DECEMBER 2025 VOLUME 60, ISSUE 4

WINTER BREAK FOR THE OSPREY!

The Osprey

NEXT ISSUE MID-JANUARY

NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Male Rufous Hummingbird
Woodbine, Howard County
Photo by Guy DiRoma, 10/23/25

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http://somdaudubon.org/

President's Perch

Every Season Is for the Birds - Counting on You

The beauty of fall surrounds us, and it reminds me that seasonal change can be a catalyst for reflection. As many of us hope to enjoy a bountiful Thanksgiving table, we think about our friends who may be struggling. With government shutdowns, job furloughs, and food insecurity daily in the news, it is easy to fall into despair. But what can we do? Giving is the answer. Check out your local food bank or church sponsored food drive. Many have lists of preferred foods, and money is often welcome.

What else can you do to avoid the blues? Get out into the natural world. A good walk on a trail is a free prescription for a healthy outlook. As you walk, listen for the Hermit Thrush, it too "weeps". At the same time the Northern Cardinal tells us "cheer" up! Both are relevant and true.

In winter our avian friends need your help too. Once the cold weather descends, please keep your feeders full. Our friends at Wild Birds Unlimited can help you select seed and feeders. Believe it or not, we should also keep a hummingbird feeder filled. We have had sightings of Rufous Hummingbirds, so please provide the sugar water that they desperately need.

Whether you are a beginner birder or an old hand, the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a great way to immerse yourself in nature. The first CBC started on Christmas Day in 1900, when Frank Chapman proposed we count birds rather than hunting them. The count grew to become a major project for the National Audubon Society and is one of the world's oldest and longest running citizen science efforts. If you have never participated, why not give it a try? The best way to sharpen your skills is to spend a day identifying and counting birds with seasoned sector leaders. See inside this newsletter for a listing of count circles and coordinators, as well as an article on the history of the CBC.

And finally, we have some last-minute field trips! Dean Newman's annual Pax NAS, newsletter editor Tyler Bell's to Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, Phin Rouland's at Pt. Lookout for sea ducks, and board member and environmental educator Mike Callahan has scheduled an Owl Prowl, a nocturnal delight! As the Barred Owl says "Who Cooks for You?" In this season of gratitude and harvest celebrations, please remember and help those that need it.

Happy Holidays - Let Nature Ring!
Lynne Wheeler
SMAS Interim President

A Lazy Bird Walk and Big Sit at Chapman State Park Mount Aventine Trip Report
by Lynne Wheeler

Nothing is better than when a plan comes together just as you hoped it would. Our plan for Southern Maryland Audubon Society (SMAS) to partner with our friends the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership (MBCP) had a high probability of success. Both of our organizations have like missions – outreach to people who care about birds and engaging them in learning about the importance of supporting habitats for birds to flourish. And the ecologically unique habitat of Chapman State Park is the perfect place to gather bird lovers to share and support that mission.

On October 11 the gates to the park were opened at 7:00 a.m. since Margaret Poethig, Director on the board for MBCP, wanted to get her October Big Day Big Sit off to an early bird start! I arrived at 6:50 a.m. and she was already at the Big Sit location at the back porch area of historic Mount Aventine setting up. Throughout the hour our other participants (we had 18 participants) trickled in for the lazy bird walk scheduled for 8:00 a.m. (putting lazy in the title I think was attractive to many!). The bird walk was kicked off by a 15-minute discussion from me about the unique ecology of the location, as well as from Margaret explaining what a Big Sit is – and why we do them.

My SMAS partner in birding, Pam Brumbley (Director on the board for SMAS) led the bird walk along the trail to the Potomac River. Me, suffering from a cold, hung out with Margaret, and then her partner Gaurav Kapoor; we truly embraced the lazy concept by doing the Big Sit! While the birds were very shy that day – we only ended up with 21 species (spooky slow!) – it was a delight to meet up with fellow bird lovers. And judging by the post comments, I was not alone. Getting out in nature, meeting up with like-minded people, and learning about the avian world, is why we do what we do. Birds matter, they are crucial to healthy ecosystems, and they enrich human lives through their connection with nature. A special thanks goes out to the Friends of Mount Aventine for helping to facilitate this event.

Top: Gaurav Kapoor, left, and Margaret Poethig, right. Photo by Lynne Wheeler

Middle: Bird walk with Pam Brumbley (top left) and others. Photo by Lynne Wheeler

Bottom: Group photo by Pam Brumbley

Hiding in plain sight!

Story and photo by Dean Newman

Horned Larks are very common year round in Southern Maryland yet, we never see them. How can they be so incognito? Well, their rich, buff-brown backs blend so well with their habitat—fields with low stubble or sparse grass—they draw no attention to themselves. Also, we tend to look at open fields and think nothing's there. It's a classic self-fulfilling prophecy. Horned Larks are all around us but, like Rodney Dangerfield, "They get no respect."

Interesting fact about Horned Larks: Before 1800, this was a bird of the Great Plains but, due to modern agriculture clearing forests in the East, its range and numbers have increased. They are here all year but Winter is the best time to see them when they congregate in large flocks. A good way to identify a flock of Horned Larks is, when flushed, instead of going straight up, will spiral or turn in a circle. It's a give-away that the open field you're viewing does, in fact, have "something there".

[Editor's Note: for those of us who can still hear high frequency sounds, Horned Larks have a wonderful tinkling song when skylarking. Click on the following embedded link to access **audio clips of Horned Larks**.]

126th Christmas Bird Count

Southern Maryland Circles

Contact the coordinator listed below to volunteer to count birds. For more information about Christmas Bird Counts see https://www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count

Point Lookout: December 21 – Sunday
Compiler: Bob Boxwell, 410-231-1251 or robertboxwell1@outlook.com

Port Tobacco: December 14 – Sunday
Compiler: Gwen Brewer, Coordinator Contact Mike Callahan, 240-765-5192 or raptorsrulemc@gmail.com

Patuxent River: December 27 – Saturday
Compiler: Ben Springer, 443-771-6636 (text preferred) or ben.springer@comcast.net

Ft Belvoir, Maryland Shoreline: January 4 – Sunday
MD Sector Coordinators: Lynne Wheeler, 301-751-8097 or somdaudubon@yahoo.com and/or
Bob Lukinic, 301-283-6317 or rdlukinic@gmail.com

History of the Christmas Bird Count

How the count started, and how the data is used today.
https://www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count/history-christmas-bird-count

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, hunters engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas "Side Hunt." They would choose sides and go afield with their guns—whoever brought in the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Conservation was in its beginning stages in that era, and many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the then-nascent Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition—a "Christmas Bird Census" that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them.

Watch this video explained by SMAS's own Chan Robbins! https://vimeo.com/71432056?fl=pl&fe=sh

So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California with most counts in or near the population centers of northeastern North America. Those original 27 Christmas Bird Counters tallied around 90 species on all the counts combined.

Each November, birders interesting in participating in the CBC can sign up and join in through the Audubon website. From December 14 through January 5 each year tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas brave snow, wind, or rain, and take part in the effort. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this long-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations, and to help guide conservation action.

The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years.
The long term perspective is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

What conservationists have learned through Christmas Bird Count data

Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report is a comprehensive, first-of-its kind study that predicts how climate change could affect the ranges of 588 North American birds. Of the 588 North American bird species Audubon studied, more than half are likely to be in trouble. Our models indicate that 314 species will lose more than 50 percent of their current climatic range by 2080.

In 2009 CBC data were instrumental in the collaborative report by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - State of the Birds 2009.

In 2007, CBC data were instrumental in the development of Audubon's Common Birds in Decline Report, which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years.

Late Season Hummingbirds!

by Tyler Bell at jtylerbell@yahoo.com

Top to bottom: Rufous, Calliope, Anna's, and Allen's. Photos by Bill Hubick

It used to be that by late September, or maybe early October, our precious Ruby-throated Hummingbirds tanked up one more time then headed off far to the south for the winter. Warmer winters have allowed a hearty handful to survive the winter in the Chesapeake Bay area and along the Atlantic Coast. However, there have always been a few exceptions. For some odd reason, Rufous Hummingbirds, which breed far to the northwest into Alaska, once they've made their way south, some fan out to the east wintering in significant numbers in Texas and Louisiana but also into the mid-Atlantic states.

Additionally, some even less common species winter here as well. In November, 2004, Maryland's first Calliope Hummingbird showed up at a most apropos location, found by two birders who worked at the Bird Banding Lab in Laurel, MD! Since then, there have been at least five more including two separate birds at a home in North Beach. Coincidentally, at the same time, Millie Kriemelmeyer, a stalwart SMAS member, was hosting a hummingbird that was misidentified as a Ruby-throated but was later IDed as Maryland's first Anna's Hummingbird. Had the Calliope Hummingbird not been present, surely there would have been more scrutiny of Millie's bird. There is only one other record of Anna's in Maryland: a bird that was present from November 5 to December 9, 2010, in Washington County but not correctly identified until one day before its departure.

Allen's Hummingbird, in the genus Selasphorus, the same genus as Rufous, is difficult to identify by photos. Immature and female Selasphorus often require in-hand measurements to determine the species. Fortunately, one of the homeowners at the Calliope in Laurel is a licensed bander and it's his passion to band hummingbirds, particularly the late season variety. There are only three records in Maryland including the first state record which was in Prince Frederick and the third state record which was in Piney Point.

But wait, there's more! There are two records of Black-chinned Hummingbird in Maryland. The first was from Compton which stayed from January 18 to February 22, 2020. The second was in North Beach from October 31 to November 8, 2021. The final hummer is mega rare anywhere in the United States: Mexican Violetear. The first state record showed up in Cecil County and was only present from October 10-12, 2011. The same bird showed up from October 24-26 in Howard County! The second Maryland record was in Worcester County from November 14-15, 2024. In the "oh so close category", a Mexican Violetear was in West Virginia from June 26 to August 20, 2003. The home where the hummer was visiting was, literally, 500 feet from the WV/MD state line!

The moral of the story is, if you're interested in the chance of hosting a late season hummingbird, please leave at least one feeder up through Thanksgiving. Some folks, like the homeowner in North Beach, leave at least one up year round. To increase your odds, late season blooming flowers like penstemon, salvia, and Mexican or pineapple sage are hummingbird magnets. As you can see from the photos in this article, identifying these different species is not straightforward. If you are lucky enough to have a late hummer, please let me know and, if you're willing, I can arrange for your bird to be identified and banded. Once the process is done, some lucky homeowner can hold the hummer until it flies away. They typically return the feeder within about 15 minutes.

Upcoming Events

Northern Pintails
Photo by Robert Ramos

November 29 - SATURDAY - 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. (rain date Nov 30)
FIELD TRIP
George Wilmot Trail, Mattawoman Natural Environment Area, Marbury, Charles County
"WATERFOWL ON THE MATTAWOMAN CREEK, WALK THE GEORGE WILMOT TRAIL"
Leader: Lynne Wheeler
Join us for an easy 1/3 mile walk through the woods on the George Wilmot Trail to a cove on the Mattawoman Creek. In the past the cove has shown up to 5,000 individuals and 13 different species of waterfowl. During the walk we will look for winter arrivals, woodpeckers (a known spot for Red-headed), Hermit Thrush, and raptors. Meeting location Lackey High School lower parking lot, 3000 Chicamuxen Road, Indian Head, MD 20640 at 8:15 a.m. Bring waterproof shoes or low boots, and dress for possible wind. RSVP with Lynne at 301-751-8097 (prefer text) or somdaudubon@yahoo.com.

Owls
Print by J. J. Audubon

December 3 - WEDNESDAY – 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM – ZOOM MEETING
"OWLSOME OWLS IN MARYLAND"
Speaker: Kerry Wixted
BIO: Biologist and Educator; Amphibian, Reptile, and Invasive Species Program Manager, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
Contact information: email kwixted0@gmail.com
Description: Kerry Wixted will present owls as the magnificent birds they are with their own specialized adaptations. Explore the wonderful world of owls including their adaptations, species you can find in Maryland, and how to support them in the landscape. **A zoom link to attend this meeting will be sent to all you have signed up for our Osprey newsletter.**

Bald Eagles, Chandler and Hope.
Port Tobacco River Park Nest.

January 7 – WEDNESDAY – 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
MONTHLY MEETING PROGRAM – ZOOM MEETING
"BALD EAGLES: PORT TOBACCO RIVER PARK CHANDLER AND HOPE. UPDATE ON BALD EAGLE NEST MONITORING PROGRAM"
Speakers: Brenda Nairn-Davies, Barbara Hill, Lynne Wheeler – Port Tobacco River Park Bald Eagle Nest Monitors, Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership – Bald Eagle Nest Monitoring Program
Bald Eagle nesting time is approaching, so what better time to present the historical nesting results of our infamous Bald Eagles Chandler and Hope. The Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership will also give an update on the Bald Eagle nest monitoring program. **A zoom link to attend this meeting will be sent out prior to the meeting.**

Upcoming Events continued

Barn Owl
Photo by Stacy Howell

January 10 - SATURDAY - 7:00 p.m.
FIELD TRIP
Privat Farm, Charles County
"BARN OWL PROWL"
Leader: Mike Callahan
Join us for a night hike as we listen and look for owls! This is a great family outing for everyone who gives a hoot! RSVP to Mike at 240-765-5192 or raptorsrulemc@gmail.com

January 24 – SATURDAY – 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
FIELD TRIP – 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. Preregistration is required and open to U.S. citizens only. Must bring photo I.D. We will be escorted and traveling together in a van; participant size is limited. No restrooms. RSVP to Dean Newman at deannewman03@gmail.com

February 7 – SATURDAY – 9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Rain Date – February 8 – SUNDAY
FIELD TRIP
Jefferson Patterson Park, Calvert County
10515 Mackall Rd, St Leonard, MD 20685
"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 12 participants. RSVP to Tyler Bell at 301-862-4623 or jtylerbell@yahoo.com

February 14 – SATURDAY – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
FIELD TRIP
Point Lookout State Park, St Mary's County
10444 Point Lookout Rd, Scotland, MD 20687
"SEA DUCKS AT THE POINT"
Leader: Phin Rouland
We will meet at the picnic area parking before walking to the Chesapeake Bay side of the point to scan for sea ducks including all three scoter species, Common Goldeneye, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, and Long-tailed Ducks. Other species of note could include horned grebe, two loon species, and Northern Gannet. The remainder of the time will be used walking the picnic area and trails around Fort Lincoln and could include Brown-headed Nuthatch, Pine Warbler, and Fox Sparrow. Flat but unpaved. No fee. Restrooms available. RSVP to phin.rouland@gmail.com

Deficit In Breeding Performance Expands For Chesapeake Bay Ospreys

The Center for Conservation Biology, William & Mary
Dr. Bryan D. Watts, Director
Center for Conservation Biology
William & Mary
bdwatt@wm.edu
(757) 221-2247

(Williamsburg, VA)— The Center for Conservation Biology at William & Mary has compiled 2025 breeding performance results for osprey in the Chesapeake Bay. The monitoring effort included 1,025 osprey pairs distributed among twenty-three study areas. Study areas were distributed across the salinity gradient, from tidal-fresh waters near the fall line to ocean-strength waters around the mouth of the Bay. The primary objective for the 2025 nesting season was to assess reproductive rates and evaluate the stability of the Bay-wide osprey population based on patterns observed. Breeding pairs were monitored throughout the nesting season (March-August) to determine nesting success and productivity.

In 2025 osprey breeding performance varied with salinity. Average productivity was 0.25 young/pair for high salinity (>18 ppt salinity), 0.31 young/pair for moderate high salinity (12-17.9 ppt), 0.4 young/pair for moderate low salinity (5-11.9 ppt) and 1.0 young/pair for low salinity (<5 ppt) study areas. For ospreys worldwide, the annual breeding performance estimated to be required to maintain a stable population ranges from 0.8 to 1.3 young/pair. Only low salinity study areas reached the minimum threshold with all five sites producing greater than 0.8 young/pair. None of the 18 study areas in waters above 5 ppt reached this minimum productivity threshold. Collectively, pairs nesting in waters above 5 ppt produced an average of 0.33 young/pair. Seventy-four percent of pairs (N = 741) nesting in these waters failed to produce any young.

Based upon direct observations during nest visits, the largest contributing factor to poor breeding performance was seemingly the loss of young likely due to starvation. Low food availability leads to a sequential loss of young and results in smaller brood size or nest failure. One of the best indicators of food stress in Chesapeake Bay ospreys is the frequency of single-chick broods in the population. Of all broods produced within waters above 5 ppt (N = 195) 67% were single-chick broods and 10% were two-chick broods. In contrast, 54% of successful pairs (N = 115) in low salinity waters produced two-chick broods. On average, pairs nesting in higher salinity waters lost 1.62 young between hatching and fledging compared to only 0.57 young for pairs in low salinity waters.

The osprey breeding performance documented in higher salinity waters in 2025 is not high enough to sustain the osprey population in the Bay. Over the past several years we have determined that pairs nesting in waters above 10 ppt were producing too few young to sustain their population without immigration from elsewhere. The major finding in 2025 is that the reproductive deficit is not restricted to the 10 ppt salinity contour but extends up tributaries to the 5 ppt contour. This contour includes more than 80% of the surface waters of the tidal Chesapeake.
One of the central questions addressed in 2025 is whether or not the surplus production in low salinity waters is enough to offset the deficit in higher salinity waters. If we consider the minimum (0.8 young/pair) production threshold for stability, the 2025 results suggest that in order for the Bay-wide population to be stable we would need 1.8 pairs in low-salinity waters (area of surplus) for every pair in high-salinity waters (area of deficit). Unfortunately, we have the opposite pattern. During the last systematic survey of the Chesapeake Bay osprey population (1995-1996) there were 7.5 pairs within the area of deficit (high-salinity waters) for every one pair in the area of surplus (low-salinity waters).

If the breeding performance observed over the past several years continues, the Bay-wide osprey population is predicted to decline. In many areas this decline has likely been ongoing for at least several years. Our expectation is that declines will vary across the Bay. Osprey pairs in low-salinity waters are self-sustaining and may continue to increase. The number of osprey pairs in high-salinity waters with consistent production below 0.1 young/pair are expected to show the most rapid and pronounced declines.

Continued on page 8. See Ospreys.

Ospreys, continued from page 7.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

2025 Objective

In recent years we have published papers on the historic decline of osprey breeding performance in Mobjack Bay (a subestuary of the lower Chesapeake) and the role of menhaden in driving the decline. One of the criticisms of this early work is that "Mobjack Bay only reflects conditions within a small area of the larger Bay" and is not representative of the entire Bay. In 2024, we collected reproductive data in ten study areas throughout the main stem (>10 ppt) of the Bay where ospreys are believed to be menhaden-dependent and two study areas within low salinity (<5ppt) reference sites where osprey depend on catfish and gizzard shad. Results from 2024 showed that early work in Mobjack Bay was not an anomaly as ospreys throughout the main stem of the Bay were suffering unsustainable production most likely due to food stress. The 2024 season also showed that pairs within low-salinity areas were producing above maintenance levels. The objective of fieldwork in 2025 was to evaluate whether or not the low reproductive rate in the main stem (>10 ppt) of the Bay represents a risk to the broader Bay-wide osprey breeding population. To evaluate the metapopulation dynamics we need to understand the relative magnitudes of reproductive deficits and surpluses across subpopulations.

Breeding Performance

During the 2025 breeding season, poor breeding performance was widespread throughout the entire Chesapeake Bay except for low-salinity sites. None of the higher salinity sites reached minimum demographic targets. However, there was considerable spatial variation in performance across study areas with fifteen (83%) of the eighteen study sites within moderate to high salinity areas falling below 0.5 young/pair and five (28%) falling below 0.1 young/pair. The majority of sites did not reach half of the minimum productivity level required for population maintenance. By contrast, all of the low salinity sites were above the minimum productivity threshold.

Comparable to 2024, a large number of osprey pairs did not lay clutches during the 2025 nesting season. These pairs arrived from wintering grounds in a timely manner (late February – early March). We also documented a significant number of pairs that abandoned territories during the height of the nesting season. Some of these birds abandoned viable clutches. Many of these pairs returned to territories in June. This is the first time this behavior has been documented in significant numbers within the Chesapeake Bay population.

Causes of Nesting Failures

Breeding performance was poor for ospreys throughout the Bay during 2025. Weather events including high winds and extended rains caused nest losses and failures throughout the region. For example, within the upper James River study area, where several nests occur on floating buoy markers, high winds tilted buoys enough to pitch active nests into the water, an event that happens infrequently in this area. Breeding performance was lower within the low-salinity areas compared to recent years. Although clutches and broods throughout the Bay were lost to a variety of factors, patterns in breeding performance were driven by the loss of young after hatching primarily due to starvation. A clear indicator of food deficit (stress) within an osprey nest is the development of asymmetric broods where the young differ in size and developmental stage. Asymmetric broods develop when not enough food is delivered to provision all young equally and leads to the formation of a dominance hierarchy within the brood and monopolization of food by dominant young. The appearance of asymmetric broods is a precursor to brood reduction by the sequential loss of subordinate young to starvation.

Asymmetric broods and brood reduction were widespread throughout higher-salinity waters during 2025. On average, pairs in the main stem lost 1.62 young between hatching and fledging. Both the high failure rate of nests and the high frequency of one-young broods for successful nests were driven by brood reduction caused by food stress. In contrast, asymmetric broods were uncommon within low-salinity sites; on average pairs lost only 0.57 young and success rate was relatively high.

To read the entire article, please follow this link:
https://ccbbirds.org/2025/10/01/deficit-in-breeding-performance-expands-for-chesapeake-bay-ospreys/

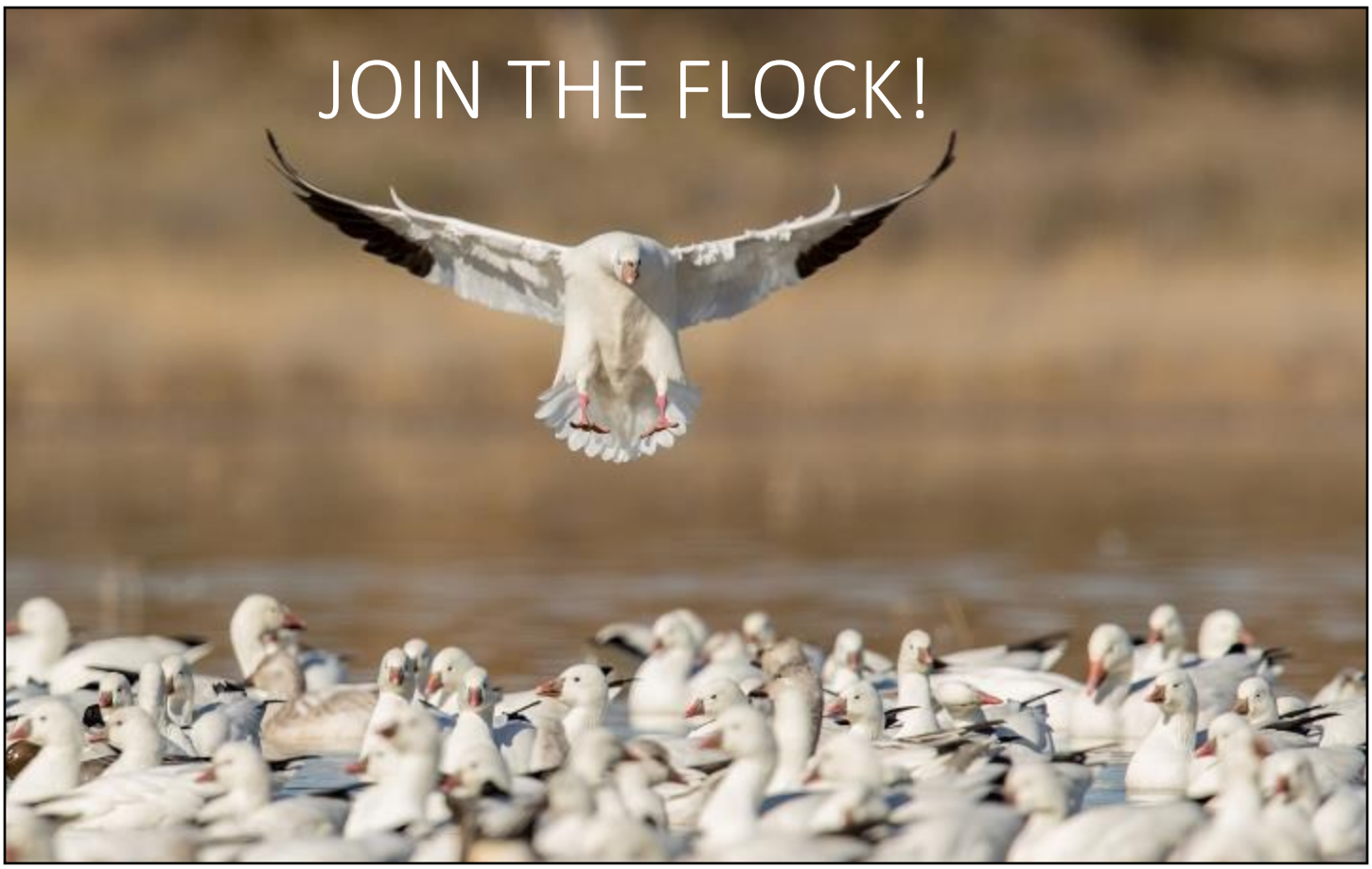
YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. JOIN OUR FLOCK OF VOLUNTEERS!

Southern Maryland Audubon Society's primary missions are education, public outreach, and environmental advocacy to support birds and the habitat they need to thrive in Southern Maryland and beyond.
SMAS's robust activity calendar includes:

- Bird Walks
- Workshops
- Presentations
- Youth & Public Outreach
- Festival Exhibits
- Community Science

Volunteers of all ages, levels of birding expertise, and availability are needed to help support our programs and activities. Even small actions make a difference!

Act Now! Contact somdaudubon@yahoo.com for more information about volunteering with SMAS.



Ross's and Snow Geese Photo by Mick Thompson

Welcome, New Members!

Benjamin Bonney, Prince Frederick
Florence Chaney, Dunkirk
Mary Ann Colie, La Plata
Lisa Elliott, Newburg
Mike Hillman, Port Tobacco
Joseph B Johnson, Waldorf
Susan Jelonek, Dunkirk
Kelly Minton, Callaway
Pat Myers, Fort Washington
Carolyn A Parker, Saint Leonard

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.

Follow us on Facebook @somdaudubon

Please follow us on Instagram @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!

Visit us at www.somdaudubon.org

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:__1 year $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

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.

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:

Southern Maryland Audubon Society
Carole Schnitzler
3595 Silk Tree Court, Waldorf, MD 20602