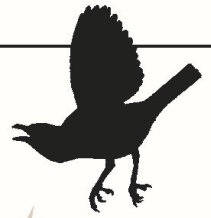




the Chat



The newsletter of the Montgomery Bird Club of the Maryland Ornithological Society

May 2019

Volume 50, No. 2

President's Chat

"April is promise. May is fulfillment. May is a time when everything is happening when life rises to a peak. May is the birdsong month."
—Edwin Way Teale, *A Walk through the Year*

As I write this in March, we're having a beautiful day, full of the promise of spring, sunny with balmy breezes, but you know that it's not going to last—rain is predicted for the weekend and lower temperatures. Oh well, spring will come! We've had our Social with a good showing of photographs by our world-traveling members and much help from lots of people, such as Helen Patton, Anna Urciolo, Andy Martin, and especially Evelyn Ralston who put it all together (see Evelyn's write-up of the Social in this issue). Thanks too for the welcome donations of food and wine from Smokey Glenn and from Tom Kimbis.

Pretty soon April and May will be along, and we will begin chasing the warblers as they come through on their way to the breeding grounds. Some will even stay around here. We can't all do what Bruce Beehler did, chasing them from the top to the bottom of the Central Flyway, but fortunately he wrote about it so we can enjoy the experience vicariously. His *North on the Wing* was inspired by someone who went first, Edwin Way Teale in his *North with the Spring*.

Years ago I visited Teale's home in eastern Connecticut and saw the hut he built to write in, a rough space with branches for walls so he could see and hear the birds as he worked. Bruce Beehler was very lucky to have the opportunity to follow in those footsteps up the Mississippi. He gave our club a presentation of his trip with the photographs he took as he moved up from the Texas coast into the Canadian North Country, following the birds.

In his 100-day journey he stopped at many of our parks, both state and local. He describes what he found there, not just the birds but the people he met, the flora and fauna he encountered, and also what he *didn't* encounter. Things have changed since the Teales went across the country. We humans have been very busy cutting down trees, realigning waterways, and building things. Bruce remarks on the disappearance of habitat and the serious problems birds are having with the loss of ground cover and woodlands. At the same time he gives lively descriptions of the volunteers and naturalists he met, doing their jobs banding, counting, and preserving the neotropical migrants as they move North to their breeding grounds.



Bruce speaks about the National Wildlife Refuge System, which goes up the Mississippi and is home to nearly 100 refuges and nearly five million acres of protected wildlands. A lot of them are like our Blackwater Refuge, welcoming visitors and providing trails, both walking and driving, to better admire the natural life found there—for both birders and photographers. He visited 20 refuges going up the river. He worked with conservationists who are experts in their area and the partnerships they have created to conserve the wild places.

His detailed description of the North Country at the end of the paved road is most interesting. He re-

marks on how you would think that with all those woods you'd be sure to encounter lots and lots of birds—not so. Most of area is forested in fire-prone Jack Pine, and you'd think there would be lots of Kirkland's Warblers there, but no. Bruce found that the dominant species were Gray Jays and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. This has to do with the subsoil and lack of soil; the area is considered barren with a subsoil of nutrient-poor shield rock. Ravens, robins and Northern Flickers do fairly well there, but the daily search for more species was disappointing.

Bruce's last stop was across the top of Canada into the Adirondacks where he revisited places he'd been to before and especially enjoyed the song of the Bicknell's Thrush, one of the most beautiful thrush songs. At the end of his journey, Bruce makes a plea for preserving of wild places: "Let's all raise the flag for wilderness, wood warblers and all things wild."

Stephanie Lovell

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Calendar

May 22, 2019 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. Gwen Brewer and George Jett present: the Southern Pantanal of Brazil: Birds, Mammals, and More.

June 8 (Saturday), 5-8 p.m. Montgomery Bird Club Picnic. Please join us for the Montgomery Bird Club picnic at Black Hills Regional Park. Bring a dish to share—we will eat and then go birding in the early evening. Please remember no alcoholic drinks are allowed in the park—please bring sodas, water, and iced tea. Families are most welcome!



Warbler Migration is on!

This issue of *The Chat* arrives in your mailbox at the same time warblers are migrating through the Washington D.C. area. Here are some warbler identification resources:

www.mpnature.com Bill Young's and Ashley Bradford's website provides a wealth of knowledge on the warblers seen in this area as well as when to see them at Monticello Park in Alexandria. Besides stunning photos, there are vocalizations, historical notes, and the origin of names.

The Warbler Guide by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle

Cornell Lab's Bird Academy – "Be a Better Birder: Warbler Identification Course"

As many of you know, reliable places to see warblers during spring migration in the Washington D.C. area are Rock Creek Park (the Ridge and the Maintenance Yard), Monticello Park in Alexandria, and along the C&O Canal. With Maryland's diverse habitats, the first warblers are in the Lower Eastern Shore by mid-April and some warblers are still in Garrett County in June. Good birding!

Field Trips

Please note: Registration for joint MBC/ANS trips is now being done online at ANShome.org/adults.

MAY 3 (Friday) BIRDING BY EAR AT HUGHES HOLLOW. Tune up your ears as we listen for and learn to identify the songs and calls of migrant and local breeding birds. The trip will be geared to new birders but all are welcome. Meet at 7 a.m. at the parking lot at Hughes Hollow. Limit 10. Reservations required. For more information, email the LEADER: Paul Woodward at grackling@ATT.NET

MAY 5 (Sunday) IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE, BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE CHAPTER, CONSERVATION FARM. Half day. Once again, the B-CC Chapter is generously providing us access to this large private property south of Poolesville. Woods, hedgerows, streams, fields, and ponds provide a wide range of bird habitats, and migration should be well underway. Trip will start at 7 a.m. at the League's Chapterhouse. Reservations required. Limit 12. Driving directions will be provided to those who make reservations. For reservations and more information, contact the LEADER: Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net or 240-515-4517.

MAY 11 (Saturday) LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK. Half Day. We will be looking for warblers and other migrants on the Wilson Mill and Kingsley Trails. Possible Kentucky Warbler. Limit 10. Reservations required. LEADERS: Woody and Rae Dubois. Contact them for time and directions at denguel@verizon.net

MAY 12 (Sunday) ROCK CREEK PARK, D.C. Near peak time for migrant warblers, vireos, etc. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the Nature Center parking lot. Reservations required. For more information or specific directions, contact the LEADER: Gerry Hawkins maineusa@comcast.net or 571-277-8406 (cell).

JUNE 29 (Saturday) OAKS LANDFILL, LAYTONSVILLE. One-third day. Joint trip with Audubon Naturalist Society. Explore this meadow area in the now-closed landfill. Mostly open terrain with some ponds. Possibility of Dickcissel, Grasshopper Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak and raptors. We have special permission to enter this "closed to the public" area, so reservations are essential. Limit 20. Register online www.anshome.org/adults Meet at 6:45 a.m. on the landfill entrance road at 6001 Rte 108, Laytonsville, Md. For more information, contact the LEADER: Mark England at 240-375-4500 or markengland@canamcontractors.com

Birds of Note January to April 2019

A chasable pair of **Evening Grosbeaks** highlight this issue's Birds of Note Column. Linda Friedland and Moira Davenport were birding along the C&O Canal in the vicinity of Riley's Lock on February 8, when another birder (whose name they did not get) alerted them to two female **Evening Grosbeaks**. Linda and Moira found the birds about 0.5 miles up from the lock. The birds were seen and reported by other Montgomery birders through March 11.

Brenton Reyner reported a **Cackling Goose** from Little Seneca Lake at Black Hill Regional Park on January 4. Additional **Cackling Goose** were seen at Black Hill Regional Park through the end of February and also from the Darnestown Road Ponds in Gaithersburg and Gunner's Lake in Germantown. Dave Czaplak was first to find a **Black Scoter** on the Potomac River in the rapids below the Seneca Breaks adjacent to Violette's Lock on March 16. The scoter cooperatively stuck around for other Montgomery birders to see through March 19.

A **Red-necked Grebe** was a great find by Orietta Estrada at Inspiration Lake in the Kentland's neighborhood in Gaithersburg on February 22. Two cooperative **Red-throated Loons** were seen almost daily on the Potomac River between Riley's and Violette's Lock from March 1 to March 22.

Dave Czaplak reported a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** on the Potomac River at Violette's Lock on February 26.

On January 1, Linda Friedland reported the continuing **Sandhill Crane** pair at their usual spot, a fallow field off Willard Road near Poolesville. The birds were reported sporadically from that loca-

tion through January 19 and refound in the Hughes Road polo field area February through early March.

Dave Czaplak noted an **American Bittern** from Hughes Hollow on March 26. Ann Hobbs reported the first of the year **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at Sligo Creek in the Silver Spring area on March 30.

Susan Hunt and Linda Friedland reported a **Peregrine Falcon** at the Hughes Rd polo fields on January 27. A **Peregrine Falcon** pair continues (and hopefully successfully nesting) in the vicinity of the American Legion Bridge near Cabin John. Mark England's MBC and ANS led trips to the Oaks Landfill (private) near Blue Mash in January, February and March consistently produced one, if not multiple sightings of **Short-eared Owls**.

Linda Friedland and Susan Hunt found two **Red-headed Woodpecker's** at Hughes Hollow on January 1. Additional **Red-headed Woodpeckers** have been seen with consistency throughout the entire McKee-Beshers WMA system and along the nearby C&O Canal all winter. Vicky Baily reported a **Red-headed Woodpecker** from the Agricultural History Farm Park near Derwood on March 19. Keith Rutter, Elda Banks, and Barry Rosenbaum also noted **Red-headed Woodpeckers** from the Silver Spring area over the past few months.

A **Lincoln's Sparrow** was a great winter find for Tim Houghton at Blue Mash on January 28.

Andy Martin

Flight Paths

Susan Strange and husband **Pat Parkinson** spent two weeks on Sanibel Island, Florida in February and visited the usual birding sites such as Corkscrew Swamp and “Ding” Darling NWR. One evening they sat at the bar in a restaurant and struck up a conversation with two young women sitting on adjacent stools. It turned out one worked at Bailey-Mathews National Shell Museum and the other worked at “Ding.” They told us where to see monk parakeets and nesting burrowing owls in Cape Coral; we took their advice and saw both species at Pelican Baseball Complex. Motto of story: You never know where you will get good birding intel.

Birds of Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia

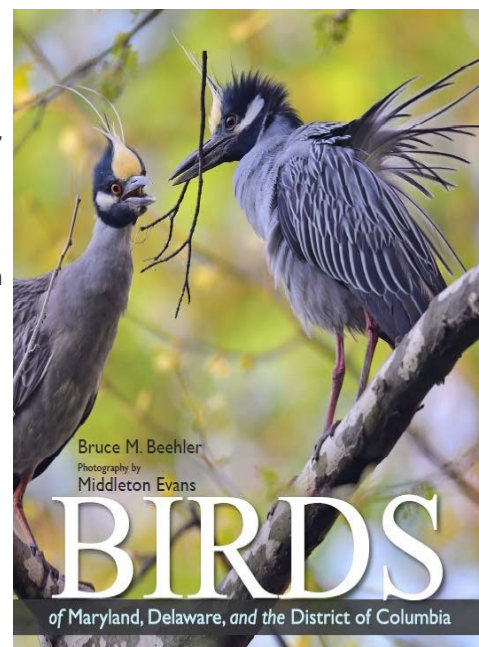
Bruce Beehler and photographer Middleton Evans have just published a stunning new book. The publisher’s review says:

“A Great Blue Heron wades in the shallows of the Potomac River, scanning for unsuspecting prey. Sunlight turns the water translucent as a small school of fish rises to the water’s surface. The heron strikes and moments later is swallowing its quarry—predation in action! This handsome Great Blue Heron is but one of the more than 400 bird species found in Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. It shares the mid-Atlantic with kingfishers, eagles, mergansers, wood warblers, and many more.

Exploring backyard birds, birds of prey, and birds of the open ocean, Smithsonian ornithologist Bruce Beehler and premier nature photographer Middleton Evans have crafted a comprehensive volume unparalleled in its beauty and captivating storytelling. *Birds of Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia* invites readers to experience the birds’ lives as they live them: where they nest, how they forage, their various behaviors, and the natural environments they need to survive.

Beehler offers practical advice on bird-watching, including how to find, attract, and even garden for birds, as well as the best places to see them in season. He also discusses the best birding apps, websites, and gear; provides advice on planning a birding field trip; and recommends ornithological institutions that will help you cultivate a lifelong birding hobby. Finally, Beehler challenges the reader to think about conservation efforts to preserve local bird populations.

With striking color photographs of more than 400 species, this book is a bonanza for nature lovers. A wealth of images immerse the reader in the world of these wonderful creatures. Marvel at the majesty of Ospreys, navigate the ocean with storm-petrels, and nest with Mourning Doves, all while learning about the richness of the birds’ lives, the complexities of their habits, and how we can help keep their populations vibrant and aloft for generations to come.”



The Chat is published in February, May, August and November by the Montgomery Bird Club, a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society.

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Visit our home page at www.montgomerybirdclub.org

Deadline for submissions is the 5th of the preceding month.

Send items to Patrick Newcombe, stonecroft5@verizon.net



Welcome New Members :

Juliana Blome

Patrick Burke

Lilian Cerdeira

Gail Fisher

Shana Marshall

Jacqueline Raiford

David Roberts

Ryan Robison

Tyler Schrufer

Alison Shelton

Lindsay Vacek

Ashlee Van Aot Veer

Lisa Wilcox and Tom Deyo



Trip Reports

Winter Waterfowl Search, January 27. Leader: Andy Martin. Participants: 13 plus leader. Weather: Partly sunny, warming to 40's and a bit breezy at times. Total Species: 41. Thirteen birders from the Montgomery Bird Club joined me to see how many different species of waterfowl we could find in the county in a one-day search. We ended up with seventeen (Canada Goose, Mallard, American Black Duck, American Wigeon, Eurasian Wigeon, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Redhead, Bufflehead, Canvasback, Northern Pintail, Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck and Pied-billed Grebe), if you can forgive the inclusion of Pied-billed Grebe as waterfowl. We started out at Swain's Lock and walked a mile downstream along the C&O Canal checking the river for ducks. In spots, the Potomac River held Buffleheads, Common Mergansers, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked, and American Black Ducks. At times the morning light was just right to reveal the purple iridescence of the males Buffleheads' neck area. Other highlights included views from less than twenty feet of a Great Blue Heron eating a two-foot Garter Snake and three immature Bald Eagles cavorting in the air together. From Swain's Lock we proceeded up River Road to the Poplar Springs Animal Sanctuary (PSAS), where we had special permission to enter this private property. Their barnyard pond was partially frozen but still full of ducks, mostly Mallards and American Wigeon but also held a beautiful male Northern Pintail, three Redheads, and the continuing Eurasian Wigeon which has overwintered at PSAS for the last three years. We left PSAS and headed for the Poolsville waste water treatment lagoon at LM Stevens Park where we added 25+ Gadwall and seven Canvasback to our day list. We finished the day by stopping at Black Hill Regional Park (RP) and nearby Gunner's Lake. At Black Hill RP, we enjoyed a fascinating few minutes watching an immature Bald Eagle make a number of, ultimately futile, attempts to prey on Common Merganser.

Oaks Landfill, Laytonsville, February 2. Leader: Mark England. Participants: 21 plus leader. Weather: Very nice, with clear skies and temperatures in the 40's. Species: Only 19, but plentiful raptors! We met at 3:30 p.m. for this late afternoon visit to the landfill. While standing around and trying to arrange the carpools, a fast-moving Merlin zipped by, the first of many raptors we were to see. At our first stop, we had a distant flying Cooper's Hawk, and a nicely-perched adult Red-shouldered Hawk, and the first of our many Northern Harrier sightings during the trip. There were either three or four harriers seen during the afternoon, including two handsome "gray ghosts." We had multiple sightings of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, both adult and immature. While on top of the landfill hill around 5 p.m., Scott Young identified of about fifteen Rusty Blackbirds in some blackberry bushes, mixed in with many Red-winged Blackbirds, and shortly after that some in the group were noticed looking high overhead. The word was passed back that there was a Short-eared Owl directly above, at least four hundred feet in the air, and, once we got on it, we noticed that the owl (a bright white male) was skirmishing with a much darker bird--a female harrier. It was a remarkable sight, and the Short-eared Owl was a life bird for some in the group. This same owl gradually descended and hid somewhere in the grass, later to come out and hunt near sundown, giving good views to all. With

our heads on a raptor-watching swivel, we didn't look too hard for songbirds, but there were a few sparrow species recorded by some, the best of them White-crowned and Savannah, though few of each.

Blue Mash, February 6. Leader, Stephanie Lovell. Participants: 2 plus leader. Weather: 44°F, steel gray clouds with an occasional shaft of watery sun. It had been some time since I had been to Blue Mash, and I was surprised to see several blow downs right in the first path off the entry road. Everything was very quiet, not many sparrow chips to be heard. The first pond, being shallow was of course frozen over, not a duck in sight. Across the entry road along the fence line the path was VERY mucky, lots of melted water and mud. They've also cut down a lot of the brush along the fence line where the mockingbirds and sparrows congregate. Some Song and White-throated Sparrows were popping in and out of the brush that was left. The big deeper pond was also frozen over, so no ducks there either. We crossed the first dip through a frozen stream and headed to the upper corner. Along the way were more White-throated and Song Sparrows, Cardinals and Mockingbirds. As we rounded the corner, we saw a Red-tailed Hawk sitting on a branch, but he saw us too and took off. Shortly after we heard crows making a ruckus and the hawk flew past chased by three loud crows. Something new, starting at the gate, they have laid down a thick coat of pine and chips all along the path and even installed a pair of pipes over the dip we had to wade through. The new road was scraped all the way past the lake and to the trees, where again, pipes have been laid down over the dip in road out to the parking lot. Not many sightings, other than the usual winter birds, but a nice walk and welcome surprises in improvements to the paths. Seen or heard: Chickadee, Cardinal, Towhee, Song and White-throated Sparrows, Juncos, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Canada Geese, Mockingbird, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Flicker.

Oaks Landfill, February 24. Leader: Mark England. Participants: 22, plus leader. Weather: Mid-50's, with sun breaking through later in the walk. The predicted very high winds over 40 miles per hour held off till the end of the trip; Species: About 28, including some sparrows seen by only a few. The late-afternoon trip started well, with an adult Bald Eagle circling over the adjacent Blue Mash Golf Course. After consolidating into carpools, we headed down to the big pond and enjoyed close views of many Ring-necked Ducks, several Canvasbacks and Bufflehead, and a few Lesser Scaup. Unfortunately, a few Gadwall flushed before we could view them. Dave Powell found a Great Blue Heron high in a distant tree, an interesting find. We had excellent views of a perched Savannah Sparrow in full sunlight, and there were Swamp and Fox Sparrows seen by a very few, as well as the usual Song and White-throated Sparrows. The leader's stakeout spot for White-crowned Sparrows yielded one adult nicely perched for a few minutes. By 5 p.m., we had surprisingly not seen a Northern Harrier, which was odd considering the high number that had been at the landfill since late fall, but we had repeated looks at both Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, probably three or four of each. We went to the top of the hill about 5:15 hoping to see harriers at least, but saw a Wilson's Snipe instead, spotted in flight by Byron Swift. We then drove to the lower end of the landfill, where

Trip Reports

raptors are usually scarce, and were met by a blizzard of birds, including a male Northern Harrier, four Short-eared Owls (possibly flushed by the harrier, or by us), and a close flyby Merlin. The four Short-eared Owls were the most seen at the landfill this winter, and a male and female soon perched about fifty yards away which allowed for a good scope comparison between the lighter male and the darker, streakier female. About 5:45, the predicted high winds materialized, and we attempted to find some Rusty Blackbirds in their usual night roost, but there no birds in those bushes at all. We then headed back to the parking lot, pausing for five minutes to view a perched male Merlin, a nice conclusion to the trip.

MARCH 9 (Saturday) PATUXENT RIVER PARK, Jug Bay Natural Area, Prince George's County. Leader: Clive Harris. Participants: 14 including leader. A period of sustained cold weather the week before the trip meant that some of the anticipated early migrants, which this trip usually brings, were not present – so no Ospreys, no Tree Swallows and no Pine Warblers. We made the most of the conditions which were a bit cool but dry and not windy. At our first stop, at Jackson Landing, we had 42 species, including eight species of waterfowl, with several pairs of Wood Duck chasing each other, and a good variety of late winter birds including nice views of Hermit Thrush, Brown Creeper and Swamp Sparrow. We then moved on to Croom Airport and scanned and walked the fields, as well as the path down to the bridge. The fields had a typically flighty Wilson's Snipe, a first of year for nearly everyone; and a real treat in a group of Savannah Sparrows that showed very well lurking near the only patch of long grass in the field, as they are wont to do. We eventually picked up as many as five Rusty Blackbirds in the wooded swamp and heard some flyover Tundra Swans to bring the day's waterfowl total to nine species. Our second stop added seven more species for a total of 49 for the day.

Informal Evening Bird Walk, March 12. Leader: Jim Green. Participants: 14 started the trip and 9 finished. We met on the bridge at Riley's Lock along the C&O Canal. We then hit Hughes Hollow and finished at Sycamore Landing Road. At Riley's Lock, we saw the three continuing Red-throated Loons, Horned Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers and Bufflehead. Down at Violette's Lock, there were over one hundred Ring-billed Gulls and six Double-crested Cormorants. A walk up the towpath was unsuccessful in locating any Evening Grosbeaks. A Brown Creeper let us know that some winter birds are still around and a quiet Eastern Phoebe let us know that spring is finally approaching. At Hughes Hollow, there were easily over two hundred Ring-necked Ducks and twenty American Wigeon. A single Pied-billed Grebe was seen and also heard giving its unique call. A Canvasback and Common Goldeneye, both unusual for this location, continued since last week. A few in the group briefly saw two Blue-winged Teal in flight. An Eastern Phoebe was seen here as well along with a Swamp Sparrow. On to Sycamore Landing field where we were disappointed by the lack of American Woodcock display. A single bird flew by us and (assuming it was the same bird) gave some distant "peents" but was never heard going up in flight to continue its display. Our lone highlight here was a sighting of a perched Barred Owl and hearing at least three others calling and hooting. It was 42 degrees F when we were listening for the woodcocks. Other

notes...Since River Road is closed near the Kunzang Palyul Choling Temple, we had to detour around taking Partnership Road, then Sugarland Road, then Hughes Roads to get to Hughes Hollow. During our caravan, one driver saw two Wild Turkeys and another car's passenger saw one of the lingering Sandhills Cranes in the cornfield opposite the polo fields. Two others met us at Sycamore Landing Road and earlier had three Red-headed Woodpeckers between the two bridges.

Informal Evening Bird Walk, March 14. Leader: Jim Green. Participants: 17 started the trip and 14 finished. Weather: 60+ degrees F. We started at Riley's Lock then proceeded to Hughes Hollow and Sycamore Landing Road. We were at Riley's Lock for only about forty minutes. Due to the nice day there were multiple boats on the river which had scattered most of the waterfowl. On top of the boat disturbance, 20-25 mile per hour winds came through while we were there. We saw a Red-breasted Merganser near the Virginia shore and two Green-winged Teal fly downriver. The highlight here was an adult Bald Eagle that twice flew directly over our heads. We moved on to Hughes Hollow where we saw Ring-Necked Ducks, American Wigeon, Lesser Scaup and had great looks at Blue-winged Teal. The Pied-billed Grebe was once again heard but not seen. Tree Swallows were back in full force. We estimated there were twenty flying over the impoundments. An Eastern Phoebe and a Swamp Sparrow were present. As we were walking back to the parking lot Gemma Radko proved to us that she still has her "ears" as she heard a Woodcock "peent" twice. The Canvasback was seen on our way out in the back pond. We spent some time on Sycamore Landing Road hoping for Red-headed Woodpeckers. We heard one in the distance but none were seen. The American Woodcocks continued their dismal showing of two nights ago despite the much more favorable weather (60+ degrees F). One bird flew by us - we then heard three to four "peents" and that was it. We never heard this bird go up in flight either. Even the Barred Owls were quiet for the most part. We only heard one hooting during the thirty minutes or so we were standing in the field. We did hear and briefly see a Brown Thrasher initially sounding just like a snorting deer.



Montgomery Bird Club Social 2019

Neither rain nor snow could stop our members and guests from coming to Woodend on Friday evening, March 8th. The always beautiful house really lived up to its designation as a Sanctuary and provided a warm venue for a cheerful Social.



Just above 65 members and 6 invited guests had signed up to attend and just fitted in the large room that looked festive with the white tablecloth-covered tables (thanks Anna Urciolo and Helen Patton!). Our

own talented bartender, Andy Martin, kept us happy with everything from water to wine, including excellent reds donated by member Tom Kimbis. Several members contributed tasty appetizers and Smokey Glen Farm owner Jim Sweet once again donated the delicious dinner. Thank you Jim, and thanks to your two staff who efficiently set up the food and stayed until the end of the meeting, cleaning up and even preparing doggie bags. Pam Oves from the Audubon Naturalist Society and husband Chris were everywhere at once, making sure everything was running smoothly and staying late after nearly everyone was gone. And thanks for the use of the beautiful ANS Library in which Gail Mackiernan displayed books from the Claudia Wilds legacy for sale, which were practically all snatched by participants.

After dinner, and an amazingly swift removal of the tables (thanks to all who helped), the ceremonial part of the meeting started, with our President Stephanie Lovell as MC. Stephanie welcomed Lisa Alexander, CEO of ANS, who reminded us of our long-term common goals and of the friendship between ANS and MBC—a majority of attendants were members of both. We were then treated to a talk by Jeff Gordon, president of the American Birding Association (ABA) who had driven from Delaware



with wife Liz especially to be with us and bestow the Ludlow Griscom ABA Award to Daphne Gemmill, ABA and MBC member, for her numerous contributions to ABA and to the birds and bird

conservation on the Island of Vieques, Puerto Rico. We will have the pleasure of hearing more on Daphne's work when she gives the presentation at our October 2019

monthly meeting.

Mark England received an MBA Award for his dedication in bringing MBC (and ANS) members to the private Oaks Landfill to view the raptors, sparrows, and Short-eared Owls attracted by the special habitat. The award aptly consisted in a montage of Short-eared Owl photos recently captured at the Oaks Landfill by MBC member Ed Vigezzi. Last but not least, Stephanie presented Linda Friedland with the Member of the Year award.



Linda started organizing our bird trips in the '90s and, as mentioned in a previous award, "completely reinvigorated them" and never stopped. Besides this essential function in the Club, Linda served on the Council in various positions including that of Vice-President and President. As if this were not enough, in 1999 she became the editor-in-chief of the first edition of *A Birder's Guide to Montgomery County, Maryland*, an effort that took three years. Linda loves all birds but has a special fondness for warblers (she, Mike Bowen, and Jim Nelson have presented a warbler workshop to our Club and many others). Appropriately her award was a stunning painting of Yellow-throated Warblers, the beautiful work of our artist member Diane Ford.



The evening ended with the traditional members' slide show. There were a record number of participants: 18 members sent slides, mostly of bird photos but also of bird drawings. All

photos and drawings (especially those of Nathan Tea, our youngest participant) were welcomed by oohs and aahs. Each one represented not only a bird but also a story, a happy and often funny moment shared by the photographer with fellow members.

Thanks again to all those who made this Social a great success. See you next year, and bring those who could not make it this time!

—Evelyn Ralston



The Chat
MBC/Maryland Ornithological Society
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Candidates for Officers and Directors 2019—2020

In accordance with Article V of the Montgomery Bird Club Constitution, at the April 24, 2019, Club meeting, the Nominating Committee will announce the following candidates to serve as officers and directors for the Club. Each person nominated has agreed to run and to serve if elected.

President: Stephanie Lovell

Vice-President: Evelyn Ralston

Secretary: Alice Jacobson

Treasurer: Chris Wright

Chapter Director: Moira Davenport

Chapter Director: Cheryl Hogue

Chapter Director: Gail Mackiernan

Chapter Director: Anne Mytch

State Director: Ed Vigezzi

State Director: Scott Young

State Director: Woody Dubois

There were no additional nominations from the floor, and nominations are now closed. The election will take place at the Club's May 22 meeting. The Officers and the State Directors serve one-year terms. The Chapter Directors serve two-year terms.