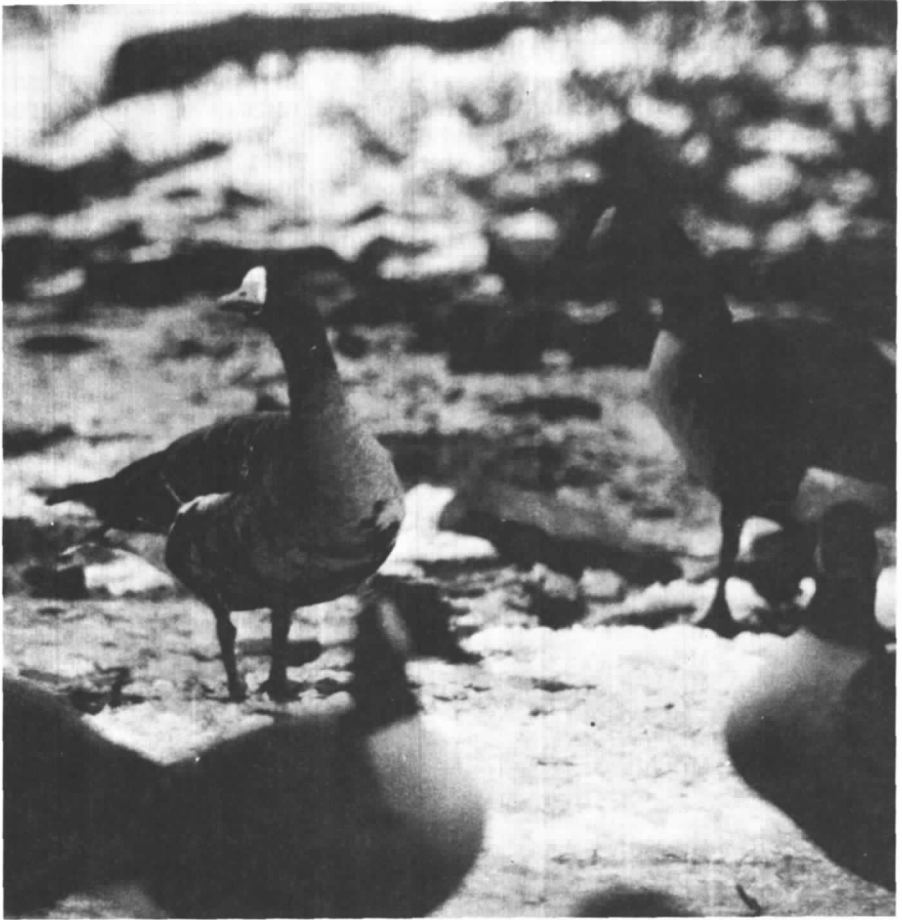


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# MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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# MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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## IN SEARCH OF NESTING EASTERN BLUEBIRDS

DAWN B. OTELLO

Where to find an Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*)? That is the question that has plagued many people who desire to attract bluebirds. What environmental feature, or more probably combination of environmental features, attracts bluebirds to nest at a particular site?

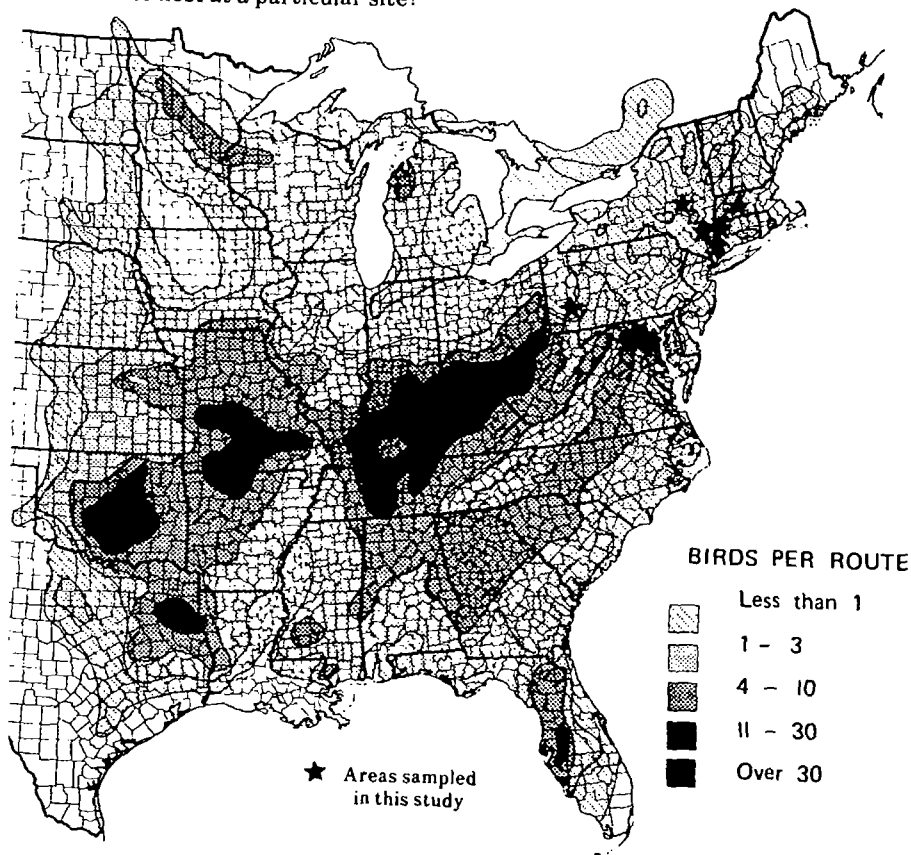


Figure 1. Breeding Bird Survey relative density map for *Sialia sialis* with study sites (from Bystrak 1979). Reproduced with permission.

Although the Eastern Bluebird is not a federally endangered nor threatened species, it is doing poorly enough so as to be listed on the National Audubon Society's 1980 Blue List. The Blue List is a compilation of species that "have recently or are currently giving indications of non-cyclical declines or range contractions...which for reasons of effects of chemicals on breeding biology, reduction of breeding or wintering habitat, predator problems (including man), or other causes, are now, or seem to be, substantially reduced in numbers either regionally or throughout their range" (Anonymous 1971).

This precariousness of bluebird numbers, along with a lack of studies that objectively quantified bluebird-selected nesting habitat as indicated by the literature searched, prompted me to quantify Eastern Bluebird habitat, and to predict sites for bluebird nest boxes that would maximize chances for bluebird occupancy. This study was conducted in 1979 and 1980 in five states: 99 sites in

Table 1. Code Translation.

Code	Variable
	(independent)
shrubvo	shrub volume
natper	# natural perches
artper	# artificial perches
woodyht	average woody vegetation height
shrubde	average shrub density (# shrub stems per area)
canclos	% canopy closure
petplo	% plot open
sheltge	# key shelter genera
forgen	# key foraging genera
foodgen	# key food genera
DS	deciduous shrub — present or not present
DT	deciduous tree — present or not present
ES	evergreen shrub — present or not present
ET	evergreen tree — present or not present
struto	total # of different structural types
gends	# genera of deciduous shrubs
gendt	# genera of deciduous trees
genes	# genera of evergreen shrubs
genet	# genera of evergreen trees
treede	average tree density (# boles per unit area)
disnap	distance to nearest natural perch
disarp	distance to nearest artificial perch
disedge	distance to nearest wood's edge or hedgerow
diswat	distance to nearest permanent water body (lotic or lentic)
dishum	distance to nearest area of human activity
topo	topographic elevation of site
vet	vegetation immediately over nest — present or not present
slope	slope of site
aspect	aspect of site
orient	orientation of nest entrance
state	state in which each site was located
range	part of <i>S. sialis</i> range in which each site was located
dens	density category of each site as indicated by a <i>S. sialis</i> density map
	(dependent)
depar	presence or absence of a bluebird nest site

New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut (the northern range study area), and 50 sites in Maryland and Pennsylvania (the central range study area). Fig. 1 illustrates the location of these study areas in relation to relative Eastern Bluebird densities as determined by the Breeding Bird Survey (Bystrak 1979). Note the Eastern Bluebird densities of the central range study areas are greater than at the northern study areas. Maryland study areas were at the Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, the Goddard Space Flight Center at Greenbelt, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center at Laurel, and at Potomac. The Pennsylvania study area was at Ligonier.

I recorded habitat variables (Table 1) in three circular plots (1/100 acre, 1/10 acre, and 1 acre) surrounding each bluebird nest site and potential nest site. I used a mathematical tool called discriminant analysis to determine which of my measured habitat variables did the best job of discriminating between two ultimate groups: Eastern Bluebird nesting sites and Eastern Bluebird non-nesting sites, as well as to predict what sort of new sites would attract nesting bluebirds. Then, in the spring of 1980 I erected an experimental bluebird trail of 25 nest boxes in central Massachusetts, based on the hypothesized prediction that minimal shrub volume and closeness to water constitute key Eastern Bluebird habitat.

Table 2. Final Nest Box Predictive Analyses with Key *S. sialis* Habitat Discriminating Variables.

Analyses	Manipulation synopsis <sup>1</sup>	Number of cases	Significance of function 1	Key discriminating variables <sup>2</sup>
northern range	2 group direct; eliminated state, range	156	.2496 (n.s.)	topo, ES, gendt, artper, disedge, treede, disarp, genet, slope, DT, genes, canclos
northern range test	2 group direct; test; eliminated state, range	78	.2604 (n.s.)	topo, sheltge, gends, ES, disedge, disnap, slope, natper, veg, foodgen, forgen
central range	2 group direct; eliminated state, range	83	.0019 (**)	forgen, genet, shrubde, ES, woodyht, gendt, diswat, slope, topo, natper, dens, ET
central range test	2 group direct; test; eliminated state, range	46	.0000	topo, dens, genes, artper, pctplo, gends, ES

1. "Test" indicates about 50% of the cases were used to create the model, the other 50% used to test its classification ability.
2. Key discriminators are arranged in order of most to least contributory to the discrimination. See Table 1 for variable code translation.

The key discriminators for the central range (Table 2) were presence of evergreen shrubs, topographic elevation of the site, and relative density of bluebirds. Elevation and density were excluded from the final recommendations for successful bluebird nest box placement in the central range because it would be too strong a statement to recommend that boxes be placed in lower elevation sites and in areas sparsely populated by bluebirds. The strongest conclusive statement that can be made is that boxes placed in lower elevation sites have a better chance of attracting central bluebirds than higher elevation sites. However, higher elevation sites should not be excluded from consideration. Likewise, boxes placed in low bluebird density areas have a better chance of attracting central bluebirds than boxes placed in high bluebird density areas. Essentially, central range bluebirds favored an evergreen shrub environment (at least within a 30 m radius of the nest), where the woody vegetation was structurally deciduous, but where there was a low generic diversity of deciduous vegetation. Structural habitat parameters (which include vegetative life forms, topography, and spatial distribution of species) are more important than generic type habitat parameters in central bluebird range, which concurs with the literature (Wiens 1969, Shelford 1912, Schnurre 1921, Sunkel 1928, Odum 1945, and Hilden 1965).

In conclusion, caution and common sense should be used when implementing recommendations to attract bluebirds to a site. This research was accomplished in areas where bluebirds were already established. If one is aware of the general needs of bluebirds—cavity, adequate and appropriate food, minimization of competition, and open landscape in which to forage and spot predators—then one can locate a reasonably favorable area. Specific guidelines for box placement in such an area are offered by the above recommendations. Obviously there are many additional factors beyond the scope of this study that also influence whether or not bluebirds will be found at any particular place. Hence, choosing sites near existing bluebird populations would seem the most prudent course in implementing these recommendations.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the following individuals, organizations, and institutions for their assistance throughout the course of this investigation.

For their professional and technical expertise, I thank Dr. John T. Finn, Dr. Joseph S. Larson, Dr. Theodore Sargent, the late Harry Ahles, Eva Goldwater, Brad Blodget, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mayers, Ethan Howard, David Boyt, and Dee Ann Civello.

For their financial assistance, I thank: Maryland Ornithological Society, Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society, Wildlife Management Institute, the University of Massachusetts, National Audubon Society, and Manomet Bird Observatory of Massachusetts.

For the use of their lands on which to conduct my study as well as the divulgence of their knowledge on Eastern Bluebirds, I thank: Dr. Larry Zeleny, Delos C.

Dupree, Dr. John Pearl, Barbara Dowell, James Cairn, Raymond Briggs, Florence Germond, Joseph DiFalco, Arthur Gingert, Thomas R. Baptist, Richard Turner, and those private landowners throughout the five states who granted me access to their lands.

Finally, a very special thank you goes to Dr. Richard DeGraaf and to Dr. Larry Zeleny, who inspired this study by sparking my curiosity about the inner workings of the bluebird habitat selection phenomenon, and instilled in me a sense of urgency regarding the Eastern Bluebird's plight.

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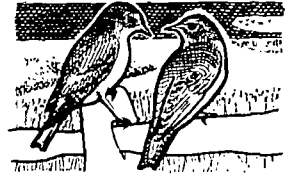
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## WILSON'S PHALAROPES IN SPRING AT BALTIMORE HARBOR

Steven H. Everhart

On May 13, 1980, while conducting a field reconnaissance for the biotic community mapping phase of an environmental assessment of the Masonville Dredged Material Deposition Area (located on the south shore of Baltimore Harbor near the Patapsco River), I observed a pair of Wilson's Phalaropes (*Steganopus tricolor*) feeding near a group of Dunlins, Spotted Sandpipers, and yellowlegs. As they were in spring plumage, the pair was readily distinguished from the yellowlegs. The dark neck stripe and pale head of the more colorful female was noted as was the slight tinge of rust on the neck of the male. Both birds were feeding in a persistent pond behind one of the dikes. They fed in the manner characteristic of the species: continuously walking and feeding from side-to-side with their needle-like bills.

Coastal Zone Resources Division, Ocean Data Systems  
4505 Franklin Ave., Wilmington, N.C. 28403



## THE SEASON

### WINTER SEASON, DEC. 1, 1981 - FEB. 28, 1982

ROBERT F. RINGLER

The dominant feature of this winter was the onset of a frigid period of weather beginning in the second week of January. Temperatures had averaged about a degree below normal in December with precipitation near normal. A warming trend in early January brought a high of 61° at Oakland on the 4th and similar temperatures throughout the state. This balmy period ended abruptly on the 10th as a mass of arctic air spread across the eastern two thirds of the country. This was accompanied by brisk winds and followed by a snowstorm on the 13th to the 16th, leaving virtually the entire state covered with snow until thawing near the end of the month. For the ten-day period Jan. 10-19 Baltimore averaged 18° below normal. Despite the warm periods before and after that time temperatures across the state were approximately 7° below normal for the entire month. See Table 1 for comparison with previous years including the devastating winter of '77. Precipitation was about a ½ inch above normal. The lowest officially recorded temperature was -34° at Eagle Rock, Garrett County on the 17th. Temperatures in the 50's at the end of the month wiped out most of the snow cover, except in the western region where it reached a depth of 21 in. at Frostburg on the 26th and 27th.

Temperatures were near normal in February, with precipitation averaging 0.8 in. above normal. Snowfalls were generally followed by warm weather that rapidly melted any cover. Warm periods on the 15-16th and the 19-24th started waterfowl moving along with the normally early passerines.

Avian mortality during the severe January weather was high as one might expect. Jan Reese in St. Michaels documented the following birds brought to him during this period that were found dead in an emaciated condition: Horned Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan (total of 7, 5 with embedded or ingested shot), Whistling Swan (3, all with ingested shot), Canada Goose (only 3 autopsied but all had embedded shot), Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Common Bobwhite, American Woodcock (4, 1 with embedded shot), Sanderling, Mourning Dove (11, 2 with embedded shot, 1 with ingested shot, 1 with nematodes), Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Cardinal, and White-throated Sparrow.

In addition Jan also found the following species that were killed by cars while feeding along the roadsides: Cooper's Hawk, Greater Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Common Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl,



Common Flicker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Fish Crow, Brown Thrasher, American Robin, Eastern Meadowlark, House Finch, and Song Sparrow plus 5 other species commonly found dead along roads in any weather. This demonstrates the magnitude of the problem that birds had in finding food during this severe period.

If anything pleasant was to come out of this season it would be the late flight of northern finches that developed in late January and into February with Common Redpolls, Pine Siskins, and White-winged Crossbills being the features. These will be documented in the appropriate species accounts for this season and also for the spring season in the next issue.

Contributors: Larry Bonham, Ric Conn, A. J. and Roberta Fletcher for all Caroline County observers, Alex Hammer, Hank Kaestner, Walt Kraus, Debbie Mignogno, Jim Paulus, Fran Pope, Jane Reese, Jo Solem for all observers in Howard County, Sallie Thayer, David Wallace, Mark Wallace, Bob Warfield, Hal Wierenga, and Jim Wilkinson.

Table 1. Average Temperatures (°F) and Departures from Normal for Month of January 1977-1982.

Station	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Baltimore	22.9/-10.5	29.2/-4.2	33.1/-0.3	33.8/+0.4*	27.9/-5.5	25.5/-7.9
Oakland	12.7/-14.8	17.9/-9.6	22.9/-4.6	28.5/+1.0	20.5/-7.0	22.3/-5.2
Hagerstown	18.3/-13.0	25.1/-6.2	28.8/-2.5	31.1/-0.2	26.3/-5.0	24.6/-6.7
Frederick	22.2/-9.5	27.4/-4.3	31.2/-0.5	32.9/+1.2	28.7/-3.0	25.8/-5.9
Salisbury	26.4/-11.1	33.7/-3.8	37.2/-0.3	36.0/-1.5	30.6/-6.9	31.6/-5.9

*Grebe, Pelagics, Cormorants.* A Horned Grebe, which mistakenly landed on a patch of ground ice near Frederick on Jan. 29, was released in a nearby stream, apparently in good health (D. Wallace). On a Feb. 14 pelagic trip off Ocean City observers tallied 15 Northern Fulmars and 1,775 Northern Gannets. There were 13 Great Cormorants at Pt. Lookout on Feb. 20 (Ringler, et al.).

*Hérons.* Mignogno noted the following species at Deal Island Wildlife Management Area (WMA) during the winter; an immature Little Blue Heron from Dec. 18 through Jan. 6, 2 Great Egrets on Jan. 6, and 5 Black-crowned Night Herons on Jan. 5.

*Waterfowl.* On Jan. 14 Paulus found these waterfowl on the Potomac near Cumberland: 5 Horned Grebes, 150 Mallards, 25 Black Ducks, 5 Common Goldeneyes; 1 Bufflehead, 1 Common Merganser, and 1 Ring-billed Gull. Bill Portlock listed 3,500 Lesser Scaup, 600 Oldsquaw, and 200 Surf Scoters wintering in the Smith Island area this year. An immature Mute Swan remained at Sandy Point from Dec. 19 through Jan. 3 (Wierenga). Ten Whistling Swans stayed on Deep Creek Lake to Dec. 7 (Pope) and others in Howard County to Jan. 6 (M. Wallace). Wallace found the peak winter count of Canada Geese in Howard County to be 1,815 on Jan. 20.

Evidence of the late movements of this species were the 50 on Deep Creek Lake on Dec. 12 (Pope), 12 flying over Germantown on Jan. 2, and 53 over Silver Spring on Jan. 24 (Warfield). Sam Dyke noted a flight of 1,000 Brant and 500 Black Ducks going south over Assateague on Jan. 17. White-fronted Geese put in a good showing with single adults seen on the Choptank River at Horn Point on Dec. 13 (Ringler, et al.), at Churchville at least through Dec. 17 (many observers), at Gaithersburg on Jan. 7 (Warfield), and at West Ocean City from Feb. 7 (Ringler, et al.) through Feb. 15. Single Snow Geese were on Deep Creek Lake on Dec. 7 (Pope), at Woodbine on Jan. 3 (Anne Walsh), in Howard County on Feb. 11 (M. Wallace), and in Montgomery County on Feb. 20 (Bonham). The high count for Wood Ducks was 55 in Baltimore on Dec. 17 (Ringler). The 8 Canvasbacks at Wilde Lake in Columbia on Feb. 13 (Linda McDaniel) were probably early migrants. In Garrett County, Sallie Thayer saw a female Lesser Scaup on the Youghiogheny River on Jan. 2 and a female Common Goldeneye on Feb. 7, both unusual mid-winter records. Another Common Goldeneye was at Lilypons on Jan. 16 and there were 37 on the Potomac River in Frederick County on Feb. 21 (D. Wallace), the latter flock a definite sign of spring migration. A female and a young male Common Eider were at Ocean City on Feb. 7 (Ringler, et al.) and at least one bird was seen through most of the winter. The 8 Hooded Mergansers at Lilypons on Jan. 20-24 (D. Wallace) were another indication of birds continuing to move south, or to more open water, during the January freeze. The high counts for Common Mergansers were 35-40 at Sycamore Landing on the Potomac on Jan. 31 (Wilson) and 60 at Baltimore on Feb. 2 (Wilkinson).

*Raptors, Turkey.* The high counts of Black Vultures were 35 at Lake Linganore on Jan. 5 (D. Wallace) and 30+ throughout the winter near Riva on the South River (Tibbie Stevenson). Rough-legged Hawks proliferated this season with numerous sightings in agricultural areas or about marshes. One was at Oldtown on Dec. 18 (Paulus), at least 2 in the vicinity of Upper Marlboro from Dec. 1 (Conn), 1 at Fishing Creek Marsh, Calvert Co. on Dec. 24 (Kraus), 1 at Gaithersburg on Dec. 31 (Bonham), 4 in northern Baltimore County from January into mid-February (Kaestner), 1 at Sandy Point on Jan. 18 (Wierenga), 1 near Owings Mills on Jan. 18 (4 light phase and 6 dark phase) at Deal Island WMA on Jan. 31 (Wierenga), 4 at Irish Grove Sanctuary near Marion on Feb. 20 (Stasz, et al.), 1 in Baltimore on Feb. 21 (Ringler, et al.), 3 in southern Frederick County on Feb. 23 (D. Wallace), and 19 (Gail Frantz), 10 (4 light phase and 6 dark phase) at Deal Island WMA on Jan. 31 (Wierenga), 4 at Irish Grove Sanctuary near Marion on Feb. 20 (Stasz, et al.), 1 in Baltimore on Feb. 21 (Ringler, et al.) 3 in southern Frederick County on Feb. 23 (D. Wallace), and 1 at Rockville on Feb. 28 (Wilson). Two Golden Eagles continued at Blackwater through the winter. The only others reported were an immature at Sandy Point on Dec. 13 (Hammer) and one bird at Irish Grove on Feb. 7 (Stasz). The mid-winter survey of Bald Eagles tallied 53 adults and 59 immatures in the state with the major concentrations being 47 in Harford County and 38 in Dorchester County. Wierenga counted 22 Northern Harriers at Deal Island WMA on Jan. 31. Early arriving Ospreys were at Benedict in Charles County on Feb. 18 (John Gregoire) and Horn Point, Dorchester Co. on Feb. 24 (Don Meritt). One Peregrine Falcon was seen in the vicinity of the Bay Bridge from Dec. 11 through Feb. 20 (Wierenga). A Merlin was seen at Fishing Creek Marsh on Dec. 19 (Kraus). The only report of Wild Turkeys was 6 at Catoctin on Feb. 20 (D. Wallace).

*Shorebirds.* There were 3 American Oystercatchers on Sinepuxent Bay on Feb. 26 (Mignogno). Sam Dyke reported from Assateague a Long-billed Dowitcher on Dec. 12 and 12 Lesser Yellowlegs on Jan. 2. David Wallace found Common Snipe in southern Frederick County on Dec. 6 and Feb. 4. David Czaplak estimated 2 Western Sandpipers and 800 Dunlin at Blackwater on Dec. 12. Harvey and Marion Mudd found a Purple Sandpiper at Chesapeake Beach on Dec. 6 and 2 were there on the 23rd (Wierenga, Mignogno).

*Skua, Gulls, Tern, Alcids.* The center for gull-watching this winter was the Montgomery County Landfill in Rockville. Wierenga made regular surveys there and estimated the January population to be about 8,000 birds. After the thaw of mid-February he noted that the population increased to 14,000-18,000 with most of the increase being in the number of Ring-billed Gulls. Of the less common species he found 2 immature Glaucous Gulls there, Dec. 9 through Feb. 4, at least 6 different Iceland Gulls with 2 immatures from late November to Jan. 18, a third immature from Jan. 26 to Feb. 4, and an adult, a near-adult, and another immature on Feb. 5, 45 Greater Black-backed Gulls on Jan. 6, and 3 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, 2 adults and a bird in second-winter plumage, from Jan. 6 to Feb. 23. The landfill near Salisbury also provided some interesting gulls for Wierenga with a near-adult Glaucous Gull, 3 immature Iceland Gulls, and an adult Lesser Black-back on Jan. 25, 2 adult Lessers on Feb. 1, and a second-winter Lesser on Feb. 15. Another Glaucous Gull was at Chesapeake Beach on Feb. 28 (Kraus). Another Iceland Gull was at Tilghman Island on Dec. 18 and 19 (Effinger) and at least one immature continued at Rockville through Feb. 28 (Wilson). The now-traditional adult Lesser Black-back spent its fourth winter at Fort McHenry. Another adult was at the Annapolis landfill on Dec. 11 and a second-winter bird on Jan. 27 (Wierenga). Two sub-adult Lesser Black-backs were at the Parkton landfill on Dec. 26 (Mike Resch), an adult on the Severn River on Jan. 3 (Bob Patterson), 2 at Chesapeake Beach on Jan. 5 (Kraus), and an adult at Ocean City on Feb. 7 (Resch, et al.). These figures show the trend for gulls to seek out landfills as a major source of food in the winter and attract the traditionally more northern species. This winter was probably the greatest presence in history shown by the white-winged gulls and Lesser Black-backed Gull in the state. Unseasonal Herring Gulls were at Lilypons on Jan. 8 and (5 birds) on Feb. 23 (D. Wallace), and another was in Allegany County on Feb. 2 (Paulus). David Czaplak noted 1 Forster's Tern at Blackwater on Dec. 5. A Feb. 14 pelagic trip off Ocean City produced 1 Great Skua, 1 Glaucous Gull, 1 unidentified white-winged gull, 1,000 Greater Black-backs, 2,000 Herring Gulls, 400 Black-legged Kittiwakes, 17 Razorbills, and 15 unidentified large alcids. A Razorbill was seen from shore at Ocean City on Feb. 22 (Hans-Joachim Feddern).

*Owls.* A Long-eared Owl was seen on Assateague on Dec. 28 and 29 and another at Irish Grove on Jan. 30 (Wierenga, Mignogno). Short-eared Owls were plentiful this winter, with 1 on Assateague, Jan. 16 and Feb. 26, 8 at Deal Island WMA on Jan. 22-24 (Wierenga, Mignogno), 5 near Walkersville on Feb. 14 (D. Wallace), 4 at Irish Grove on Feb. 20 (Stasz, et al.), and 6 at Baltimore on Feb. 21-27 (Wilkinson, et al.). A Saw-whet Owl was at Rockville from early December through the end of the period (Wierenga). Another Saw-whet was found dead on the road at Concord, Caroline County on Dec. 19 (Carol Scudder); live birds were seen at Assateague on Dec. 28-29 (Wierenga, Mignogno) and near Wye Mills in Talbot County on Dec. 29 (Reese).

*Flycatcher, Lark, Chickadees.* An Eastern Phoebe was in Denton on Jan. 31 and Feb. 25 (Roberta Fletcher). High counts of Horned Larks were 200 in southern Frederick County during January (D. Wallace) and 225 in northern Baltimore County on Feb. 13 (Kaestner). Kaestner and others also noted an influx of **Black-capped Chickadees** into northern Baltimore County in early February, coinciding with the movement of northern finches; however, the Black-caps were not found south of Ashland and did not appear in great numbers. Barbara Larrabee entertained an albino **Carolina Chickadee** at her feeder near Loch Raven throughout the period.

*Nuthatches, Wren, Thrasher, Shrikes.* **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were plentiful and widespread this winter. A **Carolina Wren** at Fran Pope's feeder in Mountain Lake Park on Dec. 19 appeared very weak and probably did not survive the freeze. The only report of a **Brown Thrasher** from the Piedmont was one that briefly visited the Clegg's feeder during the coldest part of January. **Loggerhead Shrikes** were seen at Graceham on Dec. 20 (Ringler, Nathan Webb) and in the Belfast Valley of northern Baltimore County from Feb. 11 for several days (Kaestner, et al.).

*Warblers.* A **Pine Warbler** in Federalsburg on Jan. 14 (Inez Glime) was trying to brave the cold weather. A **Palm Warbler** was seen at Sandy Point on Dec. 5 (Hammer) and on Jan. 3 (Wierenga, Mignogno) before the coldest part of the season. Another **Palm Warbler** was found in Washington on Jan. 1 (David Czaplak).

*Icterids.* A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was reported from Church Creek in Dorchester County on Feb. 28 (Paul Sykes, Bob Russell). "**Baltimore**" **Orioles** as usual tried to spend the winter, with birds seen at the Halls in Howard County during the first half of December, a male in Bethesda on Dec. 27 (Mieke Mehlman), 2 at Baldwin on Jan. 16 and 17 (Van Houtans), and 1 at Herald Harbor through Jan. 17 (Wierenga). Wierenga estimated that a flock of over a million blackbirds roosted in a phragmites marsh south of Annapolis through the period. It consisted of approximately 50% **Common Grackles**, 25% **Red-winged Blackbirds**, and 25% **European Starlings**.

*Finches.* An **Indigo Bunting** spent the winter from Jan. 9 on at a feeder in Savage (Paul Leifer, et al.). An adult male **Painted Bunting** visited the feeder of John and Elizabeth Morton in Pendennis Mount near Annapolis from Dec. 26 through Jan. 21. The only **Dickcissels** reported were a male photographed by Bruce Reid in Baltimore, Dec. 30 through Jan. 1 and one in Concord on Jan. 12 (Carol Scudder). A southward movement of northern finches began in late January and the birds poured into the state in early February. Fran Pope suddenly had 30-50 **Evening Grosbeaks** at her feeders on Feb. 5 and continuing through the month. She noted a corresponding drop in the



Painted Bunting, Annapolis,  
Jan. 12, 1982. Photo by  
Harold Wierenga.

number of **House Finches** from the daily total of 20-40 to less than 10 after that date. Ethel Engle noted 80+ House Finches at Tanyard on Jan. 6. Near Oakland Sallie Thayer saw the first 5 **Common Redpolls** at her feeders on Jan. 20 and had banded 25 by the end of the period. Another Common Redpoll was in Salisbury on Jan. 31 (Charles Vaughn). Numbers increased in February with 2 at Rodgers Forge in Baltimore on Feb. 9 (Slaughter), 2 at Ashland on Feb. 13 (Kaestner), and others in Allegany County on the 18th (Paulus), Reisterstown on the 21st (Gail Frantz), and Columbia on the 27th (George & Carole Cleland). Fran Pope noted her first **Pine Siskin** on Dec. 6 and numbers steadily increased to 25 per day in mid-January and 50-100 per day in February with 635 banded there and near Oakland by the end of the month. Other reports of Pine Siskins were 25 at Ashland on Feb. 13 (Kaestner), 20 at Gambrill State Park from Feb. 7-28 (D. Wallace), and another huge flock at Patuxent WRC with 500 in February. **American Goldfinches** peaked at 50 per day at the Mountain Lake Park feeders on Jan. 13 and gradually decreased as the number of siskins increased. The only **Red Crossbills** reported were 7 in Garrett County on Dec. 19 (Pope) and 1 flying over the Belfast Valley on Feb. 25 (Kaestner). **White-winged Crossbills** made the biggest impression on observers with all the records coming from February. On the 13th Kaestner noted 20 flying over the Belfast Valley and another 60 at Ashland with some birds remaining at the latter location through the 27th. Also on the 13th one was at a feeder in Howard County (Alice Grant) while others were seen at the National Arboretum, Feb. 7-15 (Czaplak). On the 14th Parksie Mulholland estimated 25-30 in Ruxton. On the 15th Hank Niese found 12 in Howard County. Another 12 were at Rockville on the 16th (Wierenga). In Garrett County there were 21 in Mountain Lake Park on the 24th, 100+ in Crellin on the 26th, and 20 in Oakland on the 27th (Pope). Another was at a feeder in Sunderland (Kraus). With the exception of birds at feeders the White-winged Crossbills were found exclusively in hemlocks.

*Sparrows, Longspur, Buntings.* The number of **Rufous-sided Towhees** attempting to winter this year was far above average as the Christmas Count totals will testify. A **Vesper Sparrow** at Williston, Caroline County, on Dec. 12 (Carol Scudder) was unusual. The only **Lapland Longspur** reported was an immature in the Belfast Valley on Feb. 13 (Kaestner). **Snow Buntings** dwindled to 2 at Sandy Point on Dec. 13 and the last one was seen on Jan. 3 (Wierenga). Wierenga also found 1 at Rockville on Dec. 13. The flock at Triadelphia Reservoir peaked at 53 on Dec. 4 and was last seen on the 17th before snow covered the exposed lake bottom (M. Wallace, et al.). Other Snow Buntings were 6 feeding in the road with Horned Larks in Garrett County on Dec. 19 (Pope), 4 at Tilghman Island on Jan. 1 (Reese), and 10 at Chance in Somerset County on Jan. 25 (Wierenga, Mignogno).

3501 Melody Lane, Baltimore, MD 21207



Snow Buntings at Triadelphia Reservoir, Dec. 12, 1981. Photo by Bob Ringler.

## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Last year George Kramer and the Sanctuary Committee set out to cure what we perceived as a loss of the old enthusiasm for the MOS sanctuaries. They did this in several ways: for instance, by holding regional meetings to encourage local participation, and by conducting physical surveys to determine first hand the condition of each property. Here again the local chapters participated to make sure their inputs were considered. The surveys were followed up with working weekends. Crews of 20 at Irish Grove and 40 at Carey Run showed up to clean, paint, clear trails and generally put the places in shape for the season. Charlotte and Dan Folk at Carey Run were especially appreciative of the work done there.

A special and unusual event took place at Irish Grove. With the help of the Department of Natural Resources a 40 x 90 x 6-foot hole was blasted into the marsh in front of the observation platform. The idea was to provide some deep water, which is otherwise lacking in the marsh, to attract fish and other animals, and especially species of birds not normally found there. All of this was accompanied by regular publicity in the "Maryland Yellowthroat."

Another change from convention has been the residency of Jim Stasz at Irish Grove. Jim has performed a large amount of maintenance, especially on the plumbing system, so the sanctuary looks livable for the first time in many years. Irish Grove is receiving some of the personal attention the Folks have lavished on Carey Run over the years.

George's experiences in other similar organizations helped him to accomplish these and other things this year. Unfortunately he will not be able to continue. The MOS was fortunate to have George to get this process started and now to have Ben Poscover agree to take over and lead the Sanctuary Committee for the coming year.

JOHN CULLOM

## 1982 CONVENTION SUMMARY

The 35th annual convention planning began at the 34th annual business meeting. The attendees at that meeting were so pleased with the Del-Mar-Va

Convention Center at Delmar, Md. that they voted loud and clear to return for another year. It had proved to be a good focal point for the Eastern Shore birding spots and the Center's accommodations were so right for the MOS activities other than birding.

Registration, as in the past, began early Friday, May 7, as birders arrived anxious to get settled quickly and head out in the field to do some scouting before the official program began. Soon it became clear to the volunteers at the registration table that this was not going to be a routine registration with quiet times between the rushes. A steady stream of birders lined up and just kept coming. Before the close of the registration Saturday, questions like "Where are the programs?" and "What happened to the name tags?" were being asked, but with no answers. Unbelievably we had run out of both which had never happened before. It was clear we were going to set an attendance record—at least for recent years and perhaps for all time. By Saturday afternoon, 315 had registered and a few more walked in late Saturday and even Sunday morning. That was all good news but it was unfortunate that it had not been anticipated so that everyone could have had a program and proper name tag. A lesson for next year. Dr. Stephen Kress from the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, was the guest speaker Friday night. The auditorium was set up with about 300 chairs but it was necessary to bring in more chairs and still there were standees. Some guests from the area had just dropped in to hear Steve's program, "Bird Islands of the North Atlantic."

Saturday morning there was an overflow crowd for the 4:15 a.m. coffee and doughnuts. Unlike previous years, there were even more early birders on Sunday morning (usually after a busy Saturday there are "sleep-ins"). These birders had come to the 35th convention to take advantage of every birding moment!

The field trips were organized by Chan Robbins and all well attended—many with overflows. No matter the warnings on the sign-up sheets that certain trips must be limited in numbers, persistent birders just kept signing up using the margins and squeezing names between the lines. The final count of 202 species was good and surpassed last year's count of 185. The more birders looking, the more birds are to be seen. Of course, the leaders must be given the big share of the credit for their field work.

Dr. Benjamin Poscover was the Saturday night speaker and his program on the MOS sanctuaries was so well received, Ben will surely be back next year with an updated sanctuary program. After this presentation, the three raffle gifts were given to the winners. The raffle this year brought in more money to the sanctuary fund than in any previous raffle.

We were fortunate once again this year in that the weather was great except for a shower midmorning on Saturday, which seemed to have interrupted the birding only for brief moments. As a result of all the success stories mentioned above, the membership voted to meet next year in Delmar for the 36th annual meeting. If you missed it all this year, plan now not to repeat that mistake in 1983!

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-fifth annual meeting of the MOS was held in Delmar, Maryland on May 8, 1982. A quorum was on hand when President John Cullom called the session to order at 8:10 p.m. A motion by Mrs. Joyce was seconded and passed, approving Minutes of the last annual meeting as printed in *Maryland Birdlife*.

*Treasurer.* Mr. MacGregor was pleased to announce that the budgeted deficit had not occurred; instead the Society's finances were well in the black. The Treasurer's complete annual report will be printed in this issue of *Maryland Birdlife*.

*President's Message.* Mr. Cullom highlighted achievements of the past year, among them special efforts made to enkindle greater interest in our sanctuaries. Sanctuary Committee Chairman George Kramer was commended for an excellent job of coordinating varied activities, including physical surveys of most of the properties, regional meetings involving many people, blasting a pond in the marsh at Irish Grove, workdays at the sanctuary houses and an active publicity campaign.

This past year has also seen the first anniversary of *The Yellowthroat*. Two very capable editors have contributed greatly to its success—first Dan Boone, and currently Cameron Lewis.

Also noteworthy was the establishment of two new committees—the rare bird Verification Committee chaired by Jim Stasz and Atlas Committee under the leadership of Kathy Klimkiewicz.

*First Vice President.* Miss Chestem thanked all who attended the convention, especially those who helped with arrangements and served as trip leaders. This year there were 315 registrants, up from 248 last year and 220 the year before. Registration fees netted \$1070, in addition to approximately \$180 realized from the raffles.

*Second Vice President.* Mr. Stasz is currently engaged in establishing the Verification Committee to investigate unusual bird sightings in Maryland. He anticipates that rules will be formulated and published in *Maryland Birdlife* shortly, and the committee fully operational some time next year.

*Executive Secretary.* This year MOS membership reached 2078, an increase of 17 over the previous year. Mrs. Cullom thanked all chapter treasurers for their continued cooperation. She cited especially Ed McKnight, stepping down after 17 years as treasurer of the Montgomery Chapter.

*Committee Reports.* Reports of the Auditing, Bluebird, Bylaws, Conservation, Education, Library, Long-Range Planning, Research, Sanctuary and Scholarship Committees were given. They will be printed in this issue of *Maryland Birdlife*. The report of the Budget Committee was deferred until the Board meeting which followed.



As an addendum to the Conservation Committee report, Mrs. Robbins spoke of critical environmental issues now in jeopardy. She urged all members to write their Congressmen to support legislation affecting clean water and air, preservation of public lands and protection of endangered species.

*Election of Officers.* The Nominating Committee presented the following slate to serve for the forthcoming year: President, John H. Cullom; First Vice President, CDR Anthony White; Second Vice President, James Stasz; Treasurer, W. Gordon MacGregor; Secretary, Helen Ford. There were no nominations from the floor. A motion was made by Mrs. Cole, seconded and passed, that nominations be closed and the slate unanimously elected. A rising vote of appreciation was given to Martha Chestem, retiring after three years as First Vice President.

*Election of Trustees.* The secretary read names of those nominated by the chapters to serve as trustees (chapter president is denoted by \*): ALLEGANY, Mr. Kendrick Hodgdon\*, Mr. Robert Hiegel; ANNE ARUNDEL, Mrs. Emily Joyce\*, Miss Rhonda Brown, Dr. Gary VanVelsir; BALTIMORE, Mrs. Joy Wheeler\*, Dr. Phillip Creighton, Dr. Roger Herriott, Mrs. Eleanor Jones, Mr. Robert Lyon, Mrs. Jane E. Mazur, Mr. James Orgain, Mrs. Jean Worthley; CAROLINE, Mr. Steve Westre\*, Mrs. Marianna Nuttle; CARROLL, Dr. William Ellis\*, Mr. Nathan Webb; FREDERICK, Mr. David Wallace\*, Mr. Norman Chamberlain; HARFORD, Mr. Ellis Porter\*, CAPT Lucille Wilson, Mr. Eldred Johnson; HOWARD, Mrs. Jane Farrell\*, Mr. Max Casper, Mr. Paul Zucker; KENT, Mrs. Pat Wilson\*, Mrs. Margaret Duncan; MONTGOMERY, Mrs. Lola Oberman\*, Mr. Philip DuMont, Mrs. Minette McCullough, Mrs. Margaret Donnal; PATUXENT, Mrs. Virginia Kuykendall\*, Mr. Chandler S. Robbins; TALBOT, Reverend Ivan Morrin\*, Mrs. Lucile Spain, Dr. Robert Trever; WASHINGTON, Mrs. Mary Corderman\*, Mrs. Norma Lewis, Mrs. Dinnie Winger; WICOMICO, Mr. Chester Ross\*, Mr. Karl Zickrick. A motion by Mr. Stasz was seconded and passed, accepting these trustees.

*New Business.* The Sanctuary Fund was enriched by a gift of \$1000. Mrs. Wheeler made the presentation on behalf of the Baltimore Chapter and the MOS Bookstore.

Mr. Ringler reported the status of the Cornell Peregrine Falcons in Baltimore. Two birds were released recently, one of which stayed. Scarlett's first clutch of eggs was removed to determine if they were fertile. She has now laid four more eggs, which hopefully will hatch around the first of June.

At 9:10 p.m., the members approved Mrs. Conley's motion that we adjourn until next year.

HELEN FORD, Secretary

## ANNUAL REPORTS OF LOCAL CHAPTERS

### ALLEGANY CHAPTER

The very popular annual banquet at Penn Alps in Grantsville was held on October 21. Dr. Richard Johnson presented a program on his birding trips to Mexico and Guatemala, "Mayan Adventure." In November a Walt Berlet film "Season of the Elk" was shown at the meeting. The club arranged to purchase sunflower seeds in bulk for its members. The Christmas Bird Count was held on December 19 with John Willetts compiler.

Dr. Van T. Harris presented a slide-illustrated talk on "The Gooney Birds of Midway Island" during the January meeting. Bad weather cancelled the February meeting. In March John Willetts shared his recent birding trip to the West through a program "Bird's Eye of the West."

A display of museum skins of warblers to be identified greeted club members as they arrived for the April meeting. Dr. Robert Paterson of Frostburg State College showed slides of warblers emphasizing his own work on the Black-throated Blue.

In April a very successful clean up day was held at Carey Run Sanctuary with participants from eight MOS chapters. The May Bird Count was held on the first with Dorothea Malec as compiler.

**KEN HODGDON**, President

### ANNE ARUNDEL CHAPTER

The Annapolis area chapter got off to an early start with a summer birding workshop organized by the chapter and hosted by Sandy Point State Park, and ended the year with a big plus—an all time high in membership (152). The officers met in June and set up a program with 26 field trips, seven monthly lectures, and two picnics. The directory designed by Linda Pivacek was printed and mailed to members by August 1. A weekend field trip to Chincoteague in August captured the sighting record for number of species (118) for the chapter year.

The fall season was opened by the gracious hospitality of Pat Duffy who hosted the kick off pot luck supper at her home overlooking the Magothy River. A cumulative total of over 225 persons went on chapter field trips during the year. The most popular trip was to Blackwater NWR in November led by Dotty Mumford. With the peak of spring migration still ahead of us the organized trips have chalked up 227 species, including 21 not seen in the previous year's program. Records were maintained for all the field trips and are on file with the chapter president.

A cumulative total of 368 persons attended the monthly chapter meetings. Highlighting the first Fridays were a group of outstanding speakers: Dr. Robert W. Trever, "A Mexican Adventure"; Matthew Perry, "Canvasback: King of the Bay"; Chandler S. Robbins, "Warbler Sonagrams"; David W. Steadman, "Past and

Present Birds of the Galapagos"; Dr. Ben Poscover and Betty Iber, "Maryland Spring Flowers"; and the film "Osprey." An excellent group of hostesses provided refreshments following each meeting.

The Richard E. Heise Annual Wildlife Program was a well spoken and beautifully illustrated presentation by Peter J. Dunne, Naturalist Director of Cape May Bird Observatory. Entitled "Hawk Watch in the Shadow of Light" this special program raised revenues for the MOS sanctuary and scholarship funds.

Despite the miserable weather with heavy rain, the Annapolis Christmas Bird Count logged over 100 species and tens of thousands of feathered individuals. Once again the Count was expertly coordinated and compiled by Hal Wierenga. A Navy soup down tally for the soggy participants was hosted by Dick and Pat Chiles on Broad Creek. The local star bird of the winter entered the count tabulation several days later when it became known that an adult male Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) had been dining at a feeder on Pendennis Mount since December 26. He remained on the scene brilliantly decorating the winter landscape until late January.

For their many years of organizing and reporting the Annapolis Christmas Count, verifying and documenting rare bird sightings, leadership in the field, articles to journals, and tremendous contributions to the knowledge and understanding of avifauna in Anne Arundel County, the Chapter was proud to present its highest award, honorary membership, to Professor Harold and Hal Wierenga. The presentation of the honorary membership plaque was made at the chapter's February meeting.

The year was full of memorable events. Among them were the return to our flock of Pat Duffy; innumerable trips to see the flock (3) of Gyrfalcons in Pennsylvania; Past President Tony White returning to lead the 10th annual winter weekend; the "Jive Turkey" at the National Zoo; coming back from Hawk Mountain via Little Buffalo State Park; the Year of the Eagle ceremony in the Governor's office; side trips by members to Texas, Trinidad-Tobago, Japan, and England; a Bald Eagle attempting to steal a fish from an Osprey, and the migration of Linda, Bill, and Jason Pivacek to Nahant. Yet to go are Convention and a canoe trip in the Pine Barrens. Thanks to our field trip leaders, monthly speakers, my fellow officers, and an enthusiastic and supportive membership the Anne Arundel Chapter fared well in 1981-82.

JIM CHEEVERS, President

## BALTIMORE CHAPTER

To make a decision to begin this report with the most important feature of our year would be a difficult judgment for me. As president, I feel the total life of the Society is of paramount importance. So, unsure of the degree of importance of one aspect over the other, I shall begin my report with the announcement that our membership is up this year for the first time in some years; by no more than 20, admittedly, but it is up. After several years of decline and several years of holding, the membership rolls now list 623. Perhaps our emphasis on publicity helped, per-

haps the general commitment of our members to convey the spirit of the Society to interested citizens; perhaps the growing threat to earlier achievements within the conservation movement; perhaps a real desire to use free time to enjoy the simple offerings of nature instead of the elaborate products of technology; perhaps all of these have contributed to the upward trend. For whatever reason, we welcome the rising slant and have committed ourselves to work for a continued rise in the coming year, in order to share our understanding of the environment through an understanding of the world of birds.

Our Program included several lecture series that have contributed to that end:

1. Tuesday Evenings at Cylburn presented 7 of our members and 1 invited guest opportunities to recount their experiences at some of the Bird-Hotspots of North America: Tortugas and the Everglades, Apostle Islands on Lake Superior, Tule-Klamath-Malheur, South Texas, Point Reyes, Gaspé-Bonaventure, Cape May with Peter Dunne being our one invited guest speaker. To bring our series to a suitable close Birding Hotspots in Baltimore area were reviewed.
2. Come-As-You-Are Teas/Open House at Cylburn were offered with the cooperation of The Cylburn Organization. The subjects were not limited to birds but reflected the wider range of interest of many of our members and visiting speakers. We felt that the cooperation was successful and are planning to continue it another year.
3. Beginning Birdwatching series were held in the Fall and Spring, the Fall session being a "mini-series" and the Spring session being offered with 1 credit from Essex Community College.
4. The Audubon Wildlife Lecture Film Series.
5. Nature Photography.

Field trips offered our membership 85 different times and places to pursue their interest in bird sightings. Peter Webb, our intrepid Program Chairman went on most of these trips and is determined to get together a trip list equally as impressive for the coming year. His own best bird sightings on MOS trips were Red Crossbills in December.

Of course, the membership was made aware of the rare birds in the area by our Rare Bird Alert and produced its share of people who sought out the Gyrfalcon, the Snowy Owls, the White-winged Crossbills, the Sandhill Crane, Painted Bunting, the Loggerhead Shrike, White-fronted Goose, and Harris' Sparrow. Reports of early arrivals, late hangers-on and heavy eaters at the feeders were shared through our *Newsletter*.

The *Newsletter* continues to receive kudos from its readership in Baltimore and around the state. Our excellent editor and production staff certainly deserve it.

Reaching the public with our message involved much committee and individual effort this year. The Extension Service provided speakers for school classes, church meetings and recreation groups. The Junior Program scheduled school field trips to Cylburn and provided leaders through the Museum and on the trails. The Publicity Committee supplied local newspapers with our calendar of events and news releases of the Audubon Wildlife Film Lecture Series. Newspaper

articles about many of our MOS personalities and special projects appeared several times. The Cable TV program, Library Lens, taped a field walk led by two of our members. Our phone information service answered 678 calls for information about birds this year: Why are the robins pecking on our windowpanes this Spring? The Mayor himself used our Bird Museum's mounted crow for taping a TV spot.

The Bookstore continues to strive to offer an expanded selection of nature-related literature sought by its customers at its Reisterstown Road and Irvine Natural Science Center branches. The chairman is exploring possibilities of relocating the Reisterstown Road branch. The Piney Run Nature Center in Carroll County has invited him to open a small branch there, an idea he is currently exploring. Business at the Audubon Lecture Series is down, but in most other areas business continues on an even keel. Volunteers are always welcome. A contribution to the Sanctuary Fund is being made at the Convention.

Response to the Audubon Wildlife Film Lecture Series has been disappointing again this year. At our invitation the Chesapeake Audubon Society joined us in sponsoring the series with the hope that their added membership would be an advantage. Size of our audiences continued to decline in spite of the fact that the films and lectures were excellent. It is difficult to assess our lack of success here. The Chairman of the committee has outlined some hopeful goals for next year's efforts, for we do believe that these film/lectures should be offered in Baltimore.

The heightened interest in the affairs of our Sanctuaries was reflected by the numbers who responded to our Sanctuary Committee representative's plea for workers to join forces on the paint-up fix-up weekends at Irish Grove (7) and Carey Run (6). It was gratifying to be able to contribute to noticeable improvements at both Sanctuaries and to participate in the good fellowship while doing so.

Our Representative to the Cylburn Organization supplied guides in our Bird Museum for the many occasions when Cylburn had Open House. We served tea to those who attended our Sunday afternoon lecture series mentioned earlier. For the first time in many years we participated in Cylburn's Market Day, selling cookies from a large bird nest constructed in our booth. (Could it have been an Eagle's Nest? or Osprey's?) Nature-related books from the Bookstore were also sold. We are happy to contribute the proceeds from the sales to the Cylburn Organization.

Since the person who chairs our Conservation Committee also chairs the Committee for the State MOS we will not include a report here, but will mention that our Baltimore Chapter has not been allowed to sit back and let conservation take care of itself. If Gary Trudeau's characterization of us is true, as birdwatchers who say "James Watt, who is he?", it's not because we have not been well informed about what's happening on all conservation levels, local, state and federal. We as birdwatching citizens can no longer afford to be apolitical. We must press for action on conservation issues. Surely, birdwatching is not just a sport or a pleasant pastime for us. More than that, it is a spiritual quest to help us find our own place in a Planet where such live, artful treasures exist with us, side by side. We must work to keep it that way.

JOY WHEELER, President

## CAROLINE COUNTY CHAPTER

The first event of the season was the annual May bird count on Saturday, May 1st. A total of 36 members contributed with a total count of 125 species. On Sunday, June 14th we had a picnic get-together at Pelot Sanctuary. The weather was excellent but the event was poorly attended.

Our season's monthly evening programs started as usual with Steve Westre. Steve presented a film on Nuclear Fusion. October's program was presented by member Dr. Chris Snyder with slides on his southwestern vacation trip. Nick Carter of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Tidewater Fisheries, gave a slide presentation on our bay and river fish for November. On Sunday, December 13th, Marianna Nuttle hosted a social at her home in Denton on the Choptank River. This event was well attended. On display was a dead Red-tailed Hawk found along a road. It had apparently been injured in one leg and died of starvation. The December 19th bird count resulted in a total of 95 species observed by 32 participants. The weather was the coldest in memory.

Because of snow and bitter cold the January 1982 meeting was cancelled. February's meeting deviated from our printed schedule in that Doug Pyle talked about his newly published book "Clean Sweep Wind" instead of a talk on woodlands. Doug has privately printed his book on the West Indies and he delved into the mechanics of printing a book. In March Hugh Galberth of Remington Farms talked with slides on activities at this large area and how farming and wildlife can be compatible. For April Dr. Robert Treaver gave his slide program "Sky Island of Arizona" presentation. His superb talk was very refreshing.

Sunday, April 4th was clean up day at Pelot Sanctuary in preparation for Open House on April 25th. Roberta Fletcher prepared maps of the sanctuary for hand-outs. Jerry and Roberta Fletcher represented our club at the Irish Grove work weekend, March 20th. The club again donated bird feed to the Caroline County Nursing Home and ended the season with 46 paid-up members. All members mourned the passing of Tom Robbins this past year who was an ever faithful club member.

OLIVER L. SMITH, President

## FREDERICK COUNTY CHAPTER

The 1981-82 season was another good one for the Frederick County Chapter. We were again able to increase our membership.

Our meetings were well attended. Topics included birding in Arizona and Colorado, Alaska and Australia, and Belize and Central America as well as birding in Frederick and Montgomery Counties. We were treated to a complete pictorial record of the growth of young Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and of various insects common to Frederick County. We learned about the Department of Agriculture's work with nuisance birds and about the National Aquarium. All of the presentations were very good. My personal favorites were the birding in Belize and the insects of Frederick County. Our Christmas meeting at the Araby Methodist Church included an excellent oyster and turkey dinner prior to the slide presentation. All in all, we had a very good year.

The list of field trips included such stand-by's as the C & O Canal, Lilypons, and Tresselt's Fish ponds. New areas included Washington Monument State Park, Sugarloaf Mountain and McKee-Besher's Wildlife Management Area. The Christmas Count was well attended. However, the May Count suffered from spring migrations of counters and wasn't as well attended as in past years. All of the other trips provided the participants with new bits of bird lore.

The Frederick Chapter sent a contingent of workers to help at Carey Run. The folks who went were enthusiastic about the weekend's accomplishments and several people felt the "tradition" should be continued.

Our Chapter's elections provided us with a new President for next year, Dave Wallace. Dave is quite enthusiastic over his new responsibilities and has some good ideas for the Frederick County MOS. Dave has a wonderful group of people with whom to work. I know his term(s) in office will be as enjoyable as mine has been.

JOHN HELM, President

## HARFORD COUNTY CHAPTER

We had many offers from members for the use of their homes for our September picnic; however, we opted to use the tum Suden Sanctuary. It was felt the facility was not being utilized to its fullest capacity. We had a splendid turnout and fine weather. Some members did a bit of birding, but for the most part, everyone enjoyed eating and relaxing in the quiet atmosphere.

Field trips throughout the season were enjoyed at various refuges and sanctuaries in and around the state. Some folks traveled to nearby Lancaster County, Pa. to see the rare Gyrfalcons and Snowy Owl. A Short-eared Owl was also spotted there. Several of our members were lucky enough to observe the Sandhill Crane here in the county that "blew in" from the west. For the third year, Mr. & Mrs. Winfield Mitchell boasted of a White-fronted Goose in their pond with many Canada Geese. A Loggerhead Shrike and a Golden Eagle were not unusual winter visitors.

Each year state and federal agencies cooperate in a joint effort in counting the wintering population of Bald Eagles throughout the country under the direction of the National Wildlife Federation's Raptor Information Center. Here in Harford County, Aberdeen Proving Ground flies an extensive survey on it's nearly 80,000 acres. The author has been fortunate enough to have been on all the counts, including the January '82 count, when a total of 47 Bald Eagles were seen. Thirteen of those were mature birds. We who were counting were amazed, to say the least!

Reports we get from county residents seem to indicate that the Red-headed and Pileated Woodpeckers are on the increase, which is great news!

Barbara Bilsborough, usually assisted by Nancy Roberts, continues to band at several stations in the county. Many school students get to observe their banding

demonstrations at tum Suden. Isa Sieracki can also be found there, volunteering her services to youth groups.

Our club meets in Churchville, normally on the first Friday in November, January, March and May. These dinner meetings are well attended and the programs are very interesting and informative. The November meeting featured *So Little Time*, with Roger Tory Peterson. In January, the film *Our Wildlife Heritage* was shown. Barbara Billsborough shared slides of her Costa Rica birding trip at our March function. Our May meeting was put off until May 14th because of the State Convention. At this writing, the program is to be *Birds of the Indian Monsoon*.

Our own Todd Holden, better known as Birdman, still enlightens local radio listeners with birding information and current sightings.

BIRDING WEEK, May 3-9, was proclaimed in Harford County by County Executive J. Thomas Barranger. The proclamation is being framed for display at the tum Suden Sanctuary. Local newspapers carried a photo which included Mr. Barranger, Todd Holden, Mr. Emerson Jackson and yours truly. Mr. Jackson, a master Falconer, is shown holding one of his trained birds, a Red-tailed hawk.

Much credit and thanks goes to the "feeding crew," who, all through the foul winter weather, faithfully kept the feeders full at tum Suden. Some members took part in the Christmas and May counts, and presently, many plan to attend the State Convention. We are currently carrying 120 members.

ELLIS C. PORTER, President

## HOWARD COUNTY CHAPTER

The 1981-1982 season marked the 10th anniversary for the Howard County Chapter. The November meeting was declared as the official celebration and was highlighted by two events.

First, Chan Robbins was the speaker at the first regular meeting held ten years ago. We were delighted when he accepted our invitation to speak at the November meeting. His presentation on forest fragmentation was thoroughly enjoyed for its technical completeness and also because much of the data used in the study was collected in Howard County along the Middle Patuxent River. Second, a check for \$3,600 was presented to The Nature Conservancy for use in obtaining land in the Nassawago Preserve on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

The annual potluck dinner held in February has always been a great success. This year was no exception. The evening was filled with good conversation, good food, and an outstanding slide show. The slide show is put on by those members who bring a handful of their favorite slides to share.

The bird seed sales continue to grow in popularity. At the time of the first sale several years ago we were concerned about ordering, moving and distributing



what seemed to be a staggering volume of seed (1800 lbs.). Gone are those days of small orders! Our November 1981 sale of over 12,600 lbs. of seed has strained our resources to the point where trucks may have to be rented to handle the volume of future sales. Many thanks go to Eileen Clegg for her efforts at orchestrating these ever growing seed sales.

Finally, this spring marks the completion of the spring wildflower study with the publication of the early and late blooming dates for those species found in Howard County. The three persons instrumental in carrying out this study are Bob and Jo Solem and Chuck Dupree.

MIKE MCCLURE, President

## KENT COUNTY CHAPTER

Guest speakers helped highlight our program year. Dr. Donald Messersmith, MOS member and head of World Nature Tours, Inc., fascinated our group with excellent slides and interesting information about his trip to Belize last summer. Dan Boone, ex-editor of the "Yellowthroat" was equally received in October when he shared his experiences with slides from his trip to Costa Rica last summer.

Then, too, the Chapter hosted Mrs. Assateague, herself, Judy Johnson, who brought us the latest in what is and has happened at Assateague Island.

A local resident and Purple Martin enthusiast, Jim Gent, Sr., presented a special evening on his favorite feathered subject: Martins.

Field trips were especially rewarding: a handful traveled to Washington Monument State Park, Boonsboro, to join in the Hawk migration counts on Saturday, October 10; 19 people turned up to visit Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge on a cold, blustery November day, where we saw 30 species of wintering waterfowl, hawks, shorebirds, and an immature Bald Eagle; closer to home, the Chapter, including junior members, joined in a special wildlife day celebration at our own National Wildlife Refuge, Eastern Neck, near Rock Hall.

Our group of one dozen juniors, directed by Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Parks, Jim Gruber, and myself, continued special programs of study this year and learned more about evergreens and their special importance to birds, especially in winter. A special speaker, Mr. Dick McCown, the first president of the Kent Chapter, in 1967, presented a good look at the families of Hawks for the "juniors." Plans are being made now for a special project in identification of common birds of the Eastern Shore with an MOS "patch" being the goal for the younger group next year.

One of the junior leaders was "lost" this year to the Natural Resources Department. Jim Gruber, a graduate of West Virginia University in outdoor management, and one of our special juniors of about ten years ago, joined the Marine Police and will take his prowess with birds and the outdoors to a much needed arena - The Bay Waters. A bander taught by Mrs. Dorothy Mendinhall, Jim will most certainly represent the MOS well in all its philosophy, and in a manner in which we can feel proud that he is one of us, I feel sure.

Finally, the most nostalgic loss this year is of selfish origin to the Kent Chapter. Mrs. "Dottie" Mendinhall has resigned her post of many years as Trustee because of limitations that cause her to make this decision. Margaret Duncan's name is placed in nomination to succeed Mrs. Mendinhall. Margaret hopes to have the benefit of "the bird lady's" company and knowledge at meetings as often as possible.

The 1981-82 program year can be glad for its 75 members and 12 "juniors." The 14 special activities realized participation of 316 persons.

September 1982 will usher in 25 years as a chartered affiliate of the Maryland Ornithological Society for the Kent Chapter. We hope to make it an even grander year for the promotion of Ornithology in our community and on the Eastern Shore.

**PAT WILSON**, President

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY CHAPTER

At the beginning of the 1981-82 season, the Chapter faced the realities of inflation and voted a dues increase, primarily to meet the rising costs of printing and mailing of the annual calendar and the bi-monthly Newsletter, capably edited by Henry Bielstein.

The Chapter continued its strong program of field trips, monthly meetings, and the operation of the banding station at Adventure under the direction of Margaret Donald, with the assistance of a band of dedicated volunteers.

The most significant change in activities this year was the establishment of a Memorial Scholarship Fund in honor of two Chapter members, Ernie Meyer and Vi Hogan, who died during the past year. The Fund reaped the benefit of money earned by Chapter members who participated in the Audubon Naturalist Society's 1981 Birdathon, netting our Chapter over \$300. This, added to individual contributions, has enabled the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Bob Hahn, to make a scholarship award for this summer, which will be announced at the May meeting.

We were pleased and proud to learn that Rich Bray, former secretary of our Chapter, was selected as the first recipient of the Chandler S. Robbins Scholarship to go to Cornell University's summer program on Bird Behavior.

Ives Hannay and her Field Trip Committee planned an attractive series of 23 trips, from September through May, only one of which had to be canceled due to foul weather. Average attendance was 15 persons, with a low of 2 and a high of 36. Coastal trips remain the most popular and consistently attract 20 or more participants, regardless of season. The highly successful "backstage tour" of the Smithsonian Bird Division last year was repeated by overwhelming request, and again the trip was oversubscribed.

In addition to the 23 traditional trips, the Committee announced a series of "leaderless" trips during spring migration. Members seeking migrant warblers

and companionship on the trail gather at Seneca on Sunday morning. Results of this experiment will be followed with interest.

Kathy Klimkiewicz, program chairman for many years, was assisted this year by Claudia Wilds in preparing an outstanding program of monthly meetings. Bill Oberman took us birding in Central America; Roger Clapp delighted us with his experiences "Banding Boobies for Fun and Profit"; Margaret Donald gave us an intimate view of "Adventure—Our Chapter Sanctuary"; Claudia Wilds sharpened our skills in identifying gulls; Ron Reynolds contributed a better understanding of how waterfowl banding and surveys are conducted and used in establishing hunting regulations; Robert Blohn took us to Manitoba to the breeding grounds of the gadwalls; and William Melson held an audience of birders spellbound with a non-birding subject: the 1980-82 eruptions of Mt. St. Helens. We are eagerly anticipating Henry Bielstein's talk on "Birding the North Dakota and Churchill, Manitoba, Areas," which will close our season.

Bill Oberman fielded a well-organized team for the Seneca Christmas Count, which produced a total of 100 species. The Tally Rally, under the energetic leadership of Delores Grant, was held for the first time at the new Nature Center at Adventure—an attractive and convenient site. This promised to be a precedent-setting event.

On the day scheduled for our January Social, the entire Washington area was crippled by a heavy snowstorm and numbed by the news of a tragic airplane crash in the Potomac River. The Social, capably organized by Ann Mitchell, was re-scheduled for the following day, when time and the snow plows had had a chance to do their work. Attendance was understandably lower than usual, and in a subsequent meeting, the Board yielded to urgings for a change in the calendar: The January Social will henceforth be known as the March Social.

David Mehlman took charge of the May Count and under his leadership, troops of birders, numbering 53, brought in reports of 136 species, including 25 warblers.

Ed McKnight, our peerless treasurer for the past 17 years, stunned us all with the announcement that he was retiring from that post—at the age of 80. We are grateful to him for a job well done, and cheerfully done.

The Chapter continues to grow at a steady pace, now numbering 284 members. Growth poses its problems. There are not many meeting rooms available to accommodate the 100 or more who may show up at monthly meetings. Cutbacks in library service may deprive us of the space granted us in the Chevy Chase Library this year. Alternatives are not immediately apparent.

Officers for 1982-83 are as follows: Lola Oberman, President; Ives Hannay, Vice President; David Mehlman, Secretary; Vincent Jones, Treasurer; Henry Bielstein, John Malcolm, Gary R. Nelson, and Paul J. O'Brien, Directors. The incumbent trustees, Margaret Donald, Philip A. DuMont, and Minette McCullough, were nominated for another term.

**LOLA OBERMAN, President**

## TALBOT COUNTY BIRD CLUB

The major events of any bird club seem to fall under three categories: regular programs, field trips, and conservation and ecology-minded activities. I am happy to report that the Talbot Club has made reasonable and satisfactory efforts to educate and entertain our members in these areas of concern.

In respect to regular meetings, we've had programs by talented persons in such areas as "A Walk Through a Swamp," "Techniques and Methods of Bird Painting," "Blackwater Refuge - Its Management and Future Plans," two programs on Birds of Arizona. Chandler Robbins was with us in April to do his ever popular program on Warbler Identification-By Sight and Sound. All of these and our other programs were well illustrated, with films, slides, charts, pictures, etc.

Our Field Trips were always well attended, especially the annual spring and fall walks (7 walks in each season). The spring walks (7 to 10 a.m.) usually produce a total of 65 to 95 species; in the fall, 50 to 75 species. We are fortunate to have about 10 persons who can identify birds by sight and sound and who assume leadership for these walks. Different members serve as hosts and a breakfast is served each Sunday about 10:15 a.m. Average attendance is 25 persons. \$1.00 per person is contributed by participants to help the hosts pay for the food. Other field trips took us to Chincoteague N.W.R., Hawk Mountain, Pa., Irish Grove Sanctuary, along the C & O Canal, Carey Run Sanctuary, etc.

The club encourages its members to notify congressmen on state, local and federal levels about those matters that require our deepest concern to promote conservation of our natural resources. From monies granted by the annual Waterfowl Festival in Easton, we are now engaged in producing and assembling about 20 Wood Duck nesting boxes in Talbot County. Our club assisted at clean-up and repairs for Irish Grove and also at Mill Creek Sanctuary near home.

We are happy to have the recipient of the Orville Crowder Scholarship Fund as a member of the Talbot Club. Mr. Donald Merritt, Environmental Specialist II, Horn Point Environmental Laboratory, Cambridge, Md., won that scholarship and will be attending the Audubon camp in Wyoming this summer.

Each year our club sponsors a series of Audubon Wildlife Screen Tours. Locale for these films were Africa, Argentina, Smoky Mountains and Hawaii. All were held at Easton High School and the average attendance was 133.

Our regular monthly meetings are held (except summer) at 7:30 p.m. in the Maryland Room of the Loyola Federal Savings and Loan Building, Easton, Md. The public is always invited to attend. Currently we have 89 paid up active members, but another 30 or so persons who are friends of our club and participate in some of its activities.

A large group of our members are planning to attend the annual M.O.S. convention at State Line Motel, Delmar.

REV. IVAN R. MORRIN, President

## PATUXENT BIRD CLUB

Our September meeting featured a display of the wood carvings of birds which our member Ernie Blanks has made. Peter Robinson, Law Enforcement Officer of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Great Britain told us about his work. In October Miss Friel Sanders told us about her life in Virginia and her banding at home in a house by the Chesapeake. George Jonkel showed slides about banding in Brazil. Dan Boone took us on a slide tour of Costa Rica and Dr. Don Messersmith an expedition to Belize. Dorothea Leonnig told us about Nature Conservancy work in Maryland, featuring the Nanjemoy Heronry & Nassawango Creek Preserves. Ted & Lola Oberman showed slides of the crowd of spring migrant birds at Point Pelee National Park in Ontario. Our Chapter members took part in most of the Maryland Christmas Counts, in the May Count in several counties, and helped on the Irish Grove and the Carey Run Sanctuary Weekends. Danny Bystrak reported that his Birdathon and can collection drive to benefit the MOS Sanctuary Fund should yield more than \$1300. We contributed \$200 toward the Dec. 8 blowing of the hole in Irish Grove marsh. At our May 25 meeting members showed slides: Paul Bystrak of work at Irish Grove, of a trip to Carey Run, and of a Florida trip. Danny Bystrak showed slides of his and Paul Leifer's trip to Block Island (where the Nature Conservancy is now trying to establish a Preserve). Dale Braeuninger showed some strange ducks he saw in Great Britain. Joe Ondrejko showed the albino owl of the Western Pennsylvania Nature Conservancy.

Eleanor Robbins still announces and summarizes our events in the LAUREL LEADER, but our members come from four counties. In both June 1981 and June 1982 we enjoyed delightful picnics at the home of Paul and Linda Bystrak.

VIRGINIA KUYKENDALL, President

## WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAPTER

Membership increased again in 1981-82. We meet in the Maryland Room of the Loyola Federal building, 32 N. Potomac St., Hagerstown, September through April, except in December. These meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, at 7:30 p.m. We publish a newsletter in each of these months. Through announcements in the local newspaper, we welcome anyone interested to attend. We had our first Birding Weekend in June, 1981, and we met outdoors informally in July and August.

The Birding Weekend was held at the Fairview Outdoor Education Center of the Washington County school system, near Clear Spring, Md., June 20-21. Meals were provided by the staff of the Center. Overnight lodging was used by 25 attendees, and up to 40 were present at some of the meals. Field trips were led to a variety of birding hotspots in Maryland and Federal wild and park areas within easy driving distance. Nature trails on the grounds of the Center were also followed. At least 80 bird species were recorded during the weekend, including Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, Red-headed Woodpecker, Cliff Swallow, Worm-eating Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, and Golden-winged Warbler. Many favorable comments were voiced on the success of the weekend.

In the 1981-82 Christmas Count, 79 species were logged by 16 parties with 40 participants. Compiling of reports was done following a dinner that evening for counters at Leontyne and Truman Doyle's.

At meetings during fall, winter and spring, programs were given on birding across America, in Alaska, in the Tropics, bird photography, and recognition of spring warblers, in addition to presentations on wildflowers and beekeeping as a hobby. Attendance at these meetings averaged 37. Two field trips were conducted in most months, other than summer, and attracted usually 15 or more birders and guests. Several of our members assisted at a Spring Workday at Carey Run Sanctuary.

The hawk watch at Washington Monument State Park was again held in late summer and early fall, with helpful participation by observers from several MOS chapters and from West Virginia. Sixteen species of raptors were identified, with a total of 4,671 individuals.

Increased numbers of bluebird nesting boxes were erected and managed, and many comments have been heard this spring about a new abundance of bluebirds. Members of this chapter have given talks on birds to other organizations.

With hopes for excellent birding ahead for all our enthusiasts, the writer is most grateful to all who have helped this chapter to have a very fine year.

CAMERON D. LEWIS, President

## WICOMICO COUNTY CHAPTER

The 1981-82 year was another excellent one for our chapter. We have continued to grow and we have attracted many youthful members.

We have raised significant funds once again for local and statewide projects through sales of birding materials at the annual waterfowl show held during the fall in Salisbury.

We have had a variety of speakers and programs this year featuring bluebirds, birding in Mexico and nature slides, to name a few. The annual dinner was attended to capacity and was again a highlight for our chapter.

With the benefits of both the Pocomoke River area and the Ocean City area, our varied habitats have given excellent bird walks. In addition, the multitalented Jim Stasz has provided us insight into other aspects of nature, such as flowers and trees.

Leadership of the club is with another husband and wife team for next year, Chester and Dorothy Ross. We look forward to their guidance.

HUGH K. HANSON, President

## COMMITTEE AND PROJECT REPORTS

### MOS BLUEBIRD PROJECT

The MOS Bluebird Project is closely integrated with the North American Bluebird Society, now in its fifth year. Bluebirds are in serious trouble in most parts of the continent owing in large part to shortages in nesting sites and competition from House Sparrows and starlings. The primary objectives of the Society are to stimulate public interest in helping the bluebirds and other cavity-nesting species by setting out and monitoring nesting boxes, and in conducting research designed to make bluebird conservation efforts more effective.

The Society now has close to 3,000 members throughout most of the United States and Canada. Maryland has the highest membership and many MOS members are involved. Numerous "bluebird trails" have been established and most of them have resulted in marked local recoveries in the bluebird population.

Several MOS members attended the first Canadian regional meeting of the North American Bluebird Society held at Brandon University in Brandon, Manitoba last June. They had the opportunity to see part of the famous and highly successful 2,000 mile Canadian Bluebird Trail. MOS was also well represented at the annual meeting of the Bluebird Society at the Holden Arboretum near Cleveland, Ohio in October.

Preliminary reports indicate that bluebirds in Maryland survived the past winter well in spite of record low temperatures and are now (early May) nesting in about the same numbers as last year. Reports from Pennsylvania are equally good and those from Virginia and North Carolina are even more favorable. On the unhappy side, a report from Massachusetts states that after bluebirds in good numbers returned from the South to their nesting areas, many and perhaps most of them appear to have perished in the severe and unseasonable April blizzard. Similar mortality quite likely occurred elsewhere in the North since the blizzard was quite widespread. Bluebirds and some other species are particularly vulnerable to unseasonably severe spring weather since by that time the supply of berries and other fruits on which they must depend under these circumstances is likely to be exhausted.

LARRY ZELENY, Chairman

## CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

During the past year, threats to the environment and to environmental legislation have emerged which confirm the forebodings we felt at this time last year. Rather than working with environmental groups toward common goals of preservation of wilderness and park land and conservation of natural resources, the present administration has cast these groups as opponents—as in fact they are—of its all-encompassing program of exploitation of oil, timber, land, and other resources.

Let me share with you a couple of quotations from current administration officials. Andrew V. Bailey is Chief of Conservation for the U.S. Geological Survey

and is responsible for regulating oil and mineral development on federal lands. In 1976 (in another post), he circulated a memo concerning strip-mined lands which read in part, "Inflammatory words such as disturbed, devastated, defiled, ravaged, gouged, scarred, and destroyed, should not be used. These are words used by the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, environmentalists, homosexuals, ecologists, and other ideological eunuchs opposed to developing mineral resources." (See *Audubon Leader*, Nov. 20, 1981.) And John B. Crowell, who is Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Natural Resources and Environment, and who was formerly a member of the Audubon Society, last March stated his conviction that the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society "are also infiltrated by people who have very strong ideas about socialism and even communism." Crowell later apologized, saying that he had "no reason to think the Audubon Society or the Sierra Club...are in any way un-American," but at that same press conference Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block commented, "I've never belonged to those organizations. I don't know what is in the ranks of them...we'll have to wait and see." (*D.C. Post*, 3-20-82). These attitudes are, of course, ludicrous, but they are extremely serious nevertheless as indices of administration antagonism toward proponents of conservation. The budget is a primary weapon. If ever there was a president in need of advice on environmental matters, Ronald Reagan is that man—yet the Council on Environmental Quality has been essentially defunded out of existence. On the basis of activities assigned to it, the Environmental Protection Agency might appear more important than ever but budget cuts, wholesale staff reductions, cutbacks in public information and participation, and elimination of funds for research, make it quite impossible for the Agency to do its assigned work—and the industries it is supposed to control are well aware of its weakened position.

Reagan's energy program allots billions of dollars for subsidies of the nuclear industry and less than two million dollars for solar research; promotion of conservation and renewable energy resources is regarded as a joke. Secretary of the Interior James Watt yields extraordinary power, in part because of lack of effective opposition in Congress. Even he, however, does respond to public pressure. For example, a May 6, 1982, article in the *Baltimore Sun* reports that Watt has deferred oil leasing in four areas off the California coast, because of a storm of public opposition.

Here lies the clue to what we, as citizens concerned about environmental values, must do if we hope to have any effect on the present policies: We *must* be heard. On specific issues, letters directly to Reagan and Watt, and letters to our senators and representatives, have more influence than you may imagine—and certainly more influence than silence. Reauthorization of the Clean Air Act is right now making its way through the labyrinth of Congress; the Clean Water Act will be reconsidered later this year; and the Endangered Species Act must be reauthorized by October 1, 1982. Making the effort to be informed, and speaking out, individually and as a member of citizen groups, to our senators and our neighbors, are things we all can do and will have to do if we hope to maintain a livable world.

A brief review of the recently completed session of the Maryland legislature shows mixed results. Commendable progress was made in water quality and energy conservation. Air quality and agricultural land preservation were put on hold. A bill which would have opened the Mattawoman Natural Environment Area



to hunting died quietly in committee. And once again, the "bottle bill," which would require deposits on beverage containers, was defeated. The bill to permit funding of a non-game, and endangered species conservation program through a checkoff on the income tax form, which was strongly supported by the Maryland Ornithological Society, failed to pass; however, letters and telephone calls generated by MOS and other conservation groups helped to change the pro-and-con votes in the Senate Committee on Budget and Taxation from 4-6 to 9-3, and in the House Ways and Means Committee from 2-19 to 10-12. With a little more effort, we may get this bill through the legislature next year.

The use of off-road vehicles—dune buggies, snowmobiles—on public lands has become a major issue, both nationally and in Maryland, where an additional two miles of Assateague beaches have been authorized to be opened to ORV's in spite of overwhelming public testimony against them. (Secretary of the Interior Watt has expressed a personal commitment to increased use of ORV's in multiple-use areas, including national wildlife refuges.) At the moment there is still some hope that this ruling may be voided, but if it is not, the major national conservation organizations are prepared to go to court over the issue. The Committee to Preserve Assateague Island will join any such lawsuit, and MOS should certainly support it also. (In Maryland, the Mobile Sport Fishermen's Association is pressing for additional access to bayside beaches, not content with their new two miles of Assateague ocean beach.)

Gypsy moths have begun to appear in Maryland, and what to do about them will probably soon become a hot political issue. There is no question that spraying pesticides kills them— and many other creatures. It is also obvious that spraying does not control the gypsies, which continue to spread and multiply. MOS members are urged to become aware of the potential controversy over large-scale spraying and to inform themselves about the issue as thoroughly as possible. A good place to start is an article in *Audubon*, for March 1982, by Ted Williams.

ANNEKE DAVIS, Chairman

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Program Exchange function has now been taken over by the *Yellowthroat*. The fall Listers Trip continues to be popular, with attendance increasing each year. In fact, it becomes a mini-fall convention. The leaders and planning are the reasons for its success. Under the heading of Sanctuary Educational Awareness there was an exceptional weekend last spring at Carey Run. This year the Maryland Association of Science Teachers and the Maryland Association of Biology Teachers with MOS are sponsoring a Wildflower Foray, led by Dr. Melvin Brown with dinner at Penn Alps and a workshop on using native plants for dyeing of home spun materials by Miss Mary Wise, May 14, 15, and 16. No student was nominated this year for the Outstanding Achievement in Ornithology Award. The Speaker's List is ready for distribution to the Chapters.

BENJAMIN F. POSCOVER, Chairman

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TREASURER  
MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.  
Fiscal Year Ending April 30, 1982**

**OPERATING FUND**

Fund Balance, April 30, 1981	\$17,032.53
Transfer from Sanc. Endow. Income (Life Membership Cost)	340.00
	<b>\$17,372.53</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>	
Dues remitted by chapters	\$7,566.50
Convention income	896.00
Interest on savings accounts	2,222.26
Sale of Field Lists, Birdlife, Subscriptions, Advertising	457.96
Reimbursements received for Mailing Permit and Printing	20.00
Return of Grant made in Earlier Year	165.00
	<b>11,327.72</b>
	<b>28,700.25</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>	
MARYLAND BIRDLIFE, printing and mailing	2,946.50
MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT, printing and mailing	1,211.15
Convention Program	655.88
Executive Secretary Stipend	3,000.00
Administrative and Office Expenses	425.37
Research Grants	710.00
Various Memberships and Donations	550.00
Membership Report	50.00
	<b>9,548.90</b>
Fund Balance, April 30, 1982	<b>\$19,151.35</b>

**SANCTUARY FUND**

	<b>\$18,914.19*</b>
<b>Receipts:</b>	
Contributions Received	4,668.12
Interest and Dividends, Sanct. Endowment Fund	5,163.35
Miscellaneous	981.20
	<b>10,812.67</b>
	<b>\$29,726.86</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>	
Property Tax	831.78
Insurance	1,298.00
Repairs	518.65
Utilities	1,702.29
Grass Cutting	100.00
Irish Grove-Pond	364.40
Miscellaneous	148.44
	<b>4,963.56</b>
	<b>24,763.30</b>
Transfer to Operating Fund	340.00
Fund balance, April 30, 1982	<b>\$24,423.30*</b>

\*Beginning and ending balances include Anne Arundel Chapter restricted gift in the amount of \$5,472.45.

### SANCTUARY ENDOWMENT FUND

Fund Balance, April 30, 1981	\$31,880.00
Fund Balance, April 30, 1982	31,880.00

### HELEN MILLER SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FUND

Fund Balance, April 30, 1981		\$16,265.90
Receipts:		
Contributions Received	\$2,770.00	
Interest	1,611.88	4,381.88
		<u>20,647.78</u>
Expenditures:		
Scholarships		1,730.00
Fund Balance, April 30, 1982		<u>\$18,917.78</u>

#### Reconciliation of Accounts at End of Fiscal Year

Fund Balances, April 30, 1982:		
Operating Fund	19,151.35	
Helen Miller Scholarship Endowment Fund	18,917.78	
Sanctuary Fund	24,423.30	
Sanctuary Endowment Fund	31,880.00	
		<u>\$94,372.43</u>
Fund Assets, April 30, 1982:		
Checking Account, Maryland National Bank	831.75	
Savings Account (Pooled Funds), Loyola Federal	1,193.36	
Cert. of Deposit, Loyola Federal (7.500%)	6,361.50	
T. Rowe Price Prime Reserve Fund	44,060.23	
Dayton Power & Light Bonds (8.000%)	3,012.67*	
Virginia Electric Power Bond (8.625%)	3,992.04*	
Cert. of Deposit, Loyola Federal (7.750%)	3,500.00*	
Cert. of Deposit, Loyola Federal (7.750%)	6,820.00**	
T. Rowe Price Growth Fund	9,500.00**	
General Telephone South East Bond (7.750%)	5,129.92**	
Niagara Mohawk Power Bond (7.375%)	4,983.15**	
Ohio Bell Telephone Bond (7.875%)	4,987.81**	94,372.43

\*Helen Miller Endowment Securities, at cost

\*\*Sanctuary Fund Securities, at cost

W. GORDON MACGREGOR, Treasurer

### AUDITING COMMITTEE REPORT

I have examined the financial records of the Maryland Ornithological Society for the year April 30, 1981 through April 30, 1982. In my opinion the aforementioned records accurately present the financial position of the Society.

RODNEY B. JONES, Chairman

## LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Exchange Program between *Maryland Birdlife* and other birding journals is expanding its international phase from Poland, an exchange we've had for several years with their *Ring*, to Moscow's Library of Natural Sciences of the USSR Academy of Natural Sciences, and now to Italy, with a request from Istituto Nazionale Di Biologia Della Selvaggina. We have sent a small package of 3 lbs. of back issues of *Maryland Birdlife* to Moscow and have placed their name on our exchange. We feel fortunate to be asked to enter these exchanges and invite our members, bilingual in Russian or Italian, to take advantage of the publications and share some of the information with those of us who haven't kept up with our study of foreign languages as well as we have kept up with our study of birds.

In the past year 2 members have made gifts of books to our library holdings: Etta Wedge's estate in her memory presented us with the 2 volume set of *Bird Studies at Old Cape May*. Jim Stasz gave us his extensive collection of issues of *The Auk*.

Henry Armistead has informed us that in his will he has made the MOS the beneficiary of his bird related library which now has a collection of about 2000 books and to which he adds about 40 per year. Given the long life expectancy of birdwatchers, we can expect this to be a sizeable grant from a man now only 41 years old. And while there may be no urgency to the problem of where we'd put such a collection, the problem does exist. Therefore, I charge the President and the Board of Directors to actively seek a permanent headquarters in Baltimore or Annapolis with library space.

I am submitting a number of book reviews to the Editor of *Maryland Birdlife* for his consideration. These books have been received as publishers' samples.

Henry Armistead, a librarian by profession, has agreed to serve on the Library Committee, as long as most of our business can be done through the mail.

JOY G. WHEELER, Chairman

## LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

This year the Long Range Planning Committee focused on topics given priority by President Cullom.

We were asked to consider the feasibility of establishing a Baltimore-based taped "hotline" for rare bird sightings in Maryland. After discussion, this committee recommended that if a "hotline" were to be established it would be better envisioned as a Baltimore Chapter project with some state MOS funding. The reasons for that decision were as follows: Baltimore birders constitute the single largest group in MOS and it is primarily these individuals who would

benefit from the line; Washington-area birders would continue to find it easier (and probably cheaper) to call the "Voice of the Naturalist"; it is unlikely that many birders from the Eastern Shore and far western portion of Maryland would use a Baltimore-based line on a regular basis because of long distance charges (an 800 number suggested by a number of individuals is expensive); and much of the material on such a line would duplicate the ANS sponsored "Voice."

Long Range Planning Committee members continue to be concerned with the Society's image emphasizing the importance of increasing our visibility with the general public. Until MOS is widely recognized as THE birding authority in the state, we will continue to suffer from being overlooked and underestimated (not to mention confused with various Audubon societies). This recognition can come only from more consistent publicity and vigorous recruitment of new members.

Within the last two months a member of the Maryland Chapter of The Nature Conservancy contacted MOS indicating an interest in meeting with a few of our members to examine jointly the land acquisition programs of both organizations over the next decade. The long term cooperation of these two societies could have exciting implications, especially for our sanctuary program.

JOANNE K. SOLEM, Chairman

## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

This year the Committee received six proposals requesting funding for research. Five proposals were from college graduate students working on their theses in Maryland. The sixth was a joint proposal from an undergraduate student and one of his biology instructors. Four grants were awarded: David Ijon, at Frostburg State College, received \$180 for his proposal on the "Growth and Behavioral Ontogeny of the Broad-winged Hawk." James Devereux received \$220 for his "Breeding Ecology of Barred Owls in the Central Appalachians." James is with the University of Maryland, Appalachian Environmental Laboratory at the Frostburg State College Campus. The Barn Swallow is being studied by Sherwood Weisheit at Towson State University. He requested \$60 to complete research on the energy budget of nestlings.

Debbie Mignogno received \$250 for her research into the role of orientation during juvenile dispersal of the Cattle Egret. Debbie is at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore Campus in Princess Anne.

The April 1981 issue of *The Auk* (Vol. 98, pp 270-81) had an article by Kimberly Titus and James Mosher titled "Nest Site Habitat Selected by Woodland Hawks in the Central Appalachians." MOS was acknowledged for its support; Mr. Titus received a grant in 1979.

CHARLES VAUGHN, Chairman

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Scholarship Committee is pleased to report that there were fifteen candidates for the 1982 Audubon Ecology Workshop scholarships representing six different MOS chapters. The winner of the Helen Miller Scholarship was Mr. Jay H. Foster, Earth Science Teacher, Wood Junior High School, Rockville, Md. The winner of the other MOS Scholarship was Ms. Jean Sobus, Recreation Major at Catonsville Community College. The Amateur Gardeners' Club of Baltimore Scholarship was won by Mr. Bryan MacKay, Instructor of Biological Sciences at the Baltimore County Campus of the University of Maryland. The Orville Crowder Memorial Scholarship was won by Mr. Donald Meritt, Environmental Specialist II, Horn Point Environmental Laboratories, Cambridge, Md.

These are all excellent candidates who will be using their Audubon Camp experience in their work with groups of young people both in their professional and vocational activities.

The Scholarship Committee is also pleased to announce the winner of the first annual Chandler S. Robbins Scholarship. Mr. Richard O. Bray of Bethesda, Md. was chosen from a group of six excellent candidates. He will be attending a workshop on Bird Behavior at the Laboratory of Ornithology of Cornell University. Mr. Bray is a member of the Montgomery Chapter of MOS. He works actively with young people in bird and nature study. He has recently undertaken the teaching of ornithology on a college level. He is an active bird bander and has published in *Maryland Birdlife*. We look forward to his continuing contributions in the education of young people and to the field of ornithology.

The Scholarship Committee is sincerely grateful to all the chapters and individuals who helped us find these excellent candidates for the Audubon Workshops and for the Workshop at Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology.

MILDRED GEBHARD, Chairman

## FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCKS IN PATUXENT RIVER CDR John A. Gregoire, USN

At 10 a.m. on September 20, 1981, my son Chris and I identified six Fulvous Whistling Ducks (*Dendrocygna, bicolor*) along the western bank of the Patuxent River at the Jug Bay Natural Area of Patuxent River Park. When observed, the birds were at rest on a mud bank and log approximately 50m south of the Park's photography blind. Three were in full sunlight and standing very erectly on the mud and log which is at the margin of wild rice marsh and swampy river bank. The others were partially obscured by rice stalks. All were motionless until a Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*) began to call from out over the main river channel. At that point, three ducks sought cover in the rice while the others displayed alarm behavior similar to geese in that they elongated their necks and began scanning in all directions. During the scan motion the dull, off-white collar on the anterior of the neck was much clearer.

When the ducks were at rest, the tawny head, very dark bill, dark back and off-white marking separating back and side were clearly visible. The standing birds were noticeably long-legged and the posture was extremely erect. As the birds began to move, a slightly rufous patch was distinguishable at the shoulder and the white rump and black tail were conspicuous. Observations were assisted by a Bushnell Spacemaster scope with Zoom objective and 7 x 35 binoculars.

The Fulvous Whistling Ducks were possibly observed earlier in the day (0745) moving within and on top of an abandoned duck blind in mid-river marsh opposite the Park headquarters approximately one km upriver from the observation point; the birds were noted in the same blind on September 13. Light conditions in both cases precluded positive identification; only the unusually erect posture and dark back over lighter sides were noted. On September 20, boat traffic in upper Jug Bay became heavy at an early hour and an exuberant band of Cub Scouts in canoes may have caused the ducks to opt for the protection of the more secluded area where they were identified. There are apparently no previous records of wild Fulvous Whistling Ducks in the Patuxent marsh although single birds have reportedly been sighted (rare) in the Patuxent area.

The Jug Bay area of the Patuxent marsh is a delicate environment that attracts many species despite the continuous fouling of the river by soil erosion and sewage effluent. A project is underway to record confirmed observations in the Park area (Md. Rte. 4 in the north, Merkle WMA in the south and 1-2 km from the river bank) and to identify breeding species. To date, 190 species have been identified and a new listing of Park birds is in preparation. Data contributions will be gratefully accepted by the author.

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## DARK-EYED JUNCO MISTAKES MOURNING DOVE FOR HAWK

Hervey Brackbill

Discussing predator-evasion tactics of birds in "Behavioral Mechanisms in Ecology," Harvard University Press, 1980, Douglass H. Morse writes on page 133: "Flocks of titmice [*Parus*, sp.] in eastern North America almost always respond to Mourning Doves (*Zenaida macroura*) flying rapidly through the forest. This long-tailed dove bears a superficial resemblance to the principal predator on small birds in these areas, the Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). When a dove appears suddenly, literally bursting through the trees, there is probably not enough time for the titmice to distinguish it from the hawk."

On March 23, 1962 I made this entry in my notebook: "While a [Dark-eyed] Junco [*Junco hyemalis*] was eating at one of my feeding places this afternoon a Mourning Dove alighted about 10 meters up in a tree 3 or 4 meters away. When I looked up from making a note on the dove's arrival I found that the junco had frozen, and it stayed frozen for 5 minutes, with only some slight head movements near the end of that time. Then, although the dove was still in the tree, it resumed its eating for 4 minutes. It then flew away; the dove was still present. I believe the junco had mistaken the dove for a hawk."

Morse's statement strengthens my belief; apparently this junco finally realized its mistake.

2620 Poplar Drive, Baltimore, Md. 21207

## WATERFOWL OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY COUNTRY

Brooke Meanley. Drawings by John W. Taylor. 1982. Tidewater Publishers, Centerville, Md. 210 p., 85 black & white photos, 14 black & white line drawings, charts, maps, appendices, references, index. \$19.95.

For someone from afar, the desire to learn about the waterfowl of the Chesapeake Bay before visiting the area can be completely fulfilled by reading Brooke Meanley's latest book. For someone native to the region, reading "Waterfowl of the Chesapeake Bay Country" can be completely fulfilling too, even if you are able to observe, first hand, all your own favorite and familiar places, those same ones visited and studied by the author over a lifetime of inquiry. The clear black and white photographs make up, in part, for not being on hand at the moment at those familiar sites: close ups for identification, long views for habitats and behavior patterns. Full page maps plainly outline the North American migration corridors of many of the species that winter in the Bay. Charts and graphs present the most up-to-date information on distribution, abundance and ecology of Chesapeake waterfowl, information which the author has been gathering since he first acquired his interest in this fascinating subject while still living in his boyhood home in Baltimore County. Mention of the MOS, *Maryland Birdlife*, and reports of observations made by a number of our members are inserted at intervals throughout the book. Not for the later reasons alone, however, is the book well worth the price. There is a copy in the Cylburn Museum Library. —

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### CONTENTS, JUNE 1982

JOY WHEELER

In Search of Nesting Eastern Bluebirds.....	Dawn B. Oteilo....	39
Wilson's Phalaropes in Spring at Baltimore Harbor .....	Steven H. Everhart....	43
The Season — Winter Season, Dec. 1, 1981 — Feb. 28, 1982... ..	Robert F. Ringler....	44
The President's Page.....	John Cullom....	50
1982 Convention Summary.....	Martha Chestem....	50
Minutes of the Annual Meeting.....	Helen Ford....	52
Annual Reports of Local Chapters.....	Chapter Presidents....	54
Committee and Project Reports.....	Committee Chairmen....	67
Fulvous Whistling Ducks in Patuxent River .....	John A. Gregoire....	74
Dark-eyed Junco Mistakes Mourning Dove for Hawk.....	Hervey Brackbill....	75
Book Review:.....	Joy Wheeler	
Waterfowl of the Chesapeake Bay Country.....	Brooke Meanley....	76

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