The newsletter of the Baltimore Bird Club

April–May 2001 -- Online Edition

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Deadline for next CHIP NOTES: June 20. (Mail other issues now to the address below. Deadline for September issue is September 20.) If possible, please email material to

tamaurer@bcpl.net

Between, Neal mailed to:

Steve Sanford
1 Cambridge Ave. Dept.
Randallstown MD 21133

Please **DO NOT** SPITBALL!!! get out on time.

Three Friends Remember Peggy Bohanon

by Ann Mason

Peggy Bohanon, a faithful, long-time member of the BBC died on January 7, 2001. On that day the birds lost an ardent admirer and I lost a cherished birding friend.

Peggy had an artistic bent and used it when birding. She was especially good at discerning subtle shades of coloring and shape. In a split second Peggy could separate confusing fall warblers from other warblers or discern a Gray-cheeked thrush from a Swainson's thrush.

Even though she was confined to her home for the last six years, she still enriched herself in the world of birding. From her Park Avenue apartment window in Baltimore city she watched for any bird that might be unusual. Over the last few years, her diligence paid off with the sighting of a Yellow-throated warbler and a Lesser Black-backed gull.

Her well-worn Peggy's enthusiasm and her fun for introducing people to the joy of birding. We will miss Peggy's ability to share in the delight of a new birder who was called a Cardinal, Mockingbird or "common" species for the first time.

by Wheeler

Peggy first came to my attention at one of the lectures I attended as a new member. At that time the club was known as the BOS Baltimore Chapter. Peggy and her husband Walter were seated fairly close to the front of Cylburn's lecture hall with a lively assortment of birds and bird calls in the back. Her birdbox spoke to us that evening. She throw us into the topic of her lecture instantly as the old owls.

Joan's technique was to first challenge us. She passed among us holding a dead, limp bird. We were to identify the species and age of the bird. Joan's specimens were a rare treat. Peggy's and Walter were immediately that the bird was a female Dickcissel. At that moment I knew the extent of my ignorance and the lengths I have to go to catch up with Peggy.

Peggy was a wonderful birding companion. She was a good birder and she was fun to become "some." They showed me my first Wood Thrush and introduced me to the rest-of-my-life-interest- The Northampton Furnace trail hike.

I put in some Peggy Notes as we shared their birds notes and attended based meetings together (she declared herself meetings "fun"!) revolved with her in Nomadic, southern Arizona, south Texas, Minnesota's Mid-Cooper Swarming the Yellow Rails in early March! I will miss her. Peggy's enthusiasm and her fun introducing people to the joy of birding. Peggy's enthusiasm, her fun, her ability to share in the delight of a new birder who was called a Cardinal, Mockingbird or "common" species for the first time.

Marie, but then will I ever be as self-assured as Peggy on the trail? Or one thing I am assured, I shall ever be grateful for having known her.

by Steve Sanford

Peggy was a spirited, fun loving, outspoken, opinionated, wonderful individual. Her definitions was was often reassuring but if you didn't agree with her, that was OK, too. Rational disputes always ended in an amicable way.

Comments can be e-mailed to: steve@steve-sanford.com or Dial-Up Internet Access: 410-655-8490 Home Phone: 410-655-8490 and fax: 410-655-8840.

Or Good ol' 1133,280 8595
Steve Sanford
Mass Spam Management Phase
MD DNR Wildlife & Heritage Division
Tawes State Office Bldg.
Annapolis MD 21401

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Too Many Mute Swans

by Amelia Davis

In January, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received a task force report about the Mute Swan population in Maryland. You may have seen in the March/April issue of Yellowthroat, in the Conservation Corner, a brief article about this report and the DNR's plan to deal with the birds (click "Mute Swan Task Force").

The problem is that the non-native, non-migratory Mute Swans destroy Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) at an astonishing rate, even more than they actually consume, through uprooting the Submerged Aquatic Vegetation and promoting siltation. Our winter Black and Surf scoters depend on this grass. The Maryland Chesapeake Bay population of Mute Swans has increased from 2,000 in 1991 to 4,000 in 1997 to 8,000 in 2000 to 14,000 in 2001.

I put in Jones Peggy Notes as we shared their birds notes and attended based meetings together (she declared based meetings "fun"!) revolved with her in Nomadic, southern Arizona, south Texas, Minnesota's Mid-Cooper Swarming the Yellow Rails in early March! I will miss her. Peggy's enthusiasm, her fun, her ability to share in the delight of a new birder who was called a Cardinal, Mockingbird or "common" species for the first time.

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May Count 2001

The statewide May Bird Count is scheduled for Saturday, May 12, this year. Volunteers are needed to identify and count birds in specified blocks, in their yards, and on public lands in Baltimore City and County. No prior experience counting birds is necessary. Please contact Michele Jeffcoat at (410) 244-7539 or mjeffcoat@dnr.state.md.us if you would like more information or are interested in participating.

Baltimore Urban Birdscape Project

by Aaron Hamel

The birdscape project is analogous to a breeding bird survey. It is conducted during the month of June when specific points within the city of Baltimore are surveyed for every bird seen and heard, with a special emphasis on Neotropical migrant birds. Survey points are randomly selected by laying a 500-meter grid of the entire city of Baltimore and then selecting a GPS location, a survey point, from each grid that contains a total number of 622 survey points.

Due to the huge number of survey points, we need volunteers who are able to identify local avian birds by sight and sound, especially Neotropical migrants. Beginning birders could partner up with more experienced birders to become more familiar with the avian species in Baltimore City.

If anyone is interested in this project and would like more information, please contact me at aaron@hamel.net. I can also be contacted by phone at 410-435-8080 and fax: 410-435-8041.

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Beginning Birder Course

The Oregon Ridge Nature Center is offering a **Beginning Birder Course** conducted by BBC's own Bob and Ruth Pancoast. It is designed for the beginning birder who is 16 years of age or older. The course includes three sessions: two evening classroom sessions on May 15 and 17, and a May 19 Saturday morning field practicum. The purpose of the course is to familiarize participants with the tools and basic techniques of bird watching so that when they complete the program, they will have enough knowledge to continue on their own.

For further information, call 410-887-1817.

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Membership Reminders

by Neal Mauro

This is my last year as Membership Secretary for the Baltimore Bird Club. For enjoyed my two years in this office. Thank you all for your support, and I hope you enjoyed your journey of discovery, which will be my next.

Beginning in May, the Secretary of the Membership Secretary will be taken over by a group of three people – Catherine Hocking, Dan Gottesman, and Georgia McDonald. I'm sure they'll appreciate your support too.

Please keep in mind that it is nearly the date of address changes, so we will be sending out your membership cards in the 2001-2002 membership year, which will begin September 1, 2001.

If you know people who would like to join the Baltimore Bird Club, tell them to join soon. If they pay a full year's dues (which is for individual or $30 for a household) now, this amount will be applied to the 2001-2002 year, so their dues will actually cover the period from May 1, 2001 to September 1, 2002.

After May 1, address changes or applications for membership should be sent to

Dan Gottesman
12 Parliament Court
Reisterstown MD 21136

Please help Dot and Catherine and Georgia out by keeping your information up-to-date. See you at the field trips!

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Stand Up and Get Counting!

by Helena Gerlach

Don't think you do not know enough to join in bird counts. Give what you can and enjoy.

Our Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a wonderful way to learn about birding by one, two, or three hours of effort on Start Mike's walk, I know I have to sit or stand. The course includes three sessions: two evening classroom sessions on May 15 and 17, and a May 19 Saturday morning field practicum. The purpose of the course is to familiarize participants with the tools and basic techniques of bird watching so that when they complete the program, they will have enough knowledge to continue on their own.

Dave Wallack was assigned to count the birds in the southern part of the Baltimore Bird Club. He told me that the day would end at Cherry Hill Park around 4:30. At that time Dave hoped to add spiders, Short-eared Owls and Peregrines to our count list. The day began with a cold, wet, and windy walk through the Gwynns Falls Park. Dave's knowledge of birds, which was considerable, was not enough to keep us from being cold and wet. We saw a few birds, but not many. We saw a few birds, which were numerous by early, through trees and bushes where we, by mistake, flushed birds, which were numerous by early. We scaped the harbor then moved on to other great areas. Small, brown birds were moving quickly through trees and bushes where we, by mistake, flushed. Even though I'm familiar with Song and White-throated Sparrows, the little birds were difficult to see long enough for me to identify them.

Dave was in his element when Cormorants flew past our table in the water at Thomas Cove. We parked and walked on an abandoned road that came to a dead end on a hill thick with thorny bushes and shrubs. We scrunched down the hill, found a dryer path and crossed some railroad tracks. We finally reached the water and were able to see many more birds. Again counting was difficult for me. I identified the Great Egrets as Ring-necked, Canvasbacks as Ring-necked, Canvasbacks and Redheads. I especially enjoyed the beautiful Common and Hooded Mergansers. Dave counted over 100 Canvasbacks and 100 Ring-necked Ducks. Dave's knowledge of birds, which was considerable, was not enough to keep us from being cold and wet. We saw a few birds, but not many. We saw a few birds, which were numerous by early. Cormorants and two Redheads. I especially enjoyed the beautiful Common and Hooded Mergansers. Dave counted over Greater Scaup Tables in among hundreds of Lesser Scaup.

About 1:30, as Dave had planned, we reached Cherry Hill Park our destination. Bob Rosner was there to join us. Together, we looked for Sandy, Harriers, Kestrels and possibly a Short-eared Owl. Because it was late afternoon, we moved from tree to tree, scan to tree, scan to tree, scan to tree. Dave and Bob were amazed at what we found. In past years, Dave mentioned that he has found a Saw-whet Owl in Cherry Hill. Unfortunately, we did not find one.

Don't think that you don't know enough to join in bird counts. Give it a try. I was able to contribute a second pair of eyes and did get a Green-winged Teal. I will believe it if you believe I am able to count birds. I owed it to impress my identification skills and my ability to assess and field situations. I want to go again and with more practice I will be ready.

Thank you Dave for your company, your special humor, your stories and your patience at showing me birds I had not seen. Thank you Pete Wolfe for organizing these counts and pairing me with Dave.

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And Who is Dave Wallack, Sea Ask?

by Gail Fraserty

As a computer Dave lived in Tennessee and became interested in birding. Dave was introduced to BBC by Marty Brazeau (see page 6 also), who was a member of the Bird Club. Dave's Birth Bangor that Dave was working on in Boy Scouts. When Dave was 17 years old he joined the Baltimore chapter of MOS and Audubon Society in October 1995.

One of the first MOS field trips Dave attended was a trip to Hallstone Harbor led by Bob Kogler. He attended the walk several times and now covers that area on winter bird count.

Dave's interests include birding in Bangor from Stone Harbor and Ocean City to Assateague and Chincoteague. He attended the Bangor Bird Atlas Block on top of Dave's Mountain in Allegany County. He has assisted Northern Gannet County on the Bay count twice.

Dave's birding has taken him to Costa Rica where he attended a Greenbrier Wildlife Management Area in Orange Mills. Dave's interest in Greenbrier has continued and presently he is encouraging his friends to visit Greenbrier.

Dave has published the "Nature Noting by Great Blue Heron" which appeared in the December 1998 issue of Maryland Birdlife. Another article "Observations of Reed-nesting Killdeer and Common Nighthawks in Friendship, Maryland" appeared in the March issue of Maryland Birdlife.

Dave works for the Nonlethal Methods and Wildlife Management Department of the Department of the Environment as a wildlife ecologist specialist. Dave lives with his wife Marguerite four seasons with Pennsylvania, two years with Tennessee, one year and one year with Oregon. Dave's hobbies are cooking, hiking, and birding. Dave's favorite bird is the Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

Like many bird clubs in Maryland, the Baltimore Bird Club has lost bird counts every year. Fall, Christmas, Winter and Spring. If you haven't given the counts a try, seriously consider going on one. The next count will be held on May 12. Contact Michele Jeffcoat (410) 244-7539 or mjeffcoat@dnr.state.md.us for details.

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BBC Officers 2001-02

- **President:** Helena Gerlach
- **Vice President:** Ann Mason
- **Treasurer:** Anne Brooks
- **Recording Secretary:** Carol Schreier
- **Membership Secretary:** Neal Mauro
- **Membership Secretary:** Dorothy Gustafson, Catherine Hocking, Georgia McDonald
- **BBC Directors:** Scott Cordrey, Dan Gottesman, Tomas Hamel, Bob Hocking, Chris Hocking, Dave Thornhill, Jena Wetmore
- **Nominating Committee:** Georgia McDonald, Carol Schreier, Dorothy Gustafson, Dan Gottesman, Tomas Hamel
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Winter Birding: Central California Coast

by Catherine and Gerald Hocking

Petrina's Lesser Albatross with its nearly seven-foot wide, slender black and white wings, and black-footed Albatross, gliding effortlessly back and forth as close as 100 feet from you for several minutes drew into the same morning. Adel Shore-dwelling Black Oystercatchers, Black Turnstones, Surfbirds, Black-bellied Plovers, Sanderlings, Ruddy Turnstones, Western Sandpipers, Dunlins