



CHIP NOTES

WINTER 2020 • NO. 414



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BIRD Baltimore

By Lynne Parks

How can our bird club be better? The birding community has a diversity problem. The BBC has formed a new committee, BIRD (Birders for Inclusivity, Representation, and Diversity) Baltimore. Outreach, building relationships and partnerships, and sharing resources are our goals. Black Lives Matter. We must achieve solidarity with Black people, Indigenous peoples, People of Color, LGBTQIA+, and birders with disabilities.

We all need to reach toward our personal networks and invite people in. When it comes to programming, diversity is a matter of practice. We should also create more joint efforts with existing organizations. Let's also promote STEAM as we form new partnerships with school Green Teams.

New members can create a better club. Walks, talks, conservation, and more. Chart out the birding life you want, and we'll support you.

In our bird walk descriptions, we're adding information about accessibility and safety. We also know that birding is not an equal opportunity activity. Post-pandemic, we can arrange transportation to bird walks and rarity sightings.

We're here for beginners and old hats. Mentorships are available. We welcome any requests. For more information contact Lynne Parks at v.lynneparks@gmail.com.

--the BIRD Baltimore Committee

WELCOME!

A warm Baltimore Bird Club welcome goes out to the following members who have joined us since the Fall Chip Notes was published. About twice the usual amount! Thanks for joining! We look forward to seeing you out there on our birding trips and at our meetings.

Nancy Catron – Annapolis
G Caleb Alexander – Baltimore
James Alston – Baltimore
Sam Cowan – Baltimore
Kyle Duffey – Baltimore
Neville Fernandes – Baltimore
Sarah Kulis – Baltimore
David Liebenberg – Baltimore
Kathleen Liebenberg – Baltimore
Michael McCloskey – Baltimore

Allison McIntyre – Baltimore
Mary Moore – Baltimore
Meghan Young – Baltimore
Michelle Lorah-Devereux – Finksburg
Rozanne Solomon – Finksburg
Anthony Vizcarrondo – Owings Mills
Silvia Anselmino – Parkville
Christine Broglio – Parkville
Arvinder Brar – Towson

President's Corner

By Joe Corcoran

So, the choice to write about here this edition was 1) the ins and outs of bird listing in general and the conversion of my life list to eBird, or 2) how great my life is **right now** during this pandemic. I chose the latter. Let me count the ways:

- I'm retired from full time work and so is my wife, and I'm in really good health. I can bird and can play competitive softball.... and I do...safely distancing with masks of course. We have decent retirement incomes, and most importantly, we have freedom like never before!
- This is a little personal, so be aware, but I'm going for it anyway. The word has to get out in my opinion. Being retired has allowed me to pursue more fully the "exorcising" of the "demons" inside me left behind by childhood sexual and other abuse.... let me just say that I'm a member of SNAP - Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests. And it's working! I've been blessed to have found recently a therapist who specializes in healing unresolved trauma. Except for the times I've been birding in the past, I'm happier now than I can remember! Many others in my position are drug or alcohol addicts (which I was), or have committed suicide (e.g., my cousin at 19).
- Speaking of drugs, my grandkids (14 and 10-year-old boys) are in a family ravaged by drugs living in a city neighborhood with addicts and too much crime. Two times in the last two years their mother has had them "hit the deck" when gunshots were fired outside their home. There was a drug assassination 50 yards

from their front door. They have different fathers - one of whom is my adopted son - and both are essentially gone – heroin addiction. And there's more. Last September their uncle died of a drug overdose. This past April another uncle died of a drug overdose! Their mom's brother (a third uncle) was murdered in a drug deal before they were born. Unbelievable!! But not uncommon, unfortunately.

So how is this great? Linda and I are helping their mom to raise them, and there is real hope and potential that they will escape the fate of their family members. Their mother is an awesomely strong survivor but needs help. We all do, by the way.

They are a real treasure. Every school day morning I get up at 7:15 or so, and make Linda's gourmet coffee, ground fresh with just the right temperature water hand poured over the coffee in a brown paper filter inserted into a special carafe. 15 minutes at least. And, she will let me know if there's something off! And God help any poor soul that encounters her if she doesn't get coffee first thing when she gets up. Our friends know what I'm talking about. Yes, that sweet angel Linda.

Sorry, got off topic. After making coffee I go to pick up the boys while Linda makes breakfast, and lord what great breakfasts they are. I rarely if ever got these before the boys stated coming over. We're talking egg pitas and muffin sandwiches with Canadian bacon, ham, or sausages...waffles with real maple syrup....ditto pancakes...fresh cut fruit of all varieties...apples, cantaloupe, melons, strawberries, blueberries, oranges and more. They do get first choice, of course, and

some days all I get is their leftovers, but it's still heavenly!

Then they get on line for virtual school. That was a hassle figuring out the tech at first, but we've got it down now. One of us then acts as a monitor to make sure they stay on task...the younger one WILL disappear if no one's watching... and the older one can drift away sometimes. Who can blame them?! It's tough sitting in front of a computer for hours. On the very plus side, though, they can ask for our assistance if they don't understand something, real time!

Then lunches. Not at the same time, of course, which would have been a lot easier.... two consecutive times! But just like breakfasts, they are sweet lunches. Ham or roast beef sandwiches... chicken soup... sliced apples in peanut butter...and more.

At first they were laying around with a half hour to go after eating, so we got a basketball hoop for the driveway. It works! They go out on breaks and lunch and get some good exercise. The only problem is, they want me to play! I am NOT a basketball player. So they enjoy "breaking pop's legs" with their dribbling moves. How come I always have to do the dirty work?!

After afternoon classes, a little break, then homework. This is when we really get involved keeping them at it and making sure they understand it. We go for anywhere from one to three hours. And of course it's different for each one. Their recent progress reports were really nice, so it's working and worth it. And they get delivered to their mom (who works full time and has another younger child) with no homework headaches.

And the really great part is, we

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are forming special bonds with both of these boys. And they are responding! They're polite, they work hard (with a lot of griping sometimes), and they're a lot of fun! They get me yelled at when I play with them, especially when we play chase or ball games in the house. Geeesh! Linda keeps saying that I'm supposed to be the adult and monitor them, not the other way around... I wonder how she ever got that idea.

So, thanks in a way to the pandemic school situation, the boys have a good routine and are doing well mentally and physically. I pray always that it can stay that way for them and that they don't fall in to the drug trap.

And that routine is great for me too! I haven't been in a routine like that since I don't know when. Breakfast every morning? Nope. Lunch every day? Nope. In my career I was gallivanting around the world at all times of the day and night solving technical problems (and birding). And as a child...let's not go there. This feels wonderful! I don't mind getting up! I could not say that much before, again, except for when I was birding.

Wow! I have so much more to say, but I'm at the limit. I wanted to talk about all the new and special friends I'm making in the club, the wonderful committed people in the club, how much I enjoy re-learning the local birds after years of chasing lifers worldwide, and how much I like being the president despite the drama (my goodness, it's a BIRD CLUB, not Days of Our Lives!), and the direction I see us going, etc., etc. Next time.

Thank you all for the opportunity you have given me.

Conservation Corner: Baltimore County Green Alliance

By Kathy Lambrow

Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) has been a member of the Baltimore County Green Alliance (BCGA) for about a year after being invited by the founding organization, NeighborSpace of Baltimore County. The mission of the Alliance is to support collaboration in conserving, protecting, and restoring the land, air, and waters in Baltimore County through advocacy, communication, education, and volunteer action. Their vision is for a strong, viable network of allied organizations that work to achieve sustainable communities in Baltimore County. The 2020-2021 Action Plan of the Alliance is to (1) strengthen environmental laws and regulations to protect streams and the Bay; (2) promote the concept of "good government" within Baltimore County agencies and with members of the Baltimore County Council; (3) make Baltimore County a Leader & Advocate for Sustainable Development; (4) create environmentally literate and responsible citizens & help students achieve MD environmental literacy standards; and (5) embrace and model equity and inclusion as core values of our work. Currently there are 18 member nonprofit organizations.

While broad in scope, the overall goals and action plan fit nicely with the MOS/BBC mission to promote the study and enjoyment of birds. MOS promotes knowledge about our natural resources and fosters its appreciation and conservation. The Society also maintains a system of sanctuaries to encourage the conservation of birds and bird habitat.

Meetings of the Alliance are held quarterly and include speakers on topics of interest to the Alliance –

e.g. conservation, Baltimore County leaders from various departments including sustainability, planning and environmental divisions and from other non-profit organizations. Members and guests are also afforded "5-minute pitch times" to discuss items of concern or interest to them promoting awareness and the opportunity for feedback from the group or individual members. The meetings are open to guests of member organizations and any interested community members.

The BCGA is still very much in the start-up phase while fine-tuning the Action Plan with specific goals, but there promises to be nice complements with BBC, MOS and some of the mission items that we share.

I am Treasurer of the BCGA, member of the Steering Committee and the BBC designated representative. I report back to the Conservation Committee of BBC as to actions and discussions of the BCGA and do not vote on any issues without the support and approval of the BBC Board of Directors.

In my experience with the BCGA, I have found a great networking opportunity to meet others of like minds and interests and learn about Baltimore County environmental processes. Another benefit is the joining of land conservation and environmental groups in providing position papers for a cause or advocacy in support of it. There is strength in numbers – but it takes the entire membership to agree on a position to obtain BCGA support. You can find out more about the member organizations and information on upcoming and past meetings at their website:

baltimorecountygreenalliance.org

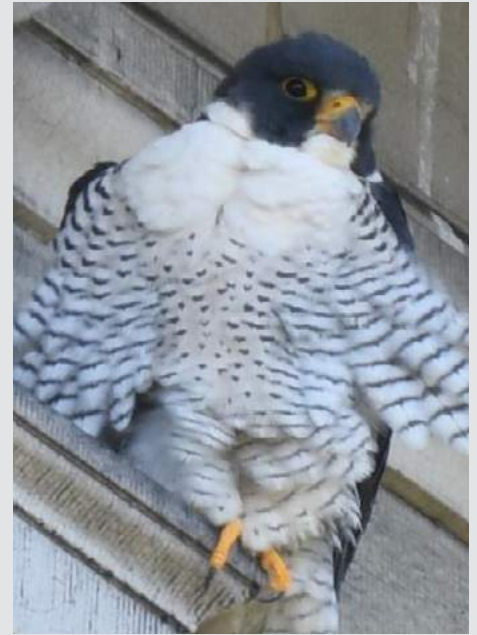
Bird Bits: Peregrine Falcons, Migratory Birds, and More

Peregrine Update

Work has begun on rehabbing the Roland Water Tower, hopefully to be completed in the summer of 2021. The male peregrine falcon that nested in the Roland Water Tower was still being spotted as late as October 20 perching on the tower as reported by our Peregrine Docent, Terry Ross. After that date the scaffolding around the tower became too high and the workmen too close for the peregrines. Once the repairs have been completed, there will be a box placed on the tower for peregrine nesting, which could happen as soon as the spring of 2022. Fingers crossed!



Photo Credit: Terry Ross



RARE PHOTO OF MOTHER
WRENCH FEEDING HER
YOUNG. ABSOLUTELY
BREATHTAKING!



Bird Bits: Peregrine Falcons, Migratory Birds, and More



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"Stephanie, would you please head down to that old lady in the park and bring me back some bread crumbs?"



Introducing New Board Members

We introduced our new President, Joe Corcoran, in the last Chip Notes. Now, meet our other three new members.

Written by Joe Corcoran



Linda Corcoran **Recording Secretary**

Wow, here I am writing another article for the club. This is Joe by the way, helping Linda out with the writing. She's pretty busy helping educate the grandkids and also taking care of her 102-year-old dad and 92-year-old step mom. And she has to put up with my irregular and free-thinking behavior; the woman is a special kind of saint!

Linda has been all over the place birding with me and others - all over the US as well as Alaska, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Peru and Argentina. But unlike most of us, she doesn't list the birds she's seen (and I'm sure that she could tick off well over 1200 birds if she had been keeping track). No, she's in it for the experience of the moment - the birding experience of the moment. That is, she loves being in the beautiful and natural varied habitats where the birds are, and

just observing the stunning birds (they're all stunning, aren't they) as they are in their different activities, like feeding, preening, nesting and vocalizing. Once she gets through the enjoyable challenge of just getting binos on the birds, she's very happy to just watch them, note their behavior, and figure out what they're doing.

She also enjoys conservation activities, in particular ones such as Nest Watch as she has a special fondness for bird families, especially the mothers and young. She'd much rather watch young Killdeer with their watchful mother, than find a rare Curlew Sandpiper in our area. She does like searching for rarities also, just not as much.

Now she's developing a bird friendly garden on our property, using native plants, trees, and shrubs. I can't wait to see what we attract when those berries come out next year!

And probably more than anything, she enjoys the company of fellow birders. I mean, think about it, she married an odd ball like me, why wouldn't she appreciate nerdy wacky birders?! She relishes the birding community, the always nice people, the typically interesting conversation, all in wonderful outdoor settings.

Finally, the birding she does fits in well with her scientific observation skills. In her career she was a trained and excellent observer, working 42 years and retiring from the MD State Department of Health, Newborn Screening Division, as a Laboratory Scientist Supervisor. She made sure that the tests that all newborns get within days of birth, checking for rare and not so rare treatable hereditary diseases, were done correctly and on time. And for taking care of all those babies all these years she received a special Governor's Citation, from current Governor Larry Hogan! Anyway, Welcome to the Baltimore Bird Club Staff, Linda Corcoran!



Killdeer
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Introducing New Board Members

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Nico Sarbanes **Board Director**

Nico is a Baltimore native and a veteran of the Baltimore birding community. His passion for birding was sparked early by, among other things, his first glimpse of a picture of a Hudsonian Godwit. His first real-life HUGO would come on a BBC trip to Hart-Miller Island on his thirteenth birthday. As a 14-year-old, Nico was one of four birders chosen to represent the American Birding Association on their “Tropicbirds” youth team in the Great Texas Birding Classic in the Rio Grande Valley. The team finished first in the competition, identifying 195 species in a span of 24-hours. Nico was later selected as the winner of the photography module of the ABA’s Young Birder of the Year competition. Locally, Nico is better-known as the birder who first found a Brown Booby (Maryland’s second record at the time) at Fort McHenry in 2015.

Nico has worked as an environmental educator both with National Audubon in New York City, and with Pickering Creek Audubon Center in Talbot County, MD. He has also led bird walks for Patterson Park Audubon Center’s Baltimore Birding Weekends for multiple years. He is currently in his first semester of law school at University of Maryland Carey School of Law in Baltimore, where he plans to concentrate on environmental law.

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Brown Booby
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

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Libby Errickson **MOS Director**

Libby is a Natural Resource Specialist in the Environmental Impact Review section of the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, where she has worked for three years ensuring that development in the County is done in compliance with local and State laws protecting forests, wetlands, waterways, and the Chesapeake Bay. Prior to moving to Baltimore, Libby completed her Masters in Environmental Science at the University of Illinois-Springfield where she wrote her thesis on the wintering ecology of Short-eared Owls in the prairies of Central Illinois. Libby is from York, Pennsylvania and received her Bachelors in Wildlife Conservation & Management from Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA. Between undergrad and grad school, Libby worked on a variety of seasonal bird research projects, including monitoring hawk migration in Cape May, Washington state, and Corpus Christi, TX; studying urban breeding ecology of cardinals and robins in Columbus,



Ohio; working for the USFWS doing bird surveys and collecting other biological data at J.N. Ding Darling NWR in Sanibel, FL; and studying Snail Kite breeding ecology in the Florida Everglades. Libby also works as an official guide every year at the Biggest Week in American Birding festival at Magee Marsh in Ohio, and has led trips for the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Texas. Libby absolutely loves her adopted home in Baltimore and is thrilled to have the opportunity to get more involved with the local birding community.



Short-eared Owl
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Field Trips

Coordinated by Nancy O'Hara

September 5, 2020 • 8:00 am Milford Mill Park

Leader: Leslie Starr

Beautiful morning; clear, high 60°s-low 70°s, light winds. 35 species including 9 warblers.

September 13, 2020 • 8:00 am Oregon Ridge & Farm Park

Leader: Simon Best

Nine participants enjoyed Oregon Ridge on a beautiful fall day, with an excellent display of warblers as the sun rose and warmed up the crisp air. Highlights included eye-level male and female Black-throat Blue Warblers, American Redstarts, and Chestnut-sided Warblers, which were new birds for many of the trip participants.

September 13, 2020 • 7:00 pm Chimney Swifts at Dusk

Leader: Joan Cwi

Migrating swifts were plentiful this fall, not only at the Bookbindery, but at Roland Park Country School. On the night of the watch we counted 1365 swifts entering the Bookbindery chimney. There were 26 observers, most from the local community. They were all masked and spread themselves well apart without any encouragement from the leader. The highest count on any individual chimney this fall was 3130.

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Photo Credit: Chris Scroggins



Black-throated Blue Warbler
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Chimney Swifts
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Field Trips

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September 15, 2020 • 8:00 am Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Ron Davis

Good number of warblers on the move. We had several particularly hot spots - above the hawk watch, along Minebank East and Minebank West. In addition, we had a nice variety of species in the tree behind the nature center. Folks all agreed, the weather and birds cooperated and we had a really nice morning of birding at CVP! 61 species (11 were warblers). 9 participants.

September 20, 2020 • 8:00 am Wyman Park

Leader: Libby Errickson

This trip was to a wonderful city location. 40 Broad-winged Hawks flying low overhead were special, along with multiple migrating warblers and 5 Scarlet Tanagers and 10 Eastern Pewees.



Scarlet Tanager
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

September 22, 2020 • 8:00 am Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Debbie and Lou Taylor

13 people showed up but only 9 signed up, so we split group in half. As Fall has just begun, we saw a few remaining warblers and a few incoming fall/winter birds. Warblers included: 5 Black and White, 1 Nashville, 6 Common Yellowthroat, 6 Redstart, 5 Northern Parula, 6 Magnolia, 3 Chestnut-sided, 1 Black-throated Blue, 4 Palm, and 4 Black-throated Green. Of some importance, 2 Yellow-throated Vireo and 1 Philadelphia Vireo were also found in Willow Grove area.

Recently arriving 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglet and 2 Golden-crowned Kinglet were sighted. 2 Veery, 3 Brown Thrasher, 2 Swainson's Thrush, 67 Cedar Waxwing, 2 Yellow-billed Cuckoo and 3 Scarlet Tanager were also fun to see. Raptors included 1 Osprey, 1 Merlin, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk and 29 Broad-winged Hawks. A pretty productive day!!

September 26, 2020 • 8:00 am Habitat Walk: Wyman Park- Lower Stony Run Stream Restoration

**Leader: Lynne Parks, James Wolf
from Friends of Stony Run**

Three intrepid souls joined us in the rain, but after half an hour, the downpour abated. It was wet and gray, but we had close looks at seven warbler species including Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and American Redstart. There were several Rose-breasted Grosbeaks often feeding on the path in front of us. A Swainson's Thrush showed up. We discussed stream restoration efforts.



Common Yellowthroat
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



American Redstart
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Field Trips

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September 27, 2020 • 8:15 am Cylburn

Leader: Peter Lev

This was a misty, drizzly day. With a mask, 100% humidity, and my glasses it was hard to see the birds! Still, the first hour of the trip was productive. We saw Brown Thrasher, Purple Finch, Hairy Woodpecker, Black and White Warbler, and a flyby Pileated Woodpecker. Then the birds became scarce. At the end of the trip Cylburn naturalist Molly Hoopes led two adventurous birders (I was one) to the pond on the border of Cylburn and BGE property. It's now more of a swamp. The pond/swamp was not birdy on this morning but should be checked in Spring.

October 6, 2020 • 8:30 am Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Joe Corcoran

Highlights were a Yellow-throated Vireo and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (3).

October 4, 2020 • 8:00 am Irvine Nature Center

Leader: Alina Martin

A wonderfully birdy fall migration trip. 65 total species, including 12 Warbler species. Olive-sided Flycatcher was another highlight.

October 13, 2020 • 8:30 am Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Joe Corcoran

Multiple accipiters (5 Cooper's and 2 Sharp-shinned Hawks), Flickers (16), Thrashers (5), and Jays in migration. All possible woodpeckers but Red-headed. Purple Finch and Pine Siskins.



Yellow-throated Vireo
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

October 24, 2020 • 8:30 am Loch Raven – Northampton Furnace Trail

Leader: John Dennehy

An amiable group of six managed 39 species on a warm and drizzly mid-autumn walk. The changing season brought us the regulars like Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, White-throated Sparrows, kinglets and Hermit Thrushes. And 53 American Wigeon on the lake had us anticipating the rafts of ducks yet to come this winter. But this year's irruption of the not so regular Pine Siskins, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Purple Finches continued to impress.



Olive-sided Flycatcher
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Purple Finch
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Baltimore Bird Club

<http://baltimorebirdclub.org>

A Chapter of

Maryland Ornithological Society

4915 Greenspring Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21209

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Sean Downs, Design

Submit materials to
Joan Cwi – jaffsc@verizon.net

Moving or email change?
Send update to
Terry Ross – trosstva@gmail.com

**Deadlines for submitting articles
for upcoming issues:**

January 24, 2020



Baltimore Bird Club APPLICATION

The membership year is September 1-August 31. New members only joining after March 1 will be members for the upcoming year as well as the remainder of the year that they enroll.

The most convenient way to join is at the Maryland Ornithological Society website using this address: <https://mdbirds.org/join/chapters/baltimore-bird-club/#toggle-id-3> where you may pay your dues using PayPal.

OR, you may join by mail.

Make check payable to “MOS” and mail with completed application to:

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Rockville, MD 20852