

Chip Notes

No. 374

WINTER 2010

BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Corner.....	2
Conservation Corner.....	2
Youth Birding Backpack	
Contest.....	3
Patapsco Valley State Park	
Starts Kid's Bird Club!.....	4
Dorothy Blake Martin,	
Woman of Mystery.....	4
Silence of the Swifts.....	5
Birder Cam.....	6
Times, They Are A'Changin'.....	7
Postcards From.....	8
BBC Application.....	12



Baltimore Orioles Junior Birding Club To Launch in the Spring of 2011

By Martin Brazeau

Heads Up!
Baltimore Harbor
Christmas Bird Count
originally scheduled for
Saturday,
January 8, 2011
is rescheduled for
Saturday,
December 18, 2010,
the Saturday before
Christmas.

Are you between 10-18 years old and enjoy birding? You will soon be able to join the **Baltimore Orioles Junior Birding Club (BOJBC)**. The program will officially begin on March of 2011. You will increase your "bird IQ" as you attend special youth-centered bird hikes and learn from seasoned birders with years of experience on BBC walks. Our Spring program will focus on how to locate and identify birds with binoculars, field guides, and I-pod Apps. You will also use GPS devices and the e-Bird website to survey bird populations. As you progress in the club, you will be able to attend a week-long residential bird study camp on the Chesapeake Bay. Youth age 10-15, must be accompanied by a parent or a sanctioned adult. If you are a teacher, please help us recruit potential new members. Early bird registrants will be invited to meet other youth members on two special birding events in December and January. A full schedule of our Spring youth program will be included in the next edition of Chip Notes. Call leader Marty at 410-583-0275 for more information. To receive an online registration form or sign up to be an adult volunteer, e-mail Marty at baltimoreyouthbirding@yahoo.com.

Last Reminder
DUES ARE DUE!!!
See page 8 for application



Thinking Ahead to January's Covered Dish Dinner and Lecture

BBC will once again have our Covered Dish Dinner and Lecture, open to all members, on the evening of January 9th, 2011. We look forward to this opportunity to socialize, meet our new Youth Backpack Award winner, and hear a fantastic lecture. This year's featured talk is "Trogons and Mot-Mots: A February Trip to the West Coast of Mexico around San Blas. Mangroves, Mountains and Beaches." It will be given by Kurt Schwartz from the Howard Bird Club. Kurt is currently the chairman of the MOS' Conservation Committee.

Unfortunately we can no longer use the Bykota Center because of cost and liability issues. We want to express our gratitude to Helene Gardel who made this facility available to us for many years. After due consideration, Cylburn's Vollmer Visitor Center was chosen so we can comfortably accommodate the increasing number of BBC

*On a practical level,
the Visitor Center auditorium is
substantially larger than the
space we had at Bykota*

members who attend this event. Those who have not been to Cylburn since the opening of the Visitor Center can experience this attractive new facility for themselves, including an opportunity to see and use the eBird Trail Tracker kiosk (from Cornell University) that BBC has purchased and individualized for use by Cylburn visitors. Members may be interested in the Visitor Center's "green" features such as geothermal heating, composting toilets, and a green roof. There is a video slide show on the entrance level ex-

(Continued on page 8)

Conservation CORNER

BBC Conservation Committee

Lake Roland, a.k.a. Robert E. Lee Park

By Carol Schreter

Lake Roland's main access (near the dam) was closed in July 2008. Hopefully, it will reopen in mid 2011 as the entrance to Robert E. Lee Park (REL Park), maintained and operated by Baltimore County. Baltimore City leased the park to Baltimore County because the bridge below the dam was unsound, and the City did not have the money to replace this bridge, built in 1852.

Baltimore County is now plowing \$6 million dollars into park improvements focused on the south entrance and peninsula. Half the money comes from Baltimore County, and half from the state.

Changes will include a new bridge, bathrooms and improved paths on the peninsula. Parking will be expanded at the Falls Rd. light rail stop. A boardwalk from there will lead through the woods into the park. An enclosed dog park with water access will crown the peninsula. A Park Ranger will help see that dogs are kept on a leash when outside the dog enclosure.

Of special importance to bird watchers, a stair-step path will lead down the steep slope to the light rail crossing. This was not part of the County's Phase I plan, but was pushed forward due to citizen input during the planning process.

The Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks invited citizen volunteers to help with planning and programming at Robert E. Lee Park, much like the Cylburn Arboretum Association helps at Cylburn. A citizen Advisory Committee of 20 people has been meeting for a year to set up a Robert E. Lee Park Nature Council. John Landers represents BBC on this start-up committee.

After the Nature Council is formed, Bill Wolf intends to join its Education, Environmental & Historic Preservation Committee, representing BBC. He will invite the Nature Council to list BBC's migration walks on the Robert E. Lee Park activities program.

The Baltimore Bird Club's 10-week migration walks at Lake Roland (as we are used to calling the park) on Tuesday mornings started in 1945 and continued until 2008, when the bridge crossing was closed. Over 63 years, our members spotted 190

(Continued on page 4)



**BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB
MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

Youth Birding Backpack Contest

Attention 10 - 16 year-olds! You can win a fabulous backpack including binoculars, field guides, and other birding loot. Winning is easy – just put together the best entry on one or more of the topics mentioned. We will judge on completeness, creativity, graphics, and accuracy.

Photos and artwork that help make points are welcome. The backpack will be awarded at the Baltimore Bird Club's January Pot Luck. Please include your name, phone number, and email address, and how you heard about our contest.

Option #1

Write an essay or photo essay on our state bird, the Baltimore oriole. Why is the Baltimore oriole our state bird? What is its summer and winter range? Will it be impacted by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico? Are orioles increasing or declining in numbers? How can you tell the difference between a Robin, a Red-winged blackbird, and a Baltimore oriole?

Option #2

Millions of birds die by colliding into windows. These collisions can be prevented by painting designs on windows or using stickers spaced a minimum of 4"x 2" apart. Do you have a door, window, or sunroom that is a problem at your house? Submit a photo essay on how you made your problem area safe for birds.

Option #3

Do an essay or photo essay about birds in your yard. You may want include info on your yard – does it have big trees? Shrubs? Mostly grass?

What do the birds in your yard eat? On what key features did you base your ID of the bird (i.e. song, color,

length/shape of tail, head, and beak)? How many different species did you observe?

Submit entries to

baltimoreyouthbirding@yahoo.com by December 10, 2010, or email us with questions on non-email submissions.

The Baltimore Bird Club reserves the right to keep possession of the submissions until January 15, 2010 for publicity purposes. Non-email submissions must be picked up by January 30, 2010. The Baltimore Bird Club is not responsible to damage occurred to entries.

Patapsco Valley State Park Starts Kid's Bird Club!

Patapsco Bird Club for Kids meetings will be held on the **first Saturday of each month from 9-10am** in the Hilton area of Patapsco Valley State Park. Whether you are interested in starting to learn about birds or are already a keen bird watcher, come and find out more about the birds of the park with a group of like-minded kids. Get outside and have fun while learning more about the different birds that visit the park each month as well as our year round residents. Each month will be different as the club visits different parts of the park to explore a variety of bird habitats, have close encounters with Scares & Tales birds and other activities depending on the kid's interests. Bring binoculars and a guide book if you have them (we will have both available to borrow) and dress for the weather. For children 8 years and older. Meet at the Nature Center in the Hilton Area. Reservations are NOT required and kids can come to as many club "meetings" as they want. *Cost: \$2 per child.*

BBC Volunteers Needed

- **Chip Notes Editor.** The editor should have familiarity with BBC activities and knowledge of computer publishing programs and website interface.
- **Docent at the Cylburn Nature Museum.** Saturday or Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm at the Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore City. Training will be provided.
- **Outreach/Publicity Chair.** To provide information to members, the media and the public concerning the Chapter and its activities.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these roles, or know someone who might be interested, please contact Karen Morley or Joan Cwi.

DOROTHY BLAKE MARTIN

WOMAN OF MYSTERY

While many women like to maintain some amount of mysterious allure during their lives, in death, Dorothy Blake Martin has managed to maintain total inscrutability. When Ms. Martin died in 1977 she left the Baltimore Bird Club a bequest of more than \$37,000. The only stipulation in her will as to the use of the bequest was that a plaque in the memory of her friend, May S. Danner, who died in 1962, be placed in the Baltimore Chapter offices at Cylburn. Neither Ms. Martin nor Ms. Danner were members of the Baltimore Bird Club, and the connection between Ms. Martin and the Baltimore Bird Club remains a mystery to this day.

The plaque was placed in Cylburn and the BBC established the Dorothy Blake Martin Fund in 1979 to provide grants for worthwhile ornithological projects. An Ad Hoc committee was appointed to establish guidelines for the use of the fund as well as procedures for reviewing requests for grants from the fund. These recommendations were adopted as guidelines which are subject to modification or redirection by the Board and some were set out in the 2006 revisions to the BBC Manual of Operations. A Martin Fund Committee was established to review requests and present recommendations to the Baltimore Bird Club Board, who make the final decision on grants from the fund. From the original bequest of \$37,278.25, the DBM Fund has given grants worth \$67,421.10 to various projects from 1979 to 2009. These include funding improvements to the Nature Museum, providing bus transportation of school children to Cylburn nature programs, sponsoring scientific research, enabling various conservancy projects, and most recently, partial funding of the eBird Trail Tracker at Cylburn's Vollmer Center (to open this fall).

According to the guidelines the fund can be used:

1. As seed money to develop new means of increasing Chapter Membership;
2. To develop educational programs not already provided. If such a program proves successful and is adopted as an on-going component of the regular program, its support would move to the operating budget.
3. Support of conservation projects in which the interests of the Baltimore Chapter are clearly recognized.

4. Support of carefully considered local ornithological research.
5. One time purchases of equipment that will improve the activities of the Chapter.



The new Chair of the Martin Fund Committee is Bob Rineer, formerly the president of both the BBC and MOS. Others on the committee are the BBC Vice President (Joan Cwi), Joy Wheeler, Mary Byers, and Terry Ross. Requests for Martin Fund grants should be directed to Bob Rineer at rrineer1@jhmi.edu (Please note that the Membership Directory incorrectly has VP Joan Cwi listed as Martin Fund Chair)

Conservation CORNER

(Continued from page 2)

species of birds, according to Kevin Graff. This is the best migration spot in Baltimore County thanks to the mix of habitat in this 450 acre park: the woods, the lake, the wetland at the back, the open area above the bridge, and the Jones Falls.

Gear up to share this gem with beginning birders attracted by our binoculars. Consider joining one of the REL Nature Council committees as they expand their volunteer base. Don't be surprised when you start hearing about Robert E. Lee Park, or REL Park. It's our old friend, by another name.

**Summer Sighting Records
collected by Kevin Graff are available
on the BBC website at
www.baltimorebirdclub.org.**

Birder Cam

Birder Cam is a section of Chip Notes that will highlight community and BBC members who have done something of general interest to local birders and/or have benefited the club and birding in important ways.

This Winter Birder Cam spotlights three BBC members who have made outstanding contributions to the BBC over their long tenures. All were honored with Distinguished Service Awards and MOS pins at the September Lecture.



JOAN CWI

This Winter Birder Cam spotlights three BBC members who have made outstanding contributions to the BBC over their long tenures. All were honored with Distinguished Service Awards and MOS pins at the September Lecture.

The first award goes to **Pete Webb**, our retiring Chapter President, for eight years of outstanding club leadership and 31 years as an active (and life) BBC member. "Retiring" from the presidency, that is, as Pete will continue in his longstanding role as Field Trips & Activities Schedule coordinator and has additionally picked up the work associated with the Lecture Chairperson, Associate Editor of Chip Notes, and remains on the Board as a Director. Phew! And, of course, he leads some of our more exciting field trips as birder extraordinaire and gives an occasional lecture himself. In the past, he has even picked up the responsibility of temporarily vacant positions such as Chip Notes Editor and Treasurer. Pete was honored with the award and pin, and also a copy of the soon-to-be released *Second Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*, which

was presented to him by the Board members in appreciation for his droll sense of humor and all he has done in his role as president. Pete's only regret is that had he joined the club just few months earlier, he could have immediately added the Boreal Chickadee (seen in Baltimore County in the winter of 1978-79) to his county, state and life bird list!

The other two awards go to **Patsy Perlman** and **Joy Wheeler** for their combined half century in the service of Club activities at Cylburn, especially for introducing the children of Baltimore City and County to the wonders of nature. Both women have been BBC liaisons with Cylburn for 31 and 27 years respectively, and have been active with the club even longer. Their work at Cylburn has had many facets. They worked on the Nature Museum when it was in the third floor of the Mansion, and now serve as docents when it is open on Sundays in the Carriage House. Patsy was also involved in designing the new Nature Museum. Over the years, both worked with children including being involved in Story Hours, school children visits to Cylburn, going to schools to talk to students about nature studies, and running the Junior Nature Camp (defunct since the mid-80's). Many of our young adult birders remember with fondness how, at a young age, these women influenced their love of nature and birds. In addition to their BBC roles, Patsy served on the Board of the Cylburn Arboretum Association for many years, and Joy continues in her role as the Maryland Ornithological Society Librarian. For several years, Joy also wrote book reviews for Maryland Bird Life.

As BBC's relationship with Cylburn becomes more integral to club activities, and as we once more are making a strong effort to introduce youth to the mysteries of nature and birding, we thank these two members for their tireless background work in these areas.



JOAN CWI



Silence of the Swifts *By Joan Cwi*

It didn't look promising even when scouting in advance. The annual Fall Chimney Swifts at Dusk field trip was scheduled for the evening of September 12th, but there were no swifts using our two traditional roosting places. As you may recall, in mid-September we generally have between 3,000-7,000 swifts roost in the Hampden Bookbindery/Mill Center or Druid Hill Conservatory chimneys at this time of year. The swifts have routinely used the Hampden chimneys for 30 years, according to Alice Nelson our local expert who lives in the area, and then started alternating between the Hampden and Conservatory chimneys a couple of years ago. (These chimneys are only about a half mile apart across the Jones Falls valley, as the swift flies.) This year the swifts did not use any of these chimneys!! We alerted potential attendees who might attend the scheduled field trip about the dearth of birds via our swift email list and MDOsprey, but three intrepid birders came anyway to the Conservatory on the 12th. No luck that night either, so we divided into "swift chaser" teams to see if we could find other potential chimneys they might be using en masse with little results. Although there had been reports of minor roosting events (200-600 birds), we could not find any chimney being used with the usual fall migration numbers.

Then two and a half weeks later things changed! On September 30th, one of our swift fans went to the Ambassador Dining Room and observed over 3,000 swifts going down the chimney of the Temple of the Scottish Rite (at 39th and Charles

Street). I went again the next night and despite the rain counted 2,500 using the chimney. Two days later I had dinner at the Ambassador with friends, unfortunately too late in the evening to see the swifts ourselves. I stepped out to the veranda and to show friends the chimney when the people at nearby tables started telling me they had seen "thousands" of birds a bit earlier and wanted to know about them. So I gave them the big swift talk and distributed handouts (which I had so cleverly brought with me). I then got hold of the manager and asked if he would like some handouts to give out. He had dozens of questions for me so he would be able to guest queries. As a thank-you for the information and handouts, he gave our table a free appetizer! So here is my Ambassador plug—they serve delicious Indian food (although upscale and pricey) in a charming locale.

This year the swifts gave us a double sucker-punch—they changed chimneys and came late. So what is happening? To be honest, we just don't know. We speculate that due to the lingering hot weather (and hence lingering bugs) migration was late. But that doesn't explain why they changed chimneys once again after faithfully using the Hampden chimneys for so many years. We sure have our work cut out for us figuring out where the next swift watch will be! Other seasonal swift factoids—for the first time since we started Lights Out Baltimore! monitoring three years ago, this fall we found a dead Chimney Swift, the victim of collision with glass. And over 200 Chimney Swifts were killed along a section of highway 295 in the District of Columbia. The conjecture is they were flying low due to foggy conditions gathering low-flying insects and hit by cars. Cedar Waxwings gathering roadside berries are sometimes reported killed in large numbers by cars, but this is an uncommon report for swifts.

Proposed regulatory changes re: Migratory Bird Specimens

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing educational use permit regulations to hold live nonreleasable or captive-bred migratory birds and nonliving migratory bird specimens for use in teaching people about migratory bird conservation and ecology. The proposed regulations also propose removing the permit exemption for some public institutions for possession of migratory bird specimens. For specimens such as feathers, parts, carcasses, nonviable eggs, and nests, the proposed regulations would be updated and clarified to more accurately reflect the types of institutions that may hold specimens for public educational purposes. While the new rules for holding live migratory birds does not apply to us, there are proposed changes could significantly affect the long term operation of the BBC Nature Museum at Cylburn Arboretum and our ability to continue to hold some of these dead and mounted specimens. The Fish and Wildlife Service is taking public comment on these proposed changes until December 20, 2010. The BBC will comment on them but we encourage all members to review and comment on them as well. You can access them at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds>. The current regulations are at 50 C.F.R. 21.12 and 50 C.F.R. 21.27. Additional information will be posted on the BBC website at www.baltimorebirds.org along with analysis and suggested comments. Note that these regulations will not impact the salvage permit BBC holds to implement our Lights Out Baltimore program.

TIMES THEY ARE A'CHANGIN...

by Joan Cwi

The upcoming year promised to have some challenges needing planning to achieve. So President Karen Morley called for a planning meeting to be held August 28th to discuss what we might want to achieve this year and start planning upfront. Eighteen BBC members, including many of the officers and others who had shown interest in some of the topics, attended this half-day event.

The morning was dedicated to discussing several areas that the club was pursuing or wanting to pursue or change. It started with talking about how the relationship with Cylburn has changed and where it will go in the future. We discussed the need to identify a specimen inventory program so we can begin to electronically update the manual records Kevin Graff has compiled of BBC, MOS and CAA specimens stored at the Nature Museum and at the Mansion. Karen also expressed a desire to redesign our recruitment brochure to make it more attractive for attracting new members.

Revitalization of Chip Notes was another topic. This effort has already begun, but we discussed what types of materials we wanted to include/exclude, and more importantly we talked about whether we should offer Chip Notes as an online-only option for members preferring to receive it electronically rather than hardcopy. This would enable us to use color, provide direct links, offer more content and would help save printing and mailing costs.

This issue, in turn, led to the notion that we need to move into the electronic age in other ways also. Our website has become antiquated in design and needs redoing, and we felt the need to be able to connect with our members electronically (at least to those who want

to be contacted this way) to send them routine updates, alerts or others items of information.

And finally we addressed the need to become proactive in revitalizing our education programs and recruiting youth into the club. Ideas were tossed around such as continuing our introduction to birding sessions giving this summer at Cylburn as well as working with Cylburn regarding other seminars and trainings, such as on butterflies. MOS is encouraging its chapters to develop more youth-oriented programs, and we now have members who are interested in undertaking this important task. Youth are very attuned to electronic communications, so this program also interconnected to our electronic discussion--do we need a Face Book or Meetup.com page to appeal to youth?

After a delicious potluck lunch, we broke into three working groups on website development, electronic interface, and education and youth programs. Each group presented its findings/conclusions at the end of the meeting and the members became the core team for continuing work on these topics.

If you have ideas, opinions or want to join one of these groups, connect with the chairperson:

Website:

Terry Ross at tross@ubalt.edu

Electronic Interface:

Pete Webb at pete_webb@juno.com

Education:

David Thorndill at DThorndill@ccbcmd.edu

Youth Programs:

Marty Brazeau at tropicbird@verizon.net

Chip Notes On Line... and Off

Want to go green? And red and yellow and blue? Get your issues of Chip Notes on line and it'll be fast, paperless and in color! We are glad that so many of you have commented favorably on the new Chip Notes and we are taking it to the next step with enhanced graphics and electronic distribution. If you are interested in receiving your Chip Notes electronically in the future, let Pete Webb know at pete_webb@juno.com so he can put you on the new electronic distribution list. You'll receive an email message that the Chip Notes is on line with a link to that issue. It'll be in color and eventually have interactive links to expanded articles. To give it a test drive, go to the BBC website www.baltimorebirdclub.org and check on the Winter 2010 Chip Notes to see what this issue looks like in color. And kudos to Terry Ross who is working with a team to redesign the BBC website where the latest issues of Chip Notes will be available.

And this is only the beginning. Chip Notes looks great because we have been fortunate to have help with graphic design from Keith Eric Costley. When Karen told Keith the last issue was "fantastic," he said, "not yet, but it will be!" It's a work in progress and we need everyone's help in this journey. Content is critical and we are looking for articles that are worthwhile, current, lively, and informative. We hope that the writer's personality will shine through and express some perspective or insight about her/his adventure or ideas... not just describe it or list birds seen. However, we may not be able to print all submissions - the editorial board tries to choose articles of greatest interest to everyone. The Editor will notify submitters that she/he has received the article; she/he may respond with clarifying questions and comments and will let you know if the submission is going to be used or not. We want to hear from you... it's your newsletter. What do you want to read about?

President's Corner

(Continued from page 2)

plaining these features and other programs at Cylburn, including Bird Club activities and highlighting the birds that can be found at Cylburn at various times during the year.

On a practical level, the Visitor Center auditorium is substantially larger than the space we had at Bykota, providing a comfortable meeting space for socializing, dinner and the lecture. It also has an elevator and bathrooms on both levels. The Visitor Center entrance road and ample parking lot are well lit with several handicapped parking spaces nearest the Center. For those who may have difficulty walking the short distance from the parking lot, there is a circular drive that will drop you off directly at the front entrance. Food can be carried in from the parking lot or delivered directly to the meeting room via the Visitor Center's access driveway door, which opens directly into the auditorium. Our "greeters" will be available to help anyone needing assistance.

We are looking forward to introducing you to this new state-of-the-art facility for our dinner and lecture in January, so save the date! Be sure to contact Joan Cwi (410-467-5352, jafjsc@verizon.net) or Kevin Graff (whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com) to let us know you are coming and what you plan to bring.

SPREAD THE JOY OF BIRDING

Consider recycling **field guides from Central and South America** that you may not use again. The American Birding Association is distributing these used field guides to students, researchers and teachers from these countries through their program called Birder's Exchange. There are three ways that you can easily contribute:

1. Bring your field guides to the covered dish supper on January 9th.
2. Ask a member of the BBC Conservation Committee to pick them up at your home.

Contact Dixie Mullineaux at
acubird@earthlink.net or 410-458-2806.

For options 1 & 2, the Conservation Committee will do the mailing to the Birder's Exchange.

3. Mail your books directly to:

Birder's Exchange, c/o ABA,
4945 N 30th St, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80919



BIG SURPRISE AT MAGEE MARSH

By Paul E. Noell



PHOTO CREDIT

John Landers, Kevin Graff and Paul Noell flanked by Marcia Balestri and Cathy Calvert in western Maryland on the first leg of the trip

John Landers, Kevin Graff and I made a spring birding trip from May 11th-14th to an area once known as Crane Creek, now Magee Marsh on Lake Erie in Ohio. All three of us are hearing-challenged, so that added a little extra spice to our adventure. But with two sets of extra sharp eyes and my electronically enhanced Songfinder digital device, we simply waded in and dig out all that can be seen.

We started out in my car after a BBC bird walk at Cromwell State Park on Tuesday the 11th. The plan was to first cover western Maryland: Allegany County that afternoon, overnight at Carey Run Sanctuary, the next day, the 12th, Finzel Swamp and Piney Reservoir in Garrett County. After that, on the 13th, on to our destination, Magee Marsh, using remaining daylight for the last possible birding chances. That left the morning of the 14th, which proved fateful...

After birding in Maryland near Cumberlândia, Carey Run, Finzel Swamp and Piney Reservoir as planned, we reached Magee Marsh just after 4 pm Wednesday and birded 'til just after 7 pm in overcast conditions, with a forecast of rain for the next day. We tallied 74 species, of which 16 were warblers. Bingo! Highlights: Wood Duck, Gadwall; Osprey; Bald Eagle; American Kestrel; Sanderling, Dunlin; Ring-billed, Greater Black-backed and Herring Gulls; Eastern Phoebe; Blue-headed, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos; lots of

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

Purple Martins; Tree, Rough-winged and Barn Swallows; Black-capped Chickadees; Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Veery. Then came the warblers: Blue-winged, Nashville, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Myrtle, Palm, Black and White, and Prothonotary.

Also: Parula, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush and Maryland Yellowthroat. My kind of birding! Additionally, we found Scarlet Tanager and several very tame White-crowned Sparrows at the Visitor Center. Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Baltimore Oriole and dependable American Goldfinches rounded out the day's sightings.

The next morning, Thursday, May 13th, we were greeted by near-torrential rains early but they abated as the day wore on. We ran into two other Maryland birders, Kathy Calvert and Marcia Balestri, who gave us tips on good areas near Magee Marsh: Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area, Bono Road; Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center on Route 2; and Krause Road, Oak Harbor; all in Ottawa and Lucas Counties, Ohio.

At Magee Marsh our total species count was 72, of which 20 species were warblers; I list only the new ones, plus others of interest. Highlights: Black-crowned Night-Heron; Eastern Kingbird; Blue Jay; Wood Thrush; Golden-winged, Tennessee, Cape May and Wilson's Warblers; Bobolink.

At Metzger Marsh it was surprisingly birdy, with a total species count of 43. Highlights: Ruddy Duck; Common Loon; Pied-billed Grebe; Black-crowned Night-Heron; Common Moorhen, American Coot; Caspian and Black Terns; Cedar Waxwing; Blackpoll, Wilson's and Canada Warblers.

At the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, Route 2, of 31 species seen, notables were 3 resident Trumpeter Swans (not counted); One was banded, with a wild companion. Also: Blue-winged Teal; Chimney Swift; and Orchard and Baltimore Orioles.

The morning of the final day, Friday at Metzger Marsh the weather was great and our repeat pilgrimage through the boardwalks was somewhat impeded by large numbers of other birders. Photographers with pricey long lenses on high-end cameras spewed out multiple flashes, seemingly at 6-10 frames per second, absolutely "freezing" the target bird. One had only to follow the flashes to spot the quarry. The entire tableau seemed somewhat obscene to me.

But we had our largest species count, 66, of which

23 species were Warblers! Wow! Highlights: Wood Duck; Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal; Great Blue and Green Herons, and Black-crowned Night-Herons; Great Egret; Red-tailed Hawk; Dunlin; Common Tern; Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos; Ruby-throated Hummingbird; Red-headed Woodpecker; Willow, Least, and Great Crested Flycatcher; Eastern Kingbird; Warbling Vireo; Red-breasted Nuthatch; 4 House Wrens, one with a nest virtually underfoot; Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 4 Veery; Scarlet Tanager; Chipping, Song, White-throated and White-Crowned Sparrows, Lincoln's Sparrow; Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting.

Of the 23 species of warblers, notable were: Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Cape May, Blackburnian (3), Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Prothonotary, Wilson's, Canada and Mourning Warblers.

Slowly birding the verges of Magee Marsh we made our way back to the car in preparation for departure when someone ran up, spreading the word that an unusual warbler had been spotted a mile down the lake shore, below the parking lot. Naturally I was dead last getting there after John and Kevin. But when I finally arrived, it was still there... nonchalant, atop a nearby bush for all to admire - and photograph! What? Only a Kirtland's Warbler.

A fitting climax to a great birding trip!

An Adventure In Spain

By Mary Chetelat

In July, my husband Frank and I flew to the city of Barcelona, in Catalunya, Spain for a birding trip. To make sure we'd see plenty of species, I dipped into the World Wide Web and came upon "Catalan Bird Tours."

There is a beautiful website, definitely worth a visit even if you are not planning to bird in Spain! We contacted a guide, Stephen Christopher, through the site, and meeting him proved to be a lucky break. Stephen is an expatriate Englishman living in Spain and a wonderful bird guide. (We asked ourselves why no Spanish guides presented themselves, but that's the way it happened).

On our first day out with him, we listed 74 species. Stephen took us to the Garraf, an area of rocky, craggy shoreline over the Mediterranean, a hilly and scrubby habitat. Then we went to Llobregat, a huge,

(Continued on page 10)



MARY CHETELAT



(Continued from page 9)

marshy reserve that luckily survived the construction of the nearby Barcelona airport. Comfortable blinds and towers have been erected in the reserve that enabled us to see masses of shorebirds, ducks, gulls and terns from close up.

In Barcelona we stayed in the Barri Gotic, or Gothic Quarter, a section of the historic "old town" once the abode of painters Jean Miro and Pablo Picasso. Our hotel, the Neri, formerly a palace, was reputed to be haunted. The area is filled with narrow pedestrian thoroughfares and outdoor markets (which include a market for captive birds).

We also enjoyed Spanish food, which ranged from *tapas* on the street to exquisite cuisine in a mountaintop restaurant.

Afterwards we visited Montserrat, a jagged mountain top 4,000 feet above sea level where we added several life birds to our list: a Chaffinch, a European Robin and a Jay.

When our fantastic journey ended, Stephen sent us an annotated bird list with the location of every sighting, which acted as a diary and souvenir of our adventure. Some of the birds we saw were:

Audouin's Gull, Peregrine Falcon, Blue Rock-Thrush, Pallid, Common and Alpine Swifts, Woodchat Shrike, Southern Grey Shrike, Sardinian Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Long-tailed Tit, Eurasian Golden Oriole (whose call is similar to those of New World icterids) Spotless Starling, Short-toed Eagle, European Goldfinch, Rock Petronia, Graylag Goose, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Purple Swamphen, Common Greenshank and Redshank, Black-winged Stilt, and Eurasian Coot. Some highlights were soft, fuzzy chicks paddling among the coots and grebes.



MARY CHETELAT

The Catalan Bird Tours website also has pictures of many of these species. Both Frank and I urge you to follow your dream of visiting Spain for an exhilarating birding adventure you won't forget.

Return to Merritt Island

by Jim Highsaw and Linda Prentice

We managed to escape from Baltimore just before the February 10, 2010 snowstorm and drive down to Florida for our fourth visit to the Merritt Island NWR and the Titusville area. Although the weather was surprisingly cold for central Florida, the birding was terrific.

We spent most of the first day on the Wildlife Drive, where some of the highlights were Roseate Spoonbills, Wood Storks and numerous herons, egrets, ibis, ducks and raptors. We also found a Clapper Rail and a Sora. We ended the day with a visit to Fox Lake Park where we found Sandhill Cranes and a Red-shouldered Hawk. Possibly the best day was the second day, when we drove south to visit the Viera Wetlands near Melbourne. Here we got good looks at Limpkins, American Bittern, Black-crowned Night Heron, Hooded Mergansers, Common Yellowthroat, Loggerhead Shrike and a White Ibis eating a snake. After lunch we drove east to Rotary Park on Indian River where we found the first Brown Pelican of the trip before it started raining.

After spending the night in Viera, we returned the next morning to the Wetlands but found that the dike roads were closed because of the rain the previous afternoon. So, we drove back to the Merritt Island NWR and did the Wildlife Drive again, then took a carryout lunch to Astronaut Park where we spotted a Common Loon, then walked the Oak Hammock Trail in the Refuge where we found a small foraging flock which included a Parula Warbler, a Yellow-throated Warbler and a Black-and-White Warbler. We began the last day by doing the Wildlife Drive again, then went to the Visitor Center where we saw a pair of Painted Buntings at the feeders and a White-eyed Vireo on the nature trail. Then we took the road through the Canaveral National Seashore which leads to Playalinda Beach. Along the road we saw six Scrub Jays. We finished the day with another carryout lunch in Astronaut Park followed by another visit to Fox Lake Park, where we found a Phoebe and a Palm Warbler.

On the way home, seeing a Bald Eagle fly over I-95 south of Jacksonville was a nice way to end the trip.



Aug 21 - Bombay Hook - No real rarities this time, but we did get an identifiable look at a Long-billed Dowitcher at Shearness Pool in Bombay Hook. Other highlight birds: Avocets, Yellow-billed Cuckoo (Finis Pool), Blue Grosbeak, Bobolink (heard several places and briefly seen on bushes at the visitor center), Bald Eagles, 13 sandpiper species, and a crop duster sounding like a dive-bombing World War II fighter plane as it released puffs of spray at the causeway to Broadkill Beach, apparently some form of mosquito control.

80 species. 12 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

Sep 7 - Cromwell Valley Park - On today's walk we saw 4 species of warblers (Magnolia, Black-and-white, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat) and were continually serenaded by Warbling Vireos; but the highlight was long, close looks at adult and juvenile Blue Grosbeaks.

46 species. 12 participants. Leader: Debbie Terry.

Sep 11 - Milford Mill - Not as birdy as some times, but we still got 32 species of birds including 9 warbler species, plus Cooper's and Red-shouldered Hawks. The 9 warblers: Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-and-White, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat and Canada. The Rose-breasted Grosbeak was heard-only. Two less-common flycatchers, both empidonax species, were found by Keith Costley, just leaving as we got there: Yellow-bellied and Least, the latter heard-only, giving its "Chebek" call for him. Mostly sunny, 60's.

32 species. 13 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

Sep 12 - Chimney Swift Watch - Only 7 swifts entered the Druid Hill Conservatory chimney. But 2500 swifts reported going down the Scottish Rite Temple chimney on Oct 1 (near John Hopkins University).

Sep 14 - Cromwell Valley Park - Great day with many birds to sort out - eight warbler species including Nashville, Palm & Wilson's. Soaring birds including a Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawks, Osprey and American Kestrel. Good view of a Lincoln's Sparrow. The impressive numbers of some species, though not uncommon, provided a great introduction for new birders or a good review for the more experienced in the group - all plumages of Common Yellowthroats, Indigo Buntings, and flycatchers (oh, there was a great view of a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher).

Participants: 17 Leader: Mary Chetelet.

Sep 21 - Cromwell Valley Park - This was an interesting day when 17 or more observers spread out over the park instead of staying in a tight group. 59 species for the day is a good result, but nobody saw every bird. Highlights included 100+ Broad-winged Hawks, 5 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and 11 species of warblers. 59 species. 17 participants. Leader: Peter Lev.



Sep 28 - Cromwell Valley Park - What started as a gloomy, showery morning, gradually improved to clearing skies and a welcome light breeze, relieving an oppressive humidity. The action was sporadic, but quite good in short spurts. The warbler count was surprising at this late date: Parula, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue & Green, Pine, Palm, Northern Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroats. Raptors appeared in good numbers, indicating the migration period is not over: Both vultures, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's & Red Tailed Hawks, Kestrel & Peregrine Falcons. Also notable: Green Heron, Ruby-throated Hummer, Yellow-breasted Sapsucker, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainsons' Thrush, Scarlet Tanager and Swamp Sparrow.

55 species. 6 participants. Leader: Paul Noell.

Oct 5 - Cromwell Valley Park - Only a few participants, but some areas had numerous birds. There were flocks of goldfinches, House Finches, bluebirds and 10 to 12 Chimney Swifts flying over. It was nice to see Ruby-crowned Kinglets and then 6 Golden-crowned Kinglets were close to the path and easy to see, beautiful little birds. Six species of sparrows showed up, the Swamp and White-crowned being the highlights. A Brown Thrasher stayed on the path in front of us. A treat was to find both yellow and western Palm Warblers sitting next to each other, so that the difference between the two was easy to see. A good birding day. 59 species. 7 participants. Leader: Ruth Culbertson.

Chip Notes, newsletter of the Baltimore Bird Club, is published quarterly.

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Deadlines for submitting articles for upcoming issues:

SPRING: January 8 for March-May
 SUMMER: April 8 for June-August
 FALL: July 8 for September-November
 WINTER: October 8 for December-February



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Membership year is September 1-August 31. Individuals/households joining in February-April may pay half-year rate. A full year's due received after April 30 will be applied to the next membership year.

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SUMMER SIGHTINGS JUNE 1 - AUGUST 31

By Kevin Graff

We're not getting any reports over the summer! Please continue send in any and all sightings from your yard and/or in city/county between September 1 - November 30 as soon as you can to Kevin Graff at WhiteMarlin2001@yahoo.com. Not all sightings will fit in the newsletter, but most records you send either in private email or from an MDOSPREE posting will be saved as data recorded for future research to public.

Thank you!

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK: 5 seen by many at Charlestown Village between late June & early July; **GADWALL, AMERICAN WIGEON, BLUE-WINGED & GREEN-WINGED TEAL, LESSER & GREATER SCAUP and RUDDY DUCKS** continuing over-summer at HMI on 6/1-8/31 (RR, KG+); **LEAST BITTERN:** 1 at HMI on 7/12 (BC, KG); **Great Blue Heron "Great White Heron"** 1 at FMcH on 6/4 (JP, BP); **LITTLE BLUE HERON:** 1 at HMI on 7/19 (KG, JH), 1 on 8/2 (BC, KG+); **TRICOLORED HERON:** 1 at HMI on 8/2, 8/16 & 8/23 (BC, KG+); **YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON:** 8 adults and 12 fledged seen by many at Jones Falls into early July, 1 at FMcH on 7/26 & 8/18 (KEC, JP+); **CATTLE EGRET:** 1 at HMI on 7/26 (BC, KG, JH+); **GLOSSY IBIS:** 1 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 6 on 7/19, 7/26 & 8/2 (KG, JH+), 3 on 8/23 (BC, KG, JH); **VIRGINIA RAIL:** 1 at HMI on 7/12 (BC, KG); **WHITE IBIS:** 1 at PP on 7/24 by a park staff; **PEREGRINE FALCON:** 2 at Key Bridge on 7/23 (MW), 1 at HMI on 7/26 & 8/2 (KG, JH+), 2 on 8/16 (KG, JG); **AMERICAN COOT:** 1 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 6/7 (KG); **BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER:** 14 at HMI on 8/16 (KG, JG), 5 on 8/23 (BC, KG, JH); **AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER:** 1 at HMI on 8/23 (BC, KG, JH); **BLACK-NECKED STILT:** 1 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 2 on 6/7 (KG); **AMERICAN AVOCET:** 3 at HMI on 8/16 (KG, JG); **WILLET:** 1 at HMI on 7/12, 8/16 & 8/23 (BC, KG+); **HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** 1 at HMI on 8/16 (KG, JG); **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER:** 1 at HMI on 8/23 (BC, KG, JH); **DUNLIN:** 6 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 16 on 6/7 (KG), 1 on 7/12 (BC, KG), 2 on 7/19, 1 on 7/26 (KG, JH+), 1 at PMF on 8/14 (BD), 1 at HMI on 8/23 (BC, KG, JH); **WILSON'S PHALAROPE:** 1 at PMF on 8/14 (BD), 1 at HMI on 8/16 (KG, JG); **BLACK TERN:** 1 at HMI on 6/7 & 7/26, 8/18, (KG+), 1 at Key Bridge on 8/21 (MW); **GULL-BILLED TERN:** 1 adult, at HMI on 6/1 (RR); **COMMON TERN:** 1 at HMI on 8/2 (BC, KG+), 1 at FMcH on 8/18 (KEC, JP+); **YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER:** 1 at FMcH on 7/26 (KEC, JP); **ACADIAN FLYCATCHER:** 1 at NPSP on 8/17 (MH); **GRAY KINGBIRD:** 1 see by half dozen at FMcH on 6/9-6/10; **Willow Flycatcher:** 1 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 2 on 6/7 (KG), 1 on 7/12 (BC, KG), 2 on 7/26 (KG, JH+), 2 at OMM on 7/23 (KEC); **ALDER FLY-CATCHER:** 1 at CVP on 8/31 (KG+); **Yellow-throated Vireo:** 1 at Prettyboy Reservoir on 7/5 (PEN); **COMMON RAVEN:** 2 at OMM on 7/23 (KEC); an early **RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH** show up in private residence in Mt Washington on 8/23; **Marsh Wren:** 7 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 3 on 6/7 (KG), 5 on 7/12 (BC, KG), 4 on 7/19, 5 on 7/26 (KG, JH+), 3 on 8/2 (BC, KG+); **Prairie Warbler:** 1 at Prettyboy Reservoir on 7/5 (PEN); **Kentucky Warbler:** 1 at Prettyboy Reservoir on 7/5 (PEN); **Yellow-breasted Chat:** 1 at HMI on 6/7 (KG); **CANADA WARBLER:** 1 at CVP on 8/31 (KG+); **Grasshopper Sparrow:** 1 at HMI on 7/12 (BC, KG); **Swamp Sparrow:** 5 at HMI on 6/1 (RR), 4 on 6/7 (KG), 8 on 7/12 (BC, KG), 4 on 7/19, 2 on 7/26 (KG, JH+), 4 on 8/2 & 8/16, 1 on 8/23 (BC, KG+); out-of-season **White-throated Sparrow** heard calling by former MD, now Iowa resident in Arbutus yard on 6/30; **SUMMER TANAGER:** 1 at HMI on 7/12 (BC, KG); **SCARLET TANAGER:** 2 at Prettyboy Reservoir on 7/5 (PEN), 1 at PMF on 8/1 (KEC+); **BOBOLINK:** 2 at FMcH on 8/18 (KEC, JP+)

OBSERVERS: BC-Brad Cernohorsky, BD-Bob Dixon, BP-Ben Poscover, KEC-Keith E Costley, KG-Kevin Graff, JG-Jim Green, JP-Jim Peters, JH-Joe Hanfman, MH-Mike Hudson, MW-Marcia Watson, PEN-Paul E Noell, RR-Robert Ringler, DT-Debbie Terry

LOCATIONS: CVP-Cromwell Valley Park, FMcH-Ft. McHenry, HMI-Hart-Miller Island, OMM-Owings Mill Mall wetlands, PMF-Paper Mill Flats, PP-Patterson Park

Joy Wheeler

In response to receiving the Distinguished Service Award, Joy Wheeler sent a note thanking the BBC President and Board. In it she expressed her appreciation for the opportunities to learn through association with Baltimore's premier birders and to introduce the wonders of Cylburn's natural history to the area's school children and the general public. She notes that "It all began with the invitation of Shirley Geddes and Marge Shipley to help with the Christmas Bird Count... not the best way to get a taste of finding birds, I've been told, but it worked for me." Joy concludes with her "commercial" for the Nature Museum. The collections in the carriage house have been studied and admired by hundreds of people since opening in April 2010. Each one of us in the bird club is qualified to act as a host in what some visitors call a "treasure" every Sunday from noon to 4PM. Stop in next Saturday or Sunday, mingle with the visitors, and then sign up to help for an upcoming Saturday or Sunday.