



News from the 'Hood

Patuxent Bird Club

A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

www.patuxentbirdclub.org

November-December 2020

We're bringing in guest speakers
for our Zoom meetings!

Upcoming Virtual Meetings

Tuesday, November 10, 7:00 pm, sign in to Zoom starting at 6:45 pm
MAGLEV High Speed Train Proposal: Oncoming Destruction of Critical Habitat at Patuxent Research Refuge & Beltsville Agriculture Research Center
Presented by Sam Droege

Plans for the MAGLEV high speed train project (first announced in 2017) have been moving forward. The MAGLEV corporation has recently made unannounced changes to their plans and now intend to put their 200-acre trainyard, train lines, factory, repair facility, and new lines as well as upgrades to the electrical and roads system on lands that are part of the Patuxent Research Refuge and the Beltsville Agriculture Research Center (BARC). The proposal calls for these lands to be transferred from the Refuge and BARC to this private corporation. These building plans will zero out bird populations at the sites and will have a ripple effect with invasive plants and fragmentation of habitat that will multiply the direct impacts. This talk will speak to the history, biology, biodiversity, and research on these sites, point out why they are THE critical wild area in the region, and discuss the openings and avenues for stopping the plans.



For background on the MAGLEV train project, see the Patuxent Bird Club newsletter, Nov-Dec 2017, page 13 (<https://testmww.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/pbc-newsletter-nov-dec-2017.pdf>).

Sam Droege is a Wildlife Biologist at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, but for this presentation he is speaking as a private citizen and is not representing the views of PWRC or USGS. Known in recent years as the "Bee Guy," Sam is an all-around naturalist and a formidable birder. Sam has coordinated the North American Breeding Bird Survey Program, developed the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program, the BioBlitz, Cricket Crawl, and FrogwatchUSA programs, and worked on the design and evaluation of other monitoring programs. Currently he is developing an inventory and monitoring program for native bees and online identification guides for North American bees at www.discoverlife.org. His group at PWRC maintains high resolution photographs of insects and other macro natural history objects at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usgsbiml/>.

This program, sponsored by Patuxent Bird Club and PGAS, will be presented via Zoom and is free and open to the public. Advance registration is required and seats are limited. Please register no later than midnight of Sunday, November 8. To register, go to the registration form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-zTok3edAOfhvieYlr5OXCsU88NpeOFAwX5luJipDVQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Your Zoom link will be sent by email on Monday, November 9, but only if you register.

Meetings continued next page

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*Upcoming Virtual Meetings, continued***Tuesday, December 8, 7:00 pm, sign in to Zoom starting at 6:45 pm
Annual Holiday Movie Night**

Join the Patuxent Bird Club and Prince George's Audubon Society for a vicarious trip to the Eastern Shore (BYO popcorn) during our annual movie night. We will share a film series called "View from the Edge." This series of four short videos features the images of award-winning nature photographer David Harp, exploring the edges where land and water meet in the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland Coastal Bays. The videos are a montage of beautiful still images and video clips, and illustrate the diversity and abundance found in the edge habitats. The fragility of the habitat and of the traditional Eastern Shore way of life is also explored. The films are narrated by Tom Horton and were produced by Harp and Horton for the Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art in Salisbury, MD. The films are made available through the Museum.



This program, sponsored by Patuxent Bird Club and PGAS, will be presented via Zoom and is free and open to the public. Advance registration is required and seats are limited. Please register no later than midnight of Sunday, December 6. To register, go to the registration form at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1et1mpJVuXU8FixlOVQv7QxT9nL2yqe1LzkPh9wcF280/edit?usp=sharing>

Your Zoom link will be sent by email on Monday, December 7, but only if you register.

If you'd like to see the photography of David Harp in person, you can visit a 40-year retrospective of his work at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michael's, on view now through September 2021. <https://cbmm.org/news/new-exhibition-feature-works-photographer-david-harp/> (The image above is a sample photo showing Eastern Shore habitat and was not taken by David Harp.)

Clip & Save ✂

To protect privacy, we are no longer publishing board member email addresses directly on the club website. Clip and save the list below for future reference.

Patuxent Bird Club Officers and Directors

President	Marcia Watson	
Vice-President	Fred Fallon	
Treasurer/Memberships	Jane Fallon	
Second Year Directors (Term 2019-2021)	David Mozurkewich	
	Debi Talbott	
First Year Directors (Term 2020-2022)	Ken Cohen	
	Matt Felperin	
	Ikumi Kayama	
Representatives to MOS State Board	Marcia Watson	
	Ross Geredien	
Field Trip Coordinator	David Mozurkewich	
Hospitality	VACANT	
Newsletter Editor & Webmaster	Marcia Watson	
Fall and Spring Bird Counts	Fred Fallon	
Bowie Christmas Bird Count	David Mozurkewich	
Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count	Marcia Watson	
Visit us on the web at www.patuxentbirdclub.org		

Message from the President

First, a warm thank-you to all of our loyal Patuxent Bird Club members who have paid their dues and renewed their memberships, and an equally hearty thank-you and welcome to all of our new members, most of whom have joined using the new online payment method. In these unusual times, we doubly appreciate your paid memberships – they will help to sustain the club through the virus crisis.

As I write, the nation is in suspense, awaiting the presidential election, and the news about the virus situation across the nation is not good, to say the least. Against that background, the planning of bird club activities is a tad challenging. All we can say at this time is that the Board of Patuxent Bird Club feels that now is not the time to re-initiate group field trips. Most of the members I have talked with are still isolating as much as possible, and that's true for myself and Gene.

We will soldier on with virtual monthly bird club meetings. We held enjoyable informal meetings in September and October, and the October meeting featured a short presentation by club member Gene Scarpulla about the latest addition to the Prince George's County bird checklist, Sabine's Gull (see Notable Bird Sightings on page 13 of this newsletter).

As you will have seen from the front-page announcement in this newsletter, our guest speaker for our November Zoom meeting will be the illustrious Sam Droege, who will join us to speak about the impending threat of the MAGLEV high-speed train to critical habitats at Patuxent Research Refuge and the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center. Sam's talk will be a call to action: a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the MAGLEV project will be released to the public on January 22, 2021, and we as individuals should prepare to make our voices heard on this plan. We have a lot to lose if we don't speak up.

The Board of Directors has lined up a series of short films to share for our traditional holiday film night in December. We're aiming for guest speakers for meetings in January through June, but we might have more short, informal presentations, rather than the hour-long talks that we usually host in-person. The shorter formats seem to work better in the virtual format.

I hope that you'll also take the opportunity to join some of our sister chapters in MOS for their virtual meetings. Although I have been sharing information about those meetings through email bulletins, quite frankly, there is now such a proliferation of meetings that I can't keep up with the details. So, the best thing is to consult the MOS online calendar at <https://mdbirds.org/calendar/> to view details about upcoming MOS chapter meetings and speaker programs. I will still attempt to email members with information about upcoming bird-related meetings hosted by organizations outside of MOS, as I become aware of them.

Also in this newsletter you'll find tentative information about the two Audubon Christmas Bird Counts that are managed through our club, the Bowie CBC and the Jug Bay CBC. It looks like those will be held, maybe. See page 4 for details.

Please stay safe and sound and enjoy the fall and winter bird arrivals. And Happy Halloween!



Welcome New Members!

**Devi Abbott
Brenda Jordan
Alexander Koch**

**Nathaniel & Tracy Miller
Betsy Painter
Robert Phelps**

Jug Bay CBC and Bowie CBC

At the moment, we are *tentatively* planning to hold the **Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count on Sunday, December 20** and the **Bowie Christmas Bird Count on Friday, January 1**.

The plans are still tentative because the National Audubon Society has asked all compilers to wait until November 15 or later to finalize plans. Each compiler is being asked to make a decision for their count based on the local COVID-19 situation.

If the virus worsens in our area, it may be necessary to cancel the count. For example, some of our prime parks and refuges may close their gates or limit access, making the count untenable.

National Audubon has issued special guidelines for counts being held this season – these guidelines apply to all counts, and are over and above any local restrictions:

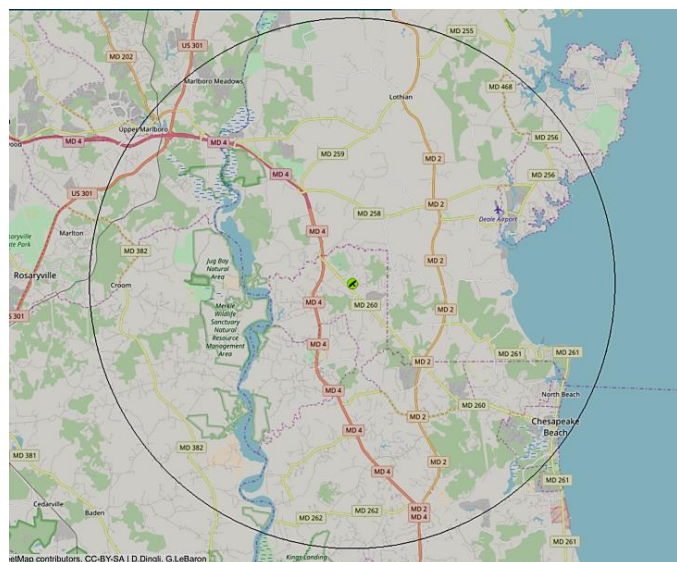
- There will be no in-person tally rallies or other gatherings.
- Social distancing and/or masking are **required at all times in the field**.
- Only household members or existing social “bubble” groups should ride in the same car.
- Activities must comply with all current state, county, and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.

More help is always needed for the counts. Each Christmas Bird Count is conducted within a pre-determined circle of 15 miles in diameter (see maps below). If you live within one of the count circles, you can do a feeder count at your home. Or perhaps you would like to count birds in your favorite park or natural area within the count circle. You can choose your own start and stop times. You must contact the compiler prior to the day of the count to confirm the area you will cover. The count compiler will give you instructions on how to submit your report. See [Audubon's interactive map](#) for zoomable maps of count circles.

Sunday, December 20, 2018 Jug Bay Christmas Bird Count

The Jug Bay count circle, centered near Dunkirk, spans the Patuxent River and includes parts of Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Calvert Counties. The circle extends from Upper Marlboro on the west to the Chesapeake Bay on the east.

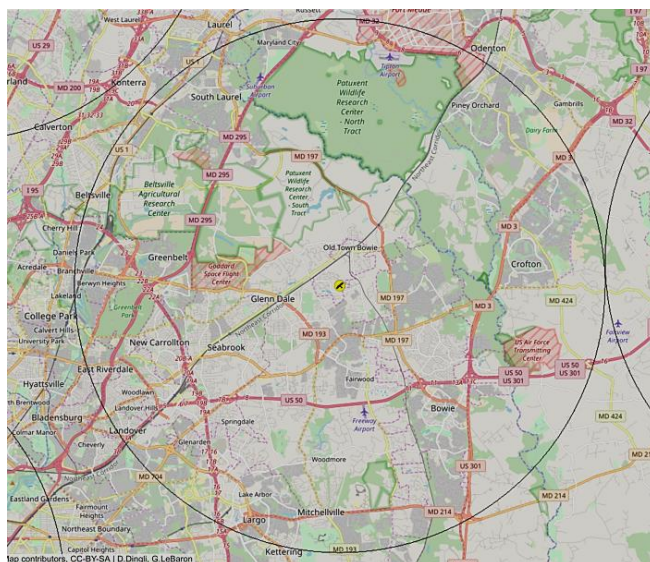
Contact compiler Marcia Watson, [REDACTED], to volunteer and receive an area assignment.



Friday, January 1, 2019 Bowie Christmas Bird Count

As shown below, the Bowie count circle includes parts of Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties and is centered in Bowie. The circle extends from inside the Capital Beltway on the west to just east of Crofton.

Contact compiler David Mozurkewich, [REDACTED], to volunteer and to receive an area assignment.





Patuxent Bird Club 60th Anniversary

This fall, Patuxent Bird Club is celebrating its 60th Anniversary, having held its first meeting on September 27, 1960. To commemorate the anniversary, we are reproducing the first-ever chapter report from the newly formed club, as published in *Maryland Birdlife*, Vol. 17, No. 2, June 1961, pp. 51-52.

Patuxent Bird Club Chapter Report

Many hours of thinking, phoning and seeing people culminated in our first meeting on Sept. 27, 1960. We chose a temporary secretary and took turns serving as temporary chairman until our By-Laws could be drawn up and officers elected. On March 28 the By-Laws were adopted and the following officers elected: President, Melvin Kleen; Vice-President, Mrs. Eleanor Robbins; Treasurer, Dr. B. C. Getchell; Secretary, Miss Sarita Lochstamphor; Trustee, David Bridge; Directors: Brooke Meanley, Mrs. Dorothy Rauth, Mrs. Clara Vergine, Mrs. Rosemary Bridge, Chandler Robbins, Charles Wilson. At our first Executive Council meeting a temporary Publicity Chairman was appointed and the following Committees were established: Records, Field Trip, Program, Telephone, Book, Education, and Conservation Legislation.

We are fortunate to number among our members several experienced naturalists who photograph trips and birds. Some of our excellent illustrated talks were on nature photography, attracting birds, canoeing down the Matagami River, Bamboo, a trip to California, and water bird identification. The report of birds seen is a highlight of our monthly meeting. At each meeting conservation problems have been discussed. Since the chairman of this committee has long been interested in conservation problems she is able to give up-to-date information and assistance to those of our members who want to take an active part in trying to help protect our natural resources. We were represented at a local meeting to discuss advisability of purchasing a city park. As services to our members we have made and sold bird feeders and sold bird seed and books.

On our trips we frequently joined the Baltimore Chapter or Anne Arundel Chapter. We have had an evening trip to hear Woodcock, midweek trips and Saturday and Sunday trips. We were glad to participate in the Christmas Bird Count, and the State-wide Bird Count on May 6. We plan to have a picnic bird-vesper meeting in June and several Junior Audubon Club meetings for children this summer.

On May 6, we received a letter from Marvin Hewitt stating that we have been accepted as a Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society. This was good news to us and we are looking forward to many fruitful years as an M.O.S. Chapter.

Melvin H. Kleen



News in Brief from MOS

Provided by John McKitterick, MOS President and Maryanne Dolan, MOS Secretary

MOS Convention Going Virtual

As announced last spring, the MOS Convention scheduled for May 2020 in Cumberland was postponed until May of 2021 because of the virus situation. In light of the relentless nature of the ongoing pandemic, the MOS Executive Committee recently (and reluctantly) decided to further postpone the Cumberland convention, until May 20-22, 2022. Instead, a virtual convention is being planned for June 2021. Activities, including self-led field trips, will be built around the theme of "The Breeding Birds of Maryland." Watch the *Maryland Yellowthroat* or this newsletter for more details as they become available.

Maryland Yellowthroat Editor Needed

MOS is in need of a new editor for the *Maryland Yellowthroat*, as Orietta Estrada has stepped down. If interested, please contact MOS President John McKitterick at [REDACTED].

Hog Island Scholarships Available

Once again, MOS is pleased to offer scholarships to allow teachers and nature educators such as park rangers and naturalists to attend Audubon camp at Hog Island. See the flyer on page 7 of this newsletter. Scholarship applications are due to the MOS Scholarship Committee by November 15, 2020. The application process requires a letter of endorsement from an MOS member or chapter. If you know an applicant who needs such a letter, please have them contact Marcia Watson at [REDACTED] prior to the November 15 deadline. **Please circulate this information to teachers and nature educators whom you know.**

Atlas Project Receives Citation from Governor Hogan



The Third Breeding Bird Atlas Project (BBA3) has received a citation from Governor Larry Hogan. The citation was presented by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford and Secretary of Natural Resources Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio to Atlas Coordinator Gabriel Foley in a surprise informal ceremony at our own Merkle Natural Resources Management Area in September. We should all be proud of this honor. Read more about it in the [Atlas newsletter for September 2020](#).



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!!

TEACHER/NATURALIST WORKSHOPS IN

ECOLOGY AND ORNITHOLOGY

Sponsored by Maryland Ornithological Society
Summer 2021

Many of Maryland's finest teachers and naturalists have expanded their ecology and birding knowledge through these workshops. Join educators from around the country for a hands-on wildlife or ornithology camp.

Ecology and Ornithology Workshops

The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) is accepting applications from Maryland teachers, youth leaders, park rangers and nature center staff for scholarships to attend a week-long ecology and ornithology workshop on Audubon's beautiful Hog Island in Maine. Each award covers the cost of tuition, room and board for an intensive course of field study and instruction covering ornithology, ecology, conservation and natural history.



Scholarship Information

MOS will award multiple scholarships each summer. Travel expenses are the responsibility of the recipient. For additional information check the MOS website links (below) or contact the Scholarship Chair.

Three workshops are offered in 2021. These may be subject to change.

[June 6 - 11: Building Better Birding Skills](#)

[June 20 – 25: Field Ornithology](#)

[July 11 - 16: Sharing Nature: An Educators' Week](#)



Application Process and Requirements

Applicants need not be members of MOS, but must be endorsed by a member or chapter. Applications for the workshops must be submitted via electronic mail by November 15, 2020. Recipients will be notified in December 2020. Please refer to the MOS website for the complete application process.

For more information and application process for the camp, please refer to:

<https://mdbirds.org/education/>

For more information about the Audubon workshops, please refer to:

<http://hogisland.audubon.org/programs/>

Scholarship Chair: [REDACTED]



Photos courtesy of Hog Island Camp Programs.



2020 Fall Count Results in Prince George's County

By Fred Fallon, County Coordinator

The MOS-sponsored Fall Count in Prince George's County took place on Sunday September 20, 2020, a day of fine clear weather, a bit chilly at first with pre-dawn temperatures mostly ~46° F, warming to ~ 68°F during the day. Some **26 observers in 16 parties** took to the field. Most of the county's traditional and best birding areas were covered, but not all: Patuxent Research Refuge (Central and South Tracts), Jug Bay by boat, Belt Woods, and Watkin's Park unfortunately could not be covered. On the other hand, the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) was exceptionally well covered and is fast becoming the premier birding spot in the county.

Several observers noted that birding was good during the first few hours but fell off sharply thereafter. This agrees with our own experience on count day. In our case at least, we might almost as well have quit by 11 AM! This experience raises the idea that a good count strategy might well be to have more birders out in the morning, but for fewer hours and a less-demanding commitment of time.

Our combined **total species count of 130** is a high for recent years, the last seven-year average being only 109. (Prior to that time, totals tended higher). A good number of migrant species, including 20 warblers, was recorded. Some MD-breeding warbler species had apparently already moved out – Blue-winged, Hooded, Kentucky, Prairie (except for one individual), Yellow, Yellow-throated, Chat. At the same time, it was a little too early for many of the typical fall arrivals which in the meantime have indeed shown up – Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, Junco, White-throated Sparrow. A few sapsuckers and Purple Finches did make it onto the list of species found.

Among the more remarkable finds there stands out the Clay-colored Sparrow spotted and described by Hans Holbrook at BARC, the agricultural landscape there affording perhaps the likeliest habitat for this species. Hans described the bird: "Buffy tan sparrow, gray nape, facial pattern bold and more distinct than CHSP, pale crown strip, white malar, with a bold moustache." Also found at BARC were Black-billed Cuckoo, Olive-sided Flycatcher (Michel Cavigelli), Lincoln's Sparrow (and also at Lake Artemesia, per Ikumi Kayama), and Connecticut Warbler (Ross Geredien). The Fall Count's only Osprey was seen at Piscataway Park (Marisa Rositol); Gray-cheeked Thrush at Hard Bargain Farm (Bill Townsend); Eastern Screech-Owl at Fran Uhler Natural Area (Dave Mozurkewich); Black-crowned Night-Heron in Laurel (Derek Richardson). A remarkable four Merlins were found, two at BARC and one each at Governor Bridge Natural Area and in Laurel. Conspicuously absent were American Black Duck, Swamp Sparrow, Bobolink – and of course the long-vanished Bobwhite.

The table of results on the following pages includes empty rows shaded in gray for species that were absent but might well have been expected based on previous counts and regular observations, so as to draw the reader's attention to these absences.

Thanks to each of our counters for coming out on count day and putting so much effort into this year's Fall Count.

- Area 1 Jug Bay, Aquasco & vicinity - Fred Fallon, Jane Fallon
- Area 2 Hard Bargain Farm - Bill Townsend
- Area 3 Piscataway, Ft. Washington - Marisa Rositol
- Area 4 Church Rd, Bowie - Andy Cooper
- Area 5 Lake Artemesia - Ikumi Kayama
- Area 6 Depot Ponds; Rosaryville; West Bowie - Marcia Watson, Gene Scarpulla
- Area 7 Governor Bridge NA; Fran Uhler NA - David Mozurkewich, Lynette Fullerton
- Area 8 Konterra Tract - John Stith, Ken Cohen, Jay Sheppard
- Area 9 BARC - Michel Cavigelli, Dick Bauder, Barry Cooper, Ross Geredien, Hans Holbrook, Gail McKiernan, Ditte McInnes, Jack Saba, Dan Weber
- Area 10 Laurel - Derek Richardson, Laura Lenkic, Peter Pokorny, Matthew Wilkin; Frances Richardson (feeder watch)

Prince George's County Fall Count Results, September 20, 2020											
Species / Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Canada Goose	30		196	25	6	4	1	103	81	102	548
Mute Swan											
Wood Duck			12		4			6	26		48
American Black Duck											
Mallard	36	2	2		29	1		15	16	57	158
Blue-winged Teal									2		2
Ruddy Duck											
Northern Bobwhite											
Wild Turkey									1		1
Pied-billed Grebe											
Rock Pigeon			14	3			9		20		46
Mourning Dove	17	4	3	9	22	3	13	4	177	33	285
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	2	1	2		1		7		1		14
Black-billed Cuckoo									1		1
Common Nighthawk											
Eastern Whip-Poor-Will											
Chimney Swift		4	13		103	5	13		25	1	164
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			1			2	2		17		22
Clapper Rail											
King Rail											
Virginia Rail		1									1
Sora		4									4
Black-bellied Plover											
American Golden-Plover									4		4
Semipalmated Plover											
Killdeer									40		40
Laughing Gull	32		210			12					254
Ring-billed Gull			98								98
Caspian Tern			1								1
Common Tern											
Forster's Tern			6								6
Royal Tern	2										2
Common Loon											
Double-crested Cormorant	2		16							1	19
American White Pelican											
Brown Pelican											
American Bittern											
Least Bittern											
Great Blue Heron	4	1	2		1	1	2		1	3	15
Great Egret			2								2
Snowy Egret											
Little Blue Heron											
Tricolored Heron											
Cattle Egret											
Green Heron							2		3	1	6
Black-crowned Night-Heron										1	1
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron											
Glossy Ibis											
Black Vulture	1		36	3	2	24	17	1	15	5	104
Turkey Vulture	3		8	2		6	9	11	19	18	76
Osprey			1								1
Bald Eagle [adult]	1	1	7	1		1	1		1	2	15
Bald Eagle [immature]			1				1		1		3
Bald Eagle [unknown age]									2		2
Northern Harrier	1							1	1		3
Sharp-shinned Hawk			1						1	1	3
Cooper's Hawk			1			2			9	1	13
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	3		1		3	2	5	16		31
Broad-winged Hawk											
Red-tailed Hawk						8	1	2	13	2	26

Prince George's County Fall Count Results, September 20, 2020

Species / Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
<i>unidentified Buteo</i>										1	1
Golden Eagle											
Barn Owl	1										1
Eastern Screech-Owl							1				1
Great Horned Owl											
Barred Owl	1			1					2		4
Northern Saw-whet Owl											
Belted Kingfisher	1	1		1			1	1	1	1	7
Red-headed Woodpecker		2	1								3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	6	5	11	2	2	9	10	5	19	10	79
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker					2		1				3
Downy Woodpecker	3	2	5		7	6	6	4	19	11	63
Hairy Woodpecker		1	2			2			5	2	12
Northern Flicker	2	2	8	4	1	1	4	1	16	8	47
Pileated Woodpecker	1	3	3		5	1	2	2	4	2	23
American Kestrel	3	1						5	28	2	39
Merlin							1		2	1	4
Peregrine Falcon									1		1
Olive-sided Flycatcher									1		1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	3		4	4	1		6		23	1	42
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher											
Acadian Flycatcher	2				1						3
Alder Flycatcher											
Willow Flycatcher											
Trail's Flycatcher	4										4
Least Flycatcher	2	1									3
<i>unidentified Empid</i>					2						2
Eastern Phoebe	7		1				2	3	15	1	29
Great Crested Flycatcher											
Eastern Kingbird		1									1
Loggerhead Shrike											
White-eyed Vireo	2	1								1	4
Yellow-throated Vireo							1		1		2
Blue-headed Vireo									2		2
Philadelphia Vireo											
Warbling Vireo		2									2
Red-eyed Vireo	4	1	16		2	1	3	1	25	4	57
Blue Jay	7	2	117	2	10	31	32	25	231	99	556
American Crow	15	21	4		5	6	16	13	372	27	479
Fish Crow		3	1			1		1	59		65
<i>unidentified crow</i>							10		5	3	18
Common Raven		1					1	1	3		6
Horned Lark											
Purple Martin											
Tree Swallow									4		4
Northern Rough-winged Swallow			10								10
Bank Swallow											
Cliff Swallow											
Barn Swallow			1						8		9
Carolina Chickadee	6	9	12		10	13	17	8	10	20	105
Tufted Titmouse	3	7	17		5	7	3	6	9	11	68
Red-breasted Nuthatch			3					2	2	3	10
White-breasted Nuthatch	6		13	4	1	3	2	1	3	6	39
Brown Creeper											
House Wren						1	2	1	1	4	9
Winter Wren											
Marsh Wren											
Carolina Wren	13	10	19	3	13	16	27	10	51	30	192
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	2							1	2		5
Golden-crowned Kinglet											

Prince George's County Fall Count Results, September 20, 2020

Species / Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Ruby-crowned Kinglet							2		2	1	5
Eastern Bluebird	13	11	6	8		4	5	1	41	4	93
Veery									1		1
Gray-cheeked Thrush		1									1
Swainson's Thrush					1		1		2	1	5
Hermit Thrush											
Wood Thrush							2		1	1	4
American Robin			7	10	29	1	16	34	18	24	139
Gray Catbird	2	9	2	2	24	7	21	4	62	28	161
Brown Thrasher	1		1		1	1	2		8	5	19
Northern Mockingbird	2	1	6	1	20	1	5	3	19	11	69
European Starling	32	4	76	2	95		14	107	201	1136	1667
Cedar Waxwing		5	14		18			2	59	9	107
House Sparrow	8		4		1		40	7	4	47	111
House Finch	1	2	14			6	3	1	11	12	50
Purple Finch									2	1	3
Pine Siskin											
American Goldfinch	6	7	8		2	8	24	2	97	11	165
Evening Grosbeak											
Ovenbird	1								1		2
Worm-eating Warbler											
Louisiana Waterthrush											
Northern Waterthrush		1					1		1		3
Golden-winged Warbler											
Blue-winged Warbler											
Black-&-white Warbler	1	1	3		3		3	2	13	3	29
Prothonotary Warbler											
Tennessee Warbler					1				1	1	3
Orange-crowned Warbler											
Nashville Warbler					3						3
Connecticut Warbler									1		1
Mourning Warbler											
Kentucky Warbler											
Common Yellowthroat	1	4	1		3	2	8		35	8	62
Hooded Warbler											
American Redstart	2	2	6		4		10		21	4	49
Cape May Warbler				2					1		3
Cerulean Warbler											
Northern Parula	4	1	6		7		6	2	13	1	40
Magnolia Warbler	4		1		8		6	5	18	5	47
Bay-breasted Warbler										2	2
Blackburnian Warbler					1				1		2
Yellow Warbler											
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1		1		2		2	1	4	1	12
Blackpoll Warbler											
Black-throated Blue Warbler							1	1	2	1	5
Palm Warbler [yellowish]								1	4	1	6
Palm Warbler [western]									2		2
Pine Warbler	1		2						9		12
Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler									3	2	5
Yellow-throated Warbler											
Prairie Warbler					1						1
Black-throated Green Warbler	5		1		3		1	1	7		18
Canada Warbler											
Wilson's Warbler	1	1									2
Yellow-breasted Chat											
unidentified warbler									1		1
Eastern Towhee	1	3			3			1	3	1	12
Chipping Sparrow	4		23	12	3			11	18	8	79
Clay-colored Sparrow									1		1

Prince George's County Fall Count Results, September 20, 2020											
Species / Area	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Field Sparrow									4		4
Vesper Sparrow											
Savannah Sparrow								12	9		21
Grasshopper Sparrow									4		4
Seaside Sparrow											
Song Sparrow		1	1		1			2	9	2	16
Lincoln's Sparrow					1				2		3
Swamp Sparrow											
White-throated Sparrow											
unidentified sparrow										1	1
Dark-eyed Junco											
Summer Tanager	1						1				2
Scarlet Tanager	2		3						4		9
Northern Cardinal	6	12	21	4	24	19	23	8	56	45	214
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			4				2	1	24	2	33
Blue Grosbeak									11		11
Indigo Bunting	3						4		10	5	22
Dickcissel											
Bobolink											
Red-winged Blackbird	160	4							61		225
Eastern Meadowlark								10	12		22
Rusty Blackbird											
Common Grackle	100	3			5		1	11	99	10	229
Brown-headed Cowbird	1		8				15		247	3	274
Orchard Oriole											
Baltimore Oriole											
Total Species	64	46	65	23	48	36	60	52	101	67	130
Total Individuals	595	165	1100	106	499	219	447	469	2657	1873	8126
PARTY STATISTICS											
Time Start:	6:15	6:25	7:28	15:00	6:58	7:00	6:30	6:53	6:40	5:22	5:22
Time Stop:	19:00	9:00	17:31	18:00	19:16	16:30	18:30	19:34	16:03	19:25	19:34
OWLING											
Hours Owling:	0.4					0.2				1.4	2
Miles Owling:	0.1					0				1.6	1.7
# Parties Owling:	1					1				1	3
# Observers Owling:	2					2				2	6
REGULAR											
Hours Foot:	6	2	4	3	8	2.7	10	7.3	31.1	9.1	83.2
Hours Car:	5	0	0.5	0	6	0.5	0	2.6	2.1	1.4	12.1
Hours Bicycle:					1.3						1.3
Miles Foot:	3	3	3.5	1	6.5	3.9	8	4.9	9.6	8.6	52
Miles Car:	8	0	5	0	0	2.3	0	3.3	24.1	25.2	67.9
Miles Bicycle:					4						4
# Parties Regular:	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	7	1	16
# Observers Regular:	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	9	4	26
STATIONARY (e.g. hawk watch)											
Hours Stationary:			0.8			9.5					10.3
FEEDER WATCHING											
			0.6							4.6	5.2

Notable Bird Sightings in Prince George's County September through October, 2020



See a selection of photos on pages 14-15.



Sabine's Gull, photo by Steve & Betty Arthur, Piscataway Park, 9/14/20, Macaulay Library ML262734121

New bird for the county checklist! In recent weeks, the indubitable star of the show in Prince George's County was the **Sabine's Gull** over the Potomac River, viewed from the boardwalk at [Piscataway Park](#) and other nearby locations. The juvenile bird was found on the morning of September 13 by Kevin Bennett, whose quick eye immediately noticed the distinctive markings on the distant bird. Word quickly spread among local birders, and the bird remained in the area and was seen and enjoyed by many until Tuesday the 15th. Most of the time, the **Sabine's** was way over near the Virginia shoreline on the opposite side of the river, but the Maryland state line extends all the way to the far side of the river, hence the bird "counts" for Maryland and for Prince George's County. The **Sabine's** was seen both cruising above the water and resting on the water in the company

of a flock of Laughing Gulls. From September 9 through September 11, a **Sabine's Gull** had been observed a short distance upriver, in Virginia and DC waters, and it is assumed that the PG bird was the same individual. As Gene Scarpulla explained during our October Zoom meeting, if accepted by the [MD-DC Bird Records Committee](#), this will be **only the 12th documented occurrence in Maryland**. **Sabine's Gulls** breed on tundra in the arctic and subarctic. Adults and young spend the winter at sea off western South America and southern Africa. **Sabine's Gulls** are often found off the west coast of the US during migration, but are rare east of the Mississippi. [See more photos of the PG bird at the Macaulay Library website.](#)



Sabine's Gull, photo by Joshua Emm, Piscataway Park - Boardwalk, 9/13/20, Macaulay Library

Now to the more expected rarities (an oxymoron, to be sure).

A **Common Gallinule** was at Cash Lake on the [South Tract of Patuxent Research Refuge](#) 9/25-9/27 (Bernard Foy, et al.).

A group of four **American Golden-Plovers** were at the [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) on 9/21 (Don Weber, Michel Cavigelli).

Marisa Rositol found a **Snowy Egret** at [Oxon Hill Farm](#); that bird was present from 9/21 at least through 10/2. On 9/25, a Snowy was on the Anacostia River, seen from both the [Anacostia River Trail](#) (Marisa Rositol) and [Bladensburg Waterfront Park](#) (Kevin Bennett).

Fall migration started off with a flurry of reports of **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** from across Maryland. In our county, they were reported along the Patuxent River near [Mt. Calvert](#) on 9/2 (Jeff Shenot) and at [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) on 9/21 (Kevin Bennett). An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was found at the [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) during Fall Count on 9/20 (Michel Cavigelli, Ross Geredien).

A **Philadelphia Vireo** was reported at the Cash Lake Fishing Area on the [South Tract of Patuxent Research Refuge](#) on 9/5 (David Michels), and another (or the same one) was near the same spot on 9/8 (Elaine Hendricks). Another was at [Lake Artemesia](#) on 9/20, found during Fall Count by Kevin Bennett. Jeff Shenot found two **Phillies** at [Governor Bridge Natural Area](#) on 9/23. A much later **Philly** was at [Lake Artemesia](#) on 10/13 (Zachary Jablow).

Michel Cavigelli found a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** at the Greenbelt Elementary School on 10/20. **Swainson's Thrushes** were found at several locations during October: [Governor Bridge Natural Area](#) on 10/1 (Jack Saba) and on 10/2 (Clive Harris); [Patuxent River Park – Jackson Landing](#) on 10/10 (Tom Eck); a home in College Park on 10/11 (Emily Larkin); a home in Glenn Dale on 10/26 (Hans Holbrook).

As mentioned in the Fall Count Report in this newsletter, the big find on the 9/20 Fall Count was the **Clay-colored Sparrow** at [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#), found and well-described by Hans Holbrook. Hans had a rare sparrow two-fer that day, also coming up with a **Lincoln's Sparrow**, also seen by Ross Geredien. Another **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at [Lake Artemesia](#) on 9/20 (Ikumi

Kayama). Marisa Rositol photographed both a **Lincoln's Sparrow** (10/28) and a **Vesper Sparrow** (10/20) at [Oxon Hill Farm](#); the Vesper has been present since 10/19 and was still there on 10/28.

It's been a good year for hard-to-find warblers. A **Mourning Warbler** was found by Marisa Rositol at [Fort Washington National Park](#) on 9/1; another was at Schoolhouse Pond on 9/7 (Fred Shaffer); and another was at Paint Branch Stream Valley Park near [Lake Artemesia](#) on 10/14 (Emily Larkin). A **Connecticut Warbler** was reported at [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) by Ross Geredien during Fall Count on 9/20; another was at [Oxon Hill Farm](#) on 10/1 (Marisa Rositol); and yet another at [Oxon Hill Farm](#) again on 10/11 (Marisa Rositol). Not one, but three, **Blackburnian Warblers** were reported from [Lake Artemesia](#) on 10/2 (Holly Brevig, Geneviève de Messières); there was also a **Blackburnian** on 10/2 at [Oxon Hill Farm](#) (Marisa Rositol), one at [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) on 10/3 (Jack Saba), and one at the Greenbelt Elementary School on 10/6 (Michel Cavigelli). Marisa Rositol had a **Golden-winged Warbler** at [Fort Washington National Park](#) on 9/4. Another **Golden-winged** was at [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) on 9/9 (Michel Cavigelli).

Kevin Bennett has been having great success with warblers: among many others, an **Orange-crowned** at [Greenbelt \(National\) Park](#) on 10/2; a **Connecticut** at [Lake Artemesia](#) on 10/5; another **Connecticut** at [Greenbelt \(National\) Park](#) on 10/8.

A **Rusty Blackbird** was photographed by Marisa Rositol at [Fort Washington National Park](#) on 10/9, an early date for this winter resident which is experiencing population declines across the country). Marisa found another one at [Fort Washington National Park](#) on 10/27; Emily Larkin had a flock of 8 at [South Tract of Patuxent Research Refuge](#) on 10/27; and Eric R had one at [Greenbelt Lake/Buddy Attick](#) on 10/31. [Greenbelt Lake Park](#) usually holds **Rusties** through the winter, so it's a good place to look for them.

This is shaping up to be a good year for **irruptive songbirds** from the far north. **Purple Finch** reports started on September 3 when Hans Holbrook had one at his home near Glenn Dale. Two were at the [Beltsville Agricultural Research Center](#) for Fall Count on 9/20 (Jack Saba) and again on 9/22 (Michel Cavigelli). Also on Fall Count Day (9/20), a single PUFI was at Rocky Gorge Reservoir (Derek Richardson), and another was at [Governor Bridge Natural Area](#) on 9/23 (Jeff Shenot). Since that time, **Purple Finch** reports have continued to roll in and are too numerous to mention.

Red-breasted Nuthatch reports have come in from scattered spots around the county, starting in early September. A sample: Bowie (Marcia Watson); Laurel (Patricia Howell); [South Tract of Patuxent Research Refuge](#) (multiple observers); Glenn Dale (Hans Holbrook); [Greenbelt Lake/Buddy Attick](#) (Debi Talbott); Northway Fields Park in Greenbelt (Elain Hendricks); [Greenbelt \(National\) Park](#) (Kevin Bennett, Elain Hendricks); [Oxon Hill Farm](#) (Marisa Rositol); [Fort Washington National Park](#) (Marisa Rositol et al.); Cosca Regional Park (Marisa Rositol); [Merkle Natural Resources Management Area](#) (multiple observers). In short, no matter what part of the county you live in, it should be possible to find Red-breasted Nuthatches near you.

Pine Siskins were first reported on 9/26 from a yard with feeders in Berwyn Heights (Geneviève de Messières, Kevin Bennett). After that, the reports have continued to roll in. Here in Prince George's, numbers of **Siskins** have mostly been in the single digits, with highs up to 40 or so, but over on the Eastern Shore, James Wilson of Oxford has reported **250 Pine Siskins** at his feeders and humorously notes that he needs to set up a GoFundMe page to pay for birdseed!

Evening Grosbeaks have been popping up here and there in Maryland, and they finally found Prince George's County, with four appearing at [Piscataway \(National\) Park – Wharf Road](#) on 10/30 (Kathy Calvert). There was also one at a private home just over the border in the Bryans Road area of Charles County on 10/26 (Karen Showalter). Be sure to keep your platform feeders stocked for this charismatic, robust, flocking bird. You'll probably hear them before you see them, so it pays to [get familiar with their calls](#).



Common Gallinule, photo by Daniel S., Patuxent Research Refuge – South Tract, 9/27/20, Macaulay Library ML266380261



Snowy Egret, photo by Marisa Rositol, Oxon Hill Farm, 9/29/20, Macaulay Library ML266870951



Philadelphia Vireo, photo by Jeff Shenot, Governor Bridge Natural Area, 9/23/20, Macaulay Library ML265109461

Notable Birds, continued

Swainson's Thrush, photo by Emily Larkin, College Park, 10/11/20, Macaulay Library ML270243551



Lincoln's Sparrow, photo by Marisa Rositol, Oxon Hill Farm, 10/28/20, Macaulay Library ML275312111



Vesper Sparrow, photo by Marisa Rositol, Oxon Hill Farm, 10/20/20, Macaulay Library ML272939211



Connecticut Warbler, photo by Marisa Rositol, Oxon Hill Farm, 10/1/20, Macaulay Library ML267280361



Blackburnian Warbler, photo by Jack Saba, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, 10/3/20, Macaulay Library ML267908371



Orange-crowned Warbler, photo by Kevin Bennett, Greenbelt Park, 10/2/20, Macaulay Library ML267519731



Rusty Blackbird, photo by Marisa Rositol, Fort Washington National Park, 10/9/20, Macaulay Library ML269504621



Purple Finch, photo by Eric R, Northway Fields Park in Greenbelt, 10/24/20, Macaulay Library ML273937871



Pine Siskins, photo by Hans Holbrook, Glenn Dale, 10/26/20, Macaulay Library ML275524061

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 [REDACTED]. Concerned 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.



MOS/Patuxent Bird Club Membership Application



REQUEST TO ALL CURRENT AND NEW MEMBERS: If at all possible, please join or renew your membership online at the MOS website (<https://mdbirds.org/>), even if you haven't done so in the past. This will streamline our database maintenance and bookkeeping procedures, and make things easier for our volunteer workforce. At the website, you will be able to choose the Patuxent Bird Club as your local chapter for membership registration and dues payment - and also make charitable donations to the Patuxent Bird Club or to MOS. If, however, you prefer to remit your membership dues by check, please print and complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below. Thank you for your assistance!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Phone(s): _____

E-Mail Address(es): _____

Full dues include Chapter and MOS State membership, and subscriptions to *Maryland Yellowthroat*, *Maryland Birdlife*, and the Patuxent Bird Club Newsletter. (The Patuxent Bird Club 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: <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$33 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$26 <input type="checkbox"/> Junior (Age < 18) \$6	or	Chapter membership only: (must be a full-paying member of another MOS chapter - indicate primary MOS chapter: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$8 <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$6 <input type="checkbox"/> Junior \$1
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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 _____

Please make check payable to **Maryland Ornithological Society** and mail with this completed application to:

Carol S. Daugherty, MOS Treasurer
11925 Oden Court
Rockville, MD 20852

"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."

THANK YOU AND HAPPY BIRDING!