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## CHAPTER REPORTS

### ALLEGANY & GARRETT COUNTIES BIRD CLUB

The Allegany/Garrett Chapter is a small one, but even so, we had plenty of activities this year, starting off with our annual picnic at Carey Run in September. It's always a good way to get the year started, and we had a nice turn-out. Bill Devlin led a number of us on a hike around the Blue Bird trail, pointing out bear damage as we walked. Bill has been responsible for the Blue Bird trail for 39 years!!, and wants to hand the job over to someone else. He is actively seeking a replacement.

We held all our meetings at Compton Hall, Frostburg State University. We had excellent speakers this past year, including Donnelle Keech of The Nature Conservancy, speaking on forest habitat conservation; Gwen Brewer and George Jett, talking about their trip to Cuba (and a good overview of what Cuba is like today). Our Annual Banquet speaker was Ron Gutberlet, speaking on Alaska 2008. We have a nice turn-out for the banquet, with approximately 33 attendees. Our speakers for January through April were Sara Rothamel, an FSU graduate student, who gave a presentation on "Territoriality and habitat composition of Cerulean warbler assemblages in Western Maryland"; Tom Matthews, retired biologist from DNR, who spoke about restoring habitat for the woodcock and golden-winged warbler; J.B. Churchill gave a presentation on "Birding tech"; and Mikey Lutmerding gave a great presentation on "Birding in Peru from the Andes to the Pacific." Our meetings were generally well attended this year!

We participated in the Fall count, the Christmas count, and the May count. We partnered with a new group out here, named 'Home Ground' for a hawk watching weekend. We went to Town Hill on Saturday, Oct. 8, led by Ray Kiddy, and then we went to Dan's Rock on Sunday. Both events were well attended, but there were quite a lot of people at Dan's Rock.

We partnered again with Home Ground in February for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Mary Huebner co-led a workshop with Raquel Ketterman of Home Ground, and then took a field trip with the participants.

We held our usual field trip to Finzel Swamp, Piney Reservoir, and Meadows Lake and Campground. We had an unusually large number of attendees on that trip! We added three new trips for warblers, one to Green Ridge, one to New Germany State Park, and one more to Garrett County. No one showed up for the third trip, but we had a nice number of attendees on the New Germany trip.

Mary Huebner attended the Appalachian Festival in Frostburg, and Heritage Days in Cumberland, and handed out brochures for the Chapter. She also had a display table at Leadership Allegany (Environmental Day), and had brochures there as well. Good PR for the Club.

All in all, 2012 was a good year for this Chapter. More and more people are expressing an interest in the Club, but not too many new members yet. I keep adding names to my emailings, and hope new memberships will be generated this way.

*Mary Huebner, President*

## ANNE ARUNDEL BIRD CLUB

The Anne Arundel Bird Club had a productive year from August 2011–July 2012. We finished the year with 151 members, participated in five bird counts, had eight very informative speakers on a variety of topics, and supported 29 field trips. Approximately 308 people participated in the field trips and at least 189 species were seen. The annual counts included the Fall, Christmas (Annapolis and Gibson Island area), Mid-Winter and May Counts plus a well-attended “Big Sit” in October at Fort Smallwood. Typical field trip participation included a dozen AABC members along with other MOS chapter members and/or visitors.

The officers for the year were: Colin Rees, President; Kathie Lambert/Kevin Smith, Trip Vice President; Gerald Winegrad/Barbara Johnson, Program Vice President; Stacy Epperson, Social Secretary; Bobbi Reichwein, Recording Secretary, Juanita Tate, Treasurer and Membership Chair; David Gillum, 1st Year Director; and Marilyn Taylor, 2nd Year Director. Danalee Henkart was editor of the quarterly newsletter, Dan Haas was our Webmaster and Peter Hanan was our e-Mail Master.

Areas visited included: Bombay Hook NWR; Swan Creek; Greenbury Point; Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary; Patuxent River Park, Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary; Chincoteague, Kiptoke and Eastern Shore of Virginia; Hawk Mountain, PA.; Wooten’s Landing; Blackwater NWR; Annapolis Neck and Thomas Point; Fort Smallwood Parks; Quiet Waters Park; Pocomoke River; Governor’s Bridge Natural Area; North Beach, Cypress Swamp, Flag Ponds and Calvert Cliffs State Park; Fairhill Natural Resource Area and Tri-State Bird Rescue; Patuxent Research Refuge -North Tract; the Delaware Bay (several locations); and Marshy Point Park.

Speakers included Art McMorris (Peregrine Falcons: The Saga of Recovery), Graham Watkins (The Birds and Other Wildlife of the Galapagos and Conservation Challenges), Peter Hanan (Maniac Tours Does the Wildlife of Brazil), Jamie Kellam (The Wonders and Management of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge), Clive Harris (Identifying Gulls in the Region: Making the Difficult Simpler), Richard Ruggiero (The Fight to Save African Elephants, Rhinos, Hippos, Chimpanzees and Gorillas), Stephan Kress (Project Puffin and Other Successes with Seabird Restoration), and Gerald Winegrad and Stacy Epperson (Red Knots and the Horseshoe Crabs, Delaware Bay).

Several members contributed articles to the *Maryland Yellowthroat* sharing their experiences on trips throughout the country. Additionally, many members volunteered at local parks (Generals Highway Corridor Park, Hammonds Connection, Quiet Waters Park and Kinder Farm Park). And the Club had a presence (and conducted a bird walk) as part of the Quiet Waters Park Earth Day activities.

The Conservation Group of the Club has been meeting regularly to help shape a conservation program, including partnering with conservation organizations. Members attended public hearings, joined demonstrations against developments threatening wildlife habitat and wrote papers on environmental issues for MOS member clubs. For this and other services, the MOS presented the Club with a 2011/12 Chapter Achievement Award.

AABC had a good year and is looking forward to another for 2012-2013.

*Colin Rees, President*

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## BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB

*Membership:* As of May 2012, the BBC has 205 memberships and 252 members.

*Lectures:* The BBC offers a lecture open free to the general public on a bird-related topic held the first Tuesday of the month from September through May. The lectures began this year in September with a talk on birding the lower Rio Grand Valley in Texas and ended in May with a talk about the Breeding Bird Atlas Project.

Each January we hold a covered dish dinner and lecture that is open to all members. Don Messersmith talked to us about Changes in birding in China over 25 years—1982-2007. About 75 members attend. At this meeting we introduced our MOS backpack awardees, and presented a BBC Distinguished Service Award to Shirley Geddes for 30 years of service.

*Field trips:* BBC sponsored more than 100 field trips throughout the year. Some of them were weekly events, such as the Robert E. Lee Park, Fort McHenry, and Cylburn walks. We held our fall and spring Swift Watch evenings, which are always popular. Frequent field trips were taken at other local hot spots, as well as to the eastern shore or in other counties.

*Counts:* BBC members participated in the following bird counts: Baltimore Fall Count, Baltimore Harbor Christmas Bird Count and May Count.

*Conservation:* The BBC has an active Conservation Committee (BBC CC) that works both independently and in close collaboration with the MOS Conservation Committee. In addition to the Conservation Committee, we do other conservation-related activities through our association with Robert E Lee Park and our Lights Out Baltimore! efforts.

Led four interdisciplinary walks into two Baltimore City Reservoirs (Prettyboy and Liberty), where the City and DNR have thinned or cleared 20 acres of trees, as part of a 3-year City Reservoir Forest Management Study. We started (October, 2010) a 3 year project to monitor bird life and forest regeneration on the study plots.

Participated in MOS conservation alerts.

Participated in the nature council and environmental council at the new Robert E. Lee Park, established in October 2011. This park (one of BBC's favorite migration locales) had been closed for two years to undergo infrastructure improvements under county (no longer city) control.

Volunteers with Lights Out Baltimore (15+) continue to walk a 3-mile stretch of the Baltimore Harbor at 5:00 AM daily, during spring and fall migration, to monitor bird collisions with glass buildings. Injured birds go to rehab. Dead birds go to the Smithsonian Dept. of Ornithology. Provided outreach through several lectures and booth displays at public events.

*Cylburn relationship:* The BBC maintains the ongoing relationship between Baltimore City, Cylburn Arboretum Association (CAA) and MOS.

*Cornell eBird Trail Tracker Kiosk at Visitor Center:* The BBC continued to host and maintain the Trail Tracker in collaboration with the Baltimore City Recreation and Parks.

*Carriage House Nature Museum:* BBC members assist Cylburn Arboretum Association as docents at the Nature Museum.

*Participation in Events at Cylburn:* BBC hosted a Backyard Birding symposium at Cylburn in late April. There were 30 attendees from the general public.

*Collections Committee:* Karen Morley led the joint BBC/MOS Collections Committee. The committee consists of both BBC and MOS representatives. A mission statement and collection policy was drafted, although not yet finalized. Work began on itemizing several collections, including journals, books, skeletons, and fossils. This work will continue.

*Other Activities:* We updated our Constitution and Bylaws, which were approved by members at the January Covered Dish Dinner meeting. BBC hosted display tables at several park events at Robert E Lee Park and Cromwell Valley Park over the course of the year.

### **Publications/Outreach**

*Chip Notes:* The current Chip Notes editor is Joan Cwi, and the Design Editor is Karen Morley. There are four editions, Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Chip Notes is delivered electronically to all members, except those specifically designating they want paper copies (about 20% of memberships); past archived issues are available on the BBC website.

*E-News:* This monthly e-newsletter is sent electronically at the end of each month to all members with an email address. It includes an inclusive list of all events scheduled for the next month, as well as other information we want members to have. It is a good way to alert members to new trips that have been scheduled since the release of the Program Booklet.

*Program Book:* We produce a hard copy program book with a listing of all scheduled BBC events (known at the time of production).

*BBC Facebook:* BBC started a Baltimore City/County Facebook page in June, 2012. It currently has over 70 members. It is too early to comment on its contributions.

*Website Revitalization:* Despite our best intentions, we did not get to revitalize the website this year. Maybe next year....

*Youth Birding:* Our youth leader, Marty Brazeau, established the Baltimore Orioles Junior Birding Club. He holds youth workshops at nearby nature sanctuaries and leads about eight field trips specifically designated for youth. In addition, he led two weekend youth trips to Irish Grove and Carey Run. Marty is working closely with George Radcliffe on the effort and there may be combined county youth activities in the future.

### **New Officers**

New BBC Officers for the 2012-2013 year were voted on and approved at the May 1st Lecture. The officers are:

President — Joan Cwi

Vice President — Karen Morley

Treasurer — Dick Krejci  
Recording Secretary — Paula Schugam  
Membership — Catherine Bishop  
BBC Directors — Debbie Terry, Pete Webb, Kevin Graff  
MOS Directors — Karen Morley, Peter Lev, Pete Webb

*Joan Cwi, President*

## **CARROLL COUNTY BIRD CLUB**

The Carroll County Bird Club's 2011-2012 season was busy and fun. We held eight monthly meetings, three at Westminster Senior Center and five at the new South Carroll Senior Center with an average attendance of about 10 people. The featured speakers covered birding in many parts of the world including Turkey, Canada, and Australia. Thanks to club Secretary Karen Mobley for coordinating refreshments and the many members who treated us with goodies.

Volunteers Ray Bourgeois, Jerry Tarbell, Dave Harvey, and Bob Ringler led field trips to Carroll County hot spots, as well as more distant trips to view birds in their many habitats. Our normal Presidents' Day weekend outing to the Eastern Shore fell victim to the MOS winter Convention. Volunteer efforts weren't limited to field trips. Several members participated in the annual fall count, winter count, and May bird count. These counts were all supported by wonderful get-togethers for the tallies. Maureen Harvey, Laura Tarbell, and Bill and Pat Ellis were mostly responsible for feeding the weary counters as they returned from the field after their long days of counting.

Once again we cemented our close relationships with the help of our annual January party at the home of Sue and Splinter Yingling and our annual summer picnic at the home of Amy Hoffman.

*Dave Harvey, President*

## **CECIL BIRD CLUB**

From May 1, 2011 to April 30, 2012, Cecil County had: eight Chapter meetings, seven of which had speakers; 11 field trips; Christmas Bird Count; and four community events: North East River Wade-In, Spring Fever Event, Perryville Lions Club (talk), Conowingo clean-up.

In addition, Cecil County conducted a number of blitzes on behalf of Audubon to designate Elk Neck an IBA.

And finally, Pat Valdata submits the following in behalf of our hawk watch:

For the 18th Turkey Point Hawk Watch at Elk Neck State Park, volunteers observed 2,467 hawks during 253.5 hours daily between Labor Day and Thanksgiving. Monthly totals

were 570 in September, 1,564 in October, and 333 in November. Rain, fog, and snow prevented observations on 15 days during this period.

The Cecil Bird Club thanks weekday volunteers Bill and Mary Jo Collins, Maryanne Dolan, Ken Drier, Richard Donham, and Pat Valdata; weekend volunteer John P. Taylor; and substitutes Monroe Harden, David Kimball, Lin and Jim Just, Don Bayard, Denis Quinn, Kevin Graff, Chris Starling, Greg Futral, and Meta Little. Special thanks go to David Kimball for compiling the data and to Hawk Watch founder Charlie Gant, who also observed periodically. Pat Valdata scheduled volunteers and coordinated with the State Park Office.

*Maryanne Dolan, President*

## FREDERICK BIRD CLUB

The Frederick Bird Club's annual planning meeting was held in June, 2011, hosted by the outgoing Chapter President, Kathy Calvert. The schedule and field trip plan was developed, and this plan was finalized and confirmed through the next few weeks. A final schedule was mailed to members in late summer, prior to our first official meeting of the program year.

Our schedule included a full series of meetings, educational and entertaining, on the first Thursday of each month from September to May. We heard presentations on birding travel to North America, Europe's low countries, Central America, Senegal, and the Pacific coasts of Central and South America. Other presentations dealt with non-bird subjects; things to look at when the birds are scarce and Maryland's geology. At our Christmas Dinner meeting, Don Messersmith recounted his seventy years of finding and studying birds. Finally, an ever-popular meeting program was Members' Night, when individual members had the opportunity to make their own short presentations of their photos or videos. At all meetings, members have an opportunity to share their latest bird sightings, to hear reports of field trips from the previous months, and to get previews of upcoming field trips and events.

Because Frederick County Public Libraries now close at 8 instead of 9 p.m., our meetings this season were held at Homewood at Crumland Farms, a retirement community which generously provided an excellent venue. This enabled us to continue our meetings as long as we wished. The exception was the May meeting, when Homewood has an alternate event scheduled on the first Thursday, and the meeting was held at Frederick High School.

The season featured a full series of field trips and counts. From September to May, there was a "First Friday" morning walk, in which people are invited to appear without reservations at 8 a.m. in a park in the city of Frederick, and the destination is chosen by the leader. Attendance was variable, quite dependent on the weather, and perhaps additional publicity would help. One walk on a cold blustery day was attended by a reporter and photographer from the Frederick News-Post (and nobody else besides the leader), and resulted in a nice article in the December-January "Senior Living" magazine supplement.

The only other weekday field trip was a Poplar Island trip on September 12, which was well attended by Frederick Bird Club members and others. Other outings to popular Frederick County sites and more distant parts of Maryland and Delaware were well attended, with several members picking up new life birds and learning of new birding areas.

Frederick Bird Club members split up to cover the county in a Fall Count, a Mid-winter Count, and a May Count, and to cover the count circles in the Catoctin and Sugarloaf Christmas Counts. They also carried out Mid-Winter and May Counts at the two wildlife sanctuaries in Frederick County owned by the Audubon Society of Central Maryland.

Requests for presentations on birds are occasionally received by the Frederick Bird Club, and this year programs were given at Middletown and Brunswick High Schools, with the former also including an outing to Washington Monument State Park, where migrating raptors put on a good show. In addition, Club members put up a display at a Nature Fest held at Frederick County's new Catoctin Nature Center, in addition to leading a well-attended bird walk at that event. Club members are helping the Nature Center develop an understanding of the bird life at this Center.

Bob Schaefer completed his first year as the Club's President, and Tom Humphrey as Vice President. Nancy Parker, Kathy Brown, and Helen Horrocks continued to serve as Treasurer, Secretary, and Chapter Delegate to MOS respectively, as they have for several years. Nancy Parker will continue as Treasurer and Helen Horrocks as Delegate, but Marilyn Veek will replace Kathy Brown as Secretary. The Club is grateful to Kathy for her years of service.

The final meeting of the year was the Club Picnic at Pinecliff Park, which featured beautiful weather before and after dinner, with a harmless downpour while we ate our dinner under the shelter of the pavilion. Highlights of the after-dinner bird walk were nests of Eastern Kingbirds high on a light tower, and of Baltimore Orioles in the standard Sycamore tree.

Membership numbers this year were: 1 Life Member, 37 Individuals, 25 Households, 0 Juniors, and 7 Associates. Attendance at meetings was generally good, about 30 persons.

*Robert Schaefer, President*

## HARFORD BIRD CLUB

HBC continued its focus on the recruitment and retention of young members. Becky Gallo remained as chair of the "Harford Herons," as the kids named themselves. The HJBC's Callum MacLellan-O'Brien was a proud and enthusiastic member of the YMOS Chesapeake Chippers who took sixth place in their division of the World Series of Birding. Due to family responsibilities, Becky will be stepping down as Youth chair for next year.

The club held five general business meetings. At our July summer social at the Anita Leight Estuary Center in Edgewood, members and guests heard a presentation by club member Debbie Bowers on landscaping our homes to be bird friendly. Nearly 40 members celebrated the new membership year with a pit beef picnic at the Eden Mill Nature Center. The chapter continued its solid relationship with Churchville Presbyterian Church by holding the next three meetings there. The November dinner meeting featured a travelogue presentation by Bob and Susan Hood on a recent birding tour of Colorado. At our January meeting, club vice-president Matt Hafner introduced us to pelagic birding and the many species not seen regularly from dry land. At our March dinner meeting, a presentation by Dr. Dave Larkin took us to the Galapagos Islands, a naturalist's delight. At our third annual May pizza dinner meeting at Harford Glen, members and guests had a rare treat for our program. Sixteen ele-

mentary students from Prospect Mill Elementary School and their two teachers told us about their studies and activities centered on birdlife. It was great to see so many young students excited about the outdoors and its wildlife. Average meeting attendance continued on its increasing trend with around 60 attendees.

Raffle Chair Elaine Beery tirelessly solicited merchandise and gift certificates from local businesses to be used as raffle prizes at our general meetings. In exchange we gave these merchants free advertising in our bi-monthly newsletter, *Wrenderings*. Elaine's efforts established and bolstered our relationships with local business owners, and generated revenue to help supplement operating costs.

Field Trip Chair Tom Gibson and his hard-working committee did a stellar job planning and coordinating a total of 50 trips over the year. The slate included perennial favorites such as Susquehanna State Park, Swan Harbor, Conowingo Dam, Harford Glen, Bradenbaugh Flats, and Bombay Hook. The club continued to offer a wide variety of trips — e.g., trips paired with other hobbies such as wine tasting, kayaking and photography. A trip to Mariner Point Park billed as “wheelchair accessible” had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. The third annual “Epic Birding Challenge” was again a rousing success. In this light-hearted competition at Susquehanna State Park, teams attempt to find as many species as possible in one May morning, then exchange their fish tales over lunch at the Tidewater Grill in Havre de Grace. A “Breeders Cup Challenge” was directed to other MOS chapters to spend a day trying to locate all breeding species within their County's limits. A team of four from Harford found 105 species on a Saturday in June, including Harford's first summer record for Blue-headed Vireo.

The club hosted a display at the Earth Day celebration at Aberdeen Festival Park, handing out literature and newsletters, and chatting with passers-by about the hobby. In the spring, Education Chair Madeline Lovera spoke to students at local elementary schools on birds and birding; while Past President Dave Webb gave a presentation on the club at the Mariner Museum in Havre de Grace.

Les Eastman did an excellent job of publishing six more issues of the club's newsletter, *Wrenderings*. Monroe Harden kept busy as the compiler and author of the column *Harford Birdlife* documenting recent sightings throughout the county; Colleen Webster and Deborah Bowers contributed guest articles on book reviews and club member profiles, respectively.

The Harford Bird Club and its members continued to participate in several bird counts throughout the year including the US Geological Survey Breeding Bird Survey, Rock Run Christmas Bird Count, Mid-Winter Count, International Migratory Bird Day Count, and United States Nightjar Survey. These efforts are coordinated by Rick Cheicante.

Awards for 2011 were presented to Birder of the Year, Becky Gallo, recognizing her efforts in creating our Youth division. Rookie-of-the-Year went to Callum McClellan-O'Brien for his enthusiastic participation in our Youth club. Volunteer of the Year went to Phil Powers for his work at the Harford Glen banding station and for the many field trips he leads for the club. Lister of the Year went to Matt Hafner for seeing 224 species in Harford County during 2011. Bird of the Year was a tie between a Rufous Hummingbird, hosted by Chris and Rebecca Kellar of Darlington, and a LeConte's Sparrow which spent part of November and December at Swan Harbor Farm Park near Havre de Grace. Both birds were first records for the County.



The Executive Board met three times during the past year. The current officers will continue in office until July 2013 — President, Dr. Dennis Kirkwood; Vice-President, Matt Hafner; Recording Secretary, Dr. Jane Scocca; Corresponding Secretary, Madeline Lovera; Treasurer, Marjie Heagy; and State Directors, Randy Robertson and Tom Congersky.

*Dennis Kirkwood, President*

## HOWARD COUNTY BIRD CLUB

The 40th year of the Howard County Bird Club will long be remembered for the arrivals of a Pink-footed Goose, a first for Maryland, and a Green Violetear, a first for the county. It also marked the change of location for our monthly meetings to Howard County's new Robinson Nature Center which opened in the fall of 2011. The Board of Directors formally adopted a club logo for the first time, largely adapted from previous artwork.

*Organization:* Voting membership dipped below 200, reducing our number of representatives on the state-level Board of Directors. Jeff Friedhoffer volunteered to step down from that position and we thank him for his service. Robin Todd joins the club Board of Directors as vice president this coming fall, joined by Eva Sunell as first-year chapter director. Jim Lubitz served as second-year director and his presence will be missed.

*Meetings and Programs:* Regular meetings were held on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. Average attendance for the nine meetings was about 50 persons. The high was 73 and the low was 35. Jane Geuder again did a wonderful job arranging a wide variety of speakers for our meetings, and attendance appears to be rising despite the loss of membership.

The club bookstore, operated by Ann Marie Raterman, was again a popular feature of the meetings. Sales, however, have consistently declined over the years as internet stores bring members the advantage low-cost, rapid-response, home delivery bookselling. After considerable discussion the Board of Directors decided to suspend acquisition of books and attempt to sell off as much of the inventory as possible. Kurt Schwarz was assigned to cull a set of volumes to be donated to the Robinson Nature Center to support the new research and educational initiatives at that facility.

The advance of technology has many advantages for us as well. Display set-up has been simplified with access to a ceiling-mounted projector in our meeting room, and a video screen at the back of the room has allowed us to host member-provided slide shows during the gathering period before the formal part of the meeting begins.

In March, the club held its annual Potluck dinner which was very successful with approximately 40 participants and many interesting stories and photos. By moving the event to the Robinson Nature Center we incurred less expense and were able to reserve the savings for our conservation work.

*Field Trips and Annual Counts:* There were a total of 38 field trips during the year not including counts and unadvertised responses to rare bird alerts — all trip reports are posted

on our website with species seen and the occasional photograph. We held day trips to Smith Island and Blackwater NWR. A “Little Big Day” was again held for those not up to the rigors of the “Big Day” itinerary. Several walks were in support of requests from the Robinson Nature Center staff and the WSSC.

The long record of chapter bird counts continued with the 18th annual Fall Count, the 27th annual Midwinter Count, and the annual May count (whose origins predate the club).

The annual compilation of seasonal ornithological records was again performed by Jo Solem. Joe Hanfman and Bonnie Ott organized the field trips and greatly assisted listers with communications about sightings and special opportunities. Two hundred thirty-two species were recorded in the county for the 2011 calendar year making that the fifth year in a row of 232 or more species.

The club has continued to support the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in its five-year Maryland Amphibian & Reptile Atlas (MARA) effort by hosting and maintaining web pages for Howard County. Club member Sue Muller is the county coordinator.

*Fund-raising, Conservation, and Habitat Preservation:* Our fund-raiser bird seed sale was held again in the early fall this year (2011) organized by Ward Ebert and Michael O’Sullivan. Unfortunately, greatly increased prices of seed discouraged many customers and only \$500 was netted from sale of seed directly. However, donations during the year added hundreds more to allow us to continue our support of wild birdlife. A donation of \$200 was made to support All Creatures Great and Small, a local wildlife rehabilitation facility in the county and a contribution of \$1000 was set aside to support bird-strike mitigation at the Cylburn Visitor Center in Baltimore. This support was in conjunction with the Lights Out Baltimore project under auspices of the Baltimore Bird Club which also committed funds. Later in the year it became apparent that this project could not be carried out successfully as originally conceived, so we have reserved the funds for distribution in the 2012–2013 year.

Once again, our very active Conservation Committee Chairman, Kurt Schwarz, wrote numerous letters supporting conservation issues all over the country to the appropriate authorities.

*Youth Birding:* We again held an art contest in the spring as an effort to expand the interest of youngsters in birdlife. Kate Tufts again organized the contest, engaging a professional artist, Holly Highfill, to judge the entries; each of two age categories had a first, second, and third place plus three honorable mentions. Backpacks will be presented to the winners and the winning artwork will be displayed at the Robinson Nature Center, Mount Pleasant Farm, and Glenwood Community Center over the coming months.

*Publications and Web Site:* The club newsletter, *The Goldfinch*, is published five times a year; field trips and programs are publicized on the website. Archives of all issues dating back to the first issue (December 1972) are available on line. An effort is underway to transition *The Goldfinch* to be delivered primarily in electronic form as a cost-saving measure with the additional benefits of added color, speed of delivery, and hyperlinks to related content.

The club website has become an important resource for information about birds, but it also hosts a great amount of information about butterflies, bees, dragonflies, fungi, reptiles, and amphibians. It has links to other birding organizations, information about county facilities, wildlife rehabilitators, and environmental organizations.

*External Relations and Outreach:* We again supported the local “Greenfest” which is held annually at Howard Community College in Columbia and we take the opportunity to display mounted birds, photos, and literature to attract interested citizens to learn about the club.

Many members have volunteered to help out at the new Robinson Nature Center. Over recent years the club has collected funds as memorial gifts on the passing of former members or relatives. A donation of \$300 was made to the Robinson Nature Center in memory of Adam Friedhoffer, Marjorie Mountjoy, and Donald Randle. Funds will be used to purchase plants attractive to birds as part of a garden display area.

*Ward Ebert, President*

## **MONTGOMERY BIRD CLUB**

The BCC-IWLA (Izaak Walton League of America) located in Poolesville, MD invited our club to participate in their Earth Day celebration. Several of us stayed from 8:00–1:00 (until the rain forced us to leave) and introduced our club and the MOS to whoever stopped by our table. We had laminated posters of common birds, MOS brochures, our Montgomery County Site Guide, a large display board with information about our club website, and many field guides to tempt anyone who passed by. The club hopes to make this an annual outing.

*Steven Pretl, President*

## **PATUXENT BIRD CLUB**

During the 2011–2012 season, the Patuxent Bird Club held ten monthly meetings. Eight of these were traditional programs with speakers talking about birds, bird identification and travels to distant lands.

One was the annual December holiday party, held jointly with BUMBA, the Bowie and Upper Marlboro Beekeeper’s association. The final program was the annual members’ nights where several members show slides and tell stories about the previous year’s highlights. These meetings have been drawing 30 to 60 attendees. We also sponsored more than 50 field trips, spring and fall migratory bird counts, the mid-winter count and the Bowie CBC. The field trips often draw 15 to 20 participants. Attendance at both meetings and field trips has been slowly growing over the last several years. Our next challenge is to convert this increased interest into a larger membership. We hold our monthly meetings and some of our field trips jointly with the Prince George’s County chapter of the National Audubon Society.

*David Mozurkewich, President*

## TALBOT CHAPTER

During our 10-month birding calendar, we enjoyed 38 bird walks/trips including nine all-day and two all-weekend trips. After eight of the local walks we enjoyed a hosted breakfast at a member's home. Our walks/trips were attended by anywhere from 5 to 24 participants, mainly dependent on the weather. We also visited Poplar Island twice. We had six monthly meetings during the period September to November 2011 and February to April 2012. The topics discussed by our guest speakers included the population explosion of breeding Brown Pelicans in the Chesapeake Bay, status of the Delmarva Fox Squirrel, how White-nose Syndrome is devastating the bat population, mainly here in the east, forest management practices at Blackwater N.W.R., the Alaskan quest for the Bristle-thighed Curlew and "pOrnithology: The Birds and the Birds and the Bees."

We also had some rare birds make a visit to Talbot County. From late October 2011 to late December 2011 a Calliope Hummingbird was a regular visitor to the garden (loved the Mexican Bush Sage) of one of our Easton members. The owners of the property were extremely gracious, and patient with the several hundred visitors from throughout the state and from surrounding states to view the rarity. The Calliope is normally found only in the western part of our nation. From February 15 to March 18 a Virginia's Warbler decided to hang around the grounds of Pickering Creek Audubon Center, and again scores of birders from near and far came to Talbot County to see this species of the west. Both species were photographed and well documented even though the warbler was less than cooperative.

For each of the above visits, officers of the Talbot Bird Club and other members provided substantial assistance to the hosts in publicizing the visits and helping to establish and enforce guidelines for visitors that would ensure good viewing by the visitors without destroying the habitats being used by these birds.

For years we have birded Tilghman Island in the late summer to fall as the "go-to" location in the county for fall migration because of the funneling effect of the narrowing land mass. The region has now become recognized as both a spring and fall migrant trap. Much of our new appreciation for the area has been stimulated by the fact that some nearby property owned by one of our members has become openly available to our club members. The family even maintains trails throughout the property. We also visited several other private estates and are grateful to all the landowners who grant our club permission to bird and enjoy all that nature has to offer on their properties. Come spend a few hours with friends in the search for who-knows-what gems we might find during the next season of birding.

*Les Roslund and Terry Allen*

## WASHINGTON COUNTY BIRD CLUB

The Washington County Bird Club held regular monthly meetings at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. The wonderful list of topics included: "A Hawk Migration Workshop" with Dave Weesner; the film *The Incredible Journey of the Butterfly*; "The History of Ornithology" by Walter Ellison; the film *A Murder of Crows*; "Birding in Senegal" by Kate Weatherby; "Tro-gons and Mot-Mots" by Kurt Schwarz; and "Bluebirds" with Kathy Kremnitzer. The May meeting is the popular and entertaining Member's Night, which includes short presentations

about whatever has piqued our individual curiosities during the year. The October and January meetings are preceded by lovely potluck meals. Summer picnics are held in June and August.

Twelve field trips carried our members near and far. Popular local destinations continued to be Washington Monument and Fort Frederick State Parks, Sideling Hill, Indian Springs WMA, and Antietam and Catoctin National Parks. The annual trip to Lambs Knoll to observe Saw-whet Owl banding by Steve Huy is always a rewarding experience for those willing to brave the late hours and chilly temperatures. Full day and overnight trips included Blandy Experimental Farm, Sky Meadows SP, Canaan Valley NWR, and the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory at Dolly Sods. In addition, four club members spent time in Botswana working on their international bird lists.

Members participated in the MOS Fall Count, the Christmas Count, and the May Count. To help celebrate International Migratory Bird Day, WCBC co-led a walk on the Antietam Battlefield with the local Audubon Society. The data collected became part of a bird survey of National Battlefield sites that include a portion of Christmas Count circles. This jointly sponsored walk was very well attended and we look forward to similar collaborative efforts.

We are fortunate to have a premier hawk-watching site at the Washington Monument SP near Boonsboro. Information is collected daily during spring and fall migration and made available to the public by the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Washington County Bird Club began sponsoring the Washington Monument Hawk Count page in 2011 and plans to continue doing so.

A slate of officers was elected for a two-year term at the May membership meeting. We have been using a system of rotating Presidents with each person covering a three-month slot. This has been working well enough for us, but one, full-time President would be the optimum situation. Membership has been holding steady. We are grateful to our club members who engage in community outreach in order to educate the general public about birds and their conservation, as well as to attract new members of all ages.

*Anna M. Hutzell, Corresponding Secretary*

*No report: Caroline Chapter, Kent Chapter, Tri-County Chapter*

