



News from the 'Hood

Patuxent Bird Club

A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society



Upcoming Meetings and Speaker Programs

Tuesday, March 12, 7:30 pm, doors open at 7 pm



North on the Wing—Travels with the Songbird Migration of Spring *Presented by Dr. Bruce Beehler*

In this illustrated lecture, naturalist and ornithologist Bruce Beehler will recount his hundred-day-long 2015 field trip following the spring migration of songbirds from the coast of southeastern Texas up the Mississippi and thence into the boreal forests of northern Ontario— breeding ground of many of the beautiful and vocal North American wood warblers. Along the way, Beehler visited various migratory bird field projects as well as scores of local, state, and national parks and refuges critical for the preservation of the migration phenomenon. He also spent time in an

array of eclectic and beautiful rural communities from southern Louisiana and Mississippi through the Heartland and to the northern limit of roads in Ontario, land of the Cree and Ojibwe First Nations peoples. Beehler's informal goal was to spend time with all thirty-seven eastern wood warblers on their prime breeding habitat. In pursuing this objective, he saw a lot of deeply rural North America. His presentation touches on wildlife, nature conservation, migration research, American history, and rural culture. Beehler will be signing his popular book, *North on the Wing*, (Smithsonian: 2018), after the lecture.

About the presenter: Dr. Bruce Beehler is an ornithologist, conservationist, and naturalist. He is currently a Research Associate in the Division of Birds at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, and conducts research and writing about nature and natural history. Beehler has spent much of his scientific career studying and working to conserve birds and their forest habitats. After conducting doctoral fieldwork in Papua New Guinea, Beehler worked for ten years at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, followed by stints at the Wildlife Conservation Society, U.S. Department of State, Counterpart International, Conservation International, and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. Beehler is an elective Fellow of the American Ornithologists Union, and has served on the boards of the American Bird Conservancy (ABC), RARE, and the Livingston-Ripley Waterfowl Conservancy. Currently, Beehler serves on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Rainforest Trust and is a Research Associate of the American Bird Conservancy. He also chairs the Development Committee for the Maryland Ornithological Society. Beehler has published thirteen books and authored more than a hundred technical and popular articles about birds and nature. Today, Beehler carries out natural history studies and writing focused on wildlife and natural places in North America. **See the flier on page 7 for an invitation to attend the March 24th launch of Beehler's latest book, *Birds of Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia*.**

Monthly meetings are held in the
College Park Airport Operations Building, 2nd Floor
1909 Corporal Frank Scott Drive
College Park, MD 20740
Free and open to the public

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Tuesday, April 9, 7:30 pm, doors open at 7 pm

How to use eBird to increase your life list!

Presented by Ross Geredien

Have you heard about eBird but never had the chance to sit down and learn how to use it? Or perhaps you are a beginning eBird user but have never gotten beyond the basics of submitting data? Then this program is for you! Ross Geredien will give a primer of the different data and information tools available in eBird, including how to submit your data; how to find recent bird sightings; how to locate target birds; how to do research for an upcoming bird trip; managing your lists in eBird; and other questions based on the audience's interest. We will cover tools like species maps, bar charts, personalized species needs alerts, species occurrence frequency, birding "hotspots," and range maps, as well as a brief overview of the eBird mobile app. We won't be able to cover everything, and so we will focus on some of the most fun aspects of eBird, like how to use it to increase your life list/state list/county list!



About the presenter: Ross Geredien has had an interdisciplinary career in the fields of environmental science and conservation that includes service in state and federal government as well as the nonprofit sector. He has worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where he regulated high-profile mining projects as well as hydraulic fracturing. In addition, Ross has managed conservation lands with The Nature Conservancy in Maine and the Mianus River Gorge Preserve in New York; lobbied Congress to strengthen loopholes in the Clean Water Act; started his own nature photography business; worked as a park ranger and naturalist in Denali, Olympic, and Everglades National Parks; and founded a nonprofit association to protect forest land in Annapolis, Maryland. Ross holds a Master of Environmental Management degree in Ecology from Yale University. He speaks fluent Spanish and has traveled extensively in Latin America. He has been birding for 28 years and has led bird walks throughout North America. His birding resume includes many types of avian surveys, including volunteering with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology in

Arkansas' White River delta to search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Patuxent Bird Club. Ross is a self-described "power-user" of eBird, which he has used extensively since 2009.



Upcoming Field Trips & Bird Walks

As always, all field trips are co-sponsored with Prince George's Audubon Society.

Saturday, March 2, 7:30 am - Fran Uhler Natural Area

Monthly walk. Meet at 7:30 am at east end of Lemon's Bridge Road, off Route 197 just north of Bowie State University. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton (kiwisuits@msn.com).

Thursday, March 7, 3 pm - Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Semi-monthly walk. Wheelchair-accessible. Meet at 3 pm at parking lot, at intersection of Berwyn Rd. and Ballew Ave. in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellatlantic.net) for more information.

Saturday, March 16, 7:30 am - Governor Bridge Natural Area

Monthly walk. Meet at the Natural Area parking lot on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd., 1 mile east of Route 301. No reservations needed. For more information contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.

Field Trips, continued

Thursday, March 21, 3 pm - Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Semi-monthly walk. Wheelchair-accessible. Meet at 3 pm at parking lot, at intersection of Berwyn Rd. and Ballew Ave. in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Sunday, March 31, 8 am - Seasons at South Tract.

Half-day walk. One of a series of walks to explore the seasonal variations in bird use of the habitats at South Tract. Be prepared to walk up to 2 miles. Wear sturdy shoes and bring a water bottle. Target species include early migrating songbirds and maybe some lingering waterfowl. Meet at 8:00 am in the parking lot of the National Wildlife Visitor Center off Powder Mill Rd.; bear left on entering the parking area and go all the way to the last section of the lot past the covered solar recharging station for electric vehicles. For directions, see

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Patuxent/visit/directions.html> or see [https://www.mdbirdingguide.com/Patuxent Research Refuge South Tract](https://www.mdbirdingguide.com/Patuxent%20Research%20Refuge%20South%20Tract). For further information, contact the leader, Ken Cohen, at kvulture@aol.com. *Photo by Marcia Watson.*



Thursday, April 4, 6 pm (Note: start time is 6 pm April through August) - Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Semi-monthly walk. Wheelchair-accessible. Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at intersection of Berwyn Rd. and Ballew Ave. in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Saturday, April 6, 7:30 am - Fran Uhler Natural Area

Monthly walk Meet at 7:30 am at east end of Lemon's Bridge Road, off Route 197 just north of Bowie State University. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton (kiwisuits@msn.com).

Thursday, April 18, 6 pm (Note: start time is 6 pm April through August) - Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Semi-monthly walk. Wheelchair-accessible. Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at intersection of Berwyn Rd. and Ballew Ave. in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Saturday, April 20, 7:30 am - Governor Bridge Natural Area

Monthly walk. Meet at the Natural Area parking lot on the south side of Governor Bridge Rd., 1 mile east of Route 301. No reservations needed. For more information contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com.



Saturday, April 27, 7 am - Fort Smallwood Hawk Watch

We will car-pool to Fort Smallwood Park in Anne Arundel County to observe the spring raptor migration spectacle. Data for the spring raptor migration are compiled annually by a team of counters organized by Sue Ricciardi from the Anne Arundel Bird Club. The number of raptors counted in a spring season ranges from 9,000 to 12,500, and fifteen different raptor species are usually observed, though not all may be present on any one day. In recognition of the significance of the hawkwatch, Fort Smallwood Park has been named an Important Bird Area by Audubon Maryland-DC. Migration of non-raptor species is also noteworthy, especially waterfowl, swallows, and Blue Jays and other passerines. About 260 species of birds

have been observed at the Park. Bring folding chair, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, drinks and snacks. Also bring cash for daily parking fee of \$6.00 per vehicle (annual passes are also available for \$30 for Anne Arundel County residents or \$40 for non-Anne Arundel County residents; a lifetime pass is available for \$40 for those aged 60 years and older). Meet at the Bowie Park and Ride at 7 am. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information. *Photo by Sue Ricciardi.*

Thursday, May 2, 6 pm - Lake Artemesia Natural Area

Semi-monthly walk. Wheelchair-accessible. Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at intersection of Berwyn Rd. and Ballew Ave. in Berwyn Heights. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Saturday, May 4, 7:30 am - Fran Uhler Natural Area

Monthly walk. Meet at 7:30 am at east end of Lemon's Bridge Road, off Route 197 just north of Bowie State University. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton (kiwisuits@msn.com).

Sunday, May 5, 7:00 – 7:45 pm - Special Event – Chimney Swift Watch in Baltimore at Dusk

In conjunction with our May meeting presentation by Joan Cwi on Chimney Swifts, the Baltimore Bird Club has invited us to join them for their annual swift watch at dusk. The swifts have been returning regularly to the Bookbindery Chimney in the Hampden area of Baltimore, so that is where the BBC will probably hold the watch again this spring, 2019. BBC members will observe the chimney the week before, and should it not be productive, a change of venue will be posted on the BBC website

(www.baltimorebirdclub.org) and Facebook page

(www.facebook.com/groups/382565775136349/members/). Be sure to double check the location! If cloudy or a drizzle, come a half hour early.

Canceled if raining. Binoculars useful but not necessary. Hope to see you

there! Leaders: Joan Cwi (jafjsc@verizon.net) and Alice Nelson (alice.display@verizon.net). Photo by Joan Cwi, 9/17/17, Macaulay Library ML71716741.



Meet for car-pooling from PG County at the Bowie Park & Ride at 5:15 pm. Or, if you wish to drive directly to Hampden, here are directions: Take I-97 or I-295 or I-95 to the Baltimore Beltway (I-695) and get on the Inner Loop to go north toward Towson. From the Beltway, take Exit 23 for I-83/Falls Expressway southbound. From I-83, take Exit 9 for Cold Spring Lane eastbound. Go east on Cold Spring to Keswick Road (about 1.0 mile or 5 traffic lights). Turn right and take Keswick south for 1.3 miles to 33rd Street. Turn right (west) on 33rd Street, then left (south) on Elm Avenue. Follow Elm Avenue to the end where it curves to the left and park in the Mill Center parking lot. Then walk back up to the Bookbindery, across from the chain link fence. If using GPS, search for 3100 Elm Avenue.

Saturday May 11 - Annual Spring Migration Bird Count

Annual county-wide census of resident and migrating birds. Pick your own start and stop times. Contact the county compiler, Fred Fallon, at fwfallon@ymail.com to receive an assigned area and for more information. Download a printable checklist for the count at <https://testmwww.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/may-count-checklist-2018.pdf>.

**Your Submissions Invited**

Do you have an idea for an article you would like to see published in a future issue of *News from the 'Hood*? Send a note with your suggestion or, better yet, a draft article to the editor, Marcia Watson at marshwren50comcast.net. Worried that you're not a good writer? No worries – Marcia will happily help with your article. Deadline for submission of completed articles is the 20th of even-numbered months (August, October, December, February, and April). If your article is just a rough idea, please allow more time to develop the text and to seek illustrations, if appropriate.

Upcoming Events

MOS Conference Registration to Open March 17 New this Year: Register Online, Pick Field Trips Online

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) 2019 Convention will be held May 31 - June 2, 2019 at Washington College in Chestertown, MD. For this event, MOS has created a new website dedicated to the convention (<http://www.mosconvention.org>). The website houses all the information about the convention, lodging and field trips. Our convention now has sponsors, some of whom have donated binoculars for our raffle. You can find information about our seminars and workshops, sponsors and vendors, book signings, the photo contest, as well as field trip locations, descriptions and the convention schedule. You will be able to browse through the field trips in advance of registering for the convention.

The convention website has links for convention registration, on-campus lodging selection and field trip sign-ups. Payment for convention registration, fees for possibly 1 or 2 special field trips, and on-site lodging will be handled via PayPal account or directly with a credit card and is integrated within the website.

Convention registration opens on March 17, 2019 at noon, at which time attendees will be able to select type of registration (meals or not), on-site lodging, and field trips.

YMOS Birdathon Coming Up Pledges Requested

Submitted by George Radcliffe and Wayne Bell

Here they go again! This year's annual YMOS Birdathon will take place March 16 and 17. It will happen come heck or high water -- and there certainly is plenty of the latter on Maryland's Eastern Shore this season! The Birdathon is the principal fund raiser to underwrite expenses for YMOS participation in the World Series of Birding (WSB) in May. The youngsters of YMOS invite you to help by pledging \$0.25, \$0.50, or \$1.00 per species seen or heard over their two days in the field.

This year at the WSB, MOS will be represented by four YMOS teams: High School, Middle School (2), and a carbon-free team that will not use motorized transportation. The Birdathon is fully described on page 12 of the January/February edition of The Maryland Yellowthroat (see <https://mdbirds.org/wp-content/uploads/bsk-pdf-manager/YT-JANFEB-2019-For-WEB-Content-Adjustment.pdf>).

A unique twist is a 100-species "Must-See" list that the youngsters compile in advance. Every missed species on this list must be made up by seeing two others. The amount owed per pledge is based on the net species recorded after correcting for any Must-See misses. Since the first YMOS Birdathon in 2009, the participants have never managed to find all 100 of their Must-See's. Will this be the year? It is quite the challenge on the second day to decide whether to chase obviously hard to get Must-See's or to pursue species more easily found. The resulting debate regarding time and effort is wonderful training for the WSB!

You can pledge any time prior to the Birdathon by emailing George Radcliffe (radclifg@gmail.com) or Wayne Bell (wbell2@washcoll.edu). Those who pledge will receive an advance copy of the Must-See list. After the Birdathon, we will send you a report of all species identified, and the amount owed based on the net species seen.

Thank you in advance for your interest, and for your encouragement of these remarkable young birders and the parents who support them all year round.

**National Wildlife Visitor Center - Patuxent Research Refuge
Spring Festival - Birthday Bash
Saturday, March 30, 2019**



Join the Patuxent Research Refuge staff and volunteers in celebrating the beginning of the spring season at the National Wildlife Visitor Center. The theme for the Spring Festival is "Our Forest Friends." Ways to help wildlife will be highlighted through crafts, games, educational activities, and much more. All programs are free and registration is not needed. See flier on page 8 of this newsletter.

See <https://www.fws.gov/nwrs/threecolumn.aspx?id=6442451399> for more information.

**Friends of Patuxent - Special Presentation
Horticulture Meets Ecology:
Creating the Delaware Botanic Gardens
National Wildlife Visitor Center
Saturday, April 6, 2019 1 PM to 2:30 PM**

Meet with Gregg Tepper, Director of Horticulture at Delaware Botanic Gardens, to learn what it takes to create a world-class, inspirational, educational, and sustainable public botanic garden. The new gardens, expected to open in Fall 2019, will provide enjoyment and education to visitors year round and demonstrate the vital importance and beauty of native species. **RSVP required.** Sponsored by the Friends of Patuxent. See flier on page 9 of this newsletter for more information.

**Master Naturalist Training by Anacostia Watershed Society
Applications Due March 31, 2019**

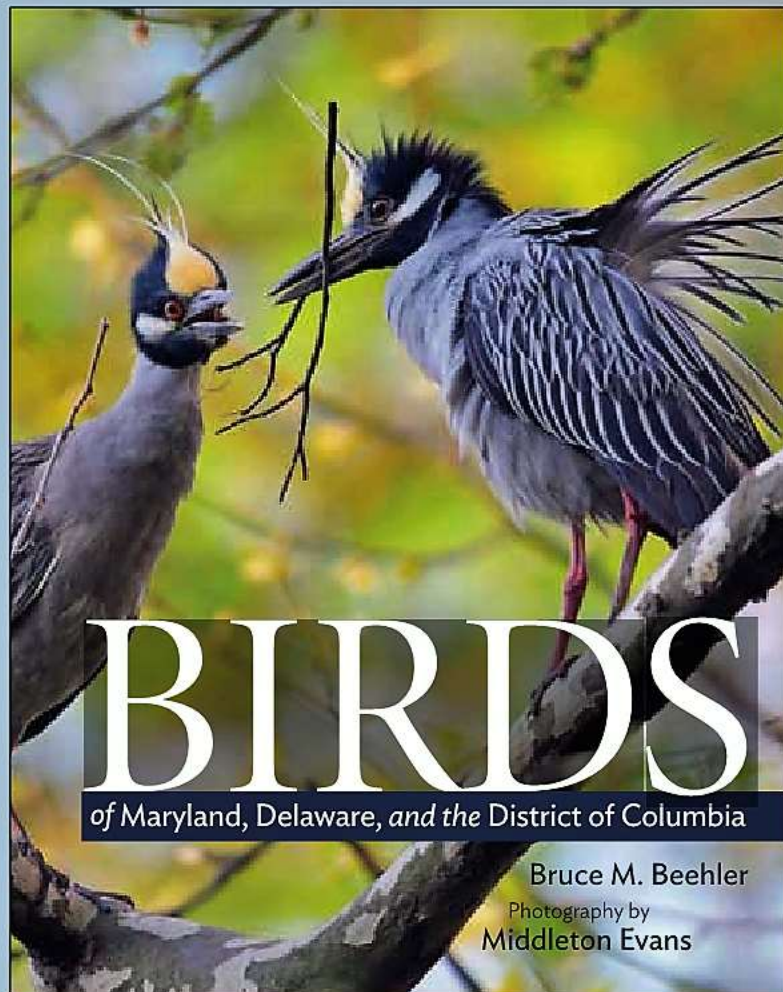
Do you like learning about birds, trees, and insects? Are you eager to meet others who share your enjoyment of the outdoors? Are you looking to get involved in protecting and restoring the natural world? This is the program for you! The summer 2019 Master Naturalist Training program will be held on Saturdays from 8:30am - 4:00pm, June 1st - August 10th (no sessions on July 6th).

Applications for the summer 2019 program must be submitted by March 31st. Do you have questions before you apply? Email Maddie Koenig, Senior Environmental Educator, at mkoenig@anacostiaws.org or call 301-699-6204 x. 112. For the application and for more information, see <https://www.anacostiaws.org/what-we-do/education/adult-education/maryland-master-naturalist.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=f3f94164-c30b-4cf2-9cbb-260dbf772bce>

**Anacostia Watershed Society Earth Day Cleanup
April 13, 9 am - 12 pm**

The Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) is sponsoring an Earth Day Cleanup on Saturday, April 13th from 9 am - 12 pm. AWS is inviting volunteers to help remove trash and debris at sites around the Anacostia watershed and show off your enthusiasm to the world on social media with #AWSEarthDay. Then after the cleanup, celebrate your hard work by wearing your Earth Day shirt at area participating restaurants to receive a special discount!

Advance registration is necessary. How do you volunteer? Visit the AWS Earth Day 2019 website at <http://earthday.anacostiaws.org/earthday2019/index.php> and choose your site from the map. Simply click on register for this site, enter your info, and you're ready to go! When you volunteer with the AWS Earth Day Cleanup, you make a positive impact on your local parks, streams, creeks, and the Anacostia River!



Baltimore Bird Club
Maryland Ornithological Society
Cylburn Arboretum Association
and Johns Hopkins University Press

cordially invite you to celebrate the publication of

**BIRDS OF MARYLAND, DELAWARE,
AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

by Bruce M. Beehler
photography by Middleton Evans

March 24, 2019 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Vollmer Center at Cylburn Arboretum
4915 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland 21209

Join us for a reception and book signing,
with remarks at approximately 2:45 PM

R.S.V.P. by March 18
to rsvp@press.jhu.edu or 410-516-7902

LEARN MORE AND GET INVOLVED

The following organizations will have representatives at the reception:

Audubon Maryland-D.C.
Baltimore Bird Club
Cylburn Arboretum Association
Johns Hopkins University Press
Lights Out Baltimore

Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership
Maryland Ornithological Society
Phoenix Wildlife Center
Safe Skies Maryland

Our Forest Friends

Spring Wildlife Festival

**Saturday
March 30th**

10 am - 3 pm

National Wildlife
Visitor Center

Live Animals
Puppet Shows
Live Music
Tram Tour
Kids' Crafts



Patuxent Research Refuge
10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop
Laurel, MD 20708



You Are Invited to a Special Presentation
HORTICULTURE MEETS ECOLOGY:
CREATING THE DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS
Saturday, April 6, 2019 1 PM to 2:30 PM



Meet with Gregg Tepper, Director of Horticulture at Delaware Botanic Gardens, to learn what it takes to create a world-class, inspirational, educational, and sustainable public botanic garden. The gardens will provide enjoyment and education to visitors year round and demonstrate the vital importance and beauty of native species.

Situated on 37 acres in Dagsboro, Delaware near Bethany Beach, the Delaware Botanic Gardens are a work in progress. The project was initiated in 2012 and is supported by state and local government, key business partners, Longwood Gardens and other renowned horticultural organizations, and many dedicated community volunteers. The gardens will include woodland, upland plateau, and fresh water and tidal habitats providing hospitable environments for native and migratory birds and other wildlife of southern Delaware. Its crown jewel -- a two-acre meadow garden -- was designed by Piet Oudolf, known for New York City's High Line Garden and Chicago's Lurie Gardens.

Gregg comes to the Delaware Botanic Gardens from the Mt. Cuba Center where he served as the Director of Horticulture. A native plant enthusiast since age thirteen, he studied horticulture at the University of Delaware and went on to start his own business designing and managing private gardens. Gregg has lectured on native plants in the United States and in Great Britain and pursues botanical excursions to study plant communities.

Following the presentation, please join us for a dessert social.

Location: National Wildlife Visitor Center at Patuxent Research Refuge, 10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop, Laurel, MD 20708

This presentation is free to the public.

RSVP requested by Thursday, March 28 for food planning. Please email us at: event@friendsofpatuxent.org; or call 301-497-5789 and leave a message as to how many individuals are coming.

Sponsored by the Friends of Patuxent

Christmas Bird Count Reports

By Marcia Watson and Dave Mozurkewich



The 38th annual **Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count** was held on Sunday, December 16, 2018. The weather forecast was for intermittent showers with a just a couple hundredths of an inch of precipitation, but in fact it poured rain all day, in times coming down in buckets. There was also patchy fog to contend with. Temperatures were in the 40s but with all the rain, it was very damp and seemed colder.

Despite the awful weather, about 40 people turned out to count birds, and the official total for the day was 107 species! While not the highest number of species ever reported on this count (the high of 122 species occurred in 2001), given the weather, the results are a testament to the dedication and hard-work of the counters.

Notable birds on the Jug Bay CBC included a White-fronted Goose, Black Scoter, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Merlin, House Wren, Pine Warbler (count week), and Red Crossbills. The Red Crossbills, seen at Merkle, were a new species for the Jug Bay CBC. We did not have record high counts for any species, compared to previous years.

There were two species with historic low counts:

- Tundra Swans: only 38 individuals. The previous low count was 65 in 2009, but 2009 was a year with a big snowfall on the day of the count, and there were low bird numbers all around.
- American Black Duck: only 88 individuals. The previous low count was 103 in 1989, and the average over all years (1981-2018) is 572.

Northern Bobwhite and American Woodcock were not found at all, as has been the case in many previous years of the Jug Bay CBC.

January 1 was the date of the 47th annual **Bowie Christmas Bird Count**. The weather was strikingly different than last year, when temperatures were sub-freezing all day long. This year's count started with fine weather. No precipitation. warm with no wind. The temperature eventually hit 60F but the wind also came up mid-morning to dampen bird activity. We ended the day with a total of 90 species, with an additional two observed during count week. Over the last decade, we averaged 92 species for this count. Both the observing effort and number of individuals counted were near average.

Even after 47 years, we are still able to add new species to the cumulative list for the Bowie CBC. This year that honor went to the Great Egret which is spending the winter at Lake Artemesia. New high counts include 66 Northern Shovelers (previous high count was 7). The increase of Double-crested Cormorants was almost as impressive, increasing from 5 to 44. Other new highs occurred in Buffleheads, Hooded Merganser, both Vultures, Bald Eagle, and Common Raven.

Two species that were observed during count week, but not on the day of the Bowie CBC itself, were three Common Goldeneyes continuing at Lake Artemesia and a whopping 6 to 10 Mute Swans in a Glenn Dale development.

As with any count, there were surprising misses. Although never common, this is the first time we failed to find any American Tree Sparrows. We also missed Northern Harriers, which were seen on 41 of the previous counts.

Conservation Alert and Call to Action

Oxon Cove Park Update



As described in the January-February edition of *News from the 'Hood*, Governor Larry Hogan had proposed a plan to acquire Oxon Cove Park and Oxon Hill Farm from the National Park Service in order to offer it to the Washington Redskins as a site for a new football stadium. As more recently reported in the Washington Post and Baltimore Sun, **Governor Hogan has now changed his mind about using the site for a football stadium, but he still wants to acquire it from the National Park Service so that the state can develop it as a mixed-use commercial development.** Governor Hogan is calling the site the "Maryland Gateway," and although he has not released specific development plans, it seems that his vision is for something similar to the mega-development at National Harbor.

In response to the earlier announcement about the football stadium, Kurt Schwarz, Chair of the MOS Conservation Committee, worked with our local groups to draft a set of letters opposing the Governor's plan. The letters were co-signed by MOS, the Patuxent Bird Club, Prince George's Audubon Society, and Southern Maryland Audubon Society and were sent to Governor Hogan and the Maryland Congressional delegation.

Now that the Governor's plan has shifted, we will be drafting a new set of letters to indicate our continuing opposition to any plan to develop Oxon Cove Park and Oxon Hill Farm. We will reiterate that Oxon Cove Park offers valuable nature education programs for the local community, as well as providing habitat for threatened bird species and open space for passive recreation. Our position is that Oxon Cove Park should not be developed in any way.

Citizen involvement is still important. Please let your state legislators and congressmen know how you feel about the Governor's plan. See the contact list for elected officials in the January-February 2019 issue of our club newsletter (<https://testmwww.files.wordpress.com/2019/01/pbc-newsletter-jan-feb-2019-2.pdf>).

The Potomac Chapter of the Sierra Club has also gotten involved in this issue, as reported in the Washington Post on March 4, 2019. **The Sierra Club is sponsoring a hike at Oxon Cove on Sunday, March 24, 2019, from 9:45 am to 12:45 pm**, and we encourage all who are able to attend. The hike is free but pre-registration is necessary. For details and to register, see <https://www.meetup.com/sierrapotomac/events/258860341/>.

For recent media coverage on Governor Hogan's latest development proposal for Oxon Cove, see:

- Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/maryland-governor-aims-to-build-at-oxon-cove-hikers-hope-that-wont-happen/2019/03/04/1d2b8bce-3e93-11e9-922c-64d6b7840b82_story.html?utm_term=.d9c8cb39a543
- Baltimore Sun: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/politics/bs-md-redskins-swap-20190212-story.html>
- Washington Post, Letter to the Editor: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/larry-hogan-has-a-bad-plan-for-a-beloved-state-park/2019/02/14/13012e90-2fe0-11e9-8781-763619f12cb4_story.html?utm_term=.31ab5eaacab8
- Washington Post: https://www.washingtonpost.com/sports/maryland-gov-larry-hogan-informs-redskins-he-is-withdrawing-effort-to-build-new-stadium-at-this-time/2019/02/12/1afa8372-2f35-11e9-86ab-5d02109aeb01_story.html?utm_term=.b87cf1e6cc56

Accompanying photo courtesy of National Park Service.

News from Around the Web

Mallard and Canada Goose Populations Down Hunting Season to Be Shortened and Bag Limits Reduced

The Bay Journal (2/1/2019) has reported that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has ordered a shortening of the 2019–2020 hunting season for the Atlantic population of **Canada Geese** and a cutback in the number that hunters may take daily. The reason for the change is a concern over the sharp drop seen last year in the Atlantic migratory goose population.

Federal wildlife regulators also have tightened next season's limits on hunting for **Mallards**, one of the most abundant ducks in the world, as they seek the cause of a long-term decline in their numbers across eastern North America.

The hunting season for migratory Canada Geese, which for several years has run 50 days in two stretches from November through January, is slated to be reduced next season to 30 days. For hunters in Pennsylvania and New York, the daily "bag limit" will drop from three to two. But around the Chesapeake Bay — in Maryland, Delaware and Virginia — the limit will go from two to just one a day.

Duck hunters will see their daily quota of Mallards reduced from four to two all along the Atlantic Flyway, which stretches from Canada to Florida.

For more details, including a discussion of the causes for the declines, see

https://www.bayjournal.com/article/hunting_season_bag_limits_for_migratory_canada_geese_mallards_to_be_reduced?utm_source=Bay+Journal+Weekly+News&utm_campaign=332939041e-Newsltr_2019_Feb4&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bde9036159-332939041e-109997401

DNR Midwinter Waterfowl Survey Results

In early January, aerial survey teams of pilots and biologists from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources made visual estimates of the ducks, geese and swans along most of the state's Chesapeake Bay, Potomac River, and Atlantic coast shorelines. This year, the teams counted about 566,300 waterfowl.

Maryland's mid-winter waterfowl survey is part of an annual, nationwide effort to survey waterfowl on their wintering grounds to monitor local distribution and habitat affiliations.

Overall, **dabbling ducks** were lower (64,400) than last winter, while **diving duck** numbers (182,000) were very similar to last winter's count. Survey teams also observed fewer **Canada Geese** (250,200) than last year's record count.

Observation teams noted that overall numbers of waterfowl were more difficult to count this year due to lack of snow and ice cover, which normally helps concentrate birds into smaller areas.

For more details, including a table of comparison data from previous years, see

<https://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2019/02/22/midwinter-waterfowl-survey-results-for-2019-announced/>

Scientists Document Earlier Timing of Migration

A February 25 article in *Science Daily* notes that scientists have documented an alteration in the timing of migration among birds in Europe and in Canada. The study found that, on average, spring migration now occurs one week earlier than it did 50 years ago, and migration is now drawn out over a longer period. Short-distance migrants experienced the greatest changes in the timing of their migration, while changes for long-distance migrants were not as substantial.

For the *Science Daily* article, see "Spring migration is now earlier in European and North American birds." *ScienceDaily*, 25 February 2019, at www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/02/190225105106.htm.

The citation for the full scientific article referenced by *Science Daily* is
Aleksi Lehikoinen, Andreas Lindén, Måns Karlsson, Arne Andersson, Tara L. Crewe, Erica H. Dunn, George Gregory, Lennart Karlsson, Vidar Kristiansen, Stuart Mackenzie, Steve Newman, Jan Erik Røer, Chris Sharpe, Leonid V. Sokolov, Åsa Steinholtz, Martin Stervander, Ina-Sabrina Tirri, Rune Skjold Tjørnløv. Phenology of the avian spring migratory passage in Europe and North America: Asymmetric advancement in time and increase in duration. *Ecological Indicators*, 2019; 101: 985 DOI: 10.1016/j.ecolind.2019.01.083



Patuxent Bird Club Officers & Directors

President	Marcia Watson	marshwren50@comcast.net
Vice-President	Fred Fallon	fwfallon@ymail.com
Treasurer/Memberships	Jane Fallon	jefallon90@yahoo.com
Second Year Directors (Term 2017-2019)	Peter Hanan	peter.hanan@icloud.com
	David Mozurkewich	mozurk@bellatlantic.net
	Pat Tate	jpt8@earthlink.net
First Year Directors (Term 2018-2020)	Ken Cohen	kvulture@aol.com
	Ross Geredien	goodmigrations@yahoo.com
	Ikumi Kayama	ikumikayama@gmail.com
Representatives to MOS State Board	Marcia Watson	marshwren50@comcast.net
	Fred Fallon	fwfallon@ymail.com
Field Trip Coordinator	David Mozurkewich	mozurk@bellatlantic.net
Hospitality	Lynn Kenny	pattylynn46@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster	Marcia Watson	marshwren50@comcast.net
Fall Bird Count	David Mozurkewich	mozurk@bellatlantic.net
Spring Bird Count	Fred Fallon	fwfallon@ymail.com
Bowie Christmas Bird Count	David Mozurkewich	mozurk@bellatlantic.net
Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count	Marcia Watson	marshwren50@comcast.net

Visit us on the web at www.patuxentbirdclub.org

PG Notable Bird Sightings

Birds have been on the move and some interesting finds have shown up in our county.



The long-staying **Trumpeter Swan**, wing tag #T-87, that has been frequenting Lake Artemesia and Alter Pond on Soil Conservation Road since November, was still at Alter Pond, at least until February 23. *Earlier photo by Hans Holbrook, November 30, 2018, Macaulay Library ML125922101.*



Two other **Trumpeter Swans** were reported by Mikey Lutmerding from Patuxent Research Refuge Central Tract on February 14. *Photo by Mikey Lutmerding, Macaulay Library ML141126181.*



Not one but two **Red-throated Loons** were found by Timothy Guida at Lake Artemesia on January 12 and were seen by several birders, but apparently were present only that one day. *Photo by Timothy Guida, Macaulay Library, ML134616521.*

Also at Lake Artemesia, on January 20, Jack Saba reported a **Cackling Goose** (no photo).



A **Red-necked Grebe** was near the Wilson Bridge, where I-495/DC Beltway crosses into Virginia, seen by Mark Rositol and by Scott Stafford on February 10. *Photo by Scott Stafford, Macaulay Library ML140571401.*



Mark Rositol reported an **Orange-crowned Warbler** at National Harbor on January 18. *Photo by Mark Rositol, Macaulay Library, ML135758731.*

Another **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center on January 27, reported by Michel Cavigelli (no photo).



A PBC/PGAS field trip led by Ross Geredien on January 12 found two excellent wintering birds: a **Black-crowned Night-Heron** and a **Northern Parula**. *Black-crowned Night-Heron, digiscoped photo by Ross Geredien, Macaulay Library ML135008461; Northern Parula, photo by Monika Barilla, Macaulay Library ML135148741.*



Chunmei Zhou found a **Common Yellowthroat** at the Anacostia River Trail on January 26; this bird was present for a few days and was seen by others. *Photo by Mark Rositol, January 28, 2019, Macaulay Library ML120942911.*

A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was a good find by Gail Mackiernan at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center on January 27. Another good sparrow at BARC was a dark-lored **White-crowned Sparrow** reported by Hans Holbrook on February 14 (no photos).



An **American Tree Sparrow** showed up at Jeff Shenot's feeders on February 20. *Photo by Jeff Shenot, Macaulay Library ML140770071.*



Your Osprey Nest Sightings Wanted Help BGE Protect Birds

Maryland will soon welcome back **Ospreys** returning to settle in breeding areas around the Chesapeake Bay. Unfortunately, one favorite Osprey nesting spot—the **top of utility poles**—poses a danger to birds while raising the risk of disruptions to electric service.

Now in its fourth year, BGE's **Osprey Watch Program** (<https://www.bge.com/SafetyCommunity/Environment/Pages/Osprey-Watch.aspx>) protects the raptors and further ensures electric reliability through crowd-sourcing the location of nests built on electric equipment. Customers have reported 70 Osprey nests since the program's inception in 2016, and recently BGE has averaged 30 Osprey-related jobs per year. Once a nest is reported, trained BGE personnel then take measures that keep the birds and their young safe and curtail the potential for Ospreys and their nests to cause electric outages.



"I'm delighted this innovative partnership between BGE and our community will again make meaningful contributions to the preservation of one of the Chesapeake Bay region's most vital wildlife resources," said Rob Biagiotti, vice president of electric operations. "Together, we're embracing a unique opportunity to expand our collaborative role in helping Osprey thrive and enhancing electric reliability for customers."

Here's how the program works: anyone who sees an **Osprey nest on BGE equipment** may report it by emailing the following information to ospreywatch@bge.com:

- The pole number, located on a placard near eye level on the pole (**Only if the pole is easily accessible**)
- The nearest address to the pole, and photos of the pole taken from different perspectives (**If the pole is not easily accessible**)

Alternatively, Osprey nest location information may be shared over the phone with BGE's customer service team at 1-800-685-0123.

When BGE receives a report of a nest, crews follow all federal and local wildlife regulations while assessing whether the nest is inhabited and if it can be relocated. The nest is removed if no birds or eggs are present; a deterrent is placed on the top of the pole to dissuade the birds from building another nest; and the nest is relocated when possible—in some cases to a new platform built by BGE nearby. If the nest is inhabited, crews install rubber insulation on wires and other equipment to shield the birds.

Source: BGE Press Release, March 5, 2019 (<https://www.bge.com/News/Pages/Press%20Releases/Osprey-Watch-Help-BGE-Protect-Birds-Further-Ensure-Electric-Reliability-for-Customers.aspx>); photo courtesy of BGE.

Dues are half-off if joining after February!



MOS/Patuxent Bird Club Membership Application



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone(s): _____

E-Mail: _____

Full dues include Chapter and MOS State membership, and subscriptions to *Maryland Yellowthroat*, *Maryland Birdlife*, and the Patuxent Bird Club Newsletter. (The newsletter will be sent by email unless US mail requested). Dues are tax-deductible; see note below.

Choose Membership category:

Chapter and State combined membership:

or

Chapter membership only:

(must be a full-paying member of another MOS chapter -
indicate primary MOS chapter: _____)

- ☐ Household ~~\$33~~ \$16.50 after Feb.
☐ Individual ~~\$26~~ \$13 after Feb.
☐ Junior (Age < 18) ~~\$6~~ \$1.50 after Feb.

- ☐ Household ~~\$8~~ \$4 after Feb.
☐ Individual ~~\$6~~ \$3 after Feb.
☐ Junior ~~\$1~~ \$0.50 after Feb.

In addition, I have enclosed a tax-deductible contribution

☐ to Patuxent Bird Club in the amount of _____

☐ to Maryland Ornithological Society in the amount of _____

Make check payable to **Patuxent Bird Club** with this application to:

Jane Fallon, Treasurer PBC
 6711 Venus Dr
 Huntingtown, MD 20639

"The benefits received from Maryland Ornithological Society membership dues are not considered to be substantial, as determined by criteria in IRS Publication 526. Therefore, members can claim a tax deductible charitable contribution for the full amount of their membership dues."

Or, you can now pay your dues online using the new MOS website:

1. Go to <https://mdbirds.org/>
2. Choose "Join" from the menu on the top right
3. Scroll down and click on "Chapters"
4. Scroll down to the map and click on Prince George's County to reach the Patuxent Bird Club membership area
5. Scroll down and click the little + sign next to "Membership" for PBC
6. Scroll down and pick your membership level and then click the orange "Register" button
7. Fill out the information, including setting up a password that will allow you to access "Members Only" information on the MOS website
8. That's it! You can even pay dues using your smartphone – the website is optimized to work with the screen on your phone.