

Why Watch the Birds?

by Mark Johnson

Why is it that we like to watch birds? What about them makes them interesting? Humans and birds do share the same predominant senses: hearing and sight. In fact, we use both in identification. They also exhibit similarities in some behaviors: territoriality, defense of offspring; even wing-feigning displays are understandable examples of altruism. Early ornithologists believed many species were monogamous for life. However, though various marking techniques and monitoring, we now know that many species switch mates between broods and breeding seasons, and some are even polygynous. Anthropogenic similarities can also be witnessed through divisions of duties. In Wood Thrush, only females build the nest yet both parents provision young (this is particularly difficult for the polygynous fathers). However, there are some anecdotal accounts of males having some influence on nest site selection, where two nests in subsequent years were in the same crotch of the same tree within a single male's territory but each time with a different female.

If you are careful during arrival of breeding birds in the spring, you can

continued on page 2



The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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GULLS GULLS GULLS GALORE

A landfill in the middle of January means gulls.... lots and lots of gulls. It also means the first-ever statewide Education Seminar.

Clive Harris, a Montgomery Bird Club member and enthusiastic guller, will kick off the new series on Friday, January 21. His lecture and slide show will begin at 7 PM at the Hampton Inn, Elkton, Cecil County. The following morning Clive will conduct a field trip to the Cecil County landfill.

“There are no shortcuts to learning gulls,” Clive says. “You have to go out and spend time looking at them, preferably where there are lots, e.g., landfills.”

Clive himself spends most of his winter birding “gulling.” In addition to studying gulls at landfills in the mid-Atlantic, he has traveled to gull spots elsewhere in North America as well as in Asia and Europe.

The workshop is limited to 40 participants, and the registration deadline is January 6. To reserve a spot, please send a check payable to MOS in the amount of \$20 to Maryanne Dolan, 104 Milestone Road, Elkton, Maryland 21921. Include a telephone number and e-mail address, if you have one.

Room reservations should be made directly with the Hampton Inn., which is located at Exit 109A off I-95 on Rte 279 in Elkton. Phone is 410-398-7777 or 1-800-Hampton; e-mail is ELKMD_hampton@hilton.com.



Can you ID this bird? No? Then maybe you want to sign up for the workshop. (Photo courtesy of Clive Harris.)

The Inn is offering MOS members room rates of \$99 (plus tax), which includes a “deluxe breakfast bar.” To obtain the special rate, make your reservation by January 1 and mention MOS. There is a 7-day cancellation policy.

Clive’s Friday night lecture will take place in the meeting room on the first floor. The field trip will assemble around 8 AM in the parking lot of the Hampton Inn and carpool to the landfill.

Advice to participants: Bring scopes and dress for very cold weather. Prepare to get muddy; bring a spare pair of shoes for getting back into the car (and a bag to transport the dirty shoes/boots).

—Maryanne Dolan
 Maryanne.dolan@gmail.com
 410-398-7567

Inside This Issue

President's Corner	1
Gull Workshop.....	1
Volunteers Sought	2
2011 Conference	3
Treasurer Needed	3
Pin Contest.....	3
Chapter Chatter	4
Y MOS News.....	6
2010 MD/DC Locality Lists	6
Birds of Note.....	7
Maryland Hummerdinger	8
Calendar	10
Christmand Bird Counts	16
Last Call.....	16

President's Corner *continued from page 1*

watch males keeping close cover on their mates, attempting to ensure their fatherhood. Frequency of song is also inversely proportional to parental involvement; unmated males sing much more frequently than males with nests and offspring. A continuously singing male House Wren during the warm humid days in spring and summer can nearly break your heart, let alone inhibit your ability to sleep in with the windows open. Intensity of parental defense is proportional to investment in young, where birds that have not yet laid eggs will abandon nests quite easily yet defend nests intensely when hatchlings are present. Although there are many differences between humans and birds, we can relate to all of these behaviors; the birds' behaviors seem reasonable.

Birds seem to exhibit much more personality than many other classes of vertebrates, with many obvious mammalian exceptions. They are much more animate, and they keep pace with our brief yet variable attention spans. Birds seem to

be the objects of study for many animal behaviorists and provide fodder for interesting papers. Birds are also included in an elite group of animals that have (even through scientific study) hung onto their common names. This is likely due to historical tradition more than anything else, but I think it makes them more attractive to others simply interested in identification. Can you imagine us discussing new sightings using only scientific nomenclature (genus and species) at bird club meetings? I think that would dissuade many beginners from ever taking up the sport.

I have also noticed that those interested in birdwatching also enjoy observing other

diurnal animals capable of sustained flight, e.g., dragonflies and butterflies. Since many insect watchers began with bird identification, they also tend to attach common names to species as well, to the consternation of many insect taxonomists. Maybe it is the phenomenon of flight that is the draw. However, I haven't yet run into any bat or moth enthusiasts.

It is quite possible that birdwatching is the equivalent to a "gateway drug" into the wide world of nature, and that once we are hooked, a whole new world opens up. This gives me hope in that as the more we learn about nature, the more we appreciate, value and protect it.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!!

As a non-profit organization, we perform many functions that are critical for our survival as a society interested in the observation, preservation, and conservation of birds. Many of our committees that support this mission are vacant and those functions are stagnant. We desperately need volunteers interested in helping out. Below are descriptions of those vacant offices.

Environmental Fund of Maryland—

As a member of this consortium, MOS receives donations from federal and state workers through the United Way and other similar regular donation programs. The chair attends EFM meetings (usually during the work week, twice a year) and attends worker seminars to encourage people to designate MOS as their recipient. This is a mechanism that can serve to greatly increase MOS's financial bottom line, allowing for more outreach, programs, and research, with the potential to lower membership fees.

Education—This committee serves to support chapters and the greater MOS through the development of education programs to enhance the birdwatching experience for members and others interested in joining (e.g., school programs, seminars, etc.). The committee arranges identification workshops and develops programs both for MOS members and for outreach. The chair of this committee

works closely with the chairs of the Conference and Youth Programs.

Investment—Over the years, members have remembered MOS in their bequests, creating significant funds that serve as our principle to fund many of our vital functions in the community. Due to the recent dip in the economy, these investments have taken a hit, and they require vigilance by someone with investment experience. MOS is actively seeking an investment chair who can oversee these investments and work with our broker to maintain the best possible returns. Simple spreadsheets are made to tabulate results for the quarterly board meetings. The chair of this group works closely with the Treasurer and President.

Yellowthroat Calendar Editor—

Each issue of the *Yellowthroat* lists the upcoming meetings and field trips for all chapters, as a means of encouraging MOS members to join with their fellows throughout the state. The calendar editor solicits field trip descriptions from each of the chapters, edits them for clarity and consistency, and provides them to the *Yellowthroat* editor (Lydia Schindler).

Any individuals interested in helping out in these areas are encouraged to volunteer. If interested or if you have any questions, please contact Mark Johnson (Mark.Steven.Johnson@comcast.net).

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Editor:	Lydia Schindler lydiaschindler@verizon.net 301-977-5252
Designer:	Suzanne Probst msprobst2@verizon.net 410-992-3489
Calendar Editor:	Andy Martin apmartin2@comcast.net 301-294-4805
Chapter Chatter:	Jean Wheeler jswheeler44@msn.com
Mailing list:	Helen Horrocks hlh_37@yahoo.com 301-831-6315
MOS web site:	http://www.mdbirds.org
Webmaster:	John Hays Christy SiteMaven@mdbirds.org

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by November 20, 2010 for the January/February 2011 issue.

*Illustrations pp. 1, 4 © M. Suzanne Probst.
Photograph p. 1 © Clive Harris.
Photographs pp. 8, 9 © Evelyn Ralston.*

**2011 MOS CONFERENCE
WISP
McHENRY, GARRETT COUNTY
MAY 20-22, 2011**

We're going to Western Maryland! We last met there in 2002, and it's high time to get back. MOS members give many reasons for attending conferences, but at the top of their lists, as shown by the evaluations, is meeting new people from across the state and seeing old friends. Of course, field trips are also at the top of their lists, and next May will present some great ones to choose from. After all, when it comes to birds, Western Maryland is very special territory. So plan to come and enjoy yourself.

I am very pleased that **Kevin Dodge** has agreed to be our keynote speaker. Kevin is the Director of the Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology Program at Garrett College. He's also a fantastic birder. Things are never dull when Kevin is around. He will give us an update on his Saw-whet Owl banding program and then entertain us with a presentation of "Night Sounds," a fun program enjoyed by adults and children. And it's also quite possible you will learn something. Come and enjoy.

Kathy Calvert will be running the field trips again this year, and we all know what an excellent job she does. Kathy is looking for field trip leaders. She also needs people familiar with the area to guide leaders who hail from other parts of the state. If you are willing to help out, please contact her at kathycalvert1@comcast.net.

The Silent Auction and the Raffle are dependant on donations. **Maryanne Dolan** does an outstanding job of running these fund-raisers, but she would like to increase

both the quality and number of items available. Please put on your thinking caps and see if you can help her locate some choice articles for this year's conference. You can get in touch with her at Maryanne.Dolan@gmail.com.

Our new MOS President, **Mark Johnson**, will be conducting a Friday afternoon seminar for novice birders, and he will lead a follow-up field trip on Saturday. This trip is not just for novice birders for also for people who prefer a more leisurely pace, with an emphasis on seeing the birds well. Mike Bowen and Gemma Radko will be leading similar trips--geared to novice birders, to persons wishing to hone their skills, and birders who like a more leisurely approach.

I'm still looking into the possibility of offering some additional seminars on Saturday. I'll let you know how that works out.

Let's jump ahead for a minute to 2012. We are considering holding a winter conference in Ocean City. It would probably be in February. Ocean City is just too expensive and too crowded during our usual conference dates, but winter might work. I'll let you know if it is possible.

Back to 2011. I'm looking forward to Western Maryland and hope you are also.

—*Janet Shields*
janetbill@prodigy.net
410-901-1039

TREASURER NEEDED

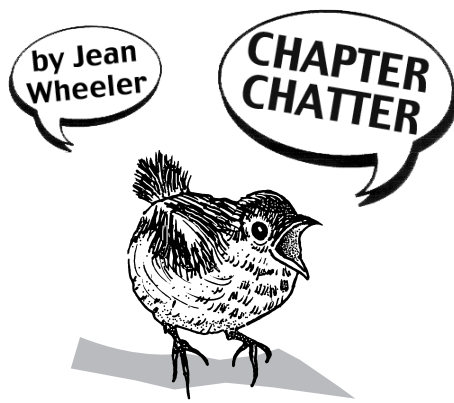
One of the most important functions in our Society is that of the Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for maintaining our accounts (receivable and payable), paying bills, and providing a brief report to the Board of Directors each quarter. Our current Treasurer, **Emy Holdridge**, has done an excellent job over the last 8+ years, but she is ready to step down to focus on her Treasurer responsibilities at her chapter. Since we have advertised previously for a replacement without eliciting any interest, the Board has approved a \$200/month stipend for a new applicant. If you have some experience with spreadsheets and are good with numbers, please consider stepping up and helping out our organization. It is a rewarding experience, and you would also be a member of the Executive Council. Please contact Mark Johnson (Mark.Steven.Johnson@comcast.net) or Emy Holdridge (emyh608@verizon.net) for more information.

Artists: Pin Contest Alert

What species will represent the birdy mountains and lakes of Western Maryland, setting for the 2011 MOS Conference, on the traditional conference pin? Black-throated Blue and Golden-winged Warblers took the prize in Garrett County in 1998 and 2002, while the winners were Ruffed Grouse and Northern Saw-whet Owl at Frostburg, Allegany County, in 1989 and 1993.

The deadline for the 2011 Pin Contest is January 17, 2011. The rules are simple: the bird must be appropriate for the conference site (WISP, in Garrett County); it must contain the phrases "MOS" and "2011;" the artist must be a member of MOS; and entries must be in HARD COPY.

Put your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, chapter affiliation, and the species on the back of each entry. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules, and more tips about designing pins for the contest, visit the MOS web site, or contact John at 301-977-5788 or at smudgie@comcast.net.



ANNE ARUNDEL BIRD CLUB

In September AABC members *Peter Hanan* and (NBS/non-birding spouse) *Barbara, Lloyd Lewis, and Jean Wheeler* (Harford Co.) journeyed with **International Expeditions** to Peru for a riverboat excursion on two major tributaries of the Amazon, the Marañon and the Ucayali Rivers. The 3 birders managed a bit of birding near Lima before the group flew to Iquitos. From there they traveled 60 miles by road to Nauta where they boarded the riverboat, *La Amatista*. They sailed up the Marañon through the confluence with the Ucayali which forms the Amazon, then they sailed down the Ucayali into the Pacaya Samiria Nat'l Reserve. They found more than 230 species of birds, including Plum-throated Cotinga, White-chinned, Bluish-fronted, White-eared, and Great Jacamars, Horned Screamer, and Sunbittern. They also saw seven species of monkeys, including the smallest primate, the Pygmy Marmoset, weighing in at 3.5 to 5 ounces. The group also enjoyed Piranha fishing. Both the unique Pink and Grey river dolphins were often spotted breaching and swimming. Although most of the birding was done from the boat and skiffs navigating the narrower creeks, the group experienced forays into the *varzea* or seasonally flooded forest as well as *terra firme* forest, the humid, mature, tall, and most diverse jungle in the world. Here they spotted Ivory-billed Aracari and Slate-colored Grosbeak. During a thrilling night excursion in the skiff, the guide grabbed a caiman for an up-close inspection; they saw Common

Potoo and Pauraque and many fish-eating bats. Finally, the group visited two villages of Ribereños or River Peoples. These people still live off the land, harvesting fruits and vegetables, fishing and building their canoes and houses. The children are delightful, and our group presented them with school supplies. There are many ongoing projects to bring clean water and electricity to these villages. This was an unforgettable and educational trip as well as a great birding destination.

—*Jean Wheeler*

BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB

While walking the perimeter trails of Cylburn Park in Baltimore City last July to try out my new version of the *SongFinder*, I was very pleased with the way this new shirt-pocket unit performed; it seemed more sensitive than the old unit, and more truly directional. So even though the sky was increasingly dark and the still air was palpably humid, I was enjoying my walk (after being confined to the house with a nasty case of shingles for the past several days). By the time I'd completed half of the circuit, the storm was virtually overhead, so I headed for the protection of the porch fronting the Cylburn Mansion. As I accessed the safe confines of the overhang, I couldn't help noting (for the umpteenth time) the majestic presence of the old walnut tree standing alone inside the circular driveway.

As I waited for the torrential rains to abate, I ducked inside for a quick pit stop. When I emerged back outside, I was stunned to see that this noble tree had shattered about its base and more or less crumpled to the ground, almost reaching the steps of the Mansion, its broken branches covering good portions of the drive. I had not heard a single sound beyond that of the storm while in the back of the building. One look and I was reminded of the Wye Oak of Talbot County, which I'd enjoyed seeing so much during the years I'd birded that area. For those of you who have birded Cylburn Park and its environs, be prepared for a different look on the occasion of your next visit. I imagine

this giant will join the rest of the city's fallen trees, just down the hill in another area familiar to those who regularly bird Cylburn—the "Stump Dump." So, even though I didn't hear it, did the tree make a noise?

—*Paul E. Noell*

HARFORD COUNTY

In June, *Madeline Lovera* and *Jean Wheeler* traveled with **Naturalist Journeys** to Montana and Wyoming. The trip began in Billings for some prairie birding. Chestnut-collared and McCown's Longspurs, Lark Bunting, and Vesper, Lark, and Brewer's Sparrows were plentiful. The cottonwoods gallery was home to Lazuli Bunting. Yellowstone NP showcased lots of birds, but the highlight was 3 Grey Wolves in the Hayden Valley. At Grand Teton NP, amidst the grandeur of those peaks, the group enjoyed Mountain Bluebird, Gray Jay, and MacGillivray's Warbler. The final stop, the remote Red Rock Lakes NWR in Montana, is home to Trumpeter Swans. We also enjoyed lots of Western Tanagers, Red-naped Sapsuckers, and assorted flycatchers. Altogether we saw or heard 150 species.

—*Jean Wheeler*

HOWARD COUNTY

Twenty-four Howard County birders and friends enjoyed a foray to Poplar Island in July. The group met at Knapps Narrows on Tilghman Island for the 20-minute boat ride out to Poplar Island. A break in the severe temperatures of July made for a pleasant day. Among the 53 species encountered the biggest surprise was a King Eider. This bird was very cooperative and allowed birders within 20 yards. A special thanks to Joe Hanfmann for organizing the trip.

The Club put the MOS youth backpack to good use, awarding it as a prize for their student birding art contest. Top nod goes to *Amy Li*, a 10-year-old student at Clarksville Elementary School. Amy's watercolor depicting a male and female Mallard caught the eye of judge Brenda Kidera. Ms. Kidera is a professional artist and art teacher whose outdoor and

bird art has delighted many. This year she was commissioned to design the poster for Howard County's Wine in the Woods festival.

—Kate Tufts

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Paul Pisano's summer highlight was a VENT tour in July to the Galapagos Islands with Michael O'Brien as the leader and his parents (and fellow MBC members), *Paul and Barbara O'Brien*, as fellow participants.

The best bird of *Jim Tate's* summer was a Brown Kiwi on North Island, New Zealand. "Lin and I spent most of July in Australia and New Zealand, getting our son Brant married off to a lovely Aussie, and of course we did a lot of birding. On July 15 I spent some time in the afternoon gathering wood for the wood stove at our friend's home on Motoroa Island in Bay of Islands. About dark, as I was carrying an armload of kindling into the house, I heard the whistling call of the male kiwi from the tree-fern-covered slope below the house. A half hour later I came back out for more wood. When I rounded the corner a male Brown Kiwi was digging in the soft earth in the wood pile. He looked at me with an attitude of disdain for disturbing his foraging and padded off into the ferns on his big thick legs."

In July, *Gail Mackiernan* and *Barry Cooper* joined Colin Campbell from Delaware and three friends from the UK on a trip to Southeast Asia, including the islands of Sulawesi and Halmahera in Indonesia. The trip, a custom tour arranged with **BirdTour Asia**, produced about 275 species in Indonesia and another 140 or so in Malaysia and Singapore. "The weather was generally hot and humid, accommodations ranged from 4-star to very basic, the food was usually excellent, and the birds were amazing," Gail wrote. "There were some unforgettable experiences, starting with a usually-skulking Malaysian Rail-babbler displaying for 20 minutes at the edge of the road at Panti, a mind-blowing lek of Standardwing Birds-of-Paradise on Halmahera, as well as close encounters with rare forest kingfishers,

brilliant fruit-doves, and the enigmatic Diabolical Nightjar on Sulawesi."

Note: On Dec. 15, *Mike Welch* of the Frederick Bird Club will give a talk at the regular meeting of the Montgomery Bird Club on birding Singapore, Sulawesi, and Halmahera—a chance to learn more about these wonderful birding destinations!

Laurie Hollander wrote the following charming account, which proves you don't have to travel to have a great birding summer. "I have a small hummingbird flower garden and a hummingbird feeder with a moat in the center for water, which keeps ants from crawling down the center post and into the sugar water. The feeder hangs on one of the four hooks on an iron post that is sunk into the ground. The other hooks have fuchsia plants and a bell. Three or four hummingbirds compete for dominance over this domain and chase each other back and forth around the yard. One Sunday, 4 goldfinches (3 males and a female) flew in and perched all over the iron post upon which the feeder hangs. One at a time, by turns, they would hop onto the red plastic top of the hummingbird feeder, sit a while, then hop onto the center post of the feeder, gripping it tightly and hanging sideways. From that position, the goldfinch would dip its beak into the water in the small moat, take a sip, then bounce upright and tip its head up to swallow. This was repeated until all the water in the moat was gone.... Meanwhile, one hummingbird would not be deterred from its frequent visits to the feeder. It looked a little nonplussed and hovered near each goldfinch in turn for a few seconds before zipping over to the next one, then took a few sips of nectar and flew off, only to return a half minute later and repeat the performance." Finally, your correspondent is pleased to report that, despite stories in the birding press that California's Yellow-billed Magpies were hard hit by West Nile Virus, they are again plentiful in the wine country near Santa Barbara. He knows this because *Mike Bowen* told him where to look for them. As a result he could report to eBird that in one display of magpie plenitude no

fewer than 29 Yellow-billed Magpies flew in and out of one oak tree beside the road in the Santa Ynez Valley (of pinot noir fame).

—Chris Wright

TALBOT COUNTY

Partly to dodge some of the expected Maryland heat of August, *Les* and *Carolyn Roslund* escaped to Alaska for a few days early in the month. This was not a dedicated birding trip, but it still produced some birding highlights. Four days of traipsing over the tundra within easy view of Denali yielded Arctic Warblers and Willow Ptarmigans amongst the numerous grizzly bears, Dall sheep, and moose. Clearly the most exciting birding event was a view of four Golden Eagles playing together in the sky. At one point a Merlin went into attack mode against one of the Golden Eagles, but the eagle seemed rather unperturbed. The final non-travel day of the trip featured a boat ride out of Seward to enjoy the whales and glaciers, along with any birds that happened to be cooperating. There were scads of birds, of course, with highlights being close-up visits to rocky islands that were home to Glaucous-winged Gulls, Tufted and Horned Puffins, and Common Murres. Murrelets, auklets, Pigeon Guillemots, and Red-faced Cormorants were also around. In Seward, the Alaska Sea Life Center provided some additional highlights, including a behind-the-scenes tour to learn about some of their wildlife rehabilitation work and their conservation research activity.

—Les Roslund

TRI-COUNTY

In June, *Mike Walsh* joined *Sally* and *Doug Ruby* along with 8 others for a birding week in Oregon. The group traveled from Portland down the coast to Medford and Crater Lake and then north on the east face of the Cascade Mountains. They were fortunate to see many of the Pacific Northwest specialties, ranging from Marbled Murrelet and Black Guillemot to White-headed and Black-backed Woodpeckers and Red-breasted

continued on page 6

YMOS News

George Radcliffe and Wayne Bell ran a summer program at Washington College and will do so again this coming year, June 19-24, 2011. The kids and teachers for this program came from several areas. They came from Baltimore, Carroll County, and the Eastern Shore. They would like to have some of the other areas represented. The application will be online within the next month and will also be in the *Yellowthroat*. George asks chapters to start looking for teachers and kids who might be interested in this program.

Chapter Chatter *continued from page 5*

Sapsucker, to Cassin's Vireo plus Hermit and MacGillivray's Warblers. (If you run into Doug or Mike ask for the details of the MacGillivray's sighting. It's priceless!)

Ellen Lawler has just completed a year-long sabbatical from Salisbury University in which she continued her study of the nature writings of Henry Callister. Callister was a colonial resident of Talbot and Queen Anne's Counties, and his preserved letters and papers include a number that describe local birds, mammals, and plants. These writings, in particular one he called "A Dissertation on Swallows," may be among the earliest nature writings from the Eastern Shore. If anyone knows of other colonial writings about birds (especially swallows), please contact Ellen at emlawler@salisbury.edu.

—Carol Broderick

REPORTING 2010 MARYLAND/DC LOCALITY LISTS

Each year, the MOS compiles and publishes totals from members' state and local bird lists. **Forms for submitting your 2010 locality lists are provided on the MOS web site.** You are invited to submit your totals for any of the following list categories:

STATE/COUNTY CUMULATIVE LISTS

This category is for lifetime species totals identified anywhere in the state of Maryland, in DC, or within any of the 23 Maryland counties. Please submit only totals that exceed 50% of the maximum number for each locality. (The form contains the latest maximums and the 50% thresholds.) If you claim a MD life list in excess of 349 species, you **MUST** list all species added to your MD life list in 2010. If you don't fill in this box, your list will not be entered into the data base.

STATE/COUNTY 2010 ANNUAL LISTS

This category is for total species identified for the same localities as above, but in 2010 only. These totals may be reported at any threshold.

YARD LIST

This category is for cumulative yard list totals, and for 2010 totals. You may count any species you have identified while in your "yard" (that is, property contiguous to your home). "Flyovers" and other birds identified from your yard (even if they were not in your yard) also count.

ALL-COUNTY LIST

This category covers the number of species you have identified in every one of Maryland's 23 counties. For example, if you have identified a Northern Mockingbird, an American Crow, a Downy Woodpecker, and a Red-tailed Hawk in all 23 counties, your list total would be 4.

TOTAL TICKS

This category is the sum of all your Maryland County list totals. The maximum possible is 7,039. We will accept all-time-high submissions at any level greater than or equal to 2,300

(an average of 100 species per county). Total Ticks for 2010-only will be accepted at any level.

ALL-TIME-HIGH ANNUAL LISTS

This category tracks all-time-high annual lists from the current and previous years. Annual totals for prior years may be submitted. For Maryland, submitted totals should equal or exceed 297 (70% of the maximum possible number). For individual counties, totals submitted from previous years should exceed either 50% of the maximum possible or exceed one of the top totals previously published for that county.

SPECIES PHOTOGRAPHED IN MD

As the name implies, this category focuses on the number of bird species you have photographed (recognizably!) in Maryland. There are no lower limits.

Members' totals that have not been updated within the previous five years (2006-2010) will be dropped from the listings (but not from the database).

If you have any questions, please contact Norm Saunders at marshhawk@verizon.net or 410-228-5066.

Please return the form **BEFORE January 21, 2011 to: Norm Saunders, 107 Sailors Lane, Cambridge, MD 21613.**

We hope that all who have participated will do so again, and that others will join in, especially those from localities that are currently less than well represented. If you have any comments, thoughts, or anecdotes, please include them. If you have any other categories of Maryland bird lists that are appropriate (for example, all-time or 2010 state/county "Big Day" totals), send them in. We'd like to hear from you. And remember, this is for fun!

—Norm Saunders



Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

- High levels of heat and humidity made birding challenging in late summer, but that was not enough to keep Jim Stasz of North Beach, Calvert County, from getting out to find some nice birds. His efforts on Jul 30 at Truitt's Landing in Worcester County yielded a view and photographs of a WHITE-FACED IBIS. He actually attained a clean sweep of available Ibises that day by also finding GLOSSY and WHITE IBISES in the same general area. Though others later readily found the latter two, there were no further sightings of the WHITE-FACED bird.
- Perhaps the high temps helped to make the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (CBEC) in Grasonville, Queen Anne's County, a target spot for birds and birders. On Jul 22 John Dennehy of Baltimore discovered an AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN at that site; this bird stayed around for a full month, much to the delight of many county listers. One CBEC visitor was Jim Green of Montgomery County, and on Aug 8 he became the first to notice AMERICAN AVOCETS there. Avocets are not readily found in Queen Anne's County, but two of them were present and at least one stayed around long enough to be seen by several other birders. While checking on CBEC shorebirds on Aug 12, Dan Small of Chestertown noticed a WILSON'S PHALAROPE, which became another CBEC magnet for birders of the region.
- It was a good season for phalaropes, with two of the best sightings being RED PHALAROPE in Howard County and RED-NECKED PHALAROPE in Harford County. The Howard County bird was found in Western Regional Park on Aug 23 by Bill Hill of Glenwood. Bill promptly reported the bird, making it possible for several others to enjoy it and get some great photos; it was not relocated after Aug 23. The RED-NECKED PHALAROPE in Harford County was found and reported independently on Sep 6 by both Mark Johnson of Harford County and Mike Ostrowski of Montgomery County. The bird, which was on the lake in Perryman Park, proved to be the first Harford County record for the species.
- A brief break in the summer's heat occurred on Aug 18, with a morning of powerful winds and driving rain making for absolutely miserable birding conditions. Though it is hard to believe that any birders would be out, these conditions did not deter Stan Arnold of Anne Arundel County from slipping over to Sandy Point State Park to check out the gulls and terns. After an hour of scanning GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULLS and the other usual stuff, including CASPIAN, ROYAL, COMMON, FORSTER'S, and BLACK TERNS, Stan hit the jackpot! A fly-by "tern" with long slender wings and a full black hood turned into a SABINE'S GULL! Weather conditions precluding any photographs, Stan quickly made note of the key field marks, which supported the conclusion that this was an adult bird in full breeding plumage--and certainly far, far away from its usual nesting range or even its normal migration route.
- Much later in the season, on Sep 25, a second SABINE'S GULL showed up on the Chesapeake Bay, where Joanne Laskowski of Talbot County was out fishing with her spouse and some friends. This bird, which was in juvenile plumage, was in the company of some LAUGHING GULLS feeding on bait fish near their boat. Eventually the SABINE'S dropped down onto the water near the boat and followed it awhile, allowing for several very nice photographs. The sighting took place out on the Chesapeake Bay close to the boundary between Talbot and Dorchester Counties. Adding to the phalarope flurry of this year, earlier in the day these birder-fishermen had seen a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE resting on the water in this same area.
- On Sep 3 the remnants of Tropical Storm Earl passed to the east of Ocean City, triggering the usual hopes that some unusual birds might be blown close enough to shore for convenient viewing. The small group of hardy birders that converged near the Ocean City Inlet were rewarded by several nice sightings, including three SOOTY TERNS, at least five PARASITIC JAEGERs, and two WHIMBRELS. BLACK TERNS and SANDWICH TERNS passed by regularly throughout the day. Jim Stasz was the first to spot the first SOOTY TERN and Tom Feild was the spotter of the other two. Later in the month, on Sep 24, another PARASITIC JAEGER was reported from Worcester County. This was a subadult chasing and being chased by LAUGHING GULLS at the beach of Assateague Island National Seashore, and J. B. Churchill of Frostburg, Allegany County, was the lucky observer.
- Also on Sep 3, far from the obvious effects of Earl along the coast, a LITTLE GULL showed up in Prince George's County at Schoolhouse Pond in the company of several LAUGHING GULLS. Fred Shaffer of Crofton, who regularly checks the birds of Schoolhouse Pond, reported the sighting, along with a full description of the key field marks. In Fred's 11 years of careful monitoring, this was the first visit by a LITTLE GULL at the site.
- The hot and dry conditions of late summer seemed to keep most but not all forest edge birds at bay. On Sep 10 a juvenile SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER was briefly seen by George Radcliffe of Spocot Farms in Dorchester County. Although this bird stayed low to the ground, it provided good scope views. George followed the bird for about 15 minutes before it disappeared into a brushy region, not to be seen again.
- On Sep 24 another interesting shorebird turned up. This was a RED KNOT discovered by Jim Stasz at the North Beach Marsh. It was soon joined by a BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER. Both birds were still being seen, off and on, as of Sep 28.
- Autumn's arrival has ushered in a plethora of splendid new birds—the usual hordes of warblers passing through all the reliable viewing sites; abundant sightings of RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES, suggesting that this may be a good irruption year; and a gradual increase in sparrow arrivals. And suddenly the most exciting of all! On Sep 26 Mikey Lutmerding of Croom, Prince George's County, found a CASSIN'S SPARROW at Point Lookout State Park in St. Mary's County. He was able to obtain excellent photos, which will be crucial for documenting the identity. If this ID holds up, as is expected, this will be the first-ever Maryland record of the species. Other birders promptly flocked to the area, and by mid-morning on Sep 28 at least five more birders had successfully relocated the bird.

Maryland Hummerdinger: A Backyard Bonanza

Hummers, hummers, hummers—has **Les Eastman** got hummers! Thanks to 30-some carefully tended feeders, the Eastman yard in Havre de Grace has become a festival of hummingbirds. More significantly, it has evolved into one of a dozen hummingbird banding stations on the East Coast. Since 2007, the Havre de Grace team has banded more than 800 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, some 232 of them in the 2010 season alone.

For most of the summer, Les's yard—adjacent to Susquehanna State Park in Harford County—is a riot of feeders. Many are suspended from a 30-foot length of wire strung between two posts. Others adorn poles and bushes; two are mounted on windows. And these feeders are abuzz with tiny birds; as many as 50 hummingbirds can be zooming around the yard at a given time.

On most Saturday mornings, though, the operation swings into banding mode. Les will have taken the feeders down and stacked them, like so many idle crab pots, on the patio. Around 7:30, **Bruce Peterjohn**, Chief of the Bird Banding Lab at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, arrives with tools and trap. Some weeks Master Bander **David Holmes** joins in. And a volunteer stands ready to record the data; on August 28 it was **Sue Procell** of Harford County (and 2010 MOS scholarship winner).

The team sets up their work space in a gazebo overlooking the yard, and they situate the wire mesh trap out on the lawn where feeders usually beckon. For banding, the sole filled feeder will hang in the trap. A strand of fishing line holds the trap's door open; it leads to the gazebo, where Les keeps an eye on the trap and a finger on the line. The instant a hummer flies in, he drops the door,



Les retrieves a hummer from the trap.

then heads across the lawn. He delicately plucks the little bird from the trap, places it in a small mesh bag, and ferries it back to the gazebo.

Bruce quickly sets to work. Securing the bird in a little nylon “footie,” he uses a special pliers to fit it with a minuscule aluminum band; each band carries a unique number registered at Patuxent. He weighs the bird (approximately 3 grams) and measures wing, tail, and culmen. He checks it for signs of fat, an indication of readiness for migration.



Bird in a sack weighs in.

He determines age (juveniles show grooving on the bill and dusky feather edges on the cap; adults can show signs of molt) and sex (immature males and females can be distinguished by the shape of the sixth primary [!]; some young males will sport a few gorget feathers). Most birds tolerate the process calmly; a few fuss, and some make little mewling sounds.

Sue, meantime, has been neatly recording each piece of information. Along with the data from hummingbird banding stations around the country—as well as from serendipitous bandings of out-of-season/out-of-place hummers, these numbers will be fed into the BBL data base, allowing scientists to build a picture of where and how hummingbirds live and migrate.



Bruce measures the bird's wings.

“For the breeding Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, I hope to document aspects of their breeding phenology in this region, patterns of molt in relation to migration status, and the timing of migration of the different age and sex groups,” Bruce says. “The winter banding aims to establish the status of wintering hummingbirds across the mid-Atlantic region and contribute to collaborative efforts to document



A minuscule band lies at the ready.

the movement patterns of these hummingbirds in the eastern USA.” It has become apparent, for example, that many return to the same site year after year. In addition to 232 birds newly banded in Havre de Grace in 2010, there were 54 “recaptures” from previous seasons. Half a dozen or more of these birds had been banded there as adults in 2007—making them at least five years old.

Measurements complete, Bruce lets the tiny bird zip away—and turns to the next. On a busy morning, birds can arrive almost nonstop. One morning in August 2010, with two banders working, the team processed 49 individuals, 39 new birds and 10 recaptures from previous years. Other mornings are quieter. By mid-September the traffic dwindles to a point where the banders call it quits.

At the beginning of the season, the population contains a mix of adults, but males, which play no part in nesting, are quick to migrate. By late August, most of the birds being caught are immatures. When a rare adult male appears in late August, Bruce suspects that it is a migrant from further north, perhaps Canada.

Les’s hummingbird extravaganza began innocently enough with a few feeders about 20 years ago. He gradually added more and more, until now, at the peak of the season, he tends between 30 and 35. The actual number depends on how many need cleaning at any one time.

Les continues to audition new varieties of feeder, but the “Perky Pet 4 flower feeder (model # 203CP)” always comes out the winner. Decorative feeders may appeal to people, Les says, but they don’t attract hummingbirds. He uses a 3-liter container to make up a standard 4-to-1 sugar-water solution—and some days he has to make a second batch. “I don’t boil the water, I just use hot tap water, so it is not a big deal to make.” He cleans and refills a feeder if it gets cloudy—but most of his are emptied before that happens.

Around noon, the day’s banding wraps up. Sue hands over the data sheets, Bruce packs up the equipment, and Les starts to get the trove of feeders refilled and re-hung. In a twinkling they will be as busy as ever.

—Lydia Schindler
Montgomery Bird Club

Off-Season Prizes

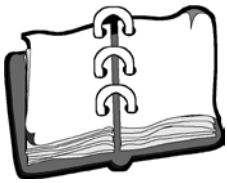
Since hummingbird banding evolved in the 1970s, it has become apparent that hummers wander much more than had been realized. So far five species have been recorded in Maryland: Ruby-throated, Rufous, Allen’s, Calliope, and Anna’s. Additional hummingbird species that have been recorded in the surrounding states include Black-chinned (WV, VA, and DC), Broad-tailed (DE), Green Violet-Ear (WV), Violet-crowned (VA), and Magnificent (VA). Of these 11 species, the Anna’s, Green Violet-Ear, Violet-crowned, and Magnificent have not (yet) been banded in this region.

While a few vagrant hummingbirds have appeared in mid-summer, late autumn is typically when strays show up, and Les, ever hopeful, makes a point of leaving a few feeders up until January. Any hummingbird observed after November 1 is actually likely to be a species other than Ruby-throated. Anyone feeding a hummingbird after November 1 and willing to allow the bird to be banded should contact Bruce Peterjohn (bpeterjohn@usgs.gov, 301-497-1629) immediately.

Evelyn Ralston of the Montgomery Bird Club digitally “captured” these hummingbird photos for The Maryland Yellowthroat.



Banded and measured, this male Ruby-throat eyes his freedom.



MOS Calendar

November-December 2010

Tuesday, November 2

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "Save the Marshes—A New Initiative by the National Audubon Society" with *David Curson*, Regional Director at Patterson Park in Baltimore. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. Note: Meeting cancelled if Balt. City schools are cancelled that day. When in doubt, check with lecture chairman Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 (h) or 443-904-6314 (m), or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, November 3

Field Trip. Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the wetland. Scope can be useful. Cancelled in bad weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. [From I-95, take Hanover St exit 55, McComas St (last exit before tunnel eastbound, first after tunnel westbound) east, left (north) on Key Hwy which turns west, first left Lawrence St, left (east) on Fort Ave, continue east to gate into Fort McHenry. From the JFX, I-83, south to St Paul St exit, south on St Paul which becomes Light St, then left (east) onto Fort Avenue, continue to end as above.] Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. Carroll. "Uganda" by *Gail Mackiernan*. 7:30 PM at the Carroll Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. Cecil. "Tree Identification" with *Doug Senn*. 7 PM Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. [From I-95 take the Elkton exit and go south on MD 279 (Elkton Rd) for about 2.5 miles. Turn right on James St; the high school is at the end of James St. There is plenty of parking in the Visitor Lot. The meeting room is just inside the main entrance, on

the right.] For more info, contact President Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

Thursday, November 4

Field Trip. Frederick. First Thursdays. Leader and destination to be announced. Meet at Culler Lake in Baker Park at 8 AM. Return at approximately 11 AM. For info, please contact Pat Caro, 301-845-6246.

MEETING. Frederick. MD/DC Records Committee chair *Phil Davis* will return to our club, this time to present his program on "Birding the Bering Sea." 6 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Field Trip. Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Friday, November 5

MEETING. Anne Arundel. 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. "Understanding the Importance of Forests for Climate, Water, Birds, and Other Critters." *Dr. Geoffrey Parker*, Senior Scientist, Forest Ecology Laboratory, Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC). For add'l info contact Gerald Winegrad, gwwabc@comcast.net.

MEETING. Harford. "Excerpts from an Expedition Notebook: Adding a Pixel to the West African Bird Picture from Coastal Gabon." *Dave Ziolkowski*, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. Dinner at 6:15 PM, program at 7 PM at Churchville Presbyterian Church, MD 22 and MD 136. For info/dinner reservations, call Dave Webb, 410-939-3537.

Field Trip. Washington. Visit Project Owl net at Lamb's Knoll and observe Saw-whet Owl banding by Steve Huy. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Last-minute cancellation possible due to wind or rain. Meet at the Boonsboro P&R next to Thompson's Gas at 9:15 PM. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 to register.

Saturday, November 6

Field Trip. Anne Arundel. Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Youth Birding Trip. Everyone welcome! Wayne Bell and YMOS members will lead this half-day trip. Meet 7 AM at Parole P&R. Contact David Gillum, 410-266-8775, for more info.

MEETING AND ANNUAL BANQUET.

Allegany/Garrett. Speaker: *Caroline Blizzard*, Director/Ranger, Discovery Center at Deep Creek Lake SP. "Monarch Migration and Land Conservation." Do our land management practices in Garrett County impact the survival of a butterfly that passes through and spends five months of its life in another country? Gathering starts at 5:30 PM, Dinner at 6 PM, at the Frostburg United Methodist Church. Please contact Charlotte Folk for dinner reservations at 301-689-6587 or mail your check to her at 179 Mt. Pleasant St, Frostburg, MD 21532. The cost for the dinner is \$15.

Field Trip. Harford. Susquehanna SP. This trip is especially designed for beginning birders. Join two former educators who are ready to share their skills and knowledge with those who are ready to enjoy a new interest. Bring your binoculars and your curiosity. Kids are especially welcome. Meet at 8 AM at the Rock Run Mill. Leaders are Tom Congersky, 410-658-4137 or njntcon@zoominternet.net, and Randy Robertson.

Field Trip. Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, November 7

H Anne Arundel. Sands Rd and Wooten's Landing. Sparrows and grassland birds. Meet 7 AM at Parole P&R for this half-day trip. Leader: Stan Arnold, 410-428-7567 or dy.dx@earthlink.net.

H Baltimore. Loch Raven Waterbirds and Land Birds. Possible Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, Common Loon. Scopes useful. Two-mile level walk. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net. Meet along Stone Hill Rd. All cars need to park on the same side of the road. Contact leader for meet time.

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Facilities available. Leader: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329, LBRoller@verizon.net.

H Montgomery. Lois Green Park. Half day. Explore the varied of habitats of this new 204-acre Montgomery Co park. Songbirds, raptors, waterfowl are possible. Meet at 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd, Gaithersburg. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call leader, Ed Patten, at 301-948-5648.

H Talbot. Jack's Field Farm (adjacent to the Mill Creek Sanctuary). Late migrant birds of fields, forest edges, and marsh lands. Leaders: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169, and Terry Allen, 410-822-8132. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM. Breakfast host: Sue Ormsby.

Tuesday, November 9

MEETING. **Kent.** "Panama: Pulling the Tails of Natural History in a Land of Winged Jewels and Poop-slinging Monkeys" by *David Ziolkowski*. 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave, Chestertown. For info contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

MEETING. **Patuxent.** "Motmots, Trogons, and Tropical Falcons" by *Kurt Schwarz*. MOS Conservation Chair Kurt Schwarz will share his adventures on a birding tour to the San Blas area on the west coast of Mexico. 7:30 PM at the College Park Airport Annex. Add'l in info at <http://www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html>.

Thursday, November 11

MEETING. **Howard.** "An Edge Effect at the Landscape Scale—Daily Commuting by Brown-headed Cowbirds," by *Dr. David Curson*, Director of Bird Conservation, Audubon MD-DC. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard County Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

H Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash. Blue Mash is hoppin' with Little Brown Jobs, making it a good place to work on the basics of sparrow ID. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Half day. For reservations, time, and directions, contact leader: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252 or lydiaschindler@verizon.net.

Saturday, November 13

H Anne Arundel. Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC). Half day. Meet 9 AM at Reed Center. Leader: Jess Parker. Contact Gerald Winegrad, 410-280-8956 or gwwabc@comcast.net, for more info.

H Caroline. Pelot Sanctuary Cleanup. 8 AM. Dress appropriately; bring work gloves and trash bags. Coordinator: Bill Scudder. Directions: From Greensboro, go north on Route 313 about 1.5 miles to Red Bridges Rd. Go east on Red Bridges Rd (dirt road) about 1 mi. to Drapers Mill Rd. Turn right on Drapers Mill Rd and go about one-half mi. to the sanctuary. Info: Debby Bennett at firefly5845@hotmail.com.

H Harford. Gunpowder Falls SP. Fall songbirds abound in this wooded valley. Meet at Youth's Benefit ES on Rte 152 at 7:30 AM. The leader is Russ Kovach, 410-457-4274 or Russell.kovach@gmail.com.

H Howard. Howard Waterfowl Search. Plan to visit Columbia lakes and search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other water birds. Easy walking involved. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Facilities available. Meet 8 AM at Broken Land Pkwy parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, krschwa1@verizon.net, 410-461-1643.

H Kent. Assateague Island, Worcester County. A prime location for sea ducks, late shorebirds, and gannets at the beaches and marshes, and late migratory land birds in thickets and dune woodlands. Full day; bring lunch. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Sunday, November 14

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 7 listing. Leader: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329, LBRoller@verizon.net. Facilities available.

H Talbot. Wye Island for waterfowl, raptors, and winter sparrows. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7AM. Breakfast hosts: Margaret and Ernie Maher.

Wednesday, November 17

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Protecting Bird Habitats outside the U.S." More than 360 species of birds that breed in the U.S. spend significant parts of their life cycle beyond our borders. The conservation of habitats that "our" birds rely on is essential to their survival. *Matt Jeffery* of Audubon's International Alliances Program will illustrate NAS's approach to conservation by focusing on successes in Veracruz, Mexico, home to the world-renowned River of Raptors. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Anna Urciolo at urcioloa@sidwell.edu.

Calendar *continued from page 11*

Thursday, November 18

MEETING. Caroline. *Jay Flemming:* "Wildlife Photographs of the Delmarva Peninsula." Jay's passion for photography came from his father, Kevin Fleming, a former National Geographic photographer and now a book publisher. For a sample of Jay's spectacular work, go to www.jayflemmingphotography.com. 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

MEETING. Talbot. *Donna Anderson* will show her bird photographs from AZ and TX. 7 PM at William Hill Manor Auditorium, Easton. Info: Cathy Cooper, coopercw@goeaston.net.

Saturday, November 20

Baltimore. Blackwater NWR. All-day trip to see ducks and thousands of Canada and Snow Geese. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl possible in late afternoon. Bring lunch. Meet at Nursery Rd P&R at 7:30 AM or at the Blackwater Visitor Center at 9:30 AM. No reservations necessary. Leaders: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com, and Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. Continuing survey of bird activity at the Fort. Scope useful. Automatically cancelled in bad weather. Meet 8 AM in the park, outside the Visitor Center. See Nov 3 listing for directions. Park outside the Fort (on the left just before the gate on the lot along Wallace St.) Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Carroll. Piney Run Park. Moderate walking around Piney Run Lake for early waterfowl, late migrants, and winter residents. Meet 8 AM at parking lot outside the gate to Piney Run Park on Martz Rd. For info call Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117.

Frederick. Pickering Creek Audubon Center. Three-quarter-day trip. We will be met at the site by Les Roslund, an expert on this fine property. Waterfowl, Winter Wren, sparrows, and other grassland birds will be our primary targets. Contact leader, Kathy Calvert, 301-698-1298, for meeting time and place.

Harford. Eastern Neck NWR. Enjoy the wintering waterfowl in this nearby NWR in Kent Co. Meet leaders Dennis Kirkwood, 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net, and Ruth Bergstrom at the I-95/MD 155 P&R at 7:30 AM.

Montgomery. Blackwater NWR. Dorchester Co. Full day (to dusk). Ducks and thousands of Canada and Snow Geese. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Rough-legged Hawk and Short-eared Owl possible in late afternoon. Bring lunch and drinks. Reservations required. Limit: 12. For meeting place and time, contact the leader, Andy Martin, apmartin2@comcast.net or 301-529-2066 (cell).

Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Tri-County. Bombay Hook NWR, DE. Waterfowl, sparrows, geese, etc. Meet 7:30 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Contact leader Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853 for more info. Bring lunch and drinks.

Sunday, November 21

Anne Arundel. Blackwater NWR, Dorchester County. Waders, waterfowl, and eagles. Meet 8 AM at the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot (located off Rte 50 on Whitehall Rd). Leader: Bobbi Reichwein, 410-798-5940. Bring lunch.

H Indicates Field Trip

Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 7 listing. Leader: Bonnie Ott, bonnieott@verizon.net or 410-461-3361. Facilities available.

Kent. Kent County Waterfowl. Twenty or more species of ducks and geese migrate through or to Kent Co. We will explore landings, small ponds, and Chesapeake Bay to see how many of them have arrived before Thanksgiving. Half day; bring snacks. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Montgomery. Lilypons/New Design Road. Half day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and American Tree Sparrows and possibly Sora and American Bittern. Reservations required. For more info and reservations, contact the Leader: Gail Mackiernan, 301-989-1828.

Talbot. Pickering Creek Audubon Center for waterfowl, Winter Wren, wintering sparrows, and other grassland birds. Leader: Kelsey ("Kestrel") Frey, 410-822-4903 x22. Breakfast host: Bobbi Wells. Contact Kelsey for start time.

Monday, November 22

MEETING. Tri-County. "Birding in Peru" with *Ron Gutberlet*. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, November 23

MEETING. Washington. *Sue Muller* will discuss the restoration efforts for MD's state insect, the Baltimore checkerspot butterfly. Learn about the state's checkerspot population, its host plant, and their fragile wetland meadow habitat. 7 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-797-8454 for further info.

Saturday, November 27

* **Cecil.** Eagles at Conowingo Dam. Half day. Meet 9 AM at Fisherman's Park lot below dam. Leaders: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net, and Charley Gant.

Sunday, November 28

H Harford. Conowingo Dam. Meet 8 AM at Fisherman's Park below the dam. Eagle numbers are at their peak, with the possibility of Golden Eagle as well as 100+ Bald Eagles. Waterfowl and early winter songbirds should also be present. Contact leader, Les Eastman, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com.

H Howard. Centennial Park. 2-3 hours. See Nov 7 listing. Leader: Jeff Culler, cullersful@hotmail.com or 410-465-9006. Facilities available.

H Patuxent. Piscataway Creek. Meet 7 AM at the Beltway Plaza P&R to carpool. Reservations required. Contact Dave Mozurkewich at 301-459-3375 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net for more info.

H Talbot. Prime Hook NWR, DE. Leader: Dave Palmer, 410-829-3376. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM.

Tuesday, November 30

H Washington. Black Hill RP, Montgomery Co. Depart 8 AM from the Rte 66 P&R. Call Ann Mitchell at 240-420-0808 for details.

Wednesday, December 1

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Nov 3 listing. Meet 8 AM at Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

MEETING. **Carroll.** "State of the Bay" by *Heather Tuckfield*, Chesapeake Bay Foundation. 7:30 PM at the Carroll Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave, Westminster. Contact Dave Harvey at 410-795-3117 for more info.

MEETING. **Cecil.** "Christmas Count" with *Laura Belascio*. 7 PM Elkton HS, 110 James St, Elkton, Rm B120. [See Nov 3 listing for directions.] For more info, contact President Maryanne Dolan, maryanne.dolan@gmail.com.

Thursday, December 2

H Frederick. First Thursdays. Leader and destination TBA. Meet at Baker Park by Culler Lake at 8 AM. Return at approximately 11 AM. For info, please contact Pat Caro, 301-845-6246.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND MEETING. **Frederick.** Our featured speaker will be *George Jett*, presenting "A Photographic Big Year in Maryland." Dinner will be at the COZY Restaurant in Thurmont at 6 PM at a cost of \$15.50 per person. Please make reservations with and send money to Treasurer Nancy Parker before 11/25/10.

H Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Friday, December 3

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. "Changes in Bird Populations in MD and the Continent at Large from 44 Years of the North American Breeding Bird Survey." *Dave Ziolkowski, Jr.*, Program Biologist, North American Breeding Bird Survey, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. For add'l info contact Gerald Winegrad, gwwabc@comcast.net.

H Anne Arundel. Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center Night Hike. Meet 9:30 PM at location. Dress warmly; bring a chair and a flashlight. Leader: Larry Zoller, 410-987-9354.

Saturday, December 4

MOS BOARD MEETING. 10 A.M. Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, Millersville, Anne Arundel Co. For more information, contact Janet Shields, MOS Secretary, at 410-901-1039 or janetbill@prodigy.net.

H Anne Arundel. Sandy Point SP and Vicinity. Shorebirds, waterfowl, and local birds. Half day. Meet 8 AM at the Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot [located off Rte 50 on Whitehall Rd]. Leader: Hal Wierenga, 410-647-7439. \$3/car State Park fee.

H Baltimore. Southern Maryland. All-day trip to Point Lookout and other locations. Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, Great Cormorant, Bald Eagle, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Brown Pelican, and gannet all possible. Birding near cars

with minimal walking. Meet 7:30 AM at Nursery Rd P&R. Bring lunch. Scopes useful. Bundle up for cold weather and wind. Leaders: Kevin Graff, whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com, and Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

H Harford. DE Coast. Meet at the I-95/MD 155 P&R at 6:30 AM. This trip will visit several hotspots along the DE Bay for wintering specialties. Contact leader Russ Kovach for further details at 410-457-4274 or russell.kovach@gmail.com.

H Howard. Blackwater NWR, Drorchester Co. Full day. Plan to stop at the Choptank River Bridge for ducks and coffee. Bring lunch and drinks. Dress warmly! Entrance fee or Duck Stamp required. E-mail the leader to reserve a spot and get details. We will carpool. Leader: Stan Arnold, dy.dx@earthlink.net, 410-768-0155. Facilities at some spots.

H Patuxent. Fran Uhler NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the end of Lemon Bridge Rd off MD 197, just north of Bowie State U. and the MARC line. No reservations required. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, December 5

H Baltimore. Loch Raven. Water birds and land birds. Possible Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, Common Loon. Scopes useful. Two-mile level walk. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net. Meet along Stone Hill Rd. All cars need to park on the same side of the road. Meet 8 AM.

Tuesday, December 7

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave. Our wintering waterfowl, their biology, and conservation issues, with *Doug Forsell*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. For more info contact Pete Webb at 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Calendar *continued from page 13*

Thursday, December 9

MEETING. Howard. "Twenty Years of Changing Birdlife: Results of the 2002-2006 MD-DC Atlas Project," by *Walter Ellison*, coordinator/editor of the just-published *Atlas*. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard County Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Ward Ebert, 301-490-5807.

Saturday, December 11

🏠 Anne Arundel. Eastern Neck NWR, Kent County. Wintering waterfowl and other land birds. Meet 7 AM at Bay 50 Shopping Center parking lot [off Rte 50 on Whitehall Rd]. Leader: Tom Bradford, 410-987-0674, tabslab@aol.com. Bring lunch.

🏠 Carroll. Conowingo Dam, Susquehanna River. Meet 8:30 AM at the parking lot at Conowingo. Checking for winter birds and rarities at dam and along the river. For info call Dave Harvey, 410-795-3117.

🏠 Tri-County. Trip to Wicomico County visiting the Nanticoke River and other Wicomico birding areas. Bring lunch and drinks. Leader: Ron Gutberlet, 410-334-2655.

🏠 Washington. Big Pool. Half day. Call Doris Berger at 301-739-8907 for starting time and place.

Sunday, December 12

🏠 Montgomery. Occoquan NWR, Woodbridge, VA. We will look for sparrows and other field birds and waterfowl. Meet 8 AM at the refuge car park. Bring lunch and warm drink. Reservations required. [Take I-95 south to exit 161 (Woodbridge), follow Rte 1 South, cross the Occoquan River, and turn left at the light onto Dawson Beach Road. Follow road to end at refuge entrance and proceed to large parking lot on right. Reservations required. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com.

Tuesday, December 14

MEETING. Kent. "Uganda" by *Gail Mackiernan*. 7:30 PM at Wesley Hall, Heron Point, E Campus Ave,

Chestertown. For info contact Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568.

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY AND SLIDE SHOW. Patuxent. 6 PM at Watkins RP Nature Center. Our annual gathering and slide show. Bring your favorite slides or photos from the past year to share with the group. Add'l in info at <http://www.pgaudubon.org/programs.html>.

Wednesday, December 15

MEETING. Montgomery. "Birding in Singapore, Sulawesi, and Halmahera—Crossing the Wallace Line." *Mike Welch's* birding adventures in Singapore, a modern city-state with several nature preserves, were followed by birding two islands in Indonesia noted for their endemic species. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, December 16

🏠 Patuxent. Lake Artemesia (Luther Goldman Birding Trail). Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 3 PM at the parking lot at Berwyn Rd and Ballew Ave in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Call 301-459-3375 for more info.

Saturday, December 18

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Baltimore Harbor.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Catoctin Mountain.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Oakland/Garrett.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Denton.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Triadelphia Reservoir.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Washington, DC.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Wachapreague, VA.

🏠 Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. See Nov 3 listing. Meet 8 AM at Visitor Center. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

🏠 Patuxent. Governor Bridge NA. Joint trip with PGAS. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot for Governor Bridge Park. No reservations required. Park is located on Governor Bridge Rd, approximately 1 mile east of MD 301. If you have questions, contact trip leader Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Sunday, December 19

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Salisbury.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Port Tobacco.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Lower Kent County.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Elkton.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Jug Bay.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Seneca.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Allegany County.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. St. Michaels.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Nassawadox/Brownsville, VA.

Sunday, December 26

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Southern Dorchester County/Blackwater.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Point Lookout.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Chesterville.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Rock Run/Harford.

Monday, December 27

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Crisfield.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Washington County.

Tuesday, December 28

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Ocean City.

Wednesday, December 29

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Central Loudoun.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Chincoteague N.W.R., VA.

Thursday, December 30

🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Cape Charles, VA.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Bowie.
 🌿 CHRISTMAS COUNT. Seaford-Nanticoke, DE.

Saturday, January 1

🏠 Baltimore. Loch Raven. Start the New Year birding. Varied habitats including woods, fields, and the reservoir. Probably also other sites for a "Big Day" in Baltimore City and Co. See Nov 7 listing for directions but meet at 8:30 AM. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

🏠 Harford. Get your 2011 birding list off to an early start. Contact Tom Gibson at gibsonlld@aol.com for trip location, time, and further details.

🏠 Indicates Field Trip

H Howard. Start Your 2011 List. Half day. Plan to carpool to different locations to find as many species as possible. The one day of the year where every bird is new! Meet 8 AM at boat ramp of Centennial Park. Expect moderate walking. Possibility of lunch stop, depending on the weather. Facilities at some spots. Leader: Bonnie Ott, 410-461-3361.

H Montgomery. Earliest Bird Walk, Georgetown Reservoir and DC Hotspots. Half day. Start the New Year right. Meet 8 AM at Georgetown Res., DC, by the gate leading to the dike between the pools. Reservations required. Limit: 20. Leader: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com.

Sunday, January 2

H CHRISTMAS COUNT. Patuxent River.

H CHRISTMAS COUNT. Sugarloaf

Mountain.

H CHRISTMAS COUNT. Fort Belvoir.

H CHRISTMAS COUNT. Annapolis-Gibson Island.

Wednesday, January 5

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Nov 3 listing. Meet 8 AM at Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, January 6

H Frederick. First Thursdays. Leader and destination TBA. Meet at Baker Park by Culler Lake at 8 AM. Return at approximately 11 AM. For info, please contact Pat Caro, 301-845-6246.

MEETING. **Frederick.** Our own *Mike Welch* will describe his recent adventures in Singapore and Indonesia. 6 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick

Friday, January 7

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** 8 PM at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. "Beginning a New Life—The Crafton's Seven-Year Circumnavigation of the Earth." *Tom Crafton and family.* After many years of living in Alaska, Tom Crafton's family left Severna Park to sail about the world in their '43 sailboat, Nueva

Vida (New Life). For add'l info contact Gerald Winegrad, gwwabc@comcast.net.

DINNER MEETING. **Harford. Frank Marsden** presents "The Ramblings of an Eden Mill Naturalist and Wannabe Wildlife Photographer." 7 PM at Churchville Presbyterian Church. Contact Dave Webb at 410-939-3537 or porzana@comcast.net for add'l info. Inclement weather date is Jan 14.

Saturday, January 8

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY. **Carroll.** Once again hosted by Splinter and Sue Yingling at 70 Ridge Rd in Westminster. If you've never attended before, now's the time to start. Everyone has a good time. 7:30 PM until ? For more info and to coordinate your potluck dish, contact Sue Yingling at 410-857-0902 or syingling@mac.com.

H Kent. Kick off your birding year with a half day at Eastern Neck NWR for waterfowl, eagles, and winter land birds. Meet 8 AM at Dollar General Store parking lot, Chestertown. Leaders: Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or rossgull@baybroadband.net.

Sunday, January 9

COVERED DISH DINNER AND LECTURE. **Baltimore.** Note new location! 5 PM at Vollmer Center at Cylburn. Tonight's featured talk: "Trogons and Motmots: A February Trip to the West Coast of Mexico around San Blas. Mangroves, Mountains, and Beaches" with *Kurt Schwartz* from the Howard Bird Club. Please contact Joan Cwi in advance, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net, to let her know you are coming and what you plan to bring.

AUDREY CARROLL MID-WINTER COUNT. **Frederick.** Meet at the Sanctuary at 6:30 AM. Dress warmly and wear waterproof boots. Call David Smith, 410-549-7082, for info.

H Harford. Lower Susquehanna River Valley. Bird from Havre de Grace north to Conowingo and down the Cecil shore. Expect eagles,

waterfowl, sparrows, and more. Meet at Tydings Park at 8 AM. Contact Tom Gibson for further info at 410-734-4135 or gibsonlld@aol.com.

H Montgomery. Western County Winter Mixed Bag. Three-quarter to full day. Dress for the weather. Trip may involve a total of 3-4 miles walked by day's end. Reservations required. For meeting time and place, contact the leader, Andy Martin, 301-529-2066 or apmartin2@comcast.net.

H Tri-County. MD and DE Coasts. Full day. Search for winter specialties and perhaps a rarity from recent CBCs. Bring lunch. Meet 7:30 AM Ward Museum parking lot. Contact leader Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497, for directions and more details.

Christmas Bird Counts *continued from page 16*

Chincoteague N.W.R., VA. Compiler: Dick Roberts, 757-336-1799 or bandbird@verizon.net.

Thursday, December 30

Cape Charles, VA. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Bowie. Contact: Fred Fallon, 410-286-8152 or fwfallon@earthlink.net.

Seaford-Nanticoke, DE. For more info contact compiler: Glen Lovelace, Glen.Lovelace@state.de.us or 302-628-3978 (h) or 302-760-2321 (w).

Sunday, January 2, 2011

Patuxent River. Compiler: Andy Brown, 410-535-5327 or brownaj@co.cal.md.us.

Sugarloaf Mountain. If you can help out, contact Helen Horrocks (Frederick), 301-831-6315/hlh_37@yahoo.com or Janet Millenson (Montgomery), 301-983-9337/janet@twocrows.com.

Fort Belvoir, VA. MD area Compiler: Carol Ghebelian, 301-753-6754 or ghebelian@comcast.net. VA Compiler: Kurt Gaskill, 703-768-2172 or kurtcapt87@verizon.com.

Annapolis-Gibson Island. Coordinators: Sue Ricciardi, 410-647-9513 and Hal and Lynn Wierenga, 410-647-7439.

LAST CALL

...for **Research Proposals**. Grants (generally no more than \$2,000) are available for ornithological research in the state of Maryland. Applications are due by December 1. Notification of awards will be made in about 8 weeks. For info, contact Dave Ziolkowski, 443-299-8453.

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

*Cylburn Mansion
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2010 Christmas Bird Counts**Saturday, December 18**

Baltimore Harbor. Birders of all experience levels urged to participate. For area assignment, contact Compiler: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Catoctin Mountain. Call Mike Welch, 301-685-3561, to participate.

Oakland/Garrett. To participate, contact Connie Skipper at connieskipper@hohnet.com or 301-387-5227.

Denton. Coordinator: Steve Westre, 410-479-0338 or swestre26@comcast.net.

Triadelphia Reservoir. Compiler: David Holmes, musicbndr@verizon.net (preferred) or 410-730-7083.

Washington, DC. Compiler: Larry Cartwright. Info: Carol Hayes at Audubon Naturalist Society, carolh@audubonnaturalist.org or 301-652-9188 x10.

Wachapreague, VA. Compiler: Irv Ailes, irvailles@verizon.net.

Sunday, December 19

Salisbury. Take a break from the holiday rush and join this traditional Christmas birding event. Compilers: Sam Dyke, 410-742-5497, and Mike Walsh, 410-546-8425.

Port Tobacco. Compiler, Gwen Brewer, 301-843-3524 or Glbrewer@comcast.net.

Lower Kent County. Full day of counting, followed by countdown dinner. Contact compiler Nancy Martin, 410-778-9568 or borealdee@baybroadband.net, for area assignments or more info.

Elkton. Compiler: Laura Balascio, avocet@udel.edu. Tally Rally 4 PM, location TBA.

Jug Bay. Compiler: Sam Droege, 301-497-5840 (w), 301-390-7759 (h), or sdroege@usgs.gov.

Seneca. Compiler: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (h), 240-375-4500 (m), or markengland@canamcontractors.com.

Allegany County. To participate, contact J.B. Churchill at 301-697-1223 or jchurchi@atlanticbb.net to get an area assignment.

St. Michaels. Compilers: Wayne Bell, wayne.bell@washcoll.edu, and Shirley Bailey. Potluck dinner at 5:30 PM at Christ Church Parish Hall, St. Michaels. Dinner Coordinator: Margie Steffens, 410-822-1966.

Nassawadox/Brownsville, VA. Compiler: Harry Armistead, 215-248-4120 or harryarmistead@hotmail.com.

Sunday, December 26

Southern Dorchester County/Blackwater. Compiler: Chan Robbins, crobbs@usgs.gov.

Point Lookout. Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 410-394-1300 or 410-610-5124 (m) or bobboxwell@hotmail.com.

Chesterville. Compiler: Maren Gimpel at funkymoss@yahoo.com or 912-660-1541.

Rock Run/Harford. Contact the compiler Mark Johnson, mark.steven.johnson@comcast.net, to volunteer and be assigned to a group.

Monday, December 27

Crisfield. Compiler: Paul Bystrak, shrike@comcast.net or 443-783-1268 (m) or 410-572-9950 (h).

Washington County. Contact coordinator Dave Weesner, 301-302-6376, to help with the local effort.

Tuesday, December 28

Ocean City. Compiler: Jay Sheppard, 301-725-5559 or JMSheppar@aol.com.

Wednesday, December 29

Central Loudoun, VA. (This count includes 5 miles along the C&O Canal in MD near White's Ferry.) Compiler: Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542 or joecoleman@rstarmail.com.

continued on page 15