



# Wrenderings



*The Newsletter of the Harford Bird Club*

Volume 45 Number 23-4

Fall 2023

## President's Perch

## Inside this issue:

With Fall comes change. Temperatures cool, days shorten, the leaves on our deciduous trees lose their chlorophyll revealing the beautiful colors that have been masked all year, and billions of birds undertake incredible journeys as they migrate back to their winter habitats. It's an exciting time for birders as we flock outside to catch glimpses of these migrants, sometimes finding it challenging to identify them in their fall plumage. This year is especially exciting for me as I take on a new role as president of our club. I've spent the last three months talking with fellow members and learning the intricacies of how our club works and what gets us excited. I still have lots to learn, but I know that with the support of our dedicated board of volunteers we will have an amazing journey together sharing our interest and knowledge in birds and our joy of birding and the natural world.

Here are some links to help you follow and enjoy our avian migration. Don't forget to post what you see ... and also on our Facebook page!

**BirdCast - Bird migration forecasts in real-time** - Using predictive technology, the BirdCast forecast provides a 3-day outlook of how many birds will be flying overhead across the country – and where.

**Migration Celebration 2023 | Birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology** – Cornell Lab held a Migration Celebration, offering webinars which they recorded. Click on this link to view the recordings. They also have fun links for kids and families.

**LIGHTS OUT!** (August 15 – November 30) – Most of you know that migration occurs at night for billions of birds, but did you know that light from buildings and other sources attracts migrating birds, causing them to become disoriented, confused, and exhausted as they try to make their way? Millions of them collide into lit buildings and die. Lights Out volunteers, such as those in Baltimore, wander the predawn streets during migration and collect collision victims, using the information they gather to sway businesses and organizations to turn their lights out during critical migration periods. We can do our part, too, by reducing our contribution to the night's light pollution during these times. Check out the following links, and share with your friends, family, and neighbors too!

**LIGHTS OUT BALTIMORE - Home**

**Lights Out - BirdCast**

The full moon was spectacular this past Saturday. Armed with binoculars, I headed out to see if I could spot migrating birds as they passed in front of the moon. While unsuccessful, I did enjoy relaxing under a clear sky on a warm Fall evening. The life of a birder is good!

Happy birding,  
Sue  
President

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## Plan Ahead!

**Fri, Nov 3rd, 6:00 pm**  
Churchville Presbyterian Church

**Sun, Nov 5th, 7:30 am**  
Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge

**Sat, Dec 30th**  
Rock Run Annual Christmas Bird Count

**Be there.**



# Bird Droppings



## 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](mailto:debstewart1307@gmail.com).

## New Members

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

**Alyssia Church & Kristopher McDaniel – Bel Air**

**Sallie Gartside – Abingdon**

**Steven Harman – Nottingham**

**Naomi Major – Bel Air**

**Gregory Miller – Bel Air**

**Rebecca Simmons, Mark Simmons & Chris Gallo – Bel Air**

**Marcia Watson & Gene Scarpulla - Phoenix**

**George & Donna Yorkston - Joppa**



**\*\*Membership dues for the September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024 year are past due.\*\***

Please complete [the online form](#), or print and fill out the form at the end of the newsletter, and mail with 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

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# Halloween Advocacy Campaign

The Harford Bird Club wants to raise awareness about bird safety and related topics to help educate our Harford County community. This fall, we shared this flyer on social media. Decorating during this time of year is becoming equal to—or in some cases has surpassed—Christmastime. Huge Skellys, larger than life spiders, and ghoulish goblins lurk in a front yard near you! It's all in good fun, but the threats to wildlife and our birds is real.

## HALLOWEEN HORRORS

**DECORATIONS CAN BE FRIGHTENING FOR OUR BIRDS! BE WISE WITH YOUR YARD DECORATIONS.**



[harfordbirdclub.org](http://harfordbirdclub.org)



## **AVOID THE SCARY TRICKS, AND TREAT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD BIRDS TO A SAFER HOLIDAY SEASON!**

- Do not set up fake spiderwebs, which can entangle/hang/wrap birds and owls.
- Minimize yard lighting, or opt for a dark yard entirely!
- Avoid glitter, foil, or other shiny materials. These attract birds, and some may try to eat them.
- Decorate with natural materials that birds enjoy: straw, untreated wood, twine, and pumpkins/gourds. Consider leaving seeds out for birds!
- Be sensitive when considering artificial sound. Loud noises, eerie music, and spooky effects can stress birds.



**THE HARFORD BIRD CLUB**  
A CHAPTER OF THE MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

**Look in future newsletters and on social media for more awareness flyers** that can be shared online, or printed out and posted or distributed at events. Together we can help nurture a more bird-sensitive county.

The more we make aware, the more who will care.



# Education News

Mary Murray

## 4H Summer Camp

This summer HBC shared more fun with the kids at the July 11 session of the 4H Summer Camp. Those happy campers can't seem to get enough of owl pellet dissection! The campers learned about the special adaptations of eyes, ears, feet, and feathers of owls. Then they were challenged to identify the bones that they found in the pellet they dissected to try to guess what rodent the owl ate. Campers got to bring home their bag of bones.



## Pollinator Gardens Trail Kickoff

Partnering with Harford Land Trust and the Maryland Master Gardeners, Harford Bird Club hosted a booth at the Pollinator Gardens Trail Kickoff celebration on August 26 at The



Grove in Street, MD. Visitors to our table learned about Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and their role as pollinators. Kids got to take the "Hummingbird Challenge", counting the number of times they could flap their arms in a minute to see how they stacked up against a hummingbird. A big THANK YOU to Eric Vangrin for greeting guests all day and for supplying the beautiful trumpet vine that decorated our booth.



## Landscaping is for the Birds

As a continuing partnership with Harford Bird Club and Harford County Master Gardeners, Greg and Mary Murray presented their "Landscaping is for the Birds" program at Harford Glen on September 30. This presentation was part of the Harford Land Trust "Grow Wild" initiative. The Murrys shared the four essentials needed for bird habitat (food, water, shelter, space),

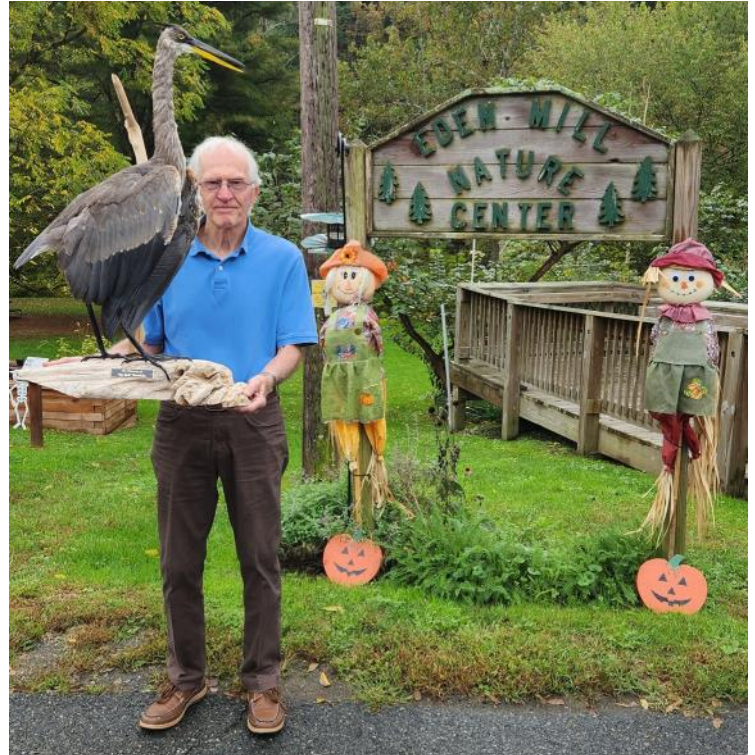
appropriate native plant varieties, and tips and tricks for making homeowners' properties welcoming havens for wildlife. A lively exchange of gardening ideas followed the presentation. President Sue Procell was on hand to invite attendees to check out the MOS website and join Harford Bird Club events. Thanks to all HBC members who attended!



To learn more about home gardening and Harford County's Master Gardeners, [visit the University of Maryland Extension website](https://www.umd.edu/extension).



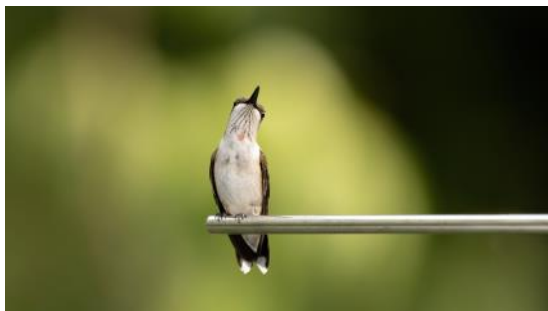
## Great Blue Heron in Memory of Dr. Bob Werrlein



The Harford Bird Club sponsored a Great Blue Heron mount at Eden Mill Nature Center in memory of past President Dr. Bob Werrlein. Bob would be thrilled!

## Ruby-Throated Hummingbirds—August Superstars

Monroe Harden



Harford County loves the abundance of the ruby-throated hummingbirds in late summer!



# Scholarships-National Audubon Society's Camp on Hog Island



Hog Island Audubon Camp is well known for its education camp for adults, families & teens. In 1936, Audubon held its first Nature Study Camp for teachers and adult students at Hog Island. The Camp's first director, Carl W. Buchheister, led the program to national attention for 21 years before becoming president of National Audubon. Their belief, highly unconventional for the time, was that they could help campers develop a sustained interest in the natural world, and thereby lead them to support wildlife and natural-resource conservation. By focusing on teachers, their goal was to have a multiplying effect that would encourage widespread concern for a conservation ethic of wildlife and other natural resources. Today, that thinking is the foundation of environmental education nationwide! Since 1936, residential sessions at Hog Island have been led by some of the most respected naturalists and environmental educators in the nation.

## Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) Education Scholarships

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) will award five ecology or ornithology scholarships to Maryland teachers and naturalists for summer workshops at the National Audubon Society's camp on Hog Island in Maine. Each award covers the cost of tuition, room and board for an extensive six-day course of study and instruction in ornithology, ecology, conservation, and natural history. Travel arrangements and costs are the recipient's responsibility; however there will be a modest travel stipend of up to \$300 available to applicants who request it.

## Five scholarships will be awarded for 2024

There are three options: Joy of Birding, June 9-14<sup>th</sup>; Field Ornithology, June 16<sup>th</sup>—21<sup>st</sup>; and Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week, July 14—19<sup>th</sup>. [MOS 2024 Scholarship Choices](#) provides more information on these workshops. Scholarship recipients must work with young people in Maryland. Teachers, camp counselors, park rangers, naturalists, and others who make nature education a part of their careers are eligible.

***Applicants need not be members of MOS, but must be endorsed by a chapter officer or a member of MOS.***



More information can be found on the [2024 Scholarship Fact Sheet](#). **Applications for the workshops must be submitted by email by Sunday, November 5, 2023.** Scholarship recipients will be notified in late November 2023.

# Harford Birdlife

Monroe Harden



This period includes the end of spring's and the start of fall's migration. In between is the summer breeding period. It's always a good time to go birding in Harford County. This report covers the period from June 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

## Swans, Ducks, Herons, Hawks, Plovers, Sandpipers

Many observers saw the Trumpeter Swans in and around the Rt 24 Marsh in Edgewood throughout the period. The group included 2 cygnets, which were seen through Aug 4<sup>th</sup>. 1 cygnet was seen until Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>, and then just the 2 adults were seen through the end of the period. MJ saw an American Black Duck and a Lesser Scaup flying near the Woodley Road pond on Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>. MA saw a Black Duck at Leight Park on Jun 6<sup>th</sup>, and NS saw a male associating with a female Mallard near Holstein Ct on Jun 23<sup>rd</sup>. MJ saw 2 Lesser Scaup at Woodley Rd pond on Jun 8<sup>th</sup>. The male and female pair were seen there through Jun 27<sup>th</sup>. MJ also saw female Common Merganser on Deer Creek on Jun 9<sup>th</sup>.

DK saw a Great Egret on Turney's Pond on Jun 25<sup>th</sup>. MJ saw a juvenile Yellow-crowned Night Heron near the Ma and Pa Trail on Jul 17<sup>th</sup>. JM reported a Glossy Ibis at Swan Harbor on Jun 16<sup>th</sup>. JB saw a Sharp-shinned Hawk being mobbed by Blue Jays in Havre de Grace on Jun 9<sup>th</sup>. He also saw a Broad-winged Hawk flying overhead in Bel Air on Jun 18<sup>th</sup>. DK spotted 7 American Kestrels and a Merlin near Turney's Pond on Sep 11<sup>th</sup>. JR found 4 Common Gallinules on APG-North on Sep 25<sup>th</sup>. MJ saw 3 American Golden Plovers at the Aldino Sod Farm on Sep 11<sup>th</sup>. One was seen there the next day. He also saw individual Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers at the Woodley Rd pond on Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>. On Jun 8<sup>th</sup>, he had 4 Semipalmated Plovers, 1 Lesser Yellowlegs, 16 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 2 Least Sandpipers, and a White-rumped Sandpiper there. He also found a Stilt Sandpiper there on Aug 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Gulls, Goatsuckers, Flycatchers, Vireos

CSA reported a Laughing Gull near the Tydings Bridge on Jul 16<sup>th</sup>. RP saw one at Tydings Park on Jul 23<sup>rd</sup>. AJ had one at the Tidewater Marina the next day. JB saw and heard a Common Nighthawk flying overhead in Havre de Grace on Jun 16<sup>th</sup>. DB saw 50-75 from her home in Street on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>. She also saw one at Rocks State Park on Sep 28<sup>th</sup>. MJ saw an Olive-sided Flycatcher at Steppingstone on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>. It was also seen there on Aug 28<sup>th</sup>. MH saw one at his Forest Hill home on Sep 18<sup>th</sup>. JM found 2 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers at Steppingstone on Aug 27<sup>th</sup>. Several others were seen around the county through Sep 19<sup>th</sup>. MJ saw and heard an Alder Flycatcher at Susquehanna State Park on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was also seen there the following day. MJ also found a Philadelphia Vireo at Rocks State Park on Sep 6<sup>th</sup>. Others were seen around the county through Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Ravens, Martins, Warblers, Tanagers, Sparrows

MJ saw a Common Raven near James Run Rd on Jun 1<sup>st</sup>. He also saw 3 flying over Snake Lane on Jun 10<sup>th</sup>. JB saw 4 in Darlington on Jun 12<sup>th</sup>. DB reported a large number of Purple Martins flying over her Street home on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>. MJ found a Brewster's Warbler and a Mourning Warbler at the Woodley Rd pond on Sep 9<sup>th</sup>. TC also saw a Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler hybrid at Susquehanna State Park on Sep 4<sup>th</sup>. MJ saw a Magnolia Warbler at Susquehanna State Park on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. He saw a Yellow-throated Warbler there on Sep 14<sup>th</sup>. MA noted that a Louisiana Waterthrush had been seen at Eden Mill for months on Aug 25<sup>th</sup>. BP found a Connecticut Warbler at Sweet Air park on Sep 15<sup>th</sup>. MJ heard one there on Sep 20<sup>th</sup> and also saw a Hooded Warbler. BP also saw a Mourning Warbler there on Aug 24<sup>th</sup>. DK saw a Wilson's Warbler at Harford Glen. JR had a Summer Tanager in Edgewood on Aug 29<sup>th</sup>. DB had a large number of female Scarlet Tanagers in her hemlock trees in Street on Sep 28<sup>th</sup>. BP saw a Grasshopper Sparrow at the Woodley Rd pond on Sep 12<sup>th</sup> and another at Perryman Park on Sep 30<sup>th</sup>. LR found a late White-throated Sparrow at Mariner Point park on Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>. MH had a molting adult at his Forest Hill home on Jul 29<sup>th</sup> through Aug 19<sup>th</sup>.

## Contributors

AJ- Austin Jennings, BP- Brad Phoebus, CSA- Cindy and Scott Ahern, DB- Deb Bowers, DK- Dennis Kirkwood, JB- John Blake, JM- John Manger, JR- John Rinker, LR- Lawrence Rhoads, MA- Matt Addicks, MH- Matt Hafner, MJ- Mark Johnson, NS- Nick Spigler, RP- Rebecca Payne, TC- Tim Carney

# Autumn and Maryland Owls

As the temperatures drop, days become shorter, and leaves begin to fall, many bird lovers turn their attention to owls. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides a [wonderful overview](#), as well as individual profiles, of the eight species of owls that live in our state. Barred Owls, Barn Owls, Eastern Screech-Owls and Great-Horned Owls commonly are found. Northern Saw-Whet Owls migrate through the State in late fall and a few occasionally breed in western Maryland in the summer. Short-Eared Owls and Long-Eared Owls historically nested in Maryland, but no breeding birds have been seen in a number of years. Snowy Owls occasionally migrate through the State and can be seen along Assateague Island.

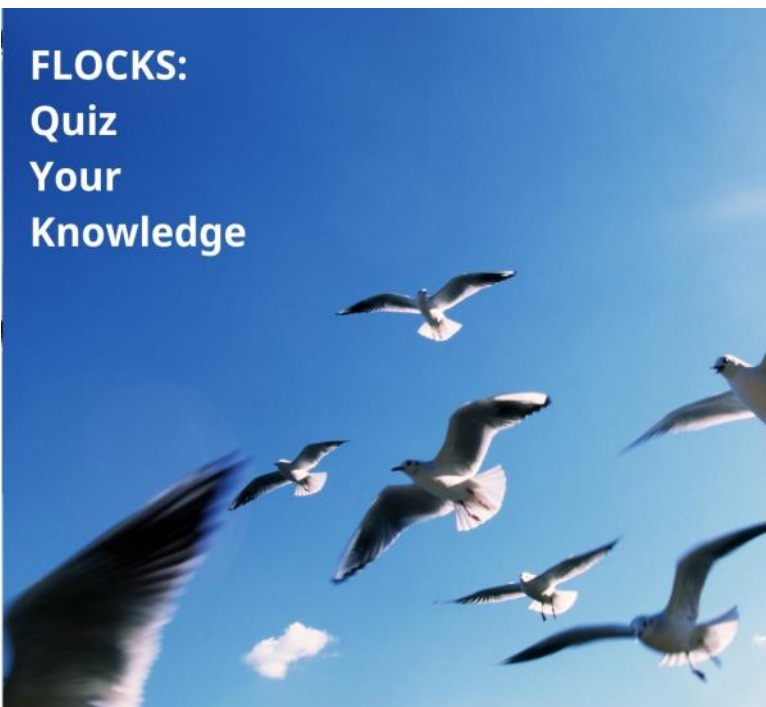


In DNR's [Habitat Tips: Owl Friendly Backyards](#), they provide seven key habitat tips to keep in mind for those interested in creating an owl-friendly environment. It begins with an essential reminder: "As predators, owls depend on having healthy food webs, so it is important to think about the big picture to properly support owls in your home habitats."

According to DNR, the Great-Horned Owl is the most common owl in Maryland. Detailed articles providing some great information about this majestic creature include the University of Maryland Extension's [Woodland Wildlife Spotlight: Great Horned Owl](#) and Audubon Society of Northern Virginia's [Autumn Acoustics and Great Horned Owls](#). For novice owl-lovers wanting to venture out into the woods

to find them, watch Psyched for Nature's [How to Find Owls](#). An Allegheny County park ranger and nature educator shares his love of owling and what he's learned while out on his owl prowls.

## FLOCKS: Quiz Your Knowledge



Many terms have been coined for flocks, flights, dissimulations, voleries, or groups of birds. Count yourself above average if you can match up more than half of these. Good luck!

- |                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Ostentation of _____  | A. Chickens     |
| 2. Gaggles of _____      | B. Nightingales |
| 3. Parliament of _____   | C. Goldfinches  |
| 4. Brood of _____        | D. Owls         |
| 5. Murder of _____       | E. Starlings    |
| 6. Charm of _____        | F. Larks        |
| 7. Exaltation of _____   | G. Geese        |
| 8. Conspiracy of _____   | H. Peacocks     |
| 9. Watch of _____        | I. Ravens       |
| 10. Murmuration of _____ | J. Crows        |

Answers can be found on page 17.



# HBC—Empowered by Passionate Volunteers

Sue Procell

Did you know that the Harford Bird Club is known for being very active? We're proud of our reputation as a fun Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) chapter with many diverse activities for its members. An active, diverse chapter takes a lot of volunteers devoting many hours of their personal time to make what seems seamless – well, seamless! In my first two months as President, I have seen this firsthand.

## Some of the events Harford Bird Club has supported, or will be supporting in the upcoming months



June

Anita C. Leight's Wade in Festival



August

Launch of the Harford County  
Pollinator Gardens Trail



**WILD  
BIRD  
DINNER**

October

The Mill's Wild Bird Dinner



November

Eden Mill's Fall Fest

We also have a devoted group of volunteers who organize and lead our field trips. You probably know many of them and may even have a favorite or two that you enjoy joining on these adventures.

Our two State Board members represent our club at the quarterly MOS State Board Meetings. These meetings are held at different locations in Maryland. June's meeting was on the Eastern Shore and September's was held in Frederick.

All our dinners, picnics, and other events have folks coming early to set-up and staying late to clean up. Another helping hand is always welcome!



### **If you are tempted to get involved and volunteer, please do!**

It's so much fun and a great way to meet other members, make new friends, and learn more about our club and local community. If you are considering, feel free to contact any of our chairpersons. For example, [Mary Murray](#) is our Education Chair and [Mark Johnson](#) is our Field Trip Chair. Find a complete list of committee chairs on page 2. There will also be times when an e-mail comes out soliciting help, or maybe a request is made at one of our gatherings or meetings. Don't be shy. If you are even a little bit interested, reach out and give it a try. You'll be glad that you did!



**REMEMBER HBC FOR THE HOLIDAYS!  
PURCHASE A MEMBERSHIP  
AS A GIFT THIS YEAR!**

*Give the love  
of birds for the  
holidays!*

**IT'S A GIFT THAT CAN LAST A LIFETIME.**

## Hummingbirds Heading South

During the fall season, many bird lovers dread the moment when it is time to say goodbye to the beloved hummingbirds who frequent their feeders and flower gardens. With long migrations to warmer climates, these Maryland favorites begin their journey at summer's end, and are usually gone by mid September. Their 1000 mile trip takes them to Florida, Mexico, or other countries in Central America. It doesn't mean an end to visits in our yards however, since many birds are still migrating from farther north.

Hummingbirds continue to frequent yards throughout October, and some stragglers even as late as November, as these northern migrants make their way through Maryland on their journey south. Be on the lookout, as Rufous hummingbirds may also be traveling through!



*Photographer: Kimberly Oliver*



*Photographer: Frank Marsden*

### **When to take down feeders?**

A common myth is that keeping a feeder up interrupts the natural migration of hummingbirds. This is not the case. Diminishing natural food sources, changing weather, and decreasing daylight hours, in combination with the completion of their breeding cycles, signals when it is time to fly. So leaving the feeders out supports the migrants traveling through, rather than preventing birds from traveling.

HBC's Amanda Subolefsky provided some guidance on when to consider taking down feeders on the HBC Facebook page in September: Two weeks after you see your last hummingbird, or by Thanksgiving!



# Status of The Mitchell Farm—Perryman Peninsula

*\*\*Update has been provided by 3P—Protect Perryman Peninsula\*\**

## The Mitchell Farm

The Mitchell Farm, approximately 700 acres located in Perryman, is privately owned by the Mitchells, a longtime Harford County family, who have worked and operated the farm for over 120 years. They have made the independent decision to sell the property based on the Harford County Master Land Use Plan (LUP). The Mitchell family plans to sell the property in the very near future and have publicly testified in support of the plans being proposed by the Chesapeake Real Estate Group.

## Value of this Region

The Perryman Peninsula, a gem nestled within Harford County, stands as a testament to nature's resplendent beauty. Its wetlands teem with migratory waterfowl, including the great blue heron, osprey and tundra swans, creating a tapestry of colors and sounds for bird enthusiasts. Above, eagles, ospreys and hawks trace the sky, symbolizing the region's robust avian life. But Perryman's story isn't confined to its natural wonders.



3P Protect Perryman Peninsula, in conjunction with various local communities and stakeholders, envisions a transformative future for Mitchell Farm. This isn't just about land conservation. It's an endeavor to carve out a state park, ensuring Perryman's environment and its community thrive side by side. Imagine a sanctuary, a haven not just for birds but also for the community—a place to engage with nature, recreate, and learn. A park in Perryman could serve as a corrective measure to historical racial and socio-economic disparities, granting marginalized communities not just green space but a sense of belonging. Harford County's scenic coastline, including iconic rivers like the Bush and Susquehanna, demand more public access. Mitchell Farm emerges as an actionable solution to this gap, bridging both environmental conservation and social justice. Existing parks in the Aberdeen/Perryman area, though valuable, don't sufficiently cater to the region's diverse needs.

## Getting Involved?



Beyond appreciating the peninsula's avian wonders, advocates can play a part in ensuring its lands remain accessible, protected, and vital for generations. By contacting 3P Protect Perryman Peninsula and getting involved, you can join fellow advocates who wish to make a difference in the Harford County landscape. Learn more about the farm and its current status by visiting the [3P website](#) and [Facebook Page](#). [Contact 3P](#) to learn more about getting involved.

## HBC Member Sightings & Sharings



**Upper Left:** Ruby-throated hummingbird, Joe Subolefsky

**Upper Right:** Belted Kingfisher, Robert Burlin

**Upper Center Right:** Martha Tome, Red-tailed Hawk

**Lower Left:** Great Blue Heron, Donna Benjamin

**Center:** Bald Eagles, Bob Reynolds

**Lower Right:** Great Egrets, Kimberly Oliver

**Bottom:** Semipalmated Sandpiper, Braeden Travers

***\*\*These photos have been shared via Facebook\*\****



# 2023-2024 CVES Bird Buddies Club

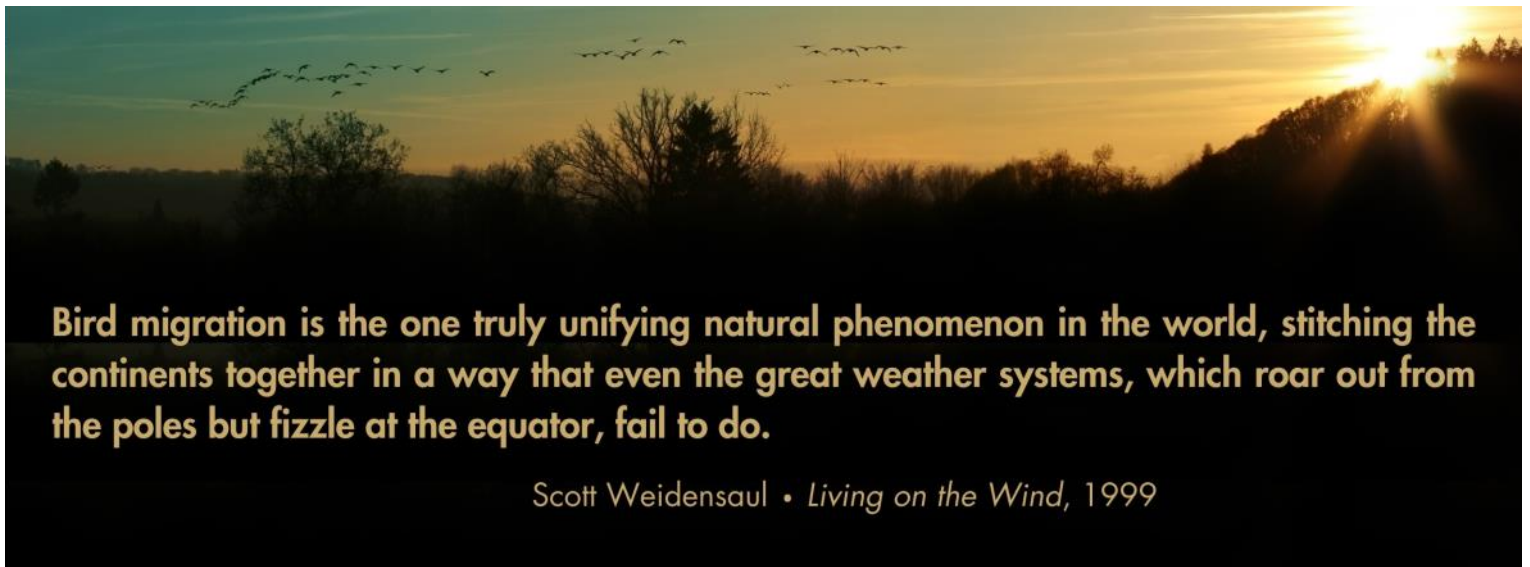


What a great start to the 2023-2024 CVES Bird Buddies Club! On October 11th, Churchville Elementary School welcomed Dave Webb, the first Bird Buddies guest speaker of the year. He taught the students all about the interaction between birds and moths.

## Vice President's Tweets

**Elaine Scribner-Wagner**

Thank you all for your votes of confidence. I know I don't have the birding expertise of so many of you. I bring to our table a love of the outdoors and an enthusiasm for FUN, Frolics and Feathers...as you found out at the July meeting, when I introduced you to my Qigong friend, the Crane who flaps his wings. You all did GREAT, thank you all for being good sports and playing with me. There will be more to come, I promise. Wishing you joy.



**Bird migration is the one truly unifying natural phenomenon in the world, stitching the continents together in a way that even the great weather systems, which roar out from the poles but fizzle at the equator, fail to do.**

Scott Weidensaul • *Living on the Wind*, 1999

# Field Trip Reports

## Eden Mill—September 2, 2023

*Matthew Addicks*

After waiting for a beaver to clear off the trail and swim right past us, we were greeted by an adult Broad-Winged Hawk perched high on a snag directly over the trail. We watched it preen and be mobbed by a hummingbird before it moved on. We finished the morning with 33 species, including a wonderful mixed flock in which two Blackburnian Warblers stole the show! It was a great early fall morning enjoyed by all!



## Ma and Pa Trail—September 6, 2023

*Susan Hood*

Six of us enjoyed a stroll along the Fallston section of this broad trail on a warm, calm day. In this season of molt and migration, it was fun to study the subtleties of blues and browns and bills in Eastern Bluebird, Indigo Bunting, and Blue Grosbeak individuals of different ages. The three species were fairly close together along the shelter belt, where we could compare them quite well in terms of age, gender, and jizz. We also saw juvenile Broad-winged (quite pale front) and Cooper's Hawks, as well as adult Red-shouldered Hawk. Only two Warblers were seen, but they were the colorful immature Magnolia and Blackburnian beauties. A flock of Cedar Waxwings made an appearance, and several singing Warbling Vireos were active, including a one low enough to see well. Other highlights included a Cormorant flyover, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher pair feeding, and a couple darting Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. 44 species were tallied, but the loudest and most numerous were the Gray Catbirds, although four species of Woodpeckers were welcome spectacles also.

## Harford Glen—September 9, 2023

*Lynn Feryus*

Five ardent birders defied the weather to meet, and the rain conveniently stopped at 7 am. This dropped the temperature a bit, but not the humidity (I had trouble with my glasses steaming up!). It had been so dry the ground soaked up the moisture and the trails were not really muddy. The Glen was very quiet, using eyes, ears and Merlin, only 23 species were found. Shocking was not even one Red-winged Blackbird. We had multiple woodpeckers and our youngest birder (11) was first to spot the Pileated. A nice surprise was a box turtle using the mowed path behind the pond. As some had other weekend obligations, we ended early. A Brown Thrasher sitting out at the pond parking area was our last bird.

**\*\*Please send trip reports, and any pictures you'd like to share, to [Wrenderings editor](#) to share with others!\*\***

## Eden Mill Banding — September 8th

**Mark Johnson**



*Black-and-White Warbler*



*Warbling Vireo*

It was an exceptional day with eight warbler species encountered.



# Mezmerized By the Puffins at Eastern Egg Rock

Tyme and Nara Anusonti-Inthra

On a sun-kissed morning in the quaint harbor of Port Clyde, Maine, where seagulls soared and the air was thick with the promise of adventure, we found ourselves boarding the *Laura B*. The boat was our gate to the world of puffins and other coastal wonders, guided by the knowledgeable hands of Captain Nick, from the renowned Monhegan Boat Line.

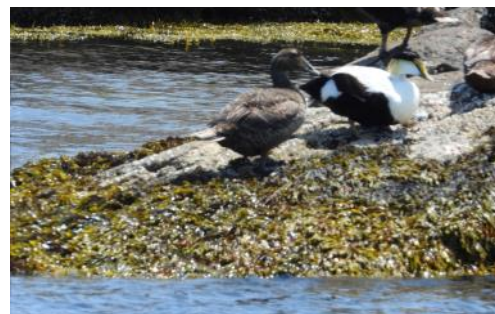


As the *Laura B* set sail, we leaned against the railing, our eyes wide with excitement, gazing out at the vast expanse of the Muscongus Bay. The salty breeze ruffled our hair as we ventured further into the open sea. After miles of ocean, Captain Nick's voice warbled through the air, painting a picture of the mystical world about to be uncovered. Our destination was Eastern Egg Rock, a small Audubon island sanctuary for breeding seabirds. Looking out into the ocean, we suddenly saw a couple tiny bird-like shapes. As we frantically raised our binoculars to take a look, we couldn't believe our eyes. They were Atlantic Puffins! Our hearts were beating frenetically with joy as we witnessed a wonderful scene, our first lifers in Maine.



Approaching our destination, the number of puffins in the water increased until Eastern Egg Rock was finally in view. Looking out at the tiny rock island, there were birds everywhere, sitting on the rocks, flying around, and drifting about in the sea. It was an amazing sight to behold as a cacophony of squawking filled the air. The bustling avian community of Eastern Egg Rock also had various terns, Common Eider, and Black Guillemot nesting nearby. On our journey, along with the seabirds, we also saw porpoises. These acrobats-of-the-sea danced alongside our boat and seals, who were lazily sunbathing on the rocks.

We were so inspired by the Eastern Egg Rock success story that we decided to visit the Project Puffin Visitor Center in Rockland, Maine. After puffins had disappeared from the Maine coast for over a century due to hunting, Dr. Stephen Kress and his team embarked on a task that seemed impossible: to bring back the puffins. Starting in 1973, he hand-raised puffin chicks on Eastern Egg Rock, hoping that when they grew up they would remember Eastern Egg Rock as their home and begin nesting there. Finally, after eight years of hard work, the first adult puffin pairs came back to Eastern Egg Rock to breed in 1981! To this day, there are currently 50 breeding pairs of puffins at Eastern Egg Rock. These surprisingly successful and ingenious techniques have been implemented all over the world to reintroduce seabirds back into their historic ranges.



This story is a testament to the power of human compassion, determination, and education in preserving the natural world. This time, the puffins were saved, but so many other species were not. The tapestry of nature is extremely beautiful, but also extremely delicate. All of us must work together to safeguard nature and ensure that future generations can witness the same beauty.

[Learn more](#) about Eastern Egg Rock and the Hog Island Adopt-A-Puffins program.

*Tyme and Nara Anusonti-Inthra are HBC Wreatherings youth columnists. Nara is a 10th grader at Aberdeen High School and Tyme is a 7th grader at Fallston Middle School. Look for their perspective on birds and birding in every issue!*

# Harford Bird Club Field Trips

Mark Johnson, Field Trip Chair

**November 5 (Sun) Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge** – Join Dr. David Larkin scoping pools and flats for waterfowl, herons, and hawks at this Eastern shore park. Meet at the RT. 155/I95 Havre-de-Grace Park and Ride at **7:30 AM**. Bring lunch. Contact Dave for details (410-569-8319 or [larkin3001@comcast.net](mailto:larkin3001@comcast.net)).

**November 18 (Sat) Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge** – Expert Eric Vangrin will lead a trip to this Chesapeake favorite in search of waterfowl, Brown-headed Nuthatches and possibly Red Crossbills. Meet at the RT. 155/I95 Havre-de-Grace Park and Ride at **7:30 AM**. Contact Eric at 443-417-7219 or [evangrin@msn.com](mailto:evangrin@msn.com).

**November 25 (Sat) Conowingo Dam** – Watch Bald Eagles, gulls, and waterfowl and walk the trail for Winter Wren and woodpeckers with Dennis Kirkwood. Meet at the parking lot at Fisherman's Park (end of Shuresville Landing Rd.) at **8:00 AM**. Call Dennis for details (410-692-5905 or [newarkfarms@gmail.com](mailto:newarkfarms@gmail.com)).

**December 2 (Sat) Delaware Marshes** – Join veterans David Webb and Mark Johnson while they try out their waterfowl skills at spots along the Delaware coast with hopes of making it to Cape Henlopen. Meet at the RT. 155/ I-95 Havre de Grace Park and Ride at **7:30 AM**. Contact David (443-417-5385 or [porzana@comcast.net](mailto:porzana@comcast.net)) or Mark (410-692-5978 or [MarkSJohnson2@gmail.com](mailto:MarkSJohnson2@gmail.com)) for questions. Bring a lunch.

**Dec 30 (Sat) Rock Run Annual Christmas Bird Count** – Partake in this tradition where teams split up long 14 sectors all within 10 km radius of the Rock Run Mill in Susquehanna State Park counting all birds seen or heard in a 24 hr period. Contact Mark for details – rain or shine (or fog, I hope not!) 410-692-5978 or [MarkSJohnson2@gmail.com](mailto:MarkSJohnson2@gmail.com).

**January 1 (Mon.) Annual New Year's Birdwatching Trip** – Break in the New Year right by getting out and joining Dr. Dennis Kirkwood at the World Famous Bradenball Flats and scoping for birds. Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting are possible. Meet at Jarrettsville Elementary parking lot at **8 AM**. Contact Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905 or [newarkfarms@gmail.com](mailto:newarkfarms@gmail.com)) for questions.

*Continued on page 17*

## Beware of Mud!

The article [\*Beware of Mud!\*](#) is included in the November/December 2023 issue of The Goldfinch, the newsletter from the Harford Bird Club's sister MOS chapter the Howard County Bird Club. It is inevitable that at some point, if you are out enjoying nature and watching birds, you'll be doing so after a rain or tramping around rivers and lakes and having to contend with mud. As the author Joanne Solem says: "At best, sinking into mud is messy; at worst, it is frightening and even dangerous."



**Birders need to be careful when out in muddy conditions.** A muddy trail will force you to slow down, and at times will make you lift your foot intentionally when the mud attempts to claim your shoes with a force that feels like a strong magnet. Caked on mud doesn't provide much traction, and can increase the likelihood of slipping. With the increased risk of slipping and falling, birders need to be very conscious of one's surroundings so that a potential fall doesn't result in serious injury. This is especially true on narrow trails or on steep declines. Additionally, walking on wet soil can loosen it, and a less stable foundation could give way. It is essential to be aware of the additional time it can take to walk in muddy conditions when hiking without flashlights around dusk.



*Beware of Mud!* provides wise recommendations for passionate birders who love birdwatching more than they are concerned about the mud. Please make sure to be safe while you're out there!



## Harford Bird Club Field Trips, *continued*

**January 15 (Mon.) Family-Friendly Birdwatching Trip at Swan Harbor** – Join the sibling duo, Tyme and Nara Anusonti-Inthra at Swan Harbor Farm on this Federal Holiday. This is a great trip for beginners and the whole family to learn about waterfowl. Prospects include Redhead, Lesser Scaup, American Coot, and others. The team will canvass the ponds and Susquehanna coast on multiple trails. We will provide binoculars to anyone who needs them and bring a spotting scope (if you have one). Hot cocoa will await to warm you up. Contact Jean Palanuwech for details at [mothergoose8257@gmail.com](mailto:mothergoose8257@gmail.com) or call/text : 908-507-1875. Meet at the Swan Harbor Farm parking lot at **8:30 AM**.

**January 20 (Sat.) Return to Swan Harbor** - Swan Harbor is a preserved area near the Upper Bay and provides prime habitat for waterfowl, song birds, and marsh and field birds. This Harford County gem has a commanding view of the bay and three impoundments, wooded trails and open fields to explore. The farm, with its varied habitat, has developed into a fine location for a broad spectrum of birdlife including marsh specialties, raptors and sparrows. The leader is experienced birder, Dr. Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; [newarkfarms@gmail.com](mailto:newarkfarms@gmail.com)) and this is a joint trip with the Baltimore Bird Club. Come out and meet our peers across the river. Meet at **8:00 AM** at the parking lot at the Agricultural Education Center at the end of the driveway.

**January 27 (Sat.) Perryville Community Park** — Check out the Mill Creek and historic Furnace Bay areas 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 **8:30 AM** at the Stump Point launch at the far end of the Perryville Community Park. Contact leaders Colleen Webster (410-459-4577; [cwebster@harford.edu](mailto:cwebster@harford.edu)), Eric Vangrin (443-417-7219; [evangrin@msn.com](mailto:evangrin@msn.com)) or Sue Procell (443-417-4919; [procellmd@gmail.com](mailto:procellmd@gmail.com)).

**February 3 (Sat.) Return to WFBF** – Dr. Kirkwood hosts another jaunt through the World Famous Bradenball Flats to get sparrows, select waterfowl and other rarities. Meet at Jarrettsville Elementary parking lot at **8 AM**. All are invited back to the Kirkwood house for hot soup and other treats after the trip. Contact Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905 or [newarkfarms@gmail.com](mailto:newarkfarms@gmail.com)) for questions.

**February 17 (Sat.) Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge** – Watch waterfowl with long-time birder, Eric Vangrin ([evangrin@msn.com](mailto:evangrin@msn.com) ; 443-417-7219) at this accessible waterside park. Meet at **7:30 AM** at the Park-N-Ride at Rt. I-95 and Rt. 155. Targets include Snow Geese, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Brown-header Nuthatch.

**March 23 (Sat.) — Lapidum Boat Launch, Susquehanna State Park** — Join us for a morning scan of the river in search of lingering winter visitors, early spring arrivals and resident species. Little Gull and Black-headed Gulls are possible. Leader is Gene Scarpulla (301-787-9362; [ejscarp@comcast.net](mailto:ejscarp@comcast.net)). Meet at the Lapidum boat launch at **8:00 AM**.

**April 6 (Sat.) Eden Mill** – Walk the trails of this county park for woodpeckers, sparrows, turkey, and waterfowl. Join Dennis Kirkwood at the mill at **7:30 AM** Contact Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905 or [newarkfarms@gmail.com](mailto:newarkfarms@gmail.com)) for questions.

**April 13 (Sat.) Wildflowers and Birds 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](mailto:cwebster@harford.edu)), Eric Vangrin ([evangrin@msn.com](mailto:evangrin@msn.com); 443-417-7219), and Sue Procell (443-417-4919; [procellmd@gmail.com](mailto: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.

**\*\*[Review Harford Bird Club Field Trip Policies](#)\*\***

For last minute notifications about HBC trips, visit the [Harford Bird Club Facebook Page](#) or [website](#).

# Chimney Swifts in Hampden, Baltimore City

Deborah Stewart



Book bindery chimney, Hampden

In 2022, Debbie Bowers, HBC Conservation Chair, and I wrote in Wrenderings information about chimney swifts and their need for nesting and roosting chimneys. We provided facts and asked if members had observed swifts roosting in a chimney in Harford County. We received stories of past observations but not any recent sightings. In September, 2022, I visited Havre de Grace where four of us saw swifts but not the pre-migration roosting that the promise of old chimneys and past observations offered.

My most impressive bird watching of chimney swifts was a visit to the book bindery chimney in Hampden in Baltimore City. Equally impressive were the number of people who showed up prior to dusk to watch the birds gather and descend into the chimney. I met Alice Greely Nelson from the Baltimore Bird Club who has been counting and recording the birds as they descend for many years. I met an Anne Arundel County bird club member who sent me information about building a chimney. He has installed three in Anne Arundel county.

On September 23, 2023, The Baltimore Sun columnist, Jacques Kelly wrote about this phenomena in a commentary entitled ***Hampden's swifts nestle in industrial chimney abodes***. He starts his article with this description:

*"As the September days grow short, a cloud of migrating chimney swifts pay a visit to Baltimore. Their motel of choice is a brick industrial chimney in Hampden on a secluded edge of the Jones Falls Valley. Their final destination: Brazil's Amazon region. It's a spectacle in the air and on the sidewalk. As the swifts drop into the 1930 brick smoke stack, dozens of their human fans observe their semiannual ornithological exhibition."*

Kelly introduces key birdwatchers who are the counters and explains the type of chimney the swifts require. Kelly lists other chimneys in the Baltimore area including Gilman School, Fifth Regiment Armory, the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry temple at Charles and 29th Streets and St. Michael The Archangel Parochial school in Overlea. It is a very enjoyable and informative piece about a species in decline and a bird behavior that should not be missed.

I plan to return next September to a known chimney. We can make it a club field trip!

For subscribers of the Baltimore Sun, [the article can be read here>>](#)

## Answers to Flock Quiz

1 H Ostentation of peacocks

2 G Gaggle of geese

3 D Parliament of owls

4 A Brood of chickens

5 J Murder of crows

6 C Charm of goldfinches

7 F Exaltation of larks

8 I Conspiracy of ravens

9 B Watch of nightingales

10 E Murmuration of starlings

Alternate names also used: muster of peacocks; skein or wedge of geese; wisdom of owls; clutch/peep of chickens; ascension /chattering of larks; unkindness of ravens.





# Harford Bird Club Meeting Schedule



## 2023

**Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6 – 7:30 pm**

**Churchville Presbyterian Church**

**Presenter: Colleen Webster, [Webster LivingPersonas](#)**

This will not be a dinner meeting, but [please consider signing up](#) to bring a dessert or treat to share. Warm drinks and cold water will be provided.

Through an interactive, educational living history performance, Colleen Webster will educate about the life of Rachel Carson and her contribution to environmental education. Rachel Carson ignited the modern environmental movement after a challenging childhood in Pennsylvania during the Great Depression, followed by her graduate study at Johns Hopkins University. Her life-long love of the sea was only enhanced by finally seeing it when she worked at Woods Hole in Cape Cod; after three books about the sea, Carson's *Silent Spring* catapulted this shy scientist into the limelight where chemical industries attacked her findings about DDT and President Kennedy's committee validated her findings. This performance highlights Carson's research, personal life and legacy, which we still enjoy today along the Chesapeake Bay.



## 2024



**Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 – 7:30 pm, library closes at 8 pm**

**Harford County Public Library, Bel Air Branch (Meeting Rooms 1,2,& 3)**

**Presenter: Marty Brazeau**

**A short general meeting will be held at 6 pm prior to Mr. Brazeau's presentation.** Marty Brazeau will provide an entertaining and informative presentation on the Birds of Maryland – from field to forest and ground floor to treetops. Marty Brazeau is a Baltimore native and local birder. He has created some bird identification videos so people can learn more about the birds around us. The videos include footage from Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge. Take a few of the quizzes to test your own knowledge!

**[22 Fantastic Late May Birds, Fun Flash Video Quiz Game](#)**

**[Marty's Spring Bird Quiz](#)**

**[Birding Quiz for CCBC Class](#)**

**Friday, March 1st, 6 – 8 pm**

**Churchville Presbyterian Church**

**Presenters: Harford Bird Club youth columnists and YMOS members**

**Nara & Tyme Anusonti-Inthra**

**[YMOS & World Series of Birding](#):** Learn more about the Young Birders subgroup of the Maryland Ornithological Society and the traditional World Series of Birding competition sponsored by New Jersey Audubon in Cape May, NJ.





# 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, 2023 - August 31, 2024

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

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

( ) *Please check if this is a gift*

\_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Make checks payable to Harford County MOS)

- ( ) New Membership\*                      ( ) Renewal

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

**Please give name(s) below as they should appear on the membership list.**

*Couples/partners should give both names.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

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.

For gifts memberships, please provide name/address of purchaser: \_\_\_\_\_

*Gift membership certificates will be emailed to purchasers. New member welcomes take place approximately 30 days from purchase, unless otherwise requested. For purchases made after Oct 1st, members will receive welcome in January.*

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.