

President's Chat

What strange, difficult times we find ourselves in. Everyone's life is somehow affected by the pandemic, the shutting down of the economy, of the schools, of the borders. I hope you and your loved ones are doing all right.

As birders, we have an advantage: nature and birds command our attention, and provide distraction and solace. Didn't spring migration feel especially good this year? Everything was getting cancelled, but the birds were arriving on time, the catbirds in our backyards, the Louisiana Waterthrushes at Pennyfield Lock, the bluebirds visiting nest boxes.

Besides, we are in the first year of the 2020-2024 Breeding Bird Atlas. Thanks to eBird, everyone birding anywhere in Maryland can contribute to the Atlas (<https://ebird.org/atlasmdcc/about>). And what's important is not just to find birds but to observe and interpret their behavior. Is this pair breeding or just passing through? Are they building a nest? I am lucky to have two Purple Martin boxes less than two miles from my home. In previous years, I was happy to see them back; I'd shoot a few photos and that was it. This year I keep returning. I have witnessed birds steal their neighbors' nesting material and watched an adult try to snatch a dragonfly meant for a young--of which there are now 12 to 15, all still in the nests but bigger and bolder by the day. Better than Netflix!

Sadly, even birding cannot bring the same joy to all. On May 25, a Black birder, Christian Cooper, was the victim of a racist incident in New York's Central Park. A "Black Birder Week" was organized to raise awareness in the birding community and became linked to the Black Lives Matter movement. The MOS Council has passed a resolution formalizing its opposition to racism; you should have received it on June 10 and it will be posted on our website. I strongly believe in the importance of diversity and the necessity to make everyone feel welcome amongst us.





As I'm writing, many states are experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases. We cannot predict what will happen in Maryland with regard to group gatherings. It is good that we have rapidly adapted to Zoom as a second best to in-person meetings. Our fall meetings will most likely remain virtual, but our field trips will restart, with restrictions (see p. 9). We will keep you informed.

At the May meeting I did not properly thank Anna Urciolo for taking over as President after Stephanie Lovell's untimely death last year. Thank you so much, Anna, for a great job! (Anna thus becomes the only person to have served twice as President.) And thanks to those who are taking on new roles on the Council, especially Scott Young, our new Vice President. To get to know Scott better, read his interview by Lydia Schindler on page 2.

Have a good summer. With trips canceled, we can focus on our local birds. And by all means be careful. We need everyone back in September, in good health.

– Evelyn Ralston

 CONTENTS 	
Meet Scott Young, MBC Vice President.....	2
Club Members Survey.....	3
Meet New Designer and Editor.....	3
Birds of Note.....	4
YMOS News.....	5
Chapter Chatter.....	6-7
Fall Field Trips.....	8-9
Fall Meeting Schedule.....	10
Membership Form.....	11
New Members.....	12

Meet Scott Young, MBC Vice President

Interview by Lydia Schindler

It was a Pileated Woodpecker that drew Scott Young into birding: The critter was vigorously demolishing his split rail fence. “Splinters were flying everywhere,” he recalls.

First Scott got the fence repaired, then he got a bird guide and binoculars. Now he owns a shelf of bird guides and he birds daily. In Montgomery County, this usually means the C&O. When he’s not going out, the day starts at the kitchen window.

Scott was born in Ohio, grew up in Connecticut, and went to summer camp in Maine. Nature was important but birds hadn’t entered the picture yet. He did, however, always carry his camera along.

When it was time for college Scott headed to Maryland, and he has been here just about ever since: Johns Hopkins for undergrad, then an MD and then a PhD (in pharmacology). He took his internship at University of Maryland, and a residency in neurology at UVA. His next move was to the National Institutes of Health, in 1984, and he is still there today, Chief of the Section on Neural Gene Expression at the National Institute of Mental Health; his lab has pioneered studies showing (in mice) how a specific small area of the hippocampus influences social memory.

Johns Hopkins is also where Scott met his wife, Alice, herself a respected scientist (and currently Deputy Director of the NIH Intramural Sequencing Center sequencing group). Gaithersburg residents since 1984, the couple have a son and a daughter, both married in the past few years and both new parents. Despite Scott’s best efforts, Alice (an excellent spotter) remains birding-nonchalant. (Even so, she has made her mark with delicious dishes for the Club’s barbecues.)

Once that Pileated Woodpecker had caught his eye, Scott started to bird locally, primarily at Pennyfield Lock. Someone soon introduced him to the riches of Hughes Hollow. He discovered MBC through a bird walk led by Jim Nelson. And he credits Bob Augustine, whom he met on his first Christmas Count, for sharing his encyclopedic knowledge of all things avian.

Currently the VP is atlasing his home block, Rockville NW, which encompasses good parts of the Muddy Branch Greenway Trail and the so-called Darnestown Ponds (the old National Geographic lakes). He is keen to grow his county list, currently hoping for a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher or even a Cerulean Warbler.

Even though Scott’s been to every continent except Antarctica, most of those travels predated birding. Last winter he took the MOS “owl trip” to Minnesota (as did Evelyn Ralston and former MBC member Maryanne Dolan); they lucked into a 5-owl-species afternoon, plus mild weather. Last year he and Alice made a loop through Texas, where he enjoyed “the iconic Roadrunner” and Gambel’s Quail. He especially enjoyed birding in Tanzania with ABA in 2018 (“Cut-throat Finch wins for best name”) as well as during work-related trips to Brazil in 2017 and Israel and Palestine in 2019. His plans to visit Florida and Costa Rica this spring and Arizona this summer have been scuttled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

As for bird photography, last year Scott switched to a Sony Cybershot RX10 M4. “It is lighter and cheaper than the SLR with the 100-400mm telephoto that I had been lugging around. I find the images through its Zeiss optics of at least equal quality and it is easier to capture birds in flight. I managed to convince our club’s president to get one as well,” he says. “She’s still speaking to me.”



Scott and Alice Young



Club Members Survey

On June 18, a survey with questions about virtual vs. in-person meetings was sent to every member as a "Mailchimp" mail. The deadline for responding was July 1. Thank you to the more than 60 members who answered, with many taking the time to explain their position. This really helps us understand what you wish us to do. A detailed (anonymous) overview of the results will be sent to all, again as a Mailchimp.

In the meantime, I am wondering if the many members who did not reply had received the survey. A member told me she had not and could not find it in her spam/junk box. If this is your case, please let me know, have a look at the questions below, and answer them if you wish. Email your answers to evelynralston@icloud.com.

1. Since April our meetings at the Potomac Presbyterian Church have been replaced by Zoom meetings. What do you think?

- A. I would like to have Zoom meetings forever.
- B. Zoom is OK for now but I prefer in-person meetings.
- C. I cannot stand Zoom.
- D. It's not so simple, let me explain:

2. When would you will feel ready for in-person meetings?

- A. When the County says it's OK.
- B. If I can be sure that keeping distances will be possible and that everyone will be masked.
- C. When the number of new Covid-19 cases per day in the County drops below
- D. Not before there is a vaccine and I have been vaccinated.
- E. It's not so simple, let me explain:

– Evelyn Ralston

A New Designer and Editor for The Chat!

Kindly responding to the ad in the May issue, two members have stepped forward and offered their help to produce the *Chat*. Pam Oves is the designer, starting with the current issue. Stella Tea will be editor starting with the November issue. Thanks a lot to both! Let them introduce themselves.



Pam Oves is the new designer of the *Chat*. Her career took a radical turn when, with a B.A. and M.A. in History, Pam found a passion for administrative work. She has worked for 14 years as the Office Manager for the Audubon Naturalist Society, where she designs the *Naturalist Quarterly*. She and her husband became avid birdwatchers after moving to Lake Churchill in Germantown 15 years ago. They love to travel and to add new species to their eBird life list.



Stella Tea is the new editor of the *Chat*. She grew up in Hong Kong and moved to Maryland when she was sixteen. She has worked for years in IT software development and will bring her organizational skills and attention to details to our newsletter. Stella has been a Cub Scout leader for over 10 years and is a proud participant of YMOS. She and her son Nathan have been monitoring the bluebird trail on the Northwest Golf Course for Brookside Nature Center since 2018. Their family loves to travel, find new birds, and new foods.



Birds of Note (late April to early July 2020)

An **Anhinga** seen soaring over Hughes Hollow on May 23 headlines this issue's *Birds of Note* column. First spotted by Basco Eszeki and also seen by Dave Powell and Art Drauglis. The bird was not relocated in subsequent days.

A first of the season **Least Bittern** was heard at Hughes Hollow on April 30 and single individuals and sometimes as many as two have been reported from there with some regularity since that time. Hopefully, June sightings of this species at Hughes Hollow are indicative of successful breeding. An **American Bittern** has also been noted at Hughes Hollow past breeding safe dates. Scott Young reported and photographed an **American Bittern** there on June 23.

This past spring's shorebirding was not quite as exciting as 2019's. Some nice shorebirds however, still passed through the county on their way to points north. **Black-bellied Plover**, **Dunlin**, and **Sanderling** were noted from Violette's Lock in late May.

A couple of uncommon gulls were seen in the western county during the last week of April. Dave Czaplak found a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Violette's Lock on April 27. Another **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was seen mixed in with a flock of Ring-billed Gulls at the Patton Turf Farm (technically now renamed Battlefield Turf Farm) on April 30. The same flock of **Ring-billed Gulls** also had a **Laughing Gull** mixed in. Not an easy bird to find in MD, west of I-95. Joe Hanfman had three Black Terns on the Potomac at Riley's Lock on May 10.

Hughes Hollow was pretty good for rail species in May. Francesca Grifo was first to report a **Sora** on May 3. **Sora** continued to be seen at Hughes Hollow through May 11. CJ DeMarco reported a **Sora** from the Seneca Creek SP wetlands upstream of Riffleford Rd on May 23. CJ was also the first to note a pair of **Common Gallinules** at Hughes Hollow on April 24. At one point, as many as four **Common Gallinules** were sharing the Hughes Hollow wetlands. John Gasper reported a **Virginia Rail** from Hughes Hollow on May 23. And the sharp ears of Nathan Tea picked up the nocturnal flight calls of **Virginia Rail** over his house near Layhill Rd on May 9, 11, and 16. Wow!

Joshua Heiser noted a **Mississippi Kite** over Pennyfield Lock on May 23. And on the same day, just a little further west at Hughes Hollow, CJ DeMarco, Dave Powell and Oliver Patrick also saw a **Mississippi Kite**.

A **Sedge Wren** was a surprise find for Max Wilson at the Cabin John RP wetlands on May 3.

Clive Harris noted an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** at Violette's Lock on May 16. John Rice-Cameron found an **Alder Flycatcher** at Hughes Hollow on May 24. **Alder Flycatchers** were also noted in subsequent days from both Little Bennett RP and the Lake Needwood area.

Some good warblers were reported around the county during migration. Dave Powell noted a **Golden-winged Warbler** in Upper Watts Branch Park on May 3. Nathan Tea found a **Golden-winged Warbler** along the Matthew Henson Trail on May 5 and Concetta Goodrich found one at Lake Frank on May 8. Joshua Heiser came across an increasingly "hard to find" in the county, **Cerulean Warbler** at Violette's Lock on May 8. Joshua struck "pay dirt" again the next day with another **Cerulean Warbler** and also a **Lawrence Warbler** (Blue-winged x Golden-winged hybrid) at Lake Frank on May 9. Ron Johnson found a **Mourning Warbler** at Lake Needwood on May 24. This bird cooperated by sticking around for another day allowing a dozen or so other birders to see it.

Summer Tanagers seem to have become consistent residents in Western Montgomery over the past 8 years or so. An effect of climate change? Oliver Patrick noted a **Summer Tanager** at Violette's Lock on May 1. **Summer Tanagers** were also back at their traditional breeding location in the Izaak Walton League woods across from the entrance to Summit Hall Turf Farm along River Rd. Alex C. reported a **Summer Tanager** in the Serpentine Barrens CP in Potomac on three separate birding forays during June.

As of July 3, 221 species for the year have been reported in the county. According to Cornell Lab of Ornithology's *eBird*, CJ DeMarco, Nathan Tea, and Dave Roberts top the list with 204, 195, and 192 species respectively.

– *Andy Martin*



YMOS News

Spring Atlas Round-up

The YMOS conducted the first (but not last) Spring Atlas Round-up in April. Youth participants surveyed and coded as many bird species as possible in the Atlas block they live in during a three-day period. All sightings were entered on eBird and contributed to the Maryland & DC Breeding Bird Atlas 3 project. With social distancing measures in mind, the YMOS also planned to include several small group Atlas-related gatherings over the summer.



Big Day

Instead of participating in the modified New Jersey Audubon's World Series of Birding in May, the YMOS created its own event this year involving youth of all skill levels and age ranges (elementary to post-college), their families, mentors, and friends. Participants from the U.S. and Great Britain formed a total of 11 teams including an adult team made up of parents and mentors. Teams stayed close to where they live and brought in a total of 309 species of which 255 species were seen in the local Maryland/Delaware/Northern Virginia area. The total included 36 species of warblers and 7 species of owls! All teams exceeded their goal and had an amazing Big Day despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic.

YMOS Facebook Page NEW

The YMOS has a new Facebook page. Search for Youth Maryland Ornithological Society or use this link: <https://www.facebook.com/Youth-Maryland-Ornithological-Society-108394860783723>.

– Stella Tea

MOS Youth Backpack



Have you ever observed a kid's eyes sparkling upon seeing a new bird, whether it's a flashy red cardinal or a huge American crow? Maybe you haven't because the kids you know are poorly equipped to watch birds.



Well, we are looking for such kids. Each year the YMOS, a subgroup of MOS that supports young birders, provides each MOS chapter with a backpack to be given to a deserving youth in their area. The backpack contains binoculars, field guides, a lens pen, and free membership to a local MOS chapter for the year.

The Montgomery Bird Club has awarded backpacks throughout the years to students in grades 3-8 and we have one to award this year. How do we find good candidates? By asking you! Perhaps these kids joined in a field trip or participated in a nature camp. You may have taught a child or are her neighbor. No matter. We are looking for a budding bird lover. Once nominated he/she has to write an essay on a favorite bird. The MBC Council will award the backpack accordingly.

These backpacks are such a wonderful way to keep the excitement of budding birders growing so, please, send us the name of anyone who might fit the bill (or beak)!

– Anna Urciolo





Chapter Chatter: Montgomery

June 2020

When Jean called for Chatter submissions she lamented that due to Covid-19 few people would have travel stories to share. Right. So I asked for members to tell their Maryland friends how they were coping with the pandemic bird-wise. Here's the result.

-- Chris Wright

Katherine Pauer: Discovering Redgate Park

These past few months have been a little out of the ordinary, but one thing that has helped me keep calm has been staying connected to nature. I have accomplished this through birding one of my favorite spots: Redgate Park, which is in Rockville, MD. I first heard about Redgate Park through a fellow co-worker, who told me there was a pair of Great Horned owls nesting in the park, and of course I had to see these owls for myself. She gave me directions and shortly afterwards, a friend and I journeyed to Redgate to see the famed pair of Great Horned owls with our own eyes. We made our way to the spot and sure enough we spotted the female Great Horned owl sitting in her nest, trying to keep warm from the wind. From that day, I was hooked on Redgate Park. In the following months as the pandemic began to affect our region, I began to bird more and more at the park, witnessing the daily lives of its avian inhabitants. I watched a pair of American Robins defending their nest from a curious Blue Jay. I observed pairs of Eastern Bluebirds fly across the open fields and glimpsed at a couple of Carolina Wrens fly off with nesting material in their tiny beaks. I also experienced some firsts as a birder. I saw my first Rose-breasted Grosbeak, my first Palm Warbler and my all-time favorite spring sighting, a Solitary Sandpiper. All seen at Redgate Park. But I am not the only one who has experienced the joys of birding at Redgate Park. I had the lovely opportunity to chat with fellow birder, Anne Mytych, about her bird sightings at Redgate Park. Here are just a few of the birds Anne has seen in the past few months: Baltimore Oriole, an Eastern Meadowlark, and just this past week, a Yellow-breasted Chat! Anne believes that the variety of habitats at Redgate make it such a special place to bird because we get to see birds that inhabit various ecosystems all in one place.

[Anne Mytych is one of a group of MOS members encouraging the City of Rockville to maintain the former Redgate Golf Course as a nature preserve.]

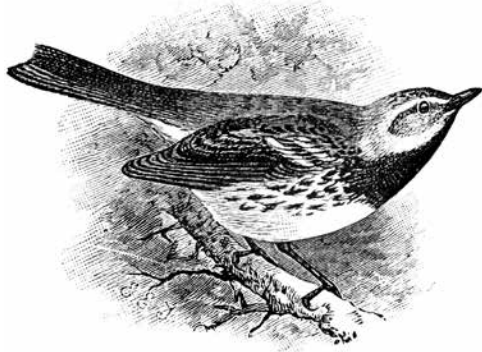
Stella Tea: Birding Taiwan

In early 2019, I wrote about a 2018 homecoming trip to Hong Kong. Although I had fun birding and eating there, I wished my son Nathan was there to share the joy and to help me ID some of those Asian birds! Our chance to visit Hong Kong in 2019 was thwarted by the political unrest that overtook the region. Still wanting to visit Asia, we decided to go to Taiwan although we were unfamiliar with the country. It was one of the best decisions we could have made. In November 2019, we spent a total of 9 days birding (and eating through) Taipei in the north, Tainan in the south, and Dasyueshan (Big Snow Mountain) in Taichung. We did a lot of birding on our own, but our local guide was instrumental in helping us find more than 75% of endemic species (28) at different elevations on Dasyueshan. Equally as exciting, we spotted red and white giant flying squirrel, Reeve's muntjac, and Formosan serow in the night. My 600th bird turned out to be the Lesser Sand-Plover that we got towards the end of the trip. Some of my favorites include the White-breasted Waterhen, Blue Rock-Thrush, Gray Treepie, Taiwan Barbet, Black-winged Kite, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Baikal Teal, Maroon Oriole, Green-backed Tit, Swinhoe's Pheasant, and Collared Bush-Robin. In total, we encountered about 155 bird species. More importantly, I got to spend quality time with my teenage son, and I will always be thankful for that.



Marta Wagner: Fallout on Capitol Hill

Every May since 2008 (except once when a mean boss made me work), I have gone to northwest Ohio for spring migration -- even before the Biggest Week festival started. But the Ohio hotspots were closed this year, and I experienced migration locally. When I was in Ohio in years past, I always wondered what I was missing here, and this year I found out. I think I learned a lot about the patterns of migration in our area, including the arrival of our breeding birds. The high point for me was a complete surprise, however. On Friday, May 22, I (mistakenly) decided



that the forecast didn't look good for migration overnight and that I'd take a break from dawn birding. Around 7 am the next day I opened my back door for ventilation, and I realized I was hearing a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in my tiny Capitol Hill backyard. I got my binoculars, and the tree in my neighbor's yard had the most amazing spectacle! It was FULL of migrants. There must have been at least 25 warblers, as well as a Peewee and a Red-eyed Vireo. Most of the warblers were Blackpolls and Bay-breasteds, but there were also some Black-throated Greens, Redstarts, Magnolias, and Parulas, as well as at least one stunning Blackburnian. I watched for about 45 minutes until the spectacle tapered off and my need for coffee took precedence. I'm still planning to go to Ohio next May, but staying home certainly has its rewards!

Mike Bowen: Atlasing at Glenstone Museum in Potomac

Soon after I learned in January, 2020, from the Maryland-DC Breeding Bird Atlas coordinators for Montgomery County that I would be assigned a Block in the Travilah area of the county, I saw that contained within the block was the Glenstone Museum, a large (300-acre) private property. I had never visited the museum, but other birders whom I know had, and had raved about the place's potential for birds -- and its impressive collection of modern art, both on canvas and as outdoor sculptures. So I wrote the museum's management and asked if I could visit and include the place in the list of properties in my Block, mostly public parkland, that I would visit during the five years of the Atlas.



To my surprise and delight, Glenstone not only gave me permission to visit but invited me to make a presentation to the staff about the Atlas and the prospect for bird finding on the museum's property. I made the presentation at the end of January to a group of about 100 Glenstone staff members, just before their regular Wednesday midday staff meeting. Using a PowerPoint presentation on the Atlas program generously provided by Atlas Coordinator Gabriel Foley welded to a tutorial of my own devising on how to use eBird to record bird sightings on the museum's property, I took almost an hour of the staff's lunch period. The reaction was more positive than I could ever have expected: people came up to me afterwards with tales of birds that they had seen and/or heard in the course of their work at the museum, and some even showed me photos they had taken of Wild Turkeys with young!

Subsequently I have birded at Glenstone at least once a week, and as of June 22 I have recorded 100 species on the museum's property. Many species have been confirmed as breeding, especially with the help of Glenstone's gardeners and field staff. Of course, for the last three months, there has been almost no public visiting of the museum because of the coronavirus. I have been allowed to visit nevertheless, for which I am extremely grateful to the museum's staff, especially Paul Tukey, Director of Sustainability for the Glenstone Foundation. I take as many photos of resident species as I can and provide them to the museum.

Glenstone is currently open (grounds only) Thursday - Sunday. Reservations are necessary -- those interested should go to the following URL to get full information and to make reservations in advance: <https://bit.ly/2Zm8aYq>.

When you go there, birding colleagues, please record an eBird checklist. Glenstone is an eBird Hotspot: <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L8133470>.



Field Trips

SEPTEMBER 3 (Thursday)

WHEATON REGIONAL PARK

Join us this morning to look for migrant warblers, vireos and flycatchers. Reservations required. Limit: 6. For more information about meeting time and place and for reservations e-mail the LEADERS: Woody and Rae Dubois at dengue1@verizon.net.

SEPTEMBER 13 (Sunday)

ROCK CREEK REGIONAL PARK

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 AM at the Nature Center. For reservations (required, limit: 6) and directions email the LEADER: Clive Harris at cliveharris@yahoo.com.

SEPTEMBER 20 (Sunday)

PENNYFIELD BIRD STALK

Half day. For folks who prefer a somewhat later start to their birding, we will meet at 9 AM at the Pennyfield Lock parking lot and work our way upstream to the Blockhouse Point area. This walk should net an interesting mix of late warblers, other landbird migrants and probably a few early winter visitors as we scan the skies and river for raptors and waterbirds. Limit: 6. Reservations required. To sign up contact the LEADER Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net or call 240-515-4517.

SEPTEMBER 26 (Saturday)

CROYDON 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 are possible. Some moderate hiking. Meet at 7:30 AM in the Nature Center parking lot. Limit: 6. Reservations required. For reservations and more information contact the CO-LEADERS Anne Mytych at amytych@yahoo.com or 240-506-0236 or Emily Huang at ephuang@verizon.net.

OCTOBER 3 (Saturday)

LITTLE BENNETT R.P. 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 AM. We'll slowly walk some of the woodland trails looking for migrant and resident birds. Reservations required. Limit: 6. For reservations and directions contact the LEADER: Gemma Radko at gradko@yahoo.com.

OCTOBER 4 (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 waterlilies and lotuses, marshes, wooded trails, the Anacostia River and fields. A variety of raptors and migratory warblers, vireos, thrushes and flycatchers should be present, and rails and bitterns are possibilities. Reservations required. Limit 6. Meet at 8 AM in the parking lot to Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens. LEADERS: Mike Bowen, 301-530-5764 or dhmbowen@yahoo.com, and Gerry Hawkins, 571-277-8406 or maineusa@comcast.net.



Field Trips



OCTOBER 10 (Saturday) **REDGATE PARK**

Come explore this “new” park on a former golf course. Offers multiple habitats, including a small marsh, wooded areas and lots of meadow areas for potential winter sparrows. In the first 10 months of Redgate as a park, birders identified 147 species. Some areas have steep hills. Meet at 8 AM in the parking lot. Limit: 6. Reservations required. For more information, reservations and directions, contact the LEADER: Anne Mytych at 240-506-0236 or amytych@yahoo.com.

OCTOBER 24 (Saturday) **BLUE MASH: Remembering Our Past Presidents**

Join us for this year’s 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 AM. Limit: 6. Reservations required. For more information, directions, and reservations, contact the LEADER: Andy Martin at martinap2@verizon.net or 301-529-2066.

NOVEMBER 11 (Wednesday) **BLUE MASH: Basics of Sparrow ID**

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 Sparrows. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Limit: 6. For reservations, time, and directions, contact one of the CO-LEADERS: Lydia Schindler, lydia13621@gmail.com or Linda Friedland, linnnet1@verizon.net.

NOVEMBER 29 (Sunday) **LILYPONS/NEW DESIGN ROAD**

Half day. Wintering field birds, targeting Fox and Tree Sparrows, possibly Virginia Rail and American Bittern. Email leader for reservation (required) and more info. Limit: 6. LEADER: Clive Harris clivegharris@yahoo.com.

DECEMBER 6 (Sunday) **BLACKWATER NWR**

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: 6. Contact the leader for meeting place and time. LEADER: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (home) or 240-375-4500 (cell).

Restrictions

Very few group activities carry zero risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, but being outdoors already helps. Bird trips with small numbers of participants should thus be quite safe if everyone respects the following simple rules:

- * canceling participation, even at the last minute, if presenting any symptoms of COVID-19;
- * keeping a separation of at least 2 arm lengths (6 ft) between you and others;
- * wearing a mask;
- * not sharing binoculars, spotting scopes, phones etc;

Furthermore, it is recommended to avoid carpooling unless with a person you live with.

Assuming that conditions do not change in the community, we will restart bird trips in September. You may be asked, when you sign up for a trip, to sign a statement promising to respect the rules stated above. Please, keep in mind the need to keep distances, even if a rare bird has been spotted!



Fall Meetings

It is July as we are preparing this issue of the Chat, and we do not know what the COVID-19 situation will be like in the Fall. The three meetings advertised here will be taking place on Zoom alone or possibly on both Zoom and in-person, as many members have expressed a wish for (see the article on the Members' Survey results on p. 3). Decisions will be made at the end of August for the September meeting, end of September for the October meeting etc. You will be informed by email.



September 16 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM
A Million Penguins - Watching Penguins in the Antarctic
Speaker: William Young

In 2016, Bill Young took a cruise from southern Argentina to the Falklands, South Georgia, and the Antarctic Peninsula. On the trip, he saw an estimated one million penguins from seven species. His presentation will focus on each of the species, with special emphasis on their biology and behavior and on the environmental issues affecting them. Bill is a writer who lives Arlington and has traveled to all seven continents to observe birds and wildlife. In 2014, his book *The Fascination of Birds: From the Albatross to the Yellowthroat* was published by Dover Publications. His natural history videos on his YouTube channel have had over a half million views. He has been honored by having a species of snail-killing fly named after him – *Dictya youngi*.

October 21 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM
Hawai'i: Paradise Rebirded
Speaker: David Roberts

Most visitors to Hawai'i will not see a native passerine. Hawai'i accounts for 15% of the world's documented land bird extinctions over the past 700 years, and only 42 of the 152 documented indigenous species of Hawai'i remain today. My wife declared Hawai'i to be her favorite place to visit during our first trip to Hawai'i in 1998. The less developed Big Island and Kaua'i remain our favorites, but we have spent time on all four main islands, and on our last visit I finally completed my checklist of the endemic forest birds on Oahu. That was accomplished thanks to a talented native Hawaiian bird guide. I want to share some of what I learned from him about native Hawaiian history and the complex impacts of Polynesian, European, Russian, and American colonization on the environment and its native birds. I will also give an overview of the endemic species unique to each island and some of the interesting migrants and accidentals that I have encountered. Some of my photos can be viewed on eBird: <https://ebird.org/profile/MzQ5MTQw/US-HI>. Dr. Roberts is a Principal Investigator of the Laboratory of Pathology of the National Cancer Institute. His NIH website is: <https://irp.nih.gov/pil/david-roberts>.

November 18 (Wednesday) 7:30 PM
Wildlife of Panama
Speaker: Gail Mackiernan

Last April, Gail Mackiernan and Barry Cooper joined 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. In two weeks, they tallied about 300 species of birds, as well as a number of interesting mammals, including cute Sloths and noisy Howler Monkeys. Bird highlights were many, topped perhaps by smashing views of a Harpy Eagle at its nest, feeding a large chick, a totally unexpected encounter with a huge Crested Eagle perched along a remote road, close views of a confiding Black-crowned Antpitta, the enigmatic apayoa, Ocellated and Bare-crowned Antbirds and thousands of Mississippi Kites winging their way north over the forest.





MONTGOMERY BIRD CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Your dues payment includes membership in both MBC and Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS) from now until September next year.

If at all possible, we prefer you pay online on the MOS website, with a credit card or PayPal.
Go to mdbirds.org/join/chapters/montgomery-bird-club and select "Membership."

If you cannot pay online, please send this form with a check payable to *Maryland Ornithological Society* to
Carol S Daugherty, MOS Treasurer, 11925 Oden Ct, Rockville, MD 20852

- _____ Individual—\$30 (\$10 MBC/\$20 MOS)
- _____ Household—\$40 (\$15 MBC/\$25 MOS)
- _____ Junior—\$6 (\$1 MBC/\$5 MOS) (under 18)
- _____ Sustaining—\$70 (\$20 MBC/\$50 MOS)
- _____ Associate*— \$8 (member through another chapter)

\$ _____ TOTAL DUES

\$ _____ DONATION TO CLAUDIA WILDS FUND (to augment the club's regular income for promoting local understanding of birds and the need for habitat protection.)

\$ _____ Total enclosed _____ New Membership OR _____ Renewal

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

NAME(S) _____

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PHONE NUMBER(S) _____

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___ 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

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Rebecca Cromwell

Carey McInerney

Kari McPartland

Tim Resch

Pete and Pam Yarrington

