

Chip Notes

BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER



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Final Reminder-- Dues are due!

Did you not renew because you lost your application in the mail?! Use the application form on page 12.

Brother/Sister, Can You Spare Some Time?

In Search of Nature Museum Docents

Article and photos by Joan Cwi



Docents Joan Hellman and Bill Seigart at the Cylburn Nature Museum

The young boy shines the flashlight up toward the ceiling at the Barred Owl swooping downward at him, talons extended, and squeals in delight! It's moments like this, says Joan Hellman, that reward me for being a docent at Cylburn's Nature Museum. Joan and Bill Seigart are two BBC members who give a couple of afternoons a month to help keep the Museum open to the public. But alas, between the Cylburn Arboretum Association and Baltimore Bird Club, we are hard-pressed to find enough volunteers to staff four hours a day on Saturdays and Sundays. Please read on and see if you might find the time to volunteer a few hours a month to educate the public about Maryland birds.

Joan and Bill shared with me their thoughts about being a docent. Both are still working, so sparing time is not always easy, but first

(Continued on page 11)

President's Corner

by Joan Cwi



After a pretty dismal fall swift watch last year, things picked up considerably this fall. As you may recall, we had only 23 swifts enter the Druid Hill Park Conservatory chimney on our Chimney Swifts at Dusk event, and relatively few birds reported elsewhere. And while they may not have used our "regular" chimneys this fall, at least deft swift watchers reported them in large numbers at several chimneys. In early September we had a couple of days when 1400-1500 swifts entered the Hamden Bookbindery chimney, only to abandon the chimney a few days later.

A spectacular new place was spotted, reported by teacher Ann Davis who actually first saw the swifts *leaving* the chimney one morning. This chimney is located at the edge of the field at Roland Park Country School, with 1600, 1200, and 500 swifts entering on September 24th, 25th, and 26th, respectively. We chose this as the site of our Fall 2012 Chimney Swifts at Dusk event. Alert watcher Rebecca Ebaugh found about 550 swifts entering the Loyola College Newman Towers West chimney on September 15th. Total busts, however, were the Druid Hill Park Conservatory and the Scottish Rite Temple that had been productive in past years.

But the big surprise was St. Michael's Archangel Church and a nearby chimney, located on Belair Road. On October 6th, over 1500 swifts were counted entering the chimney. This was reported to us by Joe and Wanda Stefan. Joe has written a description of his "find" for this volume of Chip Notes, titled *Miracle at St. Michael's*, our story in the Conservation Corner. I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

Conservation CORNER

Miracle at St. Michael's

by Joe Stefan, October 6, 2012

The word "awesome" is overused. This overuse cheapens its meaning. The Grand Canyon is awesome. Sneakers are not. The Northern Lights are awesome. Hoodies are not.

Yesterday at around 6:00 P.M., Wanda and I packed up our dog, Chloe, in the van and took off for St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church on a tip from someone a short distance away at the Natural History Society of Maryland, that chimney swifts have been seen over the property. We were already late according to the official sunset time for Friday, October 5th, but we went, hoping to see something, anything.

We pulled up in the parking lot and looked up in the sky. Even though we thought we were late, the sun hadn't set yet and the only chimney that I could see was the one on the back of the school building behind the church. It wasn't huge like the book bindery but it was a chimney. Wanda, Chloe, and I got out of the van feeling like nothing was going to happen tonight, when we saw about half-a-dozen flying cigars overhead. They were definitely interested.

Wanda talked to a man on the parking lot who was waiting to pick up someone from an event going on in the church and Chloe and I walked around the neighborhood to look for any other chimney that might have interested our bird friends. When we got back to the front of the school, I squinted up at the growing fury.

There were already quite a number of swifts flying over the school. We had the right chimney.

I came back down



Photo by Joan Cwi

(Continued on page 3)

along the side of the school and passed a small group of kids. “They’re bats! They’re bats!” one of them kept hollering. Appalled, I hurried to correct them. “No! They’re not bats! They’re chimney swifts. They’re going to be doing something amazing soon,” I said to blank stares.

I walked a little closer to the back of the school where the chimney was clearly visible. There were two women there who were fascinated by Chloe. One of them had a camera. Surely she was here for the swift-swarming. “Are you here to watch the chimney swifts,” I asked.

After a pause and a look from one of them which suggested she thought I should be wearing a straight-jacket, she said, “No we’re waiting for our kids to finish girl scouts. What are chimney swifts?” “These guys,” I said. “They’re migrating south and they’re going to spend the night in your chimney.”

“Aren’t they bats?” Maybe she thought I was bats. Wanda joined us and re-explained the whole process with greater detail. No more straight-jackets.

By this time there were more birds in the sky than there was sky. They were circling the chimney, and funneling down towards it for their great descent. Today being the day after the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, I couldn’t help but be reminded of the legendary formation the birds were supposed to have made at the moment of his death.

“They’re bats!” a new voice explained. We were being joined by another lady who needed conversion. Once again Wanda dutifully explained. Unfortunately the results were dubious at best.

“They’re bats, though. Aren’t they? They look like bats.” Her work was waiting for her so she left us. I think her miracle-awareness quotient level must have been low.

As for myself, I wish I had the ability to count swifts the way I’ve seen it done in the past. I have no idea how many were there. Definitely thousands. How many thousands, I simply can’t say.

The four of us watched the funnel of birds sift down into the chimney until there were none in the sky. Wanda explained that they would leave in the morning and continue south, seeking out more chimneys along the way and that around the same time tomorrow there might be another migration circling this structure, looking for an overnight refuge. As we were splitting off to our cars, our new-found friends thanked us for sharing the experience and told us it was awesome.

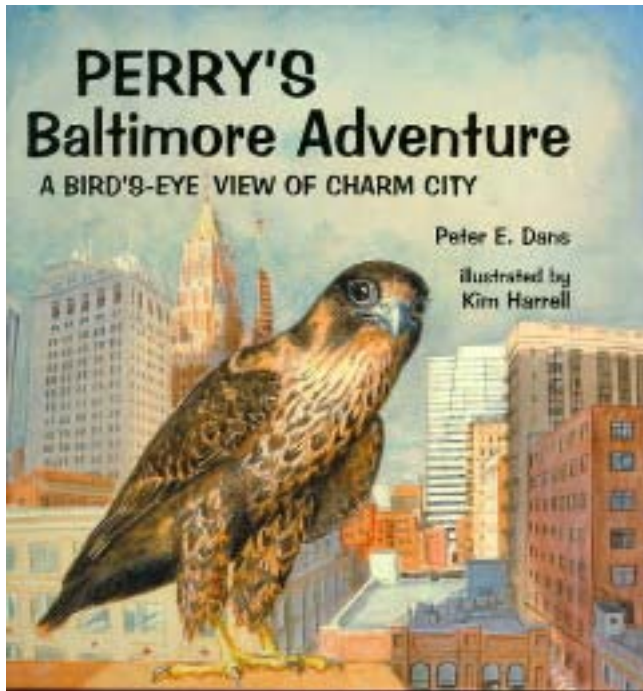


Photo by Judy Lombardi

In the classic sense of the word, it truly was awesome.

* * *

Directions to Saint Michael the Archangel Church, 10 Willow Ave., Baltimore, MD, 21206, in Overlea: South on Belair Road US 1, Beltway exit 32A. Proceed approximately 2 miles south on Belair Road between Taylor Avenue and Northern Parkway to the intersection of Belair Road and Willow Avenue. Church and school parking lot will be on the left, parking also on Willow Avenue.



“Perry's Baltimore Adventure: A Bird's-Eye View of Charm City:” The Backstory

By Peter E. Dans

Peregrine photos by David S. Jones

In 1977, a peregrine falcon named Scarlett was released by the Peregrine Fund from the Edgewood Arsenal on Chesapeake Bay. In 1978, she was discovered on the 37th story of the USF&G building at 100 Light Street in downtown Baltimore. She subsequently nested on the 33rd floor ledge outside the Corporate Communications department where a scrape or man-made nest was provided. In 1979, the Fund tried to mate Scarlett with two different males named “Blue Meanie” and “Misha” without success. After Scarlett laid three infertile eggs they were replaced with three eyases or chicks born in the Fund's lab and Scarlett began her career as an adoptive mother, raising the chicks to maturity.

In 1980, John Barber, an employee of the USF&G and a former Smithsonian Institution ornithologist, formed a liaison with the Fund and took care of the falcons. Another male named Rhett was

brought in but their courtship resulted in infertile eggs because his arrival was thought to be too late in spring. Four more adopted eyases were raised by Scarlett and Rhett, who later died after eating a pigeon laced with strychnine. In 1981, there were no suitors and Scarlett raised five more adoptees. In 1982, Scarlett was provided with two more males: Percy who flew the coop and was recaptured and sent back to the lab and Ashley. Again her eggs were infertile and she raised four more adopted eyases with Ashley's help. In 1983 Ashley was injured by a shotgun blast and a week after returning from convalescence, he was hit by a car on the Key Bridge. Two more chicks were brought in for Scarlett to raise. Both died in 5 weeks, one from eating a poisoned bird and the other from flying into a window.

In July 1983, a wild male peregrine named Beauregard was spotted on the 34th floor ledge and by February 1984 he began bringing food to Scarlett, a sign that the two had paired. Scarlett laid four eggs and Beauregard helped with the incubation duties while Scarlett got some low-level flying time. The first hatching of the four eyases (three females and a male) made front page news. I could relate to the excitement having moved to Baltimore when Scarlett first was spotted and having four children of our own. Thinking that Scarlett's story would make a great children's book, my elder daughter and I took a stab at it but were not satisfied. My responsibilities as director of an Office of Medical Practice Evaluation at Johns Hopkins left little time and the project was shelved.

The genesis of “Perry”

In 2000, the birth of Henry (our first grandchild) and success in publishing my first book on “doctors in the movies” led me to take “Perry” off the back burner. I drew inspiration from two of my favorite children's books Robert McCloskey's “Make Way for Ducklings” and Miroslav Sasek and W. H. Allen's “This is” series especially “This is San Francisco.”

I conceived a story based on the reappearance of the peregrine falcons on the East coast after the banning of DDT. It centered on Perry, a curious chick who almost falls out of the nest and is saved by Scarlett, his mother. After a brief scolding, she promises Perry that, if he eats his meals, does his exercise, and takes his naps, when he is ready to fly, his father, Beauregard, will take him on a tour to see Baltimore's famous places and learn about its people.

I sent the manuscript in October to Cornell Maritime Press. After some changes, it was accepted in April 2001 and the Press recruited Kim Harrell, an excellent illustrator from Richmond, who came up to Baltimore to get the scenes and the lighting right. Published in 2003, it sold out its first run of 5200 copies in two years but the Press declined to reprint it presumably because they believed that it had exhausted the market and additionally children's books were not very profitable. Through the help of the late Nancy Pinkard, the France Merrick Foundation, and the Peregrine Fund, the book was reprinted in 2007 by Camino books.



(Continued on page 5)

It got a new life when the elementary Social Sciences coordinator of the Baltimore City Public Schools asked Patricia King Robeson of the Maryland Geographic Alliance to develop a lesson plan to use Perry to teach urban geography. She did a marvelous job and Perry is now used in the Maryland state curriculum for 3rd and 4th grades in Baltimore City and some surrounding counties. When the Baltimore City Rotary Club learned that each of the City's elementary schools had only one copy, the Club purchased 500 books to make it more accessible to the children. The book continues to do well but the most satisfaction comes from children and parents coming up to me at my signings to say how much they love the book.

The Rest of Baltimore's Peregrine Falcon story

Peregrine falcons typically live 15 to 20 years. Sadly, Scarlett died relatively young from injuries due to a bone in her throat in September 1984. However, she had a very productive life, having raised seventeen foster eyases and four of her own. So the book, in a sense, keeps her memory alive and is a tribute to her perseverance in finding the right mate. In that peregrines mate for life, it was not surprising that Beauregard mourned Scarlett loudly from the ledge of the 33rd floor for four days.

Later Blythe, who was born in New Jersey in 1982, came on the scene and she and Beauregard formed a pair; from 1985 through 1991, they had 19 eyases successfully fledge. In 1992, Blythe was found dead of unknown causes near the War Memorial Plaza and a new female named Felicity formed a bond with Beauregard from 1992 through 1995 and 12 more eyases fledged. In 1996, Felicity disappeared after laying 3 eggs and was presumed dead. She was replaced by Tara who had been banded on the Tappan Zee Bridge in New York. The progeny did not survive and Tara left the scene. In 1997, a new female arrived from New York and was named Artemis (Greek goddess of the hunt) by a fourth grade class at Friends school. She and Beauregard had four fledglings. USF&G left that year for Mount Washington and John Barber left the company. The historical notes became sketchier during the building's occupation by Legg Mason. We do know that Beauregard died in 1999 and Artemis continued in residence until 2008.



During the period from 2000 to 2010 there were 5 documented adult replacements (3 males and 2 females).



There were 17 more fledglings from 2000 through 2012. The current pair, as yet unnamed, consists of a male hatched on a commercial building in Richmond and a female who hatched on the Francis Scott Key Bridge. I hope that the transition from Legg Mason to Transamerica will rekindle the interest in the falcons who have taken up permanent residence on their building.

This history was drawn from a chronological account provided by Phyllis S. Clements an employee of USF&G and Craig Koppie of the United States Fish and Wildlife Chesapeake Bay Field Office. Mr. Koppie continues to band the fledglings each spring. I am also indebted to Joy Wheeler of the Baltimore Bird Club, and Kathy Woods of the Phoenix Wildlife Center for their assistance.

Peter E. Dans, M.D. is an author of scientific articles and book chapters, movie reviews, and fiction and non-fiction books. He is currently associate professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins. A long-time member of the Baltimore Bird Club, he enjoys the "very peaceful and salutary hobby of bird watching." He can be reached at pdans@verizon.net More information about his books is available at www.physicianatthemovies.com or Amazon.

Photo at Cylburn Nature Museum by Joan Cwi



Birdbits.....

Save the Date!

Chan Robbins is guest speaker at this January's Covered Dish Dinner and Lecture

BBC will have our Covered Dish Dinner and Lecture, open to all members, on the evening of **Sunday January 13th, 2013 beginning at 4:30 pm**. Once again it will be held at Cylburn's Visitor Center. We look forward to this opportunity to socialize, meet our new Youth Backpack Award winner, and hear a fantastic lecture by Chan Robbins.

This year's featured talk is "What I have Learned from 100,000 Hours of Backyard Bird Banding." Chan's career is legendary in the birding community. He retired from the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center after 60 years of service where he devoted his life to the study of migratory birds. He has authored field guides and hundreds of articles and was instrumental in organizing the North American Breeding Bird Survey, including assisting with the Maryland and District of Columbia Breeding Bird Atlas. He has mentored many of our most influential birders.

Be sure to contact Kevin Graff (KeyWeststyle2001@gmail.com) to let him know you are coming and what you plan to bring. If you prefer the telephone, call Joan Cwi at 410-467-5352. Hope to see you there!

Changes at the Helm in Lights Out Baltimore

After four years of dedicated service, Wendy Olsson decided to step aside as LOB Chairperson. Wendy wants to take a break after four years of heavy-duty energy committed to this difficult task and limit her bird-club activities to Scholarships. Thank you Wendy for your years of good work.

Ever the trooper, Wendy recruited Lindsay Jacks as her replacement. You may remember Lindsay from our Fall Chip Notes where she wrote an article titled *Memoirs of a Bird Nerd*. Lindsay is an avian keeper at the Baltimore Zoo, and has been helping out on LOB for a couple of seasons. As a Chairperson on a Standing Committee, Lindsay is also a welcome new addition to the BBC Board. Welcome, Lindsay!

Christmas Bird Count

The Baltimore Bird Club participates in two important national bird counts each year—the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in December, and the Breeding Bird Survey in June. As its name implies, the CBC is coming up soon, and there are dramatic changes afoot. As we noted in the Fall Chip Notes, the Baltimore count, scheduled for Sunday December 16th, will be moved from the Inner Harbor to the Loch Raven area. By the time you read this, the Count will either be right-around-the-corner or over. If it's not over and you want to help out, please contact Kevin Graff at keyweststyle2001@gmail.com. All skill levels are welcome to participate.

A little background. Since 1900, the National Audubon Society has conducted an Annual Christmas Bird Count. Initially early each winter volunteers gather information on bird numbers across the United States and Canada. From a start of 27 observers, this annual effort has grown to 50,000 counters throughout North and South America. The Baltimore Bird Club started participating in 1979. CBC data are now available on a publicly accessible database used by researchers worldwide to provide a picture of how bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years.

In the Spring Chip Notes, we'll provide some results from the CBC and tell you a little more about the upcoming Breeding Bird Survey.

BBC Financial Audit completed—thank you Bob and John!

This time last year we began soliciting help from members to conduct a pro bono audit of BBC's financial statements. Two heroes came forth, Bob Rineer and John Fleishman, who volunteered to give up a summer day to undertake this long-overdue task. In summary, they found our financial statements to be well documented and in excellent shape. This is a great compliment to our Treasurer, Dick Krejci, who has kept meticulous records since he started six years ago. So thank you Dick also!

Live - local - late breaking!

Are you a member of the **BBC Facebook**? Almost a hundred people have signed up on our Facebook page. Members enthusiastically share their birding pictures, thoughts, experiences, and questions in a spontaneous and rapid way. It is also the fastest way to learn about a rarity or field trip changes (cancellations, new time, bring boots, etc.). Open to all, BBC member or not. **Join us at: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/382565775136349/>**



Compiled by Kevin Graff

Photos by Joan Cwi

Aug 18 - Bombay Hook - As always, an enjoyable and worthwhile trip, starting with a hummingbird show at the visitor center, with birds chasing each other around the feeders. We enjoyed a young flyby Peregrine Falcon at the impoundments, along with a side-by-side comparison of "Henderson" (prairie race) Short-billed Dowitchers and a Long-billed Dowitcher. What a treat! We also enjoyed good views of Blue Grosbeaks, Avocets, herons and egrets, Glossy Ibis, and nine species of sandpipers all told. We missed out on the Black Skimmers we often catch up with at Ted Harvey W.M.A., but a nice trip overall, especially the two-Dowitcher comparison! 65 species. 8 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

Aug 28 - Lake Roland - A warm, muggy morning. The wave of migration from 7-10 days earlier had subsided. We had only 3 warbler species, American Redstart, Ovenbird and Common Yellowthroat. Herons put on a good show, with a nice comparison of immature Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned in the area below the dam. A Caspian Tern flew by and a Pileated Woodpecker was well-seen from the main lakeside trail. 48 species. 10 participants. Leader: Peter Lev.

Sep 4 - Lake Roland - Our most productive areas on this walk were the boardwalk and the bridge over-looking the falls. It was nice to see 6 warbler species and 6 flycatchers species, one that was either an Alder or Willow, but didn't speak to let us know. Standing on the bridge we saw 4 heron species and a Great Egret. The immature Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Herons were close to each other so that we could distinguish their differences. 51 species. 8 participants. Leader: Ruth Culbertson.

Sep 8 - Quarry Lake - One of the best areas for birds proves to be near the flagpoles and overlooking the water. Many old trees are bare: birds are easily spotted. The group saw Wood Ducks, a Great Blue Heron (two have nested there and produced young during the summer), a Green Heron, Belted Kingfisher, and of course, many geese. Abandoned heron, oriole, and kingbird nests are proof that birds are attracted to this area. Many vireos were spotted as well as an Alder Flycatcher. As we walked up and around the condos, the sky graced us with several hawks: Cooper's, Red-Shouldered and Broad-Winged. Since there is a wooded area right beyond this swamp, we heard birds in the distance, in particular, Downy and Red-Bellied Woodpeckers. A big advantage of the Quarry area is that birders are, for the most part, looking down or at least outward rather than straining their necks to look upward! 38 species. 12 participants. Leader: Joan Hellman.



Sep 11 - Lake Roland - Yellow-throated Vireo keep singing and finally moved into view for everyone to see. 48 species (7 warblers). 10 participants. Leader: John Landers.

Sep 16 - Cromwell Valley Park - We started the walk with good looks at two Belted Kingfishers flying low over the bridge by the parking lot. We soon had a cooperative Wood Thrush that landed on a low hanging branch where we could all see. We had only three warbler species during our walk in addition to Rose-breasted Grosbeak and cuckoos, We ended our walk at the hawkwatch. 41 species. 9 participants. Leader: Mary Anne Fluke.

Sep 18 - Lake Roland - In spite of the threatening conditions, three birders braved the elements and shared a very pleasant morning together. Highlight included several Yellow-rumped and Magnolia Warblers. We were also entertained by a juvenile Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Others birds of note included a juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron and more than 50 Chimney Swifts as well as one phoebe. There were many American Goldfinches as well as several catbirds, robins, and crows. We encountered at least two Carolina Wrens and and two House Wrens. Also one Great Blue Heron with about a dozen Mallards. Observed too were a few flyby Mourning Doves. 15 species. 3 participants. Leader: Ron Davis.

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Sep 22 - Milford Mill - Fairly slow morning, but a nice look at a late Wood Thrush eating a berry at eye level, and the drama of a Sharp-shinned Hawk flying off with a screaming Blue Jay. Other highlights included Pileated Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, yellow fall plumage Scarlet Tanagers, a heard-only Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and 7 warblers: Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, and American Redstart. 37 species. 8 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

Sep 25 - Lake Roland - Lovely day! Numerous Black-throated Green Warblers, a very distinctive Blue-headed Vireo. Ten warbler species including Chestnut-sided, Northern Parula, and Black-throated Blue. Two Great Egrets. No Hawks! 50 species. 12 participants. Leader: Mary Chetelat.

Oct 6 - Quarry Lake - A lone Yellow Warbler was the first to arrive, followed by Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green and Palm warblers. The area along the lake near the stores continued to surprise birders. Leftover nests from orioles and herons sat empty. Of course, many water birds were seen: Canada Geese, Wood Ducks, a Green Heron, as well as a Great Blue Heron all attest to the value of the lake as a habitat. Birders noticed that the Belted Kingfishers have multiplied! Their summer nest has been productive. Overhead, we observed various hawks such as the Cooper's, Red-tailed, and Sharp-shinned circling high above. 10 participants. Leader: Joan Hellman

Oct 7 - Cromwell Valley Park - It rained off and on during our walk. We did have a long, close up view of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker working a tree trunk along the path. We heard a Red-breasted Nuthatch and had several warblers along the way including an eastern Palm. A cuckoo was heard in the same area where a Yellow-billed Cuckoo had been seen the previous week. 36 species. 5 participants. Leader: Mary Anne Fluke.

Oct 9 - Lake Roland - Our 8am walk began with overcast skies and temperatures in the low 50's. We were rewarded with seven warbler species and a close look at those adorable Ruby-crowned Kinglets. 40 species. 4 participants. Leader: Debbie Terry.

Oct 13 - Cape May Hawk Watch - Wood Ducks, four Bald Eagles including three adults in one binocular field of view. Red-headed Woodpecker and Eastern Meadowlark flyby at the platform. Red-breasted Nuthatches nice views and calls, and - MIGRATING?? White-breasted Nuthatches going by. Brown Creeper seen nicely on trail, both Kinglets, TONS of Myrtle ("Yellow-rumped") warblers everywhere, and even more TONS of Tree Swallows swirling around near the platform and in the sky just about anywhere you aimed the binoculars in the sky - quite a show there! Really excellent view of two Pine Siskins with a Goldfinch between them for comparison (on the trail). Other standouts included a poorly seen Parasitic Jaeger out in the haze over the water, a couple of White-crowned Sparrows near the platform, and a huge female Coopers Hawk that had Pete thinking Goshawk at first, until a better view was obtained. Three Baltimore birders among the crowd of mostly excellent birders from other locations gathered for the day's migration spectacle at Cape May's hawk watching platform overlooking marshes and ocean and distant Cape Henlopen, Delaware, next stop south for birds brave enough to make the flight out over miles of open water. The rest of them, Blue Jays, Turkey Vultures, Tree Swallows, and many more were milling around, then back-tracking north along the Jersey shoreline back up to Philadelphia, to cross over into Delaware without the miles-long over-water flight. 80 species. 3 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

Oct 20 - Irvine Nature Center - As usual, a very birdy place full of sparrows of many kinds this time of year. Special birds included a flyover adult male Peregrine Falcon carrying something, Lincoln's, Vesper and Savannah Sparrows, Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, both kinglets, Palm warblers, both yellow and western races, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a flyby flock of Rusty Blackbirds which flew along the tree line and disappeared into the trees behind a small freshwater marsh, and a pair of Red-tailed Hawks, one of which was in a nearby tree making the call of a Red-shouldered (!??) Hawk. Also, part of the group of observers got a brief look at both a Marsh and a Sedge Wren. (The rest of us missed them.) Likewise, the scolding House Wren was seen in the grasses seen by a couple of us. 55 species. 11 participants. Leader: Pete Webb.

October 23 - Robert E Lee Park - On this last walk of the season at RELP, our group slowly assembled and disassembled as people arrived on time or late (due to a bad accident on Falls Road) or left early due to work constraints or to chase a rarity reported during the walk. Fall migrants predominated—White-throated and Chipping Sparrows, "Slate-colored" Juncos, American Robins, Blue Jays, both types of kinglets abounded, and there was a sole Pine Siskin despite reports of this bird in abundance elsewhere. Year-around locals were plentiful—Mallards, American Goldfinches, Northern Cardinals and the very vocal Carolina Wrens. The best sighting was a Winter Wren foraging in plain view for several minutes. Two of our group spotted a hummingbird (unidentified)—perhaps the same one seen at RELP a week earlier....? It disappeared before a better ID could be made. 37 species, 10 participants. Leader: Joan Cwi.

eBird at CVP

Do you bird at Cromwell Valley Park?

Do you record your observations on eBird?

Cromwell Valley Park is setting up three new eBird trails to make it easier for you to record your bird observations, and easier for us to monitor our bird populations. Join us for an

eBird Workshop

January 12, 2013, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Willow Grove Nature Education Center, CVP

2175 Cromwell Bridge Rd, Parkville

Dr. Wayne Bell and George Radcliffe from the Maryland Ornithological Society will teach **new and experienced birders** to:

- **record and enter accurate data** into the eBird system
- **use the eBird trails at CVP** to help us build a usable data base of bird observations

No previous experience with eBird is necessary; the workshop will include a primer on the use of this on-line citizen science resource.

Bring a bag lunch (drinks will be provided) and binoculars. You may bring your personal laptop or iPad, but it's not necessary. Dress for the weather—we'll be going outside.

For more information and to register, **contact Justine Schaeffer**, Naturalist at Cromwell Valley Park. **justine@cromwellvalleypark.org** or **410-887-3014**.

These programs are designed for individuals and families. They are not designed to provide childcare. Therefore, parents are encouraged to discuss attendance expectations with their children. Park staff cannot detain youth wishing to leave at any time. Children under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Should you require special accommodations (i.e., language interpreter, large print, etc.) please give as much notice as possible by calling the Park Office at 410/887/2503, or the Therapeutic Recreation Office at 410.887.5370.

In Search of Nature Museum Docents continued



Mouse-eye view of a Barred Owl

Young children thrive on the “hands on” experience of displays at their level. They often need encouragement to touch these objects as parents have taught them not to touch in museums, but they come alive feeling the fur on various skin samples, shaking the rattling seed pods, or making the horse skull chew. One shy four year old who had hesitated to touch anything, when given permission crawled onto the mounted raccoon skin and snuggled against it, pretending to sleep with his new friend!

On less busy days docents have time for themselves.

Bill uses these moments to bird the trees around the museum, often luring in visitors passing by the museum. Joan likes to learn more about aspects of the collections that she is less familiar with, such as the eggs and nests, shells and bones. And there is always reading and knitting to fill time.



Bill and Joan check out the Bald Eagles

and foremost they feel that teaching adults and youth about nature, in particular birds, is extremely important in this electronically-obsessed age. And who is better equipped to share their passion for birding and to answer questions about the museum’s contents than members of our Club?

Everyone who enters is struck by the Bald Eagle and Wild Turkey displays in the center of the room. And, of course, Baltimore’s team birds, the Raven and Baltimore Oriole, always attract attention. Adult visitors in particular come in with questions about birds at their feeders and Maryland birds in general--their identities, where they can be found, or help in identifying a bird they’ve seen.



Benjamin Franklin’s Choice for National Bird

Can you spare some time? The Nature Museum draws several thousand people a year. It will be closed for much of the winter, but come March we need your help to keep it open.—from 12-4 on Saturdays and Sundays. Volunteering one or two days a month would help a lot!! If interested, please contact me (410-467-5352, jafisc@verizon.net) and I can direct you on the next steps.

BALTIMORE BIRD CLUB

http://baltimorebirdclub.org

A Chapter of

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

4915 Greenspring Avenue

Baltimore, MD 21209



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Karen Morley, Design

Submit materials to
Joan Cwi - jafjsc@verizon.net

Moving or email change?

Send correction to
Catherine Bishop at jcbishop1@verizon.net
Or... 6111 Bellona Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21212

**Deadlines for submitting articles
for upcoming issues:**

SPRING: January 24, 2013



**Baltimore Bird Club
APPLICATION**

*Membership year is September 1-August 31. Individuals/households
joining after March 1 may pay half-year rate. A full year's dues received
after April 30 will be applied to the next membership year.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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* Through 17: record age here _____

+Chapter Only membership is available to MOS members who are already members of another MOS chapter or who are MOS life members.

Mail completed application with check payable to Baltimore Bird Club, Attn: Membership Chairman, 4915 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21209