

**The newsletter of the Baltimore Bird Club**

**October/November 1998 -- Online Edition**

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Deadline for next *CHIP NOTES*: October 25, 1998 (the next issue will be December 1998–January 1999). Send material to: Steve Sanford, 8412 Downey Dale Drive, Randallstown MD 21133

or e-mail to [tsanage@mail.bcbf.lib.md.us](mailto:tsanage@mail.bcbf.lib.md.us)  
Please help *CHIP NOTES* get out on time.

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**May Count 1998**

by Michele Melia

This year's State May Count was held on May 9, 1998. A total of 24 parties of 57 Baltimore Bird Club members turned out to identify and count the birds of Baltimore City and County.

The weather was cool with rain falling off and on -- not the greatest of birding conditions. However, our birds and rainy spring seems to have convinced some of our usual winter residents to stick around a little longer than usual, and we tallied several species on this count that are more typical of our January count than the May count. These included one Red-breasted Nuthatch, two Winter Wrens, ten Purple Finches and fifteen Red Crossbills! The crossbills were reported by two parties from two different sites, both in northern Baltimore County. Some wintering ducks were apparently lingering in the area (mainly at Hart-Miller, but also at Loch Raven), as the count included reports of Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, and Red-breasted Merganser. Other sightings were Red-necked Grebe and White-rumped Sandpiper at Hart-Miller Island, and White-crowned Sparrows at the Ferryback Dam area. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Bald Eagle, both absent from last year's count, were present this year, as were Great Egret and Cattle Egret.

Some species missed on this year's count included: all rail species, Chuck-will's-widow, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Blue-headed Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler. Some of these misses were no doubt due to a lack of counters in the pre-dawn and dusk-early nighttime hours.

Altogether, a total of 162 species were identified on the count (not including the genus only reports, such as crow species). The five most numerous species on this year's count are (from highest to lowest): Least Sandpiper, Barn Swallow, Red-winged Blackbird, European Starling, and Lesser Yellowlegs. Barn Swallow, Red-winged Blackbird, and European Starling were also in last year's top five.

Many thanks to all of you who participated in this year's count.

Here is the detailed count:

36 Common Loon	11 Purple Martin
4 Horned Grebe	150 Tree Swallow
25 Red-breasted Cormorant	86 Northern Rough-winged Swallow
130 Great Blue Heron	89 Bank Swallow
1 Great Egret	82 Cliff Swallow
1 Cattle Egret	480 Barn Swallow
2 Black-crowned Night-Heron	150 Swallow Sp.
4 Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	125 Carolina Chickadee
36 Black Vulture	91 Rufed Titmouse
1 Turkey Vulture	1 Red-breasted Nuthatch
24 Canada Goose	14 White-breasted Nuthatch
6 Hute Swan	83 Carolina Wren
1 Wood Duck	2 Winter Wren
2 Gadwall	2 Marsh Wren
3 American Wigeon	1 Golden-crowned Kinglet
3 American Black Duck	5 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
281 Mallard	94 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
1 Blue-winged Teal	65 Eastern Bluebird
1 Northern Shoveler	20 Veery
1 Lesser Scaup	3 Swainson's Thrush
5 Red-breasted Merganser	1 Hermit Thrush
32 Osprey	119 Wood Thrush
3 Bald Eagle	370 American Robin
3 Northern Harrier	264 Gray Catbird
1 Sharp-shinned Hawk	80 Northern Mockingbird
4 Cooper's Hawk	1 Brown Thrasher
1 Red-shouldered Hawk	698 European Starling
20 Red-tailed Hawk	17 Cedar Waxwing
2 American Kestrel	15 Blue-winged Warbler
1 Peregrine Falcon	2 Cerulean Warbler
4 Ring-necked Pheasant	1 Nashville Warbler
6 Northern Bobwhite	59 Northern Parula
1 American Coot	84 Yellow Warbler
3 Black-billed Plover	5 Chestnut-sided Warbler
104 Semipalmated Plover	2 Magnolia Warbler
49 Killdeer	1 Cape May Warbler
112 Lesser Yellowlegs	4 Black-throated Blue Warbler
491 Lesser Yellowlegs	128 Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler
10 Solitary Sandpiper	15 Black-throated Green Warbler
31 Spotted Sandpiper	2 Blackburnian Warbler
39 Semipalmated Sandpiper	1 Yellow-throated Warbler
76 Least Sandpiper	2 Pine Siskin
3 White-rumped Sandpiper	15 Prairie Warbler
200 Sharp Sp.	2 Bay-breasted Warbler
130 Dunlin	2 Blackpoll Warbler
30 Short-billed Dowitcher	2 Black-and-white Warbler
1 Common Noddy	49 Black-and-white Warbler
4 Laughing Gull	58 American Redstart
1 Bonaparte's Gull	21 Horned Lark
138 Ring-billed Gull	77 Ovenbird
314 Herring Gull	6 Northern Waterthrush
93 Great Black-backed Gull	21 Louisiana Waterthrush
362 Caspian Tern	5 Kentucky Warbler
15 Least Tern	164 Common Yellowthroat
130 Rook	15 Hooded Warbler
202 Mourning Dove	3 Canada Warbler
1 Yellow-billed Cuckoo	6 Yellow-breasted Chat
2 Great Horned Owl	4 Summer Tanager
120 Eastern Screech Owl	80 Eastern Towhee
2 Whip-poor-will	51 Chipping Sparrow
156 Chimney Swift	17 Field Sparrow
8 Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2 Savannah Sparrow
1 Belted Kingfisher	127 Song Sparrow
68 Red-bellied Woodpecker	4 Swamp Sparrow
23 Downy Woodpecker	4 White-crowned Sparrow
3 Hairy Woodpecker	267 Northern Cardinal
37 Northern Flicker	8 House-scaled Creeper
1 Pileated Woodpecker	2 Blue Grosbeak
2 Emperor Woodpecker	4 Indigo Bunting
1 Acadian Flycatcher	103 Bobolink
15 Empidonax Sp.	648 Red-winged Blackbird
20 Eastern Phoebe	5 Eastern Meadowlark
16 Great Crested Flycatcher	268 Common Grackle
100 Blue Jay	76 Brown-headed Cowbird
32 American Crow	20 Orchard Oriole
9 Fish Crow	90 Baltimore Oriole
46 Crow Sp.	10 Purple Finch
	88 House Finch
	1 Red Crossbill
	285 American Goldfinch
	176 House Sparrow

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**Thanks**

by Joy Wheeler

Mike Knott, one of our long time members, deserves our sincere thanks for the expert restoration work in our Museum of the Birds of Maryland. He came to Cylburn on July 6 at our invitation equipped with all the tools needed to replace five of the largest Plexiglas panels on largest cases of birds. The original panels were put into place during the 1983-84 renewal of the museum. They served their purpose well until two or three years ago when Cylburn's furnace stopped working for a week during a very cold winter. We believe the severe and abrupt changes in temperature caused the panels to crack around the screws and across the corners. At the May meeting our Board of Directors appropriated enough money to replace them.

Mike showed his skill as soon as he arrived at 1:30 and got to work handling those enormous sheets of Plexiglas, drilling holes all at the right angles and putting the panels into place, using not only screws but also washers around the screws. This important omission in the original installation may have allowed the problem to occur in the first place. Mike also showed considerable skill at handling a crew of volunteers, among them Bix Wheeler who had constructed the cases though he was not on the committee to put the original Plexiglas in place.

Patsy Perlman and I were there to cheer on the process, each of us wielding a mean screwdriver on command. Thanks also to Patsy for having the Plexiglas delivered from Laird Plastics Co. in time for the job. We worked steadily from 1:30 to 5:30 PM, finished the job, cleaned up the mess, and helped Mike pack his tools in his truck. Be sure you notice the difference the next time you're in the museum and thank Mike. We couldn't have done it without him.

Thanks from **Calvin Rodwell School**:

For the past three years of the Baltimore Bird Club have provided 6 sets per year of *Audubon Adventures* to 6 different Baltimore City elementary school classrooms. We used the \$200 grant made available each year from the MOS Education Committee. *Audubon Adventures* is a publication of the National Audubon Society so act as a "field trip within the classroom." With this project we intended to reach young children, grades 3-5, with information, stories, pictures, and puzzles about natural history in a readable format.

The following is an excerpt from a letter written on June 3, 1998 by one of the teachers who inadvertently received *Audubon Adventures* for the entire 3 years. (For the first two years it was addressed to the science specialist who directed it to her, knowing she would put it to good use.)

I am writing on behalf of myself and the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders at Calvin Rodwell School, #256, in Baltimore to thank you for your contribution of the subscription *Audubon Adventures*. The children love the "Newsletters." The articles enrich many of our science units. Since we are an M.S.P.A.P. grade we try to give the children as many opportunities as possible to read from different sources. I have saved the issues from the 3 years I have received the papers and use them whenever they fit in both science and language arts. Currently, we are studying the life cycles of butterflies and frogs, and also the habitats of both, so I have 3 different issues in my science center for the children to use. The children did a big unit on birds in the fall when we made very good use of the papers.

Thank you for thinking of us at Calvin Rodwell Elementary School.

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**Postcard from Arizona**

by Hank Kaestner

At the end of March I celebrated my south excellent birding in the Dominican Republic. The next week was my wife's birthday and she wanted a week at a dude ranch in Arizona. I was lucky that the ranch she picked was the Circle Z, located immediately south of the Sonoma Creek sanctuary south of Patagonia, Arizona! Although most days were spent horseback riding with my wife, I did have a few hours around lunch and dinner breaks, and one morning to bird watch, and managed 114 species on the ranch. The best sightings were Gray, Black, and Zone-tailed Hawks, 9 hummers, including Violet-crowned, an early Elegant Trogon, 12 flycatchers including Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Hammond's, Dusky, and Pacific-slope Flycatcher, 6 wrens, Nuttall's, Bell's, Cassin's, Plumbeous, and Warbling Vireos, and Five-striped, Rufous-crowned, and Black-chinned Sparrows.

Hub had for 4 days on a dude ranch. We even got a Roadrunner on the last day.

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**Membership Dues**

by Roberta Ross

Our 1998-99 membership year began September 1, 1998. Thanks to all who paid their dues promptly. If you have not paid your dues, please forward them as promptly as possible to:

Roberta Ross  
4128 Roland Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21211-2034

If the expiration date on your mailing label is **printed in red**, we have not received your dues. Our regular dues, which include membership in the state organization, are \$20 for an individual or \$30 for a household. Members of another chapter or life members of BCB are exempt. The best sightings were Gray, Black, and Zone-tailed Hawks, 9 hummers, including Violet-crowned, an early Elegant Trogon, 12 flycatchers including Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Hammond's, Dusky, and Pacific-slope Flycatcher, 6 wrens, Nuttall's, Bell's, Cassin's, Plumbeous, and Warbling Vireos, and Five-striped, Rufous-crowned, and Black-chinned Sparrows.

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**History Lessons**

by Joy Wheeler

During the past 2 summers several incidents involving our collections at Cylburn have occurred to bring our attention to some past history of bird study in Maryland. I've already mentioned these incidents to many interested members and reported in the MOS IRVING E. HAMPE Annual Report. It is important for the *Chip Notes* to carry the record for present and future members. Some of the stories have to do with birds, some with people.

**IRVING E. HAMPE**

The first president of the MOS at its 1945 founding lived a long life and pursued a continuing interest in bird study. He died in 1995 as we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He supported MOS activities in many ways, writing, editing and contributing art work to our newsletter, and to Maryland Birdlife. "Duke" as he was known, led many field trips, and did much to educate the general public, adults and children alike about birds. Even after suffering several strokes, and during long terms of hospitalization, he was able to regale his fellow patients with talks and slide shows about birds. Before his death he had introduced his son David to be sure that the MOS received his bird-related materials; his original art work, a small collection of decoups, books, journals, and field notes dating back to the 1930's. At the 1998 MOS Conference we put the decoups and some of the art collection into the Silent Auction. Scott Johnson, professor of ornithology at Towson University, was grateful to get long series of the journals Mr. Hampe received during his lifetime. We feel better about dispersing these collections throughout the MOS than hiding them away in an inaccessible closet at Cylburn. We still have many items of art and will put these into next year's Silent Auction. We do intend to keep the field notes which may be seen and studied at Cylburn by appointment. Call Joy Wheeler, 825-825-1204.

**JOHN SOMMER**

Never a member of MOS, Mr. Sommer had a serious interest in studies of Maryland birds, especially those of the Hamilton and Govans area of Baltimore City and parts of Baltimore County from the late 1800's to the mid 1960's when he died at age 95. Mr. Sommer had connections with some most respected names in Maryland bird study: Frank Kirkwood, Hal Pleasants, James Fischer, and Brooke Meanley among them. It was through Mr. Meanley that we were alerted to the existence of this collection. We are grateful for his gentle but persistent prodding of Mr. Sommer's heirs over a period of 10 years to relinquish this rich treasure to become a part of our collections. For many hours of mid-winter browsing and study these items can be seen by reservation. Call Joy Wheeler, 410-825-1204.

**Great Gray Owl and Capercaille**

Two bird specimens can be seen when you come to browse through the Hampe and Sommer collections. They are not birds of Maryland so do not qualify to be housed in our Museum of the Birds of Maryland. As mounted specimens they are too imposing to be hidden away on a dark shelf somewhere, however.

The **Great Gray Owl** was given to us several years ago by Trina Comstock-Gay when she was disposing of some birds and butterfly collections that had belonged to her father. At that time Baltimore's Peale Museum was looking for some mounted birds to fill some cases made empty by the return of birds they'd borrowed from Harvard to commemorate Peter Scherer's 1800's display. Our Great Gray Owl fit Peale's needs perfectly. Unfortunately the bird exhibit at the Peale was returned to us as the closing of the entire museum. It is now on display as special arrangement in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor landing sitting room.

Equally as impressive a mount as the Great Gray Owl is a Capercaille, a European bird of the grouse family. The **Capercaille** or **Auerhahn**, the largest of the grouse, lives only in mature stands of spruce and pine with some undergrowth of berry-bearing shrubs in northern Europe and in the mountains of the Alps and in the Siberian taiga. It is restricted to mountain forests and private preserves. Each male takes a harem of up to a dozen females. Perching in a pine tree in April and May, crowing and calling, he drives off all other males in his territory. The female nests in a crude hollow scrape in the ground, incubating alone a normal clutch of from 5 to 8 eggs for 27 days, and alone rearing the young in family groups throughout the summer.

The Capercaille at Cylburn was the 1974 hunting trophy of Col. Clarence Hurr during an 11-year of duty with the US Army in Germany. With the guidance of a seasoned hunter, Hurr stalked the bird for 3 days before taking it during the April-May season of fall. Immediately after the death of the bird a 30 minute ceremony of silent respect for the bird was held. It was then mounted by a taxidermist in Bavaria and held a place of honor in Hurr's home until his recent death. Mrs. Virginia Hurr gave the Capercaille to Cylburn in 1998. It can also be seen by arrangement with Patsy Perlman or Joy Wheeler.

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**Crowing about Crossbills**

by Joy Wheeler

Listening to the crowing of my fellow Baltimore Bird Club members about all the crossbills being seen around the county and state on Christmas counts, Mid Winter Bird Counts, and any other count was hard to take. If you know anything about my birdwatching habits you may know that my goal would not have been just to see these uncommon birds this year, but to see them at the focus of my birdwatching activities. Loch Raven's Northampton Furnace Trail. I will admit that after a few weeks of reports of crossbill appearances and bill to crossbills for me, I did go to my next best site to see them, the Pine Ridge Golf Course. I did that three times, even taking a tape of crossbill sounds with me, with no luck. I was actually going to "judge" my list if the birds in question appeared with what might be interpreted as being visible across the cove from "my" trail. I wasn't even getting an opportunity to do that. (Please don't assume I've "judged" any other bird on my Trail list of 204.)

By February 28 I had begun to accept the notion that these winter finches had flown back to the north where there was some real winter. I hadn't needed to be so fatalistic. On March 1 as I was returning to the head of the trail after an hour and a half of pure delight (Almost any bird will do, and there had been bluebirds, three kinds of mergansers, and a Fox Sparrow, to name a few) it seemed my mind for crossbills may have arrived. A tight flock of small finch-like birds, maybe 20 altogether, flew rapidly through the tops of the pines on the south side of the trail to the north side and down into the pine tops out of sight. Their chips sounded familiar from my sessions of listening to the tapes, but not familiar enough for me to be sure. I really had no hope of seeing this small flock, as they had been moving so fast. I "pushed" on. On cue the little flock filled itself out of the tree tops and flew in my direction. There was a second chance, though the birds were too high and the pines were thin. I kept on pushing and the birds kept moving. This time a single tree top even closer, the seed pods probably attracting them more than my pushing. Only then did I allow myself to hope: plenty of light, birds hanging among the twigs digging into the seed pods. Some of them were reddish, more reddish than a house finch, some of them were yellowish, not brownish like female house finches; and none of them had just plain, stout conical bills. When I could get a steady unbroken look I could actually see the curved tips on these finches bills. I never did see any white on the wings of any of the birds, but I am satisfied -- thrilled, even -- to add Red Crossbills to my Northampton Furnace Trail list. This kind of proof is not required to keep me loyal to my trail, but it helps.

Now the question is, can the rest of you Baltimore Bird Club members put up with my crowing?

March 19, 1998 -- the day the swallows come back to Capistrano.

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**Denali National Park and Anchorage**

by Jim Highsaw and Linda Prentice

We completed a nine day trip to Alaska in late July-early August 1998. Although birding was not the primary reason for the trip, we were able to spend some time looking for birds in Denali National Park and in the Anchorage area.

Our first morning in Anchorage we visited Potter's Marsh, which is included in Scher's Field Guide to Birding in Anchorage as one of the good sites in the Anchorage area. Birds spotted here included Arctic Tern, Red-necked Grebe, Bald Eagle, Belted Kingfisher, and Common Goldeneye. The best sightings were Gray, Black, and Zone-tailed Hawks, 9 hummers, including Violet-crowned, an early Elegant Trogon, 12 flycatchers including Northern Beardless Tyrannulet, Hammond's, Dusky, and Pacific-slope Flycatcher, 6 wrens, Nuttall's, Bell's, Cassin's, Plumbeous, and Warbling Vireos, and Five-striped, Rufous-crowned, and Black-chinned Sparrows.

After two days in Anchorage, we were scheduled to take the Alaska Railroad to Denali National Park. However, a train derailment had disrupted service, so the Railroad sent us to Denali on a bus. Most of the following day was spent riding the North Face and Lodge bus (the bus to the park to Wonder Lake. Although Willow Ptarmigan were plentiful along the park road, and a Golden Eagle nest with young was located on a cliff below the park road, there weren't many other birds. Much more visible were the larger animals in the park (grizzlies, caribou, moose, Dall sheep, and red fox). The most productive birding area near North Face Lodge was Wonder Lake, where we spent half-a-day canoeing and saw a family of Common Loons up close, a Surf Scoter, Mew Gull, Pintails, Boreal Chickadees and Great White-fronted Goose, and had spectacular views of Mount McKinley. On a day hike near the tundra ponds we saw Northern Harriers, Savannah Sparrows, White-Crowned Sparrows, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pintails, and Ravens.

We had rain on our last day in Anchorage, but we did spot a Wilson's Warbler foraging in our host's yard. We hope to go back soon to visit other parts of the State.

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**Field Trip Reports**

by compiled Steve Sanford

**August 15 -- Bombay Hook - No Report**

August 25 -- **Lake Roland** -- 14 participants saw 50 species including both species of Night-Heron (immature), Great Egret, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and three species of warbler: Chestnut-sided, Black & White, and American Redstart. The weather was hot, in the 90's. Leader: Shirley Geddes.

August 28 -- **Liberty Reservoir** -- Sightings included Great Egret, Green-backed and Great Blue Herons, Spotted, Western, and Least Sandpipers, and Magnolia Warbler. The weather was "good." 15 participants. 42 species. Leader: Burton Alexander.

September 1 -- **Lake Roland** -- The 21 participants were treated to 11 warbler species: Blue-winged, Tennessee, Blue, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Red, Black-throated Green, Black & White Warbler, American Redstart, Yellowthroat, and Canada Warbler, plus a Caspian Tern in flight, and many others for a total of 61 species. It was clear, about 75°, with a gentle breeze. Leader: Chris Manning.

September 6 -- **Phoenix Pond** -- Leader Michele Melia was writing a trip featured "good looks at Parula, Blackburnian, Magnolia, and Canada Warblers [plus Redstart, Black-throated Green Warbler for a total of 6 warbler species], and 3 vireo species: Red-eyed, White-eyed, and Warbling. The leading Wrens were singing up a storm, just like in the spring." Total species: 39. 10 participants. The weather was "perfect!" Clear, sunny, 60s to mid 70's.

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**Sunday Mornings at Cylburn**

by Joseph M. Lewandowski

August 23, 1998

I have heard it said that if one leaves an area for a while and then comes back to it, one notices all the little changes that have taken place. For our first walk of the Summer/Fall at Cylburn, that statement was certainly true. On this beautiful August day, seven birders saw Cylburn in all its glory. The mansion porch has been decked out with beautiful plantings. An urn graces the side garden with colorful flowers growing out of it. The garden was full of color and a new pond can be seen in front of the mansion. New bird feeders have been placed along the trails, and this with some blue slots, and hot temperatures made for a great summer day. Twenty-six species topped our birding list. Memorable species included a Canada Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Wood Thrush, Barn Swallow, Broad-winged Hawk, Kestrel, and Hummingbird. It was great to be out at Cylburn and this city arboretum did not disappoint us.

August 30, 1998  
It was another gorgeous day at Cylburn for this second self-guided bird walk. The butterflies were out in force and the leaves were continuing their early departure from the trees and carpeting the forest floor. Despite this early sign of fall, the wildflowers were still in bloom and gardeners enjoyed a pleasant morning. It was a quiet morning, quiet in that we did not hear the constant chatter of birds as we walked the trails. But, it must have been a good sign for we saw 32 species of birds. Several species of warbler were spotted including Black-and-white, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Parula, and Redstart. Veery, both wrens, Kestrel, Pileated Woodpecker, Warbling Vireo, hummingbirds, and an Acadian Flycatcher were other notable sees. We can only hope that September will be a great birding month.

September 6, 1998  
If fall is going to be this nice, I am sure that all of us would want the weather to stay this way forever. For the sixteen birders (that's right, sixteen, a new Cylburn record!) that joined us on this self-guided bird walk, it was wonderful. Unfortunately, for those of us looking for a fine fall day, it was not the best of days. The Arboretum was in great shape but bird calls were down, butterflies as a low effort, and only 28 species of birds were seen. We did spot Flickers, a Kestrel, Killdeer, Black-and-white Warbler, Canada Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Redstart, and Chestnut-sided Warbler. Hummingbirds gave us a good look at their flying acrobatics and a brief glimpse of a Sharp-shinned Hawk capped our day. For me, the bright blue sky, forest smelling air, blooming flowers in the garden, and walk among friends made this day memorable.

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**Postcards from the Edge**

by Hank Kaestner

I've just had a double dose of Australia, starting with a few days in Hobart, Tasmania. There are 13 emdemies here, and most can be seen on Mt. Wellington, which looms over this city of Hobart. It was interesting to see wintering Parasitic Jaegers (or Arctic Skuas as they are called here) kingfishers in the estuaries around Hobart.

I ended the trip with a stay at Chasing Stars Lodge near Cairns on the tropical northeast coast of Queensland. A successful night foray for Lesser Sooty Owl was one of many highlights.

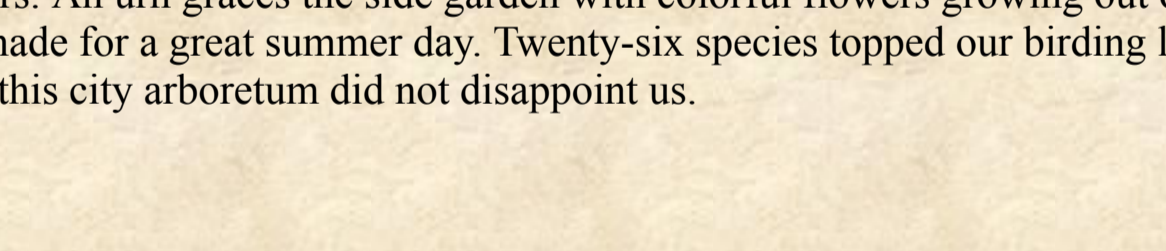
Cheers -- Hank Kaestner

April 23

Once a year, I negotiate my annual purchases of basil and marjoram with my Egyptian supplier, usually in Hunt Valley, MD. This year my supplier suggested that I come to Cairo for the meeting. So I've flown but for just a 2-day stay. My favorite bird, the Hoopoe, is common in the gardens there. I've also seen lots of migrating European Bee-eaters. And last night several Senegal Thick-knees flew over our dining patio as darkness fell.

Hank Kaestner

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**Baltimore Birdline: A Reminder**

This is a reminder that we *do* have a **Baltimore birding hotline**, and we need your reports.

Let us hear about your sightings. Naturally we want to hear about uncommon birds and "rarities." But also let us know about highlights of your birding in the region, as well as interesting yard birds, seasonal arrivals, and nesting. We urge field trip leaders especially to report trip highlights directly to the BDC line in addition to mailing in your reports. You can call in your sightings to (410) 467-0653. You can also e-mail your sightings to [birdline@starbox.com](mailto:birdline@starbox.com). For best results, please include the specific words: "BDC Birdline sighting on the subject line."

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**Back Yard Birding**

by Gail Frantz



**Baltimore City**

Georgia Blower, physical therapist at Sinai Hospital, was curious about an aggressive bird that was attacking everyone who dared use the sidewalk that leads to the hospital cafeteria. She described the bird as being robin sized and having a long, grey, white edged tail with white stripes on its gray wings. What do you think? **Mockingbird?** Got to be.

**Roland Park**

The following detailed observations were made by Tom and Doris Simpson from May through August of this year.

\*Our home is located in central Baltimore, just north of the Johns Hopkins University campus and across the street from a heavily wooded tract in the Roland Park area. Tributaries of the Jones Falls waterway flow southward through the neighborhood.

\*For the first time in the twenty-seven years that we have lived here, we have **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** (*Nyctanassa violacea*) flying across the street intersection at dusk as singles, pairs, or in groups of three to five. They first appeared on May 14<sup>th</sup> and we have