Spring is a very exciting time of year, especially for bird watching. It gives us the opportunity to observe their behavior, sounds and colorful patterns. Days are longer and it’s a great time to be outdoors and connect with nature, which is so important in these modern times. There have been many studies that indicate outdoor recreational activities, including birding, are associated with an increase feeling of wellbeing and life satisfaction in general. It could also promote positive attitudes and actions toward conservation of all natural resources.

As mentioned in previous issues, Birdcast – which was created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology – is a great tool for forecasting bird migration. Using their Migration Dashboard by entering a state or county will give you a good idea of what is flying over an area that night in real time. Based on last year’s data it predicts that early May could be peak migration this year for our region.

Locally, this year, three field trips have been planned concurrently for late April and early May to focus on warblers at Susquehanna State Park. Please check our Facebook page, website, and newsletter for more information. Hope you can join us.

The Spring 2023 issue of Living Bird magazine had a very interesting article entitled “What If State Birds Were Determined by Data?” The article provided an analysis of eBird data to determine what the state birds might look like if based upon population distribution. It was quite different.

Some Highlights:

1. What was the most popular state bird? (Listed in 7 states) ___
2. What was the second most popular state bird? (Listed in 6 states) ___
3. What was the third most popular state bird? (Listed in 5 states) ___
4. What bird could replace the Baltimore Oriole as Maryland’s State Bird? (A) Northern Cardinal (B) Seaside Sparrow (C) Eastern Bluebird (D) American Robin

Answers found below.

The only two states that kept their state birds based on the eBird assessment were Louisiana (Brown Pelican) and Oklahoma (Scissor-Tailed Flycatcher). The American Robin was only listed by 3 states.

Answers: 1. Northern Cardinal 2. Western Meadowlark 3. Northern Mockingbird 4. Seaside Sparrow. (13.3% of the global population breed in Maryland). Interestingly enough, Maryland has less than 1% of the world’s population of the Baltimore Oriole.

Happy Birding!

~Joe Stevens, President

Visit the Harford Bird Club website at Harfordbirdclub.org
Club News?
Have news the club should know about? Births, deaths, marriages, or any other notable events that belong in the newsletter? Please contact Secretary Deb Stewart: 410-879-2364 or debstewart1307@gmail.com.

New Members
A warm Harford Bird Club welcome goes out to the following members:

Brenden Biondi of Whiteford
Marcie Birk of Bel Air
Diane Flemming of Earleville
Cyle Griffith of Delta
Craig Killoran of Bel Air
Deecan Sumutka of Jarrettsville
Braeden Travers of Bel Air

**Membership dues for the September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023 year are past due.**

Please complete the online form, or print and fill out the form on page 12. and mail your dues to Eric Vangrin. Remember The Harford Bird Club is a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society. Paying online or by check to Eric includes you on the club roster for both the Maryland Ornithological Society and the Harford Bird Club.

### Harford Bird Club Executive Board

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Vacant</td>
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<td>May Count Coordinator</td>
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Visit the Harford Bird Club website at Harfordbirdclub.org
Volunteer of the Year
Deborah Stewart

Rookie of the Year
Patrick Campbell

Birder of the Year
Co-Awardee: Dr. Dave Larkin

Birder of the Year
Co-Awardee: Dr. Bob Werrlein

Horizon Award
Churchville Elementary

Community Support Award
Peter Jay

Mary Murray, HBC Education Coordinator; Joe Stevens, HBC President; Nicole Murray, CVES SLP and Bird Buddies moderator; Bobby Postestio, CVES Assistant Principal; Jordyn Schellenberger, Levering Schellenberger, and L.J. Minutoli, Bird Buddies members

Bird of the Year: Peregrine Falcons at Conowingo Dam
Constellation Energy picture not available

Visit the Harford Bird Club website at Harfordbirdclub.org
Ruby Throated Hummingbirds — They’re Back!

For many in the Mid Atlantic, it’s the best part of Tax Day (April 15th): an easy date many use to signal the return of the ruby throated hummingbird, Marylanders’ favorite (well and only!) hummingbird. With social media keeping everyone in close touch, and migration maps making it easier to report sightings, the anticipation of the return of the hummingbirds has been running on high for weeks. Reports in our region began around Easter, and just this past weekend people noted sightings in Elkton, Parkville, Churchville, and Joppa.

If you haven’t checked out the Hummingbird Migration Map 2023, it’s a great way to view where the birds are. At this time of year, it is being updated hourly with the most current sightings. Hummingbird-Guide.com has been tracking hummingbird migration since 2009.

View the map here>>

According to the map, there have been a few sightings now in Bel Air!

Join in the fun and post your own sightings! If you’d like to check out other locations, follow these easy directions.>>

Dispelling the Myth of the Praying Mantis

For years, a picture of a predatory praying mantis devouring a hummingbird has been circulated on social media causing great alarm. There is a small army of mantis-haters forewarning others about these “menacing murderers.” While gruesome, the Audubon comforts in the article Praying Mantis vs. Hummingbird by confirming it is rare: " ‘A mantis has to be very hungry to go after a meal as large as a hummingbird, especially since the mantis will not be able to eat the whole thing,’ says Dr. Joshua Martin, from Case Western Reserve University. ‘Praying mantis are very good for the yard, so should you see one on the feeder, just move him to another location.’ "

In a recent study conducted by Martin Nyffeler, it was found that mantis capturing hummingbirds occurs on all of our continents aside from Antarctica, and in total there were 147 instances worldwide. Cats and spiders are far more of a threat. Further, the majority of the hummingbirds killed in Europe and Africa caught in bird mist nets (not fair!) used for surveying and banding birds and mantises discovered the birds were sitting ducks in these nets and proceeded to eat them alive.

For those more sympathetic and on Team Hummingbird, you may be pleased to hear that overall many more mantises are likely eaten by birds than eat birds. For example, at least 34 species of North American birds dine on mantises!
Planting an Acre of Trees on an Old Farm

Debbie Bowers, Conservation Chair

An old farm can use new things sometimes, and even with all the maturing wooded acreage we are happy to have, more trees are welcome by all creatures, mostly small. For the first time, our farm will be host to a new tree planting, of a little over an acre along some field edges and upon a knoll. This planting will aid, over time, the drainage that flows toward a stream that has for so long been ravaged by stormwater draining from a neighboring crop field and the county road. The trees will be sheltered in plastic tubes to protect them from deer and mice and other nibblers.

And to protect birds, there will be netting over the top of the tube to keep birds from entering what appears to be a possible nesting place. Sadly, many tubes set out without nets are later discovered with remains of birds. All kinds of birds, including warblers, have been found in the tubes. If you know of tubes without nets, and know the landowner, why not offer to take a walk and look for struggling birds this Spring?

The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay coordinates the tree planting at no cost to landowners. Plus, they provide three years of no-cost mowing, weed removal and tube maintenance. We think its a good deal, and especially like the work being done for us! Contact the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to learn more.

On another note, have you been to a nursery yet to get a winterberry, hawthorne, Eastern red cedar or serviceberry? Start getting more birds into your yard by offering these native bird feeders! While you're at it, add a birdbath and remember to keep it refreshed every day. The Cornell Lab provides some sage advice for new birdbath owners in the article If you have not had a birdbath, you will be amazed at how many birds it attracts! Happy Spring!

All About Birds: Attract Birds With Birdbaths

Have you always wanted a birdbath, but never taken the plunge? Or newly inspired with the above suggestion? There are some important basics to know when setting up and maintaining a bird bath. There are a variety to chose from, and some require more care than others. But if you love birds, and want to provide a dependable supply of clean water for drinking and bathing, check out the article Attract Birds With Birdbaths. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology also provides the handout Providing Water for Birds.

When considering sun vs. shade for your bath, consult the BirdInformer.com article Should A Bird Bath Be Positioned in the Sun or Shade?
The Churchville Elementary School Bird Buddies club continues to meet once a month for a presentation and bird walk, despite the early hour and the cold winter weather. In January, Dr. Dennis Kirkwood took the young birders on a virtual tour of Antarctica with slides and stories from his recent trip. Everyone was excited to meet the penguins! In February, Mary Murray presented a lesson on the amazing adaptations of vultures. In March, Joe Subolefsky shared his beautiful photos of the birds of Harford County and explained his techniques for capturing these wonderful shots. The intrepid young birders braved cold temperatures and high winds for walks around the school campus. They continue to find a nice variety of birds, thanks to their feeding stations.

Harford Bird Club was proud to award the 2022 Horizon Award to Churchville Elementary School in recognition of their support of youth birding. After applying for and receiving a grant from HBC to erect bird feeding stations around the campus, CVES had to wait until after the pandemic to implement their project. This year the feeding stations finally went up and the entire school community is engaged in bird watching. Many classes spend their indoor recess watching the birds come to the feeders. Fourth grade Bird Buddies club members are responsible for keeping the feeders filled. The Horizon Award included two backpacks donated by the Maryland Ornithological Society. Each backpack contained a pair of binoculars, field guides, Harford County bird checklist, and a bird-themed read-aloud book with supportive lesson plans. The backpacks will be kept in the school library so that classroom teachers may check them out. They were also presented with a gift card from The Mill Store for birdseed. Congratulations to the CVES school community and Bird Buddies!

Harford Bird Club Summer Social

Friday, July 14th—Tidewater Marina, Havre de Grace

More information to come on our upcoming summer social tradition.

We hope you can join us for fun and bird-loving fellowship!
Spring is upon us - the trees and flowers are blooming and the birds are migrating. This report includes the early migrants coming in and some final sightings of the season for our winter residents. It covers the period from February 1st through March 31st, 2023.

Geese, Ducks, Egrets, Hawks, Rails, Shorebirds
MJ saw a Greater White-fronted Goose at Swan Harbor on Feb 10th. It was also seen there on Feb 26th. JK reported the continuing pair of Trumpeter Swans at the Edgewood Home Depot pond on Feb 9th. Others saw them there or nearby through Mar 2nd. MG saw a male and a female Wood Duck at Swan Harbor on Feb 2nd. MJ saw a pair at Susquehanna State Park on Feb 9th. JG also saw 2 males and a female in Darlington on Feb 12th. MJ saw 2 Long-tailed Ducks flying upriver near Susquehanna State Park on Mar 7th. He and JM also saw one at Swan Harbor on Mar 16th.

KD reported a Great Egret near Conowingo Dam on Mar 1st. Apparently, it had been seen there a few days before that. TH also saw on at Rustica Farm on Mar 28th. VS saw his first ever Osprey at Swan Harbor on Mar 11th. MJ saw the continuing Red-shouldered x Red-tailed hawk hybrid at Susquehanna State Park throughout the period. JM heard a Virginia Rail at Bosely Conservancy on Mar 25th. MJ counted 24 American Coots at Swan Harbor on Mar 12th. 2 of them were “white shielded.” These were seen there through Mar 19th. KG counted 33 Sandhill Cranes at the Days Cove portion of Gunpowder Falls State Park on Feb 25th. MJ found a Dunlin at the Home Depot pond on Mar 24th. DK reported the third female American Woodcock in 43 years at the Harford Glen banding station on Mar 28th. It had a brood patch.

Woodpeckers, Phoebe, Ravens, Swallows
JeK saw a Red-headed Woodpecker at Newark Farm on Mar 27th and 28th. DB was surprised to see an Eastern Phoebe in her Street yard on Feb 2nd. DK saw and heard a Common Raven flying over Bradenbaugh Rd on Feb 11th. RC saw one near the Ma and Pa Trail on Mar 4th. MH heard one in Fallston on Mar 6th. MJ saw a group of 2, followed by a group of 3, flying to the northwest over Susquehanna State Park on Mar 6th. JR saw at least 54 Tree Swallows near Eagle Point in Edgewood on Feb 10th. JG saw 100 or more near Conowingo Dam on Feb 25th. MJ also saw 75 near Lapidum that same day.

Chickadees, Nuthatches, Thrush, Warblers, Blackbirds, Orioles, Finches
MJ saw a Black-capped Chickadee at the Woodley Road pond on Feb 16th. JM saw one at Mullins Park on Mar 28th. DWM had a Red-breasted Nuthatch and a Purple Finch at her feeder in Forest Hill on Feb 19th. She also had a Baltimore Oriole visiting her feeders daily. JM saw a Red-breasted Nuthatch near Country Club Rd on Feb 22nd. DB also had one at her feeder in Street throughout the period. DB also saw a Hermit Thrush at her birdbath on Mar 27th. MJ saw a Pine Warbler near Country Club Rd on Feb 21st. DB saw one at her suet feeder in Street on Mar 23rd. AW saw and photographed a Yellow-headed Blackbird at Mariner Point Park on Mar 26th.

Contributors

Visit the Harford Bird Club website at Harfordbirdclub.org
Harford Bird Club Field Trips

**April 22 (Sat.)** Warblers and Wildflowers at Susquehanna State Park — Enjoy discovering the beauty of colorful spring wildflowers and the gorgeous spring plumage of migrant and resident bird species. Leaders are Colleen Webster (410-459-4577; cwebster@harford.edu), Eric Vangrin (evangrin@msn.com; 443-417-7219), and Sue Procell (443-417-4919; procellmd@gmail.com). Meet at **8:00 AM** at the parking area at the confluence of Deer Creek and the Susquehanna River just north of Rock Run Mill.

**April 30 (Sun) Susquehanna State Park** — The second of three trips to focus on warblers in one of the best migration spots in the county. Join Mark Johnson (410-692-5978; markjohnson2@gmail.com) walking the trails at this historic location. Targets are Yellow-throated Warblers, Baltimore Oriole, and Louisiana Waterthrushes. Meet at the parking area at Rock Run Mill at **7:00 AM**.

**May 6 (Sat.) Warbler walk at Susquehanna State Park** — Meet at the parking area at Rock Run Mill at **7:00 AM**. Take a stroll through the park in search of spring migrants, especially the beautiful but, difficult to find and ID warblers. While warblers will be the focus of the trip, there should be plenty of other songbirds, as well as waterfowl and waders out on the river. The leader is Brad Phoebus (443-415-9776; bradphoebus@gmail.com).

**May 13 (Sat.) Harford Glen** — We will begin this tour with sightings from the parking lot, then proceed to the triple riparian habitat of the Atiskisson Reservoir, the faster flowing Winters Run and the Plumtree Run tributary. The woodland trails and the open meadows offer great opportunities for good birding. Join expert birder Lynn Feryus (443-910-5570; lfery@verizon.net) who will be leading our trip. Meet at the Harford Glen parking lot at **7:30 AM**.

**May 20 (Sat.) Eden Mill** — Join expert birder, Matt Addicks (maddicks@harfordcountymd.gov) while walking the trails along Deer Creek. Expect to see warblers, breeders, and some of the raptors that breed in the surrounding area. Meet at the Nature Center at **7:30 AM**.

**May 29 (Mon.) Hidden Valley (and surrounding areas)** — Meet at **7:00 AM** in the parking lot at the northern end of Madonna Road where it crosses Deer Creek. Parking space is limited. The trip will proceed along the aptly named Hidden Valley area with its sparkling stream running through a beautiful stand of the now rare mature hemlocks. From there the walk will proceed to the Bradenbaugh Flats, with stops along the way at any other sites with potential. Leader is Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; newarkfarms@gmail.com).

**June 3 (Sat.) Fair Hill, Cecil County** — With over 5,600 acres of forests, fields and wetlands, Fair Hill NRMA offers spectacular scenery and some of the best birding in Cecil County. We will explore Fair Hill’s diverse habitats for a variety of breeding species including its crown jewel, the Bobolink. This grassland species migrates over 4,000 miles every spring to breed in hayfields specifically managed to support the Bobolinks’ nesting cycle. Other likely species are Eastern Meadowlark, Veery, Scarlet Tanager, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Yellow-breasted Chat. In the interest of safety and to ensure we see target species during their peak activity, this trip starts early. Carpoolers can meet at **5:55 AM** at Darlington Park (4549 Conowingo Rd.) or individual drivers can meet at 6:30AM at Parking Lot #3 (2941 Appleton Rd.). Bring small bills to pay parking fee ($3/vehicle MD residents; $5 out-of-state). Also bring water, snacks, repellent, sunscreen and hiking boots if it has rained recently. This is an all-morning trip, although heat might cause us to stop early. Trip leader is Dave Webb (410-939-3537; porzana@comcast.net).

Con’t p. 9
Feather Identification

Sometimes you may miss the bird when out on a stroll, and only find the feathers! Did you know you can turn to a wonderful image database to help identify the bird? This wonderful resource is the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s Feather Atlas, with a database dedicated to identification and study of the flight feathers of North American birds. The feathers illustrated are from the curated collection of the national Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory. The tool allows you to select a variety of attributes to help with identification: pattern, color, size, position, and type of bird.

Field Trips continued

June 10 (Sat.) Atlas Block Buster — Help our volunteer scientists determine breeding bird populations in Harford County. These data will be added to the Maryland Breeding Bird Atlas project data collection sponsored by MOS. Details for the event to be announced later. Check the website calendar two weeks beforehand or with Harford County directors for the Atlas Project: Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; newarkfarms@gmail.com) and Matt Hafner (410-9713203; hafner.matt@gmail.com).

June 17 (Sat.) Perryville Paddle at Perryville Community Park — Bring your kayak, canoe or stand-up to ply the usually serene waters in the well-protected Mill Creek and historic Furnace Bay in search of swimmers, divers, and of course, fliers. Eagles and Osprey are often seen soaring overhead; songbirds and woodland birds frequent the shoreline; and waterfowl and heron are common sightings as well. Meet at 8:00AM at the Stump Point launch at the far end of the Perryville Community Park. Contact leaders Colleen Webster (410-459-4577; cwebster@harford.edu) or Sue Procell (443-417-4919; procellmd@gmail.com).

**For last minute notifications about any HBC trips, visit the Harford Bird Club Facebook Page.**

Avian Flu Concerns at the Conowingo Dam

An increase in vulture deaths near the Conowingo Dam is potentially due to avian flu. To be cautious, the park trail and parking lot are closed.

According to the April 11th article Avian Flu Outbreak Returns to Conowingo Dam, Renewing Poultry Industry Fears, by Chesapeake Bay Magazine. “Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) spokesperson Jessica Hackett says, ‘The increase in vulture mortalities is significant and has elicited a multiagency response. MDA, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, USDA Wildlife Services and USDA Fish and Game along with Constellation Energy [which owns and operates the dam] are working together to remove infectious carcasses to break the infection cycle.’ Hackett explains this cycle: ‘The carcasses have a large virus load and are a source of infection when consumed by healthy vultures.’”
HBC Member Sightings & Sharings

Upper Left: Coopers Hawk, Frank Marsden
Mid Center: Kestrel, Frank Marsden
Bottom Left: Horned lark, Kimberly Olivier

Upper Right: Eastern Phoebe, Frank Marsden
Mid Right: Wood duck hermit thrush, Vivek Raj
Bottom Right: Goldfinch, Shanti Sukumar Pattnaik

**These photos have been shared via Facebook**
Dinner Meeting — Save the Date!

Friday, May 5, 2023 at 6:30 pm

There will be a lite fare of pizza, drinks and dessert which will be served at 6:30pm. There will be a nominal fee of $5.00 and reservations will be required. (Please complete form below.) This will be followed by a short business meeting which will include the election of officers for the next two-year term, and then our guest presentation by Dr. Dennis Kirkwood.

Election 2023

Following our bylaws, a nominating committee was appointed for the 2023 club elections. The names of the candidates for Officers and State Directors were presented at the March meeting. No additional nominations were made.

The slate of nominees:
President: Sue Procell
Vice-President: Elaine Wagner
Treasurer: Eric Vangrin

Secretary: Deborah Stewart
State Director: Dr. Dennis Kirkwood
State Director: Diane Jones

The membership will elect the officers and state directors at the May 5th meeting.

The Harford Bird Club Dinner Reservation Form

To RSVP: please cut, complete, and return with payment by May 2, 2023.
The preferred method of payment is by check, however, if this is not doable, please contact Johanne for other arrangements. Please make checks to Harford County MOS.
Mail to: Johanne Henrickson, 128 W. Ring Factory Road. Apt. 1120, Bel Air, MD 21014
To contact: johen24@gmail.com or 410.937.1174.

_________ Number attending ($5.00 each)

Print name (s) as you would like on your name tag(s)

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Some of our bird-loving members enjoying the evening and the American Woodcock.
Photographer: Tim Houghton, February 23
May Meeting Speaker

Birding on Seven Continents - A Journey of Joy, Discovery, and Adventure
Presenter: Dr. Dennis Kirkwood

Presented by long time HBC member Dennis Kirkwood, we will see birds and other critters from across the globe and learn a little about the world’s biodiversity and the challenges facing wildlife in the future. This program will feature the photography of Jean Kirkwood and will touch on the bounty of different cultures and how wildlife and nature tend to unite and inspire us from one hemisphere to another.

Dennis is a native Harford Countian and is the seventh generation to work and live on Newark Farm. He is a graduate of North Harford High School and McDaniel College, with graduate degrees from Northern Illinois University and the University of Maryland, College Park. He spent his career with Harford County Public Schools as a classroom science teacher, director of the program at Harford Glen, and retired in 2008 after serving ten years as Supervisor of Science. He and Jean have two daughters and four grandchildren.

DNR Marylanders Plant Trees Program

You don’t have to have sizable acreage to benefit from tree programs here in Maryland. Conservation Chair Debbie Bowers references a wonderful program by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay in her article *Planting an Acre of Trees on an Old Farm* on Page 5. Every Maryland resident can take advantage of tree savings, by using the $25 off coupon included in their program flyer. This program only pertains to trees retailing for $50 or more listed in the Marylanders Plant Trees Recommended Tree List.

Planting trees is a wonderful way to help care for the birds we love so dearly.

MOS 7th Annual Convention — May 19th - 21st

Important dates to remember:
- Photo Contest is OPEN; closes on May 1st
- Registration closes on May 3rd
- Field trip sign-ups close May 16th

They are interested in more vendors/exhibitors at this year’s event. For more information, contact Bonnie Borsa (bonnie.borsa@mdbirds.org) or Meg Harris, Convention Chair.
HARFORD BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

If you would like to join or renew your Harford Bird Club and MOS membership, please print this page and mail the completed form along with a check to:

Eric Vangrin
1100 Barkley Place
Bel Air, MD. 21014

Membership Year - September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023

( ) Individual $33.00  ( ) Sustaining $63.00
( ) Life (see below)  ( ) Household $39.00
( ) Junior $10.00

OR

Memberships for those who are either members of another MOS Chapter or are MOS Life Members.

( ) Individual $13.00  ( ) Household $19.00

Please indicate your MOS membership status:

( ) MOS Life Member (After 9/1/90)
( ) Member of ______________ MOS Chapter

________________ AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Make checks payable to Harford County MOS)

( ) New Harford Bird Club Membership*  ( ) Renewal

Please give names below as they should appear on the membership list.

Married couples should give both names.

Name ______________________________________________________________________________
Street & # _____________________________________________________________________________
City, State ____________________________________________________________________________
Zip Code __________________ Telephone _________________________________________
Email Address __________________________________________________________________________

( ) Check here if this is a new address, phone number or email
( ) Check here if you object to having your name, address, and phone number listed in the state directory.

*If a new member, how did you find out about the Harford County Bird Club?

________________________________________________________________________________

An "Individual" membership is anyone 18 or older.
A "Junior" membership is someone younger than 18 whose parents are not members (i.e., not part of a household membership)
A "Household" membership is all persons residing at the same address. (A student who is away at school and wants publications mailed to the school address must be in the Individual class.)
Life Membership dues are: State $1000.00 and Chapter $300.00.
New life memberships have the option of paying $11.00* per year chapter dues in lieu of the $300.00 lump sum.
Life memberships effective prior to September 1, 1990, are exempt from any further chapter dues payment.