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# President's Chat

By Emily Huang

The beginning of winter is one of the nicest times of year for birders, in no small part due to the annual counts that take place while the holiday season is in full swing. For me, the annual Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs), followed by the Canal Count in January, are true highlights of the birding year.





Take the Seneca CBC; I've been participating since 2020, but this tradition dates back to 1955 and provides a treasure trove of data on Potomac wintering birds over the years. The CBCs bring together a mix of experienced birders and folks who count this as their primary annual birding event; and somehow the dark and frosty mornings, red noses poking out of fleecy scarves, and foggy glasses make for an extra-convivial outing. Everyone is alert to scour the landscape for all possible winter species, and the bare tree trunks and branches are a considerable help to spotting! The average species count for the Seneca CBC over the past decade is an impressive 97, and 2024 brought in 106 species, the highest since 2000.

My favorite CBC birds are the winter specialties, and I always list some first-of-season birds on count day. In 2020, my first CBC year, Karen Cyr and I were the first to spot the Evening Grosbeaks that came for a time to Riley's Lock—a lifer for me, and a harbinger of a great season of irruptive finches. This year's Winter Finch Forecast from the Finch Research Network suggests that another irruptive season may be on the way, and I'm hoping my feeders will be hosting Pine Siskins and Purple Finches again! But, if not, I'll happily settle for the company of glossy waterfowl, kinglets, Brown Creepers, and Hermit Thrushes—and even a few snowflakes, if Mother Nature can see fit to provide.

It's not just the birds that change over with the season, the county's favorite birding locations shift, too. Waterfowl hotspots such as Gunner's Lake, Black

Hill Regional Park, and the Potomac River locks surge in popularity compared to the stream valley parks, and I always take at least one trip to Hains Point and other DC locations to check for ducks, geese, and gulls. Open field areas, such as the new Royce Hanson Conservation Park in Poolesville, should be checked for overwintering sparrows, Horned Lark, and raptors; and let's not forget the fabulous Oaks Landfill, available to visit exclusively through VP Mark England's series of guided tours. As longtime bird club members know, sign up early!

Yes, for the birder, winter is no drab season, but one full of opportunities. So, get up and get out there! And if, by late February, winter birding does start to pall, just remember that spring birds and nests are just around the corner.

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# Editor's Corner

By Stella Tea

It's been an interesting autumn for me with limited time to go birding, but when I did, the birds as usual would reenergize me and lift my spirit, such as first-of-season Dark-eyed Juncos and White-throated Sparrows, Black-throated Blue Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, and a Blue-headed Vireo at Wheaton Regional Park in mid-October. Birding at home also filled some of that gap. It was extra special to add Gadwall to our yard list and welcome back the Red-breasted Nuthatch.

The last new duck species that we got at home was a Blue-winged Teal back in May 2023. It stayed for an extremely short time, and it was a miracle that we got a photo. The single Gadwall came to the creek with a small group of Mallards in early November and stayed for one day. If I could put a new duck species on the holiday wish list, I would ask for a merganser, any merganser! The Red-breasted Nuthatch was on hiatus since April 2022. In recent weeks, they started getting more comfortable and coming closer for better photos. Perhaps these are signs for a hopeful Project FeederWatch season and a Christmas Bird Count season.

I am looking forward to winter birding—now that “bugging” season is over until next spring—for more waterfowl and sparrows, perhaps even visiting the new eBird hotspot Royce Hanson Conservation Park and tagging along on more Youth Montgomery Bird Club field trips. I am also grateful for all the birding travels I got to do this year, and I can't wait for the next adventure.

Last but not least, I want to thank our key *Chat* contributors of the past year: Dorothy (Dee) Brown, Cintia Cabib, Lauren Carey, Kathryn Carr, Ryan Carr, Moira Davenport, Mark England, Diane Ford, Linda Friedland, Emily Huang, Andy Martin, Jim Nelson, Lisa Norwalk, and Chris Wright. I have enjoyed collaborating with you and learning from you. A special shoutout to the crew behind the scenes who make our quarterly newsletter possible: Susan Hunt, Pam Oves, Gemma Radko, and Ed Vigezzi for your expertise, enthusiasm, and patience. I am proud of every issue we have published together on behalf of the Club. To Club members, thank you for reading our newsletter! Please email us at [montgomerybirdclub@mdbirds.org](mailto:montgomerybirdclub@mdbirds.org) to share your feedback and suggestions. Happy Winter Birding! See you out in the field.



*Red-breasted Nuthatch. Photo by Stella Tea*

## Membership Updates

By Moira Davenport, MBC Membership Chair

### Have you remembered to renew your Club membership?!

Membership runs from September 1 to August 31 each year. If you haven't already had a chance to renew your MOS/MBC membership, now would be the perfect time! Electronic payments are fast and easy at <https://mdbirds.org/join>. Electronic payments are preferred, but if you wish to pay by check, please use the form on page 11, which also includes the address to send your payment.

Our membership dues help sustain all our activities and those of the MOS and allow us to contribute to environmental conservation. Included in your membership are the MBC newsletter, *The Chat*; the MOS newsletter, *The Maryland Yellowthroat*; and the MOS journal, *Maryland Birdlife*. Many thanks for your continued support!



# Winter Meetings

By Mark England, MBC Vice-President

The Club's monthly meetings are recorded and are accessible at our YouTube Channel: <https://bit.ly/3MH3FB4>.

## **DECEMBER 10, 2025 (Wednesday), 7:00 p.m. Holiday Wine & Cheese, Door Prizes, Bird Quiz, and Other Fun! (In-person only at the Potomac Presbyterian Church)**



Meet other members over wine and cheese while listening for door prizes to be awarded during the evening. Then sharpen your bird identification skills for the traditional Vice-President's Bird Quiz, which will feature a variety of questions, both visual and verbal. The evening will wind up with members' favorite photos from 2025.

**CALL FOR PHOTOS:** The December social will feature a slideshow of attending members' favorite bird photos from 2025. Photos do not have to be exclusively from the State of Maryland, just your favorites! To submit photos for the show, please send them to [montgomerybirdclub@mdbirds.org](mailto:montgomerybirdclub@mdbirds.org) with the name of the Club member, location, date of photo, and bird species. Up

to two photos may be submitted per Club member, but please indicate your favorite in case of time restrictions. The deadline for submitting photos is Wednesday, December 3.

## **JANUARY 21, 2026 (Wednesday), 7:30 p.m. David Curson, Director of Bird Conservation (Maryland), Audubon Mid-Atlantic, presents "Marshes for Tomorrow."**



Marshes for Tomorrow, an initiative led by Audubon Mid-Atlantic, aims to conserve and restore salt marsh habitat in the face of climate-driven sea level rise. With the goal of safeguarding populations of salt marsh specialist birds, including the Saltmarsh Sparrow, Audubon and partners completed a landscape-scale restoration plan in 2025 and have begun a first on-the-ground restoration project at Maryland Ornithological Society's Irish Grove Sanctuary in Somerset County. The project will remedy hydrological problems by excavating shallow runnels to release water from the marsh surface and reinvigorate marsh vegetation.

Dave has worked as Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon in Maryland since 2004, leading efforts to protect, manage, and monitor bird habitats across Maryland. He now leads Audubon's coastal program in Maryland. He completed his PhD in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where his research focused on the ecology and behavior of the Brown-headed Cowbird. He taught ecology at Johns Hopkins University from 2003 to 2023.

## **FEBRUARY 19, 2026 (Thursday), 7:30 p.m. Bruce Beehler presents "50,000 Miles in Search of Godwits from the Mexican Border to the Arctic Ocean."**



Between 2019 and 2023, Bruce completed 13 road trips in search of Hudsonian Godwits. He visited stopover and breeding sites in 37 states and 9 Canadian provinces. Bruce will recount the highlights of his more than five months in the field, from Texas to Alaska and the Northwest Territories.

Bruce Beehler is currently a Research Associate in the Division of Birds at the National Museum of Natural History, and a Scientific Affiliate of the American Bird Conservancy. He has spent much of his career studying birds and their forest habitats. After conducting doctoral fieldwork in Papua New Guinea, he worked for 10 years at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, followed by stints at the Wildlife Conservation Society, the U.S.

Department of State, Conservation International, and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. Bruce has published 19 books and monographs and scores of technical articles about birds and nature. In 2021, he was awarded the Elliott Coues Medal from the American Ornithological Society, recognizing his lifetime contribution to the field. Today, Bruce carries out natural history studies and writing focused on wildlife and natural places in North America.



# Birds of Note (Mid-August to Mid-November)

By Andy Martin

A Howard County **Northern Saw-whet Owl** shows up in Montgomery County! I'm breaking two of my rules for "Birds of Note": one, mentioning an owl location, and two, passing off a Howard County bird as a Montgomery County bird. But sometimes exceptions just have to be made! On November 7, a resident of Ellicott City in Howard County found a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** in their garage and, as a precaution, the bird was brought to the Owl Moon Raptor Center (OMRC) in Boyds for observation and assessment. OMRC determined that the bird was able to be released into the wild. The next day, it was released at Black Hill Regional Park during OMRC's Raptor Festival. (See page 5 for Club President Emily Huang's firsthand account of the event!)

Gail Mackiernan observed 4 **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** flying over Northwest Branch SVP near Sherwood Forest on August 26. Dave Czaplak and Mary Ann Todd noted 13 **Black Scoters** on the Potomac River adjacent to Violette's Lock on November 3. John Sojda reported a **Surf Scoter** at Black Hill RP on November 6.

**White-rumped Sandpipers** were seen at Blue Mash in the Landfill pond for most of the latter half of September. The flight call of an **American Golden-Plover** was heard by Stephen Davies at Blue Mash on September 27. Stephen also noted and recorded the flight call of an **Upland Sandpiper** migrating over the Riggs Rd area near Blue Mash on August 28. Dave Czaplak observed a single **Red Knot** flying downriver on the Potomac, adjacent to Violette's Lock on September 28. Two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were reported by Jared Fisher at the Summit Hall Turf Farm on August 28. Stephen Davies found 3 **Stilt Sandpipers** on the mudflats at the Landfill pond at Blue Mash on September 16.

Stephen Davies observed a flyover **Neotropic Cormorant** at Blue Mash on August 19. Jared Fisher reported a juvenile **White Ibis** at Hughes Hollow on August 27. Another **White Ibis** (or possibly the same bird?) was seen by Dave Czaplak as it flew over the Potomac in the vicinity of Violette's Lock on August 30.

Karen Cyr reported a **Philadelphia Vireo** at Wheaton RP on August 26. Clive Harris tallied 4 different **Philadelphia Vireos** while birding at Woodstock Equestrian Park near Dickerson on September 26.

**Marsh Wrens** were noted at Homestead Farm near Poolesville by Clive Harris, and Jared Fisher spotted one along the Gude Trail in Rockville, both on October 2. Angela Atwood-Moore spotted a **Marsh Wren** at Hughes

Hollow on October 8, and Jake Klim found one at Veirs Mill Local Park on October 9.

*Clay-colored Sparrow at Royce Hanson CP. Photo by Jared Fisher*



Gail Mackiernan found a **Clay-colored Sparrow** along the Poplar Run Trail in Colesville on October 2. A **Clay-colored**

**Sparrow** was also found and reported by Jared Fisher at Royce Hanson CP on October 7. Jared found an additional **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Homestead Farm on November 4. While playing a round of golf, James Boughton and Lesley Simmons observed a **Lark Sparrow** at Bretton Woods near Seneca on September 16.

Jared Fisher recorded the Nocturnal Flight Call (NFC) of a **Dickcissel** along Sycamore Landing Rd on August 31. Isaac Rosenberg reported a **Dickcissel** at Royce Hanson CP on October 10, and the following day, Clive Harris found two of this species in the same location. Leo Prikhodko found a **Dickcissel** in his Potomac yard on October 2, and John Whitaker had one visit his Chevy Chase yard on October 19.

Clive Harris reported a **Connecticut Warbler** at Hughes Hollow at McKee-Beshers WMA on September 14. Roy Howard and Dave Roberts reported two **Connecticut Warblers** at Woodstock Equestrian Park on September 18, and Stacy Rabinovitz observed one along the C&O Canal near Violette's Lock on September 22. Gavin Qian noted a **Swainson's Warbler** at Little Bennett RP near Clarksburg on September 13. Sharon Buchanan reported an **Orange-crowned Warbler** in her Potomac backyard on October 15. **Orange-crowned Warblers** were also seen at Layhill Park and along Sycamore Landing Rd. Tim Carney reported a female **Cerulean Warbler** at Little Bennett RP on September 13.

Montgomery County's total species for the year (as of November 13) stands at 257. Currently, the top 5 listers are Jared Fisher, 246; John Sojda, 238; Mary Ann Todd, 234; Ryan and Kathryn Carr, 229; and Clive Harris, 226.



# MBC at the Owl Moon Raptor Festival

By Emily Huang

The 2025 Owl Moon Raptor Festival took place on November 8 at Black Hill Regional Park and was a successful event. As a partner organization at the Festival, Montgomery Bird Club hosted a table staffed by Vice-President Mark England and me. We were visited by friends and Club members, including Tara Clifton, co-founder of the Youth Montgomery Bird Club, and Jim Ivett, State Director. We also spoke to many festival attendees who expressed interest in the Club's activities and who snapped up all but one of our business cards!

The Festival was attended by hundreds of supporters of all ages, with many visitors coming in from other counties. There were talks by the Maryland Farmland Raptor Program, presentations on vultures, face painting and games, owl pellet kits to take home—and, of course, lots and lots of raptors to see. Many people enjoyed visiting with the falconers' and educators' birds—how often can you get face-to-face with a Barn Owl? But the undisputed highlight of

the Festival was the release of five wild raptors that had been rehabilitated by Owl Moon Raptor Center (OMRC). Narrated by Suzanne Shoemaker, OMRC director and founder, these heartwarming liberations were the culmination of weeks of hard work healing hawks and owls from life-threatening injuries and illnesses.

This year, fans of Owl Moon's raptor releases received a once-in-a-lifetime gift. The last raptor to be freed was a Northern Saw-whet Owl, rescued the previous day from a garage in Ellicott City. Seldom seen while migrating through Maryland, this tiny owl has a feline face and the heart of a lion. Several Club members, including myself, notched a lifer by watching this beautiful bird launch itself from Suzanne's hands into the darkening woods. It was a thrilling close to a wonderful day.



*Emily and Mark represented MBC at the 2025 Owl Moon Raptor Festival and were joined by YMBC co-founder Tara and other Club members. Photo by Dan Ryder*



*A Northern Saw-whet Owl, the last raptor released back to the wild by Suzanne Shoemaker, OMRC director and founder. Photo by Dan Ryder*



*An American Barn Owl—always a crowd-pleaser—at the OMRC's annual Festival. Photo by Emily Huang*

# Youth Birding: Special Edition

By Ryan Carr, Youth Montgomery Bird Club

We are so grateful to the Montgomery Bird Club for sponsoring our September pontoon boat trip around Jug Bay. It was an awesome and new experience for all of us! We also want to thank the Club for our new tripod for the Club's scope, an important and needed upgrade. See next page for a year in review!

This fall the YMBC visited Oaks Landfill, Jug Bay, Royce Hanson Conservation Park, and the Sycamore Landing fields. We are grateful to Lauren Carey, Jo Cox, Mark England, Matt Felperin, Clive Harris, Hanna Nettles, Susannah Parker, Dave Powell, and Luke Sumberg for mentoring us this season. We would also like to give a big shout out to Susan Hunt for her generous bird book donations!

Our first trip of the season was to Oaks Landfill. As always, this location is full of awesome surprises like a flyover of 63 Common Nighthawks, many close-in shorebirds in the landfill pond's mudflats, and even glimpses of an immature Mourning Warbler. A big thanks to Mark England for mentoring this trip and allowing us to experience this Montgomery County treasure. (eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S270871855>)

In September we had the new experience of visiting Jug Bay, a large body of water on the Patuxent River. On this trip we got to take a pontoon boat out for a 4-mile trip around the bay, and we found 61 different species

including lots of Bobolinks, five Marsh Wrens, and 14 Soras! It was an awesome adventure that we hope we can do again next year. (eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S273384233>)

Our third trip of the season was to the new Royce Hanson Conservation Park. We were all super excited because of recent sightings of Dickcissels and a Clay-colored Sparrow. It was a fantastic trip where we found some great species such as seven Killdeer, great looks at a Wilson's Snipe, a Northern Harrier, two Common Ravens, a Rusty Blackbird, a Nashville Warbler, a Lincoln's Sparrow, and the Clay-colored Sparrow. We also "yahtzee" the 7 woodpeckers! It was a very successful trip, and we greatly appreciate Lauren Carey and Dave Powell for switching it up at the last minute to take us there. (eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S280096513>)

Our final trip this season was to Sycamore Landing Fields. It was a very windy day so we made sure to keep an eye out for raptors which got us four Bald Eagles and lots of vultures. It was a beautiful morning and we spotted five woodpecker species, two Purple Finches, and a Fox Sparrow. We had a great time and thanks to our new mentors, Clive, Luke, and Hanna, for planning the trip! (eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S284771388>)

We are looking forward to our December trip to Lake Needwood and our January trip to Oaks Landfill. Look out for more upcoming dates soon via MailChimp and the MBC website. We'd love to have some new members join us!

We are always looking for new mentors. We handle all of the administrative work, you just pick the place and show up. If you are interested in being a mentor on a walk or want to tag along to see what being a mentor is like, please reach out to us at [youth.birding@gmail.com](mailto:youth.birding@gmail.com).

The Youth Maryland Ornithological Society (YMOS) season is underway! You can learn more at <https://mdbirds.org/young-birders/> or by reaching out to George Radcliffe at [radclifg@gmail.com](mailto:radclifg@gmail.com).



*Hanna and Luke (far right) joined the YMBC and Clive (second from left) on a windy but productive morning at the Sycamore Landing Fields.*

*Photo by Kathryn Carr*



## YMBC: A Year in Review

*The YMBC helps me connect and make friends that share the same hobby of birding with me, and is a place where I can learn more about birds. We laugh, we smile, and we have fun with each other while exploring nature. My favorite trip of the year was the boat trip at Jug Bay. We found Soras, Marsh Wrens, Bobolinks, and had lots of fun on the boat, goofing off while looking for birds. Not only is it birds though, I learned about insects. One of these fun experiences: On the Rachel Carson Conservation Park trip, Stella and I found a Cream-edged Dichomeris Moth; a MoCo first!—Gavin*

*What I like about YMBC is that I get to go birding with other kids who enjoy birding as much as I do. I love birding new hotspots and finding lots of “birbs.” A favorite trip was on a pontoon boat at Jug Bay in September, where we floated up to Marsh Wrens and listened to Soras and Bobolinks. Our last YMBC trip, at Royce Hanson Conservation Park, was great too. We saw lots of sparrows, including Clay-colored, Lincoln’s, White-crowned, and lots of Savannahs. I can’t wait for our next YMBC walk at Sycamore Landing! I am grateful for all of the birding trips.—Ada*

*I really like going birding in new places and with other kids. YMBC trips are both of those things. We frequently find several exciting birds. I very much enjoyed Royce Hanson Conservation Park, which was our latest trip. We heard some Common Ravens and got some pretty good views of Lincoln’s, Clay-colored, Savannah, and White-crowned sparrows. YMBC trips are always fun, and we always observe some birds on our trips. I am thankful for YMBC trips!—Calla*

*On Saturday, January 25, I went birding in Oaks Landfill in the afternoon. It was amazing! I saw many uncommon raptor birds such as three Short-eared Owls, a Red-tailed Hawk, and lots of Northern Harriers. I also saw planets. I saw Mars, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, & Saturn’s rings. I also saw deer. I came to this landfill last year & liked it a lot. I’m looking forward to doing this next year if they do this again.—Riya*

*This fall we had our 30th YMBC trip. We have visited 23 locations and have had 21 mentors volunteer their time to lead these trips where we have identified 162 species together. It has been amazing to see how much the kids have grown over the past few years, both in their friendships and in birding. I am so grateful to the MBC, our mentors, and all of the parents who have helped make the YMBC a success.—Kathryn Carr, YMBC Co-founder*



*The YMBC enjoyed the guided driving tour of Oaks Landfill led by Mark England in January 2025. Photo by Kathryn Carr*



*Dave Powell, Lauren Carey, and the YMBC explored a birdy new hotspot—Royce Hanson Conservation Park—in Poolesville. Photo by Kathryn Carr*



*Wonderful turnout at the Jug Bay birding trip led by Matt Felperin, Susannah Parker, and Lauren Carey (back row right to left). Photo by Kathryn Carr*

# Winter Field Trips

By Linda Friedland, MBC Field Trip Coordinator

Reservations are required for all MBC field trips unless otherwise noted. Contact trip leaders for reservations, directions, and other information. If you need to cancel, please notify the leader well in advance so those on the (often long!) waiting lists will get a chance to participate. For recent field trip reports and for guidance on in-person events and inclement weather changes, please visit <https://www.montgomerybirdclub.org/>.

## **JANUARY 1 (Thursday)**

### **LOIS Y. GREEN CONSERVATION PARK POP-UP**

No reservations needed! Morning walk through the varied habitats of this excellent 250-acre park, including two ponds, fields, and deciduous and coniferous woods. We'll be looking for sparrows, waterfowl, and raptors. We will meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot at 8711 Snouffer School Road, Gaithersburg, Md. Walk will last about two hours. There are no restrooms or water facilities at the park. If it is snowing or sleeting, the trip is cancelled. LEADER: Dave Powell at [Seneca.ranger@gmail.com](mailto:Seneca.ranger@gmail.com).

## **JANUARY 3 (Saturday)**

### **BLUE MASH NATURE TRAIL**

Join us for the morning as we walk the circuit trail looking for overwintering birds, including especially sparrows and raptors. Meet at the Zion Road entrance at 8:30 a.m. Probable waterfowl in both ponds if not frozen over. Leader will have scope for distant views. Waterproof boots recommended. Limit: 12. LEADER: Lauren Carey at [ljcarey011@gmail.com](mailto:ljcarey011@gmail.com).

## **JANUARY 4 (Sunday)**

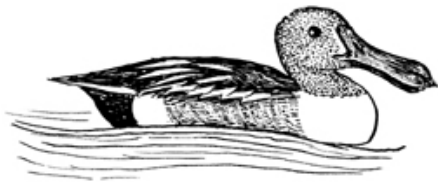
### **BLACK HILL REGIONAL PARK AND GUNNERS LAKE**

All birders, but especially new birders, are welcome on this half-day trip, which will focus on the identification of ducks at this premier county spot for winter waterfowl. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Visitors Center to Black Hill Regional Park, and bring a spotting scope if you have one. Limit: 15. CO-LEADERS: Gerry Hawkins at [maineusa@comcast.net](mailto:maineusa@comcast.net) and Emily Huang at [ephuang@verizon.net](mailto:ephuang@verizon.net).

## **JANUARY 7 (Wednesday)**

### **BLACKWATER NWR**

Full day (to dusk). Early waterfowl and lingering migrants plus late afternoon marsh watch. Brown-headed Nuthatch possible. Bring lunch and drinks. Limit: 12. CO-LEADERS: Mark England at [englandmark@comcast.net](mailto:englandmark@comcast.net) and Leo Dilling.



## **JANUARY 10 (Saturday)**

### **OAKS LANDFILL, LAYTONSVILLE**

Bundle up for LATE AFTERNOON (3:00-5:30 p.m.) search for wintering sparrows and raptors, including possible Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls. Mostly open terrain with some ponds, which we will check if they are not frozen over. Meet at 3 p.m. on landfill entrance drive at 6001 Rt. 108, Laytonsville, Md. *Reservations required at least a week ahead of the trip for names to be submitted to the county.* Limit: 16. LEADER: Mark England at [englandmark@comcast.net](mailto:englandmark@comcast.net).

## **JANUARY 18 (Sunday)**

### **OCEAN CITY AND THE COAST**

We will bird the Ocean City inlet in the morning, looking for sea ducks, gulls, wintering shorebirds, and anything else that might be around (hopefully Razorbill). After that, we will check a few local areas around OC and then, depending on what is being seen in the area, head further north possibly to Indian River Inlet or a little further inland. We will meet at 8 a.m. in the Ocean City inlet parking lot so either get up early or stay overnight in the area! Scopes would be useful. Carpooling will likely be needed on the day to visit different locations. Limit: 12. LEADER: Clive Harris at [cliveharris@yahoo.com](mailto:cliveharris@yahoo.com).

## **JANUARY 24 (Saturday)**

### **LOIS Y. GREEN CONSERVATION PARK**

We will take a winter morning walk through fields and woodland edges, looking for sparrows, waterfowl, and raptors. Trails are well-maintained with some hills. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot at 8711 Snouffer School Road, Gaithersburg, Md. Limit: 10. LEADER: Leo Dilling at [LeoDilling@hotmail.com](mailto:LeoDilling@hotmail.com).

## **FEBRUARY 7 (Saturday)**

### **OAKS LANDFILL, LAYTONSVILLE**

Bundle up for LATE AFTERNOON (3:30-5:30 p.m.) search for wintering sparrows and raptors, including possible Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls. Mostly open terrain with some ponds, which we will check if they are not frozen over. Meet at 3:30 p.m. on landfill entrance drive at 6001 Rt. 108, Laytonsville, Md. *Reservations required at least a week ahead of the trip for names to be submitted to the county.* Limit: 16. LEADER: Mark England at [englandmark@comcast.net](mailto:englandmark@comcast.net).



**FEBRUARY 8 (Sunday)****HUGHES HOLLOW**

Join us for a morning of winter marsh and woodland birding. Targets are sparrows, woodpeckers, and possibly ducks. Be prepared for possible wet/muddy conditions. Beginners and young birders are encouraged to join. Limit: 12. LEADER: Kathy Brown at ktbnurse@gmail.com.

**FEBRUARY 15 (Sunday)****ROYCE HANSON CONSERVATION PARK POP-UP TRIP**

No reservations needed! Royce Hanson made a name for itself in the fall with plentiful birds and rarities. We'll enjoy it in the winter months with a walk along the fields and wood edge in search of overwintering sparrows and raptors. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot at 21820 Club Hollow Road in Poolesville, MD. The trip will be cancelled in the case of snow or sleet. For questions or more information, contact LEADER: Lauren Carey at ljcarey011@gmail.com.

**FEBRUARY 20 (Friday)****LOIS Y. GREEN CONSERVATION PARK**

Morning walk through the varied habitats of this excellent 250-acre park, including two ponds, fields, deciduous and coniferous woods. We'll be looking for overwintering songbirds, waterfowl, and raptors. Meet at 8 a.m. in the parking lot at 8711 Snouffer School Road, Gaithersburg, Md. Limit: 12. LEADER: Mark England at englandmark@comcast.net.

**FEBRUARY 21 (Saturday)****RILEY'S LOCK**

Join us for a morning at and around Riley's Lock where we will first spend some time scanning the river for waterfowl. After that we'll head upstream on the towpath, checking the turning basin for any elusive waterfowl and then continue on looking for winter woodland birds. Meet at 8:30 a.m., and consider bringing a scope if you have one. Limit: 10. LEADER: Scott Young at scott4aves@icloud.com. Dave Roberts will co-lead.

**MARCH 6 (Friday)****GUNNERS LAKE, GERMANTOWN**

This little body of water has established a deserved reputation over the years for a nice variety of wintering waterfowl and rather close views of the birds. If the lake is frozen over at the time of the trip, we will switch to a nearby larger body of water. Walking will be along a level, paved path. Meet at 8 a.m. along the north side of Wisteria Drive, where there is ample parking. Specific maps giving directions will be sent to participants. Limit: 10. LEADER: Andy Martin at martinap2@verizon.net.

**MARCH 7 (Saturday)****ROCK CREEK'S NORTH BRANCH STREAM VALLEY**

Discover upper Rock Creek's watershed with a variety of habitats. We'll start along open fields and marshy areas next to Bowie Mill Park with the opportunity to see sparrows, hawks, and early migrants. Turkeys and a woodcock have been spotted in this area. For those wanting a longer foray, a 4-mile loop, which includes the stream valley, will be possible. The path at this point along Rock Creek is meandering and narrow with some steep sections. Meet at 8 a.m. at Bowie Mill Park (<https://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/bowie-mill-local-park/>) next to Sequoyah Elementary School with the option to do the shorter paved walk or the longer loop. Limit: 12. CO-LEADERS: Jo Cox at jobird11@gmail.com and Anne Mytych at amytych@yahoo.com.

**MARCH 7 (Saturday)****TIMBERDOODLING AT BLUE MASH**

Join us for some crepuscular adventuring and witness the whistling Woodcocks! We'll meet in the gravel lot off Zion Road in Laytonsville at 4 p.m. Pre-dusk we will be watching for late winter stragglers as well as early spring migrants. The grand finale will be listening for the first "peents" of the evening followed by the whistle and whirl of the sky-dancing American Woodcocks. Wear boots and bring a flashlight! Limit: 12. LEADER: Angela Atwood-Moore at getmoorphit@yahoo.com. Stacy Rabinovitz will co-lead.

**MARCH 14 (Saturday)****WHEATON REGIONAL PARK**

A bit early for spring migration but who knows? Wheaton RP always surprises us. Ducks, woodpeckers, flycatchers, raptors (sometimes a Merlin!), bluebirds, and towhees are all possible, and if you don't know WRP, you will enjoy the variety of terrain and landscape. Limit: 12. CO-LEADERS: Evelyn Ralston at evelynralston@icloud.com. Jo Cox will co-lead.

**MARCH 15 (Sunday)****LAKE ARTEMESIA**

Join us at 8 a.m. for a late winter trip to Lake Artemesia. Early landbird migrants such as Tree Swallow and Eastern Phoebe are possible; winter birds including lingering ducks are still present. Easy walking on a paved path. Limit: 10. LEADER: Rob Hilton at rob.hilton.2010@gmail.com. Lisa Shannon will co-lead.

**MARCH 21 (Saturday)****BROOKSIDE GARDENS**

If you've been wanting to explore this garden oasis in suburban Maryland, here is your chance. Easy walk with mostly local birds and a few winter visitors or early spring arrivals. Good for beginners and anyone wanting to begin their spring birding in a lovely setting. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Visitor Center parking lot. Limit: 10. LEADER: Karen Cyr at kdcyr@comcast.net.



# Christmas Bird Counts

By Jim Nelson, Seneca CBC Compiler

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) season is rapidly approaching. This year will be the 126th year that CBCs have been conducted. The annual CBC has been organized by National Audubon for many years, and the resulting data is available to everyone in a public database online at <https://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/>.



The compilers of our local CBCs can always use new volunteers to help with the counts. Participating in a CBC can be fun and educational, and you are contributing to a very valuable, long-term citizen science effort. You can participate in the CBC as a field counter, or, if you don't want to count in the field and you are located inside one of the count circles, you can participate by counting birds at your feeders and around your yard.

Many of you have been participating in the CBC for years and may already be hearing from your CBC leaders about this year's counts. If you would like to participate again or try out a CBC, contact one of the compilers below. For general information, please visit the Audubon Christmas Bird Count website at <https://www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count>.

## **Seneca CBC: DECEMBER 14 (Sunday)**

Compiler: Jim Nelson, [kingfishers2@verizon.net](mailto:kingfishers2@verizon.net)

## **Triadelphia Reservoir CBC: DECEMBER 20 (Saturday)**

Compiler: David Holmes, [musiclbndr@gmail.com](mailto:musiclbndr@gmail.com)

## **District of Columbia CBC: DECEMBER 20 (Saturday)**

Compiler: Larry Cartwright, [prowarbler@verizon.net](mailto:prowarbler@verizon.net). Alternatively, contact Nature Forward through Pam Oves at [pam.oves@natureforward.org](mailto:pam.oves@natureforward.org)

## **Sugarloaf Mountain CBC: DECEMBER 28 (Sunday)**

Compiler: Josephine Cox, [jobird11@gmail.com](mailto:jobird11@gmail.com)

## **Central Loudoun CBC: DECEMBER 29 (Monday)**

Sign up at <https://www.loudounwildlife.org> or contact Compiler: Joe Coleman at [coleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:coleman@loudounwildlife.org) or Bryan Henson at [bhenson@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:bhenson@loudounwildlife.org). This count circle includes 5 miles along the C&O Canal around White's Ferry in Montgomery County, MD.

## Welcome New Members

Robin Boutlier  
Monica Campos  
John Csokmay  
Patrick Downey  
Daniel Eberly and Phyllis Carney  
Tracey and Jonathan Haber  
Mason Hall  
Kimberly Jean and Abner Louima  
Mary and Emma Kim  
Dana Ledger  
Stephanie Miles and Kim Okahara

Anna and Ryan Morgan  
Colleen Nicholas  
Maya O'Connor  
Oliver Ou and Valerie-June Button  
Jim Pruitt  
Ellen Richmond and Matthew Streich  
Toni Robinson  
Elliot Rosen and Sharon Cohen  
Bradford Schmonsees and  
Amy Dispanet  
Marilyn and Peter Schoettle

Leslie Shapard  
Barbara Speas  
Jeff Stottlemeyer with  
Sailen, Papia, and Sid  
Kenny Wang  
Brandon Weaver  
Richard White  
Rebecca Wilken  
James Wilson





**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL**  
**Montgomery Bird Club - a Chapter of the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS)**

Your dues payment includes membership to both MBC and MOS until September next year.

If at all possible, we prefer that you pay online on the MOS website with a credit card or PayPal.  
Go to <https://mdbirds.org/join> and select "Join" or "Renew."

**If you cannot pay online, please send this form with a check payable to**  
***Maryland Ornithological Society* to**

**Carol Daugherty, MOS Treasurer, 11925 Oden Ct, Rockville, MD 20852**

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

See classes of membership at <https://mdbirds.org/join/about-mos/manual-of-operation/>.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL DUES

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ DONATION TO MONTGOMERY BIRD CLUB (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 in your Club membership \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER(S) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL(S) \_\_\_\_\_

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

The Chat  
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**Montgomery Bird Club Websites:**

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[www.montgomerybirdclub.org](http://www.montgomerybirdclub.org)

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[mdbirds.org/join/chapters/montgomery-bird-club/](http://mdbirds.org/join/chapters/montgomery-bird-club/)