



# THE GOLDFINCH



A CHAPTER OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## SUMMARY OF THE 1998 HOWARD COUNTY FALL COUNT BY MIKE McCLURE AND CHUCK STIRRAT

The fifth annual Howard County Fall Count was conducted on Sept. 19, 1998. The count saw a new record for species while at the same time setting a new low for individuals. The number of participants and parties (49 and 25) was slightly less than last year (55 and 28). The totals for party miles and hours are shown on the accompanying tally sheet, with the party-hours being essentially the same as last year, while the mileage showed a slight decline. The day's efforts recorded a new high total of 136 species, after last year's record low (133 in '94, 135 in '95, 130 in '96, and 113 in '97). The total of individual birds tallied to 17,190 compared to 26,651, 26,643, 21,615, and 22,781 from prior years. Saturday's temperature reached the mid-80's with morning cloud cover clearing as the day wore on. The morning was quite calm with light southerly 5 to 10 mph winds in the afternoon. No precipitation was reported but the humidity was high enough to keep everyone uncomfortable. So while the count occurred the weather was more like summer than fall.

The accompanying table presents the count data. Fall warblers species identified rebounded from last year's low mark (18) to a more typical species count (29) compared to the first three years (30, 30, & 29). New species were **American Bittern** (1 in area 7), **American Wigeon** (2 in area 4), **Ruddy Duck** (2 in area 7), **American Coot** (1 in area 4), and **Sedge Wren** (1 in area 6, 1 in area 7).

This year the individual bird totals were dominated by: European Starling (3910), Common Grackle (1010), Mourning Dove (849), and Canada Goose (848). These four species accounted for about 38% of the total birds observed compared to the 1997 top four which were about 56% of their total. Blackbird numbers (redwing & species



combined - 522) declined dramatically from last year (4485).

Thanks to all participants and those who acted as area coordinators for the count: **Maud Banks, Bob and Mary-Jo Betts (Area 6), Bill and Karan Blum (Area 4), Joe Byrns, Marty Chestem, Edgar and Joy Cohen, Dennis and Jane Coskren, Deborah DeSalvo, Ward Ebert, Darius and Paula Ecker (Area 3), Jeff Friedhoffer, Carol Garza, Dave and Maureen Harvey, Mike Kerwin, Mike Leumas, Larry Line, Brigitte Lund, Grazina and Mike McClure (County Co-coordinator), Elayne and Jeff Metter, Carol and Paul Newman, Doug Odermatt (Area 5), Richard Orr, Bonnie Ott, Karla**

**Pearce, Linnea Pett, Anita Picco, Suzanne Probst, Ann Marie Raterman, Clyde Robinette, Kurt Schwarz, Romayne Smith, Bob and Jo Solem, Hank Stanton, Chuck Stirrat (County Co-coordinator), Tom Strikwerda, Eva Sunell (Area 7), Mark Wallace, (Area 1), Don Waugh, and Paul Zucker (Area 2).** A very special thanks to **Don and Martha Waugh** who hosted the evening tally rally.

This fifth fall count, as always, provided an enjoyable time in the field for the participants, and, of course, there was a fun-time at the tally rally. Several reported the excitement of finding "lifers", others shared great views or neat bird behavior observed during the day. The event provided a great wrap-up for the day. None present will forget to bring their "tracing paper" when next asked to provide written details on a "rarity" at future counts. Plan now to join us on a future seasonal count and if possible attend the tally as well. Next year the fall count will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of September, the 18<sup>th</sup>.

### HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB HOSTS STATE MOS MEETING

On Saturday, December 5, 1998, the Howard County Bird Club will host the state MOS board meeting. This will mark the first time in many years that Howard County has hosted a state MOS meeting. Thanks go to **Maureen Harvey**, who made this possible by arranging for a meeting room at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab.

We are looking for volunteers to provide baked goods and other refreshments for the participants of this meeting. If you are willing to do so, please call **Paula Ecker, 410-312-9165** for more information. **Mike Kerwin** has generously offered his house as a drop-off point for the baked goods and refreshments the Friday evening before the meeting.

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HOWARD COUNTY FALL BIRD COUNT - September 19, 1998

Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	Species / Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals		
Pied-billed Grebe	B			5			4	9	Swainson's Thrush	B			4		1	3	1	9	
Double-crested Cormorant	E		4	1		1	1	7	Wood Thrush	A	1	3	2	1	4	12	12	35	
American Bittern	*							1	American Robin	A	102	29	118	34	38	43	155	519	
Great Blue Heron	A	3		1	5	10	1	10	30	Gray Catbird	A	37	22	50	104	86	71	75	445
Great Egret	B				3	4		7	Northern Mockingbird	A	27	3	34	55	33	56	89	297	
Green Heron	A		1	3	7	1	4	8	24	Brown Thrasher	A	2	5	2		2	9	8	28
Black-cr. Night-Heron	*					1		2	3	European Starling	A	378	64	1645	215	87	153	1368	3910
Black Vulture	A	15	22	59	2	7	10	2	117	Cedar Waxwing	A	12		25	12	7			56
Turkey Vulture	A	37	4	22	37	23	20	27	170	Blue-winged Warbler	B			1			2	3	6
Snow Goose	**B				1			1	Tennessee Warbler	B					1		2	3	
Canada Goose	A	141	84	161	221	137	37	67	848	Orange-crowned Warbler	**C			1				1	
Mute Swan	A					4	3	7	Nashville Warbler	B		1	1					2	
Wood Duck	B	4		2	5	1	2	14	Northern Parula	A	3	1	6		4		10	24	
American Wigeon	A				2			2	Yellow Warbler	A					1			1	
American Black Duck	B				2			2	Chestnut-sided Warbler	A			4	1	3	1	2	11	
Mallard	A	5		3	140	16	2	122	288	Magnolia Warbler	A	4	8	7	5	11	7	7	49
Green-winged Teal	B							1	1	Cape May Warbler	B	1							1
Ruddy Duck	*A							2	2	Blk.-thro'd. Blue Warbler	A	1	3	7	2	5	4	4	26
Osprey	B	1	2	1				1	5	Yel.-rump'd Warbler	A			1				2	3
Bald Eagle [ad/im/unk]	B			1				1	1	Blk.-thro'd. Green Warbler	B	8	1	3		1		4	17
Northern Harrier	B	1		1			1	3	Blackburnian Warbler	B			4		1			5	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	B	3	2	3	1		4	2	15	Yellow-throated Warbler	B					1		1	2
Cooper's Hawk	B	1	2					2	5	Pine Warbler	B					5	2	7	
Red-shouldered Hawk	A			2	3	1	9	11	26	Prairie Warbler	A				2		1	6	9
Broad-winged Hawk	B	12		11					23	Palm Warbler	A	4				1		15	20
Red-tailed Hawk	A	1		4	1	1	2	4	13	Blackpoll Warbler	B							1	1
American Kestrel	A	3		9	4		8	6	30	Black-&-white Warbler	A	9	5	8	8	21	5	13	69
Merlin	*	1				1		2	2	American Redstart	A	10	2	18	8	20	12	45	115
American Coot	B				1			1	1	Worm-eating Warbler	B					1		1	1
Black-bellied Plover	*							2	2	Ovenbird	A			2		1	2	4	9
Semipalmated Plover	*		2					2	2	Northern Waterthrush	B	1						1	1
Killdeer	A	7	6	27	2	6	7	13	68	Connecticut Warbler	**C					1		1	2
Lesser Yellowlegs	B							1	1	Mourning Warbler	**C	1						1	1
Solitary Sandpiper	B				5		1	6	6	Common Yellowthroat	A	20	2	29	33	18	34	31	167
Spotted Sandpiper	B		1			1		1	3	Hooded Warbler	A							1	1
Least Sandpiper	B		3		4			7	7	Wilson's Warbler	B		1	1				2	2
Laughing Gull	B			17				17	17	Canada Warbler	B			3		1	1	5	
Ring-billed Gull	A			13	4	1	1	9	28	Warbler species		50	13	1	1	3	4	72	
Herring Gull	A			2				2	2	Scarlet Tanager	A	3		1				4	4
Caspian Tern	B		1			2		3	3	Eastern Towhee	A	4	1	4		3	10	14	36
Rock Dove	A	102	3	275	63	4	54	16	517	Chipping Sparrow	A	6	1	37		10	2		56
Mourning Dove	A	82	18	348	95	34	106	166	849	Field Sparrow	A			3			1	18	22
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	A	1		1		1		2	5	Savannah Sparrow	*B			2	1			1	4
Eastern Screech-Owl	B	1		7				8	8	Grasshopper Sparrow	B							1	1
Great Horned Owl	B	1		3			2	1	7	Song Sparrow	A	11		12	18	4	5	25	75
Barred Owl	B			2		1		1	4	Swamp Sparrow	B	3							3
Chimney Swift	A	21	14	29	82		37	367	550	White-throated Sparrow	A	3				1			4
Ruby-thr'd Hummingbir	B	2		4	12	1	6	3	28	Sparrow species				14	4			18	
Belted Kingfisher	A	3	2	7	6	6	2	15	41	Northern Cardinal	A	31	11	49	75	74	148	170	558
Red-bellied Woodpecker	A	28	4	29	24	32	60	38	215	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	B	1	1			1	1	1	5
Yellow-b'd Sapsucker	B			1			1	2	2	Indigo Bunting	A	76		23	1	1	14	4	119
Downy Woodpecker	A	8	4	13	15	18	31	28	117	Bobolink	B					2		1	3
Hairy Woodpecker	A	3		10			7	1	21	Red-winged Blackbird	A	25		44	93	5		89	256
Northern Flicker	A	12	12	50	9	15	30	28	156	Common Grackle	A	30		86	21	2	3	868	1010
Pileated Woodpecker	A	2	1	9	1		3	3	19	Brown-headed Cowbird	A	60		2			1	3	66
Eastern Wood-Pewee	A	3	5	6	3	5	2	2	26	Blackbird species		100			56	60	60		268
Acadian Flycatcher	*A				1			1	1	Baltimore Oriole	B	1			1				2
Eastern Phoebe	A	3	1	13	5	1	1	12	36	House Finch	A	8	6	11	74	17	76	80	272
White-eyed Vireo	A	3	3		3	1	4	3	17	American Goldfinch	A	40		46	127	49	85	102	449
Blue-headed Vireo	B	1						1	2	House Sparrow	A	4		33	46	85	19	85	272
Yellow-throated Vireo	B		1					1	1	Area Total Birds:		1879	506	4216	2190	1552	1805	5042	17190
Warbling Vireo	B				1	1		2	2	Area Total Species:		78	56	87	72	81	73	94	136
Philadelphia Vireo	*							1	1	Area No.:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Red-eyed Vireo	A	6	3	5	6	9	8	20	57	Supplemental Data									
Blue Jay	A	46	34	133	66	105	128	192	704	Time Start:	7:00 a	7:00 a	6:30 a	6:30 a	6:45 a	7:00 a	7:00 a	6:30 a	
American Crow	A	50	51	166	85	242	132	93	819	Time Stop:	7:35 p	2:00 p	6:10 p	4:00 p	4:30 p	6:00 p	5:45 p	7:35 p	
Fish Crow	A			40	3	1		3	47	Hours on Foot:	18.0	6.5	15.6	18.5	36.5	20.5	33.3	148.9	
Purple Martin	A							4	4	Hours by Car:	2.5	.5	3.6	1.0	1.0	1.0	7.7	17.3	
Barn Swallow	A	1						20	21	Miles on Foot:	14.0	5.0	13.3	13.5	28.0	23.0	18.5	115.3	
Carolina Chickadee	A	33	13	53	69	37	58	152	415	Miles by Car:	22.0	12.0	46.0	22.0	12.0		61.8	175.8	
Tufted Titmouse	A	31	2	43	72	33	62	57	300	Hours Feeder Watching:					3.5			3.5	
White-breasted Nuthatch	A	19	4	15	6	10	7	18	77	Hours Stationary:						5	5.0	5.5	
Carolina Wren	A	26	12	40	15	30	39	65	227	Hours "Owling":				2.0				2.0	
House Wren	A	7	1	2	1	3	7	11	32	Miles "Owling":			12.0					12.0	
Sedge Wren	**						1	1	2	Total Observers in Area:	3	3	8	13	9	7	9	49	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	A		1	2	1	1	1	1	7	Total Parties in Area:	2	1	3	4	6	4	5	25	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	A	1			1			2	2	Total Party-Hours (Reg.):	20.5	7.0	19.2	19.5	37.5	21.5	41.0	166.2	
Eastern Bluebird	A	26	8	18	5	10	29	11	107	Total Party-Hours (Feeder):					3.5			3.5	
Veery	B	1	1	2	2			1	7	Tot. Party-Hours (Station'y):					5	5.0		5.5	
										Total Party-Hours (Owling):				2.0				2	
										Total Party-Hours:	20.5	7.0	21.2	23.0	38.0	26.5	41.0	177.2	
										Area No.:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals	

## CAPE MAY FIELD TRIP REPORT BY DARIUS ECKER

**A**t 5:30 am on the Saturday morning of September 26 almost 30 energetic, excited birders arrived at a Columbia park and ride to begin their trip to Cape May. Everyone was anxious to get started, so after I handed out the maps, everyone was off. We were the last to leave the park and ride, after assuring everyone registered for the trip was on their way. Amazingly, everyone arrived in Lewes, Delaware without getting lost and in time to catch the 8:40 am ferry. While waiting for the ferry, a Caspian Tern showed up, along with a released Muscovy Duck that fooled quite a few of us. We were a bit disappointed with the number of species seen from the ferry, but the quick glimpse of a whale, seen by a few of us, made up for the lack of birds. As we got nearer to Cape May, Royal Terns started to show up to compliment the vista of the Cape May Lighthouse and Higbee beach.

~~Upon our arrival at Cape May~~ Point State Park we proceeded to the overlook of a small pond and began our own private hawk watch. The flight on Saturday morning was decent, with Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Broad-winged and Red-tailed Hawks all showing up. All three falcons, Peregrine, Merlin and Kestrel were found, along with several fish-carrying Ospreys. At one point, a Sharp-shinned and Cooper's were flying side by side for a great comparison. At Bunker Pond, Dave Harvey found a Bonaparte's Gull in with the Laughing Gulls. Terns were mostly Forster's with a few Common mixed in. A male Eurasian Wigeon was with the American Wigeon on the pond. There were lots of birders present in the park, so at lunchtime we had to spread out to find a picnic spot. The afternoon at South Cape May Meadows produced a new list of birds. Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal and Northern Shoveler accompanied the Pectoral and Stilt Sandpipers. Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs and a single Killdeer were found. Some of us got a quick look at a group of Black Skimmers as they

flew over the dune. We found a dead Virginia Rail by the side of the path, which provided a good opportunity to study field marks. We then returned to the state park to watch the bird banding demonstration and were treated to a close look at both Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, Northern Harrier, and all three falcons. Dinner that evening at a local Italian restaurant was attended by 14 of us that stayed the night. This lively crowd made quite a bit of noise, but it was acceptable since we had a private room to dine in. We turned in early and agreed to meet at Higbee Beach at 6:30 am.

Sunday started out slow. With southeast winds, the only migrants expected would be birds left over at Higbee from the last songbird flight. It must have been a few days, because there were definitely more birders at Higbee than birds. Elayne Metter found a Northern Waterthrush which ~~a few of us got to see. Bonnie Ott found~~ American Redstart and Palm Warbler. There were lots of Northern Flickers flying about and a highlight was a

fly-by Merlin. Things were slow, so we decided to return to South Cape May Meadows to look at shorebirds. We had lunch at the butterfly garden in Cape May Point, and we watched Monarchs and Painted Ladies on the butterfly bushes.

After lunch, we drove to Stone Harbor Point. There we had great looks at Black Skimmer, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper and American Oystercatcher, but the best bird was a cooperative fly-by Gull-billed Tern which ended up being a life bird for most trip participants. It's late for this rare New Jersey breeder to be around, so we were lucky to find it. After having ice cream in Stone Harbor, we headed for the ferry trip home. Dave Holyoke found a roosting Peregrine on a buoy, and I quickly turned up a second one. The ferry docked at Lewes, and fourteen very tired birders headed back to Howard County. The final species tally was 73 species, not quantity but definite quality.

## CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE-TUNNEL FIELD TRIP BY DARIUS ECKER

**P**aula and I had so much fun leading the Cape May field trip that we decided to plan a second overnight excursion, January 16, 17 and 18, a three day weekend to bird the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (CBBT). Tentative plans are to leave on Saturday at 9:00 am, bird our way down to Exmore, VA, where we'll spend the night at the Best Western. Sunday we'll get an early start and spend the day birding the CBBT. We'll look for wintering waterfowl, loons, grebes and gulls. Great Cormorant and Northern Gannet are a sure thing, and both Eiders and Harlequin Duck are possible. We'll spend Sunday night in Exmore, check out Monday morning and drive to Chincoteague, VA, to bird until about

noon, after which we'll leave for home. Please pre-register for this trip by calling *Paula or Darius at 410-312-9165* or e-mailing *dariuse@abs.net*. You'll need to make your own reservations at the hotel, we can provide you the telephone number. The room rate will be between \$50.00 and \$60.00 per night. There is a \$10.00 toll to drive on the CBBT, and drivers must have a permission letter obtained by writing to the Director of Operations, Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, PO Box 111, Cape Charles, VA 23310 or call 757-331-2960. Request permission to stop on the bridge-tunnel islands to observe sea birds and waterfowl.

# SUMMER BIRD RECORDS: JUNE 1 - JULY 31, 1998

BY JOANNE SOLEM

**S**ummer is the shortest reporting season and also one of the least birded. Although it is the height of the breeding season for most local species, most reports are late spring and early fall migrants along with wandering species that do not nest in the county.

Lingering waterfowl are found each summer. This year was no exception. A **Common Loon** and a **Horned Grebe** were both on Lake Elkhorn (LKELK) 6/12 (DE); a **Ruddy Duck** was present on the same lake until 6/8 (DE; J&RS).

**Great Blue Herons** returned to Vantage Point (VANPT) this year. A county record eight nests fledged an unknown number of young. All nests contained at least one young. The maximum number of birds observed in the nests at one time was 15, most of which were thought to be immatures. Because of dense vegetation and the sensitivity of the herons to disturbance, the limited number of observers remained at a considerable distance so that no accurate count of nestlings was available. Some were still present in nests on 7/9 (MC). **Great Egrets** are regular visitors to county lakes and reservoirs. The first two were at VANPT 7/17, while the high was a flock of six at LKELK 7/26 (SN). Three adult **Cattle Egrets** were startled from the edge of a small pond at Gateway (GATWY) 6/9 (J&RS). A second year **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was examined at Wilde Lake (WILLK) 7/7 (DO), while an adult was noted at LKELK 7/7 & 7/15 (DE). **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** are hard to locate in the county, but an immature was present for a day at Font Hill Wetland Park 7/26 (J&TDC; m obs.).

DN reported an accipiter (undoubtedly a **Cooper's Hawk**) chasing birds at her feeder in Timberleigh 6/9 & again 7/9. A few pairs nest in the county; Sharp-shinned do not. A **Merlin**, perched on a telephone pole at the junction of MD 32 & Pindell School Road 7/20, was noted by DH.

There were two **Ring-necked**

EACH SEASON HOWARD COUNTY BIRD SIGHTINGS ARE COMPILED AND SUBMITTED TO *MARYLAND BIRDLIFE* AND *FIELD NOTES*. BECAUSE BOTH PUBLICATIONS PROVIDE OVERVIEWS FOR LARGE AREAS, ONLY A FRACTION OF HOWARD COUNTY SIGHTINGS ARE PUBLISHED. THE RECORDS ARE NOT LOST, HOWEVER, FOR THEY ARE THE BASIS FOR COUNTY RECORDS. ALL RECORDS ARE WELCOMED AND APPRECIATED. ANY INDIVIDUAL WHO TURNS IN SEASONAL SIGHTINGS RECEIVES A COPY OF THE COUNTY COMPILATION. TO REQUEST A FORM ON WHICH TO LOG DATES, PLEASE CALL 301-725-5037. THE BOARD HAS REQUESTED THAT A DIGEST OF THE SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS APPEAR IN THE NEWSLETTER. OBSERVERS ARE REFERRED TO BY THEIR INITIALS (SEE THE LIST AT THE END OF THE ARTICLE). LOCATIONS ARE WRITTEN OUT THE FIRST TIME CITED; THEREAFTER, ABBREVIATIONS ARE USED.

**Pheasant** reports: one about 1 mile south of Lisbon on MD 94 on 6/5 (DN) and the other on 5/30 & 6/7 at Belmont near Elkridge (MSP).

Fall shorebird migration began with a **Spotted Sandpiper** at Lake Kittamaquidi 7/20 (MC). Although **American Woodcock** nest in the county, they are rarely seen after the spring courtship flights. One flushed from a drainage area in GATWY 7/25 (NM).

**Ring-billed Gull** numbers drop dramatically during the summer. One was at LKELK 7/2 (DE) & three appeared at the Stanford Road pond 7/27 in company with two **Caspian Terns** (JC).

The last few years cuckoo numbers have been low. The only **Black-billed Cuckoo** was spotted 6/12 at LKELK (DE). A pair of **Barred Owls** nested near WILLK. They were reported from 6/7 on (DO). Beginning in mid-July and continuing for several weeks two young **Barred Owls** hunted each evening in a yard in that area enabling many people to observe them (MC).

After more than three weeks of noises in a chimney, at least three **Chimney Swifts** fledged on 8/9-10 from a home in Fulton. Two of the young fell into the fireplace where they were closely observed before they climbed back up the bricks into the chimney (RM).

**Willow Flycatchers** are a predictable county nester. This year they were reported from CENPK (JC), LKELK (DE; JS), Stevens Road (J&RS), Meadowbrook (JS) and Plum Tree Path (DO). A late **Least Flycatcher** was seen and heard at LKELK 6/8 & 6/9 (DE).

**Veeries** do well along the major rivers. One was seen and heard by club

members at the anniversary picnic at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab 6/27 (m.obs) & at Gwynn Acres 7/24 (BO). Eight were heard at Long Corner along the Patuxent River 6/21 (J&RS).

At least one **Cedar Waxwing** was at WILLK 6/14 (DO). As expected, **Warbling Vireos** were present along the Little Patuxent River at Alpha Ridge Park 6/28 (J&RS). By 7/26 **Cerulean Warblers** are hard to locate because of reduced singing, but one was still present at Marriottsville along the Patapsco River (J&TDC). One **Mourning Warbler** lingered for 3 days (6/5-7) at Rockburn Branch Park along the path adjacent to the stream (EN). **Hooded Warblers** were reported from the same park 6/13 where they nest (DO).

A late **White-throated Sparrow** turned up in a yard south of Ellicott City 6/7 (CB; MSP).

A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was a late spring migrant (or an early fall one?). He spent 7/17-19 at a Marriottsville Road feeder (T&CF). Two male **Bobolinks** were present 6/8 in a pasture at Wessel's (1/2 mile west of US 29 & MD 216) (MW).

*Observers: Connie Bockstie (CB), Martha Chestem (MC), Jane Coskren (JC), T. Dennis Coskren (TDC), Darius Ecker (DE), Tom & Cathy Franklin (T&CF), Dave Harvey (DH), Nancy Magnusson (NM), Rosamund Munro (RM), Erich Neupert (EN), Diane Nagengast (DN), Sue Neri (SN), Doug Odermatt (DO), Bonnie Ott (BO), M. Suzanne Probst (MSP), Jo Solem (JS), Robert Solem (RS), Mark Wallace (MW), many observers (m.obs).*

# CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS AND FIELD TRIPS

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 pm. Meeting/program begins at 8:00 pm. Club bookstore opens at 7:30 pm.

- ✓ **November 12, Thursday** "A Tale of Two Islands: Appledore in Maine and the Farallons in California" by David Holmes.
  - ✓ **December 10, Thursday** "Research Findings on Steller's Sea Eagles in Russia" by Mike McGrady.
  - January 7, Thursday** Mark your calendar. Hank Kaestner returns as our guest speaker.
- Field Trips meet as described for each trip. Carpooling is encouraged; riders share the cost of gas and tolls. Dress for the field trip with stout, reasonably waterproof footwear and layers of clothes. Trips do not always follow paths. NO pets. Leaders may cancel due to inclement weather or fewer than three participants. FOR INFORMATION, CALL BONNIE OTT, at 410-461-3361.
- November 1, 8, 15, 22 Sunday** Sundays at Centennial Park Walk - Meet at 8:00 am at the west end parking lot. Leader: TBA. Walk the paved path around the lake. Call Bonnie for more information.
  - November 28, Saturday** Snow Bunting Search at Sandy Point State Park - Meet at 7:30 am at the Route 32 and Broken Land Parkway park and ride (car parking). Leaders: Darius and Paula Ecker. Last year we were successful in our search. Call leaders at 410-312-9165 for more information.
  - ✓ **December 3, Thursday** Autumn (August 1 - November 30) Bird Records Due - Mail to Jo Solem, 10617 Grae Loch Road, Laurel, MD 20723.
  - ✓ **December 19, Saturday** Triadelphia Reservoir Christmas Bird Count - For details or to volunteer, contact Jo Solem, 301-725-5037 or Mark Wallace, 301-725-6370.
  - January 1, Friday** Start Your New Year List - Meet at 8:30 am at the Broken Land Parkway parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Leaders: Darius and Paula Ecker. This half day field trip will tour Howard County in search of birds for our year lists.
  - January 16 - 18, Saturday - Monday** Birding the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel - See article on page 3 of this newsletter. Please pre-register for this trip so we can coordinate carpools.
  - February 6, Saturday** Midwinter Count - Mark your calendar. Details will be in the next issue of the newsletter.

Board of Directors meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm, unless otherwise noted, at the home of the board member listed. If directions are required, please call the hosting board member.

**November 19, Thursday** Mary-Jo Betts, 9494 Crisscross Court, Columbia, MD 21045, 301-596-5859

**December - NONE**

**JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1999 NEWSLETTER MATERIAL is due NOVEMBER 27, 1998.** Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas which you think will be of interest to other birders. Call or mail to Paula and Darius Ecker, 9270 Crazyquilt Court, Columbia, MD 21045, Phone 410-312-9165 or e-mail to [Paulae2156@aol.com](mailto:Paulae2156@aol.com). Also, please visit the club's site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.abs.net/~darius/birding.html>.

## RENEW, RENEW, RENEW

**D**on't forget, if you have not already done so, it is time to renew your membership. Please complete and return the membership application that was included in the last issue of the newsletter. If you need another copy of the application, contact Paula and Darius Ecker, 410-312-9165.

## BIRD CLUB DISPLAY AT THE HOWARD COUNTY FAIR

**T**he Howard County Bird Club had a display at the Howard County Fair the week of August 15-22. Tom Strikwerda coordinated the event with the Fair Board of Directors, and Karla Pearce coordinated prime-time booth coverage with volunteers from the club. Darius and Paula Ecker, and Marty Chestem set up the display on Friday night before the fair, and Karla Pearce and Darius and Paula Ecker dismantled the display on the last day of the fair.

Thanks to the following volunteers who worked the booth: Marty Chestem, Ralph and Jane Geuder, Dave and Maureen Harvey, Dave Holyoke, Mike Kerwin, Karla Pearce, Chuck Strrat, Tom Strikwerda and Helen Zeichner.

## MOS SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

**T**he Maryland Ornithological Society annually awards ecology and ornithology tuition scholarships to Audubon camps. If you work with young people, you may wish to apply for a scholarship. Contact President Mike Kerwin at 410-461-2408 for additional information.

# HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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COLUMBIA, MD 21044

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## CONSERVATION COLUMN BY BOB SOLEM

A new service is available to connect Maryland homeowners interested in improving the wildlife habitat and water quality on their property to programs that will help them accomplish their goals, according to an article in the *Bay Journal* 8(6):5 (September 1998):

"With one phone call to the Landowner Stewardship Referral Service, landowners can learn about the many federal, state, local and private programs that are available and in some cases offer free or cost-shared improvements designed to enhance habitat and water quality.

"The service is a free, voluntary program. Landowners can register their property for projects such as riparian forest buffer plantings, streambank stabilization, wetlands restoration and wildlife habitat creation.

"The Landowner Stewardship Referral Service is a cooperative effort including the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources, Environment, and Agriculture, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Maryland Chapter of Ducks Unlimited. For information, contact the DNR Watershed Restoration Division at 1-800-989-8852, or the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at 1-900-445-5572."

## BIRDWATCHER'S LIBRARY OPENS AT MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARK

The Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MCC-MOS) announces the opening of a bird-related library at Black Hill Regional Park in upper Montgomery County. Claudia Wilds, one of the Washington area's best-known bird authorities, left her entire book collection to the MCC-MOS, which has installed most of the library at the park, where it is available for free public use. The organization, with the permission of the Black Hill Regional Park staff, installed the non-circulating reference library on June 9, a year after Wilds' death.

The library is now open at the park's visitor center, where park naturalist Denise Gibbs reports that it has already been heavily used, especially on weekends. The collection of 365 books is housed in oak bookcases donated by MCC-MOS. Reference materials include field guides, site guides, species accounts, and books about birds of the world.

The library is dedicated to its former owner, Claudia Wilds. Wilds, an expert on Washington area birds and the world's shorebirds, gulls, and terns, left her mark on the local birding community in many ways. She served on the boards of the Maryland Ornithological Society and Virginia Society for Ornithology (VSO), was president of MCC-

MOS, and from 1973 to 1990 was the voice of the "Voice of the Naturalist," a local rare bird tape weekly issued by the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS). Wilds was a consultant for the popular National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America, an assistant-to-the-editor of the national magazine of the American Birding Association Birding, a contributor to the National Audubon Society's three-volume Master Guide to Birding, and author of *Finding Birds in the National Capital Area*. She regularly led field trips for the MCC-MOS, ANS, and VSO, and influenced thousands of birdwatchers. Born in Hyannis, Massachusetts in 1931, Wilds had been a Washington area resident since 1958. On June 8, 1997, she died, after a year-long battle with cancer. At the time of her death, Wilds was working on a book detailing the natural history and identification of the world's terns and skimmers.

Wild's library is housed at the Black Hill Regional Park Visitor Center, located at 20926 Lake Ridge Drive in Boyds, Maryland. The visitor center and library are open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week. (Fall hours will differ; call for details.) Admission is free. For more information, call (301) 972-3476.

