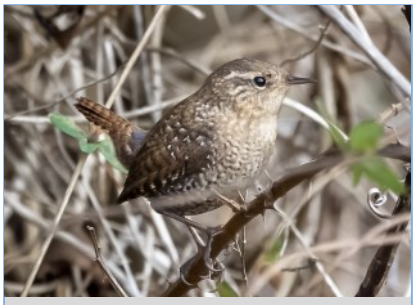
FEBRUARY 2023 VOLUME 57, ISSUE 5

The Osprey

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY



Winter Wren
Photo by Steve Arthur

IN THIS ISSUE

Southern Maryland Audubon Society

http://somdaudubon.org/

President's Perch

One moment in a kid's life can turn them on to birding or create a love of nature for a lifetime.

In my case, that moment came when my parents gave me a pair of binoculars and a Peterson's Field Guide for my eighth birthday. For a little girl who had lousy eyesight, those binoculars opened a magical new world and that dog-eared bird book became my constant companion.

That's why I consider Southern Maryland Audubon's scholarship program for teens and teachers one of our most important—and inspirational—projects.

Each year we sponsor one teenager and two teachers from Southern Maryland to attend Hog Island Audubon Camp off the scenic coast of Maine.

It is an extraordinary natural setting where National Audubon helped restore the nearly extirpated population of Atlantic Puffins and where ornithologists, photographers and artists bring people and birds and nature together. In fact, naturalist Roger Tory Peterson (author of my Peterson's field guide) was the first bird instructor at the camp when it opened more than 80 years ago.

If you are between the ages of 14 and 17—or know someone who is —with a passion for birds, nature or conservation, we welcome all applications.

If you are a teacher of science, biology, environmental sustainability or other related fields in any of Southern Maryland's public or private school systems, environmental education centers or parks, we would love for you to apply. Details on the camp and the scholarships are on the page following this column.

I also personally invite each of you to bring a youngster to our Wednesday, February 1 virtual Zoom meeting: "Bring Your Kids to Audubon Night." And that can include your grandkids or your neighbors' kids—any kids! Meeting starts at 7 p.m. Just have them sign up for our Osprey newsletter on the website homepage for the meeting link at somdaudubon.org.

You will meet some of our star Southern Maryland youth birders, learn about their amazing conservation projects and internships and discover how the newest generation of birders is changing birding and birding conservation. I think you will be inspired. And I hope the youth you bring will be inspired as well.

We'll tell them all about our Hog Island scholarship and how they can apply. And they'll hear from last year's winner—Eaton Ekarintaragun, a 16-year-old junior at Huntingtown High School in Calvert County.

It's going to be a fun night! Hope to see you there!

Happy birding,
Molly

Scholarships to Audubon Hog Island

Southern Maryland Audubon Society is now accepting applications for scholarships to Audubon Camp in Hog Island, Maine. For 2023, SMAS will offer three types of camp scholarships for teens, educators, or others with a serious interest in ornithology, bird watching, or environmental and nature studies. Applications must be received by **February 28.** The scholarships cover tuition, room, and board. The recipient is responsible for all travel expenses. For details about each camp scholarship and Covid-19 vaccination requirements go to the Audubon Hog Island website at https://hogisland.audubon.org/programs

CAMP PROGRAMS OFFERED

Birders	Field Ornithology	**June 18 – June 23**
Teens	Mountains to Sea Birding for Teens (ages 14 -17)	**June 25 – June 30**
Teachers	Sharing Nature: An Educators Week	**July 16 – July 21**

Applicants must be residents of Southern Maryland. To apply please send a one page letter explaining:

1. How you will benefit from the Hog Island opportunity?
2. How you will use the experience and knowledge to benefit others in Southern Maryland and support the SMAS mission?

Your signed letter must include:

1. Mailing Address
2. Email Address
3. Phone Number
4. One or more signed letters of recommendation describing your interests, abilities, and how the experience will benefit either your organization or the SMAS mission.

Scholarship recipients must submit a written article for our *Osprey* newsletter about their experience by August 7, and possibly a brief presentation at one of the future Monthly Meeting Programs for 2023 – 2024.

Please send applications to:
Southern Maryland Audubon Society
president.somdaudubon@gmail.com

Arctic Tern photo by Walker Golder

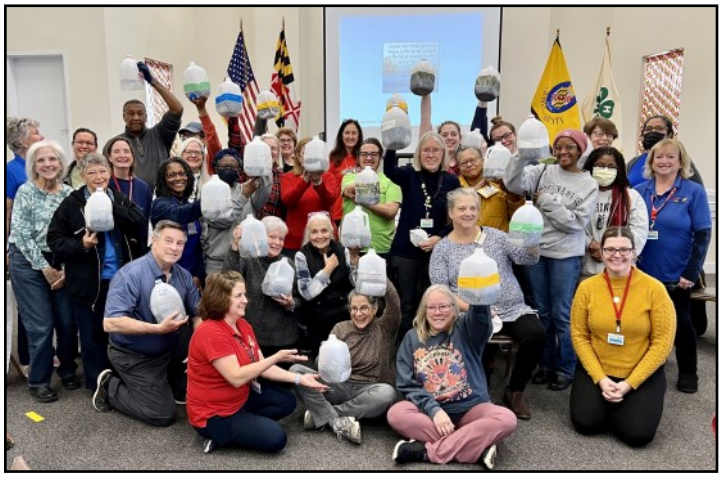
Dear Readers:
If you have any observations, announcements, articles, etc. that you'd like to see in the newsletter, send them in! The deadline for submissions for The Osprey is the 5th of each month. Since this winter is shaping up to be a winter finch irruption, perhaps you have some photos that you'd like to share? Did you travel over the holiday break? Go on a birding/nature outing that you recently enjoyed? We're always looking for member-contributed content!

Welcome, New Members!

Delois Barnes, Waldorf
Steve Pranger, Huntingtown
John Cordone, La Plata
Kathleen Manley, Lusby
Marie Tarleton, St. Mary's City
Diane D Garner, Solomons
Carol Sampson, Tall Timbers
Clayton Leboo, Clinton
Gaylord G Hogue, Waldorf
Louise Vanallen, Waldorf
Roberta Jenkins, Brandywine
Jim Ryan, Faulkner
Anna-Christian Young, La Plata
Sharon L Weber, Clinton
Arthur Joseph, Fort Washington
Vivian Zumstein, Dunkirk
Alan Christian, Dunkirk
Alison Ehrlich, Chevy Chase
Gray Handley, Arlington
Marlene Smith, Waldorf
Rebecca Wolf, Coltons Point

Sowing Native Seeds In A Milk Jug!

by Molly Moore



Participants in our Winter Sowing Native Plants workshop on Jan. 7 planted more than 60 milk jugs of native seeds that will grow into hundreds of plants supporting birds, pollinators and other wildlife. Southern Maryland Audubon partnered with Charles County Master Gardeners for the event which was open to the public and drew 30 participants—a capacity crowd for our space at the historic Bel Alton High School in southern Charles County.

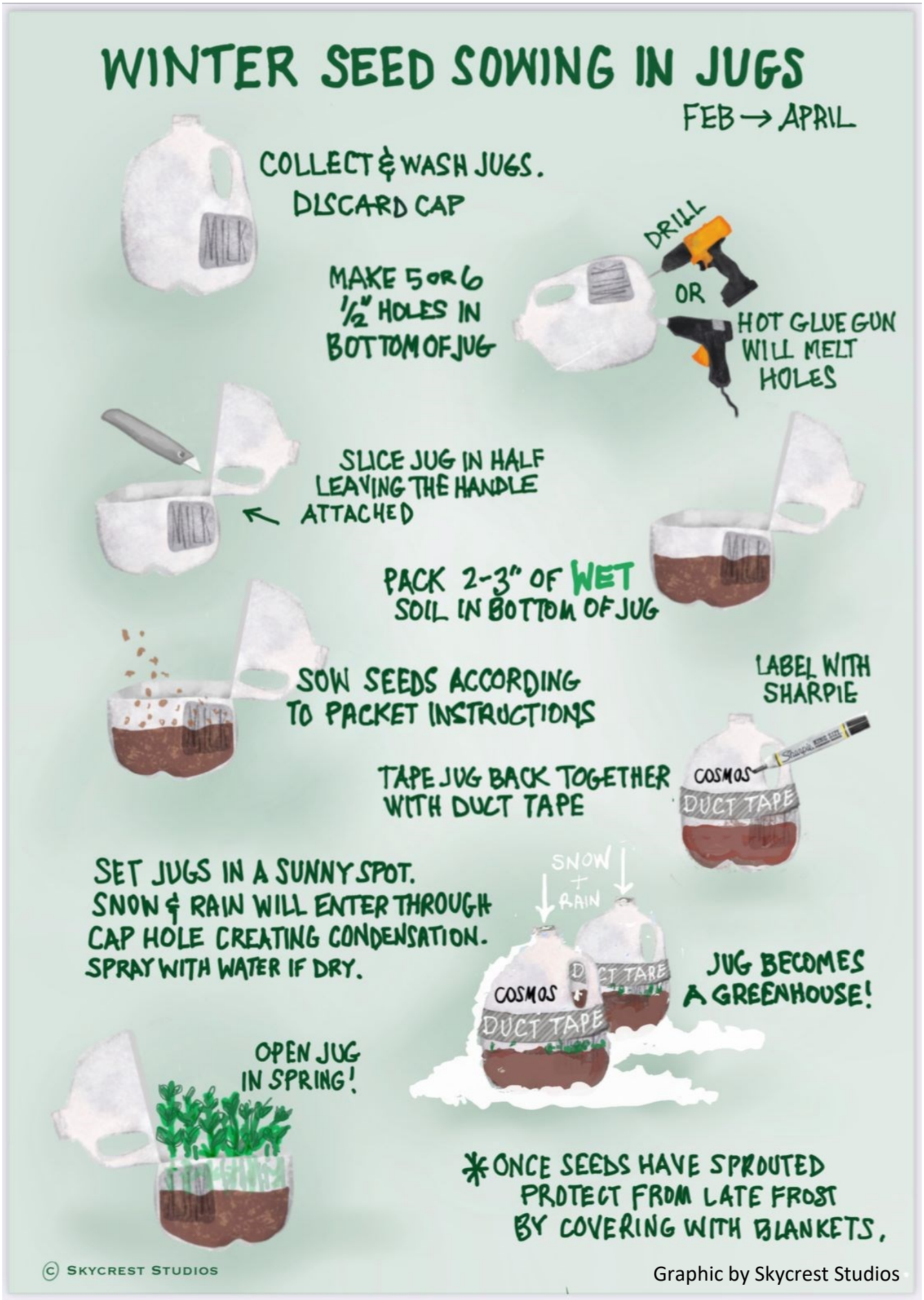
What is winter sowing? It's an incredibly easy way to grow seedlings, especially native seedlings. In the middle of winter, scoop soilless potting mix into a plastic container—in this case milk jugs—with a hole in the top for ventilation and holes in the bottom for drainage. Plant seeds, water and wait for them to sprout in spring.

The seeds for our workshop were harvested from the Master Gardeners demonstration garden in the front of Bel Alton High School, now home to the Charles County Extension Office, 9501 Crain Highway.

Southern Maryland Audubon President Molly Moore and member Marlene Smith —avid winter sowers—led the workshop. Both are also Charles County Master Gardeners and find the combination of Audubon and Master Gardeners a perfect partnership in the mission of promoting native plants across Southern Maryland.

Learn more about winter sowing by watching the presentation in our archives: "Winter Sowing: How to Grow Your Own Natives for Birds & Beauty" at www.somdaudubon.org/our-work/program-archive/

A shout-out to locally-owned Wee Bean Coffee Roasters in LaPlata for donating the recycled milk jugs for our workshop!



Graphic by Skycrest Studios

Great Backyard Bird Count coming February 17 — 20

How to Participate

COVID Statement: *Watching birds is a safe and enjoyable activity we can do during the Covid global pandemic. For the 2023 Great Backyard Bird Count, we strongly urge participants to comply with all current country, province, state, First People's lands, or municipal Covid-19 regulations and guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, social distancing while bird watching and wearing a mask when birding with others.*

https://www.birdcount.org/participate/

Participating is easy, fun to do alone, or with others, and can be done anywhere you find birds.

Step 1 – Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2 – Watch birds for **15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days,** February 17-20, 2023.

Step 3 – Count all the birds you **see or hear** within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

If you are a **beginning bird admirer and new to the count**, try using the Merlin Bird ID app.

If you have **participated** in the count **before**, try eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website (desktop/ laptop).

If you are **participating as a group**, see instructions for Group Counting.

Below, explore step-by-step instructions for entering data using each available tool.

Merlin Bird ID

If you are NEW to the Great Backyard Bird Count and have a smartphone**,** we recommend you using the Merlin Bird ID app to enter your first bird. It is **FREE** and easy to use.

Using Merlin Bird ID

Merlin covers bird species from **7 continents** and is available in **12 languages**.

eBird Mobile

If you are already using eBird to track your birding activity, the **FREE** eBird Mobile app is a fast way to enter your bird lists right from the palm of your hand.

Using eBird Mobile

Desktop or Laptop

If you prefer to enter your sightings on a computer, perhaps after making a list while on a hike or watching your feeders, we'll walk you through how.

Using eBird on a Computer

Note: *You can start entering bird lists at* ***midnight local time on the first day of the count,*** *anywhere in the world.* **Data entry remains open until March 1**, but the information you enter should only be from the four days of the Great Backyard Bird Count.

Inside the Bird Data Factory

A brief glimpse at the work Audubon scientists do with the data that you collect during Christmas Bird Count and Climate Watch

So you've participated in a Christmas Bird Count or have signed up for a few Climate Watch blocks. You've sent in the data and now you have questions about who analyzes that data and what are they looking for. Well, we have some answers. American Birds spoke with quantitative ecologists Tim Meehan and Sarah Saunders, and Audubon's Director of Climate Science Brooke Bateman, about their work with your hard-won data points.

Meehan, who is a quantitative ecologist with Audubon's Science team, spends his time digging through the vast datasets of the Christmas Bird Count. Now in its 122nd year, the Christmas Bird Count is one of the longest-running community science projects in the world, and the data collected is some of the richest available for avifauna in the Western Hemisphere.

What are some of the ways in which data from the Christmas Bird Count are used?

Some folks use the data to answer basic science questions about how birds interact with each other, other species in their community, and their physical environment. Other folks use the data to understand how birds respond to more recent changes in the environment caused by humans, things like habitat degradation and climate change. And yet other folks use the data to judge if species are increasing or decreasing in different regions, and if current resource management policies are helping or harming birds. The CBC database is remarkable in that it goes back more than one hundred years and covers a whole continent! And that scope is growing every year. The questions you can ask of the data are only limited by your imagination.

Tim, you periodically update the population trends of some birds using data from the Christmas Bird Count. What does a bird population trend tell us?

Every couple of years, the Science team pulls together the latest CBC data and updates population trends for more than 500 species of birds. These population trends tell us how each species is doing. Are the numbers stable? Are they increasing or decreasing? Maybe they are increasing in one part of their winter range but decreasing in another part.

We produce two kinds of trend reports: long-term trends that cover approximately 50 years, and short-term trends that cover the last decade. We produce them for individual states and provinces and whole countries. When we are done, we put all these trend reports on the Audubon website so that anyone can view them, download them, use them in whatever way is helpful.

A lot of people use them, too. Some folks visit the site just to see how species are doing in their area, because they are curious. A lot of scientists download the trends to do their research. One recent example that comes to mind is a scientist who is using the trends to understand how birds have shifted their winter ranges in the last few decades due to warmer winters. Other trends customers are wildlife biologists that work with Partners in Flight and Environment Canada, who use them to inform management recommendations.

How long does your process take to run these population trends?

From start to finish? Well, first it takes about seven months, on and off, to get all the data entered, verified and cleaned up. Geoff [LeBaron, director of the Christmas Bird Count] mostly does that. Then it takes me about five months, on and off, to do the trend analyses, do a bunch of quality checking, get them bundled up for public consumption, and sent off to folks who put them on the Audubon website.

What is one thing about Christmas Bird Count data that you think would be a surprise to volunteers?

I'll bet that people would be surprised by the power of CBC data. Every year I get data requests from scientists in Canada who study birds of special conservation concern. CBC data are regularly used to evaluate the conservation status of the 'snowbirds' that breed in remote parts of Canada, where they are hard to monitor, but winter in the USA where they can be counted by CBC volunteers. Bird conservation status, whether it is threatened, endangered, special concern, or otherwise, can have a huge economic impact on many thousands of people.

What's one of the weirdest things you've seen in the data?

Over time, one of the most abundant species counted on CBCs has been Red-winged Blackbirds—they account for up to one-third of all of the 4.7 billion birds that CBC volunteers have tallied since the CBC began. But one memorable year—the 88th CBC, according to Geoff LeBaron—birds, and especially Red-winged Blackbirds, thronged into one count circle in Pine Prairie, Louisiana. That year, volunteers counted more than 100 million birds—more than all birds counted by all the other count circles combined—53 million of which were Red-winged Blackbirds.

See Data Factory continued on page 4.

Data Factory continued.

Sarah Saunders, also a quantitative ecologist with Audubon's Science team, analyzes the data generated by volunteers for Climate Watch, Audubon's newest community science project. Together with Brooke Bateman, director of climate science, Saunders aims to track how birds are—or aren't—responding to a changing climate. While the program is still quite new, Saunders and Bateman are already seeing some bird species responding to the changing conditions around them.

Sarah, how is Climate Watch data used to understand birds and a changing climate?

There are two important ways we use Climate Watch data. First, we use the observations to determine whether our climate suitability predictions are correct. Are species being found in locations that are predicted to be more climatically suitable than those that are not? If they are, then we know that the models we build to predict where climate conditions will become more or less favorable are indeed accurate.

Second, once we've validated the climate predictions, we use the observations to see whether species really are moving in response to changing conditions – are individuals leaving locations that are worsening in suitability and moving into new locations that are becoming more suitable? In other words, which species seem to be doing a good job of tracking climate change? Which species seem to be "stuck in place", or remaining in locations that are worsening in terms of climate suitability?

How many data observations are really needed in order to tell us if the birds are moving their ranges?

Answering big questions like range shifts requires a lot of data! Not only is it important to have observations from across species' ranges, but it is critical to have observations over a long period of time. Species' occurrences can change each year in response to local weather conditions or land use, but that doesn't necessarily mean their entire ranges are shifting. Generally, range shifts can only be detected after decades of data collection.

What happens if a particular location is only surveyed for two years? Can the data still be used?

Yes! That's the beauty of a large community science program like CBC or Climate Watch. We pool all the observations across the country each year to get a bigger picture of what is going on, which means if a site "blinks" on or off between years, that's ok because we can still understand the larger patterns when all the observations are combined.

Brooke, one of the important things about Climate Watch is documenting where birds are *not* found. Is it hard to get people to look for birds where they're not supposed to occur?

Most birders don't like missing seeing a bird. But experiencing the frustration of "dipping," the act of searching for a bird and not finding it, is incredibly important to the science of Climate Watch. Why? Because some of these bird species may not live in a particular area now, but they could move into that area soon because of climate change.

As such, those 'zero', or absence, data points help us understand where a bird species is or isn't right now—and we can track how that will change over the next five, ten, or fifteen years. The same goes for when you detect a species for several years at a location, and then they disappear. Over time we can compare the bird data with our climate change models to determine if and how climate change is causing these shifts. I think once volunteers understand the importance of how not finding a bird contributes to our broader understanding of birds and climate change, they'll be more willing to put up with some missed birds on their birding trips.

I spent several winter Climate Watch survey periods looking for Eastern Bluebirds in Madison, Wisconsin. The climate conditions are expected to continue to improve for this bird in winter there, and there have been more found each year as time goes by. Most years I didn't find any bluebirds on my surveys, but one year I did which was really quite exciting. It helped me feel that my being there, looking for these birds year after year, I was contributing to our understanding of how a global scale problem like climate change can affect birds in my neighborhood.

Speaking of Christmas Bird Count, Sarah, you've done your fair share of analysis of that dataset. With a dataset that large and varied, when you look at the much older counts, do you have to do things differently than just doing studies on the more recent data?

Yes, often with long-running community science programs like CBC, survey protocols have changed over time. In order to analyze all the data (both historic and recent) consistently, those varying protocols and efforts need to be accounted for during analysis. Frequently, we can do things like correct counts of species based on the amount of effort or sometimes, we will start the time period of analysis at a certain point after more consistent protocols have been in place. In other cases, we can analyze time periods separately and then compare results. For example, if the first few decades of a dataset followed one protocol but the most recent decades followed another, we can analyze those two sets of decades differently (accommodating the different protocols) and then standardize the results in way that they can be compared to understand any differences in counts (or whatever is being measured) between historic vs. recent time periods.

Tim, do you have more fun analyzing Christmas Bird Count data, or participating on a CBC?

Analyzing the data. I know. I'm a geek.

https://www.audubon.org/news/inside-data-factory

Pt. Lookout CBC, December 18, 2022

by Tyler Bell

Barrow's Goldeneye
Photo by J.B. Churchill

Spotted Sandpiper
Photo by Tyler Bell

Thankfully, the count was a week earlier than usual, or we would have been in the middle of the arctic blast. Temps on the count day were fairly comfortable though the wind started picking up mid-morning making it difficult to count waterfowl out on the Bay. There were 106 species on count day and a Snow Goose found by Scott Clark and a/the Barrow's Goldeneye found by Betty and Steve Arthur during count week. FYI, the Barrow's Goldeneye, assuming it's the same bird since it was in the same location, has now been seen at Pt. Lookout between the causeway and the entrance to the picnic area for a third winter in a row. The Elms Barrow's Goldeneye was present for seven winters in a row. Will this bird break the record?

Also notable was a Spotted Sandpiper found by David Moulton and me. First seen near the Elms Environmental Education Center loosely associated with a group of eleven Sanderlings, it flew south toward the public beach. When we relocated to that location, just down the beach but a bit of a drive, we were able to obtain photos. It's only the second occurrence on the count, the first one on 1/1/1984, and the second December record for St. Mary's after another one found by Scott Clark on 12/12/2020.

A Green-winged Teal, found by Kyle Rambo, was the only one for the count. Another single bird was a Lesser Black-backed Gull found at the point at Pt. Lookout State Park by Scott Clark and Jim Stasz. Laura Hammett, birding in the Drayden area, found the count's only Northern Harrier. Patty Craig and Jim Boxwell found the only Merlin on St. Jerome's Neck Road. Kyle also found the only Peregrine Falcon, a flyover on Long Neck Road. Scott and Jim found two Sedge Wrens at Cornfield Harbor, almost expected at that location. Laura also had a female-type Purple Finch at her feeders in Drayden. Considering this is an irruption winter for Purple Finches, it's surprising that it was the only one found on the count. Kyle found the only White-crowned Sparrow at Miller's Wharf in Ridge. Oddly, none were reported along Long Neck Road where they are fairly reliable. Perhaps the most mind-blowing report is Kyle's two Common Grackles. That's it for the entire count, two!

Bald Eagle photo by Laura Hammett PHOTOGRAPHY

Patuxent CBC

Text and photos by Ben Springer

The survey day for the Patuxent circle of the 123rd Christmas Bird Count was held on December 31, 2022. On this day, twenty-eight dedicated birders volunteered to cover sectors with in the fifteen-mile radius circle of the Pax circle. This circle includes areas of both Calvert and St. Mary's counties near the mouth of the Patuxent River. Although the weather was somewhat overcast and rainy, the count was conducted and amassed a total of 91 species. Volunteers surveyed for a total of over 64 hours of birding effort among all parties between over 90 different locations.

Several species that were found only by one party on the Pax count day are as follows:

Gadwall: Seen by Bob Boxwell and Jim Boxwell

American Black Duck: Seen by Ben Springer

Green-winged Teal: Seen by Bob Boxwell and Jim Boxwell

Ring-necked Duck: Seen by Ben Springer

White-winged Scoter: Seen by Charles Stadtlander

Wild Turkey: Seen by David Moulton

American Coot: Seen by Sue Hamilton and Catherine Bailey

Bonaparte's Gull: Seen by Charles Stadtlander

Brown Pelican: Seen by Bob Boxwell and Jim Boxwell

Great Horned Owl: Seen by Ben Springer

Red-headed Woodpecker: Seen by Mary Hollinger and Lisa Garrett

Horned Lark: Seen by Jim Swift

Brown-headed Nuthatch: Seen by Matt Ichniowski

Winter Wren: Seen by Ben Springer

Gray Catbird: Seen by Kyle Rambo

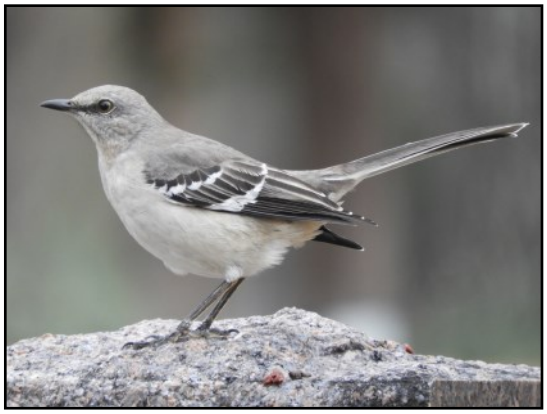
Purple Finch: Seen by Gene Groshon

For the full species report, click here!

Ring-necked Duck

Great Horned Owl

Golden-crowned Kinglet



Northern Mockingbird

Pheasant-Pigeon Reported After 140 Years

Wednesday, November 23, 2022

The trail camera's display was tiny, but there was no mistaking the creature it showed – a Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon – a species that hasn't been documented by biologists since it was first described and last seen in 1882! Dedicated researchers traversed narrow mountain ridges, crossed and re-crossed rivers that roared through canyons cloaked in dense tropical forest, and endured blood-thirsty mosquitoes and leeches for a month, all in search of a bird that might not exist. They had just hours of searching left before leaving Fergusson Island, located off the east coast of Papua New Guinea.

At that point, expedition co-leader Jordan Boersma imagined their chance of success was less than 1 percent. Out of breath after climbing to retrieve trail cameras, he sat down on a lush hillside to catch his breath and begin looking through the photos from the cameras, not expecting to find anything. "Suddenly I was confronted with this image of what at that time felt like a mythical creature," explained Boersma, a researcher with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "It was, without exaggeration, the most surreal moment of my life."

The stunning late-September rediscovery could not have happened without guidance from local hunters with intimate knowledge of the island's forests, the researchers explained, demonstrating the invaluable role of Indigenous communities in ongoing efforts to relocate species lost to Western science. With its existence confirmed, the Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon is almost certainly the most endangered bird in New Guinea, possibly in the world, which underscores the urgent need to protect its habitat on Fergusson Island, a rugged 555-square-mile isle that is largely undeveloped, but faces pressure from international logging companies.

"This is a huge discovery," exclaimed Bulisa Iova, an expedition member and acting chief curator of the National Museum and Art Gallery in Papua New Guinea. "I have studied birds for many years, and to be part of this team to discover this lost species is a highlight for me."

The expedition is part of The Search for Lost Birds, a collaboration between BirdLife International, Re:wild, and the American Bird Conservancy, which funded the field study. The initiative aims to rediscover avian species that haven't been declared extinct, but also haven't been seen for at least a decade. The large ground

How do you describe viewing an impressive bird that hasn't been reported to science for 140 years? This Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon photo was taken on a trail camera by Doka Nason of the American Bird Conservancy.

-dwelling pigeon, the Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon only inhabits Fergusson Island, and it is 1 of the 4 pheasant-pigeon species native to New Guinea.

"To find something that's been missing that long, it feels remarkable," said John Mittermeier, director of the Lost Birds Program at the American Bird Conservancy and a co-leader of the 8-member expedition. "It's extraordinary."

For more information about the exciting search and rediscovery of the Black-naped Pheasant-Pigeon see 'Like Finding a Unicorn': Researchers Rediscover the Black-Naped Pheasant-Pigeon, a Bird Lost to Science for 140 Years | Audubon

And for more information about The Search for Lost Birds see The Search for Lost Birds

Share your backyard birding experiences and photos at editorstbw2@gmail.com
Share your birding experiences and photos at editorstbw2@gmail.com
To subscribe, click on this link: https://subscription.theoutdoorwire.com/subscribe?brand=birding

January — February 2023 Events

February 1 – WEDNESDAY – 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Monthly Meeting Program - Virtual Zoom Meeting

"BRING YOUR KIDS TO AUDUBON NIGHT"

Meet some of our star youth birders, learn about their amazing conservation projects and discover how the newest generation of birders is changing birding and bird conservation. You'll learn how to apply for our 2023 youth scholarship to a summer birding and conservation camp at Audubon's Hog Island in Maine which has one of the East Coast's largest Puffin populations. We'll also describe our Hog Island scholarships for teachers and other conservation educators.

February 12 – SUNDAY – 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. ***DATE CHANGE***

FIELD TRIP

Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, Calvert County

"WINTER WATERFOWL TRIP"

Leader: Tyler Bell

Open fields and wooded areas provide good land birding and the river frontage close views of waterfowl including Horned Grebe, Long-tailed Duck, lots of Ruddy Ducks, both scaup, Common Goldeneye, lots of others! Call or email Tyler for directions to the meeting spot. Maximum of 10 participants; SMAS Covid rules apply. RSVP to Tyler Bell at jtylerbell@yahoo.com or 301-862-4623.

February 17 – 20 is the GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT!

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time. For information about the GBBC see their website at birdcount.org. You can help out by counting birds for as little as 15 minutes! Local GBBC get togethers throughout southern Maryland will be advertised on our Facebook page.

February 18 – SATURDAY - 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

FIELD TRIP – A Great Family Outing!

Indian Head Riverwalk, Charles County

165 Riverwatch Drive, Indian Head, MD 20640

"GBBC ON THE RIVER"

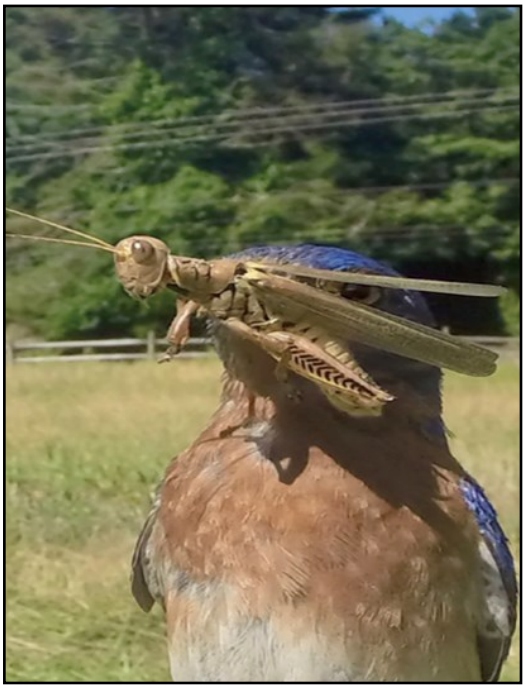
Leader: Lynne Wheeler

Come and enjoy a winter walk through the woods to a 1,200 feet long boardwalk along the Potomac River. A great bird walk for families! We will also participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count - a global project where the world comes together for the love of birds. We will report our observations to help scientists better understand bird populations before one of their annual migrations. Expect to see many Bald Eagles and rafts of waterfowl, as well as winter birds in the wooded section. Due to limited parking, we will meet at the Indian Head pavilion parking lot at 100 Walter Thomas Road, Indian Head, MD 20640. We will carpool and/or do drop offs to the boardwalk. RSVP to Lynne Wheeler at 301-751-8097 (text only) or somdaudubon@yahoo.com

January — February 2023 Events continued

March 1 – WEDNESDAY – 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Monthly Meeting Program – Virtual Zoom Meeting
The Bird Insect Food Web, Dr. Ashley Kennedy
Numerous studies from around the world suggest that insect populations are currently in decline, which in turn affects birds who rely on insects for food. To determine which insects are most important in bird diets, trail cameras and crowd-sourced pictures of birds gained insight about the food webs that connect plants, insects, and birds and what we can do in our own yards to make a difference.

Ashley Kennedy received her PhD in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware in 2019. Her dissertation research in Dr. Doug Tallamy's lab focused on bird-insect food webs, investigating which insect groups are most important to breeding birds. She is currently an environmental scientist for the state of Delaware in 2020. She is a past board member of Delaware Audubon, a Science Policy Fellow of the Entomological Society of America, a 2018 recipient of the John Henry Comstock Graduate Student Award, current president of the Entomological Society of America (Eastern Branch), and a Board Certified Entomologist with a specialty in Medical and Veterinary Entomology.



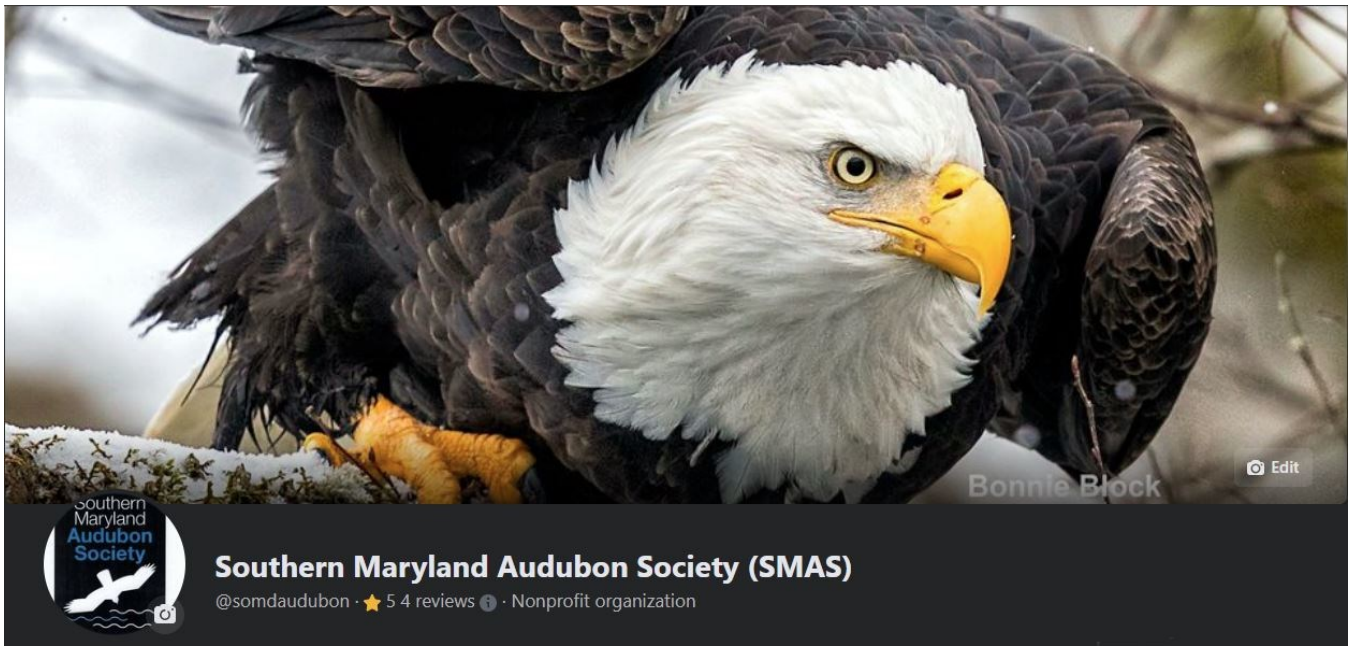
Name the grasshopper species! See the bottom of page 13 for the answer.

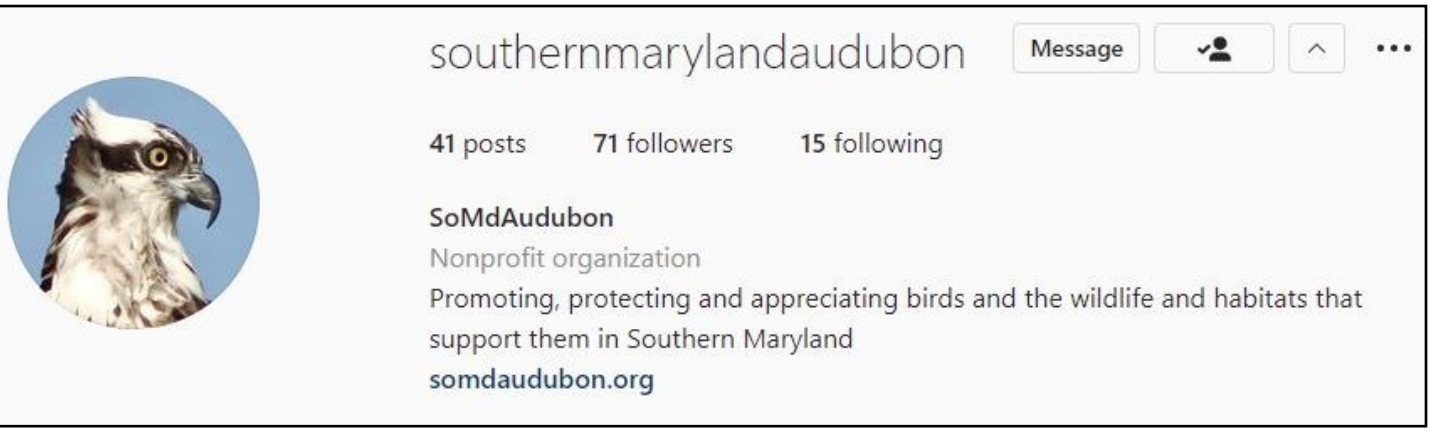
March 4 – SATURDAY – 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
FIELD TRIP – One of our Best! Don't miss out, this trip fills up quickly!
Patuxent River Naval Air Station, St. Mary's County
21866 Cedar Point, Bldg. 2189, NAS Patuxent River, MD 20670. Gate #2, pass office parking lot.
"WINTER BIRDS AND TUNDRA SPECIALISTS AT PAX RIVER AIRFIELD"
Leader: Dean Newman We are fortunate to have access to sections of the navy base fronting on the confluence of the Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay, which hosts airfields that provide tundra-like habitat. Previous trips have turned up winter birds such as Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspurs, Short-eared Owls, Horned Larks, Savannah Sparrows, Wilson's Snipe and Peregrine Falcon. Pre-registration is required and open to U.S. citizens only. Must bring photo I.D. We will be escorted and traveling together in a van, so participant size is limited to 10. RSVP to Dean Newman at deannewman03@gmail.com

April 5 – WEDNESDAY – 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Monthly Meeting Program – Virtual Zoom Meeting
"The Mysteries and Marvels of Bird Migration"
Chris Eberly, Executive Director, Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership
Chris Eberly has been Executive Director of the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership since 2017. He attended graduate school at the University of Georgia where he earned an M.S. in natural resources and ornithology. Following graduate school, he became the first coordinator of the Department of Defense's bird conservation program (DOD Partners in Flight Program), a position he held for 17 years. After serving as Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in Texas, he was excited to return to Maryland to head up the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership. Chris strives to connect people to birds through Bird City Maryland, the Maryland Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring Program and the Farmland Raptor Program. No one is more qualified to share with us examples of amazing bird migrations from raptors to shorebirds to songbirds.

Hooded Warbler
Photo by Dean Newman

Join SMAS on Facebook and Instagram!





We are now officially on Instagram!

Please follow us @**southernmarylandaudubon**

You might see other similar account names, but our official Instagram account is @**southernmarylandaudubon**.

You'll find our latest event updates, tantalizing tidbits of bird lore, how-tos on attracting more birds to your yard, and updates on how you can pitch in to help protect birds and their habitat in Southern Maryland and elsewhere. And of course, there will always be awesome bird photos!

Follow @**southernmarylandaudubon** and please invite all your friends to join our flock!

From Page 12: Differential Grasshopper - *Melanoplus differentialis* - https://www.marylandbiodiversity.com/view/5089

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

☐ Please enroll me as a member of the **Southern Maryland Audubon Society**. All of my membership dollars will help support local conservation initiatives and enable us to provide southern Maryland teacher education scholarships to attend Hog Island, Audubon Camp in Maine.

☐ Individual/Family: __1year $20 __2 year $35 __3 year $45

☐ Lifetime Membership: __$500

☐ Donation: _____

☐ Please enroll me as a first time member of he **National Audubon Society**. You will automatically become a member of the Southern Maryland Audubon Society. You will receive six issues of National's award winning Audubon Magazine. A fraction of your dues will be received by our chapter. Your renewal information will come directly from the National Audubon Society.

☐ Introductory Offer: __1 year $20

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Please enroll me for electronic delivery of our monthly newsletter ***The Osprey***:

☐ Email me a link to download the PDF

Please make your check payable to Southern Maryland Audubon Society **or** National Audubon Society.

Mail to: *Southern Maryland Audubon Society, P.O. Box 181, Bryans Road, MD 20616.*

GREAT NEWS! You can now join SMAS via PayPal.
Go to our website at ***somdaudubon.org*** for this new option.

Osprey
Photo by Bill Hubick

Editor: Tyler Bell Email: jtylerbell@yahoo.com

The deadline for *The Osprey* is the fifth of each month. Please send all short articles, reports, unique sightings, conservation updates, calendar items, etc. to the above address.

2021—2022 Officers

President, Molly Moore - president.somdaudubon@gmail.com
Vice President, Elena Gilroy—elenabode@yahoo.com
Treasurer, Julie Daniel—juliemdaniel@hotmail.com
Secretary, Barbara Hill —tytito@verizon.net

Southern Maryland Audubon Society

Adopt-a-Raptor

Foster Parents Needed!

Southern Maryland Audubon Society sponsors the banding of nesting birds of prey, or raptors, with serially numbered aluminum bands in cooperation with the Bird Banding Laboratory of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Limited numbers of Osprey, Barn Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, and American Kestrels become available each year for adoption. Your donation will be specifically utilized for raptor research and raptor conservation projects such as:

Barn Owl Nest Boxes *Osprey Nesting Platforms*

Kestrel Nest Boxes *Mist Nets or Banding Supplies*

Please indicate which raptor you wish to adopt. You may adopt more than one:

☐ Osprey, $10 each Total Amount:_____

☐ Barn Owl, $25 each Total Amount:_____

☐ Northern Saw-whet Owl, $30 each Total Amount:_____

☐ American Kestrel, $35 each Total Amount:_____

☐ General Donation to Raptor Fund Donation Amount:_____

The foster parent receives:

- A certificate of adoption with the number of the U.S. Department of the Interior band and the location and date of the banding.
- Information on the ecology and migration patterns of the species.
- A photo of a fledgling and any other available information on the whereabouts or fate of the bird.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip Code: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

If this is a gift, please include the recipient's name for the certificate: _____

Mail To: *Southern Maryland Audubon Society*
Carole Schnitzler
3595 Silk Tree Court, Waldorf, MD 20602