What was your gateway bird? Amanda Koss, VP, asked in last issue of Wrenderings. This question has me remembering my first year of birding, one that was full of surprise and excitement discovering one gateway bird after another. June, an exceptional and enthusiastic birder, led weekly trips all over Harford and Cecil Counties and into Pennsylvania. I recall seeing a large bird sitting on a rock in the Susquehanna River. With a quick look and an excited response, June identified it as a Caspian Tern. “A Caspian Tern!” I, too, excitedly replied literally jumping up and down caught up in the moment. It was all magical to be outdoors, to experience the change of seasons, to learn about the many habitats, and to be fascinated by a varied and beautiful species like birds. I was hooked on birding!

Recently, I traveled with some HBC members to South Africa. One of our leaders, 24 year old Dylan, has a life list of over 2000 species and can identify 1000 bird songs. He was easily one of the most enthusiastic birders on our trip. When the target bird was sighted, Dylan would take a step back and say with satisfaction in his South African accent and deep voice, “I love good birding, I really do.”

As a long time member of HBC, I realize that the components of good birding often go beyond the sightings. It includes the people—the community of like minded individuals who love good birding in the backyard or across the world. It is the shared experience and enthusiasm that contributes to my awe and gratitude. It happens right here in our bird club all of the time.

In September, I watched bird banding at Eden Mill. Mark Johnson is a master bander, and on this day, Amanda was the student trying her best for correct procedure and information. Other members were there trained in banding and as committed as ever to retrieve birds and assist in the process. The next Saturday morning, I joined a walk at Emory Knoll Farm led by our volunteer members, Susan Hood and Carey Ransom. Their love of birding and enthusiasm was evident, and the same could be said for the participants who came out on this blustery morning. On October 4, Colleen Webster led an evening nature walk on the promenade in Havre de Grace. Colleen’s love of the natural world is shared skillfully and with passion. She had the group’s attention—we were all enthralled to learn about habitat and bird and animal behavior. The evening ended with the pastel hues of the setting sun and rising of the moon over the Susquehanna River. I felt awe of the beauty of nature around me and grateful for being able to share with others.

(Continued on page 2)
These are just some of the examples of continued learning, shared enthusiasm, and a wonderful sense of community that adds to the pleasure of bird watching. It could be said about our bird club members that “We all love good birding, we truly do.”

In this issue of Wrenderings, you will find many opportunities to continue to be excited about birding. As always, HBC field trips, meetings, and other events are listed. Be sure to join in and keep that feeling of awe and excitement alive. Amanda’s essay, What is Your Gateway Bird has resulted in members sharing some wonderful stories. I hope to hear more at our next dinner meeting which is November 3 at Churchville Presbyterian Church. Come learn information about bluebirds and support our HBC member and guest speaker, Mary Murray. Volunteers ensure our club’s success. Please check the requests for volunteer opportunities. Contact me for more information. Volunteer. For the love of birding.

Deb Stewart

November Dinner Meeting
Our next club meeting will be on Friday, November 3 beginning at 6:15 p.m. with a delicious turkey dinner prepared by the members of the Churchville Presbyterian Church. It is a casual, pre-Thanksgiving evening to be enjoyed by all our members. Feel free to invite friends and family members to savor the bounty of the harvest season, and to enjoy our scheduled program as we wind down our 2017 birding year. There will be a brief meeting at 7:15 along with our raffle. This month the raffle will be a 50/50 cash raffle. Then, at 8:00 p.m. Mary Murray, the HBC Education Coordinator, will speak about Eastern Bluebirds. Mary has extensive knowledge about the species after working with Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s citizen science program, Project Nestwatch. Mary monitors bluebird boxes at Harford Glen, Prospect Mill Elementary and the Susquehannock Wildlife Society property in Darlington. After many years of monitoring, Mary will share her successes and failures as you possibly contemplate erecting Eastern Bluebird boxes on your property. Mary will share hot tips on predator guards, ways to keep invasive birds out of boxes, the importance of checking the boxes properly and cleaning the boxes out after each brood. Concluding the presentation, one person in attendance will walk away with a hand crafted, perfectly designed Eastern Bluebird box built by Mary's father, Jack.

Reservations are necessary. Eric Vangrin will be handling the reservations for this month so for more information, contact him at evangrin@msn.com

The reservation form is on Page 7.
Club News?

Have news the club should know about? Births, deaths, marriages, or any other notable events that belong in the newsletter? Please contact Corresponding Secretary Madeline Lovera at 443-425-3974 or send an email to lovebluebird206@gmail.com.

Our condolences go out to Mary Jo Collins and family on the death of long time club member Bill Collins. We will all miss him.

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!

NANCEY & ANDREW BROCKI of BEL AIR
STEVE & TIKA DANNENFELSER of JOPPA
NANCY ANN GILLIS of BELCAMP
SUE HIRT of PARKVILLE
SARAH MACLELLAN of LINCOLN UNIVERSITY, PA

Membership Dues Are Due

Annual membership dues are now overdue for the Harford Bird Club year from September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018. If you have not yet renewed, the membership form was included in the August issue of Wrenderings or you can print it off the web site at http://www.harfordbirdclub.org/pdfs/HARFORD%20COUNTY%20BIRD%20CLUB.pdf. Please contact Eric Vangrin at evangrin@msn.com or 443-417-7219 if you have any questions about your renewal. Please fill out the form, enclose your check made payable to HARFORD COUNTY MOS and mail it to Eric. We would like to have all dues paid by December 31, 2017.

Volunteer Opportunities

Please consider how you can serve the Harford Bird Club. A little time on your part will make a big difference for HBC and its members. Thank you for your consideration. For more info, contact Deb Stewart (410 879 2364 debstewart1307@gmail.com)

PUBLICITY VOLUNTEER

Twice a year, the HBC Field Trip committee sets the schedule and provides a write up for the next 6 months. A word document of trips is sent to publicity volunteer who transfers information to the online sites for Sun Paper, Cecil Whig and HCN, Harford’s TV station. Each trip is entered online.

Time required: 4 to 5 hours twice a year.

Skill: Edit and enter information on line on a timely basis

RAFFLE

The raffle is a long standing fundraising tradition at HBC meetings. Rather than ask one person to assume the raffle of all 6 meetings, we are requesting 6 volunteers to each take one meeting. This involves obtaining raffle items for a specific dinner meeting date. Two more volunteers are still needed.

Time required: time to obtain 6 to 10 raffle items, attendance at specific meeting.

Items: gift certificates, bird seed, bird books and other bird related items (in very good condition if being recycled). Elaine Berry can advise.

BIRD COUNT COORDINATOR

After many years of coordinating bird counts, Rick Cheicante will be passing the torch. Rick has developed a well oiled machine and willing to pass on information. His last count is the Christmas Bird Count, December, 2017. We have a volunteer to enter data.

Frequency: Fall, Christmas and Winter Counts

Time required: Moderate amount of time 3 times a year.

Skill: Organized and able to follow a protocol to coordinate block leaders. Communication with team

HBC on Social Media

Harford Bird Club is now an open group on Facebook. Please follow, share, post local bird info and photos. You might want to add friends with an interest too. The Board is discussing ways to make social media more effective for our club.
Ducks, Wading Birds, Falcons
EH found a Redhead in a group with some Mallards in Havre de Grace on Sep 27th. RJ also found a Ring-necked Duck at Lakeside Business Park on Sep 30th. KC counted 4 Least Bitterns at the Gunpowder Marsh on Sep 4th. RS saw a Great Egret, 2 Green Herons, and a Glossy Ibis at Swan Harbor on Aug 16th. DK reported that he had 3 or 4 American Kestrels near Turney’s Pond for most of September. They had been in the area for about a month.

Plovers, Sandpipers
KB saw a Black-bellied Plover at the Aldino Sod Farm on Sep 3rd. JE found 2 American Golden Plovers at the Aldino Airport on Aug 25th. They were seen by several others through Aug 31st. MJ saw one there on Sep 5th. This one appeared to be a juvenile. He saw 3 at the Sod Farm on Sep 3rd and 4 on Sep 5th. KB had 4 there on Sep 3rd. MJ found one there on Sep 13th. RJ heard an Upland Sandpiper across the airport on Aug 26th. JE found a juvenile Sanderling on Battery Island on Aug 14th. DL saw a similar juvenile bird there on Aug 20th. JE had 3 juveniles and 1 adult there on Aug 30th, along with a flyover Stilt Sandpiper.

Vireos, Ravens, Martins, Thrushes
DK caught and banded a Blue-headed Vireo at Eden Mill on Sep 30th. He and his team also caught and banded a Gray-cheeked Thrush and a Swainson’s Thrush in the same net. They got excellent side by side comparison views of the two similar birds. DW saw 2 Common Ravens soaring over Churchville on Aug 25th. MJ saw a late Purple Martin at Perryman Park on Sep 13th.

Warblers, Sparrows, Oriole
JE found a Golden-winged Warbler at Susquehanna State Park on Sep 12th. DK had single Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green Warblers along with a Lincoln’s Sparrow at Eden Mill on Sep 30th. DL saw a Kentucky Warbler at Susquehanna State Park on Sep 14th. BH saw a Lincoln’s Sparrow and a Dickcissel at Perryman Park on Aug 18th. DW had a Canada Warbler in his Webster Village backyard on Aug 24th. MJ saw an Orchard Oriole near the entrance to Perryman Park on Aug 23rd.

Contributors

The leaves are changing and the fall birds are moving in. Summer must be over. This report covers the period from August 1st through September 30th, 2017.
Harford Bird Club Field Trips

Field trip schedule compiled by Tom Gibson

October 21 (Sat.) – Swan Harbor Farm Park – This preserved area near the Upper Bay provides prime habitat for waterfowl, songbirds and marsh and field birds. The trip begins at 7:30 AM at the parking lot at the end of the driveway. Contact leader, Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; newarkfarms@gmail.com).

October 29 (Sun.) – Bombay Hook – Visit one of the East Coast’s best sites for shorebirds and waterfowl. The refuge is beautiful at this time of year with an exciting array of migrating birds. Bring a lunch and drink. Meet at the MD 155/I-95 Park and Ride near Havre de Grace at 7:30 AM. Leader is Dave Larkin (410-569-8319; larkin3001@comcast.net).

November 4 (Sat.) – Blackwater Wildlife Refuge – Don’t miss this opportunity to visit the Eastern Shore’s 28,000 acre national wildlife refuge. Established in 1933, its fresh water impoundments, brackish tidal wetlands, open fields, and mixed forests attract thousands of birds migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. The refuge is also home to many local species and Eagle and Osprey cens which can be viewed online. Meet at the Havre de Grace Park and Ride lot at the I-95/155 exit at 7:30 AM. Leaders are Tom Gibson (410-734-4135; gibsonlld@aol.com), Tom Congersky (410-658-4137; injtcon@zoominternet.net) and Bob Werlein (410-692-5180; we2rein@gmail.com).

November 11 (Sat.) – Wild Card Waterfowl Tour – The leader, Dave Webb, will determine trip sites based on recent sightings. Contact Dave (410-939-3537; porzana@comcast.net) for specific details about start time and location as well as possible sightings.

November 18 (Sat.) – Sweet Air section of Gunpowder Falls State Park. Explore a variety of trails that meander among pines, deciduous woods, open fields, and riparian habitats. Meet at 8:30 AM in the Dalton-Bevard Rd. parking area west of Routes 165 & 152. The leader is Susan Hood (410-937-7552; susanjhood@comcast.net).

November 25 (Sat.) – Eagle Watch – Conowingo Dam – Look for a possible Golden Eagle among the more than 100 Bald Eagles along with just a few buzzards (actually, numerous Black Vultures). There will also be waterfowl and early winter songbirds. Meet at 8:00 AM at Fisherman’s Park below the dam at the first parking lot straight ahead after passing through the gate at the south end of the park. Contact leader Dennis Kirkwood (410-692-5905; newarkfarms@gmail.com).

December 2 (Sat.) – Delaware Coast – Depending on recent sightings, several waterfowl and shorebird “hot spots” will be visited along the coast of the Delaware River and Bay. Meet at the Havre de Grace commuter parking lot near the I-95 exit along Rt.155 at 7:30 AM. Contact Russ Kovach for details. (443-386-4787; Russell.kovach@gmail.com).

December 9 (Sat.) – Mariner Point, Joppatown – Avian activity will be surveyed with an emphasis on wintering waterfowl and songbirds at this estuarine location. Meet at 8:00 AM at the Mariner Point Park parking lot. Phil Powers is the leader (443-417-7520; birdsinmd308@gmail.com).

December 30 (Sat.) – Christmas Count – Contact the compiler, Rick Cheicante (410-803-2712; rickcheicante@cs.com) for details.

January 1 (Mon.) – Perryman Area – Celebrate the New Year or recover from New Year’s Eve by getting back to nature in the always productive Perryman Area with leader Phil Powers (443-417-7520; birdsinmd308@gmail.com). Meet at the Wal-Mart parking lot at 8:30 AM.

January 13 (Sat.) - Winter Feeder Tour - Enjoy watching avian visitors to bird feeders from the cozy warmth of the homes of a few of our club members. While the birds enjoy some of their favorite foods, tour guests will also have the opportunity to enjoy some breakfast goodies and to socialize with their fellow members. It is also a good time to get some new ideas and pick up some hints for attracting a variety of birds to your yard. Details to follow closer to the event by internet and the HBC website.
Shorebird Search
August 26
Seven birders started the annual shorebird search at the Tydings marina in Havre de Grace. Unlike last year the mats of bay grasses had not yet attracted large numbers of shorebirds but we did manage to find Lesser Yellowlegs and a distant flock of Least Sandpipers. We enjoyed looks at five of the six swallow species found in Harford County, missing only Cliff Swallow. Great Egrets were abundant in the shallows and Bald Eagles and Osprey were present in numbers. Lots of Forster’s Terns and Caspian Terns were patrolling the mudflats. A lone Laughing Gull joined the many Ring-billed Gulls. We moved on to the Aldino Airport and the surrounding turf fields, and thanks to the advance scouting by co-leader Josh Emm, found 3 more species of shorebirds. An American Golden Plover played hide-and-seek amongst the clods of dirt in a recently plowed field. This is a rare species for the county and with patience, all were treated to good looks through the scope. Dozens of Killdeer were present and a single Pectoral Sandpiper also made an appearance. Small flocks of Horned Larks were busy gleaning the fields. We ended the morning with 35 species. ~ Dennis Kirkwood

Ma & Pa Trail
September 4
The morning was sunny and cool. A group of ten birders met at Annie’s playground. They walked the Ma and Pa trail from there to the Equestrian Center and back. We enjoyed seeing 39 species in our 4+ hours, with a Canada Warbler being the bird of the day, and life bird for one beginning birder. Blue Grosbeaks were seen and heard in several locations. ~ Elaine Beery

Emory Knoll Farms
September 30
It was a blustery day at this beautiful location where green roof plants are grown and the landscape beyond the nursery is undulating, with good views of fields and woods and open, cloud-filled sky. Seventeen people, led by Carey Rowsom, meandered along the trails and managed to count 40 species of birds, in spite of the winds hindering their efforts. We encountered at least eight raptor species, plus a couple that escaped identification at the horizon. Both kinglets were accounted for, and five warbler species were spotted, mostly in non-breeding plumage (Magnolia, Blackburnian, American Redstart, Black-throated Green), plus two Black-throated Blue Warbler males in stunning color. ~ Susan Hood

Update on the New Sighting for Harford Contest
By Dennis Kirkwood
As you may remember, we tried a new contest for 2017 in which club members and friends were invited to predict what species would find Harford County for the first time during the current year. 38 species were submitted by 20 individuals and as of October 4, no one has come close to an accurate guess. In my article in the February newsletter, I shared the top vote getters as Northern Shrike and Crested Caracara, with Sedge Wren, Lark Sparrow and Northern Lapwing a close second. We are certainly entering the season when the shrike and the sparrow are likely but the others are fading as migration winds down for the fall. However many of the others predictions are still in play and we have almost three months yet to search before the start of a new year. The closest we have come to a new Harford record in 2017 was a European Green-winged Teal seen at the Home Depot ponds at routes 40 and 24 in March. Unfortunately, the AOS does not recognize the split of this species as of yet (the IOS considers it split and is referred to as the Common Teal) so it remains a subspecies for now. No one predicted it anyway! Pay attention in the field and at your feeders and maybe we will yet find a winner to our contest. If not, let’s do it again next year! Remember - you know who to call first.

Harford Birds Checklist
Many thanks to Dave Webb for taking on the huge task of updating the HBC Checklist. The fifth edition was published seven years ago in 2010. Dave dutifully added species, reorganized the families as dictated by the American Birding Association (ABA) and reformatted the document to make all of the changes fit.

Special thanks to Matt Addicks who provided the cover art. Dennis Kirkwood proofed and edited the checklist and shared his professional opinion to Dave before final approval. Monica Chiveral, the production teacher; Lindsay the student in charge of our account; and the students in the Production class at Harford Technical High School earn kudos for providing a professional and well received product. The students will be printing and folding the new checklists for distribution in November. Here’s to several more years of good listing with the 6th edition of the HBC Checklist!
Support Our Sponsors

The following businesses generously donated prizes for the raffle at the last meeting. Please patronize them and thank them for their support of the club.

The Harford Bird Club Dinner Reservation Form

Please cut and mail the bottom portion of this page to Eric Vangrin, 1100 Barkley Place Bel Air, MD 21014, by Friday, October 27th, 2017 if you plan on attending.

__________ Number of adults (at $13.00 each)

__________ Number of children 16 and under (at $5.00 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!

Include address and phone number if you would like transportation to the meeting.

TEL: ___________________________ Address: ________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

Newsletter Mailing Update

In the last newsletter, it was announced that the mailings for this newsletter would be transitioning to primarily electronic delivery. If you have changed email addresses recently or you would prefer to keep getting a hardcopy, please contact Eric Vangrin, Membership Chair at evangrin@msn.com or 443-417-7219 to update your information.

The transition to electronic delivery will begin with the next newsletter.
Harford Bird Club
November Dinner Meeting

Eastern Bluebirds
by
Mary Murray
Friday, November 3rd, 2017
Dinner - 6:15 PM, General Meeting - 7:15 PM
Location: Churchville Presbyterian Church
2844 Churchville Road
Churchville, MD 21028