

Chip Notes

Fall 2024, No. 429

Northern Gannet Images: Marty Brazeau



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Carol Schreter, picture: Jude Lombardi

Carol Schreter, BBC's Dedicated Conservation Chair, (2002-2024) By Kathy Lambrow

Carol Schreter, who has chaired the BBC Conservation Committee since 2002, taking the lead from her mentor, Anneke Davis who formed the Committee in 2000. I have had the pleasure of knowing and volunteering with Carol over the past four years on the Committee. I will be stepping into some very "big shoes" as after 22 years Carol is ready to turn the position over, while remaining active as Co-Chair. It would be remiss of us if we allowed her to leave that position without acknowledgment of her long-term commitment and enormous contribution to the Baltimore Bird Club.

Carol joined the Baltimore Bird Club in 1982 and in her non-birding life (if there IS such a thing) is a retired notable gerontologist and social worker holding a Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work. I, and I'm sure many others, have learned so much from her over our years of association. There are several defined styles of leadership, but as may have been expected, Carol's did not quite "fit" any of the models – she is unique! In my case, she provides subtle encouragement, offers advice, support and guidance in any appropriate way.

She believed that volunteers on the Committee would come and go while working on a topic of personal interest and encouraged members to do as much as they felt comfortable with – she never pushed or demanded more than they were willing to give. I would describe her style of advocacy as one of gentle persistence. She chose to provide education to those to whom we were making a case – attending public input meetings and government hearings, sending a book on conservation topics, such as Doug Tallamay's "Nature's Best Hope" or an invitation to a habitat or bird walk.

One of her great talents is knowing which people to put in touch with each other; matching knowledge, contacts and skills on a particular topic. She did not seek the spotlight when there was a conservation win, but always shared and attributed the success to all the volunteers and lead members on the project.

Conservation Corner, Carol Schreter, continued



Carol Schreter and Matthew Black at the Bookbindery Swift Watch in 2022 (photo from the Baltimore Banner)



This Chip Notes has a seabird theme. Read on to visit Bempton Cliffs with Marty and sail out to sea with Sam!

Carol's institutional knowledge of BBC history, relationships with MOS, Audubon Mid-Atlantic and other professionals in the birding and conservation world have been and continue to be invaluable. Thoughts from Peter Lev, a past president from 2016 – 2019 and founding member of the Conservation Committee in 2000: "Carol was a very strategic thinker, she knew what was important and most importantly, how to present the issue to the BBC Board and members so that it was understood, and action could be taken. She gradually changed the emphasis of the Club from a field trip, lecture and education focus to encompass conservation and habitat preservation."

In her own words, Carol's goal from the outset was to get more people involved in protecting birds and bird habitat. She was delighted when Neville, as Lecture Chair, independently began scheduling conservation lectures, and when Toby and Mirat started scheduling new habitat walks, without Committee involvement.

In a changing world, our committee does what it can with a primary focus on Baltimore City and Baltimore County local issues, however State, National and Global issues affect us all. Carol will continue to assist and educate us. She plans to remain an active advocate for the Swift Watch in Baltimore City and is passionate about the most pressing and time sensitive issue of supporting democracy and the rule of law on a nationwide level. In closing, a very BIG thank you to Carol - a remarkable woman, leader, mentor and volunteer. She has touched so many of us and helped so many environmental, conservation and bird friendly causes over the years and will continue to do so for many more.



President's Corner by Joe Corcoran

Hello all!

I've asked for and been granted a reprieve from writing this edition's President's Corner, so thank you Editor JoAnn! But I would like to point you all to two trip reports that I wrote about 1) Birds and Bees and 2) Rash Field. These trips were a result of our efforts (see Spring 2024 edition) to partner with groups in city urban areas to bring the joys of birding to underrepresented areas and communities. So far so good and we'll be conducting even more trips this fall with local city library branches of Enoch Pratt.

Welcome New Members! Thanks for joining!

We hope you bring your binoculars on a Tuesday morning bird hike to Cromwell Valley Park.
Bird leaders will surely be able to help you identify those confusing fall warblers!

Hillary Deems ... Baltimore
Anne Evered ... Baltimore
Sharon Evered ... Baltimore
Rex Reyes-Feller ... Baltimore
Kerensa Zimmerman ... Baltimore
Erika Johnson ... Catonsville
Samantha Zeiler ... Lutherville
Rachel Epitropakis ... Parkville
Emily Perryman ... Reisterstown
Rob Millard ... San Jose, CA



Spring Palm Warbler



Muted Fall Palm Warbler



Birding Pals are out there throughout the World!

Article and pictures by Marty Brazeau

Romulo and I always plan to bird during our travels in the USA and abroad. The Birding Pal website http://www.birdingpal.org has enabled me to arrange days chasing birds with local birders in such places as Australia, London, and Arizona. I alway offer to pay for gas and treat each birder to lunch. Birding Pal birders certainly appreciate a t-shirt or souvenir from Maryland.

The website is easy to use. Click on a country and a list of birders is displayed. You can then communicate with each birder safely through the website. The website does charge a yearly \$10 fee to get a passphrase to access the website. You can also fill out the online form to become a Birding Pal. So far nobody has contacted me to bird in Maryland. I am willing and able to take foreigners birding at Loch Raven Reservoir or Cromwell Valley Park! In this article I want to share my wonderful experiences birding with friendly Birding Pals.

CONTACT M Baltimore Brazeau I am a retired birder in Maryland who would be available to take travelers birding in the Baltimore area. I have been birding most of my life. I can take birders during day trips











Barry Lancaster

Royal Spoonbill

Australian Brush Turkey

Crimson Rosella

Superb Fairywren

Australia: Nov. Dec. 2019: Barry Lancaster picked Romulo and me up at our AirBnB in Sydney. Among Eucalyptus trees we found many parrots, willy wagtails, and honeycreepers. We also visited wetland habitats. Barry recommended a bakery where we ate tasty meat pies for lunch. On the last day I birded with Barry during the height of the Australian fires. It was like birding in a hazy, cigarette filled room. Three videos to watch! https://youtu.be/AIP0XT6SpD4 https://youtu.be/qiQXLZ PtX8



Charles Swift



Yellow-headed Blackbird



Lazuli **Bunting**



Both the Lewis's Woodpecker, left and the Say's Phoebe, right, were carrying insects to their nests.

Moscow, Idaho: June 6-14,2024: I visited Charles Swift, a registered Birding Pal. I did not have to use the website to find him. We used to work at Broad Creek Scout Camp in Harford County Maryland in 1977 back when we were in our teens. Charles and his wife Deb both work at the University of Idaho. During the week we traveled to some birding hotspots. I created a YouTube video. Watch it: https://youtu.be/0WsFxDrTaO8. Please leave a comment below my video. It is nice to get some feedback.

Birding Pal Website, continued

emailed local birders. Success! Retired police officer and Royal Society for the



Gary Duckwith



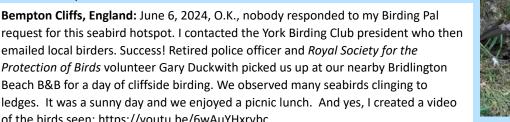
Bempton Cliffs



Northern Gannet



Razorbill Auk



Atlantic Puffin



Northern Fulmar



of the birds seen: https://youtu.be/6wAuYHxrybc

From left to right, Romulo, Marty, Jonathon East



Great Crested Grebe



Chiff-chaff



Reed Warbler

Rainham Marsh east of London: June 8, 2024, Jonathon East, a good friend of David Curson, met us at our hotel near Hyde Park. We took the subway and trains to a wetland habitat chock full of waterbirds. We ate lunch at the nature center. Back to London to meet Romulo's nephew Jerwyn for Italian dinner in Soho followed by seeing the play Book of Mormon. I have to admit I dozed a tiny bit during the play due to getting up so early!



From left to right, Romulo, Marty, Oliver Burton

Fen Drayton Lakes - Nature Reserve: June 11, 2024, Oliver Burton, a Cambridge assistant professor, born in the USA, picked us up at our Cambridge hotel and drove us to a wetland sanctuary. A bit of a drizzly day. Oliver was able to find quite a few local birds. We heard cuckoos and saw one fly across the trail. I am hopefully going to return to England during early May and film the elusive cuckoo someday.



Long-tailed Tit, upside down



Common Whitethroat, female



Greylag Geese



Long-tailed Tit, right side up

Hyde Park Birds and Colossal Pelagic Birding













European Robin

Eurasian Chaffinch

Great Tit

Eurasian Jay

Introduced Ring-necked Parakeets

Birding Pal-Less in Hyde Park! I woke up early and walked a hundred yards from the Commodore Hotel to Hyde Park to bird in the early morning. I filmed quite a few birds clinging to Basswood tree limbs. The parakeets are plentiful!

A Pelagic Trip 'Bordering on Colossal'

Article and pictures (unless otherwise credited) by Sam Tillman

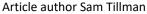


I ended 2023 with my first ever pelagic birding trip, and it delivered in ways I didn't think possible. A 'pelagic' is a boat trip into ocean waters in search of birds that spend the majority of their lives at sea, only coming to shore to breed and nest (and are known as pelagic species). I decided a 10-hour trip was a good way to test whether I could stomach such an adventure. I chose the esteemed tour company Hillstar Nature, run by the well-known and amiable birder George Armistead, who joined us that dav.

We set sail from the Ocean City inlet at 6 a.m. on December 29 aboard the Ocean Princess in near complete darkness. We soon lost sight of the neon lights of the boardwalk and were engulfed in a dense, flat fog – no birds, no boats, just an endless void in all directions for close to an hour. As the sun broke the horizon, the mist began to burn off and the birds began to multiply. Seemingly endless Dovekie flocks zipped across the horizon, and crabbing boats became visible. These were joined by elegant Northern Gannet which streaked by on their powerful, graceful wings.

The first mate of the Ocean Princess, Jeff, began sawing apart chunks of frozen butterfish and bunker, and tossing handfuls of them off the back. The strategy is to draw in gulls which our targeted species then see and come in closer to investigate. The feeding frenzy this produced brought in abundant gulls, including Black-legged Kittiwakes and a Little Gull, plus Manx Shearwater, one of our desired pelagic species. It wasn't long until we saw an Atlantic Puffin, the first of 22 that day. By midday we'd added Razorbill (84) and Red Phalarope (246) to our list, as well as Black and Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, and Red-breasted Merganser.







Heading out to the sea early morning from Ocean City. Whats next? Did you take Dramamine?



Colossal Pelagic Birding (continued)

A shock came around noon when a Black-capped Petrel zipped by the port side of our ship, long enough for some excellent photos. This species isn't expected in the relatively shallow waters we were in (approximately 20 fathoms) and represents the first winter record in Maryland waters. While that appeared to be the standout moment of the trip, we had one more surprise in store.

As we started back toward Ocean City, after sailing some 50 miles from shore, Corey Husic called out 'whale!' and we raced to the forward deck to get a look. A smallish whale then briefly surfaced twice before showing its fluke as it went into a deep dive. George noted that it may have lacked a dorsal fin, indicating a North Atlantic right whale. Thanks to the fast reflexes of Kyle Gardiner, who managed a few photos before we lost it, this was later confirmed. Our whale was one of the last 360 of its kind, and likely the rarest animal I'll ever see. Markings on its fluke later identified it as #2503, a female born in 1995 named Boomerang.

Around 4 p.m. we pulled back into Ocean City, and were met by a few birds which are expected near shore in the Winter; Red-throated and Common Loon, Purple Sandpiper, and an American Oystercatcher. By day's end we'd totaled 37 species including a spectacular 5,156 Dovekies, a new state high count, on a trip described by George as "bordering on colossal." A huge thanks to Hillstar Nature tours and the knowledgeable and friendly guides who made the experience so *memorable*.



Northern Atlantic right whale, image courtesy National Marine Sanctuaries



Chumming for pelagic birds.



Manx Shearwater



Black-capped Petrel



Northern Gannet



Common Loon diving, images, Marty Brazeau



Surf Scoter, image, Marty Brazeau



Dovekie

Lesvos Greece Birding Tour, late April 2024

Article by Debbie & Lou Taylor, pictures by Lou Taylor

Our latest birding adventure was to Lesvos, Greece in late April 2024. We traveled with the group Naturalist Journeys. Lesvos is the third largest Greek island, (600 square miles,) in the Eastern Aegean Sea. Many people are not familiar with the island because it's all about nature and is not touristy. For birders, it is a very well known migration area.

We flew from Athens, Greece and arrived in the very small town of Mytilene. We continued to one of the beach areas to our hotel, Kalloni Bay, in the town of Skala Kalloni. Skala is a small fishing village known for its sardine industry. It sits on a wide bay with a view of two mountain ranges along edges of several rivers. We were among the many birders of various nationalities and languages descending onto the island to see and listen to the endemic birds and birds migrating from Africa.

Near our hotel there were varied habitats: beach, fields, and marshy areas. The Skala Kallonis Marsh had so many surprises including Dalmation Pelican, hundreds of Greater Flamingos, Tawny Pipit, and Eurasian Thick Knee. This was the tip of the iceberg. Also, near our hotel in a tiny park, we had a fun surprise, a Long Eared Owl family, consisting of mom and two babies. So cute.

In the town of Skala smack dab in the middle of town there was a HUGE White Stork's nest on top of a lamp post. This drew lots of attention from birders and non-birders, especially since it was so out in the open.

Near the Lower Tsiknias River we saw a Squacco Heron, Cetti's Warbler, many European Bee-eaters, and Western Marsh Harrier. At the Lozaria Track area, we saw the Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, Zitting Cisticola, Greater Short-toed Lark, Gray Heron, Kentish Plover, Yellow Wagtail and many, many, many more birds. Driving along you see acres and acres of Olive groves and Oak groves, many being hundreds of years old. Most of the island has more sheep than people. You could tell that they weren't used to humans as we tried to get near them and they scattered. The young ones weren't as cautious. One of the most fun things was when we were coming back to the hotel around 6 p.m. each night, we heard the clinking of the bells on the sheeps' neck as they were being moved from place to place. Around the corner came the shepherd who was an older man, on a bike, with a stick leading his flock! It was adorable to watch. No technology or special tools here!

In the Achladeri Forest, we went to find the Kruper's Nuthatch. We had to be really quiet to find their nests. We were successful, finding mom and babes, pretty much at eye level in a hole in the tree. The babies' heads were sticking out. So cute! We also heard a Short Toed-Treecreeper.

We also were delighted to see acres and acres of red poppy fields which were just gorgeous. Oh, and lots and lots of small churches and fishing villages. Fields between East River and the Saltpans yielded Woodchat Shrikes, Corn Buntings, Marsh and Montagu's Harrier. The Salt Pans' birds varied at different times of day, including wading birds, a Wood Sandpiper, Temmincks and Little Stints, Ruff and Greater Flamingo. Small quaint villages with old men sitting and enjoying their morning coffee were a delight to see.



Debbie and Lou Taylor



European Bee-eater



Greater Flamingo

Lesvos Greece Birding Tour, continued

It was like a very traditional scene which could have taken you back in time. We were surprised at one of these little villages with a sighting of an Eurasian Scops-Owl in a village square tree. The Rocky north coast had Eastern Bonnelli's and Ruppells' Warbler, Black-Eared Wheater, and Rock Nuthatch. The Western side of Lesvos is mountainous, arid, rocky volcanic hillside. It showed us Cinnerous Bunting. Crestchmarz's Bunting, and Rock Sparrow.

Of course birders get hungry when out all morning, so we stopped at a restaurant several times, near the water. The food was good and fresh. Interestingly, we had lot of company, and not human. The town's cats appeared, at least 15 of them, and boy they were hungry! They got the best meals they have had in a long time, since many of us are cat lovers.

Meladia to Ersus we saw Rocky Track-Yelkouan Shearwater (vulnerable,) Eurasian Jackdaw, Red Backed Shrike, Eastern Orphan Warbler, Western Rock Nuthatch, Isabelline Wheatear, Eastern Black-eared Wheatear, Cinerous Bunting, Cretzschmar's Bunting and Rock Sparrow. At Vatousa Gorge we saw Eurasian Craig-Martin, Eastern Subalpine Warbler and Blue-Rock Thrush. We also thoroughly enjoyed our mid-morning and mid-afternoon coffee/drink stops, sometimes in small, quaint villages. These stops afforded us a short opportunity to find some local crafts or small things to take home with us.

Here is a list of more hotspots with some of the birds we saw:

<u>Polichnitos Saltpans:</u> Great Purple Heron, Hoopoe, Zitting Cisticola, and Sardinian Warbler. On the coastline of Efthalou to Sikamineas we found Red Rumped Swallow, Crested Lark and European Stonechat.

<u>Faneromani Stream and Fields</u>: Squaco Heron, Red-Footed Falcon (vulnerable,) Icterine Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Semicollared Flycatcher. <u>Ipsalou Monastery</u>: Short-toed Snake-Eagle, Wood Lark, Red-Rumped Swallow, Blue Rock Thrush, Eurasian Linnet, Cinerous Bunting, and Cretzschmar's Bunting. It was fun to watch the Rock Sparrows fly in and out of the monastery windows, probably establishing nests inside.

<u>Filia track</u>: several times over several days we saw Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Masked Shrike, Subalpine Warbler, and Cirl Bunting.

<u>Lotzaria track:</u> Western Marsh Harrier, Montagus Harrier, Zitting Cisticola, Eastern Olivaceous Warbler, European Stonechat, Greater Short-toed Lark, Eastern Blackeared Wheatear, Gray Heron, Kentish Plover and Black Headed Bunting.

After seven exhausting days we made our final Lesvos bird count resulting in approximately 115 new birds. We added many Warblers, and Buntings, not bad! And off we went to continue our adventure with a week of sightseeing on the Mainland. And NO, we did not have a particular favorite species.

Debbie & Lou Taylor



Great Tit



Eurasian Scops-Owl



Kruper's Nuthatch



Cretzschmar's Bunting



Western Yellow Wagtail

Birding with Kids!











Joe Corcoran, center, and fledgling birders.

An enthusiastic young crowd.

We had a fun and educational Birds and Bees event Saturday, July 13th with the Piedmont Learning Center (Steve and Imauri), Dad's United Organization (Mike and Naomi), and the Baltimore Bird Club (Laverne, Charisma, Collin, Linda and Joe) and the kids - 4 pre-teens and 5 younger ones. It was on Piedmont property (which has a decent size apiary) and the adjacent Gwynn Oak Park. 21 Species of birds were found, and the fresh honey was delicious. **Joe Corcoran.**

We had a fun day at the Baltimore Bird Club Youth trip to Masonville Cove in South Baltimore despite the rain storm that looked like it was going to last all day. The gray sky did make identifying birds a little hard but we did manage to list 26 species. We did see a pair of Common Goldeneye and on the Upland Trail. We could spot the American White Pelican that had been hanging around for over a month (in camera lens- courtesy of birder Mike Brent). Everyone seemed to have fun, especially when Ray picked up a black rat snake crossing our trail, and everyone got to touch it. Mr. Nathaniel, the Masonville Cove Naturalist, showed us around the Nature Center and spoke with us about how to make the most of our visit. **Daisy Sudano**



Mike Brent



Nest building award recipients.



Nest building challenge



Miss Daisy & youth birders scanning for birds.

The Baltimore Bird Club Youth Coordinator Miss Daisy visited Coppermine Fieldhouse for their last week of Summer Camp to do birding activities with the children. The groups learned about fall migration, common backyard birds, went on bird walks, learned about how to use binoculars, and our oldest group did the STEM Nest Building Challenge.

Daisy Sudano Baltimore Bird Club Youth Director

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Baltimore Bird Club Trip Reports: May 19 to June 16, 2024

May 19

Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park

Leaders: Paul and Elise Kreiss

On Sunday, May 19, the Baltimore Bird Club cosponsored a bird walk with the Friends of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park (FoGFLP) in the Park. Seventeen birders, including BBC and FoGFLP members, neighbors, and a visitor from Denver participated. Highlights included watching Roughwinged Swallows, Barn Swallows and Bluebirds swooping over grassy Winans Meadows, while an easily visible Phoebe called by Dead Run. Breeding birds included two Robins on nests. Two adult Hairy Woodpeckers were spotted north of Hutton Avenue feeding young. Also seen along Hutton Avenue was a Spotted Sandpiper who bobbed along the road for an extended period of time before flying up on a stone barrier for even better looks. A few warblers were observed or heard throughout the walk, including Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. A Belted Kingfisher was seen and heard. A White-eyed Vireo was heard calling at the intersection of Franklintown Road and Weatheredsville Road.

May 28, 2024

Lake Roland

Leader Laure Lechtzin.

This was the last walk in the Lake Roland spring migration series. We had ample sunshine with morning temperatures in the low 70s. There were a few high clouds and light wind. We observed and heard 56 species. Highlights included several species of flycatchers: Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Great Crested Flycatcher and Eastern Kingbird. Both the Warbling and Red-eyed Vireos serenaded us as we walked along the Red Trail. There were busy parents as well. Downy Woodpecker and Carolina Chickadees feeding their fledgling young. A pair of Barn Swallow prepared their mud nest on the dam side of the covered pavilion. Northern Rough-wing and Tree Swallows did aerial dives over the water collecting insects in mid-flight. Chimney Swifts chatted overhead. A Green Heron made a stopover, perching itself up in the top of a bare tree near the dog park. Sweet songs of some of our most colorful migrants: American Redstarts, Baltimore Orioles, Northern Parula, Yellow Warblers, and an Indigo Bunting announced their presence. All in all it was an enjoyable day.

June 15

Birding in Birdland with the Baltimore Waterfront Partnership

Leader: Joe Corcoran.

On a gorgeous June 15th day, the Birding in Birdland event put on by Baltimore Waterfront Partnership along with the Baltimore Bird Club went very well on Saturday. Mostly new birders learned the basics of birding, experienced urban birding at the Inner Harbor (Rash Field) - we found 16 different species - and also learned how to make simple bird feeders to attract birds. The highlight was American Goldfinches feasting on Thistle, which was among the other native plants planted in the new Rash Field Park put in specifically to attract birds, butterflies and other species to the harbor area. We'll be doing an event there again during fall bird migration in September or October so watch out for it.

June 16

Cylburn Arboretum

Leader: Charisma Burrows

A short birding walk through Cylburn Arboretum on Father's Day with breezy weather in the low 80s. The group covered the border trail behind the Nature Center and walked through the gardens to catch sights of lots of Barn Swallows and massive murders of Fish Crows. The highlight of the walk was at the end when double checking for the presence of reported Redheaded Woodpeckers an adult pair was observed behind the Nature Center and posed long enough for everyone to get looks. We ended the walk with a total of 39 species for an early summer day.



Fluffing Green Heron, images by Marty Brazeau

Baltimore Bird Club

http://baltimorebirdclub.org

A Chapter of

Maryland Ornithological Society

4915 Greenspring Avenue Baltimore, MD 21209





Sandhill Crane images by Wendy L. Nibeck (MOS Member) taken at the Jiffy Mart ponds in Westminster

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JoAnn Bochmann, Editor Marty Brazeau, Design and Educational Bird Video Creator

Submit materials to JoAnn Bochmann – jlbochmann@gmail.com

> Moving or email change? Send update to Terry Ross at trosstva@gmail.com

Deadlines for submitting articles for upcoming issue: October 24, 2024



Application

The membership year is September 1-August 31. New members only joining after March 1 will be members for the upcoming year as well as the remainder of the year that they enroll.

The most convenient way to join is at the Maryland Ornithological Society website using this address: https://mdbirds.org/join/chapters/baltimore-bird-club/#toggle-id-3 where you may pay your dues using PayPal.

OR, you may join by mail.

Make check payable to "MOS" and mail with completed application to:

Carol S Daugherty MOS Treasurer 11925 Oden Court Rockville, MD 20852