



# Wrenderings



*The Newsletter of the Harford Bird Club*

**Volume 23 Number 5**

**April, 2010**

## President's Perch

Ah, spring at last. For many birders this is the "holy season" of the birding year. Each week in April and May ushers in a wave of newly arrived migrants, many of them bursting in song and sporting their most vibrant colors. In an attempt to absorb as much of the springtime spectacle as possible, I visit favorite sites at specific times hoping to rendezvous with returning species, some of which I may not see at any other time of the year. Over time, I have cultivated my own personal spring birding rituals.

One of these rituals I share with Marsha and Danny. On a calm, warm late-April evening we drive over to Swan Harbor Farm to listen to the calls of rails, grebes, and bitterns. On the benches of the observation deck we are partly camouflaged as we eavesdrop on the bizarre, distinctive vocalizations of these moonstruck marsh birds. The "kowlps", "kik-kik-kerrrs" and "oonka-choonks" emanating from the impoundment advertise their presence, but these birds can be very elusive to the human eye. Although not always successful, the challenge of actually see one of these secretive birds, adds a little sport to the outing.

Spring would not be complete without one or more pilgrimages to Susquehanna State Park for some of the best songbird watching in the mid-Atlantic. Orioles, vireos, cuckoos, thrushes, and swallows abound. But the real attraction is warblers. Perhaps it is the rich colors or the sweet songs, but there is something enthralling about these tiny, active, insectivorous forest dwellers. As Arline Thomas wrote in *Audubon's Birds*, "For most bird-watchers, the coming of the warblers has the same effect as catnip on a cat."

My personal favorite of all spring rituals is May Count. At the stroke of midnight on count day, I stand with my partner in the middle of a field at APG listening to the calls of Whip-poor-wills, American Woodcocks, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Grasshopper Sparrows. We then embark upon a 24-hour birding blitzkrieg, fueled by an occasional dose of caffeine, but mostly the adrenaline rush of birds found throughout the day, such as Red-headed Woodpecker, Barn Owl, and Summer Tanager. Although marathon May Counts are not for everyone, it is a tradition that I look forward to each year, much like a child does Christmas morning.

Whatever your spring birding rituals may be, I hope you enjoy them this season, and perhaps start some anew. See you in the field!

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## Calendar of Events

- Earth Day: Sat, Apr 17, @ Aberdeen Centennial Park
- "Pizza" dinner meeting: Fri, May 7, 6:15 PM @ Harford Glen
- May Count: Sat, May 8,
- State Board meeting: Sat, Jun 5, 10 AM @ Swan Harbor
- MOS Conference @ Chestertown: Jun 11-13
- Summer Social: Fri, Jul 9, 6:15 PM @ Leight Center
- Annual Fall Picnic @ Eden Mill: Sat, Sep 11, 1 PM

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## Pizza Dinner Meeting May 7

Join us for the club's next gathering on Friday, May 7. Although still a dinner meeting, we are offering something new. The meeting will take place at Harford Glen (directions below), and the menu will consist of a variety of pizzas, fresh vegetables and dip, and beverages. As usual, dinner will be served promptly at 6:15. The business meeting will start at 7:15, and include the presentation of more 2009 club awards and another exciting raffle. The night concludes with a special presentation by Officer Bart Roberts, a game warden with Aberdeen Proving Ground's Wildlife and Marine Law Enforcement Division. Using photos and rare film footage, Officer Roberts will discuss a Bald Eagle tagging and monitoring program recently conducted at Aberdeen Proving Ground under the direction of researchers from the Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William and Mary.

Directions to Harford Glen. From MD 24 between Bel Air and Constant Friendship, turn southwest onto Wheel Road. Drive 0.9 miles to entrance gate. Continue for another 0.2 miles, and turn left to enter parking area beside dining facility. See map at [www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=3611133](http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/?r=3611133).

## Bird Droppings

Have news the club should know about? Births, deaths, marriages, or any other notable events that belong in the newsletter? Please contact Corresponding Secretary Marty Crouse-Farley at 410-557-6786 or email to [mhcf@msn.com](mailto:mhcf@msn.com).

### Welcome!

A warm Harford Bird Club welcome goes out to the following new members. Thank you for joining... we look forward to seeing you out there on our birding trips and at our meetings!

**Elizabeth Burley of Havre de Grace**

**Alex McComas of Havre de Grace**

**Dave Gigliotti of Bel Air**

Get well wishes to Lorna Wortman, who suffered a mild heart attack in late March; and to Marian Argentino, who continues her lengthy recuperation following a January 2009 auto accident.

### Annual Awards

Two awards were presented at the March 5<sup>th</sup> dinner meeting. Joe & Melody Stevens shared the 2009 Rookie of the Year Award for their enthusiastic and cheerful support of the club and its activities. Our 2009 Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Les Eastman for his countless hours of selfless service promoting birds and birding thru banding, leading trips, and hosting club events. Congratulations Joe, Melody & Les.

Two more awards remain to be handed out. What are they? Who will receive them? Come to the May meeting and find out!

## Spring Migration Bird Count (the May Count!)

Saturday, May 8th, any time of day. Contact Mark Johnson to participate or for additional information at 410-692-5978. It is not spring until the May Count arrives; be sure not to miss this count smack in the middle of our annual migration spectacular. See you all out there May 8th!

## Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas

The latest word regarding the 2002-2006 Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas is that the book will be published sometime this fall. This publication will summarize the breeding distribution of all bird species that breed in Maryland and DC. Full of additional information on habitat preferences and historical records, this follow-on

## 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Rock Run CBC

The Rock Run Christmas Bird Count was held on Sunday, December 27, 2008 and 38 birders of 15 parties covered the 7.5 mile radius of the Rock Run area. Altogether, 100,186 individuals of 100 species were found. The weather was largely clear and above freezing during the daylight hours. Interestingly, a previous heavy snowfall two weeks ago had nearly melted by count day. Eight parties did some owling and managed to find the usual three species. Peter Jay and crew covered the Flats and the river; however, both species and numbers of ducks continue to be elusive. Usually common Goldeneyes and Buffleheads were harder to find; Wood Ducks and Redheads were not found by any party; nor were Canvasback and Green-winged Teal.

Ten raptor species were found including a Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon and a Merlin. Thayer's and Iceland Gulls were also found. All woodpeckers were sighted except the Red-headed. This was not a winter finch invasion year, only a single Purple Finch was found. Even Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglet were uncommon. Double-crested Cormorants were relatively uncommon. Overall, number and species were down from previous years. Party-specific details are provided as follows.

**Oakwood:** Cecil County veteran Marcia Watson (35 species) had a Thayer's Gull, found four species of sparrows, four raptor species and the high count for Common Mergansers (400).

**Rowlandville:** Les Eastman & Diane Jones (52 species) found the only Merlin, had the high count for Black Duck (19), and also found Savannah Sparrow (2) and 5 species of woodpeckers.

to the 1982-1986 atlas project will make a great addition to your personal library.

## MOS Conference

Registration is underway for the 2011 MOS Conference to be held at Washington College in Chestertown, Kent County from June 11-13. The conference is a three-day celebration of birding in Maryland, featuring a full slate of field trips led by some of the state's leading birders, a workshop, a silent raffle, research posters, social hour, fine meals, and a keynote presentation by noted ornithologist Doug Gill. For more information and a reservation form, visit

[www.mdbirds.org/activities/conference/annual.html](http://www.mdbirds.org/activities/conference/annual.html).

Hurry -- the registration deadline is May 10.

**Colora:** Working in his "home" territory Tom Congersky, Rupert and Cynthia Rossetti (42 species) found a Gray Catbird, an American Coot and Pied-billed Grebes (2).

**Bainbridge:** Matt Hafner and his team of "All Stars" (Jim Stasz, Ed Boyd, Ron Gutberlet, Robert Ostrowski, Mike Ostrowski, Tom Ostrowski) came in second with 75 species for the count. They found nine species of sparrows including Chipping, White-crowned, and Fox. They also found American Pipit (3), American Kestrel (1), all three mimic thrushes and the only Red-breasted Nuthatch, Cackling Goose, and Purple Finch of the count.

**Perry Point:** Working solo, David Ziolkowski had the lead (76 species)! He found Hooded Mergansers (25), Gadwall (2), Ring-necked Duck (65) and six raptor species. He also found all three mimic thrushes, Yellow-rumped and Pine Warblers, eight sparrow species and Rusty Blackbirds (2). Way to go!

**Swan Creek:** John Gallo lead his team, Frank Gallo, Vanessa Mickan, & George Yorkston (63 species) and found all three mergansers, Tundra Swan (31), Lesser Scaup (8), and Ring-necked Duck (17). They also recorded Killdeer (12), Tree Sparrow (2), American Pipit (1) and the only Barred Owls (2) for the count.

**Havre de Grace:** Rick Cheicante & Dave Larkin (69 species) found Gadwall (1), Black-crowned Night-Heron (1), six species of woodpeckers, all three mimic thrushes, and Rusty Blackbird (4). They also had the high count for Savannah Sparrow (15).

*Continued on page 8*

# Book Review

## Bright Wings: An Illustrated Anthology of Poems About Birds

Billy Collins, editor, David Allen Sibley, paintings.

New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. 248 pages. 20.95.

Review written by Colleen Webster

Avid birders will be familiar, and perhaps comfortable, with the name David Allen Sibley on a volume with birds in the title; fans of poems will be eager to thumb through a book with the name of Billy Collins, twice Poet Laureate of the United States and the first American poet to sign a publishing contract with six figures, all of them before the decimal point. The genius pairing of these two stand-outs is sure to bring a nice cross-over audience to this attractive and compact anthology. The introduction by Collins sets the tone appropriately as he employs his usual humor and sharp commentary, noting “the persistence of the human fascination with these ‘things with feathers’ –Emily Dickinson’s image for Hope” from the beginning of writing to a “poetry workshop that might have been held last night.”

While certainly many others have collected poems about birds into a single work, Collins indicates two innovations in this current book; one is the accompanying paintings by Sibley which provide the reader with “pleasures that are literary, pictorial, and scientific,” and two, this grouping of poems passes over many poems often previously selected, focusing instead on “lesser-known poems, particularly more contemporary ones.” So there. Two good reasons to add this book to your shelf, or at least borrow it from your local library, even if your life is already full of bird books, or poem books, or both. I have lots of both, so let’s test out this assertion.

It is a warm, late afternoon, April the 2<sup>nd</sup> and I am typing this on my balcony, listening to the flicker’s long call, fish crows flying over, sparrows and finches at my feeder. But what I have been looking for, craving if you will, is the chittering that means the chimney swifts have returned. Just this

past Saturday I watched my first tree swallows of the season, pointed out by Deb Stewart who found their flashing white breasts high up over the trees in Susquehanna State Park. I found them again this Wednesday morning swirling over the Havre de Grace light house, and who cannot love a swallow? But I wanted the chimney swifts, the way children want chocolate eggs this time of year. And so I open this book at whim and find these lines by Mark Jarrman:

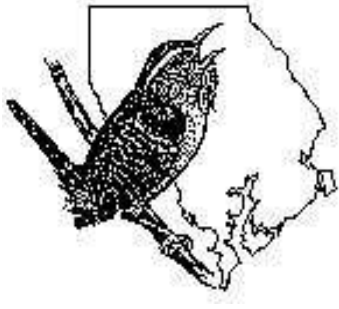
“To watch for them, to become expectant  
To need their spring arrival,  
To know the kink from craning back the neck  
During the warm, late afternoons of April,  
Is part of the enchantment,  
Is to believe they feel it, too, and act.”

The painting on the previous page is not only rendered with great accuracy, of course, but accompanied by a brief bit of information about these birds which Sibley says are “almost constantly in flight, catching and eating small insects on the wing and stopping only to nest or to roost at night.” So I have yet to see my own chimney swifts wing over my house, but I feel a bit reassured that others, too, are waiting and some are even writing about it.

Throughout long and snowy winters I often pull out my bird and flower guides, flipping through to fill my mind with color and life and movement. These are also joined by my favorite poetry books by Mary Oliver, Ruth Schwartz and Mark Doty. The closer any volume to my bed, the more often I need it, the more important it is. I am more than certain this nice little book will be taking a place in that necessary stack, within the shadow of my reading light.







# Harford Birdlife

By: Monroe Harden

The birds are singing and the flowers are blooming- it's Springtime! That sure beats the massive snowfalls that took place during this reporting period, which runs from Jan 30th-Mar 28th, 2010.

## Geese, Swans, Ducks

Large scale goose and swan migrations were reported in March. LE saw 2 mixed flocks of **Snow Geese** and **Tundra Swans** flying north on Mar 8th. CS also saw mixed flocks heading north on Mar 9th. He also counted 10,600 **Canada Geese** flying north in at least 50 groups that day. Back on Earth, DK had 4 **Cackling Geese** on Turney's Pond on Mar 8-9. He also noted a **Tundra Swan** there on Mar 15th.

CS reported a big waterfowl day on the Gunpowder River in the Edgewood area of APG on Mar 10th. He saw 550 **Tundra Swans** as well as 90 **Gadwall**, 40 **American Wigeon**, 15 **Black Ducks**, 20 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 500 **Scaup** (species undetermined), 5 **Long-tailed Ducks**, 7 **Bufflehead**, 23 **Goldeneye**, and 80 **Common Mergansers**. BJD reported 2 **Green-winged Teal** at Forest Greens on Mar 6th. DG also saw 4 in the marshy area at the intersection of Rts 40 and 24 in Edgewood, as well as about 25 at Swan Harbor on Mar 8th.

## Grebes, Hawks, Falcons

DG saw 3 **Pied-billed Grebes** at Concord Point in Havre de Grace on Mar 9th. MH saw his first **Osprey** of the year along Rt 40 in Havre de Grace on Mar 20th. DL saw one at Lakeside on Mar 28th. KG saw an adult **Northern Goshawk** near the Goose Knob development on Schuster Rd on Jan 30th. He also saw a female **Cooper's Hawk** a bit farther down the road and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** in the area. JG saw a **Peregrine Falcon** near the Rt 543 exit ramp from I-95 on Mar 3rd.

## Plovers, Sandpipers, Gulls, Flycatchers

DL saw 3 **Killdeer** and a **Greater Yellowlegs** at Lakeside on Mar 28th. MH saw 10 Wilson's **Snipes** at Swan Harbor on Mar 27th. He also saw an **American Woodcock** at dusk on Mar 19th at Harford Memorial Gardens. CS saw one on the Edgewood Area of APG on Feb 17th. It let him get within about 2 feet. The bird did not seem to be injured.

DL reported large numbers of **Ring-billed Gulls** at Lakeside. On Feb 28th he saw 148, with all of their various plumages represented. He had 2 **Herring Gulls** there on Feb 4th. DB announced her first **Eastern Phoebe** of the year in her Street yard on Mar 11th.

## Larks, Swallows, Nuthatches, Thrushes

DB reported 40-50 **Horned Larks** on Holy Cross Rd on Feb 27th. JG saw 12 **Tree Swallows** at Swan Harbor on Feb 25th. CS saw 20-40 at M-field on the Edgewood area of APG the following day. MH saw several at Swan Harbor on Mar 27th along with 2 **Barn Swallows**.

JLG had 2 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** on his suet feeder along Garret Rd on Feb 21st. KG had 2 **White-breasted Nuthatches** at his Jarrettsville farm on Jan 31st, Feb 1st and Feb 6th. CS saw 7 **Hermit Thrushes** in the Edgewood area of APG on Feb 17th. DB had 2 under her pine tree in Street on Feb 24th. MCF saw a **Brown Thrasher** at her Abingdon home on Feb 13th.

## Pipit, Sparrows, Meadowlarks, Finches

KG saw an **American Pipit** on Nelson Mill Rd on Feb 8th. He also saw a **Fox Sparrow** there. DW reported the first **American Tree Sparrow** in his Webster Village yard in 6 years on Feb 11th. RC saw one at his Creswell yard that same day. JG and his family had one at their Swan Harbor home on Feb 15th. RK and his family had a **Chipping Sparrow** at their Darlington home on Feb 12th. SH saw 12 in Fallston that day. DK had 2-3 **White-crowned Sparrows** near Bradenbaugh Rd throughout the reporting period.

DK had 2 **Eastern Meadowlarks** at his northern Harford County farm on Feb 8th. DL saw one at Lakeside on Mar 21st. RC saw 2 **Rusty Blackbirds** in his Creswell yard on Feb 8th. He also noted a **Bronzed Grackle** there in a larger group of regular **Common Grackles** on Feb 11th. RK and his family had a **Purple Finch** at their silo feeder in Darlington on Feb 6th. KG reported one in his Jarrettsville yard on Feb 7th. He also had a **Pine Siskin** stop there for a few minutes on Feb 6th.

## Contributors

BJD- Bob and Jan Depuy, CS- Chris Starling, DB- Debbie Bowers, DG- Dave Gigliotti, DK- Dennis Kirkwood, DL- Dave Larkin, DW- Dave Webb, JG- John Gallo, JLG- JL Goch, KG- Kevin Graff, LE- Les Eastman, MCF- Marty Crouse-Farley, MH- Monroe Harden, RC- Rick Cheicante, RK- Russ Kovach, SH- Susan Hood

# MEMBER PROFILE

## Thirza Brandt

*Debbie Bowers had a wonderful chat on the phone with longtime member Thirza Brandt of Upper Falls on April 8, a sunny spring morning with birds singing. Here is part of their conversation.*

**Debbie:** Thirza, where did you first start birdwatching?

**Thirza:** We didn't go to any special place – just around the house, and then we joined the bird club with Dave and Nell Smith. Hammond and I got married in '62 and that's when we joined the club. Hammond and I, for 18 years, did the Cecil County Christmas Bird Count –Cecil County at that time didn't have a chapter. We counted along the Susquehanna and west of Rt. 1 to the Pennsylvania line.

**Debbie:** Do you still go birdwatching?

**Thirza:** No, just on my back porch – see, I'm 93 years old. I can't get out to my feeders now. I have a wrap around porch, and on my back porch, which faces east; I just feed the birds there. I've already fed them once today – I feed them cracked corn and black oil seeds. During that snow I'd feed them about five times a day on the back porch. I feed a couple squirrels too, on the back porch.

**Debbie:** Tell me a few stories that come to mind about birds you've seen.

**Thirza:** We canoed one time over to Snake Island on a bird trip- we put in at Swan Creek. I'll tell you what was interesting – a hummingbird had a nest hanging from a limb, hanging right over the water. And I had a hummingbird here. One day I was out planting something in an urn, and I saw this hummingbird going round and round an evergreen tree, so I stood real still, and it went on a nest. Dave Smith came down and took a picture of her sitting on the nest – a real good close up. People would come to visit me and I'd give them a glass of iced tea and they'd watch her come back and forth. She had two little eggs in there. When she was feeding them, I thought she'd stick that beak right through them... I carry a picture of her in my wallet. Because those nests are hard to find. It was right close to where I had cinnamon fern, and they use that brown seed in their nest.

**Debbie:** Imagine that – they pluck it off the fern and put it in their nest...

**Thirza:** Right – they kind of glue it to the limb. Very interesting. One time we had an oriole nest in our maple tree. How it held up on that fragile limb-- I was afraid it would break off. Hammond said to me, 'Thirza, they fly all the way to Belize – I think they'll make it.' I watched the [parents] take the birds out and line them up on the limb. I could watch from the bedroom window and see right into the nest.

**Debbie:** Do you have a favorite bird?

**Thirza:** My favorite bird – oh, that's hard. I love them all. I love the wrens, the chickadees, the woodpeckers; I just love them all. I don't like it when the blackbirds come by, but outside of that I just love every one of them. They're so cute – the nuthatches, the winter wren ...

**Debbie:** Yes, the winter wren is one of my favorites...

**Thirza:** Oh, he's cute as a button. They are just busy, busy...

**Debbie:** Tell me about the club in the 1960s.

**Thirza:** We met at the Presbyterian Church even then – and I was recording secretary I don't know how many years. I was also program chairman with Dave Smith. We didn't have a picnic then; that was started later. The club has more activities now than back then. I got Chan Robbins one time to come talk to us. I have his book. Right now it's falling apart, but I won't give it up because Chan signed it for me....

### **The Peace of Wild Things by Wendell Berry**

When despair for the world grows in me  
and I wake in the night at the least sound  
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
rests in the beauty on the water, and the great heron  
feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things  
who do not tax their lives with forethought  
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.

And I feel above the day-blind stars  
waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

# Harford Bird Club Field Trips

Field trip schedule compiled by Tom Gibson and Dennis Kirkwood

**April 24 (Sat.) – Pish and Pedal.** Combine two interests of the outdoors by pedaling along the flats of southern Cecil County. Helmets required. Support vehicles will carry non-bikers as well as equipment for birding. Make reservations with the leader Dave Webb (410-939-3537 or [porzana@comcast.net](mailto:porzana@comcast.net)). The meeting place will be 155/95 Park-and-Ride at 7 am.

**April 25 (Sun.) - Winters Run Road.** 7 am. Meet at the Park and Ride at Route 24 and I95. Join veteran leaders Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis to enjoy one of Harford's rural landscape and the spring songbird migration. Contact Lynn Davis (410-569-0504; [lynnd@iximd.com](mailto:lynnd@iximd.com)) or Dave Larkin (410-569-8319 or [dlarkin@towson.edu](mailto:dlarkin@towson.edu)).

**May 1 (Sat.) - (Inclement weather date, Sun., May 2) – Second Annual Epic Birding Contest.** Join a team to compete for bragging rights on finding the most species at Susquehanna State Park. Meet at the Rock Run Mill at 6:30 am for team selections and rules review. Counting will begin at 6:45 am and end at 11:30 am. Rally celebration will occur at approximately 12 noon at the Laurrapin Grill in Havre de Grace. Family members and others are welcome to join the contestants for the celebration. Coordinators are Tom Gibson (410-734-4135; [gibsonld@aol.com](mailto:gibsonld@aol.com)) and Sue Procell (410-676-6602; [suzanne.procell@us.army.mil](mailto:suzanne.procell@us.army.mil))

**May 8 (Sat.) – Statewide May Count.** Help Harford County contribute to this important data collection day and monitor migration throughout our locale. Contact the coordinator, Mark Johnson, for assignments. (410-692-5978; [mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil](mailto:mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil))

**May 9(Sun.) – Girls Gone Wildflowers.** Enjoy Mother's Day with a walk through flower rich areas of Susquehanna State Park. Birds will also be abundant. Meet at the confluence of Deer Creek and the River on Stafford Rd. at 7:30 am. Leaders are Colleen Webster (410-459-4577; [cwebster@harford.edu](mailto:cwebster@harford.edu)), Jean Wheeler (410-638-6774, [jswheeler3@verizon.net](mailto:jswheeler3@verizon.net)) and Lynn Feryus ([lfery@verizon.net](mailto:lfery@verizon.net)).

**May 15 (Sat.) – Swan Harbor Farm.** Explore the wetlands and forests of this beautiful county park. Shorebirds, eagles, grebes, ducks, and rails are expected. Meet at the park at 8:00 am. Leaders are Randy Robertson (410-273-9029; [r.c.robertson@comcast.net](mailto:r.c.robertson@comcast.net)) and John Gallo.

**May 16 (Sun.) – Eden Mill Park - Bird banding Demonstration.** Come see expert bird banders in action. You will see birds up close in hand and, perhaps have the opportunity to actually release a bird. You will also learn about the data col-

lection process, how the birds are captured and released from the nets and much more. This is a great experience for beginners and children. There are also near-by nature trails through woods, meadows, along streams and a boardwalk through a marsh. Meet at the banding station on Eden Mill Road at 7:30 am.

**May 23 (Sun.) – Harford Glen.** Always a spring favorite, the woods and wetlands of Plumtree Run and Winters Run are full of great birdlife from eagles and hawks to shorebirds, waterfowl, and warblers. Meet at the upper parking lot of Harford Glen at 7:00 am. Leaders are Lynn Davis (410-569-0504; [lynnd@iximd.com](mailto:lynnd@iximd.com)) and Ruth Bergstrom.

**May 29 (Sat.) – Bombay Hook, the premier location on the East Coast for shorebird migration.** Join leaders Randy Robertson (410-273-9029; [r.c.robertson@comcast.net](mailto:r.c.robertson@comcast.net)) and Russ Kovach (410-457-4274; [Russell.kovach@gmail.com](mailto:Russell.kovach@gmail.com)) to search for the rare and the familiar. Meet at 7:00 am at the 155/95 Park and Ride.

**May 31 (Mon.) – Upper Deer Creek Valley.** Explore the streams and ponds of NW Harford County and visit the World Famous Bradenbaugh Flats. Expect to see warblers, Horned Larks, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Willow Flycatcher. Meet at the northern end of Madonna Road where it crosses Deer Creek at Hidden Valley at 7 am. Leader is Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; [dkirkw@verizon.net](mailto:dkirkw@verizon.net))

**June 6 (Sun.) – Conowingo Dam.** A great place in Harford to see eagles and orioles as well as Prothonotary Warblers. Meet at the new observation platform close to the dam at 7 am. The leader is Les Eastman (410-734-6969; [les@birdtreks.com](mailto:les@birdtreks.com))

**June 19 (Sat.) – Railing at Swan Harbor.** Join this search for "Mud Hens", "Cattail Herons", and other secretive marsh birds that call Swan Harbor's reedy impoundments home. Lucky birders have spotted Marsh Wrens, two types of bitterns, and 3 rail species while peering down from the raised berms – and we hope to do the same! Meet at the park at 7:30 PM. Leader is Dave Ziolkowski (443 299-8453; [djziolkowski@yahoo.com](mailto:djziolkowski@yahoo.com))

**June 26 (Sat.) – Churchville Farm Tour.** Visit two farms in the area that support great bird habitat. Expect meadowlarks, woodpeckers, Field Sparrow, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Meet at the Churchville Rec Center off Glenville Rd. at 7 am. Leader is Dave Webb (410-939-3537; [porzana@comcast.net](mailto:porzana@comcast.net))

# Field Trip Reports

## Delaware/Maryland Shore.

February 28

This was a great trip where 63 species of birds were observed including the first Rusty Blackbirds and Boat-tailed Grackles that I remember seeing on this trip. Other highlights were 20 species of waterfowl, including Harlequin Duck at the Ocean City Inlet and Hooded Mergansers at the West Ocean City Pond; great views of Brown-headed Nuthatch at the Cape Henlopen Nature Center feeders; and Short-eared Owl at Port Mahon. It was a fun day for all involved. Join us next year for some great late winter birding. ~ *Les Eastman*

## Laurrapin and Lapidum

March 28

A good crowd (~14) joined us at the Laurrapin Grill for a brunch then we were off to spots along the Susquehanna to spot for migrating waterfowl. Our first spot at the

Craig Memorial Park had few birds, and included Osprey, Coot, and Double-crested Cormorant. From there we went to the Lapidum Landing where cool winds kept us to a brief search for birds. Bonaparte's, Herring, Greater Black-backed, and Ring-billed Gulls were spotted, but few ducks. We then birded along the railroad tracks from the mill at Rock Run up to Deer Creek and found an Eastern Phoebe and various sparrows. The only ducks that were spotted included Mallard, Wood Duck, Common Merganser, and Lesser Scaup. While everyone thought the idea of getting together for food and drink married with a birdwatching trip was great, opinions differed on whether it was best to bird or dine first. Altogether we logged in 27 species (and not a single Starling or House Sparrow found!).

~ *Mark Johnson & Suzanne Procell*

## 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Rock Run CBC (continued from page 3)

**Aldino:** Phil Powers, John Taylor & George Evering (43 species) found six raptor species and five woodpecker species. They also had most Tree Sparrows for the count (10).

**Susquehanna:** Mark Johnson & Suzanne Procell (48 species) found six woodpecker species (high count for Pileated (5)), five sparrow species including a Chipping Sparrow. They missed, however, House Sparrow.

**Rolling Green:** Dave Webb & Jean Wheeler (58 species) found seven raptor species including the only Golden Eagle for the count. This "Presidential Pair" also found six species of woodpeckers, six species of sparrows, including White-crowned (4). They also had two American Pipits.

**Deer Creek/Palmer SP:** Solo avian enthusiast, Jay Rubinoff (41 species) covered this rural area and found Bald Eagle (3), Northern Harrier (1) and American Kestrel (1). He also recorded Fish Crow (4), Gray Catbird (1), and Rusty Blackbird (4).

**Darlington:** Tom Trafton, Jay Killian, & John Hughes covered both Darlington and the Dublin areas. Here they found 42 species including Sharp-shinned Hawk (1), Bald Eagle (7), and Great-Horned Owl (1). This team also found the only Eastern Phoebe of the count. Thanks *again* for doing double-duty!

**Conowingo Dam:** Gull expert, Gene Scarpula (23 species), covered the dam area solo and found Iceland and Thayer's

Gulls! He also found Tundra Swan and Black Duck. Only 88 Ring-billed Gulls recorded. What a difference a year makes!

**Dublin:** Tom's team (23 species) pulling extra duty found Common Mergansers (35), Bald Eagle (3), Double-crested Cormorant (1) and Pileated Woodpecker.

**River Flats:** Dennis & Kristin Kirkwood, Peter Jay, Sarah Jay, Grace Hiter, & Volney Ford (57 species) were out in the river and upper bay covering waterfowl. Eleven species of duck, swans, and geese were observed and this crew found the only Peregrine Falcon, Common Yellowthroat and Common Loon.

The 38<sup>th</sup> Rock Run CBC was a resounding success but once again the weather (or northern food abundance) likely contributed to fewer winter species to include many that are not considered finches (e.g. Golden-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creepers, White-crowned Sparrows, etc.). Again, many other species were also missed including Wilson's Snipe and Eastern Meadowlark. Thanks to all who participated, particularly Tom Trafton and crew and new leader (Jay Rubinoff). Thanks always to Lorna & Adele Wortman for hosting the "tally rally" and providing the hot stew and lentil soup and a scrumptious selection of homemade breads.

Next year's CBC will be on Sunday December 26, 2010. Mark your calendars! ~ *Suzanne Procell and Mark Johnson*



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### The Harford Bird Club Dinner Reservation Form

Please cut and mail the bottom portion of this page to Eileen Nack, 8 Crestmont Drive, Aberdeen MD 21001 by Friday, April 30, 2010 if you plan on attending.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of adults (at \$7.00 each)

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of children 12 and under (at \$4.00 each)

Please make checks payable to Harford County MOS.



Print your name(s) above as you would like it to appear on your name tag!

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# Harford Bird Club May Dinner Meeting



## "Tagging and Monitoring of APG's Bald Eagles"

by  
George "Bart" Roberts

Friday, May 7th

Dinner - 6:15pm - General Meeting time 7:15pm

Location: Harford Glen Environmental Education Center

502 W. Wheel Road

Bel Air, MD



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

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