



March 2022

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President's Chat

This is my last President's Chat. At the May Annual Meeting, which will be combined with the Social (I keep my fingers crossed), we will elect the next president, vice-president, and other officers. Those who have finished their term, like me, will step down, as every MBC president or officer has done before. So simple!



It was a great honor to be MBC president for nearly two years and I very much enjoyed it. I hope that those among you who will be asked by our Nominating Committee to take on some responsibilities will not hesitate. My only regret is that there has not been a single in-person meeting so far during my term. I would so much like to meet our many new members face-to-face. On the other hand, no one has become sick—or worse—after attending an MBC meeting. This is clearly more important.

A club like ours depends entirely on the dedication of volunteers. Time and again I have been awed by the response to requests for volunteers. Below is a long list of members I want to thank. They are in alphabetical order, because there are not enough pages for me to recognize what each of them has done. Without these volunteers, no trips, no meetings, no website, no *Chat*... no MBC!



Thank you then to Joy Aso, Mike Bowen, Anne Cianni, Jo Cox, Becky Cromwell, Karen Cyr, Carol Daugherty, Moira Davenport, Lisa Wilcox Deyo, Rae Dubois, Woody Dubois, Mark England, Diane Ford, Linda Friedland, Clive Harris, Gerry Hawkins, Cheryl Hogue, John Houghton, Emily Huang, Susan Hunt, Alice Jacobsohn, Sarah Lister, Gail Mackiernan, Andy Martin, Don Messersmith, Janet Millenson, Martha Morris, Anne Mytych, Jim Nelson, Pam Oves, Dave Powell, Gemma Radko, Dave Roberts, Lydia Schindler, Jim Tate, Nathan Tea, Stella Tea, Anna Urciolo, Ed Vigezzi, Marta Wagner, Max Wilson, Chris Wright and, last but not least, Scott Young, our vice-president. I owe Scott special thanks. He

has enriched our meetings greatly with his monthly selection of member bird photos and "science tidbits." I trust he will be a wonderful president and will lead MBC to new successes. Best wishes, Scott!

Finally, thank you also to those who responded to our and to MOS's campaigns to promote conservation issues. Do you doubt that such efforts work? Recently, our Patuxent Bird Club friends mounted a campaign to save 105 acres of forested land in Prince George's County adjacent to the Patuxent Research Refuge; NASA was disposing of the tract and it was headed for development. Our congressional delegation took notice of the many emails, letters, and phone calls and wrote to the Office of Management and Budget to support an interagency transfer of the land to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (which manages the Research Refuge)—just what was hoped for. Thanks to all who took a stand. It worked!

Happy birding! See you on Zoom and at the Social.

—Evelyn Ralston

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Editor's Corner

Nathan and I often run into birder friends in the field. In fact, we ran into Rae and Woody Dubois twice in one day last September chasing the Black Tern at Lake Whetstone. With this said, I could only imagine how excited Clive Harris must have been when he ran into Mike Bowen the day after Christmas (page 7). How about field trip leaders who find themselves enjoying each other's company so much that they team up time and time again? This spirit of community and camaraderie we share often leads us to want to do more, whether volunteering time to become a club officer or director (page 3), advocate for conservation issues (page 4), or organize and compile bird counts (page 5). I am keeping my fingers crossed for the in-person Social, but I will be just as delighted to see you out in the field.

—Stella Tea

Spring Meetings

The long-awaited Social at Woodend will take place in May, not in March, and will be combined with our Annual Meeting (elections and awards) for a big finale. The March and April meetings are on Zoom but watch for club emails for details and updates.

MARCH 23, 2022 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m.
Can Floating Islands Save Endangered Seabirds in Maryland's Coastal Bays?
Speaker: David Curson



Colonial waterbirds that depend on islands for nesting in Maryland's Coastal Bays have been steadily declining in recent decades due largely to the erosion and loss of their nesting islands. Three species, Common

Tern, Royal Tern, and Black Skimmer, are now listed as Endangered in the State of Maryland and are at risk of disappearing from the Coastal Bays as breeding species. A new partnership of Audubon Mid-Atlantic, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Maryland Coastal Bays Program is trying to reverse downward population trends by installing artificial nesting platforms as part of a larger strategy to expand breeding habitat for these birds. The first year of this project, 2021, was a promising start. David Curson has worked as Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon in Maryland since 2004. He has been a frequent and appreciated speaker at our meetings.

APRIL 20, 2022 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m.
Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation
Speaker: Patrick Newcombe



Across 11 Western states and millions of acres of public lands, the Greater Sage-Grouse continues to make its remarkable courtship displays where the birds congregate, at sites called leks. Patrick Newcombe, former

MBC *Chat* editor and YMOS alumnus, has recently finished a documentary, *Glory of the West*, about conservation of the Greater Sage-Grouse. During a gap year from Princeton University, Patrick spent two months camping and filming the Greater Sage-Grouse on their leks in Colorado, Wyoming, Oregon, and Idaho. To supplement his footage, he interviewed ranchers, natural gas lobbyists, indigenous people, conservation professionals, and government biologists. Patrick will join us via Zoom to share his film and insights about the Greater Sage-Grouse and their fascinating ecosystem, home to hundreds of other species of birds.



**MAY 11, 2022 (Wednesday*), 6:00 p.m.
Annual MBC Meeting and Social at Woodend**

After several cancellations, we will return to the beautiful setting of Woodend, the Chevy Chase home of the Audubon Naturalist Society. Under a well-ventilated outdoor canopy, we will combine two yearly traditions of the Club: the Annual Meeting (elections and awards) and the Social (dinner catered by Smokey Glen Farm, with a well-provisioned bar, Guest of Honor, and photograph presentations by members). Look for the participation form on page 11 and additional information on our website's News & Events section at montgomerybirdclub.org and in future communications.

*Note that this is the *second* Wednesday of the month, not the third.



Don Messersmith (left) and Mark England (right) exchange birding secrets...or not. Photo by Evelyn Ralston from 2019



Rae and Woody Dubois enjoy drinks from bartender of the night Andy Martin (middle). Photo by Evelyn Ralston from 2019



Anne Mytych (left) and Elaine Kim (right) share a laugh. Photo by Evelyn Ralston from 2019

Club Elections for Officers and Directors

In May, we hold our annual elections for club officers and directors. The Nominating Committee for this year was announced at the February meeting. It is composed of Rae Dubois (Chair), Dave Roberts, and Stella Tea.

At the April 20 Club meeting, whether held on Zoom, in-person, or in a hybrid of the two, Rae will present the list of candidates for the open positions and ask if there are additional nominations from the floor. After additional nominations are received, or if there are none, the nominations will be closed.

Within a week thereafter, every active member will receive a special elections email with the final candidate list and instructions on how to vote electronically. The results of the electronic vote will be announced at our May 11 Annual Meeting.

Please participate! A quorum of 20% of the membership is needed for the vote to be valid.

—Evelyn Ralston and Jim Nelson



Conservation Update

The MOS Conservation Committee

The Maryland Ornithological Society bylaws state that the organization will further educational, scientific, and charitable pursuits relating to birdlife in Maryland. Conservation is an important facet of our activities and, as such, MOS has an active Conservation Committee. The current chair is Kurt Schwartz; I have been a member of the committee for about five years.

The Conservation Committee does not limit itself to state and local issues, although these of course are a priority, but also weighs in on those of national or even global importance. The committee monitors government activities and coordinates with other environmental groups. Members give testimony at hearings, meet with legislators and government representatives, develop joint actions with other groups (e.g., American Bird Conservancy), submit official MOS comments in response to proposed government actions, draft position papers for MOS on a variety of subjects (e.g., fracking in the state), and sign on to letters from conservation partners. The committee also assists MOS chapters with issues impacting birds or their habitats in their locality.

Examples of recent MOS Conservation Committee actions:

National

- Submitted comments supporting the restoration of the “incidental take” provision of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, as well as for additional Congressional action to strengthen the MBTA. (The suspension of this rule by the previous administration was revoked in October.)
- Submitted comments supporting restoration of the Waters of the U.S. rule to ensure federal protection of wetlands, ephemeral streams and pools. (The rule had been downgraded in 2019 to greatly restrict protection of these important habitats.)

State

- Submitted letters and contacted state and local representatives opposing the transfer of environmentally important federal lands in Maryland to private interests. This includes ongoing opposition (with many partners) to the proposed Maglev train development, as well as the proposed sale of a forested NASA tract rather than the desired transfer of such property to Patuxent Research Refuge—formerly Patuxent Wildlife Refuge. (See President’s Chat for an update.)
- Submitted comments and will work with partners to address planned update of State Forest Work Plans.

The 2022 Legislative Session is in session until late April. MOS will submit testimony on a number of bills that impact birds or bird habitats. When appropriate, MBC will submit separate comments. Examples of bills that MOS has gone on record to support:

- Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2022, HB43, would require the State to establish standards for state buildings to reduce the amount of energy-inefficient and bird-dangerous glass.
- Pesticide Regulation, SB0268, would transfer oversight and regulation of pesticides from the MD Department of Agriculture to the MD Department of the Environment, which has more expertise (and incentive) to deal with environmental impacts.

Local

- Submitted comments opposing a Howard County stream restoration project that would not improve habitat and the use of this project as mitigation for wetland destruction elsewhere in the watershed.

A final thought: Some of these issues would benefit greatly from increased involvement by MOS members. Please watch for announcements from MOS or MBC asking you to submit a comment or contact your national, state, or local representative on behalf of birds or their habitats. For more information, visit mdbirds.org/conservation/.



Christmas Bird Count Summary Reports

Triadelphia Reservoir CBC: December 18, 2021

For the 74th Triadelphia CBC we had more field observers (82) than any year since I started compiling in 2010. This year we not only set new records for hours and miles on foot and miles by car, but it is also the first year that I felt we had appropriate coverage in every area in our circle. We found 90 species—8 fewer than last year—but still fairly high even though it was *not* a winter finch year like last year, and the weather had stayed too warm to drive many waterfowl South. There were no “count week” birds reported.

We set new high counts for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (89 from 57), Pileated Woodpecker (110 from 90), Common Raven (20 from 16), White-breasted Nuthatch (308 from 299), Hermit Thrush (103 from 78), Eastern Bluebird (617 from 572), and Brown-headed Cowbird (5,060 from 3,800). We tied Red-shouldered Hawk (90) and produced a second high count of Eastern Phoebe (8). The differences between old and new highs were a surprise for the sapsuckers, woodpeckers, thrushes, and bluebirds. The cowbirds were almost all in a single flock that also scared up 14 Killdeer as they flushed out of their field.

Equally pleasing were the 19 additional species that gave us higher than usual counts since 2010. Most of them were standard woods to edge species that provide the most important reasons for doing our count. The data are most useful for figuring out population trends over time. Finding most of the birds in our circle on count day gives us a wonderful standard to compare against. The most unusual species was the Northern Shrike seen by many around Blue Mash this winter. This was the species’ fifth appearance since the count started in 1947. The 5 Bonaparte’s Gulls were a seventh, and a Baltimore Oriole was a ninth.

In Montgomery County, very special thanks go to Gail Mackiernan who organized Area 5 and Kathy Reitz and Jo Cox who organized Area 7. They did more active organizing than has been done for a long time in those areas. Jay Sheppard has done a wonderful job with Area 6 for many years. The next Triadelphia CBC will be on Saturday, December 17, 2022, and I look forward to being in touch and seeing you at the tally rally, however we have it.

—David Holmes, Compiler

Seneca MD/VA CBC: December 19, 2021

We had windy but decent weather for the 63rd Seneca CBC. In our continuing pandemic, 150 enthusiastic field counters and 18 feeder watchers (a new high for total observers) worked the count circle and reported 97 species on count day, basically right at the 98 median and 97 average for the previous 10 years. We also had 5 additional species only found during “count week” (the period starting 3 days before and ending 3 days after the count day) for a grand total of 102 species, also right around the previous 10-year median of 100. The 28,621 individual birds counted is right on the previous 10-year median of 28,090.

This year’s big news is our first count-day Rufous Hummingbird visiting a feeder near Potomac, MD. Previously we only had Rufous Hummingbird as a count week species in 2019. This brings the cumulative total of count day species for the Seneca CBC to 169. Other unusual birds included Long-tailed Duck, our now continuing pair of Sandhill Cranes, an American Woodcock, a count week Bonaparte’s Gull, an Orange-crowned Warbler, and a Pine Warbler visiting Club Vice-President Scott Young’s feeders for a third winter.

We set new high records for Wood Duck (36), Bufflehead (301), Common Merganser (71), Black Vulture (665), Turkey Vulture (647), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (177), Peregrine Falcon (tied highest at 2), and Chipping Sparrow (81). Species in lower than usual numbers included American Coot (1), Killdeer (1), Red-headed Woodpecker (10), Blue Jay (379), Red-breasted Nuthatch (2), Purple Finch (3), American Goldfinch (188), Savannah Sparrow (1), Eastern Meadowlark (1), Red-winged Blackbird (355), Brown-headed Cowbird (11), and Common Grackle (2). Thanks to everyone who came out to count this year under the continuing conditions of the pandemic and especially to the sector leaders for their hard work before, during, and after the count.

—Jim Nelson, Compiler

—continued on page 10



Birds of Note (mid-November to mid-February)

Mottled Duck was a surprising find along the C&O Canal near Carderock on December 26 and the bird was still being seen as recently as February 12 in the same area. For a more in-depth dive into this sighting, see Clive Harris's article on page 7 in this issue. While birding at Woodstock Equestrian Park near Dickerson on December 8, Dave Czaplak noted a flyover **Ross's Goose** and was also first to report a **Cackling Goose** for 2022 at Lake Churchill in Germantown on January 1. Dave Roberts found a **Black Scoter** on the Potomac River adjacent to Great Falls on November 25, and two **White-winged Scoters** were reported at Violette's Lock on January 9 by John Sojda. Allen Lewis identified three **Trumpeter Swans** on Triadelphia Reservoir near Greenbridge Rd on January 18.

Matthew Moskwik observed a **Red-throated Loon** on the Potomac River near the mouth of Difficult Run, Virginia, on January 30.

Clive Harris reported a couple of great raptors during January. He welcomed in the New Year with a **Peregrine Falcon** soaring over his Bethesda area yard—possibly one of the pair that uses the nest box on the underside of the American Legion Bridge. Clive also noted a pale morph **Rough-legged Hawk** over Homestead Farm along Sugarland Rd on January 29. Two days later, John Sojda had great looks at a **Rough-legged Hawk** over the Patton Turf Farm area (now renamed Battleview Turf Farm) along River Rd near White's Ferry.

Short-eared Owls have been observed at the closed Oaks Landfill near Laytonsville in December, January, and February. As many as three at a time have shown up on Mark England's tours of this private facility. Some of these same **Short-eared Owls** have been seen by folks birding from the Zion Rd side of Blue Mash on early mornings or evenings while looking toward the landfill.

Sandhill Cranes continue to be seen with some regularity this winter, either flying across the Potomac River toward Montgomery County from the Lowes Island/Algonkian RP, Virginia, or foraging in the farm fields in and around the entrance to the Poolesville Golf Course along West Willard Rd. Dave Czaplak noted four birds in flight crossing the Potomac on February 11.

Dave Roberts, Jared Fisher, John Sojda, and Dave Czaplak were on hand at Violette's Lock the morning of December 1 to witness a "rare for the county" **Iceland Gull** (mixed in with some Herring Gulls) flying upriver. John Sojda noted a **Franklin's Gull** at Little Seneca Lake on November 15, and Jared Fisher reported a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Violette's Lock on February 5.

A **Northern Shrike** at Blue Mash was a great find by Mark England on December 15, and this bird proved fairly cooperative for county listers, sticking around the same area for over a month.

It has been a good winter so far for some out-of-season warblers. Bruce Beehler reported a **Northern Parula** along the C&O Canal near Brookmont Dam on December 19. Both Robin Skinner and Tim Benner, in Clarksburg and Silver Spring respectively, have had an **Orange-crowned Warbler** visit their backyard feeders. Monte Tarbox's home birdfeeder hosted a **Yellow Warbler** for most of the latter half of January. In Darnestown, a **Palm Warbler** came to Don Simonson's heated birdbath on January 16. And a **Pine Warbler** that first showed up at MBC Club Vice-President Scott Young's house on September 2 apparently has decided not to leave, being seen by Scott as recently as Valentine's Day!

A few **Lapland Longspur** sightings have come recently from Homestead Farm along Sugarland Rd, the Hughes Rd polo fields, and also the Patton (Battleview) Turf Farm area.

American Robins are not usually a species that makes it into the "Birds of Note" column but when you see an estimated 7,500 in one place as Jared Fisher did at the Hughes Rd polo fields on January 27, it is noteworthy.

What a year 2021 has been for birders in Montgomery County! Jared Fisher finished the year finding 248 of those 264 species, followed close behind by Max Wilson (240), Mary Ann Todd (236), John Sojda (233), and Dave Roberts (229). Well done!

—Andy Martin



Birds of Note: A Boxing Day Surprise

Back in my native UK, December 26 is Boxing Day. We always do a family walk on Boxing Day, so that afternoon we went off for a walk along the canal, with all the kids, my in-laws (over from the UK), and the dog. At the last minute we decided our destination would be Carderock as parking nearer Great Falls might be difficult. I took my binoculars, but not my camera as I did not expect to see anything rare, let alone a potential first state record...

We weren't far into our walk when we stopped to look at a group of ducks in the canal: our young dog Maisie is a curious animal. I noticed a darker bird, raised my binoculars to check if it was a pure American Black Duck, and to my surprise saw instead what looked like a male Mottled Duck. Without a camera I could not get photos, but we encountered Mike Bowen out for a walk with his family. He had brought his camera, and I took him, a bit abruptly, down to the bird to photograph it. He sent me the photos that evening and, after reviewing them, I put the word out about the bird.

Many birders will have seen this species in Florida, but the bulk of the population lives along the western Gulf Coast and South Carolina and Georgia. There is an increasing number of vagrants, most in the Mississippi flyway but also two recent records in Virginia. Its similarity to female Mallard and American Black Duck means it can be overlooked, as happened with our bird: there is a photo from the Potomac near Carderock from March 2021, and possibly even earlier. December 26 was just the first day it was identified correctly.

Is it a "pure" Mottled Duck? It seems to be. Its body is uniform in appearance, dark feathers with rich brown edges and markings in the center, the tail feathers also dark with rich brown edges. The speculum has only a very thin white border at the bottom. The lower throat and neck are unmarked buff with a prominent black gape spot. The supercilium is heavily marked, but many birds, particularly from the Gulf, are similar. In direct comparison with a Mallard, this bird has a slender head. It's paired with a female Mallard so look out for hybrid offspring—good luck telling them apart from the Black Duck/Mallard hybrids, though!

—Clive Harris



Mottled Duck at Carderock (MD/DC Records Committee confirmation pending). Photo by Clive Harris

Spring Field Trips

MBC field trips follow the CDC's recommendations for safety during the pandemic. In addition, all trip participants must be fully vaccinated except children and those with medical exemptions. Unvaccinated individuals are required to wear a mask. Please see our website at montgomerybirdclub.org/calendar/ for up-to-date details and inclement weather guidance.

The Club has planned a wide array of trips, thanks to leaders who volunteer their time and expertise. Here are some tips to help ensure that our trips are productive and enjoyable for everyone:

- Stay with the group, keep talking to a minimum, and walk with a soft tread.
- Let the leader lead, staying behind him or her, and remember that the leader is here for the whole group. Don't forget that shorter folks may be standing behind you.
- When the leader gets a bird in the scope, take a quick look, then move aside so that others can get a view before the bird flies.
- If possible, avoid pointing if a bird is close by, as that movement may flush it. Unfortunately, this is not always easy to remember!
- Leaders often use the clock-face method of helping birders locate a bird—"The bird is at 11 o'clock in that sycamore tree." Imagine the tree as the face of a clock, and look for the bird on a branch on the left side of the tree near the top.
- See lots of good birds!

—Linda Friedland, Field Trip Coordinator

For recent field trip reports, please visit montgomerybirdclub.org/trip-reports/.

MARCH 12 (Saturday) **WHEATON REGIONAL PARK FOR NEW (AND OTHER) BIRDERS**

A bit early for spring migration but who knows? Wheaton RP always surprises us. Ducks, woodpeckers, flycatchers, raptors (sometimes a Merlin!), bluebirds, towhees are all possible, and if you don't know WRP, you will enjoy the variety of terrain and landscape. Limit: 12 in two groups of six each. For reservations (required) and directions, contact one of the CO-LEADERS: Evelyn Ralston at evelynralston@icloud.com or Martha Morris at mamorris1123@verizon.net.

MARCH 26 (Saturday) **CABIN JOHN REGIONAL PARK**

Explore the scrub habitat below the power lines cutting through Cabin John RP. Spend the morning studying multiple sparrow species with the potential for an American Kestrel that bred here the last two years. We will be walking the dirt road with a few moderate inclines. Limit: 6. For reservations (required) and more information, email the LEADER: Max Wilson at mercretas@hotmail.com.

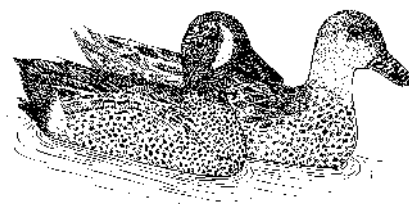
MARCH 30 (Wednesday) **PENNYFIELD LOCK**

We'll be looking for early warblers and lingering waterfowl as we head upstream for a several hour walk. Easy level walking. Start at the Pennyfield parking lot at 7 a.m. Limit: 6. For more information and for reservations (required), email the LEADER: Dave Powell at seneca.ranger@gmail.com.

APRIL 3 (Sunday) **HUGHES HOLLOW**

Half day. We will begin at the Hughes Hollow parking lot in the McKee-Beshers WMA at 7 a.m. We will explore the wetlands and fields of Hughes Hollow. Species to be expected include Red-headed Woodpeckers, Wood Ducks, Blue-winged Teal, and many other marsh-dwellers, as well as lingering winter land birds. A chance for several warblers including Prothonotary and other early neotropical migrants. Limit: 16. For reservations (required) and

more information, email the LEADER: Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net.



APRIL 16 (Saturday)**WHEATON REGIONAL PARK**

On this walk, aimed at new birders but open to all, we'll spend a morning exploring Wheaton RP (accessible by Metrobuses Y2 and Y8). We'll use our eyes and ears to identify forest birds, likely some waterfowl, and perhaps early migrants. Limit: 8. For reservations (required), time, and directions, email the LEADER: Cheryl Hogue at cheryl.hogue@gmail.com.

APRIL 20 (Wednesday)**PENNYFIELD IN THE SPRING, TRA-LA-LA**

With Spring come the warblers—and the vireos and the thrushes and the orioles! We'll stroll north toward Violette's Lock, looking and listening for new arrivals and early nesters, not neglecting spring wildflowers. Limit: 8. For reservations (required) and starting time and place, email the LEADER: Lydia Schindler at lydia13621@gmail.com.

APRIL 30 (Saturday)**CROYDON CREEK NATURE CENTER**

Come discover this lovely park during spring migration. Lots of migrants pass through, including many warblers. We will start in the parking lot at 7:30 a.m. Limit: 16. For reservations (required) and more information, email one of the CO-LEADERS: Anne Mytych at amytych@yahoo.com or Emily Huang at EPHuang@verizon.net.

MAY 1 (Sunday)**IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE, BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE CHAPTER, CONSERVATION FARM**

Half day. Once again, the B-CC Chapter is generously providing us access to this large private property south of Poolesville. Woods, hedgerows, streams, fields, and ponds provide a wide range of bird habitats, and migration should be well underway. Trip will start at 7 a.m. at the League's Chapterhouse. Limit: 10. For reservations (required) and directions, email the LEADER: Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net.

MAY 6 (Friday)**BIRDING BY EAR AT HUGHES HOLLOW**

Tune up your ears as we listen for and learn to identify the songs and calls of migrant and local breeding birds. The trip will be geared to new birders but all are welcome. We will start at 7 a.m. at the parking lot at Hughes Hollow. Limit: 6. For reservations (required) and more information, email the LEADER: Paul Woodward at grackling@ATT.NET.

MAY 8 (Sunday)**OCOQUAN BAY NWR**

Half day. Explore the diverse habitats in this one-square-mile refuge at the confluence of the Potomac and Occoquan Rivers in Woodbridge, Virginia. A variety of raptors and migratory warblers, vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers should be present, and rails and bitterns are possibilities. Start at the parking lot in the center of the refuge at 7:30 a.m. Limit: 12. For reservations (required), contact one of the CO-LEADERS: Mike Bowen at 202-236-0510 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com or Gerry Hawkins at 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.

MAY 12 (Thursday)**BLUE MASH AND OAKS LANDFILL**

Half-day trip starting at the Blue Mash Nature Trail, where we will look for a variety of songbirds and other species. Then we will drive over to the adjacent Oaks Landfill to look for raptors, Blue Grosbeaks, and possible Dickcissels and Grasshopper Sparrows. Limit: 12. Start at 7 a.m. at 20500 Zion Road, Laytonsville, Md. For reservations (required), contact the LEADER: Mark England at englandmark@comcast.net or 240-308-4114.

MAY 15 (Sunday)**RICKMAN/WOODSTOCK EQUESTRIAN PARK**

Join us as we explore this location for some spring early-morning birding on the west side of Route 28 (<https://rb.gy/qpdqda>). We'll bird the broad fields and separating woods, beginning at 7 a.m., hoping for warblers and sparrows, vireos, woodpeckers, and raptors. Limit: 10. For reservations (required) and more information, email the LEADER: Scott Young at scott4aves@icloud.com. Dave Roberts will co-lead.

JUNE 11 (Saturday)**PATUXENT RIVER AT BROWN'S BRIDGE**

On a morning walk, we'll look for Cliff Swallows building mud nests beneath this bridge in the northeastern part of the county. We will also explore wooded trails on WSSC property bordering the reservoir to observe other possible breeding birds including Scarlet Tanager, flycatchers, and thrushes. Be prepared for bright sunlight at the bridge and possible biting insects in wooded areas. Trip will be cancelled in case of heavy rain or thunderstorms. Limit: 10. For reservations (required), time, and directions, email the LEADER: Cheryl Hogue at cheryl.hogue@gmail.com.



Other Field Trips and Events

MOS Annual Convention

The annual MOS convention—the first “real” Convention since 2019—will be conducted in Solomons, MD, May 20-22, at the Solomons Inn Resort and Marina. Look for information in our emails and on the MOS website at mdbirds.org/join/annual-convention/. Registration will open on March 1!

Youth Birding

Many of you look forward to supporting the annual YMOS Birdathon in March, which raises funds to send passionate young birders in the area to the New Jersey Audubon’s World Series of Birding in May. Last year, YMOS members found all 100 species on the challenging must-see list during the two-day birdathon. It will be interesting to learn about this year’s results. YMOS is a subgroup of the Maryland Ornithological Society and runs birding trips for youth throughout the year. For more information, visit the Young Birders page on the MOS website (mdbirds.org/young-birders/), the MBC website (montgomerybirdclub.org/young-birders/), the Youth Maryland Ornithological Society page on Facebook, or contact George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com.

—Stella Tea



Youth birders with George on one of the scouting days at the New Jersey Audubon's World Series of Birding. Photo by Stella Tea

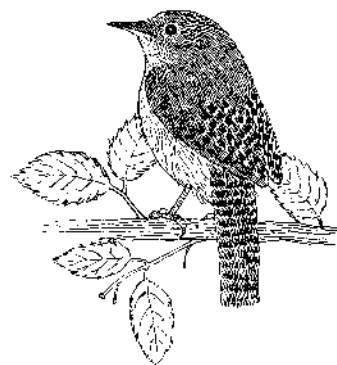
Christmas Bird Count Summary Reports

(continued from page 5)

Sugarloaf Mountain CBC: January 2, 2022

The stars certainly aligned for the 70 participants in the 37th Sugarloaf CBC! Temperatures topped out at 60 degrees or more in many places, just ahead of a storm that dumped heavy, wet snow on the area the next day. After a far warmer December than usual, many of our normal winter visitors stayed north, but other species hung around unusually late.

Our species count totaled 92, the highest in seven years. It includes a bird new to this CBC: a Cape May Warbler, reported and photographed by David Smith. Many species' tallies hit record highs, including Cackling Goose, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Flicker, House Wren (four!), Carolina Wren, Hermit Thrush, Chipping Sparrow, and Eastern Towhee. Three species tied their previous high counts: Merlin, Eastern Phoebe, and Brown Thrasher. There were no new lows.



We once again ended the day with a Zoom tally rally, a great opportunity for participants from across the region to meet and share stories of the day. We also shared warm memories of Helen Horrocks, my longtime co-compiler and the leader of Sector 9 in Frederick, who passed away in November and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Next year’s Sugarloaf Count will take place on Monday, January 2, 2023, so you can all sleep in on New Year’s Day. I can’t promise the weather will be as mild as it was this time, but I’m confident our crew of dedicated birders will show up enthusiastically anyway! I look forward to seeing you then.

—Janet Millenson, Compiler



Welcome New Members



Kathryn Alisbah

Merrilee Banic

Jeff Baron

Shye Bay

Suzanne Bode

Janet Bogue

Lisa Bonaparte

Elizabeth and Alister Basauri
Bryan

David Burns

Andrea Conte and Ina Felau

Linda and Walter Daniel

Mary Ellen Delayo

Peggy Ellowitz

Morgan Galligan

Loretta Gavin and Mac Otten

Chris Hennemeyer

David Kidwell

Leo Lopez

Kumar Machado

Courtney Mason

Melanie Mason

Melinda Mclaughlin

Brian, Claire, Connor, Erin,
Kathleen, and Mary Monahan

Gwen Moulton

Alex Nettles

Travis O'Neil

Barbara Perry

Richard Pollock and Karen Holtzman

Patti, Jim, and Theresa Schulte

Kenneth, Angela, Jonathan, Rose,
Savannah, and Scott Scollar

Jack Shero

Steven Sparenborg

Joan Starr

Cam and Jessica Trowbridge

Annual MBC Social May 11, 2022

Guest of Honor Janet Millenson

Join us for our annual social at the Woodend headquarters of the Audubon Naturalist Society, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase. The evening begins with a social hour at 6:00 PM, with dinner at 7:30 PM.

Smokey Glen Farm of Gaithersburg will once again cater this delicious dinner. Please bring appetizers to share.

The evening will feature our traditional recognition of the Guest of Honor and the brief, but awesome, slide shows by our members. For those interested in presenting in the slide show, please limit your presentations to 8 digital photos. You can send them to Scott Young (scott4aves@icloud.com) as a compiled PowerPoint display, as individual photos, or as a link to a Dropbox (or similar) folder. Make sure that the photos are identified as to presenter and preferred order (if not in PowerPoint).

Because space is limited, places will go to the first 90 persons to reserve and pay. Send this form (or a copy) and your check (\$25 per person) payable to Montgomery Bird Club to Scott Young, 11116 Pinion Court, North Potomac, MD 20878.

We need to receive both the participation form with check and photo submissions no later than April 27.

Name(s) to appear on name tags

Phone # _____

_____ Please check here if you would like a vegetarian meal. Vegetarian lasagna will be available.

_____ Number of reservations

\$_____ Enclosed

The Audubon Naturalist Society Shop will be open from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. Take advantage of this opportunity!



The Chat
MBC/MOS
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