

A goodbye

There will be no President's Chat in this issue. Stephanie Lovell, our president for the past year and just re-elected for a second year, died on June 11th. She had been stoically undergoing treatment for cancer for several months but kept up a nearly full schedule, leading the Club's monthly meetings and hosting Council meetings at her home, until just a few weeks before her death. Stephanie was a strong, no-nonsense, person. She was passionate about nature in general and birds especially. She was dedicated to the Montgomery Bird Club. I am lucky to have served as vice-president under her as a benevolent mentor turned friend. We have received many tributes to Stephanie. Below are some of these, followed by a biography.

We will miss her very much.



Evelyn Ralston, Vice-President

Tributes to Stephanie

She was one of those rare people who are perpetually willing to accept responsibilities without demur or fuss. **Mike Bowen, MBC**



This June, Hartford Audubon lost a longtime beloved member, Stephanie Lovell. She was a member of HAS since 1995, President of the Society 2003-2005, Member of the Year in 2007, and led 54 trips for HAS. She is remembered for being ardent in her birding and brooking no foolishness when on the prowl. She generously shared her favorite birding haunts, participated on the HAS Facebook page, and continued to lead trips to Delmarva even after moving to Maryland to be closer to her daughter. She also was excellent at Trivial Pursuit and was a Scotch connoisseur. She is missed but, as one member expressed it, probably still birding! **Hartford Audubon Society (Connecticut)**

In January, Stephanie led a weekend birding field trip to the Eastern Shore. She was open to having a co-leader—and I

jumped at the chance. During our trek, I sensed that she wanted to pass on to others her favorite winter birding spots. And she took in each stop as if it were her last visit there. Her face lit up with delight at the Brown-headed Nuthatches, with their squeaky-toy call, that we found at the edge of a parking lot, right where she told us to look

for them. Like the rest of us, she marveled at the spectacle of a late-afternoon fly-in of snow geese at Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge. She eagerly snapped photos of bald eagles and songbirds. The next morning, she led us to her favorite breakfast haunt. Then she tromped through the cold wind at the Ocean City Inlet to track down a glaucous gull. She took in every moment. Stephanie, thank you for sharing the birds of the Eastern Shore in winter. I hope that, in the future, I can lead that trip in your honor. **Cheryl Hogue, MBC Chapter Director**

We will miss Stephanie's leadership, her liveliness, and her passion for the natural world. **Lisa Alexander, Executive Director, Audubon Naturalist Society**

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Stephanie, a Life



Stephanie was born in Detroit but spent much of her life in more exotic locales: her school years in post-war Paris with her Foreign Service family, her young adulthood in New York and then Haiti.

After high school in Massachusetts, Stephanie studied visual arts at Garland Junior College in Boston, then went on to earn a Master of Fine Art at the University of Michigan. (During this time she was briefly married to a fellow UM alum.)

In 1965 during a holiday in Mexico, Stephanie crossed paths with an unlikely suitor, Pierre-Richard Villedrouin, an architecture student in exile from Haiti. They soon married and moved to Long Island. During the next five years Stephanie taught art at the public schools of New Hyde Park, NY, and Pierre-Richard worked for an architecture firm in Manhattan. And the couple had two daughters.

Upon the death in 1971 of Haiti's "President for Life" François Duvalier (aka Papa Doc), Pierre-Richard's uncle asked him to return to the homeland to build a signature house. He took a leave of absence, and with Stephanie and the two girls, moved to Haiti—ostensibly for a year or two.

Haiti in the 1970s was just emerging from a repressive dictatorship, and the new "President for Life," Jean-Claude Duvalier (aka Baby Doc) allowed more

freedoms. Stephanie soon created her own micro-enterprise, Atelier Nushka, where she designed and fabricated embroidered clothing and home goods. At its peak, her clients included Henri Bendel and Jax of NY and boutiques as far-flung as Hawaii and Aspen. A third daughter joined the family in 1973.

Pierre-Richard and Stephanie would divorce in 1976. Nonetheless, Stephanie stayed on in Haiti. She parlayed her micro-enterprise experience into a management job with General Mills, which, like many American companies, took advantage of the low labor costs in Haiti to staff its factories. But when unrest began brewing anew, General Mills pulled out of Haiti, and in 1985 Stephanie made the difficult decision to leave the country where her daughters had grown up and come home to the United States.

By then manufacturing in America was winding down, but for a time Stephanie managed to find work with companies in Hartford, Connecticut. When those jobs inevitably went off-shore, she reinvented herself and eventually became a jobs counselor for the state of Connecticut.

She also discovered a passion for birding, became involved in the Hartford Audubon Society, and traveled widely—Alaska, Brazil's Pantanal and Amazon, France's Camargue. And in Maryland, she returned to her passion for textiles. She was soon selling her colorful quilted items—bedspreads, bags, placemats—a popular fixture at the Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative Market in Bethesda.

Stephanie's greatest joy was her three daughters, who are as cosmopolitan as their mother. Of Stephanie's eight grandchildren, two live in California, four live in France, and two live in Tunisia.

—Lydia Schindler, abbreviated
from a biography by Stephanie's daughters

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Deadline for submissions is the 5th of the preceding month.
Send items to Patrick Newcombe, 12005 Smoketree Road,
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Field Trips

New Club members, new birders, and guests are cordially welcome on every field trip. Don't hesitate to contact field trip coordinator Linda Friedland at linnetl@verizon.net or 301-983-2136 (before 9 p.m.). Registration for joint MBC/ANS trips is done online at ANShome.org/adults.

AUGUST 17 (Saturday) BOMBAY HOOK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE, DELAWARE. Joint trip with Audubon Naturalist Society. (Scheduled for July 20 but postponed due to excessive heat. There are a few spots left.) Shorebirds, marshbirds, and some songbirds. Bring sunscreen, hat, bug repellent, lunch, snacks, and lots of water. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Bombay Hook Visitor Center parking lot. LEADERS: Paul Pisano and Cyndie Loeper. Registration required (15-person limit). Register online at ANShome.org/adults. For more information, contact Paul at cheep@alleale.com.

SEPTEMBER 5 (Thursday) WHEATON REGIONAL PARK. Join us to look for migrant warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. Registrations required. Limit: 10. For more information about meeting time and place and for reservations, email the LEADERS: Woody and Rae Dubois at dengue1@verizon.net.

SEPTEMBER 7 (Saturday) PATUXENT RIVER PARK, JUG BAY NATURAL AREA, PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY. Half-day. Joint trip with Audubon Naturalist Society. Three-hour pontoon boat trip on the Patuxent followed by a trail walk. Search for Sora, also migrant and resident songbirds and waterbirds. Meet at 7 a.m. at the park entrance gate. Bring fee of \$7 per person for park program; boat trip can be cool and a bit damp. LEADERS: Greg Kearns and Karen Fairweather. Registrations required (20-person limit). Register online at ANShome.org/adults. For more information, contact Marta Wagner at wagmara@yahoo.com.

SEPTEMBER 15 (Sunday) ROCK CREEK PARK D.C. FOR NEW BIRDERS. One-third day. The focus will be on identifying migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows, but we'll also look closely at more common birds. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Nature Center (reservations required). For reservations and directions, email the LEADER: Clive Harris at clivegharris@yahoo.com.

SEPTEMBER 21 (Saturday) SNICKERS GAP HAWKWATCH (BETWEEN BLUEMONT & BERRYVILLE, VA). Two-thirds day. Joint trip with Audubon Naturalist Society. Peak time for Broad-winged Hawks. Meet at 10 a.m. at the commuter parking lot at VA 7 and VA 601. Registrations required (no limit). Register online at ANShome.org/adults. Bring tripod, scope, chair, and a packed lunch. For directions and more information, contact the LEADERS: Joan Boudreau and Bob Abrams at icepeep@aol.com or 703-282-9495 (cell).

SEPTEMBER 22 (Sunday) PENNYFIELD TO VIOLETTE'S BIRD STALK. Half-day. For folks who prefer a somewhat later start to their birding, we will meet at 9 a.m. at the Violette's Lock parking lot, end of Violette's Lock Road. We will then carpool to Pennyfield Lock and walk back up the C&O Canal towpath to Violette's Lock. This walk should net an interesting mix of late warblers, other land bird migrants, and probably a few early winter visitors, as we scan the skies and river for raptors and waterbirds. Limit: 12. To sign up, contact the LEADER: Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net or 240-515-4517.

SEPTEMBER 28 (Saturday) CROYDEN CREEK NATURE CENTER. Come discover (or re-discover) a Montgomery County birding gem; 125 species of bird have been recorded in this park. Multiple warblers, thrushes, and Common Nighthawks possible. Some moderate hiking. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Nature Center parking lot. Reservations required (15-person limit). LEADERS: Anne Mytych and Emily Huang. For reservations and more information, contact Anne at amytych@yahoo.com or 240-506-0236 or Emily at ephuang@verizon.net.

OCTOBER 5 (Saturday) LITTLE BENNETT REGIONAL PARK FOR BEGINNERS. All are welcome on this half-day trip, but we especially encourage those new to birding to join us. Meet at 7:30 a.m. We'll slowly walk some of the woodland trails looking for migrant and resident birds. Reservations required. Limit: 8. For reservations and directions, contact the LEADER: Gemma Radko at gradko@yahoo.com.

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Field Trips

OCTOBER 6 (Sunday) KENILWORTH PARK AND AQUATIC GARDENS. Half-day. Explore the diverse habitats of scenic and historic Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, which include a complex of cultivated ponds with rare water lilies and lotuses, marshes, wooded trails, fields, and the Anacostia River. Raptors and migratory warblers, vireos, thrushes, and flycatchers should be present, and rails and bitterns are possibilities. Reservations required. Limit: 25. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. For reservations, contact the LEADERS: Mike Bowen at 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com, or Gerry Hawkins at 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.

OCTOBER 26 (Saturday) BLUE MASH: HONORING OUR PRESIDENTS. Join us for this annual walk in honor of former MBC presidents. We will especially remember those who are no longer with us. Longtime birders and new birders, new members and nonmembers—all are welcome. Meet at 8 a.m. Reservations required. For more information, directions, and reservations, contact the LEADER: Andy Martin at martinap2@verizon.net or 301-529-2066.

NOVEMBER 3 (Sunday) OAKS LANDFILL. Explore this now-closed landfill adjacent to the Blue Mash Nature Trail. Mostly open terrain on a gravel road, including two pond views and one hill climb of moderate difficulty. Possible sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl. Leader will have scope for distant birds. We have special permission to enter this “closed to the public” landfill so reservations are essential. Limit: 16. Meet at 8 a.m. For reservations and more information, contact the LEADER: Mark England at 240-207-3132 (home) or 240-375-4500 (cell).

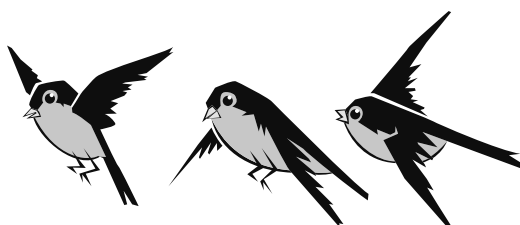
NOVEMBER 11 (Monday) BASICS OF SPARROW ID AT BLUE MASH. Sparrows—Little Brown Jobs, to some—can be tricky to identify. A morning at Blue Mash provides a good opportunity to learn and review key field marks. In addition to common species like White-throated and Song and Swamp, we’ll keep an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Field. This trip is primarily for beginners, but all are welcome. Limit: 8. For reservations, time, and directions, contact one of the LEADERS: Lydia Schindler at lydia13621@gmail.com or Linda Friedland at linnet1@verizon.net.

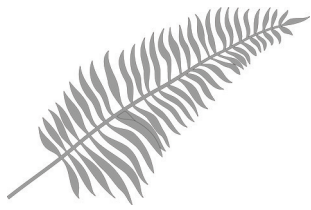
NOVEMBER 24 (Sunday) LILYPONS/NEW DESIGN ROAD. Half-day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and Tree Sparrows, possibly Virginia Rail and American Bittern. For reservations (required) and more information, contact the LEADER: Clive Harris at clivegharris@yahoo.com.

DECEMBER 8 (Sunday) BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Full day (to dusk). Early waterfowl and lingering migrants plus late afternoon marsh watch. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch and drinks. Reservations required. Limit: 12. For reservations and meeting place and time, contact the LEADER: Mark England at 240-207-3132 (home) or 240-375-4500 (cell).

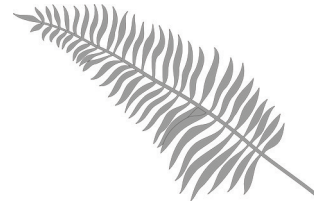
For reports on past field trips, please visit the Montgomery Bird Club website:

<http://www.montgomerybirdclub.org/TripReports.php>





Fall Calendar



SEPTEMBER 18 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. Phil Davis: The Canary Islands and Cape Verde Islands: More Macaronesian Endemics and Other Entertaining Stuff

Phil and Barbara Davis love islands and endemic birds. With one of the world's highest levels of endemism, the Atlantic Macaronesian archipelagoes of the Azores, Madeira, Canaries, and Cape Verde Islands have been a subject of study and exploration for them over the past few years. This is a follow-on to their earlier presentation on the Azores and Madeira Islands. In this presentation, Phil will show and discuss the endemic species and subspecies of the Canary Islands and Cape Verde, as well as some geography, history, culture, interesting factoids, a brief travelogue, and maybe even throw in a little humor (!).

OCTOBER 16 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. Daphne Gemmill: Report from Vieques: Hurricane Maria's Impact on the Birds of Puerto Rico

Daphne Gemmill, also known as the Bird Lady of Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, has studied the birds of Vieques Island for over 35 years. Returning to the island after Hurricane Maria, Daphne will report on her observations on the impact of Maria in 2017 as well as the future challenges associated with climate change on the birdlife of Vieques and other Caribbean Islands' birdlife. Daphne received the 2018 American Birding Association Ludlow Griscom Award for her work in Puerto Rico.

NOVEMBER 13 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. Clive Harris: Gull Workshop

Can you distinguish a first-winter Great from a first-winter Lesser Black-backed Gull? A Laughing Gull from a Black-headed Gull? If not, come to this meeting! Clive will share his extensive knowledge of Gull identification. Hopefully a trip will follow in winter.

DECEMBER 11 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m.

Annual Wine & Cheese followed by special meeting, to be announced.



Bird Club News

In May, youth members of the Montgomery Bird Club had fun competing in the **World Series of Birding** in an all-state high school team, a middle school team, and a carbon-free (cycling) team. YMOS is a subgroup of the Maryland Ornithological Society and runs birding trips for youth throughout the year. More information is available at <https://mdbirds.org/young-birders/> or by contacting George Radcliffe at radclifg@gmail.com.

Young birders are also invited to attend the “**Frontiers in Ornithology: A Symposium for Youth**” on September 28. The Symposium focuses on “cutting-edge technologies being used in avian research and study, careers in ornithology, and how to pursue that focus in either higher education or vocationally.” It is hosted by the Delaware Ornithological Society at Ashland Nature Center in Delaware. The keynote speaker is Scott Weidensaul, a renowned author, co-founder of Project SNOWstorm, and ornithologist. For more information, visit <https://www.delawarenaturesociety.org/activities/events/frontiers-in-ornithology-a-symposium-for-youth/>.

Several Club members attended the **2019 MOS Conference in Chestertown, Kent Co.** (May 31 to June 2). We enjoyed the Keynote presentation by Jeff Gordon, president of the ABA, heard a chorus of Northern Bobwhites at the Chino Farms and Black Rail(?) at Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge, had a

lovely walk through Adkins Arboretum with a Prothonotary Warbler just a few feet away, and ran through a practice round for the third Breeding Bird Atlas that was introduced by Walter Ellison, the Project Coordinator for the second Atlas. Ikumi Kayama (Patuxent Bird Club) won the pin contest for a lovely Grasshopper Sparrow (see photo). The weather was great and so was the food, the beds in student dormitories less so. The 2020 MOS Conference will be somewhere in Western Maryland and it will take place earlier in May for increased bird variety. Consider attending and, even better, responding to MOS’s request for volunteers to help in organizing it.



The weather was exceptionally nice for the **Club picnic at Black Hill Regional Park**, on June 8 and attracted a good number of participants (see photo), including our youngest ever participant: a three-week old little girl who accompanied her older sister, brothers, parents, and grandma. Delicious dishes were brought by the participants and a beautiful sunset birdwalk followed with 42 species found.



Birds of Note (April to mid-June 2019)

Shorebirds highlight this issue's "Birds of Note" column including the first **Whimbrels** seen in Montgomery County in 20 years. Dave Czaplak and MaryAnn Todd found a Whimbrel at Violette's Lock on May 23. The bird hung around most of the day allowing a number of other birders to twitch this species for their Montgomery County life lists. Dave also reported a three-Whimbrel flyby at the same location on May 29. The only previous Whimbrel eBird record for the county comes from the Potomac River at Violette's Lock in May 1999.

Heavy rainfall during the first few weeks of May made for some great shorebirding. Fifty-eight **Short-billed Dowitchers** were found on May 12 in a large rain puddle off Sugarland Road near the entrance to Homestead Farms. Later that day, Lydia Schindler and some fellow birders were present when a **Ruddy Turnstone** dropped into the same puddle. Two **Dunlins** were noted at same location the next day. And for a week or so afterwards as this puddle slowly evaporated, it produced **Semipalmated Plover, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, and Pectoral, Least, Semipalmated, Western, Solitary, and Spotted Sandpipers**. Just goes to show what's probably passing over our heads every spring!

Black-bellied Plovers were noted by Dave Czaplak at Violette's Lock on May 10 and 19, by Brenton Reyner and Dave Roberts at the Patton Turf Farm and by Alex C. along Sugarland Road on May 13. A **Sanderling** was seen at Violette's Lock on May 31.

A great find by Concetta Goodrich was a breeding plumage **Red-necked Phalarope** in the upper-end mudflats at Lake Frank on June 1. Concetta also reported a **Trumpeter Swan** from Lake Frank on May 27.

Dave Czaplak reported all four of the likely migrant tern species from the Potomac River adjacent to Violette's Lock, including **Forster's Tern** on April 5, **Caspian Tern** on April 8, **Black Tern** on May 14, and **Common Tern** on June 10.

Tom Kimbis noted a **Ring-necked Pheasant** (possibly a dog-training bird escapee) along Sycamore Landing Road on April 6. John McDonough was driving along White Ground Road in the vicinity of Hoyles Mill Conservation Park on June 7 and came across a family group of nine **Northern Bobwhite** Quail (one adult, eight juveniles).

Common Nighthawks made for a delightful showing late afternoons and early evenings this past spring with the first

individuals being reported over Hughes Hollow by Douglas Graham on May 7 and most recently over Violette's Lock by Linda Friedland on June 4.

Howard Youth was first to report a **Sora** from Hughes Hollow on April 13. Michael Bowen noted a **Common Gallinule** from the same location on April 29. Nathan Tea heard a **Virginia Rail** passing over his house while listening for nocturnal flight calls on May 15.

Woody and Rae Dubois found a FOS (first of the season) **Black-crowned Night-Heron** at the Wheaton Branch Stormwater Ponds on April 4. Brenton Reyner reported two **Least Bitterns** at Hughes Hollow on April 30. **American Bitterns** were quite evident this spring, being reported on a regular basis from Hughes Hollow late April through May. Lydia Schindler saw one in flight at Hughes Hollow as recently as June 7. Possibly a breeder? American Bittern reports also came in from Wootton Mills Park in Rockville and Green Hills Farm Wetland in the far eastern portion of Gaithersburg.

Nathan and Stella Tea found a beautiful breeding plumage **Cattle Egret** at Hughes Hollow on April 28. Dave Czaplak noted a Cattle Egret flyby at Violette's Lock on May 5. A first spring plumage **Little Blue Heron** was found at Hughes Hollow on May 5, and a **Glossy Ibis** showed up at the same location on May 14.

Jim Nelson continued his streak of finding **Golden Eagles** in Montgomery County while leading a Montgomery Bird Club field trip at Hughes Hollow on April 7. Everyone had great looks at the flyover Golden Eagle.

The first **Broad-winged Hawk** of the season was reported over Green Hills Farm Wetland on April 10 by Brenton Reyner. Nathan Tea spotted a **Swallow-tailed Kite** over Wheaton Regional Park on May 17. Dave Czaplak spotted a **Mississippi Kite** feeding on dragonflies over the Potomac River adjacent to Violette's Lock on May 22. Mississippi Kites, sometimes as many as two individuals, continued to be seen in same vicinity as recently as June 16.

Peregrine Falcons continue to use a nest box under the American Legion Bridge, with a chick seen as recently as June 15.

Nathan Tea and Josephine Kalbfleisch were out for some pre-dawn birding near the Hughes Road polo fields when they twice heard the distinct nocturnal flight call of a **Barn Owl**.

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Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper found a **Least Flycatcher** at Wheaton Regional Park on April 29. Chris Wright was birding along the C&O Canal at Pennyfield Lock on May 6 and came across an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**.

Dave Roberts noted a **Marsh Wren** at Hughes Hollow on April 30. Brenton Reyner found a **Black-billed Cuckoo** at Green Hills Farm Wetland on May 1.

While checking for the return of **Summer Tanagers** in the woods across from the entrance to Summit Hall Turf Farm along River Road on April 28, Clive Harris found a male **Golden-winged Warbler**. Robin Skinner was first to note the return of **Kentucky Warblers** to Little Bennett Regional Park on April 30. Don Simonson found a Kentucky Warbler along Violette's Lock Road on May 10.

Summer Tanagers are continuing their recent trend of becoming more common in Montgomery County. Oliver

Patrick reported a Summer Tanager from Willard Avenue Neighborhood Park in Bethesda on May 1. Additional reports of Summer Tanagers have come from Violette's Lock, the River Road area near Summit Hall Turf Farm, Izaak Walton League property in Poolesville, and the Serpentine Barrens Community Park near Potomac.

Joshua Heiser noted a rare-for-spring **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Pennyfield Lock on May 5. Don Simonson (along with CJ DeMarco) was elated to add Lincoln's Sparrow to his Montgomery County lifelist by finding one on the Bretton Woods Country Club property near Violette's Lock on May 11. The Watkins Ponds in King Farm subdivision of Rockville seemed like an odd spot for Dave Powell to find Montgomery County's FOS **Vesper Sparrow** on April 2. Nathan Tea noted the nocturnal flight call of a **Dickcissel** over his house on May 17.

As of June 18, 230 different bird species have been reported from Montgomery County in 2019.

—Andy Martin



Meet a Trip Leader: Clive Harris

The Montgomery Bird Club is very lucky to have Clive Harris as a member. Besides being a well-respected birder with great expertise and knowledge, Clive has contributed a tremendous amount of time and effort to the Montgomery Bird Club in various roles. Clive joined the Montgomery Bird Club in 1996 and has served as Chapter Director, Vice-President, and President. He began leading bird walks for the Bird Club in 2013. He will be leading two trips this fall: his annual trip to Lilypons/New Design Road as well as a trip to Rock Creek Park. Chat editor *Patrick Newcombe* interviewed Clive.

How did you start birding?

My father was interested in birds and he used to take me on bird walks. I grew up in Hong Kong, and we started going on walks with the local birdwatching society, including to the shrimp ponds on the border with China, which later became the Mai Po Reserve. We saw some pretty good birds there.

What is your favorite Montgomery County birding spot?

We are fortunate in having a lot of great places to bird so it's hard to choose (though I do wish we still had a



functioning landfill!). If I had to choose, I would pick the fields south and west of Poolesville in the agricultural preserve, with their pockets of woodland. It's a lot of fun driving those in spring and listening to all the birdsong.

What is your favorite bird?

I like lots of species groups, but my favorite thing to do is sort through a flock of peeps in late summer when the juvenile birds are coming through. I also like gulls, though our area is not great for a good diversity of gulls, and seabirds. If I had to pick a single species it would be from a different group—Acadian Flycatcher—because it is so present and obvious here even in the midsummer heat.



What is your favorite bird book?

It's one of the earliest of the Helm ID guides, *Shorebirds: An Identification Guide* by Hayman, Marchant and Prater. I used to pore over it when I first got into shorebirds in the mid-90s. It's a classic and still as good as any guide for that species group.

What is your most significant birding accomplishment?

In 2018 I had an accidental Big Year because of the places I went to for leisure and work—I ended up with 1,015 species for the year. I'm not sure this is an accomplishment, although I did put a lot of effort into chasing birds locally to bump the total.

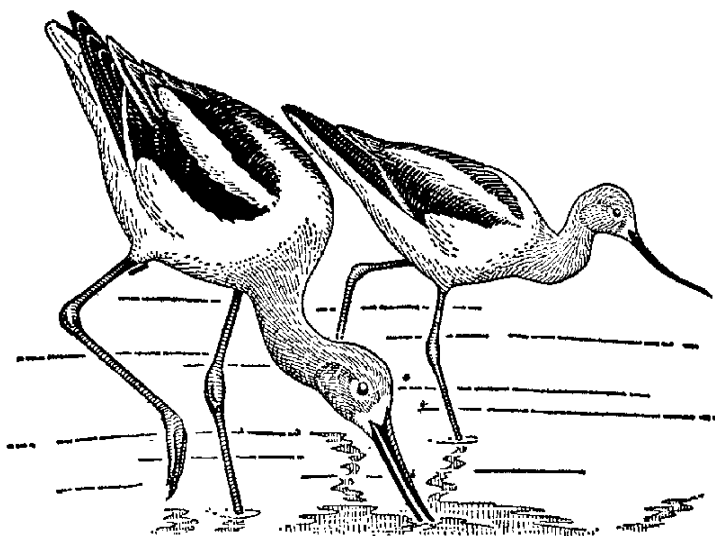
What is your most memorable birding experience?

I've been lucky enough to have traveled the world a lot and been to some of the world's top birding locations. If I had to pick one trip, it was the one I did to Nome, Alaska, last year. I always wanted to go to the tundra where some of the birds we see in migration and winter breed, and it

exceeded my expectations. It was also great to see birds familiar from the Old World, like Bluethroat and Northern Wheatear, alongside New World songbirds. Of the places I go to regularly, I'd pick a spot from my home country, England—the Goyt Valley near where my mother lives. In spring this has breeding Eurasian Curlew and European Golden Plover, Wood Warbler, Nightjar and Tree Pipit, and the moors have Red Grouse (Willow Ptarmigan) year-round. Some very special birds.

What inspires you about birding?

Every day is different. You get the chance to see something new every time you go out—whether it's a bird doing something unusual, the passage of birds on migration on a particular day, a bird you didn't expect to see at one of your local spots, or something else. Every day is an opportunity to learn something.



Chapter Chatter

Don Messersmith wrote that he had two days of excellent birding in Ohio with Bill Murphy and friends at Magee Marsh (Crane Creek) in May. He saw 18 species of warblers. “The highlight was Kenn Kaufman, the nature books author, asking if he could have his picture taken with me, because of my being a pioneer in overseas birding.”

Bruce Beehler sent the following: “As stage one of my new birding adventure, in late April I headed to the Lower Rio Grande Valley to await the arrival of northbound Hudsonian Godwits. Using eBird, I followed the godwits north through Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, and Manitoba, ending my trip at Churchill, where the species was establishing breeding territories in the fen southwest of town. I was in Churchill at the very end of May, when it seemed more like winter than spring—with daily snow showers, remnant snow drifts, and both the Churchill River and Hudson Bay still icebound. Those interested in getting a sense of what I saw (including lots of godwit images) can re-visit my twice-weekly blogs of the trip at <https://birdsandnaturenorthamerica.blogspot.com> (please join!). For stage two I will be back on the road in early August as the godwits begin staging in James Bay for their travels south to Chile. Stage three will commence in June 2020 and will take me to Alaska as well as the Northwest Territories of Canada, to the two other breeding grounds of Hudsonian Godwit.”

Marta Wagner wrote that in early June, after attending a family wedding in Ann Arbor, Michigan, she ventured farther north to see a Kirtland’s Warbler on its breeding ground. “Based in a comfortable motel in Greyling, Michigan, I joined a tour led by a summer intern at nearby Hartwick Pines State Park. The tour, which cost \$10 and required no preregistration, started at 7 a.m. in the park visitor center. The intern provided information about the status of Kirtland’s Warblers before leading the group to breeding habitat a short drive away. Upon arrival at the site, the group heard several Kirtland’s Warblers singing, but none was visible at first. The intern led the group along two different paths, noting that the target birds usually show themselves between 9 and 10 a.m. On schedule, one male appeared quite close to the path and foraged. As the group discussed the satisfying view, the bird reappeared in the path right next to where the group was standing and foraged even closer than it had before. Some members of



the group also saw a female and a young male.” Marta says she will gladly share more details of her trip with anyone interested in trying next spring.

In April, Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper joined two friends from England for two weeks in Panama. This was Gail and Barry’s third trip to that country, but reports of breeding Crested and Harpy Eagles provided a great reason for another visit! The group spent about five days at the famous Canopy Tower near the Panama Canal and six days at the Canopy Camp in the far-eastern province of Darién.

Gail writes, “The Canopy Tower is a former U.S. military facility that has been converted into a unique and comfortable lodge. Located in Soberanía National Park on the top of Semaphore Hill, about an hour’s drive from Tocumen Airport in Panama City and very close to the Panama Canal, the top of the tower provides an amazing view over the forest and into the canopy of the surrounding trees. It is also an excellent spot for observing diurnal hawk migration as well as canopy species. Canopy Camp is located in the extreme east of Panama in the Darién Province, bordering Colombia. It’s home to the vast wilderness commonly called the ‘Darién Gap,’ a roadless swathe of forest that is the ‘missing link’ in the Pan-American Highway. Protected areas include Darién National Park, encompassing more than 500,000 hectares with serrated peaks, coastal lagoons and mangrove swamps. Staying at the Camp is a ‘glamping’ experience, with upscale floored tents, en suite facilities, and wine at dinner!

“The guides at both lodges are superb, with an unsurpassed knowledge of the area and an incredible ability to find birds! In two weeks we four tallied about 300 species of birds, as well as a number of interesting mammals, including cute Sloths, noisy Howler Monkeys—the jungle

alarm clock—and a new one on us, the Olingo (an arboreal Raccoon relative). Bird highlights were many, topped perhaps by smashing views of a Harpy Eagle at its nest feeding a large chick, as well as a totally unexpected encounter with a huge Crested Eagle perched along a remote road, unconcerned

with the awestruck birders. Other great birds included close views of a confiding Black-crowned Antpitta, the enigmatic Sapayoa (in its own family, most closely related to the Broadbills of Asia), Ocellated and Bare-crowned Antbirds, and thousands of Mississippi Kites winging their way north over the forest.”

—Compiled by Chris Wright

Field Trip Tips

With migration underway, Montgomery Bird Club kicks off the birding season with a wide array of trips, thanks to leaders who volunteer their time and expertise. Here are some tips to help ensure that our trips are productive and enjoyable for everyone:

- Please stay with the group, keep talking to a minimum, and walk with a soft tread.
- Let the leader lead, staying behind him or her, and remember that the leader is here for the whole group. Don't forget that shorter folks may be standing behind you.
- When the leader gets a bird in the scope, take a quick look, then move aside so that others can get a view before the bird flies.
- If possible, avoid “thrust arm” (pointing) if a bird is close by, as that movement may flush it. (Unfortunately, unless your arms are taped to your sides, this is the most difficult field trip tip to adopt!)
- Leaders often use the clock-face method of helping birders locate a bird—“The bird is at 11 o'clock in that sycamore tree.” Imagine the tree as the face of a clock, and look for the bird on a branch on the left side of the tree near the top.
- See lots of good birds!

—Linda Friedland, Field Trip Coordinator



Notice of Election and Proposed Amendment to the Montgomery Bird Club Constitution, for Action at the September 18 Club Meeting

The recent death of Stephanie Lovell has left the Montgomery Bird Club (MBC) without a President. As of Stephanie's passing, under Article II, Section 2, of the MBC Manual of Operations, Evelyn Ralston, as Vice President, began to "perform the duties of the President" of MBC, but she did not automatically become President. The MBC Constitution does not provide for the Vice President automatically to become President. Instead, Stephanie's death creates a vacancy on the MBC Council. Under Article VIII of the MBC Constitution, Section 5 provides that "Any vacancy on the Chapter Council shall be filled by a special election at the next regular meeting. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for such vacancies and nominations from the floor will be accepted." The next regular MBC meeting is September 18.

As of the September 18 meeting, there will be 9 months left in the one-year term of the MBC President to be filled. Under long-standing MBC practice, this would have been Stephanie's last term as President, and next May MBC would elect a new President (typically the current Vice President) and a new Vice President, with the expectation that each would serve two successive one-year terms. Then the expectation would be that the Vice President would be nominated to become President and would serve for two terms as President. Evelyn Ralston was willing to be nominated to become President at the September meeting, provided the Nominating Committee could find a person willing to be elected Vice President who was prepared to serve as Vice President for two terms and as President for two terms.

Unfortunately, due to the urgent timing of this process, the Nominating Committee was not able to find a person willing to do this. So Evelyn asked the Nominating Committee to see whether

an appropriate candidate could be found to serve as President only for the remaining 9 months without committing to further service. This would allow the next Nominating Committee to nominate candidates under the regular schedule for President and Vice President for election next May to full terms. The Nominating Committee was able to find a good candidate for President.

In accordance with Article VIII, Section 5, of the MBC Constitution, at the September 18 MBC meeting, the Nominating Committee will nominate Anna Urciolo to be President. Anna has already served very ably as MBC Vice President and President and has agreed to serve as President for the remainder of this term. After nominating Anna, the Nominating Committee will ask for any additional nominations from the floor and then will hold the vote. Whoever is elected will become President immediately upon election.

It is unfortunate that the MBC Constitution does not provide for the automatic elevation of the Vice President to President in the event the President position becomes vacant between annual elections of officers. The Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) bylaws follow the approach traditionally done in most organizations that the Vice President automatically becomes President when that position becomes vacant before the next scheduled election. Article XIII of the MBC Constitution provides in Section 2 "This Constitution may be amended, in any manner not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc., by two-thirds vote of the active members present at any regular or special Chapter meeting, of which due notice setting forth the amendment shall have been

given to the members not less than ten days prior to the meeting.” The MBC Council has decided to propose an amendment to the MBC Constitution to fix this succession problem and align our practice with that of MOS.

In accordance with Article XIII, Section 2, of the MBC Constitution, the MBC Council proposes the following amendment to the Constitution to be presented for a vote by the MBC membership at the September 18 MBC meeting:

Amend Section 5 of Article VIII, to read as follows:

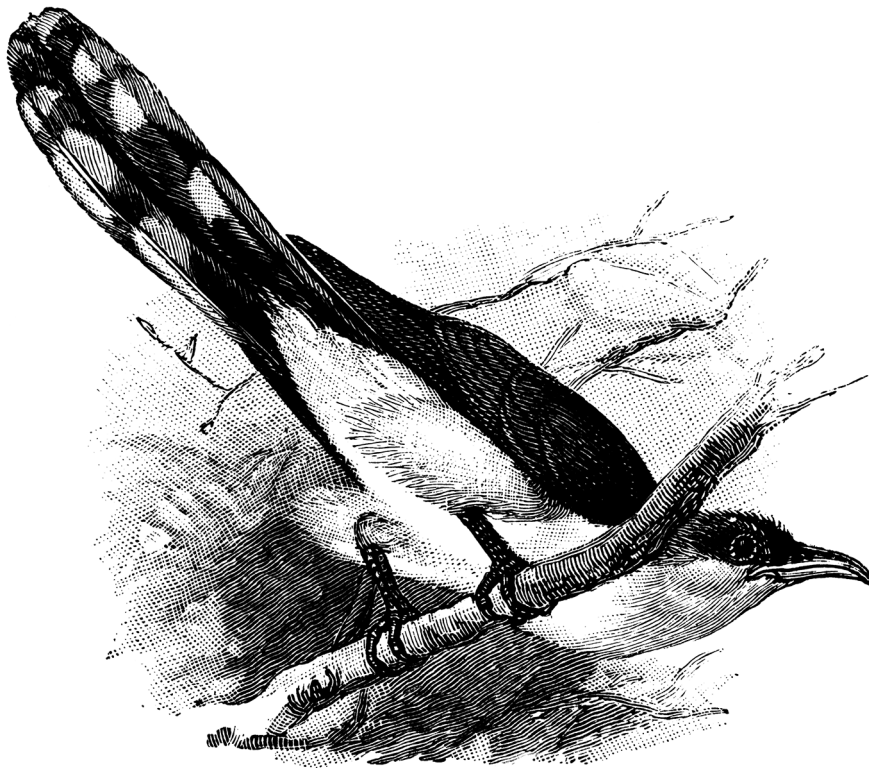
Sec. 5 Any vacancy occurring on the Chapter Council shall be filled in the following manner:

(a) The President: The Vice President shall automatically assume the office of the President;

(b) Any other vacancy on the Chapter Council shall be filled by a special election at the next regular meeting of the Chapter. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for such vacancies, and nominations from the floor will be accepted.

The vote on this proposed amendment will be held immediately after the election of a new President.

—*Jim Nelson*



MBC Treasurer's Report for 2018-19 and Budget for 2019-20

I'm pleased to report that once again our Club has finished the year in good financial standing, with substantial reserves in the bank and with 204 memberships renewed as of April 30.

During the year the Club received \$7,744.00 in income and spent \$7,420.83. By far the largest source of income is from dues paid by members to the chapter, of which 60 percent is forwarded to the Maryland Ornithological Society. In 2018-2019 we received \$5,055 in dues and passed \$3,190 to MOS. However, this was the first year that members could renew using the MOS website, and 43 people did so. As a result, MOS paid our Club \$846 as our share of these dues payments.

The Club uses most of its income to pay for eight monthly meetings and for producing the quarterly newsletter, The Chat. Both of these activities came in as budgeted. In addition, the Club holds an annual Social at Woodend, which has been subsidized by Smokey Glen Farm for the past three years, thanks to Club member Jim Green. The Club's practice has been

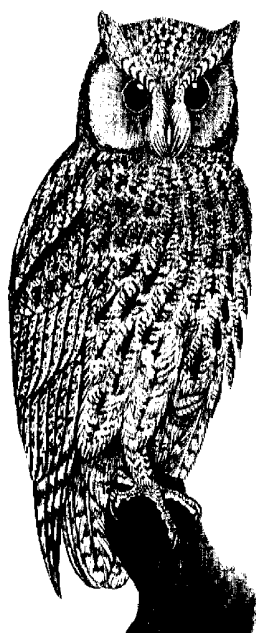
to charge members for the dinner and to use the proceeds to sponsor a bird-friendly activity in Montgomery County. This year the dinner raised \$1,054 after all costs were paid.

In December 2017 the Club received \$1,500 as a bequest through MOS from the estate of Chandler Robbins. The Council is holding this money with the expectation of using it to coordinate our web presence with that of the new MOS website. For this reason (and the surplus from the Social), the Club's balance sheet may appear slightly more flush than would be expected.

As of April 30, we had \$11,194.85 in our checking account with PNC Bank, and as of March 30 we had \$31,953.28 in our Vanguard account.

The budget for 2020 was approved by the Council on May 10, 2019.

—Chris Wright, Treasurer



	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
INCOME			
Dues	7,000.00	5,240.00	5,000.00
Wilds Fund	1,000.00	1,095.00	1,000.00
Social/Picnic	1,500.00	1,522.00	1,500.00
Site Guide/Misc.	100.00	152.00	50.00
TOTAL	9,600.00	8,009.00	7,550.00
EXPENDITURES			
MOS	4,400.00	3,310.00	3,150.00
Chat	1,200.00	1,130.04	1,200.00
Website	850.00	177.00	200.00
Office supplies/ Misc.*	150.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Rent/Speakers	2,000.00	1,248.35	1,300.00
Social/Picnic	1,000.00	675.44	700.00
TOTAL	9,600.00	7,540.83	7,550.00

* Includes donations

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/ RENEWAL 2019-20

Note: You can now join or renew using the MOS website and pay with a credit card or PayPal.

Select "Membership" at <https://mdbirds.org/join/chapters/montgomery-bird-club>

I/we wish to join the Montgomery Bird Club, a chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, for the year beginning September 2016 and enclose dues for:

- ☐ Individual—\$30 (\$10 Chapter/\$20 State)
☐ Sustaining—\$70 (\$20 Chapter/\$50 State)
☐ Household—\$40 (\$15 Chapter/\$25 State)
☐ Life—\$1200 (\$200 Chapter/ \$1000 State)
☐ Junior—\$6 (\$1 Chapter/\$5 State)
☐ Associate*— \$8

**member of MOS through another chapter*

\$_____ Dues
\$_____ Donation to Claudia Wilds Fund*
\$_____ Additional Donation to MOS
\$_____ Total enclosed

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Total number of Club members _____
(Household, Sustaining, or Life memberships)

Please make check payable to MBC/MOS and mail to:
Helen Patton, 429 Hamilton Avenue, Silver Spring, MD
20901

* To supplement the Club's income for promoting local understanding of birds and of the need for habitat protection.

NAME(S)

STREET ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

TELEPHONE

E-MAIL

☐ Check if you **DO NOT** want your email address listed on the members-only section of our website.

List your cellphone here if you **DO** want it listed on the members-only section of our website. _____

☐ Check if you would like to receive the *Maryland Yellowthroat* by mail. Otherwise you will be notified when the *Yellowthroat* is posted on the MOS website.



The Chat
MBC/MOS
429 Hamilton Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20901

