



November 2020

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President's Chat

In the strange summer that is now over, many people turned to nature for solace, including a lot who have discovered an interest in birds. Numbers are impressive: According to *The Washington Post*, between March and June 186,377 people signed up for eBird accounts, a 68 percent increase over the same period last year. Wow!

This increased interest will be good for all concerned, especially if newly converted birders become aware of the perils facing birds and become conservation advocates. We also have to make sure that birding itself does no harm to birds or to the environment.

About a month ago, a friend and I, birding Wheaton Regional Park, heard a Screech Owl in the middle of the day. We quickly realized that this was no real owl but a recording, being played to attract migrant birds. It went on and on, and loudly, so we tracked down the sound; we found two birders amidst frantic warblers, thrushes, etc. The birders invited us to join the party. I disappointed them by explaining this was not good for the birds and asking them to stop—which they immediately did. Told of this incident, Gail Mackiernan, our conservation chair, pointed out that it is illegal to harass wildlife in our parks. Occasionally playing a specific bird or a Screech Owl recording to attract nearby birds is not a major crime, but it should be done briefly, if at all, and avoided during migration and breeding. If you are a new birder, join one of our free walks led by expert birders. They will teach you where to find birds without the need to call them!

Cornell's eBird is a fantastic tool that has completely changed the way we document and share bird sightings. In the process, eBird ranks just



about everything, birders included, and can therefore stimulate competition between birders. Friendly competition includes help and cooperation. I want to finish this column with a personal story in which I was at the receiving end of bird-watching cooperation.

Again I was birding at Wheaton. I had found nice enough birds but felt I was the only birder in the county without a Rose-breasted Grosbeak this fall. A photographer I had never met before asked me to help him identify a bird he had just shot. Of course, his excellent photo was of a Rose-breasted Grosbeak! But to my surprise, the photographer said he thought the bird was still around and he would help me find it. Soon enough we were both seeing and photographing the family of three grosbeaks and a lovely hummingbird nearby to boot!

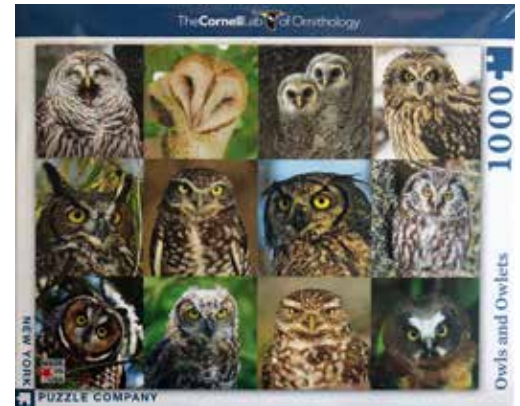
Happy and safe birding to all!

— Evelyn Ralston

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Club News

As part of their fund-raising efforts, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology sells bird-themed jigsaw puzzles that they design. Their latest puzzle, **Birds of North America 1000 Piece Puzzle: Owls and Owlets**, features 12 North American owls. Our VP, Scott Young, had one of his pictures chosen, a Boreal Owl, from his trip to Minnesota this past January. As you may recall from the May newsletter, members of the Maryland Ornithological Society had a great time on this trip led by Josh Engel of Red Hill Birding. The store website is <https://cornelllabpgstore.com/product/birds-of-north-america-puzzles/>.



If you missed our September meeting, you wouldn't know that Anna Urciolo, past president, conferred several awards. Here they are:

Helen Patton received an **Outstanding Service Award**.

In deep appreciation for your many years of dedication and graciousness as our Membership Chair and for being our special “Buyer” for the Club Social.

Patrick Newcombe received a **Distinguished Service Award**.

In deep gratitude for your dedication and perseverance as you tirelessly fulfilled multiple responsibilities as high school student, editor of The Chat, and speaker at the Frontiers of Ornithology Youth Forum.

Jim Nelson received a **Valued Service Award**.

In deep appreciation for your counsel as our “Lawyer in Residence” and for ensuring that we discuss and resolve each issue thoroughly and completely.

Karen Cyr and Emily Huang both received a **Valued Service Award**.

In deep appreciation for graciously stepping forward and serving as Co-Chair of our County Atlas program.

Gail Mackiernan received a **Valued Service Award**.

In deep appreciation for your many years of service, dedication, and leadership as Chapter Director.

Scott Young received a **Valued Service Award**.

In deep appreciation for your many years of service, dedication, and leadership as Chapter and State Director.

Moira Davenport, Gail Mackiernan and Evelyn Ralston each received the coveted Official MBC **Atta Girl Award** for helping sort Stephanie Lovell's books.

Thank you - Helen, Patrick, Jim, Karen, Emily, Gail, Scott, Moira, and Evelyn - for your valuable service to the Club!

On October 10, a group of YMOS birders, including our own member Nathan Tea, went to Cape May, New Jersey. Although migration was not great, the group enjoyed a day of birding from Cape May Point to North Wildwood while practicing social distancing etiquette. Notable birds include a Clay-colored Sparrow, a Common Eider and a lot of Pine Siskins! For photos of the Clay-colored Sparrow, check out **Youth Maryland Ornithological Society** on Facebook. YMOS is a subgroup of the Maryland Ornithological Society and runs birding trips for youth throughout the year. More information is available at <https://mdbirds.org/young-birders/> or by contacting George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com.



Member Spotlight - Nathan Tea

Interview by Stella Tea

Nathan Tea is a young member of the Club and the YMOS. *Chat* editor Stella Tea (yes, they are related) interviewed Nathan to discuss the pandemic, the BBA3, and more. If you are interested in being featured in future newsletters, please contact Stella at stazandgazer@gmail.com.



What is your last life bird?

The Sabine's Gull in DC on September 10.

How did you hear about the bird?

I saw the report on the DC RBA [Rare Bird Alert] group chat and decided why not since I missed the last two sightings in the last few years around the DMV [DC, Maryland, Virginia].

How has the pandemic affected your birding?

Birding has been quite interesting. I got to bird more than normal and to visit local places that I had not birded much before, such as the Matthew Henson Trail, Layhill Park, and various county hotspots, and flight IDs at my old school. I got a chance to practice my NFC [Nocturnal Flight Call] skills way more in the spring which allowed me to get more birds than last year, but it also made it difficult to do NFCs and to wake up super early to do morning birding. As for this fall, with my school schedule being more lenient than the previous school year, I am able to go birding more times during the week and to locations a bit further away from my house.

What about birding at home?

Birding at home has not changed at all besides the fact that I can actually see birds in my backyard rather than physically being at school. However, I took more time to ID birds in flight over my driveway which got me more birds for my yard list such as Bonaparte's Gull, Pine Siskins, and many spring flocks of cormorants.

Are you participating in the Breeding Bird Atlas 3? If so, how has your experience been?

Yes, this is my first year participating. It's been a challenge to maintain a block and to also go out and explore new areas and try to find breeding birds. One of the harder challenges was to get started and to look for new nests from spring arrivals. Mid-spring was also quite challenging in differentiating migrants from breeders. But I have a lot of fun so far paying attention to details that show if a bird is breeding or not, such as carrying food or showing defensive behaviors.

Have you gotten any breeding birds at home?

Yes, actually. My household produced our first breeding Eastern Bluebirds which was quite exciting! I also noticed more young birds in the summertime from various songbirds that I didn't realize were nesting in our vicinity. Some of our breeding birds include the typical House Wrens, Gray Catbirds, and White-breasted Nuthatches.

Have you attended any field trips lately or been birding with friends?

I haven't really birded with a lot of people during this pandemic. But I have recently birded with another young birder in Montgomery County which was a lot of fun, and it got me checking out another part of the county I had not checked out before. As for field trips, aside from the Cape May trip with the YMOS, I also went to Bombay Hook in August with them.

Do you have any suggestions for young people in the county who are getting into birding?

Get out a lot and experience all the different types of habitats and birds. Reading bird guides will only do you so much if you don't actually experience birding firsthand. Another way is to contact our Club to not only meet welcoming people in the birding community but to also have opportunities to go on different trips to see new birds.

When the pandemic is over (hopefully soon), where do you want to travel for birding next?

I was hoping to travel a lot this year but that didn't happen of course. A trip I was hoping to do this summer and still wanting to do is to go visit my friend in London and see all the European birds. Or possibly to another Asian country such as Thailand or Taiwan again.



Birds of Note (mid-July to early October 2020)

Wishes can come true! At least those of a chasable **Anhinga** showing up in Montgomery. A great county bird to headline this column. This species has teased as a county possibility over the last two years. Jim Ivett photographed one at the Kentlands Lakes in May 2018. Dave Powell and Art Drauglis had a well-seen flyover **Anhinga** at Hughes Hollow on May 23 this year. County birders, though, finally struck “pay dirt” with this species on July 28. Clark Day spotted one when he was checking out the stormwater management ponds near the old Lakeforest Mall. Word got out quickly and over the next few days, more than 100 birders were able to “twitch” this bird for their county list. As an added bonus, the bird showed up again at nearby Lake Whetstone on August 16 and was seen there for about 10 days.

Some species of passerines are just a little easier to locate in the county during their southbound migration period late summer to early fall. These species include **Philadelphia Vireo**, **Connecticut** and **Orange-crowned Warblers**, and **Yellow-bellied** and **Olive-sided Flycatchers**. Bernard Foy found a **Connecticut Warbler** near downtown Silver Spring on September 22. Stephen Davies reported one from the Wheaton Branch Stormwater Ponds a day later. Additional reports came from Redgate Park and a private home off Prices Distillery Rd. Denise Pirnia and Gregory McDermott reported an **Orange-crowned Warbler** along the canal near Violette’s Lock on October 3. Additional sightings came from Lake Frank and Northwest Branch Park. Jared Fisher was first to note 2 **Philadelphia Vireos** at Hughes Hollow on September 12. Daily reports also came from Wheaton RP between September 15 and 23.

Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper found a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at Wheaton RP on August 18. Jared Fisher had one at Hughes Hollow on September 9 and Stephen Davies also reported one at the Wheaton Branch Stormwater Ponds on September 15. Scott Young reported the first southbound **Olive-sided Flycatcher** of the season at Dufief Park on August 20. At least 10 other sightings came in from around the county through September 25.

Late summer/early fall is always a great time to find some of the rarer shorebirds that pass through Montgomery on their way to points north and south. Dave Czaplak and MaryAnn Todd spotted

2 **American Avocets** flying over the Potomac River adjacent to Violette’s Lock on July 29. A cool surprise for Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper on September 2 at Pine Lake within Wheaton RP was an **American Avocet** on a small sandbar. The bird cooperatively stuck around the whole day allowing many birders to see it. Dave Roberts spotted a **Willet** on some mid-river rocks in the Potomac at Violette’s Lock on August 20—just a 2nd record for this species in Montgomery. On September 8, also at Violette’s Lock, Dave Czaplak and MaryAnn Todd spotted an **American Golden-Plover** in flight over the river. Bernard Foy found 2 **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** mixed in with some foraging **Killdeer** at the Hughes Rd Polo Grounds on September 13. Joe Hanfman was able to pick out a **White-rumped Sandpiper** among some other shorebirds on a low-water sand spit at Triadelphia Reservoir on August 4.

On August 7, Scott Young spooked a **Snowy Egret** out of Broad Run where it passed under River Rd near the NIH Animal Center in Poolesville. A number of juvenile **Little Blue Herons** were found around the county July into August, a common pattern of post-breeding dispersal for this species. CJ DeMarco found one at Lake Hallowell on July 7. Subsequent reports rolled in from Hughes Hollow, Black Hill RP, Triadelphia Reservoir, Edwards Ferry and Violette’s Lock.

Dave Czaplak noted 2 **Least Terns** over the Potomac adjacent to Violette’s Lock on July 2. A single **Black Tern** was seen at Violette’s Lock on August 7 and 8.

Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper noted a flyover **Mississippi Kite** at Wheaton RP on October 4.

Nathan Tea reported a **Golden-winged Warbler** at Wheaton RP on September 5. Robin Skinner noted one at Little Bennett RP on September 15. Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper found a **Marsh Wren** in the Sherwood Forest area of Northwest Branch Park on October 10. **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin** seem to be irrupting south into our area this winter. As of October 13, all three species have been reported in the field and from backyard feeders.

Through early October, 246 species have been seen in Montgomery this year. Montgomery’s current top birders include CJ DeMarco 217, Nathan Tea 208, Dave Roberts 207, MaryAnn Todd 206, and Robin Skinner tied with Team Dubois (Rae and Woody) 199.



Fall/Winter Meetings

Considering the still unabated spread of COVID-19 we judge it prudent to decide now that we will continue meeting virtually for the next three months, i.e. until the end of January. However, we will continue to have field trips, as long as the necessary precautions highlighted in page 7 are followed. Were conditions to change significantly, we would, of course, reconsider.

November 18 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM **Wildlife of Panama** **Speaker: Gail Mackiernan**



Last April, Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper joined friends from England for two weeks in Panama. This was Gail and Barry's third trip to that country, but reports of breeding Crested and Harpy Eagles provided a great reason for another visit! The group spent about five days at the famous Canopy Tower near the Panama Canal and six days at the Canopy Camp in the far-eastern province of Darién. In two weeks, they tallied about 300 species of birds, as well as a number of interesting mammals, including cute Sloths and noisy Howler Monkeys. Bird highlights were many, topped perhaps by smashing views of a Harpy Eagle at its nest, feeding a large chick, a totally unexpected encounter with a huge Crested Eagle perched along a remote road, close views of a confiding Black-crowned Antpitta, the enigmatic apayoa, Ocellated and Bare-crowned Antbirds and thousands of Mississippi Kites winging their way north over the forest.

December 16 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM **Wine & Cheese Holiday Social**

Relax, meet other members, and make new birding friends over Wine and Cheese (viewer supplied for this Zoom meeting!). Then sharpen your visual and auditory bird identification skills for the traditional Bird Quiz that will be presented by Scott Young. If you have any ambiguous bird photos with corresponding good, decisive shots, please forward them to Scott at wasyacy@verizon.net. He will use them as part of the quiz. Other suggestions to make this annual pre-holiday, social meeting extra fun will be appreciated!



January 13 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM **Maryland & DC Breeding Bird Atlas 3: Results and Progress 2020** **Speaker: Gabriel Foley**

The Maryland & DC Breeding Bird Atlas 3 has had a tremendously successful first season, and Atlas Coordinator Gabriel Foley is excited to discuss these results with the Montgomery Bird Club. Come learn about the birds reported in 2020, where this season's effort was focused, how data quality review works, and how to strategize for a successful atlasing season in 2021. And Gabriel wants to hear from you, the atlaser, as well! Let him know what additional materials you could use, what topics are unclear, or anything else Atlas-related that happens to be on your mind.

February 17 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM **Montgomery County Birders, Birds, and Birding Over the Years**

Michael Bowen will host a panel discussion on Montgomery County birders, birds, and birding over the years. Stay tuned and look for panel discussants to be announced on the Montgomery Bird Club website.



Fall/Winter Field Trips

NOVEMBER 11 (Wednesday)

REDGATE: BASICS OF SPARROW ID

Sparrows—Little Brown Jobs to some—can be tricky to identify. A morning at Redgate provides a good opportunity to learn and review key field marks. In addition to common species like White-throated and Song and Swamp, we'll keep an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Field Sparrows. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Limit: 6. For reservations, time, and directions, contact one of the CO-LEADERS: Lydia Schindler, lydia13621@gmail.com or Linda Friedland, linnet1@verizon.net.

NOVEMBER 29 (Sunday)

LILYPONS/NEW DESIGN ROAD

Half day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and Tree Sparrows, possibly Virginia Rail and American Bittern. Email leader for reservation (required) and more info. Limit: 6. LEADER: Clive Harris, clivegharris@yahoo.com.

DECEMBER 6 (Sunday)

BLACKWATER NWR

Full day (to dusk). Early waterfowl and lingering migrants plus late afternoon marsh watch. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch and drinks. Reservations required. Limit: 6. Contact the leader for meeting place and time. LEADER: Mark England, 240-308-4114 or englandmark@comcast.net.

JANUARY 6 (Wednesday)

BLACKWATER NWR

Full day (to dusk). Overwintering waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors plus late afternoon marsh watch. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch and drinks. Reservations required. Limit: 6. For meeting place and time, contact the LEADER: Mark England at 240-308-4114 or englandmark@comcast.net.

JANUARY 9 (Saturday)

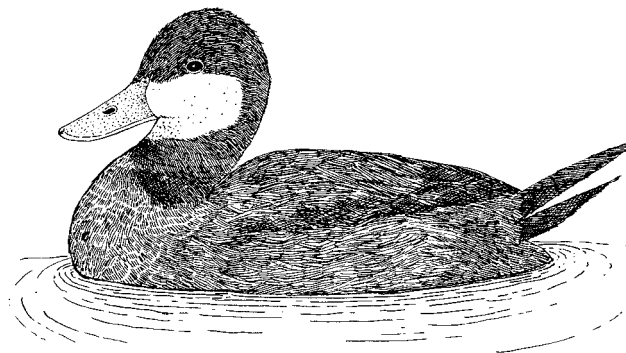
RICKMAN/WOODSTOCK EQUESTRIAN PARK

Join us as we explore this new location for some midwinter morning birding on the west side of Route 28 (<https://rb.gy/qpdqda>). We'll bird the broad fields and separating woods, hoping for sparrows, woodpeckers, and raptors. Limit: 6. For reservations (required) and more information, contact the LEADER: Scott Young at wsyacy@verizon.net.

JANUARY 17 (Sunday)

BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK

All birders, but especially new birders, are welcome on this half-day trip, which will focus on the identification of ducks at this premiere county spot for winter waterfowl. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Visitors Center at Black Hill Regional Park, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. Limit: 6. For reservations (required) and more information, contact the LEADER: Gerry Hawkins at maineusa@comcast.net or 571-277-8406 (cell). Note: Because of the COVID-19 restrictions about sharing scopes, the leader will be unable to share his scope, and each person should bring his or her own. If you don't have a scope, there should still be a number of closer waterfowl that can be seen through binoculars.



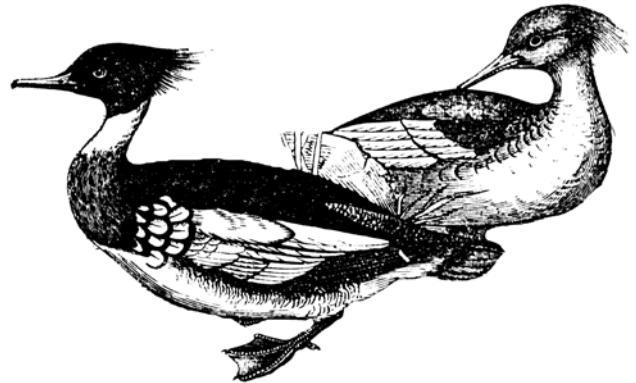
Fall/Winter Field Trips

JANUARY 23 (Saturday) REDGATE PARK

Come explore this “new” park on a former golf course. Offers multiple habitats, including a small marsh, wooded areas, and lots of meadow areas for potential winter sparrows. In its first year as a park, birders identified 150 species. Some areas have steep hills. If there are icy conditions, the trip will be postponed. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot. Limit: 6. Reservations required. For more information, reservations, and directions, contact the LEADER: Anne Mytych at 240-506-0236 or amytych@yahoo.com.

JANUARY 24 (Sunday) WINTER WATERFOWL SEARCH

Half-day. Waterfowl search of Montgomery County waterways for ducks, grebes, and mergansers. Based on the unpredictability of winter weather conditions, the leader will decide on the meeting place a few weeks before the trip and use recent bird reports to decide best locations to visit. Bring a scope if you have one. Limit: 6. For reservations and more info, contact the LEADER: Andy Martin at martinap2@verizon.net or 301-529-2066.



COVID-19 Restrictions

The fall field trips have been very successful so far. To allow more members to enjoy the trips without making social distancing impossible, our trip leaders may be accompanied by a co-leader who will separately lead up to 6 members. To find out specific information about a trip you are interested in, please contact the trip leader(s).

Other rules remain:

- Cancel participation, even at the last minute, if you have any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Keep a separation of at least 2 arm-lengths (6 ft) between you and others.
- Wear a mask.
- Do not share binoculars, spotting scopes, phones etc.

Furthermore, we recommended avoiding carpooling except with a person you live with.

There are still a number of great trips on the schedule, so be sure to sign up. Many thanks to our trip leaders for being so flexible and continuing to share their time and expertise with us!



Trip Reports

Thursday, September 3, Wheaton Regional Park

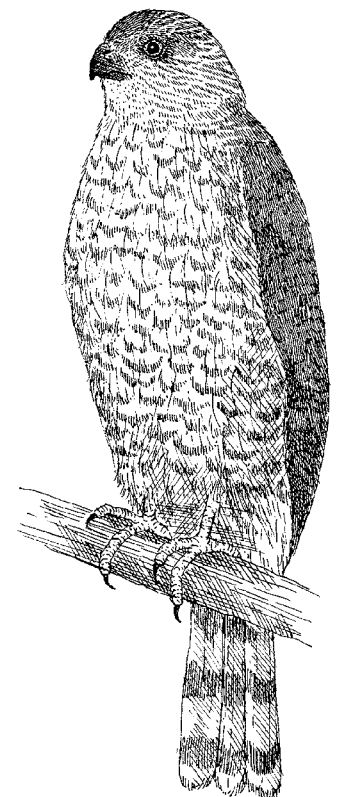
The first bird walk of the 2020 fall season was held at Wheaton Regional Park on Thursday, Sept. 3 on a sunny morning. Leaders: Woody and Rae Dubois. The six participants gathered with Rae in the parking lot, Woody being down at Pine Lake. He had gone early to see if the American Avocet seen on Sept. 2 was still there but he appeared shortly saying no luck. We started by scanning the trees around the parking area but continued fairly quickly to the train tracks, the orchard, wall of vines, Pine Lake, and the sunny corner. By the end of three hours we had seen or heard 37 species, three of which were warblers: Black-and-white, American Redstart, and Blue-winged. Three more warbler species stayed maddeningly just out of identification range. Other notable birds were a Common Nighthawk, a Warbling Vireo which was both heard and seen, two Baltimore Orioles, and two Veeries, one of which followed an apparent companion American Robin everywhere as though he were attached by a string! Red-eyed Vireos were in fairly good supply and Ruby-throated Hummingbirds buzzed over the jewelweed. All the participants seemed to have a good time and were very good-natured about mask wearing.

Sunday, September 13, Rock Creek Park

The MBC beginners bird walk had 3 participants plus the leader Clive Harris. Because Rock Creek is a migrant trap, some days are better than others, and this day was a relatively quiet one as it had been a few days since the last cold front. We had a total of 29 species for the morning, which included 5 species of warblers, of which Blue-winged was the best, but American Redstart and Common Yellowthroat were the most numerous. We had very nice views of a Veery feeding on berries in the Maintenance Yard parking lot, and of a Baltimore Oriole in the Yard itself, as well as a Scarlet Tanager. Red-eyed Vireos were the most common songbird, with a tally of 10 and we also enjoyed many House Wrens.

Sunday, September 20, Pennyfield to Violette's - Bird Stalk

Note: Due to the pandemic and concerns about maintaining safety and social distancing on a crowded towpath, the stalk was changed to Hughes Hollow in the McKee-Beshers Wildlife Management Area. Leader: Jim Nelson. Participants: 7, including leader. Weather: Sunny, 44 to 61 F. Total species: 44. This walk is for folks who generally cannot get out as early. The total species count was more than last year's walk on the towpath, not surprising given the broader array of habitat at Hughes Hollow and favorable weather. Neotropical migrants are always a delight in fall migration. We had 7 species of warbler, 2 of vireo, and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, but no tanagers, thrushes, or orioles. Highlights in the impoundments were Blue-winged Teal, Pectoral Sandpipers, an American Bittern surprisingly out in the middle of the water, Green Herons, and a Great Blue Heron. A high-flying Cooper's Hawk was seen stooping on a soaring Common Raven. Three Brown Thrashers together in one small area were quite a surprise. There were lots of Eastern Wood-Pewees and a Least Flycatcher. The complete checklist from the walk can be viewed in eBird at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S73837358>.



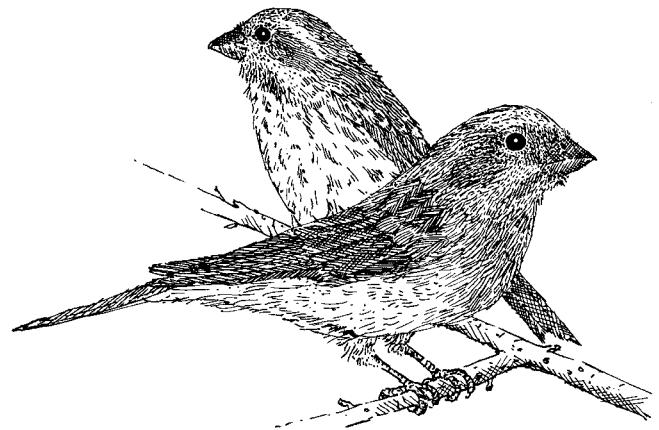
Trip Reports

Saturday, September 26, Croydon Creek Nature Center

Co-Leaders: Anne Mytych and Emily Huang. Participants: 7, including co-leaders. Weather: Overcast, light drizzle at times, 65 to 69 F. Total species: 33. This was the second MBC walk at Croydon Creek to help expose birders to a MC hidden gem. We met at the nature center parking lot at 7:30 a.m. and ended around 10:30 a.m. We started at the feeders, which had some activity, but the lighting was very poor. We saw mostly the usual feeder birds as well as two Scarlet Tanagers and a Common Yellowthroat. We headed down the main road toward the meadow, and found a couple of Magnolia Warblers, a Black-and-white Warbler and another Scarlet Tanager. The meadow was quiet but we did see a Swainson's Thrush and heard a couple of Catbirds and Cardinals. We went over the bridge on the trail and found another Swainson's, as well as a Gray-Cheeked Thrush, which we noted had a plain gray face and no eye-ring. We made a final stop back at the feeders and there were a lot of Chickadees, Titmice and House Finches fluttering around. Before we left, we had a quick visit from an Indigo Bunting and a Black-throated Green Warbler, who landed on the Sycamore behind the feeders. The complete checklist from the walk can be viewed in eBird at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74071867>.

Saturday, October 3, Little Bennett Regional Park

Little Bennett Regional Park, Wilsons Mill, Mound Builder, Beaver Valley trails. Leader: Gemma Radko; Participants: 7; Weather: Chilly to start, but clear, turning into a beautiful fall day. Species: 40. This trip featured a big influx of winter residents, starting with Purple Finch. We observed at least eight birds, most brownies, but one adult male in all his purple glory. Also saw many Ruby-crowned Kinglets, plus heard a Golden-crowned Kinglet and a Red-breasted Nuthatch. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker turned up at the end of the walk, just in time to make number 40. Other notables were Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes, plus a late Wood Thrush; at least three stunning Blue-headed Vireos; Pine, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, and Yellow-rumped warblers; and large numbers of both Blue Jays and Cedar Waxwings.



Sunday, October 4, Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens: Kenilworth Park, DC

Leaders: Mike Bowen and Gerry Hawkins; 10 other participants. Weather: Fine, sunny, delightful, cool at first. Species count: 40. With the club mandating that no more than 6 participants should be allowed on a field trip conducted during pandemic times, on this trip we divided the 10 participants into two groups of 5, one going with Gerry and the other with Mike. The two groups traveled independently all morning. The 2 resulting checklists were slightly different, with Mike's group recording 37 species and Gerry's group 38. Highlights: Both groups noted large groups of American Robins, Blue Jays and (low-flying) Chimney Swifts at KAG, which also featured Wood Ducks overhead, a flushed Wilson's Snipe and a late Brown Thrasher. One group had Savannah Sparrows in Kenilworth Park, while both groups saw an Eastern Meadowlark there, flushed up by Gerry's group. Warblers were scarce, but we did manage Yellow-rumped (Myrtle), Palm, Black-throated Blue, and Common Yellowthroat. The morning ended in the park with an immature Bald Eagle cruising overhead. The two eBird checklists for the trip can be found at <https://ebird.org/atlasmdc/checklist/S74404724> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S74410893>.



2020 Annual Report and 2021 Budget

I am pleased to report that our Club, once more, finished the year in good financial standing, with 207 memberships and substantial reserves in the bank. As of April 30 we had \$11,816.17 in our checking account with PNC Bank, and as of March 30 we had \$32,597.86 in our Vanguard account. The 2021 budget was approved by the Council in a Zoom meeting on June 15. The development of our new website was budgeted later and is therefore not included in this report.

The 2021 budget (see below) looks very different from this year's, largely because of an accounting change. Up to now, memberships were paid to MBC, and we sent close to two-thirds of the total to MOS. From now on, as you have experienced while renewing your membership, all dues are going to MOS who then sends us about a third of the total.

The budgetary implications of COVID-19-related cancellations add some unavoidable uncertainties. I wish we could predict the return to in-person meetings and hope we will be able to hold our 2021 Social and BBQ.

—Chris Wright, Treasurer

	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget
INCOME			
Dues	\$5,000.00	\$4,388.00	\$2,000.00
Wilds Fund	\$1,000.00	\$1,520.00	\$500.00
Social/BBQ	\$1,500.00	\$320.00	\$1,200.00
Site Guide/Misc	\$50.00	\$377.00	\$0.00
Total	\$7,550.00	\$6,640.00	\$3,700.00
EXPENDITURES			
MOS	\$3,150.00	\$1,955.00	\$0.00
Chat	\$1,200.00	\$1,205.16	\$1,200.00
Web	\$200.00	\$196.98	\$800.00
Office Supplies/Misc	\$1,000.00	\$729.85	\$150.00
Rent/Speakers	\$1,300.00	\$975.68	\$200.00
Social/Picnic	\$700.00	\$635.66	\$1,200.00
Total	\$7,550.00	\$5,698.33	\$3,550.00



Christmas Bird Counts



Christmas?!? Yes, it is time to think about the counts. Barring significant changes in the pandemic situation or different instructions from National Audubon, it looks like the counts will be taking place normally. Watch for confirmation in our email newsletters. The restrictions that we have been applying to field trips (6 participants, masks, distancing) should not be difficult to observe for the counts and should keep us safe and healthy. There is one exception: the recommendation not to carpool. Many counting parties leave cars at each end of their zone to avoid walking the distance twice. We could consider having smaller parties counting half the distance and meeting halfway. We will need to think about what to do. In the meantime, here is the schedule:

- **Saturday, December 12: Triadelphia Reservoir CBC, MD.** Compiler: David Holmes, musiclbndr@gmail.com (preferred) or 410-730-7083 (home) or 410-952-3584 (cell).
- **Saturday, December 19: Washington, DC CBC.** Compiler: Larry Cartwright, prowarbler@verizon.net, 703-941-3142 (landline), 571-359-2395 (cell); Sector Leader: Marta Wagner, wagmara@yahoo.com. Marta leads the count along the towpath between Lock 7 and Chain Bridge. Both Larry and Marta need to be contacted.
- **Sunday, December 20: Seneca CBC, MD and VA.** Compiler: Jim Nelson, kingfishers2@verizon.net (preferred) or 240-515-4517 (cell).
- **Monday, December 28: Central Loudoun CBC, VA and MD.** (This count includes 5 miles along the C&O Canal in Montgomery Co, MD). Compiler: Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rstarmail.com or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org. Sign up at www.loudounwildlife.org.
- **Sunday, January 3 (2021): Sugarloaf Mountain CBC, MD.** Compiler: Janet Millenson, 301-983-9337 or janet@twocrows.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Holly Brevig

Dorothy Brown

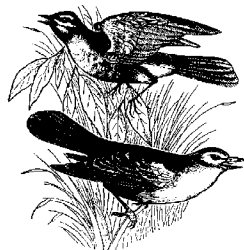
Jared Fisher

Francesca Grifo

Jake Hess

Benson Kwong

Courtney Lewis



Sarah Lister

Melinda McLaughlin

Nancy Pielemeier

Joseph Priniotakis

Diane Vatcher

Jan Walters

Joyce Winston



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