

Chip Notes

No. 377 FALL 2011



BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

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EARL PALMER, PAST BBC PRESIDENT, DIES AT 97

Earl Palmer, President of the BBC from 1991 to 1993, died July 30.

Earl joined the MOS a few months after its organization and remained active until he was in his eighties. In addition to being President, he served on various committees and particularly enjoyed working with school children and the Lecture Committee of which he was Chairman for several years.

Earl was an amateur nature photographer. His work was published in National Geographic Magazine and exhibited at many places including the Smithsonian and Eastman

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INTRODUCING THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE CLUB, JOAN CWI

The Baltimore Bird Club (BBC) board for 2011-2012 will be headed by the new president Joan Cwi. Here Joan introduces herself.



Passing the torch—

Karen (left) to Joan

I got interested in bird watching about 18 years ago when my late-life partner, John, and I were looking for activities we could do together. One semester of David Holmes' Introduction to Bird Watching given by Johns Hopkins Odyssey Program sucked us in. We joined the BBC, and during one of the field trips Carol Schreter convinced me to join as a Board Member. As you know, nature abhors a vacuum, so next thing I knew I became a member of the Conservation Committee, then a MOS director for BBC. Last year I became Vice President. When I first

joined, I had no idea how complex the workings of the BBC and MOS were, nor did I know anything about our long-term relationship with Cylburn. I've learned a lot since then!

I bird with the club on scheduled trips and have taken trips throughout the US, Mexico and South America. I'm still only a mediocre birder, but it is a passion and a solace. But this passion extends beyond identifying birds—I also want to provide education to others, contribute to avian science, help save birds from destruction, and offer bird watching opportunities to others at all skill levels. I also want to make sure our infrastructure and budgets are sound and we continue to work within our mission. And therein lies my personal mission for next year.

Turn to [page 2](#) to see the full list of the 2011-2012 board and President's Corner with more on Joan's thoughts about the coming year in the BBC.

GO GREEN WITH CHIP NOTES

Did you notice the orange survey card included in the August mailing with the booklet? This is your chance to go green with *Chip Notes*.

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BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB
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2011-2012

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REPRESENTATIVES TO

Cylburn Arboretum Liaison, **Karen Morley**

MOS Sanctuary Committee, **Brent Byers**

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The BBC is a small, non-profit organization with about 230 members-- meaning we have a limited number of people available to help us. Our operating budget is about \$7,500 a year from dues plus miscellaneous contributions. About 75% goes toward mailing and printing (and this doesn't include the hundreds of dollars of free printing provided by members) and 20% to expenses related to the monthly lectures. No one is paid. Everything we accomplish is due to the hours volunteered by working members. People give thousands of hours each year doing the following:

- writing, editing and mailing Chip Notes, the Program Booklet and Membership Directory;
- organizing and leading nine lectures and 125+ field trips;
- providing ongoing communication and updates via various electronic means;

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(Continued from page 1) **Earl Palmer**

Kodak. He won numerous awards for his photography and also taught and judged photography. For many years, Earl was an active member in the Coast Guard Auxiliary, where he taught weather and conducted safety inspections of pleasure boats. He was an eagle scout, scout leader and for several summers worked as an area director at Broad Creek scout camp. Earl compiled the first fern collection of the Natural History Society of Maryland, studied classical piano at Peabody and was a Baltimore City Junior Tennis Champion.

For most of his working career, Earl was a science teacher in the Baltimore County Public School System. He is survived by his wife, Dottee (also an active birder and a member of the board for many years), one son and two stepchildren.

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Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Goes Bird-Friendly in Visitor Center Renovation/Addition

By Wendy Olsson

While many builders have chosen to build glass structures and “see if birds hit it after it’s built”, Cambridge, MD’s Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge has chosen to prevent bird strikes during the design and construction phase. The American Bird Conservancy, [Lights Out Baltimore](#), Lights Out DC, Maryland and Delmarva Ornithological Societies, Chesapeake Audubon Society, Maryland Conservation Council, and the Phoenix Wildlife Center applaud Blackwater for taking birds into account and for their leadership on bird-friendly building in Maryland. The renovated center’s design includes a new wing and an all-glass entryway. The renovations will provide a great opportunity to educate the public on the tragic number of birds that glass kills and a product that makes glass more visible to birds.

Blackwater’s comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) specifically targets forest interior birds and secretive marsh birds. Unfortunately, glass impacts many of these species. While collecting data on birds impacted by glass and light in urban areas, Lights Out volunteers in Washington DC, Wilmington, and Baltimore have found marsh birds including Virginia, Sora and Clapper Rail, Lesser Yellowleg, and Swamp Sparrow dead and/or injured. Monitors have also found forest-interior species such as Ovenbird, Wood Thrush, Worm-Eating Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, and Black-and-white Warbler. Obviously Lights Out monitors found these species in the concrete-and-glass-filled downtowns of Washington DC, Baltimore, and Wilmington – areas that one could hardly consider suitable habitat. Blackwater Refuge, being prime habitat for these species, had more reason to be concerned. Suggestions from concerned organizations on how to and why it was important to make the renovation as bird-safe as possible did not fall on deaf ears.

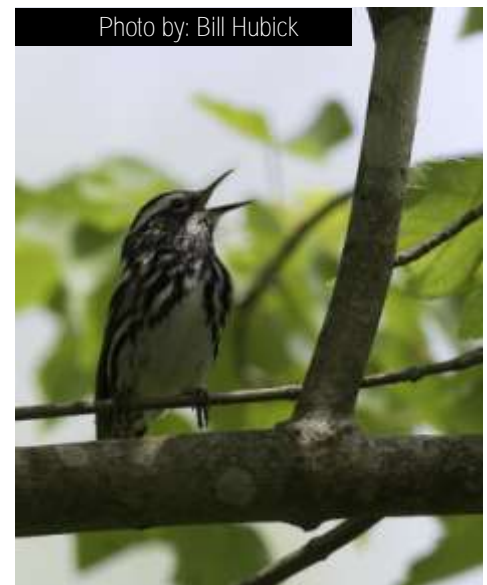


Photo by: Bill Hubick

Blackwater considered various options on how to make the building less hazardous to birds: “Visual noise” on windows, reflectivity reduction, and bird-friendlier glass. While Blackwater considered all options, they ultimately modified the specifications for the facility to include Ornilux glass. According to the Refuge’s Manager, “None of the other options seemed to have the aesthetic appeal or functionality of Ornilux with supporting scientific research.” Germany-based Arnold Glas manufactures Ornilux glass. Roeder Windows and Doors and Nana Wall Systems distribute the product in the U.S. According to Arnold Glas’s website, “The idea for ORNILUX glass came from understanding that certain species of spiders (the Orb Weaver in particular) have UV reflective properties in the silk used to weave their webs, and that birds have the ability to see light in the ultra-violet range. The advantage of alerting birds to the presence of a web via UV reflectance is that the web then becomes visible to the bird and it can avoid crashing into it and destroying the spider’s ability to capture prey.” Studies have shown that the glass does not completely eliminate bird strikes, so our thank you letter to Blackwater included our hope that they will share their experiences with the manufacturers of the glass so that they can completely eliminate bird strikes in future product enhancements.

We would like to sincerely thank Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge for considering birds during construction and for showing refuge visitors another way they can help birds. Birders should visit the [Refuge’s website](#) to learn more about this exciting project, or “like” “[Friends of Blackwater NWR](#)” on Facebook to learn more and get updates. If you visit Blackwater, make sure to congratulate them on their leadership and for considering birds. They deserve it!

Birder Cam

By Joan Cwi

This quarter, and off and on in the future, Birder Cam will highlight some of our most active field trip leaders. These are the unsung heroes of our club—those individuals who lead up to 16 trips a year. But

like me, most of you know little about them. In these profiles we present them in their “birding life.” Each one was asked a few questions, and their answers follow. Below are the results of interviews with four field trip leaders—Pete Webb, Mary Chetelat, Joe Lewandowski, and Kevin Graff.

Pete leads some of BBC’s more far-flung trips—from Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania, to Huntley Meadow in Virginia, to several spots on the Eastern Shore. Pete has an exceptional auditory memory that enables him to do 90 percent of his birding by ear. Even now he remembers the pieces he played on the trumpet and baritone horn with his high school band. Pete says he likes leading bird walks so he can share his bird knowledge with others. This has evidently paid off, as he met his wife Carolyn, then a beginning birder, while leading a bird trip from Cape Henlopen to Ocean City. Seven and a half months later they were married.

Birding Beginnings. Pete’s bird watching history had a three-stage evolution. As a child he casually birded with his parents. But the next and most influential stage was as a Boy Scout in pursuit of his Bird Studies Merit Badge at the age of 16 or 17. Although it seems simple in retrospect—being able to identify 10 species and doing other things like building a birdhouse—it started his life as a serious birder. The next step began when he joined the BBC. Although already a mid-level birder at this time, his exceptional aural and vis-

(Continued on page 6)

Pete Webb



Mary Chetelat



Most of you probably know Mary from walks at Fort McHenry where she has led the Wednesday morning field trips for several years. She also assists in leading Lake Roland and Cromwell Valley walks. Ultimately, Mary feels birds and birding make the world a nicer place. It gives her great solace in the stressful world of an orthopedic nurse. When leading trips herself, she draws upon the teaching styles she most appreciates—especially the group identification effort.

Birding Beginnings. Always interested in the outdoors, wildlife, and fishing, she came across birding about 12 years ago. Her “aha” moment was finding a stunned Northern Parula that had run into her screen door. This event opened her eyes to the many wonderful birds in her wooded back yard. Mary’s birding classroom was our BBC field trips where she learned to identify birds through their calls, color, behavior, and size. In terms of leadership style, she admires Jim Peters for his historical knowledge about the birds and wetlands of Fort McHenry and the enthusiasm of Debbie Terry.

One of the best learning tools was listening to group discussions about what bird was just seen. In particular she remembers a trip to Hart Miller Island when, after much discussion, the birders decided they had just seen a juvenile Northern Goshawk.

Travel. In addition to local trips, Mary has traveled elsewhere in the US and Ireland. She feels that being a birder contributes to any trip, whether a birding destination or not. Often when traveling she arranges to spend some time with a local birder. In the quiet of a weekday, Black Marsh is one of her favorite birding spots. There in the vastness of the park she feels surrounded by nature—water, birdlife, insects and butterflies, fish and frogs and small mammals.

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Joe Lewandowski

For many years, Joe has been the coordinator of Cylburn's self-guided walks on Sundays during spring and fall migration. The Cylburn walks have a different tempo than other field trips. Joe "coordinates" rather than leads the Cylburn walks—they are very casual but over time one experiences an incredible array of species and behaviors. He also really likes to see people's reactions. For example, observing the faces of a California couple light up on seeing their first cardinal or the Englishman marveling at the bright orange breast of the American Robin.

Birding Beginnings. Even as a young child, Joe was interested in all of nature. He remembers looking at the backyard feeders using the binoculars his father kept on hand. But it wasn't until majoring in biology in college that this interest grew when one of his professors introduced him to the Toledo Naturalist Association that met once a month. Many of the members were bird watchers and Joe was soon joining them on field trips to Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge.

Travel. His graduate work in public health (he still works in risk assessment) and each new job allowed him to bird in different parts of the country. He settled in Baltimore with his family where he joined the BBC. Since the rest of the family are not birders, vacations are not devoted to birding, but Joe always brings his binoculars to catch what he can. Nearby his favorite places are Cylburn (of course), Lake Roland, and Huntley Meadows.



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Kevin Graff



Kevin leads several trips and attends most trips. He also maintains the records of all BBC-sponsored trips and submits them to MDOsprey and eBird. Because of his hearing impairment, he cannot bird aurally, but he makes up for that by his keen eyesight that has earned him the nickname "Hawk Eye." He has an excellent memory. He likes leading walks because he can help people in their birding efforts and he uses that excellent memory to point out the other creatures like butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies, beetles, amphibians, and mammals.

Birding Beginnings. Kevin began birding at eight when his family took him to the zoo, and he became enamored with the flamingos. He was embarrassed about this because, he said, the flamingos were pink! That trip, reading books, and getting a pair of binoculars for Christmas started him looking at birds more carefully around his yard and on fishing trips with his father. Ray Lane, then owner of the Wild Bird Center, took the teenage Kevin under his wing (so to speak) and introduced him to the BBC. Ray

died four years later. After joining the BBC he was befriended by Leanne and Mark Pemburn who took him on birding trips and introduced him to the digital aspects of birding, such as emails, internet, MDOsprey, rare bird alerts, etc.

Travel. Kevin has traveled extensively up and down the east coast, from Maine to Florida, as well as to OH, PA, WV, TX and AZ. His favorite spots are the Everglades and Key West in southern Florida because, as migration traps, a wide variety of bird species can be seen. He also routinely visits Hart Miller Island and Assateague.

(Continued on page 6)

Birder Cam

(Continued from page 4) **Pete Webb**

ual birding skills were recognized by some of our key birders who mentored him in his career. He gives special thanks to Bob Ringler, Rick Blom, Jim Stasz, and Joy Wheeler for taking him under their

wings.

Travel. Since the 1980's, Pete has gone bird watching through much of the US (AZ, CA, TX, MN, ND) and has twice birded in Costa Rica. His favorite birding spots include the picnic grounds at Bensten Rio in TX, southeast AZ, Hawk Mountain, PA, Huntley Meadows, VA, and in MD Millford Mill and the Eastern Shore.

Birding Stories. When asked about a favorite birding story, he immediately said “el plastico!” On his first trip to Costa Rica he, like most birders, wanted to see the Resplendant Quetzal, but luck was evading the group. On the last day, some of the group walked down a hillside where they were able to scope an immature male quetzal. Soon another birder walked by also seeking the quetzal, so they shared their finding and he then wandered off. When the lodge bus came to pick them up they discovered that 1) their quetzal was plastic, and 2) the people in the bus had seen a real quetzal at the lodge. When the bus returned to the lodge, the female was gone, but a male quetzal was reported nearby. Pete finally got his target bird. He claims he can wear his quetzal T-shirt with pride now. Meanwhile there is a birder who, none the wiser, is claiming a plastic quetzal on his life list!

Avian Favorites. His favorite birds visually are warblers (and specifically the Blackburnian) and the Yellow-crowned Night Herons that nest near his house. Aurally his favorites are the Wood Thrush and Mockingbird.

(Continued from page 4) **Mary Chetelat**

Birding Stories. While walking among the caged, healing birds in the Pelican Harbor Seabird Rescue near Miami, a free-living juvenile Anhinga landed on her arm hoping to take advantage of the food handouts. Mary spoke of the incredulity of seeing this gorgeous creature so close up--and the fear of that long, sharp, weaving beak near her eyes!

Avian Favorites. Hummingbirds, especially observing them among her plants and feeder. Her love of birding has turned into an interest in native plants and how they benefit birds. One of Mary's favorites is the Cardinal Flower, which reseeds itself far and wide across her property. And for the good and bad of it, she has quite a crop of wild raspberries to feed all.

(Continued from page 5) **Joe Lewandowski**

Birding Stories. Joe sees his best birding moments as “snapshots”—momentary pictures of an event rather than an ongoing narrative. Some of his strongest snapshot memories include a Condor flying over the Grand Canyon, suddenly realizing the white ground one is observing is a field of Snow Geese, and masses of hummingbirds of many species around the feeders in Ramsey Canyon.

Avian Favorites. His favorite birds are the common ones that he can observe well and watch their behaviors through migration, courting, nest building, egg laying and hatching, and fledging. He talked about a Killdeer he was able to observe from work as it went through all these behaviors, including the broken wing display.

(Continued from page 5) **Kevin Graff**

Birding Stories. One of Kevin's passions is chasing rare species. These chases also produce some of his best birding stories. For example, he went to Jamaica Bay Refuge near NYC to see the Red-necked Stint. While looking at the stint, to the joy of the onlookers, another rare Russian species flew in—a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper. What a two-fer!

Avian Favorites. His favorite birds are the Hooded Merganser because of its interesting profile and the way it holds its crest. Another is the Ivory Gull because it was so hard to find and because it is almost extinct.

Photo by: Bill Hubick





Apr 5 - [Cromwell Valley Park](#) - A few hardy souls braved threatening and at times downright nasty weather for some good birds! Highlights were: distinguishing an immature Bald Eagle from among the other soaring birds overhead; a Pine Warbler; and a sitting Merlin! At Loch Raven Dam (upper & lower), Ring-necked Ducks, American Wigeons, Common Loon & Caspian Terns were reported. 37 species. 8 participants. Leader: Mary Chetelat.



Photo by: Bill Hubick

Apr 12 - Cromwell Valley Park - Cloudy & rainy, but we managed to see 36 species including 2 yellow Palm Warblers. 14 participants. Leader: Ron Davis.

Apr 19 - Cromwell Valley Park - In spite of the heavy overcast, everyone had many great looks at Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Myrtle Warblers, Palm Warbler, and Yellow Warbler. A few caught a fleeting look at an early Great Crested Flycatcher.

42 species. 14 participants. Leader: Debbie Terry.

Apr 24 - Chimney Swift Watch at Hampden - Despite the weather, 530 swifts! IN a nearby chimney, 3 swifts seemed to be zealous guarding their nesting chimney from the roosting marauders! 4 participants. Leaders: Joan Cwi & Carol Schreter.

Apr 26 - Cromwell Valley Park - Highlights included having 23 pairs of eyes & ears. Both species of orioles, Baltimore & Orchard, both genders were observed multiple times both to the east on Minebank Run toward Loch Raven & the same to the west into Sherwood Farm.

49 species. 23 participants. Leader: Ron Davis.



Photo by: Bill Hubick

Apr 30 - [Soldiers Delight](#) - The weather was fantastic for this visit to Soldiers Delight NEA. The birding was casual with periods of high activity. We found seven species of warblers during our 260 minute walk: Northern Parula, Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), Black-throated Green Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Ovenbird, and Hooded Warbler were found. We had close-up extended viewing of a male Hooded Warbler on and alongside the path and another close encounter with singing Prairie Warbler. Other highlights included Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and a Baltimore Oriole through a spotting scope.

57 species. 22 participants.

Leader: Keith Eric Costley.

May 3 - Cromwell Valley Park - Baltimore and Orchard Orioles were seen throughout the walk. A very cooperative White-crowned Sparrow stayed feeding on the trail so everyone could see.

55 species. 18 participants.

Leader: John Landers.

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Conservation CORNER

Reservoirs = Bird Habitat

by Carol Schreter

The three Baltimore City Reservoirs provide more than drinking water for your faucet. The reservoir watersheds contain 24,580 acres of woodland and water, important habitat for wildlife. Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoir Forests are considered Important Bird Areas or IBAs, based on our recent surveys of birds nesting there.

So the BBC Conservation Committee went to investigate when BBC member Michael Wise complained about logging at Prettyboy Reservoir, in an area near his home off of Beckleysville Rd. On a walk there with Clark Howells, head of Baltimore's Reservoir Natural Resources Section, we learned about a three year City of Baltimore Reservoir Forest Management Study. The study started in August 2010 at Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoir Forests, with thinning and clearing of just 21 acres of woods, total, broken up into six study sites representing different forest types.

Essentially, Baltimore City is faced with a dilemma. Much of the reservoir woodland, perhaps 40-50 percent, consists of aging pine forests planted 40-80 years ago. In these "pine plantations," the trees are reaching the end of their life span, and prone to wind-throw.

The goal of the Reservoir Forest Management Study is to create a more healthy, diverse woodland, which will better protect our drinking water. On small plots, white pine or mixed hardwood trees were thinned, to allow more light to reach the forest floor, to stimulate new growth. Some areas of poor quality Virginia pine were cleared, in the hopes that nearby hardwoods, especially oaks, will seed there. Eight foot tall deer-

proof fencing was erected on five sample plots of 1/10 of an acre, to see what grows if deer are excluded.

Forest management in the reservoir watershed involves some risk. White-tailed deer browse on tree seedlings, and may prevent saplings from rising. More sunlight on the forest floor could encourage the growth of invasive exotic plants, instead of native plants.

The City of Baltimore Reservoir Natural Resources Section intends to collect data annually for up to three years. They will assess regrowth on the study sites, and then make future forest management plans, in conjunction with the Maryland DNR Forest Service.

The BBC Conservation Committee decided that we too should be watching developments at the reservoir forest study sites. What will forest management mean for bird life and bird habitat there?

Paul Kreiss and Eileen Wise kindly offered to monitor nesting bird activity at the Prettyboy watershed study site, near Eileen's home off Beckleysville Rd. Meanwhile, Bob Ringler will document nesting bird activity at the Liberty Reservoir study site, off Marriottsville Rd. #2, near his home. They will compare what they find to area results from BBC's 2000-2005 Breeding Bird Survey.

Clearly, the study timeline of just 3 years is very short. But our involvement from 2011-2013 will allow us to better judge and react to any large scale Reservoir Forest Management Plan thereafter.

In addition, each September we hope to provide a list of birds found nesting in the study areas to the City's Reservoir Natural Resource Section. The former reservoir manager Gene Scarpulla is a well-respected birdwatcher and BBC member, but Gene recently retired, in late 2010.

Because forest management could dramatically change forest composition and quality, we birders also decided it would be wise to get other local naturalists watching. We organized four cross-disciplinary walks into the Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoir study sites. The 13 people involved included representatives

Conservation CORNER

(Continued from [page 8](#))

from the Baltimore City Forestry Board, the Maryland Conservation Council, the Sierra Club, and the Md. Native Plant Society.

These cross-disciplinary walks into the Reservoir Forest Management Study sites will continue each spring, for three years. In mid June, Dwight Johnson, of the Maryland Native Plant Society, and Eugene Meyer, a

retired instructor of Biology at Loyola University, will lead a BBC walk at Prettyboy. We will look to see if: 1) vulnerable tree species are starting to recover from excessive deer damage; and 2) the extent to which invasive exotic plants are overrunning native plant communities. The goal is to see if reservoir management efforts now underway are adequate to preserve habitats.

Want to know more? Consider walking with us into Prettyboy on Saturday, June 9, 2012. (Rain date June 10, 2012.) For an informative PowerPoint presentation about the Baltimore City Reservoir Forest Management Study, go to: www.baltimorecity.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=UIoi8k6Hy3I%3d&tabid=334&mid=755



May 8 - [Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park](#) - The Baltimore Bird Club Mother's Day trip to Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park featured an appearance by four Yellow-crowned Night Herons; delighting the participants. A couple fed on the grass, and flew to join others perched in trees, giving birders good long looks. The morning was bright, cool, and birdy, with steady finds of both typical nesting species and migrants. Highlights included perhaps a hundred Cedar Waxwing; Veery, and Wood Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, eleven species of warblers, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Orchard and Baltimore Orioles. Black Vultures continue to perch in the Winans Meadows area, as they have for several weeks now.

57 species. 8 participants. Leader: Elise Kreiss.

May 10 - [Cromwell Valley Park](#) - A gorgeous day with lots of sound greeted our group of birders. We were hoping to see Bobolinks as they had been seen on Sunday. We found plenty of beautiful Baltimore Orioles and a perfectly constructed oriole's nest with a male oriole 2 feet away. Also had Orchard Oriole and a Yellow Warbler sitting a few feet away from an Indigo Bunting. A highlight was a White-crowned Sparrow on the ground behind the Sherwood House. Also our birding friend from Harford County spotted an Ovenbird sitting quite far up in a tree in the woods of the park. A good day, but no Bobolinks.

54 species. 17 participants. Leader: Ruth Culbertson.

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Photo by: Bill Hubick

May 7 - Milford Mill - CAPE MAY
WARBLER singing male, everyone saw well. Others species seen well were Scarlet Tanagers singing males; Rose-breasted Grosbeaks both genders; singing males Black-throated Blue Warblers; singing males American Redstarts.

50 species. 8 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

President's Corner

(Continued from [page 2](#))

- conducting citizen science activities such as bird counts and providing bird lists to [eBird at Cornell](#) from our trips and from the [Trail Tracker at Cylburn](#);
- working with Cylburn to staff the Nature Museum and inventorying our collections;
- leading a youth birding program and providing scholarship awards;
- keeping abreast of conservation issues related to birds and leading a Lights Out Baltimore! program for 20 weeks a year;
- staffing informational booths and giving lectures at various events throughout the State;
- providing direction to our efforts by participating in monthly Board meetings including keeping minutes and financial statements.

Wow! All that from our small membership. And last year we even managed to organize an all-day "Cylburn Is for the Birds!" festival on May 1st, attended by about 300 people, to celebrate the dedication of the Trail Tracker at Cylburn. This is the kind of progressive organization I want to be a part of, and I look forward to continue leading us in these activities as well as developing new directions.

Through the good stewardship of our last two presidents, Karen Morley and Pete Webb, most activities are proceeding smoothly. We have strong leadership in the chairpersons leading our Standing Committees. Some other areas are still in early stages or not yet started. These require strong leadership from myself and people undertaking them. These are:

Entering the Digital Age. This was the theme of the lecture given by Bill Hubick at our festival at Cylburn in which he talked about the changes in bird watching with the use of electronic devices. We communicate both to members and to each other more and more by electronic means. This started in [1995](#), when BBC set up its first version of a website

available to members and the general public alike. But the digital age has swept by us and we are finding that we need to do more electronically.

BBC/MOS Natural History Collections Project. BBC jointly with MOS have a large and historic collection of specimens and books. A small portion is on display at the Nature Museum and the rest are housed in the Mansion. MOS also has some collections housed elsewhere. The collections include mounted birds, egg and nest collections, mammalian skulls, butterfly and turtle specimens, rocks and fossils, shells, and tree cones. The book and manuscript collection includes six archival field journals, several rare books, and a large bird and natural history library. Under the auspices of Karen Morley and members of BBC and MOS, we will formalize a collection policy that includes defining the purpose of the collections, conducting a full inventory that augments the current one, categorizing the value (for research, education purposes and intrinsic value), and prioritizing the collections for preservation and conservation actions.

Constitution and Bylaws. Last January we [amended BBC's Bylaws](#) to make them compliant with regulations allowing us to remain a non-profit organization. In that review, we found that we have changed our operations over the years since the last amendment ([2005](#)) and need to amend our current document accordingly for membership approval at the Covered Dish Dinner meeting in January. Our [Manual of Operations](#) will also be updated, although that only requires Board approval.

Hosting another May Day-like Festival. The festival was fun and brought members and the public together in a celebration of birds. It was also expensive and very time-consuming during a season when many of us would prefer to be out birding. Should we host another such event? If so, decisions have to be made very quickly on the theme, partners, funding, leadership, place.

Come join us in our endeavors! Do you like to write, work with youth, or help out in general? Do you have the skills that could help us out with our digital info systems, such as website/database development, e-News distribution, data entry? We need you!

A Birding Loop Trip Around Chesapeake Bay

by Jim Highsaw and Linda Prentice

During May 2 - 7, 2011 we decided to expand on a trip we did in 1994 and do a birding loop around Chesapeake Bay. Our route took us east across the Bay Bridge and into southern Delaware, then south down the Eastern Shore to Norfolk, then west and north through tidewater Virginia.. Along the way we visited three National Wildlife Refuges and three State Parks. We also enjoyed driving some scenic roads.

On the first day we reached [Trap Pond State Park](#) in southern Delaware in midmorning, then birded along the lake and around the picnic areas for a couple of hours. Some of the highlights were an Orchard Oriole, a Prothonotary Warbler, Kingbirds and Chipping Sparrows. Then we made a brief stop at Trussum Pond, but didn't find anything new. We regretted not having our canoe to get back into the cypress swamp, but on this trip we had to leave it at home. Then it was on to Salisbury for the night. On the second day we drove down to [Chincoteague](#) and spent most of the day in the Refuge, either on foot or in the vehicle (however, we did not go to the beach). This was the best birding area of the trip - birds included Black Skimmers, Dunlins, Willets, Royal Tern, Bald Eagle, Little Blue Heron, White Ibis and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. An excellent seafood dinner at [Don's](#) was the perfect way to end the day.

On the third day we drove south through the rain to [Kiptopeke State Park](#) and the [E.S. of Virginia NWR](#). Because of the rain, we weren't able to do much except go in the Visitor Center at the NWR and have a tasty lunch at [Sting-Ray's](#). Around 2:00 we backtracked some to a motel in Exmore for the night. On the fourth day we returned to the same places and walked some of the trails. Birding was kind of slow but we did see Red-breasted Mergansers, Glossy Ibis and Bluebird. Then we crossed the Bay Bridge/Tunnel and continued on to the west side of the [Great Dismal Swamp NWR](#). We walked part of the Boardwalk Trail at Washington Ditch on a warm afternoon and found a Hooded Warbler before we were driven away by mosquitoes and biting flies.

On Day 5 we left the motel in Suffolk and returned to Washington Ditch on a very cool morning. The insects were inactive, so we walked the entire Boardwalk Trail. We heard lots of birds (including Hooded Warbler, Ovenbird, Great-crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo and Pileated Woodpecker) and also had a great look at a Pewee giving its call. After leaving the Swamp we drove west and north past Yorktown, then up Route 17 to Tappahannock and Warsaw, then continued to [Westmoreland State Park](#) on the Potomac River. We birded around the Visitor Center and on one of the trails for a couple of hours and found Hooded Warbler again as well as Great-crested Flycatcher and Ovenbird. Then it was back to Warsaw for the night.

On the last day we spotted the only Phoebe of the trip near the motel, then drove across the Potomac on Route 301 back into Maryland. We would do this trip again, probably with a stop at the Blackwater NWR.

(Continued from page 1) Go Green with Chip Notes

Chip Notes has now been online for [sixteen years](#), and many people prefer to read it there. The long-term trend in publishing is toward more online and less paper. This way we don't need to kill so many trees for the paper or fill up the landfills with old issues.

Both the BBC and the MOS are now going to offer the option of receiving their newsletters, *Chip Notes* and *Maryland Yellowthroat* respectively, electronically only. If you would prefer to join the growing legion of readers who are forsaking "dead tree publishing" for the greener online alternative, check the box that says, "You want to receive your BBC/MOS newsletters electronically, no hardcopy" on the orange survey card and mail it with your dues to Catherine Bishop, 6111 Bellona Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21212. If you have already paid your dues and want to add this option now, send a separate note or e-mail to Catherine at jcbishop1@verizon.net. Make sure we have your correct e-mail address.

If you take this option we will notify you by e-mail when the online version is available. Beginning with the Winter edition of Chip Notes in December, you can be paper-free!

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Moving or email change?

Send correction to
Catherine Bishop at jcbishop1@verizon.net
Or... 6111 Bellona Avenue
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**Deadlines for submitting articles
for upcoming issues:**

WINTER: October 24 for December-February
SPRING: January 24 for March-May
SUMMER: April 24 for June-August
FALL: July 24 for September-November



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Attn: Membership Chairman
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Baltimore, MD 21209

(Continued from [page 2](#)) **Earl Palmer**

Here are some past contributions from Earl Palmer in *Chip Notes*:

[August 1992 President's Corner](#)
[October 1997 Sandhill Crane in Worcester County](#)
[December 1997 The Exotic and the Rare](#)

(Continued from [page 2](#)) **2011-2012 Board**

Natural History Society, **Joe Lewandowski**

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

Website Manager, **Terry Ross**

E-Newsletter, **Karen Morley**

Electronic Database Manager, **Pete Webb**

Meetup, **Martin Brazeau**

PICTURES IN LAST ISSUE

The identifications of the birds in our summer issue:

Eastern Towhee (p. 3)
Great Crested Flycatcher (p. 9)
Spotted Sandpiper (p.11)
Snowy Egret (p. 11)

Thanks to [Bill Hubick](#) for allowing us to use these.

There are additional pictures in this fall issue on pages 3, 7, and 9. Can you identify the birds?

Send us YOUR pictures - of birds, birding places, or fellow birders in action!

Send to Roberta Ross at
RobertaBRoss@aol.com .

DUES ARE DUE!

Dues envelopes were mailed out in August with the program booklet.

Please mail your check and survey card in the envelope to Membership Secretary, Catherine Bishop. Be sure to include any address or e-mail changes.

Editor's Technical Note: This newsletter was produced using Microsoft Office Publisher 2007. Links have been inserted using this software.