



CHIP NOTES

WINTER 2021 • NO. 418



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Baltimore Bird Club Needs You!

The Baltimore Bird Club needs your help in promoting bird conservation and birding opportunities for all in the Baltimore area. Find out how you can help on page 3.

*Black-capped Chickadee
Cover Photo Credit: Bill Hubick*

President's Corner

By Joe Corcoran

Wow, I'm finally getting to writing about the Kirtland's Warbler, that special bird that graced Swann Park in Baltimore City in early October. What's been taking so long? Well, it would be easy to write about what a gorgeous unexpected rarity it was and how many people enjoyed the bird, which is all quite true, and include some nice photos with the article. I could have done that a while back. But nope, I must speak about ethics enforcement.

I'm going to talk about Birder and Photographer ethics. And I'm going to focus on how to handle bad actors. And that means I've taken time to do some research.

Most birders were on their best behavior. They were excited to see the bird and help others see their lifer Kirtland's. They were chatty and amusing and knew the bird wasn't timid and would hop right over to you if you stood still. The longer the bird stayed, the farther people drove to see it. And that's when I believe the bad apples started rolling in.

There are all kinds of ethics published out there about birding and wildlife photography. There's official codes, guidelines and ethics from NANPA (North American Nature Photography Association), (ABA) American Birding Association, Audubon, Nature Photographers Network - some of the main organizations - and beyond that, there are countless articles, local park bulletins, conservation group

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Kirtland's Warbler, Swann Park, Baltimore, MD
Photo Credit: Alina Martin

WELCOME

Welcome, new members! Scaup, Redheads, Buffleheads, American Pipits, Winter Wrens, Horned Larks, and more await you this winter. Don't miss out on our trips or events; there's always something to see.

Charlene Johnson – Arlington, VA
Theresa Bedoya – Baltimore
Campbell Blanks – Baltimore
Laura Cox – Baltimore
Sandra Dawson – Baltimore
Christy Hulett – Baltimore
Michaelia Karim – Baltimore
Marian Marbury – Baltimore
Lauren McHugh – Baltimore
Nancy Nuth – Baltimore
Brent Trostle – Baltimore

Ian Power – Baltimore
Rahul Swaminathan – Baltimore
Joseph Turner – Baltimore
Brittany Shapiro Dooley – Catonsville
Donald Dooley – Catonsville
Miriam Talalay – Lutherville
Kevin Prescott – Parkton
Sam Akman – Towson
Donna Marie DeLeno Neuworth – Towson
Ruth McGhee-Bey – Windsor Mill

guidelines, nature trip guidelines, and much, much more on the subject.

And they all come down to these two things as far as especially rare birds (and other rare wildlife for that matter) are concerned.

- 1) THE BIRD COMES FIRST – do not harass or otherwise stress it.
- 2) YOU AND OTHER PEOPLE WHO ARE TRYING TO SEE OR PHOTOGRAPH THE BIRD COME SECOND – but still count some - do not harass or otherwise stress each other....note that stressing the bird counts as stressing each other.

So what do you do when encountering unethical behavior in the field? In my opinion, from all I've seen, you should tactfully and politely let the offenders know about their behavior and how it may be stressing the bird. Remember, the bird comes first.

From the American Birding Association's Code of Birding Ethics, v.2.1, Nov. 2019, 2.(d) "Approach instances of perceived unethical birding behavior with sensitivity and respect; try to resolve the matter in a positive manner, keeping in mind that perspectives vary. Use the situation as an opportunity to teach by example and to introduce more people to this Code."

Easier said than done. While our Chipnotes editor was observing the bird a photographer was sitting only a foot away and would get up and walk back and forth trying to get a better angle regardless, getting in the way of all the birders trying to watch from a respectful distance, as well as making them all uncomfortable with his lack of respect for photography ethics. He had one of those big lenses too. And when people politely, and after a while somewhat angrily, asked him to get out of the way of the bird and the birders, do you know what he did? He did nothing. No response. Stone-cold ignored. A few minutes later to test his hearing & communication capabilities, our editor asked him "was that the Kirtlands that just chipped" to which he acknowledged me, gestured towards the bird, and said "yes". While the bird seemed indifferent to us all, birders were incredibly (and justifiably) agitated by this rude individual to the point that many of them did not have a good time and left in frustration to air their grievances on Facebook and the listservs. But look at this from NANPA Principles of Ethical Field Practice. In the last section "INDIVIDUAL: EXPERTISE AND RESPONSIBILITIES" IS: *Report inappropriate behavior to proper authorities. Don't argue with those that don't care; report them.*

Enforcement

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is responsible for administering this Act. While the law is not often enforced, penalties are severe - up to six months in jail and a fine of up to \$15,000. Equipment used to pursue, hunt, or trap can also be seized. To report violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in Maryland, please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Regional Office (Division of Migratory Birds) at 413-253-8643 or the Maryland Natural Resources Police at 800-628-9944.

More information on U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service enforcement.

I'm sure there are a lot of questions and thoughts now. *Who do I report them to? What does that mean "perspectives vary"? What exactly do I say? What if a serious argument ensues? Isn't it better to just complain on a group forum and condemn the entire community? This is extremely uncomfortable for me.*

- 1) Be polite. Ask them to please back up from the bird. If you can't rely on their own respect for the bird try relying on their desire to not be judged harshly by those around them.
- 2) If they still won't listen, go ahead, raise your voice, get a little cranky on them if you're comfortable and confident in doing so.
- 3) If all else fails, you can let the person know that their behavior will be reported to authorities. It's against the law to harass wild birds, especially rare ones. As posted on New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation "Wildlife Watching Tips", in **REPORT VIOLATORS**:
 - Purposely disturbing, flushing, or chasing wildlife is harassment and is **ILLEGAL**.
 - If you witness such activity, please document it and report it to DEC Dispatch, etc.

The same is true about harassing birds (wildlife) in MD and even in the US per the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). To report violations of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act in Maryland, you can contact the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Regional Office (Division of Migratory Birds).

Further, I think that the threat of reporting will detract all but the most obstinate persons from further unethical behavior. Also note the "document it" part of the statement. That means photographing or recording I say. Now, depending on how aggressive the offender is, you might want to record discretely. Remember, the bird comes first. A loud argument isn't relaxing to the bird either!

- 4) Complaining on an online forum about an anonymous offender does not solve the problem. Instead, it upsets even more people who themselves then go on to complain, or to say they won't take the wonderful opportunity to see the bird themselves because they have misunderstood the problem.

There are more things that could be done to mitigate and help control bad behavior. Again, of course, education is the most important area to concentrate on ahead of time. But at a site with a rare bird, the local birding organizations can monitor the area with designated captains. There can be a sign with ethics written on it for people to clearly see as they approach the rare bird site. It's an ongoing battle to educate the disrespectful and we need all the help we can get.

Any other ideas? Let's have them.

Baltimore Bird Club Needs Your Help

The Baltimore Bird Club needs your help in promoting bird conservation and birding opportunities for all in the Baltimore area. Looks great on a resume!

BIRD-Baltimore (Birders for Inclusivity, Representation, and Diversity) is a committee focused on creating a diverse and inclusive bird club. We are looking for a **Co-Chair** (a Board Position) to lead and engage the committee. If you are interested in co-chairing the committee, please contact Lindsay Jacks at lindsayjacks@yahoo.com.



A tech savvy volunteer **IT Technician** is needed to help, design, and/or lead Information Technology projects like setting up lectures for simultaneous in-person and zoom presentations, assisting the web master with web site additions and improvements, and producing you tube videos and electronic outreach material. Contact Joe Corcoran, President, corcoran2921@gmail.com.

We have a Board Position open for a **Community Outreach Coordinator** responsible for a committee getting out information about BBC activities and events, staying abreast of community events where the BBClub can be represented in person to give a talk, or set up a table with display boards and brochures, or coordinate volunteers to work at the events. Contact Joe Corcoran, President, corcoran2921@gmail.com.

Join Today!

We could always use help on our very successful and active **Trip Committee** to arrange birding and habitat trips with inclusivity in mind in the Baltimore area and beyond. This includes contacting and getting leaders and collecting Trip Reports. Contact Nancy O'Hara, Trip and Lecture Committee Chairs and BBC Director, noh529@gmail.com.



Male Hairy Woodpecker
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



American Woodcock
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Conservation Corner:

Maryland Passes House Bill 322 – Low-Impact Landscaping Legislation

By Kathy Lambrow

This action is proof that a few individuals **CAN** make a difference in enacting bird-friendly and environmental legislation. At times trying to make a difference in conservation efforts can be so disheartening, but it is good to see that individually we can affect positive changes.

The new law took effect on October 1, 2021 and prohibits restrictions on land use that impose unreasonable limitations on low-impact landscaping. Low-impact landscaping are those features that conserve water, lower maintenance costs, provide pollution prevention and create habitat for wildlife. Restrictions on use include, among other things, bylaws or rules of a condominium or homeowners association. What this means to many who live in a homeowner or condominium association who have faced opposition or restrictions on native plantings, rain gardens, features designed to attract wildlife, and pollinator gardens, is that you may now do so – your homeowner association can no longer tell you that you can only have turf grass.

A complete article about the inspiring efforts of Janet Crouch to have the law enacted can be found at <https://www.humanegardener.com/butterflies-1-hoa-bullies-0/>.

There is a grass roots movement (pun intended!) throughout the state to create more wildlife friendly habitats, many using Doug Tallamy's "Nature's Best Hope" and "Bringing Wildlife Home" as their guide. Both these books are excellent reading and show how simply making small changes in your yard can create a significant favorable impact on our environment and the birds we so love to watch.

Recently, the City of Salisbury announced the launch of the "Pocket Pollinator Meadow Program" that allows for pollinator meadows in yards within the Salisbury City limits.

They are defined as a planned, intentional and maintained planting of native grasses and wildflowers that are commonly found in meadow and prairie plant communities. Residents who wish to participate must first register and follow a few rules to remain exempt from property code violations.

While it does not appear that Baltimore City or Baltimore County have any specific initiatives, residents are urged to learn, plan and act to restore habitat and improve conditions in the Chesapeake Bay. Information can be found at: <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/environment/forestsandtrees/landscapes.html>.

Baltimore City has a similar initiative outlined in its "Baltimore Green Network" adopted in September 2018, details of which can be found at: baltimoregreennetwork.com.

Little by little, we are making a difference.



Field Trip Reports

Compiled by Nancy O'Hara

August 31, 2021

Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Gene Ricks

Saw a lot of activity along the upper field above the garden and around the visitor center. It was unusually quiet around the Lime Kiln. The highlight was several Yellow-billed Cuckoos feeding on bagworms in the trees along Mine Bank Run. We had 11 people and 40 species.

September 7, 2021

Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Mary Chetelat

First sighting- yellow-billed cuckoo! Good start to any bird walk. Hearing the Eastern Screech Owl got everybody talking. Only 4 warblers (sure sightings) but going off the main trail to an open stream area brought plenty of great sightings. We had 9 people and 31 species.

September 11, 2021

Coppermine Fieldhouse (Youth Trip)

Leader: Daisy Sudano

I had 3 little friends and their Moms. We saw 14 species with the highlight being the Red tailed hawk. It was a beautiful morning with perfect cool weather. We played a migration game adapted from the Cornell K/12 education pages with "Ruby's Birds"

We talked about Lights Out and I showed them the map of the US at night to explain.



Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

September 11, 2021

Conquest Preserve

Leader: Dan Small

Report: Nancy O'Hara

On September 11, BBC's had their first habitat/bird field trip to Conquest Preserve. The day started with perfect weather. We were greeted by Bay-breasted, Magnolia, and many other species of warblers, many of which were first recorded here in 2021. Further on we spotted a Lincoln's Sparrow and Alder/Willow Flycatcher (Traill's Flycatcher) in the same tree. We flushed a covey of Bob-whites, not once but twice. In addition to Purple Martins, Tree, and Barn swallows near the parking lot, we were excited when a Scarlet Tanager showed up.

Since the day was heating up and a wedding reception prevented us from exploring the shore habitat, we called it a day. We had 55 species, of which at least 2 this was the first time reported at this site. And we had only explored a fraction of the trails!

September 12, 2021

Days Cove

Leader: Sam Tillman

The first bird club canoe trip in a while found sunny skies, calm water, and a couple of marsh specialties. We started down a small inlet, finding a Marsh wren shortly after embarking, which sang briefly and provided a glimpse as it flew across the inlet. Just ten minutes later, we spotted a Least bittern, one of our most sought-after species. It sat in the sun, just inches from the edge of the reeds, hunting, while the whole group got very good, close looks. We worked our way into the back lake, catching a brief look at one of the resident Northern harriers. Finally, we paddled toward the mouth of Days Cove, enjoying the Caspian terns hunting there. Herons, egrets, bald eagles, and two extremely active Belted kingfishers rounded out a very nice day on the water. Much thanks to Joe Davis, the BCPS Outdoor Science Educator for Days Cove, for making this trip possible. He provided us with interesting details on the ecology and history of the cove. There were 20 participants who saw 43 species.

September 14, 2021

Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: John Landers

BG&E had a helicopter near the hawk watch, so we had to take a different route. For half the walk, it was very loud, and there were few birds, but we did end the day with 38 species. Fifteen birders participated.



Bottom Left and Right: Photos from the September 11, 2021 Coppermine Fieldhouse youth trip.

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September 19, 2021 Cylburn Vollmer Center

Leader: Mark Linardi

On a moderately warm, late Summer morning, there were perfectly blue skies with a few wispy clouds for contrast.

We were greeted immediately by a couple hundred gregarious, Grackles. Falling from the sky, they descend upon the trees, then to the shrubs, and finally the ground before us. An enjoyable spectacle to start the day.

We slowly and methodically worked our way around the stately mansion grounds and eventually enjoyed a steady stream of resident and migrating species. Several Warblers and a pair of Brown Thrashers put on a good show.

The largest congregation of Red-eyed Vireos I ever saw were busy feeding on what looked to be a Quince tree. I believe they were nabbing insects from the tree's fruit. We watched the birds coming and going for over twenty minutes, and I counted well over a dozen birds during that time.

That was a terrific event, but for me, the morning's best highlight(s) were several fragmented kettles of Broad-Wing Hawks. Groups of 3, 5, 7 hawks would appear seemingly out of nowhere. From treetop elevations to infinity, they would gently glide and turn and float. The sun's rays bouncing off their breasts, their wings and moments later filtering thru their tail feathers. All the glorious feather shades of white, gold, brown, and black were constantly displayed against the vivid, blue backdrop.

I couldn't help but think to myself..... They must be having a great day at the CVP Hawk watch.



Red-eyed Vireo
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

September 21, 2021 Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Ron Davis

It was a beautiful early fall day with temps in the high 60's and low 70's. 12 People (including myself) joined up with a nice mix of levels of experience. We walked and observed and talking fall birding & fall birding identification for 3 hours and 20 minutes starting at 8am. Everyone seemed to enjoy the birding, the weather, the conversations and the experience.

September 26, 2021 Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary

Leader: Deb & Lou Taylor

Jug Bay is always a calming place to visit any time of the year. Plenty of woods and water. We had 11 people on the walk (3 1/2 hours) and found a nice assortment of birds (30).

The BEST bird of the day was the Red-Headed Woodpecker, right where you would expect- on the top of a big, dead old tree. It was quite exciting, esp since our most recent visits

did not provide a Red-Headed Woodpecker. AND, to our surprise, a few minutes later, we saw a juvie, not far from the parent, in its black and white feathers.

The funny part was the person who found it (Shirshir Rao) had lost his bins prior to the trip and asked me to lend him a pair. Good thing I lent the binocs to him!

It was an ok Warbler day; it seems you can never get enough! We saw one Cape May, one Magnolia, one Yellow-Rumped, and one Blackpoll (very tricky to id because of Fall plumage.)

A Harrier flew by, which was very exciting and was a lifer for some. A Ruby-Throated Hummingbird was also a hit. We also had lots of the usual suspects, including Cardinals, Catbirds, Downy, etc.

We were hoping to find a Sora but to no avail. However, I saw on eBird that the Sora was found a little later in the day. Oh well, another reason to visit again.

September 26, 2021 Hampden Swift Watch

Leader: Alice Greely-Nelson

As for the spring let me get back to you I want to consult Joan about changing this up a bit especially in the fall. Maybe give people a whole week to view or a time frame and I am there almost every night and I could get someone else there another night



Cape May Warbler
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

I am not, the counts were all over the place this fall... just a thought.

We had a fun gathering on a warm Sunday evening - 9/26 - for the chimney swift watch. Fifty plus people attended from different areas of the city and from different clubs. We counted 180 swifts entering that night with 4 entering a nearby smaller chimney. The swift count was 1210 the week before our swift watch but we do believe the swifts were spooked by a Barred owl that decided to perch on the chimney as they entered. No swifts were reported to be hurt.

We have had a strange pattern this year. The height of our counts were in the end of August and the beginning of September, peaking to 1,590 on September 13 with the last group leaving on October 21 with 220, which is a late count for us historically.

All enjoyed the spectacle in spite of the low count. The new town house owners have welcomed us all.

I want to thank Anching Tang, Noah Bers, Joan Cwi and Carol Schreter for their support.

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September 28, 2021 Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Debbie & Lou Taylor

Cromwell Valley Park gave 12 birders a run for their money on Tuesday, September 28. We got lucky not far from the Hawk Watch spot where a Red-shouldered Hawk was perched high

in the trees. It was extremely quiet the first hour as the skies started to darken, and then a little drizzle came.

Yet, it cleared quickly as we approached the Lime Kiln area. Finally, we started to see a few exciting birds, including Bluebirds, Red-Eyed Vireo, Waxwings, and the highlight of a Magnolia Warbler.

As we made our way back to the Mine Bank Trail, Dave Spector spotted a Green Heron in the stream near the little bridge (not far from the parking lot). Most of us got to see it.

John Landers found a female Red-Breasted Grosbeak near the stream, and then the group saw a few Common Yellowthroats (both sexes) in the meadows. Another exciting bird was a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo found not far from box 11 by Deb Taylor. It was a first for a few birders.

Although we started off slow and the weather seemed a little iffy, we ended up with a respectable list of 30 birds.



Red-shouldered Hawk
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Green Heron
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

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October 5, 2021

Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Mark Linardi

On an overcast, humid day we had 16 people and 35 species.

October 9, 2021

Wyman Park

Leader: Libby Errickson

Our walk had a slow start that was punctuated by cheers, news helicopters, and “Eye of the Tiger” being blasted from very loud speakers due to the Baltimore Marathon passing alongside the park. Once we were able to move away from the noise we managed to find an enjoyable smattering of fall migrants. Highlights included a Nashville Warbler, several Tennessee Warblers, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a few Blackpoll Warblers, and an obliging Magnolia Warbler. Two perched migrant Cooper’s Hawks provided good views, a less common sight in this particular park, and a Brown Thrasher showed at the very end, also not easily found here. Overall it was a lovely morning with several first-time participants who are eager to join more walks with the club.

October 9, 2021

Fairwood Forest

(Youth Trip)

Leader: Daisy Sudano

Baltimore Bird Club had gone BATTY! That was the theme of our October Youth Birding Trip to Fairwood Forest. “Bats, Our Flying Friends that are NOT Birds”.

We had 26 in attendance which was great! We started at 6pm so that we could do some bat watching. First Daisy read an A-Z story on some of the amazing facts about bats. Emphasizing the differences between bats and birds.

Thanks to the DNR Bat Education Trunk, there were plenty of hands on items for little hands to check out. We had a bat matching game, information boards, bat puppets, bat activity sheets, bat clip art project and of course bat viewing.

Then we took a walk in the forest to look for some habitat of the tree bats we mostly talked about and to find some hidden bats. Of course along the way with help from some flashlights, the children spotted other hidden friends along the trails. Every season Ms. Daisy puts around fairies, gnomes and other fun friends to discover while hiking



Above: Photos from the October 9, 2021 Fairwood Forest youth trip.

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the woods.

After the walk we were ready to look for some bats. Unfortunately the lamp post that lights up the Fairwood Forest amphitheater wasn't working so we had to walk to a neighbors driveway & front lawn to see if bats would come out.

At first I was a bit worried with the weather since there were no insects hanging around the light post that was working. I told the kids to call out for the bats and as if on cue a Dad said, "There's one." Yay!! The bats came out. The kids were excited watching them swooping around.

I could see the darkness coming quick so we walked back to the amphitheater for some more information and to do the craft.

Before everyone left the children received some bat rings and a little bat as a souvenir of their night with us.

I hope everyone had fun and learned something new about our flying mammal friend the bat.

Our next adventure will be November 13th at Cromwell Valley Park to learn and see the Wild Turkey. Gobble gobble!

October 12, 2021 Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Deb and Lou Taylor

It was a cloudy and gloomy day with a slight drizzle off and on, yet we managed to find 37 species at Cromwell Valley Park on October 12, 2021.

10 birders spent 3+ hours searching for any remaining Warblers and any new winter birds which may have just arrived. We did find a few Warblers- 2 Palm, 2 Common Yellowthroat, and 2 Redstart. The latest sets of birds arriving that were seen in great quantities were Yellow-Bellied Sapsuckers (10) and Ruby-Crowned Kinglet (6), and Golden-Crowned Kinglet (1).

American Robins were extremely plentiful, approximately 150, all over CVP. John Landers found our only hawk of the day- a Cooper's Hawk. The White-Throated Sparrow (3) graced us with some tunes. Other birds we saw included Flicker, Towhee, Waxwings, and plenty of Red-Bellied Woodpeckers.

After all, we really were glad that we stayed the entire morning.

October 16, 2021 Soldiers Delight

Leader: Deb and Lou Taylor

We had a lovely few hours at Soldier's Delight area. It was sunny, slightly breezy,

and 65 degrees. 11 of us (9 signed up online with two extra showing up) started on the Serpentine Trail, near the overlook/parking area. Things started off a little slow but progressed into what was a decent day (for Soldier's D). The winds were favorable early on for a Red-Shouldered Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, and a Sharp-Shinned Hawk. Of course, there were Red and Black Vultures scattered around.

Further along, we heard an Eastern Towhee and finally saw 2 Eastern Towhee later on. Continuing halfway down the Serpentine Trail, we found a variety of mostly "winter" birds such as Ruby 3 Crowned Kinglet, American Redstart (3 juvie or female), 1 White-Throated Sparrow, and 1 Downy Woodpecker. Heading towards the Visitor's Center, we spotted an Eastern Phoebe as well as 2 White-Breasted Nuthatch, 2 Creepers, and 3 Golden-Crowned Kinglets. 24 species in total.



Eastern Phoebe
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

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Note: The following Field Trip Reports were left out of the previous issue of Chip Notes. Thank you to our wonderful trip leaders who led the trips and wrote the reports.

April 20, 2021

Lake Roland

Leader: Mary Chetelat

The sunny day started off cool. Red-shouldered hawks nest spotted. 9-10 Yellow-rumped Warblers singing along the “new path” by the Fallsway. Beautiful Palm Warbler. Lots of Phoebe. Not much activity beyond the light rail line (somewhat disappointing, but good exercise). 12 participants. 40 species.

April 24, 2021

Stony Run

Leader: Lynne Parks

It was a little early for migrants, but we did alright with thirty-one species. A Northern Waterthrush sang nicely for us. James Wolf from Friends of Stony Run gave us some background on the stalled stream restoration and some history. The reason bricks wash into the paths? When the Jones Falls Expressway was being built, they dumped demolished building debris in Wyman Park. We had a nice group of eight people.



Northern Waterthrush
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Double-crested Cormorant
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

May 1, 2021

Susquehanna State Park, Rock Run Gristmill

Leader: Mary & Brent Byers

Nineteen members enjoyed a sunny but cold and windy walk along the river and the picnic area of the park. The temp was 46°F. Everyone had multiple great views of Prothonotary Warblers, Northern Parulas, and Baltimore Orioles. Bald Eagles, Ospreys, Double-crested Cormorant (over 200), and Great Blue Herons hunted the river for Shad. We had a good migration of Blue Jays constantly overhead during the morning with Southern Rough-winged Swallows and Tree Swallows darting over the flats. The group heard or saw a total of 63 species, including 14 warblers between the two locations. Overall not bad for such a cold and windy day.

May 2, 2021

Cylburn

Leader: Mark Linardi

I arrived early to scout the general area. The large metal entrance gates were heavily padlocked, forbidding my access. I suppose a product of the lingering COVID protocols and their invisible tentacles that somehow still impede our movement. Impatiently I waited until finally the gates were unceremoniously opened around 8:05 am.

An ominous start slowly evolved into a more promising event. A few Blue Jays broke the silence, squawking as they streamed by in small groups. Their close relatives, American Crows, came in even smaller groups but vocalized equally as loud. Red-bellied WP's and Flickers pierced the airwaves occasionally, trumped

eventually by a lone, splendid, Pileated WP.

We walked slowly and deliberately around the grounds picking up a few more species. One of the early highlights was a pair of close-by Brown Thrashers. One was hurriedly obtaining nesting materials, ducking in and out of sight. Chipping Sparrows appeared from nowhere and spread everywhere. In the large, open field surrounding the mansion, we observed a handsome, Great Crested Flycatcher (FOS) blurring out his notes. Well-lit House Finches sang from the treetops as the Golden versions did their singing while on the wing.

Circling back to our original starting point, we focused an inordinate amount of time trying to see our only attending warbler. A Common Yellowthroat sang incessantly, deep within some thick shrubs, moving about occasionally but always in stealth mode. (FOS) Catbirds kept us company while we searched.... and even though we never saw the warbler, our scanning did reward us with a good look at a silent Indigo Bunting that would have otherwise gone unnoticed.

I left at 10:30 am.... The gates were still open.

May 2, 2021

Oregon Ridge/Ag Center

Leader: Simon Best

A beautiful day at Oregon Ridge Park and the Maryland Agriculture Center was enjoyed by an enthusiastic group of 12 birders. We explored forest and meadow habitat at Oregon Ridge, where highlights included a Black-billed Cuckoo and a pair of Baltimore Orioles that were calmly exploring a stand of trees for breeding

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habitat, allowing wonderful views for all participants. We then moved to the Ag Center and the preserved grassland habitat, where we were greeted by a Northern Harrier floating over the field, singing Eastern Meadowlarks, and Bobolinks and Grasshopper Sparrows perching up on the fence posts. We had 49 species at Oregon Ridge and 15 species at the Ag Center.

May 4, 2021 Lake Roland

Leader: Deb & Lou Taylor

Awaiting birders to arrive, we were looking at the clear sky when a raccoon came bolting across the parking lot, which was surprising. A beautiful sunny day and 70 degrees at 8 am.

We had three new attendees totaling the group to 16.

Overall, we had a wonderfully productive morning with a Yellow Warbler quite quickly at the beginning of the boardwalk, followed by our usual Eastern Phoebe, Northern Parula, and a variety of Vireos. Continuing to the dam bridge, it was very quiet except for a few Tree Swallows and two Black Vultures.

Walking “up the hill” towards the dog park, we heard Orioles in the distance but were having trouble hearing calls over the lawnmowers and weed whackers. Didn’t the park get the message

that they should not do maintenance on a Tuesday morning? We did see the Baltimore Oriole briefly and a Northern Flicker. The upper dam was quiet too. Unfortunately, there was not one

Eastern Bluebird! Crazy because they are a staple near the dog park. There also were bees all over the lawn in that area.

I took the group to see The Catherine Bishop Bench and explained who she was and why a bench was named after her. On our way down to the Lite Rail Trail, Lou spotted a baby turtle, the size of a fifty-cent piece, and everyone enjoyed looking at the little fella.

At this point, we lost half the group, which isn’t unusual. The rest of the group went across the Lite Rail and closer to the water, where we were greeted by a Cormorant sunning itself on a downed tree sitting in the water. A little further down the path, a Hairy Woodpecker made a great showing for us as well. Working our way along the edge of the water, we noticed the mudflats had 6 shorebirds. Chris helped us look at the bird book to identify the types-Spotted Sandpipers (5) and Solitary

Sandpiper (1).

Going up a slight incline to look over the lake was an Indigo Bunting which was spotted by Francine, and several members got a photo. It wasn’t until we went a little further did we finally hear the beautiful songs of the Wood Thrush and then the Ovenbird.

Our last and most wonderful bird was a Scarlet Tanager that we had been hearing for quite some time but absolutely couldn’t find; it finally appeared.

The mighty few dragged ourselves back to our cars after 4 1/2 hours of adventure and 59 birds.

May 8, 2021 Herring Run Park: Birding by Ear

Leader: Lynne Parks

It was a miserably cold and rainy day; nonetheless, twelve intrepid birders had a good day with fifteen warbler species and fifty species altogether. Frankly, not much was singing, but everyone had a good look at a vocal Wilson’s Warbler. We made some nice recordings.

May 8, 2021 Spring Migration” at Coppermine Fieldhouse (Youth Trip)

Leader: Daisy Sudano

The May trip was the 1st one since I took over as Youth Coordinator. Unfortunately, the day was filled with on and off again rain storms. My trip had to be moved up to a later time because I was still teaching on Saturdays. It was 20 minutes past the start time, and no one was there, so I started to pack things up. I always put a table out with hands-on self-exploration to keep people occupied while waiting for others. Then a car pulled up, and I knew it was for me. A new youth member, Adil, and his Dad came from Pikesville, so I couldn’t leave now. I showed them to our Blue Room, where I had it all set up with charts of migrations, bird pictures with their migratory paths, and my table of exploration. I showed him my bird chart that I like to use whenever I take a walk to mark down the birds I see.

We took one of the charts and took a walk around the trails of Coppermine. We often see a lot of birds since we butt up against Lake Roland. I tell children that if you truly look, you will see at least 10 birds a day. We saw over that 10, and I was so glad since it



Eastern Bluebird
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

was such a rainy day.

The group was small, but we did have a good time.

May 9, 2021 Soldiers Delight

Leader: Mark Linardi

An overcast and chilly Mother’s Day was made enjoyable by a diverse, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic group of 14 observers. I exited the warm confines of my car, leaving behind the sounds of Ahmad Jamal playing “There’s No Greater Love.” A nice but unsophisticated standard that allowed me to disengage painlessly.

I stood staring out over the overlook with memories of Whip-poor-will’s calling in years gone past. What a delightful song. This early morning it’s an American Thrush doing the singing, no competition.

I pace back and forth until the group assembles, and we head towards the visitors’

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center in almost defining silence. Where's that blasted "Robin" now?

My fears abate when we reach the parking lot. A Hooded Warbler is singing close at hand. While we search for a look, a couple of Warblers help divert our attention. Moments later, a Barred Owl starts to serenade us.

Moving on, we added a Veery and a couple of Swainson's Thrush playing about.

We eventually got the targeted Pine and Prairie Warblers... although they were more often heard than seen. We added a few more Warblers, with an appearance by a lone Chat being the biggest highlight.

By the time we reached the large tract of these serpentine barrens, the birds again decided to retreat. Fortunately, we had a botanist, a forest management student, and an array of other teachers and subject matter experts helping each other along the way with a large variety of sight and sound IDs. I was schooled on the "call" of the Summer Tanager. Thanks, Everyone!

May 11, 2021

Lake Roland

Leader: Mark Linardi

Before I fully exit my car, I hear a distant Baltimore Oriole singing away. FOY for me, and what a welcoming sound. I didn't realize it at the time but later would come to recognize that I was listening as much as I was looking throughout the day. Later I'll hear and recognize 3 different flycatcher species and think to myself.... it's like hearing the voices of old friends.

On this day, we had a group of 15 observers with a good mix of experienced birders to help everyone along. A distant, well illuminated Scarlett Tanager was an early highlight. Warblers were not overwhelming, but we did manage about 8-9 species. It seemed like Cedar Waxwings appeared every twenty minutes or so while we were sorting thru Red-Eyed Vireos and a few more common species. In the skies, over the lake, we had an immature Bald Eagle, a Red-tailed Hawk, and an Osprey all in the same general vicinity. This precipitated a few friendly debates on the ground.

When we reached the point of Lake some four hours later, only a handful of birders remained. Those that did were rewarded with great looks at a trio of Balto. O's which traversed the airways and even stopped to perch occasionally. 61 species for the day.



Photo Credit: Sally Foster

May 15, 2021

Slaughter Beach

Leader: Daisy Sudano

I was so excited to lead my 1st trip for the Baltimore Bird Club. Especially since it was to a place, I visit every year to see my precious Horseshoe Crabs. Getting the chance to show others the phenomenon of 1000's of horseshoe crabs and millions of birds is just so rewarding.

The day started out with meeting Alison M. and carpooling to the Park and Ride route 152 & 95N. We waited for over 20 min, but no one else showed, so we got on our way. The ride took almost 2 hours as we took 95N to 896 S to DE 1 to DE 36 East to Lighthouse Road. There were signs about a road closure that I did not know about, so I kept hoping it wasn't until after the Nature Center, and luckily it was.

Once at the Nature Center, I finally met Lynne Pusey, who helps run the Du Pont Nature Center. She and I have chatted back and forth about the happenings around Slaughter Beach. Her Assistant Sam was

a great help telling us about what we saw through our binoculars and scopes. Inside the center, they have a live cam that they can move around to pinpoint some fun species. That's where we first learned about the Black-bellied Plover. We were also able to see terrapin turtles popping their heads out of the water. They like to feed on the horseshoe crab eggs and come up on the shores of DE Bay to lay their eggs in May too.

We stayed over an hour, and that's when Jen T., who was visiting family in Cecil County, joined us. Both women are fabulous birders, and I learned A LOT from them. Thank You both! While scoping the shoreline, they spotted the bright orange bills of the American Oystercatcher. If you look at the photo, you'll see them in the back by the rocks. Jen T. put our findings in eBird and listed at Du Pont we saw 12 species.

We ate lunch at the Center and planned our next course which was taking the detour around back to Slaughter Beach area to stop along the beaches. The detour took about 20

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min. This was a bummer because it was the little bridge right off of Lighthouse Rd to Bay Ave, which we were going to.

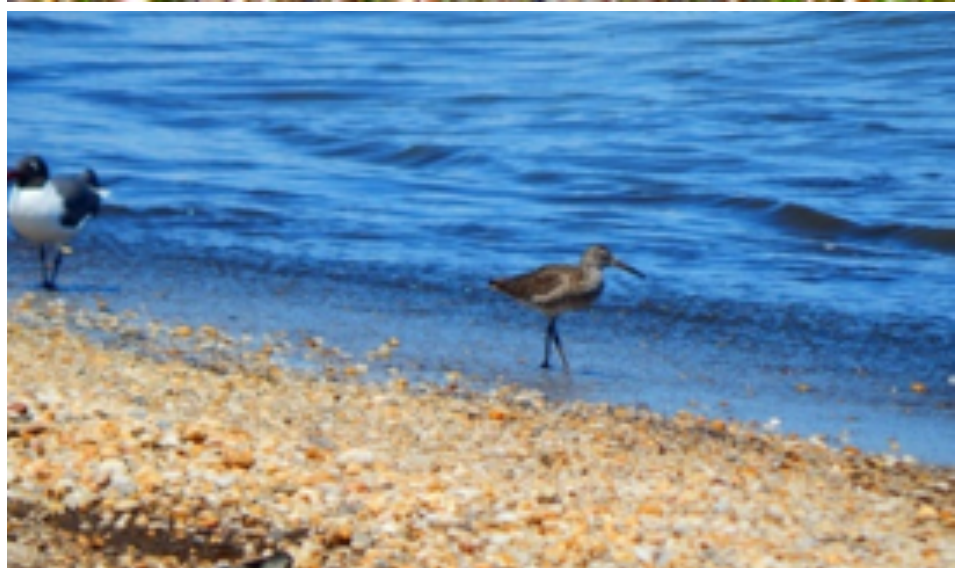
Once back on Bay Ave, we parked in one of the beaches cut ways and walked up to the beaches. A fun thing to see while walking across the dunes is the Eastern Prickly Pear Cacti. They just don't seem right to be there. At this time of year, there are not many people along the beaches, which makes it a nice place to view the birds and horseshoe crabs up close. For warning, it does get a bit stinky when the main spawn of horseshoe crabs happen since many do not make it back to the water :(The picture is of a female (buried in the sand) with 8

males around her!! Males have a curved shell front for fitting on the female's shell like a puzzle piece so she can drag them on the shore easier. The female is 30% larger than the males, which makes it easy to spot the females. Along the beaches are signs "Just Flip Them." So, if you see a horseshoe crab upside-down, take hold of their shell and help them flip back over. If they lay too long on their backs, they will start to dry out, and then the gulls will get them! If you see one with a tag (pictured) call the number to report it, or you can go online at <https://www.fws.gov/crabtag/>.

Along the beaches, we saw 11 species, including the Short-Billed Dowitcher. As we were continuing our journey, we passed an area with a boardwalk for viewing the marshland. This was Marvel Saltwater Preserve. This is where we saw the Seaside Sparrow. Jen T. listed in eBird we saw 5 species, including a Green Heron.

Since we were heading south, we decided to stop at the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. As soon as we got out of our cars, we heard a different song of a bird which made us really search hard. This is when we saw the Blue-Grosbeak. I never tire of seeing the bright-colored birds. I think because I grew up in the city with your share of sparrows, starlings, pigeons, and crows.) We walked along the trail that led to the water, and it had a viewing platform. Here we saw 23 species of birds, including more turnstones, plovers, willets, snowy egrets, and a Dunlin.

We couldn't believe our watches as it quickly became 4:30 pm, and we decided to head home. A fun time was had by all, and it was a pleasure meeting two great birders! Hope to see you again.



Above: Photos from the May 15, 2021 Slaughter Beach trip.

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May 18, 2021

Lake Roland

Leader: Ron Davis

Weatherwise, it was a beautiful morning for the 12 of us who did the walk. All we can say is that the RUSH of warblers is OVER for this area. We had only 4 Warbler Species, Yellow, Redstart, Parula, and Gnatcatcher. Everyone chipped in and was supportive, but the variety of birds hoped for were just not there. Nonetheless, all participants willingly shared and seemed to enjoy themselves.

May 23, 2021

Cromwell Valley Park

Leader: Sam Tillman

We started our walk along Minebank Run with the vague intention of finding the Black-billed Cuckoos that had been seen and heard earlier that week. Though we never did find them, we saw a great variety of birds; overall, 42 species in total, which was good for what turned out to be a very hot day. While the number and variety of warblers were dwindling by late May, we did find a few, including Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Parula, and Pine Warbler (our last bird of the day, singing heartily from the parking area cedars). The abundant Baltimore and Orchard Orioles were the stars of the day, with appearances by males and females of both species, as well as three active nests. We had 11 participants.

June 12, 2021

Habitat Walk:

Prettyboy Reservoir, Shambergers Trail

**Leader: Carol Schreter and
Ted Martello**

A Habitat Walk has two leaders: a plant person and a bird person. This Habitat Walk involved 11 people: 5 birders, 4 Prettyboy neighbors, and two tree men. We learned a lot from each other. Despite the din of the Cicadas, we located, mostly heard, 14 species of birds, including Pine and Prairie Warblers, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. This felt like Environmentalist Networking.



Northern Parula

Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

July 10, 2021

Lake Roland: Waterfowl (Youth Trip)

Leader: Daisy Sudano

I set up my table of exploration by the boardwalk path and waited for any prospects to show. To my delight in pulled Adil and his Dad. They had never been to Lake Roland, so it was nice to show them around. We first walked along the boardwalk, where we had lots of action from the Cardinals. We went down to the bridge in hopes of finding any waterfowl. The only ones we saw were a couple of Mallard ducks. A Blue Heron did fly by while I was waiting for people to show, but we could not find it along the banks.

We took the Red Trail and Yellow trail and looped back to the Nature Center. It was fun to show the holes of the Yellow Belly Sapsucker. Off the red trail, we did see some Canadian Geese, but I was hoping for more exotic waterfowl :)

This was one reason I was glad to take them into the Nature Center. I knew they had some good taxidermy waterfowl, and if we weren't going to see them live, at least we could see them stuffed :)

We slowly worked our way back to the end of the boardwalk and said our goodbyes. On my list, we did see over 10 species of birds but not all waterfowl.

August 14, 2021

Fairwood Forest: Bird Banding (Youth Trip)

Leader: Daisy Sudano

This Youth Trip was definitely a result of getting the word out and having friends in higher places. Eric Fishel, who was

doing the bird banding, created B.Ur.B.- Baltimore Urban Birds, where he conducts studies about the habits of urban birds. Eric is also the Forest Manager for Baltimore Green Space, and since Fairwood Forest is in a land trust with BGS, we got a lot of attention :) We had a whopping 46 people in attendance and 20 children! We were delighted to have the Baltimore Zoo Teen group. Among them was Peter, who works for the zoo and is an Amazing birder. I had self-exploration tables set up. Joe Corcoran had a table with BBC info, a table was set up for painting mini birdhouses, another with binoculars, an area for bird banding, a net to see how birds get caught, and of course, the favorite, a snack table. I even gave away door prizes. We started the day by learning how to use binoculars. A tricky thing if you never tried them before. As we were practicing with the binoculars, the nets were already catching birds, so we went right into the bird banding demonstration. We caught a couple of sparrows, but those are not the ones he bands but the children got to see them up close, and we let them go. We had a couple of wrens that are on the list, so we got to see how he bands them. Later we banded some chickadees too. After the first few birds were weighed, measured, and banded, we took a walk along the trails of Fairwood Forest. Fairwood Forest is dear to me because I am the Site Manager of this protected land. Oh yea, and it is right across from my house :) We heard all kinds of cool bird songs, so I asked Peter to step up front to lead the way. Always fun to see the Red-bellied Woodpecker, which made a show for us, and as if on cue, when I mentioned, even though we are going to see a lot of forest birds, we will most likely see a vulture down swooped a Turkey Vulture. I showed them along our upper and lower trails and explained the history of the land. The children had fun spotting my hidden forest friends that I have posted along the trails, like the gnomes, fairies, and dragons. Some stay all year long, and others I switch out seasonally. When we got back to the amphitheater, Eric had more birds to band. Some enjoyed painting a mini birdhouse, while others focused their binoculars on my bird feeder to catch a glimpse of house finches and friends. Kind of cheating, but hey, they were birds :) We saw over 18 species of birds that day, and though I told them I was surprised a hawk didn't show itself, had they stayed a little longer, they would have seen one. Just as we got done cleaning up a Red-Shouldered Hawk flew into the trees. I know my forest. :)

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Great Blue Heron
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Red-bellied Woodpecker
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick



Yellow-throated Vireo
Photo Credit: Bill Hubick

Baltimore Bird Club

<http://baltimorebirdclub.org>

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Send update to

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for upcoming issue:**

January 24, 2022



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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