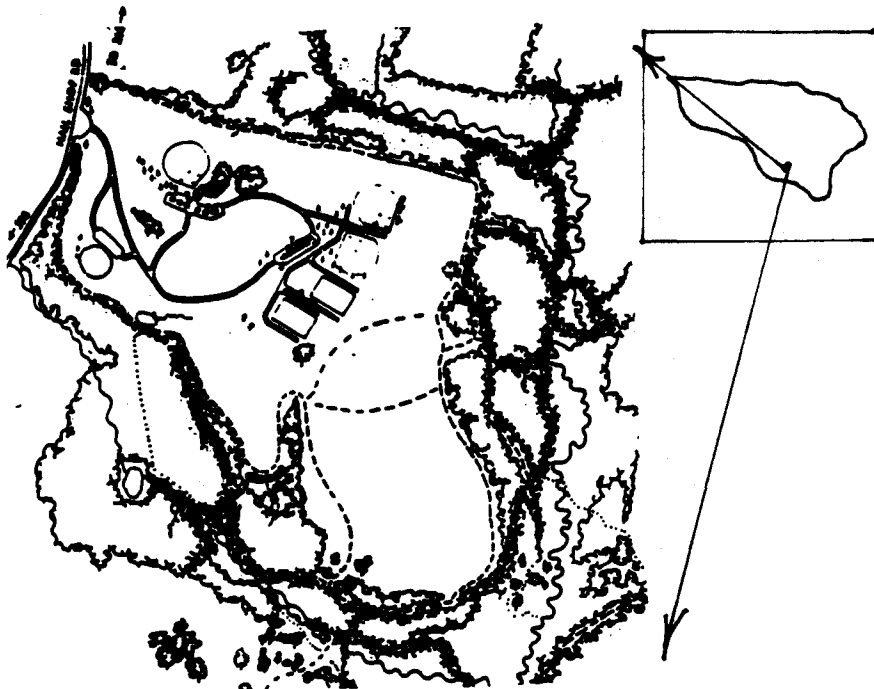
SORA AT CENTENNIAL PARK SEEN BY MANY BIRDERS



Thanks to the Rare Bird Alert callers who efficiently contacted interested members about the presence of a Sora at Centennial Park that Nancy Magnusson discovered in early April. Many people were able to observe this normally elusive species which stayed near cattails in the shallow, muddy edges of an island for days. Bea Newkirk, who heads the Alert, has assembled

the following team of callers: Mariano Gonzalez, Marjorie Mountjoy, James Medwin, Zelda Simon, Margie Kupiec, Peggy Willson, Monika Botsai, Helen Zeichner and Mike Leumas. If you are willing to help call in case a rarity is sighted, give Bea a ring at 498-1902.

BIRDING "HOT SPOTS" IN HOWARD COUNTY - George Chase & Nancy Magnusson
Schooley Mill Park, Part I



Schooley Mill Park (SMP), one of the newer county parks, is located on the south side of Hall Shop Road between Routes 108 and 216. Turn in at the unmarked park entrance near the riding ring, and park in one of the three parking lots. In the evening, gate closing times are somewhat erratic. Unless you're sure you'll be out before the last ball game is over, park outside the gate and walk in. SMP is still relatively undeveloped; most human activity centers around the baseball and soccer fields. Small numbers of horseback riders and hikers use the remainder of the park.

The fairly small confines of SMP (178 acres) contain a variety of habitats. Wooded stream valleys form the outer boundary. The central section is primarily open fields -- those near the entrance are grassy (weedy), while the area beyond the soccer fields is brushier with an abundance of thistle and pokeweed in the summer and fall. Shrubby areas and honeysuckle/multiflora rose thickets are scattered along the edge of the woods. ~~One small pond is to the right as you drive in; another, on private property in the woods below, is visible from the park.~~ Although SMP has no significant aquatic habitat, it pays to watch for flyovers from Rocky Gorge and Triadelphia Reservoirs.

Trails wind through the woods along the streams bordering the park. To reach the main trail, head to the woods near the pond on the right or beyond the old house on the left, depending on the direction in which you wish to circle the park. Walk along the edge of the woods until you find a trail leading in. Trails are not always well marked and may be briefly obscured in a few spots (particularly during the winter), but it would be tough to become hopelessly (or even slightly) lost! Secondary trails lead off the main trails; these either loop back, dead end at private property, or lead you to the open fields in the center of SMP. In addition to the wooded trails, mowed paths border the perimeter of the woods and crisscross the fields.

Not unexpectedly, birding is most interesting during spring and fall migration. Uncommon migrants found last year included Bald Eagle (fall), Rough-legged Hawk (fall), Gray-cheeked Thrush (spring), Lawrence's Warbler (spring), Northern Waterthrush (spring), Lincoln's Sparrow (spring, fall) and Vesper Sparrow (fall). Breeding birds include Acadian Flycatcher, Hooded, Kentucky and Prairie Warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Grasshopper Sparrow. Blue Grosbeaks have also been seen during the summer. Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Bobwhite, Barred and Great Horned Owls, Pileated Woodpecker and Eastern Bluebirds are permanent residents.


The park has been censused regularly for over a year for the Parks Checklist Project. So far, more than 130 species have been reported; of these 62 are probable or confirmed breeders. If you bird this park, please send your species sightings and/or any evidence of breeding you observe to George Chase, 10699 Graeloch Road, Laurel, MD 20707. In coming newsletters an enlarged map of the park will be provided as well as a more detailed description of the different habitats and the birds found within them.


CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS, FIELD TRIPS, SPECIAL EVENTS


Programs are held at Longfellow Elementary School, 5470 Hesperus Dr., Columbia. 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 noted. Carpooling is encouraged with riders sharing the 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 or Field Trip Chair Michele Wright 465-6057.


FOR LATE APRIL, EARLY MAY FIELD TRIPS REFER TO MARCH-APRIL NEWSLETTER

 MAY 11 **"BIRDING THE WESTERN STATES."** Paul Zucker. Paul will show us the important habitats and beautiful scenery along with some birds found in the West.
Thurs

 MAY 13 **MAY COUNT** - 42nd annual daylong statewide count by the Maryland Ornithological Society. All birders welcome. Call Paul Zucker 681-9005. Go alone or with others. Evening tally at Randle's 531-6296. Please reserve for meal. Count results must be turned in that day.
Sat


 MAY 20 **INDIAN SPRINGS WMA & FT. FREDERICK ON C & O CANAL** (Washington Co.) Leader: Chuck Dupree 796-1086 (evenings). Leave at 7:00 a.m. from Grempler; all day trip. Bring lunch, beverage. Back by 6:00 p.m. Abundant migrants & breeding birds. Mostly level walking. Carpooling possible. Two years ago, highlights included Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Raven, several thrushes, a variety of warblers and a number of interesting wildflowers.
Sat

MAY 21 **BLUEBIRD WALK.** Leader: Mark Wallace 725-6370. Meet at Grempler 10:00 a.m. ~~Nestlings & adult Bluebirds, perhaps Tree Swallows; poss. banding.~~ 2 hrs.
Sun


 MAY 27 **BEGINNING BIRDER'S WALK AT APL.** Leader: Richard Giannola 774-5483. Designed for those who are relatively new to birding, but all birders are welcome. The Applied Physics Laboratory land along the Middle Patuxent River is a mature floodplain forest which contains a variety of breeding birds. This area is no longer open to the general public except on scheduled trips or with special permission. Meet at Grempler at 8:00 a.m. for 1/2 day trip.
Sat

✓ JUN 2-4 **STATE MOS CONVENTION AT FROSTBURG.** Brochures have been mailed by state MOS.

JUNE 24 **SUMMER WILDFLOWER WALK.** Leader: ^{Bob Led. 7} ~~Marci Krishnamoorthy~~ 730-0568. Meet at Grempler at 1:00 p.m. or at Schooley Mill Park (old house) at 1:30 p.m. (See "Hot Spot" in this newsletter.) Several hours.
Sat

 JULY 23 **SUMMER HABITAT WALK AT CEDAR LANE PARK.** Leaders: Chuck Dupree 796-1086 (evenings) and Bill Eckert 992-2464 (days). Co-sponsored with How. Co. Rec & Parks. Another in the popular series examining one county park through the seasons. Meet at 1:00 p.m. in front of the gray building near the parking lot at the Cedar Lane entrance. Two hours.
Sun

AUG 20 **GOLDFINCH WALK.** Chance to observe county bird. How. Co. Rec & Parks. 9:00-10:30 a.m. See Rec & Parks flyer or call Bill Eckert 992-2464 (days). Fee.
Sun

 AUG 26 **TRIADELPHIA RESERVOIR SHOREBIRD TRIP.** Leaders: Nancy Magnusson 498-4612 and Jo Solem 725-5037. Group will visit 3 or 4 sites on the reservoir in search of migrant shorebirds. Day use fee of \$2 required, which can be obtained at office at Brighton Dam (meeting place). Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot on the Montgomery Co. side of the dam on Brighton Dam Road. 1/2 day. If hot day, bring liquids.
Sat

THANKS TO LEISUREFEST HELPERS - The display at the Columbia Mall on Saturday, Feb 18 was coordinated by Eileen Clegg. Helpers during the daylong exhibit were Marty Chestem, Elise Seay, Chuck Stirrat, Mary Gold, Helen Thompson, Gail Duszczak, Marjorie Mountjoy, Ralph & Jane Geuder, Ed Cohen & Jo Solem.

NEW MOUNTED SPECIMENS - The Bird Club has recently acquired several new birds. A Cooper's Hawk was paid for with money from the sale of plaques that Frank Griffin donated. Michele Wright completed a male Eastern Bluebird and Northern Cardinal. Two birds that had been professionally mounted decades ago were given to the Club. Thanks to Kirk and Sandy Goolsby who passed along an adult Red-tailed Hawk, and Jeff Kessler who gave us a worn but usable Osprey. The two latter birds benefited from Mark Wallace's cleaning and his skillful remounting of the Red-tail.

POTLUCK SUCCESSFUL - The annual potluck in February was a congenial and smoothly run event in the capable hands of Monika Botsai and Grazina McClure. The organizers always appreciate the willing individuals who provide set-up help. Mike McClure took care of the slides for the evening's entertainment with his usual efficiency. Thanks to Jim Heller for lending us the slides of the breeding screech owl for the show.

BLUEBIRD MONITORS - Joe Suess and Mark Wallace remind bluebird box monitors to be vigilant in cleaning gypsy moth larvae out of boxes. This may be a problem during mid to late spring on boxes attached to trees. Bluebirds do not eat these larvae. Do **NOT** remove these fuzzy caterpillars with bare hands as the hairs may irritate your skin. Monitor your boxes carefully during the entire breeding season (until late August), keeping records of eggs, fledglings and nesting success. Cavity nester survey forms will be included with the Sept-Oct newsletter in late summer.

PARK CHECKLIST REMINDER - Please send Charles Swift any sightings from Centennial Park by June 1st. His address is 10563 Tolling Clock Way, Columbia, MD 21044. Although this will be the first checklist published, continue to keep track of sightings there in order to update the list from time to time. If you need additional forms, contact Jane Farrell 596-2630. Individuals willing to help compile lists of birds at Schooley Mill Park, Savage Park, and Lake Elkhorn are especially welcome.

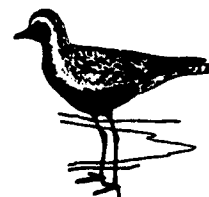
HOWARD COUNTY FAIR HELPERS NEEDED - Call Tom Strikwerda 942-2841 (evenings) to volunteer to help with the booth at the fair in August.

HARFORD COUNTY RARE BIRD ALERT - Harford County MOS has initiated a taped Rare Bird Alert. If you are planning to bird in that part of Maryland and wish to know what has been seen recently, call (301) 638-0292. June Vaughn is the person who receives reports of sightings at (301) 838-4427.

NEW BIRD VIDEOS AVAILABLE AT LIBRARIES - Just in time for the spring migration, the Howard County Central Library (Columbia) and Miller Branch (Frederick Road) have acquired the new five cassette series of Audubon video tapes. They cannot be reserved, but each can be checked out for a week. In most cases, footage of a species in its breeding habitat is featured, accompanied by its songs and calls. This material is best watched in small doses in order to avoid hopeless sensory overload. Use them in conjunction with some of the current birding aids such as basic and specialized guides, records or tapes, periodicals, and local knowledge. Just as there is no substitute for practicing a sport in order to become proficient, there is no substitute for time in the field. Take every opportunity to increase your proficiency outdoors. Identification is just the tip of the iceberg which often leads to an interest in behavior, life history, migration and other aspects of the natural world.

ITEMS FOR THE SEPT-OCT NEWSLETTER DUE JULY 1, spring migration records by June 5. Call or mail to Jo Solem, 10617 Grae Loch Road, Laurel, MD 20707; tel 725-5037.

BOARD MEETINGS - Both of the following at Miller Branch Library at 7:30 p.m.
APRIL 27 - Thursday MAY 25 - Thursday



1988 ANNUAL BIRD LIST HITS RECORD 220 SPECIES - Jane Farrell

WOW!. 220 species! WOW! We broke the 1982 and 1987 records of 213 species by seven species for a total of 220. It was quite a year and you certainly did "beat the bushes," and "beat the shores," and "beat the water." As you can imagine by the previous sentence, the dramatic increase in species seen over the two previous high totals was in species associated with water. Records for two additional species for 1988 are pending with the State Records Committee and two hybrids were reported: Brewster's Warbler for the third time since 1979 and Lawrence's Warbler for the second time since this compilation began in 1979.

Nancy Magnusson brought in a new county record, a Red Knot, well described and cooperative enough to be seen later by several other members. Common Tern was reported for the second Howard County record and five species were reported for the second time in the last ten years: Glossy Ibis, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Lesser Golden-Plover, and Marsh Wren. Least Bittern, Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling and Olive-sided Flycatcher were reported only for the third time in the last decade. We also found a Redhead, a bird that was missed in 1987 (for the first miss since 1979), a beautiful male seen by many observers.

Away from the water, a Northern Saw-whet Owl was reported for the first time in the last ten years, and the third report of a Wild Turkey was received.

Despite the lack of northern species invading in any numbers, we found a few of each to keep the scarce Red-breasted Nuthatches, Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Siskins, ~~Snow Buntings and Purple Finches on the list. One species we did miss was Summer Tanager;~~ it went unreported for only the second time in the last decade. In my 1987 report, I erroneously cited a Connecticut Warbler, likewise, there were none reported in 1988. In fact, one has not been reported in Howard County since 1984.

Accolades to those who sent in their complete 1988 year's list: Connie Bockstie, Marty Chestem, Mary Lou Clark, Jane Farrell, Dave Harvey, Nancy Magnusson, Jo Solem, Charles Swift, Mark Wallace, Michele Wright, and Paul Zucker. Without Jo Solem's compilations of season reports and the May and Mid-Winter Count compilations, several species would not have appeared on this list. Thanks also to David Holmes and Bob Ringler for sharing their technical expertise and providing guidance.

Is it possible to top the 1988 total in 1989? Get out there and help us try! Report your sightings and write details on unusual sightings.

Addenda:

* A Peregrine Falcon was observed in 1980 and brings that year's total to 207 species.

* A Merlin and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher were observed in 1981; this brings that year's total to 203 species.

* There is an error in a previously reported total for 1983. The last total reported was 206; the correct number should have been reported as 204. To that number, the 205th species observed and not previously reported is Bald Eagle bringing the 1983 total to 205 species.

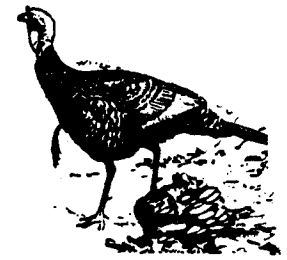
* Two species, Brewer's Blackbird and Mute Swan, should be added to the 1985 list to bring the total to 207.

Those individuals who submitted annual lists will receive a printout of the 10 year compilation. Other members who desire a copy are asked to call Jane Farrell at 596-2630 or send a stamped self-addressed long envelope to 6324 Sandchain Rd., Columbia, MD 21045.

Red-throated Loon
Common Loon
Pied-billed Grebe
Horned Grebe
Double-crested Cormorant
American Bittern
Least Bittern
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Little Blue Heron
Cattle Egret
Green-backed Heron
Black-crowned Night-Heron
Glossy Ibis
Tundra Swan
Mute Swan
Snow Goose
Canada Goose
Wood Duck
Green-winged Teal
American Black Duck
Mallard
Northern Pintail
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Gadwall
American Wigeon
Canvasback
Redhead
Ring-necked Duck
Greater Scaup
Lesser Scaup
Oldsquaw
White-winged Scoter
Common Goldeneye
Bufflehead
Hooded Merganser
Common Merganser
Red-breasted Merganser
Ruddy Duck
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Bald Eagle
Northern Harrier
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Broad-winged Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Rough-legged Hawk
American Kestrel
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Ring-necked Pheasant
Wild Turkey
Northern Bobwhite
American Coot

Black-bellied Plover
Lesser Golden-Plover
Semipalmated Plover
Killdeer
Greater Yellowlegs
Lesser Yellowlegs
Solitary Sandpiper
Spotted Sandpiper
Red Knot
Sanderling
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Short-billed Dowitcher
Common Snipe
American Woodcock
Laughing Gull
Bonaparte's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Great Black-backed Gull
Caspian Tern
Common Tern
Black Tern
Rock Dove
Mourning Dove
Black-billed Cuckoo
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Eastern Screech-Owl
Great Horned Owl
Barn Owl
Northern Saw-whet Owl
Common Nighthawk
Whip-poor-will
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Belted Kingfisher
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Olive-sided Flycatcher
Eastern Wood-Pewee
Acadian Flycatcher
Willow Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Horned Lark
Purple Martin
Tree Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Bank Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Barn Swallow

Blue Jay
American Crow
Fish Crow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Red-breasted Nuthatch
White-breasted Nuthatch
Brown Creeper
Carolina Wren
House Wren
Winter Wren
Marsh Wren
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Eastern Bluebird
Veery
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
Hermit Thrush
Wood Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Northern Mockingbird
Brown Thrasher
Water Pipit
Cedar Waxwing
European Starling
White-eyed Vireo
Solitary Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Philadelphia Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Blue-winged Warbler
Golden-winged Warbler
Tennessee Warbler
Nashville Warbler
Northern Parula
Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Magnolia Warbler
Cape May Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Pine Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Palm Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Cerulean Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
American Redstart
Prothonotary Warbler
Worm-eating Warbler
Ovenbird



Northern Waterthrush
Louisiana Waterthrush
Kentucky Warbler
Mourning Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Hooded Warbler
Wilson's Warbler
Canada Warbler
Yellow-breasted Chat
Scarlet Tanager
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Rufous-sided Towhee
American Tree Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Grasshopper Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Lincoln's Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Snow Bunting
Bobolink
Red-winged Blackbird
Eastern Meadowlark
Rusty Blackbird
Common Grackle
Brown-headed Cowbird
Orchard Oriole
Northern Oriole
Purple Finch
House Finch
Pine Siskin
American Goldfinch
Evening Grosbeak
House Sparrow
Brewster's Warbler
Lawrence's Warbler

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS PRESENTED BETWEEN APRIL 14, 1988 AND APRIL 12, 1989

As usual, the mounted bird specimens and slide programs were used in a wide variety of presentations and displays during the past year: Westowne Elementary School (4th gr.), Brownie Troops #248 & 1266, Girl Scout Troop #1260, Boy Scout Troops #601 & 362 and Cub Scout Den #3 at GlenMar Church, #4 at Magruder's. #649, Packs #375 & 376, Blue and Gold Dinner for Pack #702, Den #2 of Troop #874 and Cub Scouts meeting at Talbott Springs E.S., Harper's Choice Middle School (7th gr. science), Glenwood M.S. (6th gr. outdoor ed.), Owen Brown Senior Place, West Friendship E.S. (5th gr. outdoor ed.), Glenelg County School day camp, Howard County Fair, Columbia Mall exhibit in Sept., Glenelg H.S. (9th gr.), Natural History of Howard Co. class (How. Comm. College), Oakland Mills M.S. (6th gr. outdoor ed.), Chipmunk Hour (How. Co. Rec & Pks.), Children & Co. Nurs. Sch., Stevens Forest E.S., Centennial Lane E.S. (3rd gr.), Senior Lunch group at Glenelg Meth. Church, Atholton E.S. (3rd gr.), Hammond E.S. (3rd & 4th gr., later kindergarten at same school), Leisurefest at Columbia Mall, Patapsco M.S. (7th gr.), Howard County Library System presentation (6-9 yr. olds), Centennial H.S. (biology), & Christ Memorial Nurs. School.

Those individuals making the presentations or using specimens for personal study included Eva Sunell, Jo Solem, Marty Chestem, Eileen Clegg, Jim Hill, Susan Sullivan, Suzanne Probst, Joe Suess, Carolyn Cradler, Carla Huber, Bill Bridgeland, Ralph Geuder, Pete Neperud, Florence Seito, Marci Krishnamoorthy, Michele Wright, Helen Zeichner, Judy Habib, Jane Geuder, Pete McIntosh, Kevin Heffernan & Carol McIntyre.

MAY COUNT IS SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1989 - PAUL ZUCKER



Every year since 1948 members and friends of the Maryland Ornithological Society have conducted an annual May count. No other state can equal this record of spring migration counts taken on a single day each year. The results of this group effort are compiled and published in Maryland Birdlife.

All members of the Howard County Chapter and interested friends are invited to participate. This is an excellent opportunity to get to know other chapter members at the optional tally rally at the end of the day. Inexperienced birders are encouraged to participate; the compiler will try to team them with more experienced birders. (Personally, I have learned an immense amount about birding from going out on counts like this in a small group with more experienced colleagues.) Participation is also sought from people who will watch their feeders. It is not necessary to spend the entire day counting (although many people do)--part-day participation is also encouraged.

The compiler for the Howard County May Count is

Paul A. Zucker
112 Finale Terrace
Silver Spring, MD 20901
Telephone 681-9005

The areas to be birded and the groupings of observers into parties will be assigned by the compiler although, whenever possible, requests will be honored. There are many parts of the county which are yet to be covered. It is necessary for all participants (including feeder watchers) to contact the compiler during the two weeks prior to the count or at the April or May chapter meetings.

The county has been divided into 18 regions; a team leader will be assigned for each region. Each leader is responsible for combining all the field notes from that region into one clean, final tally sheet. This tally sheet MUST be turned in to the compiler at the tally rally. This final tally should be neat (no extraneous marks), legible, and on the official form which is enclosed (extras available at rally). The leaders are also responsible for tallying start time and miles, stop time and miles, party-hours by car and by foot, party-miles by car and by foot (and by other means), and the names and addresses of all the participants on the team. (Time out for lunch and time out of the assigned area must be subtracted off the totals.) In addition, the team leaders are responsible for obtaining the write-ups of all unusual sightings for their regions.

Occasionally, people who are birding in Howard County on May Count day, but who are not Count participants, wish to submit observations to the compiler. Such records are welcome but can only be used in those cases when no one else has seen the species in question (otherwise there may be double counting). Such less common species are generally "unusual sightings" as described below which require written documentation.

SOME GENERAL HINTS

It is necessary to keep track of party-hours and party-miles separately for time spent in the car, on foot, or with other means of transportation. Observers within talking or shouting distance of each other are one party. Thus, if a party of three people spends an hour together on foot, then one party-hour should be notated. If, however, one party member is separated from the others for half of that hour, then a total of one and a half party-hours should be tallied. I find it easiest to keep track of the hours spent on foot by making a notation to the nearest quarter-hour each time I get back into the car.

Count all birds. Large flocks can be estimated (don't be timid--most people underestimate). Although undue effort should not be spent chasing after common birds, it is important to count all birds seen. Don't ignore House Sparrows and European Starlings.

For keeping notes in the field, I like to use a notebook. Final totals, times and miles are then transcribed to the tally sheet which is enclosed. When I see a few birds of a species, I record them using hash marks (#). When I see a large flock, I write the total number and then circle it. It is a good idea to have extra paper along for making notes about unusual sightings. If something unusual is seen, it is useful to make the appropriate notes on the spot. (See the section below entitled UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS for procedures and species to be documented.)

If you see birds outside of your assigned area, please make notes on a separate sheet of paper. This information should not be added to your tally but should be given to the person responsible for the area where the birds were seen. If your total for that species in their region is higher than theirs, they can use your total instead. Only if you are both sure that you counted different individual birds can your total be added to theirs.

UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS

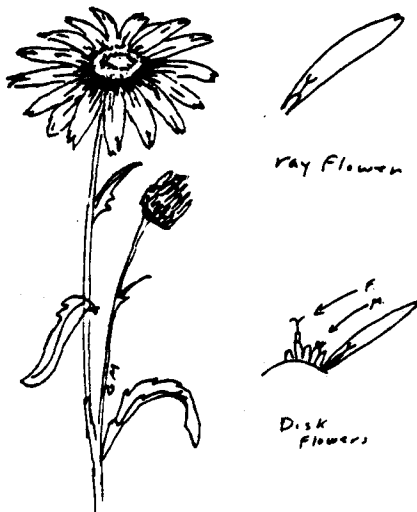
All unusual sightings need to be documented. Such documentation should include name of person making the identification, names of all others who saw the bird, when and where the bird was seen, how far away the bird was (approximately), what the lighting conditions were, what the bird was doing and how long it was observed, what field marks and coloration were observed, any other information pertaining to the decision of the species of the bird in question.

The following species are unusual for Howard County May Counts and need to be documented. First, all species not on the official checklist (enclosed in this mailing) are considered unusual. Second, all of the following species which have been seen on four or fewer of the last 15 Howard County May Counts are considered unusual and should be documented: Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Cattle Egret, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Glossy Ibis, Tundra Swan, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Greater or Lesser Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Merlin, Wild Turkey, Sora, American Coot, Upland Sandpiper, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short or Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope, Bonaparte's Gull, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, Chuck-will's-widow, Common Nighthawk, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Water Pipit, Loggerhead Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Summer Tanager, Dickcissel, American Tree Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, and any other species you suspect may never have been seen on a Howard County May Count.

MAY COUNT TALLY POTLUCK TO BE HELD AT DON & JAN RANDLE'S, 6424 LOCHRIDGE ROAD, BRAEBURN

Although it is not necessary to attend the tally in order to participate in the May Count, many birders find that the get-together in the evening is a pleasant and satisfying way to end one of the best birding days of the year. It provides an excellent opportunity to share your best sightings, find out what others saw (and where), and perhaps relate the thrill of seeing some species for the very first time. Anyone who participates in the Count is welcome at the tally (including feeder watchers). Call Jan Randle 531-6296 to let her know the number coming and your choice of food to share. (Non-cooks or all-day counters are not expected to prepare a culinary masterpiece; ask Jan for suggestions.) Counters begin gathering any time after 5:30 p.m.; dinner usually begins between 6:30-7:00 p.m. The Randles live in Braeburn which is on the west side of Cedar Lane (the section north of Rt. 32 and south of the stoplight at Owen Brown Rd.) Entrance road is Braeburn Rd., turn right on Lochridge and continue to first house on left after Hillbrook Dr. (one long block). If unable to attend, make arrangements with area leader or Paul to turn in or phone results sometime during Count Day or evening. All participants will receive a copy of the results and highlights.

FLOWER FEATURE: OX-EYE DAISY - Georgia Morris and Bob Solem



OX-EYE DAISY - *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*

FAMILY - Composite (*Compositae*)

HABITAT - Open fields, meadows, roadsides

HOWARD COUNTY BLOOMING SEASON - May through the fall

HOWARD COUNTY LOCATION - Widespread. Centennial Park, Schooley Mill Park, Lake Elkhorn and Patapsco valley

FLOWERS - Female white ray flowers surround a center disk of densely crowded golden yellow tubular flowers which are both male and female. Each flower head is on a single stalk. Flowers are 1¹/₄" to 2" across.

LEAVES - Alternate, coarsely toothed

SPECIAL INFORMATION - The name Daisy is a corruption of "Day's Eye." As the flower first opens, the white "petals" unfold to reveal the "eye" which is yellow like the sun. The daisy is one of our most common and beloved wildflowers but is not native to America. It is believed to have originated in Asia and came to this country from Europe. During the Revolutionary War, Burgoyne's army fed its horses fodder that came from Germany. Daisies were mixed in with the fodder and grew up in the pathways of the army.

HOWARD COUNTY CONSERVATION NEWS - Bob Solem

The Maryland Legislature passed a nontidal wetlands bill requested by the Governor. This bill sets up a statewide program for the "conservation, regulation, enhancement, creation, monitoring, and wise use of nontidal wetlands." The Assembly also passed the "Recycle First" bill: Before counties can get a permit for a new landfill or incinerator, they must achieve the recycling goals of the 1988 Recycling Act, must implement a yard waste composting program, and must develop a program to remove toxic materials from the household waste stream.

Other conservation bills did not pass. A bill to ban use of the pesticide carbofuran died in committee. (Carbofuran, especially when misapplied, is fatal to birds as well as insects.) A bill requiring plastic yokes on beverage containers to be biodegradable also died in committee.) Thanks to Marty Chestem for her conservation efforts on the state level. On February 13th she joined the Howard Co. group of the Maryland Parks and Recreation Association who lobbied in Annapolis to lift the lid on Project Open Space. February 28th she testified on behalf of the Bird Club before the House Environmental Affairs Committee on the yoke bill.

Howard County Executive Elizabeth Bobo announced a recycling program for newspapers, aluminum cans and glass bottles. Six thousand residences will get weekly curb-side pickup of these items for recycling. Each succeeding year, more residences will be served. If you are in the pilot area, the county government will mail you information. There are plans to equip a county truck for pickup of these materials in other areas on a rotating schedule.

The Howard County Zoning Board is hearing a petition (ZB 882) to amend the Zoning Regulations. Some of the proposed changes would make the Zoning Regulations consistent with the changes already adopted by the County Council in CB No. 66. CB No. 66 eliminated floodplain lot adjustment, tightened procedures for grading permits, and preserves vegetative cover in stream valleys and on steep slopes.

LYME DISEASE ALERT

Spring brings exciting birds but it also brings ticks which are potential sources of several illnesses including Lyme disease. For birders and others who spend time outdoors, it pays to be aware that Lyme disease is becoming increasingly common in Maryland. The arthritis-like symptoms of this bacterial infection are spread by the bite of an infected deer tick.

The deer tick is tiny, much smaller than the more commonly observed dog tick. In around 75 percent of the documented cases of Lyme disease, people who were bitten by an infected tick developed a skin rash that initially looks like the bite of a large insect or spider and then spreads outward from the bite mark in rings. Fever, headache and fatigue are among the other early symptoms. If treated with antibiotics, the disease can be eliminated. Untreated, it may spontaneously disappear, only to reappear months or years later with an assortment of much more severe and painful health problems. As yet, there is no preventive vaccine.

The following measures designed to help reduce the risks of exposure to the carrier tick are recommended by the New York State Assembly's committee on health.

1. Wear long, light colored pants (so that ticks are more visible). Tuck the pants legs into the socks.
2. Use insect repellent that contains high quantities of DEET (diethyltoluamide).
3. If bitten by a tick, carefully remove and save it. Watch for the early symptoms of Lyme disease as noted above.
4. If you have been bitten and early symptoms develop, seek prompt medical attention.

For additional information, several articles have been reproduced and will be available for reference at the May meeting.



At left is the common dog tick shown actual size (1) and enlarged four times (2). In drawings 3 and 4 the deer tick is shown actual size and enlarged four times. (Drawings are those in *Scientific American*, July 1987, p. 81.)

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