



News from the 'Hood

Patuxent Bird Club

A Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

www.patuxentbirdclub.org

September-October 2020

Message from the President

Well, here we are starting another year at Patuxent Bird Club, after our abrupt halt to activities last spring because of the coronavirus pandemic. As we go into the fall season, we are still unable to hold in-person meetings because the College Park Airport and most other county parks buildings, as well as other possible venues (schools, libraries, etc.), are still closed for public use. Therefore, Patuxent Bird Club and Prince George's Audubon have not booked any guest speakers for the coming year.

But all is not lost. Although we have not booked any speakers for our club, **we are going to give online get-together meetings a try.** Our meetings will be brief, informal opportunities for general discussion and information sharing among our members. We want to see your smiling face and hear how you've been spending your time under pandemic conditions. The first Patuxent Bird Club/Prince George's Audubon meeting will be on **September 8th, starting at 7 pm.** We will use Zoom software, which enables us to see and hear each other on the computer screen. If the September meeting proves popular and feasible, we'll schedule another in October.

And thanks to cooperation among MOS chapter presidents, Patuxent Bird Club members do have opportunities to attend a very full schedule of online speaker programs. **Three MOS chapters – Anne Arundel, Carroll, and Frederick – are generously opening their online meetings, with presentations by guest speakers, to Patuxent Bird Club members.** So, each month you will have three presentations to choose from – attend one or attend them all. See the following pages for a schedule of the online meetings.

Some of the online meetings require pre-registration, so read the meeting descriptions carefully and register by the stated deadline. There is also an article in this newsletter with all you need to know about Zoom, the software program being used to host these online meetings.

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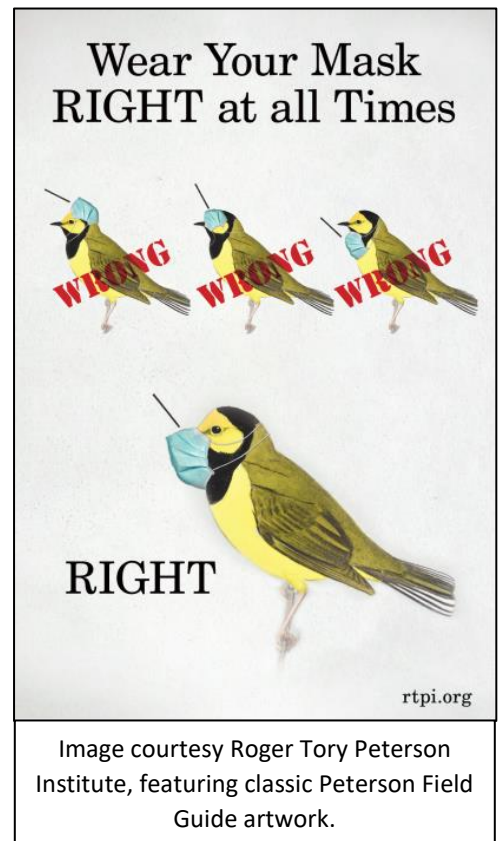


Image courtesy Roger Tory Peterson Institute, featuring classic Peterson Field Guide artwork.

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President's Message, continued

And what about field trips and bird walks? Our club's Board of Directors has decided to hold off on resuming field trips. We feel that there is still too much risk to have any group activities. So we are taking a wait-and-see approach and will continue to re-evaluate the situation.

The one event we will be holding is the **Fall Count**; the date will be **Sunday, September 20**. We encourage all our members to participate, whether it's hitting the road to bird at your favorite park or wildlife area or doing a backyard feeder count. We ask that you bird in a family group or solo, to wear a mask if you encounter others, and to otherwise practice virus safety. See the article in this newsletter for Fall Count details.

We realize that not everyone will feel comfortable with the idea of online meetings. If you have other ideas for ways to keep up communication among bird club members, please drop me a line. The Board of Directors is open to other ideas. We're all in this together.


**New Bird Club Member and Director**

Patuxent Bird Club welcomes Matt Felperin, who not only joined the club but also stepped up to serve on the Board of Directors. Matt is a former Park Ranger from Patuxent River Park who now works for Northern Virginia Parks.

Missing Member!

About 2 months ago, the club received a check for membership dues directly from a credit union in New York. Unfortunately there was no membership form included, and the credit union will not supply the name or contact information of the person on whose behalf the payment was made. If you are that person and are reading this newsletter on the web, or if you know whom it might be, please contact Treasurer Jane Fallon at [REDACTED].

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	
	Vacant	
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		

Upcoming Online Meetings
Patuxent Bird Club and Prince George's Audubon Society
Meetings will be held via Zoom

Tuesday, September 8, sign into Zoom at 6:45 pm for **7 pm start time**. Informal meeting with time to catch up on news and bird sightings. No formal speaker or presentation. The meeting will last no more than 40 minutes. Pre-registration required. Those registered will receive a link to the meeting by email on Monday, September 7, the day before the meeting. **Only those who pre-register will receive the link to the meeting.**

You must pre-register no later than Sunday, September 6, 2020, at 10 am using the form at this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1PZluKyMyLPyqe-Lq0MXyn5Rq4UyJUQlYaPkZT3perUw/edit?usp=sharing>

Tuesday, October 13, sign into Zoom at 6:45 pm for **7 pm start time** (tentative). If we have a good response for the September meeting, we'll try it again in October. A link to the pre- registration form will be sent via email in early October.

Meetings Hosted by Other MOS Chapters
All meetings listed below will be held on Zoom or Google Meet
All are free - there is no fee for Patuxent Bird Club members to participate

Wednesday, September 2, sign into Zoom at 6:45 pm for **7 pm start time**. Carroll County Bird Club. Speaker will be Dr. Peter Marra presenting "The Epic Migration of Birds." Dr. Marra will take us on a hemispheric journey to discover the unknown migrations of birds, explaining the latest technologies used for tracking and why it's up to us to uncover the secrets of their biology to protect these marvelous species. If you have questions, please contact CJ McAuliffe, President, Carroll County Bird Club at 443-398-6483 or by mail to <[REDACTED]>.

Pre-registration is required by August 31, 2020, at 10 am using the registration form at this link:

<https://forms.gle/rUgEKwxbkhzysisN9>

Thursday, September 3, sign into Zoom between 6:30-6:45 pm for **7 pm start time**. Frederick Bird Club. Speaker will be Zoe Johnson-Ulrich presenting "How Smart Are Birds?" She will talk about the different ways birds are smart as well as some of the research she has done with birds, and why we think birds are smart. No pre-registration is required. A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent by email to all Patuxent Bird Club members a day or two before the meeting.

Wednesday, September 16, sign into meeting between 6:30- 6:45 pm for **7 pm start time**. Anne Arundel Bird Club. Katie Fallon will present "Vulture: The Private Life of an Unloved Bird." Details on signing up for this meeting will be sent by email to Patuxent Bird Club members at a later date.

And save the dates below; speakers and sign-in details will be provided at a later date.

- **Thursday, October 1, 7 pm** start time. Frederick Bird Club.
- **Wednesday, October 7, 7 pm** start time. Carroll County Bird Club.
- **Wednesday, October 21, 7 pm** start time. Anne Arundel Bird Club.
- **Wednesday, November 4, 7 pm** start time. Carroll County Bird Club.
- **Thursday, November 5, 7 pm** start time. Frederick Bird Club.
- **Wednesday, November 18, 7 pm** start time. Anne Arundel Bird Club.

Fall Bird Count: Sunday, September 20

By Fred Fallon

This year's Fall Count is scheduled for Sunday, September 20, 2020. In a departure from the virus-inspired stricter protocols for this past spring's May Count, the Fall Count returns to more customary procedures. It's OK to travel some distance to your favorite patch; you may stay out as long as you like; and county coordinators will serve their same functions as in former times. Volunteers are still urged to travel in smaller groups of close household members only and to wear masks whenever and wherever other people may be encountered.

If you wish to count in Prince George's County, first e-mail Fred Fallon ([REDACTED]) to specify the area you intend to cover, or request suggestions of where you might go. (This is necessary to prevent accidental double-counting). Fred will then send you an email with an Excel spread-sheet, blank except for species names, on which you can enter your bird counts and return to Fred by e-mail. We are asking that there be no sending of printed data sheets through US Mail out of concern for possible viral transmission.

The Excel file will have more species than are really needed and so will be a bit too long to use a printed version in the field. Feel free to take notes and create a field list using paper and pencil. Or, check the Patuxent Bird Club website (<https://patuxentbirdclub.org/bird-checklists/>) at a later date for a checklist that you can print to use in the field. You'll still need to transfer your bird counts to the Excel spreadsheet for submission to Fred as an email attachment. Please remember – no paper forms through the mail!

After all the data is collected, Fred will prepare a summary for this newsletter, and a state-wide summary will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Maryland Birdlife*.

Here's a tip for your field notes: When recording bird names in the field, you may find it useful to use four-letter "Bander Codes" to eliminate the hassle of writing out long bird names. For birds with two-word names, the codes are just the first two letters of the first name and first two of the last name, e.g. Magnolia Warbler -> MAWA; (Northern) Cardinal -> NOCA. For one-word names, it's just the first four letters: Osprey is OSPR; Veery is VEER. Special cases come into play when there are 3 or more words in the name, or when two different names would give the same code, e.g. Carolina Wren and Canyon Wren. Here is a link to the bander code system in detail: <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/bandcodes.html>.

All About Zoom for Meetings

Since we are still restricted from having in-person indoor group meetings, holding online meetings over Zoom has become a means of survival for businesses, schools and colleges, and community groups like ours. Zoom is a software program that enables people to hold "virtual" or online meetings over the internet, with the ability to both see and hear the other people in the meeting. Zoom can be used for informal conversations or for meetings with speakers giving formal presentations like we normally have at bird club monthly meetings. A group can even watch movies together using Zoom – think Holiday Movie Night.



There are other software programs that can be used for online meetings, but there are several reasons that Zoom has become so popular.

- The Zoom software can be downloaded for free. See <https://zoom.us/support/download>.
- Zoom is extremely easy to use.
- Zoom has good security features and it doesn't demand a connection to a lot of other programs on your computer.
- Zoom can work on a desktop or a laptop computer (both Windows and Mac); or on a tablet such as an iPad or Microsoft Surface or a Samsung Galaxy; or on a smartphone (both Androids and Apple iPhones).
- If you don't have a computer or tablet or smartphone, you can dial-in to a Zoom meeting using a regular telephone and you'll be able to hear what's being said, although of course you won't be able to see other people or see the screens being shown by a speaker. But you'll be able to hear all the other people and they'll be able to hear you when you speak. The meeting organizer will give you a phone number to call.

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- The person or group hosting the meeting (i.e., the bird club) is probably paying a subscription fee for their use of Zoom to offer meetings, but these fees are relatively affordable, starting at about \$150 a year.
- There are also free Zoom accounts, but they have a 40-minute limit on meeting length. We'll be using a free Zoom account for our initial bird club meeting on September 8.
- Although the meeting host (i.e., the bird club) in most cases will have a paid Zoom account, Zoom does not charge a fee to the participants in meetings. So for bird club members, there is no fee to you, the member, to participate in a Zoom meeting. (See note at the end of this article.)
- Both the free Zoom account and the \$150/year Zoom account enable the meeting host (i.e., the bird club) to have as many as 100 participants in its meetings. If the host club wants to have more people in the meeting, a more expensive account would be needed. (In late August, the Maryland Native Plant Society had about 695 people signed up for a Zoom presentation on pollinator gardening!)

For the best experience, your computer should be equipped with a webcam and microphone and speakers. Most newer model computers, as well as all tablets and smartphones, come with these features built in. You will also need a good internet connection.

Once you have the Zoom software installed on your computer, tablet, or smartphone, joining a meeting is very simple. The organizer of the online meeting will send participants an email containing a link to the meeting, and when it's time for the meeting to start, all you have to do is click the link and your Zoom software will automatically open and take you to the meeting. Prepare to go into Zoom about 15 minutes before the meeting start time – it takes a few minutes for people to settle in and get their setup working.

Once you're in the meeting, the Zoom screen has some simple controls (see screenshots below) that let you turn your camera off and on – this will let you control whether people can see you on their screen, or not. It's OK to turn off your camera if you would prefer that people not see you (bad hair day?). There is a similar control that lets you turn your microphone on and off. If you have a lot of background noise in your house, it's polite to turn your microphone off. Also when a speaker is giving a presentation, you may be requested to mute your microphone.

If you do participate in online meetings with your camera on, here are four quick tips:

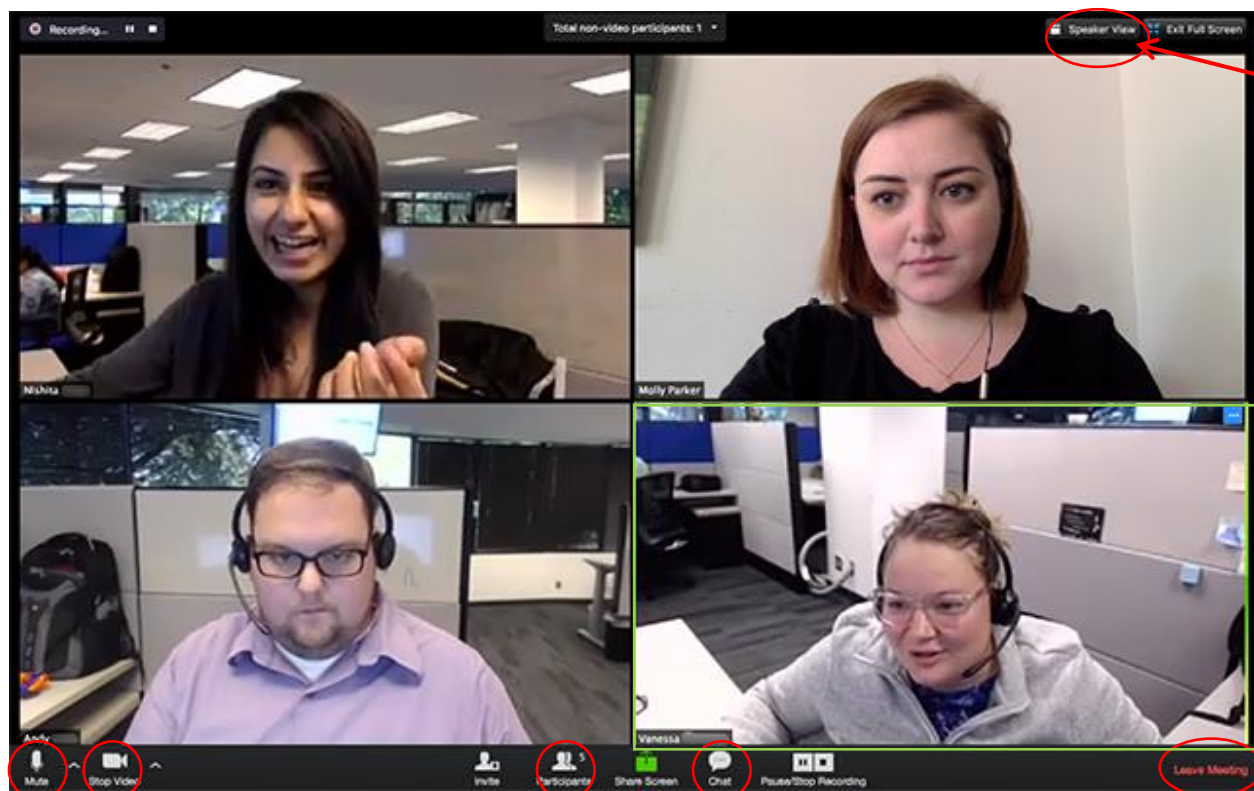
- Avoid sitting with a window or strong light **behind** you; the backlighting will make it difficult to see your face on the screen. You want a window or strong light in **front** of you.
- You may need to tilt your computer screen or camera angle to make your whole face visible on the screen. You'll be able to see yourself on the Zoom screen, and do a quick check from time to time that make sure that you are properly centered in your screen.
- Avoid accidentally blocking your camera with your hand or objects.
- Remember to dress appropriately – people will be able to see you!

The Zoom system has an easy way for people to type messages to send to one another during the meeting. This is called "chat," and it's similar to sending someone a text message. You can send a message to the whole group or to just one person. This is really useful if you want to ask a question without interrupting someone who is speaking. The meeting moderator will be able to read your question to the speaker.

This article is just meant as a brief introduction. Zoom has a very good Help section on their website with articles and videos showing details on how it works. [See https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us)

Below are a couple of images to illustrate what you might expect to see in a Zoom meeting (images courtesy of University of Minnesota IT Department). Be aware that the placement of the controls may be different on your screen than what is shown below: the exact screen appearance varies with each computer setup.

Continued next page
All About Zoom, continued



Switch
to
Speaker
View

Microphone on/off

Camera on/off

List of Participants

Chat

Leave Meeting

Zoom offers a “Gallery” view (shown above) that enables you to see all the other meeting participants in equal-sized boxes; the boxes get smaller when there are more participants. When someone begins to talk, a lime-green outline will appear around the box containing that person’s image; it’s the image on the lower right in the example.



You can change your screen to “Speaker View” as shown at left, where the person doing most of the speaking shows in a large box, and all the other participants are in smaller boxes, in this case at the top of the screen. You can also set up your screen so that the strip of small boxes appears as a vertical row on the side of the screen. These are just some of many ways that you will be able to tailor your screen to your preferences.

We’re hoping that Zoom meetings will help hold our club together for the duration of the virus pandemic. In fact, there are hidden benefits for our club to have online meetings: a presentation by a guest speaker can be recorded for later on-demand viewing; bird club members can join a meeting from the comfort of their sofa, instead of having a long dark drive to and from the College Park Airport; we could have a large audience of up to 100 people – far more than the College Park Airport could hold; and we have the ability to host a guest speaker from anywhere in the world! However, you will have to supply your own refreshments.

Note: Some organizations do charge fees to participate in lectures and other events held over Zoom, but those fees go to the organization, not to Zoom. Most of those organizations charge an entry fee for their in-person programs and they are simply reproducing that practice for their online events.

The Maryland Ornithological Society and its chapters are committed to keeping regular monthly meetings free. At this time, most chapters are limiting their online meetings to MOS members. In the future, online meetings of MOS chapters might be open to the public if it appears there will be sufficient space in the online meeting; since having online meetings is so new, we have to wait and see how things work out regarding the feasibility of opening online meetings to the public.



News in Brief from MOS

Provided by Robin Todd, MOS President and Maryanne Dolan, MOS Secretary

Election of MOS Officers

In May, the first ever on-line election in MOS history affirmed the following slate of new officers for MOS:

- John McKittrick (Howard County) for President
- Bonnie Borsa (Frederick County) for Vice President
- Maryanne Dolan (Cecil County) for Secretary
- Carol Daugherty (Montgomery County) for Treasurer

Approximately 200 MOS members cast votes in the election. The new slate of officers will take office in September.

MOS Board Meetings Now Online

Normally the MOS Board of Directors meets quarterly at different locations around the state. The June 6th meeting was successfully conducted online through Google Meet. The September Board meeting is also scheduled online, and the Board anticipates that online meetings will be the new norm for the foreseeable future.

In addition to the quarterly meetings, the MOS Board and the MOS chapter presidents have active email discussion groups that are much used to conduct business between meetings. These forums have enabled the MOS Board to be very productive over the past few months.

MOS Stands Up for Racial Equality

In the wake of the killing of George Floyd and other Black and Brown people, MOS issued the following statement:

DECLARATION ON RACISM

Recent racist incidents against Black Americans have brought home to us that racism remains systemic in our society. As an inclusive organization that welcomes all people with an interest in birds, we are committed to speaking out against racism and bigotry. Black lives matter to MOS; as such, we condemn racism in all its forms.

The MOS Board of Directors recognizes that MOS members across the state are predominantly White, and as such are not representative of the diverse population of our state. The MOS Board is committed to making changes within MOS to ensure that MOS is welcoming to all people. At present, an *ad hoc* committee is working on a statement addressing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion for MOS as a whole.

MOS Joins Recreate Responsibly Coalition

In July, the Executive Committee of MOS voted to join the Recreate Responsibly Coalition, a newly formed coalition of nonprofits, outdoor businesses, and land managers developing and sharing best practices to protect each other and our natural landscapes. The coalition is a diverse community brought together by love of the outdoors and a desire to help everyone experience the benefits of nature safely during this public health crisis. The national coalition is a working group that looks to unify and amplify commonsense guidance about getting outside during COVID-19. The coalition has seven tenets, shown in the graphic above. You can read more about the coalition and its members at <https://www.recreateresponsibly.org/>.



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*MOS News, continued***Maryland Yellowthroat**

Orietta Estrada, *Yellowthroat* Editor, has advised that, due to complications arising from the pandemic, the next edition of the *Yellowthroat* will be issued only in its digital form. No printed copies will be mailed.

Breeding Bird Atlas Newsletter Available

You can stay informed about progress on the Third Breeding Bird Atlas for Maryland and DC through *What's Hatching*, an informative monthly newsletter. Even if you're not actively atlasing, the newsletter is chock-full of interesting photographs and information about breeding birds and about Maryland's special places that offer habitat for breeding. You can read the newsletters online at <https://ebird.org/atlasmdc/about/newsletters>. To get on the mailing list for notifications when each issue is published, send a request by email to the editor: [REDACTED] or call 202-681-4733.

Want to donate to the Atlas? You can do that at mdbirds.org/donate. You can also follow the Atlas on social media:

**New Process for MOS and Chapter Membership Renewal**

If you've been paying attention to your email, you should have already noticed a reminder from MOS that it's time to renew your membership in the Patuxent Bird Club and MOS. The MOS Board voted to approve a new process whereby all dues are remitted directly to MOS, rather than through the chapters. The preferred method is to pay online through the MOS website.

Please log in to [your account](#) to go directly to the renewal page. If you've never logged in or have forgotten your password, please click the "Forgot Password" link at the bottom of the login page and follow the instructions. After you log in, you'll see the payment amount at the top of your account profile. You may update your profile at this time. At the bottom of the page click "Sign Up" to take you to PayPal. Don't forget to click "Pay Now" to finalize your transaction. You'll receive a confirmation email when the transaction is completed.

Alternatively, log in via the [MOS website](#), which will display your profile. To renew, click "Subscriptions" and on the right side of the table click "Renew" or "Subscribe", which will display the price at the top of your profile. Then follow the steps above. If you wish to change your membership (for example, "Individual" to "Household") just navigate to your [chapter's page](#) and click on the "Membership" bar to list choices. You can also visit the [donation page](#) after you renew to contribute to our chapter or to an MOS project or fund.

Renewing via the MOS website is the most efficient way to renew your membership and update your profile, such as your address, and whether to receive *The Maryland Yellowthroat* via email notification. However, if you prefer to pay by check, please make it **payable to MOS** and **send your check, along with the application form at the end of this newsletter**, to the MOS Treasurer using the address on the form.

MOS Member Discounts — The Cornell Lab of Ornithology

As a benefit for members, MOS has arranged for a 20% discount on subscriptions to the online reference work *Birds of the World*, and also for online bird courses offered by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Birds of the World is an up-to-date online reference work that covers, well, all the species of birds of the world. It is the authoritative source for information on subspecies and taxonomy, life history, appearance, molts, vocalizations, breeding, and more. *Birds of the World* is only available through paid subscriptions; the usual cost is \$49/year. The MOS discount is for 20%, reducing the annual cost to \$39.20. See <https://birdsoftheworld.org/bow/home>.

Cornell University's Bird Academy offers a full set of online courses, covering identification, behavior, photography, and more. The cost varies for each course, starting at \$30. See the catalog at <https://academy.allaboutbirds.org/>.

For information on how to get the MOS discount, log into the MOS website with your member logon and password, then go to <https://mdbirds.org/join/member-information-restricted/birds-of-the-world/>

Anne Arundel Bird Club Challenge!

Chimney Swift populations are in steep decline. As part of Anne Arundel Bird Club's bird conservation efforts, the Club is undertaking a project to construct nesting towers for the swifts in Anne Arundel County parks. Kinder Farm Park has been chosen as the first site.

As indicated in the accompanying illustrative photo, the project will include interpretive panels to explain the function and desirability of the tower, along with other information about these fascinating birds. The towers will be constructed by Anne Arundel Bird Club volunteers following detailed instructions from *Chimney Swift Towers – New Habitat for America's Mysterious Birds*, by Paul D. Kyle & George Z. Kyle.

The Anne Arundel Bird Club is asking for donations to cover the cost of the building supplies. An anonymous donor has pledged up to \$500 to match new donations. Please send your checks made out to AABC to the Club Treasurer, Pete Bungay, at 1750 Birdbrook Trail, Annapolis, MD 21401. Alternatively, you can make contributions through PayPal on the Club website, www.aabirdclub.org. While you are on the website, please consider joining the Club, which is open to all bird lovers at all levels of experience.



2020 May Count Results in Prince Georges County By Fred Fallon, County Coordinator

This year's annual May Count occurred during the trying conditions of the Coronavirus pandemic; out of safety concerns, the count was nearly cancelled altogether, but in the end MOS decided to hold it under restricted protocols. Observers were urged to limit their birding to their immediate neighborhoods, foregoing motorized vehicles and birding only on foot within walking distance of home. The usual practice of assigning people to cover specific areas of the county was abandoned, since most of the larger, favorite tracts lie at considerable distance from home for most birders. In addition, in order to maximize coverage and encourage counting, MOS decided to allow participants to count birds on either Saturday, May 9, 2020 or Sunday, May 10, 2020, or on both days.

Observers were instructed to submit their data directly to MOS using an MOS eBird account, rather than to county coordinators using the standard report form we all used in past years. Although a review of all eBird submissions in the county shows that many people (upwards of 50) were out birding on the weekend of May 9th and 10th, only eight people in Prince George's County submitted their data to the MOS eBird account, and only those submissions are captured in the data presented below. Still, we are grateful to this hardy band of birders and impressed with the **total of 106 species** recorded under the restricted conditions.

Reports for Prince George's County were submitted to MOS by the following individuals:

Observer	Area(s) Covered	Date(s) Counted	# of Species Reported
Dorothy Paugh	Milltown Landing Natural Resources Management Area	Saturday May 9	16
Ann Hobbs	Merkle Natural Resources Management Area	Sunday May 10	31
Mike Burke	Kendal at Collington Neighborhood (near Glenarden)	Saturday May 9 & Sunday May 10	23
Marcia Watson	Vicinity of home in Westview neighborhood of Bowie, including Collington Branch Stream Valley Park & Old Stage Wetlands	Saturday May 9 & Sunday May 10	65
David Mozurkewich	Vicinity of home in Lanham	Sunday May 10	33
Elaine Hendricks	Greater Greenbelt Area including Greenbelt Community Garden, Greenbelt Lake (Buddy Attick Lake Park), Northway Fields Park, Ora Glen Stormwater Pond	Saturday May 9 & Sunday May 10	55

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Observer	Area(s) Covered	Date(s) Counted	# of Species Reported
Ken Cohen	Laurel area, including Laurel Lake/Granville Gude Park, Victoria Falls Neighborhood, Patuxent Research Refuge-South Tract (National Wildlife Visitor Center)	Saturday May 9 & Sunday May 10	40
Derrick Richardson	Vicinity of home in West Laurel; also Fairland Regional Park, Konterra Fields and Ponds, Laurel Lake/Granville Gude Park, Van Dusen Rd Ponds near Old Gunpowder Rd, Rocky Gorge Reservoir-Supplee Park & T. Howard Duckett Dam,	Saturday May 9 & Sunday May 10	75

A total of 106 species were found during the weekend. The table below shows the total number of individuals of each species, the number of eBird checklists on which each species appeared, and the number of observers who reported each species. In the event that more than one eBird checklist was submitted for the same location on the same day, only the maximum count across all the checklists for the location on that day is included. Note that, because of the differences in the protocols and reporting this year, the results and totals are not presented in the customary tabulation by area. The table below includes counts from both days of the weekend; since most of the observers who counted on both days covered different areas on the two days, there is little chance of over-counting in terms of the number of individuals of each species. Because of the drastic difference in the protocols and reporting this year, unfortunately it is not possible to compare with data from previous years.

Species	# of Individuals	# of eBird Checklists	# of Observers
Canada Goose	114	17	7
Wood Duck	4	2	2
Mallard	33	9	5
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	3	1	1
Mourning Dove	57	22	8
Common Nighthawk	1	1	1
Chimney Swift	52	8	4
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	2	2
Least Sandpiper	1	1	1
Spotted Sandpiper	4	2	1
Solitary Sandpiper	16	4	2
Lesser Yellowlegs	8	2	1
Laughing Gull	2	1	1
Ring-billed Gull	5	3	1
Double-crested Cormorant	5	4	4
Great Blue Heron	7	6	4
Green Heron	3	3	2
Black-crowned Night-Heron	1	1	1
Black Vulture	29	11	6
Turkey Vulture	49	18	6
Osprey	13	9	7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1	1
Cooper's Hawk	4	2	2
Bald Eagle	9	6	5
Red-shouldered Hawk	13	9	3
Red-tailed Hawk	6	4	2
Barred Owl	2	1	1
Belted Kingfisher	2	2	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	35	18	7
Downy Woodpecker	21	10	5
Hairy Woodpecker	8	5	2
Pileated Woodpecker	5	4	3
Northern Flicker	7	5	3

Species	# of Individuals	# of eBird Checklists	# of Observers
American Kestrel	2	2	1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	2	2	2
Acadian Flycatcher	1	1	1
Least Flycatcher	2	1	1
Eastern Phoebe	8	6	3
Great Crested Flycatcher	14	9	5
Eastern Kingbird	8	5	4
White-eyed Vireo	6	4	3
Blue-headed Vireo	1	1	1
Warbling Vireo	1	1	1
Red-eyed Vireo	22	8	5
Blue Jay	43	17	6
American Crow	23	10	4
Fish Crow	16	9	3
Common Raven	2	2	2
Carolina Chickadee	23	9	4
Tufted Titmouse	28	15	6
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	7	4	2
Purple Martin	11	3	1
Tree Swallow	35	11	5
Bank Swallow	1	1	1
Barn Swallow	45	10	4
Cliff Swallow	3	1	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	2	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	12	8	4
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	32	11	5
House Wren	14	9	3
Carolina Wren	64	21	6
European Starling	119	20	8
Gray Catbird	34	16	7
Brown Thrasher	3	3	3
Northern Mockingbird	25	15	7
Eastern Bluebird	13	7	7
Veery	2	1	1
Swainson's Thrush	3	3	3

Species	# of Individuals	# of eBird Checklists	# of Observers
Wood Thrush	10	5	3
American Robin	103	23	6
Cedar Waxwing	21	3	3
House Sparrow	78	13	5
House Finch	42	13	6
American Goldfinch	66	20	7
Chipping Sparrow	19	10	5
White-throated Sparrow	4	4	2
Song Sparrow	12	7	3
Eastern Towhee	10	6	4
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	1	1
Eastern Meadowlark	1	1	1
Orchard Oriole	5	4	2
Baltimore Oriole	14	11	3
Red-winged Blackbird	141	18	7
Brown-headed Cowbird	22	11	6
Common Grackle	147	21	6
Ovenbird	7	4	4
Black-and-white Warbler	1	1	1

Species	# of Individuals	# of eBird Checklists	# of Observers
Common Yellowthroat	15	8	4
Hooded Warbler	1	1	1
American Redstart	2	2	1
Cape May Warbler	3	2	2
Northern Parula	8	5	4
Magnolia Warbler	1	1	1
Blackburnian Warbler	1	1	1
Yellow Warbler	3	3	2
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2	2	1
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	1	1
Pine Warbler	3	2	2
Yellow-rumped Warbler	27	8	4
Prairie Warbler	1	1	1
Canada Warbler	1	1	1
Scarlet Tanager	9	7	3
Northern Cardinal	116	24	8
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	1	1
Blue Grosbeak	1	1	1
Indigo Bunting	14	6	3

Notably, the list for the weekend includes Common Raven; two individual birds were reported, one by Dave Mozurkewich in Lanham and one by Elaine Hendricks in Greenbelt. Common Ravens were a great rarity in our area 15 to 20 years ago, but their range has been expanding eastward and they now occur even on the Eastern Shore. A pair has been nesting at the T. Howard Duckett Dam on the Rocky Gorge Reservoir for several years now.

Given the restrictions in place for the 2020 May Count, the total of 106 species is certainly respectable, but who knows what might have been if we were able to cover more of the county as in past years. Hopefully we will be able to return to a normal protocol next year. **Save the date: Saturday, May 8, 2021.**

My Marathon Big Day By Tom Beal

On May 5, 2020, I completed a Marathon Big Day; it was a low-carbon footprint/coronavirus Big Day, all on foot. I walked three loops — 14, 9.5, and 3 miles long, for a total of 26.5 miles. My home in Glenn Dale was the starting point, and I also did a 1½ hour feeder watch at home. (No hummingbirds all day!)

I started the first loop at 0500 at the Guinevere Place entrance to the WB&A Trail and walked east to the WB&A extension along Horsepen Branch. Then I walked through Fran Uhler Natural Area and Lemon Bridge Road, down to Old Town Bowie, through the abandoned park on Zug Road (Tanglewood Park), and then through the “Q” residential neighborhood of Bowie. This loop took 6+ hours.

Then starting at 1400, I walked the second loop, taking the WB&A Trail west to the Folly Branch Trail. I walked through the Glenn Dale Hospital grounds, down Bell Station Road, and through the Fairwood development to the railroad tracks. I walked north along the railroad spur through west Bowie and then back thru the “G” section of Bowie. This loop took 4 hours.

My last loop was through another part of the Fairwood development ending at the power lines, hoping for Nighthawks or Whips, but had no luck. I saw only one new bird for that loop, Hooded Merganser.

I’ve lived for 31 years in Glenn Dale in the Camelot neighborhood. I’m lucky that there are good birdwatching spots that can be reached on foot from my home using the WB&A Trail and other footpaths.

I have done Big Days for many years. Normally I drive hundreds of miles for these, covering VA -> MD -> DE. One year I did a Big Day from Kennesaw Mountain in Georgia to Saint Simons Island, also in Georgia. My record for species is one fantastic year with 157 species. This year, to have a much smaller carbon footprint and because of prudent travel restrictions, I did my Big Day on foot.

Continued next page

Marathon Big Day, continued

My total for the day was 97 species, if you include Lesser/Greater Yellowlegs (couldn't identify to species). My list included 17 different warblers and 6 woodpeckers (no Red-headed at the wetland on the WB&A extension, sadly!)

Here's my species list for my Marathon Big Day:

Canada Goose	Eastern Phoebe	American Goldfinch
Wood Duck	Great Crested Flycatcher	Chipping Sparrow
Mallard	Eastern Kingbird	Field Sparrow
Hooded Merganser	White-eyed Vireo	Song Sparrow
Pied-billed Grebe	Warbling Vireo	Eastern Towhee
Rock Pigeon	Red-eyed Vireo	Yellow-breasted Chat
Mourning Dove	Blue Jay	Orchard Oriole
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	American Crow	Baltimore Oriole
Chimney Swift	Carolina Chickadee	Red-winged Blackbird
Killdeer	Tufted Titmouse	Brown-headed Cowbird
Spotted Sandpiper	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Common Grackle
Solitary Sandpiper	Purple Martin	Ovenbird
Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs	Tree Swallow	Worm-eating Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Barn Swallow	Louisiana Waterthrush
Great Blue Heron	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Black-and-white Warbler
Green Heron	White-breasted Nuthatch	Prothonotary Warbler
Black Vulture	Gnatcatchers	Kentucky Warbler
Turkey Vulture	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Common Yellowthroat
Osprey	House Wren	American Redstart
Cooper's Hawk	Carolina Wren	Northern Parula
Red-shouldered Hawk	European Starling	Magnolia Warbler
Red-tailed Hawk	Gray Catbird	Yellow Warbler
Barred Owl	Brown Thrasher	Chestnut-sided Warbler
Belted Kingfisher	Northern Mockingbird	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Eastern Bluebird	Palm Warbler
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Veery	Pine Warbler
Downy Woodpecker	Swainson's Thrush	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Hairy Woodpecker	Wood Thrush	Black-throated Green Warbler
Pileated Woodpecker	American Robin	Scarlet Tanager
Northern Flicker	Cedar Waxwing	Northern Cardinal
American Kestrel	House Sparrow	Blue Grosbeak
Eastern Wood-Pewee	House Finch	Indigo Bunting
Acadian Flycatcher		



Update: Breeding Bird Atlas in Prince George's County

The Third Breeding Bird Atlas has gotten off to a running start in Prince George's County. The following data are current as of August 28, 2020, and are taken from the BBA3 Atlas Portal on eBird (<https://ebird.org/atlasmdcc/county/US-MD-033>).

- 157 Atlasers have submitted a combined total of 2,699 checklists within Prince George's County.
- There are 53 Atlas blocks in the county, and 100% of them have had at least some coverage.
- A total of 137 species have been reported, although some of these consist of plain observations, with no breeding code.
- A total of 96 species – 70% of the total of 137 species – have been **confirmed as breeding**.

On the next page are details on coverage and results for each atlas block in the county. The last four columns indicate numbers of Possible, Probable, and Confirmed breeding species. Yellow highlighting shows blocks that need more coverage, based on hours of counting and/or number of confirmed breeding species.

Continued next page

Breeding Bird Atlas Update, continued

Block	Day Hrs	Nght Hrs	# of Obs	Species			
				POS	PRO	CON	Tot
Alexandria SE	10.68	0.00	26	28	10	6	44
Anacostia CE	1.42	0.00	18	12	8	2	22
Anacostia CW	3.18	0.00	3	27	9	1	37
Anacostia NE	3.38	0.00	28	10	3	2	15
Anacostia SE	4.28	0.00	24	12	7	3	22
Anacostia SW	3.95	0.00	2	29	16	2	47
Beltsville CE	72.78	5.00	20	31	25	27	83
Beltsville NE	91.55	0.00	48	20	7	27	54
Beltsville SE	393.8	0.08	79	6	17	53	76
Beltsville SW	23.25	0.00	27	16	19	12	47
Benedict CW	0.50	0.00	4	5	1	0	6
Benedict NW	16.54	0.33	13	24	26	11	61
Bowie CW	39.59	0.00	50	39	6	5	50
Bowie NW	1.73	0.00	11	8	4	0	12
Bowie SW	7.92	0.00	6	22	7	12	41
Brandywine CE	4.12	0.00	7	18	16	19	53
Brandywine CW	0.27	0.00	4	12	2	3	17
Brandywine NE	23.03	0.00	17	15	28	15	58
Brandywine NW	7.84	0.00	9	9	27	31	67
Brandywine SE	2.73	0.00	5	26	7	3	36
Bristol CW	13.94	2.67	43	33	20	9	62
Bristol NW	67.59	1.13	44	24	40	24	88
Bristol SW	282.3	12.72	85	15	32	45	92
Lanham CE	0.92	0.00	23	1	5	0	6
Lanham CW	16.40	0.17	30	6	4	12	22
Lanham NE	331.6	6.26	48	5	23	25	53
Lanham NW	14.22	0.00	14	24	15	21	60
Lanham SE	4.25	0.00	11	23	11	0	34
Lanham SW	11.85	0.00	4	25	20	7	52
Laurel CW	66.80	5.05	74	12	27	26	65
Laurel NW	29.07	0.65	31	19	10	33	62

Block	Day Hrs	Nght Hrs	# of Obs	Species			
				POS	PRO	CON	Tot
Laurel SE	277.1	0.43	57	19	37	32	88
Laurel SW	44.99	1.57	39	14	29	27	70
Lower Marlboro CW	22.88	0.00	33	14	32	8	54
Lower Marlboro NW	126.9	0.00	60	23	32	22	77
Lower Marlboro SW	30.94	0.00	37	18	8	3	29
Mount Vernon CE	218.2	1.90	77	26	17	46	89
Mount Vernon NE	67.25	0.00	60	21	23	19	63
Mount Vernon SE	12.63	0.00	16	37	10	8	55
Piscataway CE	0.73	0.00	3	23	5	0	28
Piscataway CW	2.58	0.00	20	26	7	3	36
Piscataway NE	8.77	0.00	23	31	6	6	43
Piscataway NW	5.93	0.00	14	24	12	13	49
Upper Marlboro CE	21.18	0.00	41	27	25	11	63
Upper Marlboro CW	1.08	0.00	3	18	4	6	28
Upper Marlboro NE	3.55	0.00	10	25	11	16	52
Upper Marlboro NW	114.5	0.00	39	12	13	36	61
Upper Marlboro SE	11.02	0.00	16	16	29	22	67
Upper Marlboro SW	4.70	0.00	10	15	22	13	50
Washington East CE	33.85	0.00	37	16	33	13	62
Washington East NE	253.9	4.32	86	14	17	41	72
Washington East NW	92.00	1.57	31	16	25	21	62
Washington East SE	6.45	0.00	12	17	18	2	37

Quite a few of these under-covered blocks have not been “adopted” by a specific Atlaser and are only receiving random coverage. To see which blocks are unadopted, go to the [Atlaser Block Tool](#) on the eBird website for the Atlas. To adopt an Atlas block, write to County Atlas Coordinators Ross Geredien and Dave Mozurkewich at [\[redacted\]](#).

See Atlas Training, Tips, & Links at

<https://ebird.org/atlasmdc/about/tips-links>

Notable Bird Sightings in Prince George's County May through August, 2020

See a selection of photos on the next page.

Two **Trumpeter Swans** were at Governor Bridge Natural Area on June 13th, reported by Joe Hanfman and by Hugh Vandervoort. These may have been the same pair that has been hanging out all year, primarily at Patuxent North Tract, but with some movement in both Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties.

A **Horned Grebe** was at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center on May 4th, reported by Michel Cavigelli. This is an exceptional bird for an inland location.

Black-billed Cuckoos, a scarce bird outside of the Piedmont, were unusually prevalent in our county this spring. Sightings included one or two at Lake Artemesia on May 4th and 7th (Matt Cohen, Kevin Bennett); one on the WB&A Trail at Horsepen Branch on May 3rd and again on May 8th (Marisa Rositol). At least one cuckoo continued at Lake Artemesia up through May 15th (multiple observers). Another cuckoo was at a private farm near Upper Marlboro on May 15th (Dan Rauch).

A smattering of **Common Gallinules** occurred in late April and early May. One was at Patuxent Research Refuge – Central Tract, first reported by Evan Buck on April 29th and relocated on May 1st. Erik Raun found another on May 2nd at the wetlands visible behind Ikea in College Park. And yet another was found, also on May 2nd, at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center by Marisa Rositol.

A **Mississippi Kite** was reported by Todd Hitchcock at Patuxent River Park – Jug Bay Natural Area on June 7th. Another **Mississippi Kite** was seen by Michel Cavigelli at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center on June 13th.

Matt Felperin reported a group of three **Least Terns** at Patuxent River Park – Jackson Landing on July 9th; Michel Cavigelli saw one **Least Tern** at the same location on July 12th.

Art Drauglis saw an **American Bittern** at Patuxent Research Refuge – South Tract on May 24th. Jeff Shenot found a group of three **Snowy Egrets** on May 3rd in the Billingsley Marsh on the Patuxent River north of Mount Calvert.

A few **Alder Flycatchers** showed up during spring migration: May 23rd at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (John Rice-Cameron) and at Patuxent Research Refuge – Central Tract (Evan Buck); May 24th at Magruder Park in Hyattsville (Stephanie Dalke); May 25th at Patuxent Research Refuge – Central Tract (Evan Buck); May 26th at Piscataway Park Boardwalk (Marisa Rositol).

A **Golden-winged Warbler** was a great find at Lake Artemesia on May 13-14th (Amaury Bouyon, Kevin Bennett, Marisa Rositol, et al.). A **Nashville Warbler** was seen and heard at Magruder Park in Hyattsville on May 15th (Stephanie Dalke). A **Tennessee Warbler** was at Lake Artemesia on May 24th (Kevin Bennett), and another was at Patuxent Research Refuge – Central Tract (Evan Buck) on May 25th. Evan Buck also found a **Mourning Warbler** at Central Tract on May 25th.

Marisa Rositol found a **Dickcissel** at Oxon Hill Farm on May 24th. Jane and Fred Fallon found a group of **Dickcissels** at Patuxent River Park – Aquasco Farm on June 7th, during breeding season. The birds remained through the end of June and were seen by many other observers. They were confirmed to be breeding when Jeff Shenot saw an adult carrying food on June 13th. A single **Dickcissel** was at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center on July 2nd (Michel Cavigelli); and another was at a residential neighborhood adjacent to Patuxent Research Refuge – Central Tract on July 12th (Christina Yuan).

On the front side of migration on assorted dates in May, **Bobolinks** were widespread in the county, appearing at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (multiple observers); Bladensburg Waterfront Park and the adjoining Anacostia River Trail (multiple observers); Lake Artemesia (Kevin Bennett, Marisa Rositol); Merkle NRMA (Jacob Hall); Patuxent River near Mount Calvert (Jeff Shenot); Piscataway Park Boardwalk (Bill Townsend); and a private home in Windsor Manor in south county (Kyra Harvey). More recently, on the fall side of migration in August, **Bobolinks** have been spotted off Good Luck Road on August 22 (Hans Holbrook); at Patuxent Research Refuge – South Tract on August 27th (Christina Yuan); at the Patuxent River near Mount Calvert on August 27th (Jeff Shenot); at Patuxent River Park – Cedarhaven on August 27th (Marisa Rositol); and at Governor Bridge Natural Area on August 28th (Jeff Shenot). In between, there was a tantalizing report of a small flock of **Bobolinks** at Aquasco Farm on June 28th (D. Gildersleeve), a date that could indicate breeding there.

Selected photos, next page

Notable Birds, continued

Trumpeter Swans, photo by Joe Hanfman, Governor Bridge Natural Area, June 13, 2020; Macaulay Library ML242967851



Black-billed Cuckoo, photo by Marisa Rositol, Lake Artemesia, May 15, 2020; Macaulay Library ML234953941



Common Gallinule, photo by Marisa Rositol, Ikea Wetlands, May 2, 2020; Macaulay Library ML229841681



Least Tern, photo by Matt Felperin, Patuxent River Park – Jackson Landing, July 9, 2020; Macaulay Library ML248595351



Snowy Egrets, photo by Jeff Shenot, Patuxent River Park – Mount Calvert, May 3, 2020; Macaulay Library ML230301401



Golden-winged Warbler, photo by Marisa Rositol, Lake Artemesia, May 14, 2020; Macaulay Library ML234534231



Tennessee Warbler, photo by Evan Buck, Patuxent Research Refuge, May 25, 2020; Macaulay Library ML238683461



Dickcissel, photo by Jim Stasz, Patuxent River Farm – Aquasco Park, June 13, 2020; Macaulay Library ML246198861



Bobolinks, photo by Cory Kampf, Anacostia River Trail, May 5, 2020; Macaulay Library ML231007381

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 marcia@hoodnews.org.

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!