

“News from the ‘Hood”

Newsletter of the Patuxent Bird Club
of the Maryland Ornithological Society



March – April 2016

Editor: Fred Fallon, fwfallon@ymail.com

Programs

Our meetings are held at the College Park Airport Museum, as last year. Doors open at 7 pm for hospitality and informal discussion; meetings start at 7:30 pm, every 2nd Tuesday Sep thru June.

Tuesday March 8

“Bird Conservation in the Americas”

Presented by

Benjamin Skolnik,

Former International Program Officer, American Bird Conservancy

Join us for a discussion on the vast field of bird conservation. Topics include protecting habitat for the rarest species and addressing wide-spread threats such as pesticides, glass collisions, and wind development. Guest speaker, Benjamin Skolnik, spent the last six years with American Bird Conservancy working on these issues, primarily in Latin America. He will provide an overview of topics in avian conservation and delve into his personal experience saving several rare birds from extinction. As an avid amateur wildlife photographer, he hopes to challenge the audience to identify photographs throughout the presentation.

Benjamin worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in a high Andean village in Peru, where he worked on community diagnostic methodology, implemented an improved cooking stove campaign, provided technical assistance to the community in watershed conservation activities, and conducted small business and leadership workshops. He has participated in many avian field projects, including several in remote regions of Ecuador. He is fluent in Spanish and speaks some Quechua, the indigenous language.

Calling all Bird Photographers: Help in identifying Birds’ Prey Items

(taken from Mar-Apr issue of BWD)

Dr Doug Tallany, an entomologist (insect specialist) at the U of Delaware, is widely known for advocating that suburban homeowners grow – and let grow - native plants, from flowers to trees, around our yards, through his book “Bringing Back Nature”. Why *native* plants? Because they support many more species of insects, and their larvae, than do the exotics often urged on us by landscapers. More larvae translates into both more birds and more butterflies. (Dr

Tallany's book became a sensation after he appeared as keynote speaker at a recent MOS Conference).

Now Dr Tallany has followed up with the question – what insects specifically do birds eat, or need to feed their young? It turns out that “science doesn't know”, exactly. This is where citizen science photographers come in – you're invited to send in any photos you have, or take in the future, showing prey items in a bird's beak. Entomologists will then try to identify the item, which is easier for them to do than one might think, even from a small image. Data from all the useful photos will be entered into a spreadsheet open to researchers and the public. (No photos will be released w/o the photographer's permission).

So search your wild bird photo collection and send in any showing birds with insects (including larvae) to this website: <whatdobirdseat.com >. Include the date, nearest town, and whether the bird seemed to be carrying food to young, as provided for in the easy-to-use interface. Photos of birds feeding young are especially valuable. (See last page).

Field Trip Report Ocean City, Feb 20-21

Seven of us convened in Ocean City Saturday pm, and visited the jetty for good views of Bonaparte's Gull, Old-squaw, Bufflehead, both loons, and Purple Sandpipers.

The next morning at 7AM, joined by another 4 chapter members, found us again at the jetty, where we had even better views of the above, plus Black and Surf scoters, Harlequin Ducks, and fly-by Gannet. A visit to the W. Ocean City Pond yielded a great bonanza of waterfowl – Gadwalls, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Widgeon, Pintail, Shoveller, Green-winged Teal, L Scaup, Coots; and bonus Br-headed Nuthatch and other land-birds.

In the PM we visited Indian R Inlet where we enjoyed close views of Surf and Black Scoters, Oldsquaw, and Red-thr Loons in the turbulent waters. Search nearby for Nelson's Sparrow and Palm Warblers came up empty. We also introduced birders to little-known Isle of Wight Park and Burton's I. Park, from which we added Golden-eyes and both Horned and Pied Billed Grebes.

Weather had been wonderfully warm and clear in the AM, but turned dark, blustery, and cold in the PM, and in the face of rain the group dispersed and headed home at reasonable hours.

Tuesday April 12 “Eagles and Peregrine Falcons “

Presented by
Craig Koppie,
Raptor Biologist, Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. Koppie, eagle/raptor biologist with the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service, Chesapeake Bay Field Office, will provide a talk about the status of Eagles and Peregrine Falcons in our area. During his presentation, Mr. Koppie promises to reveal where we can locate Golden Eagles wintering with us. Mr. Koppie has an extensive 30-year history with Bald Eagle research and recovery initiatives. He and Teena Ruark Gorrow recently published the book, *Inside a Bald Eagle's Nest*.

Field trips, entire remaining 2015-2016 Season

Thu Mar 3 - Walk at Lake Artemesia. Meet at **3** pm, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich <mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more information.

Sat Mar 5 - Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the end of Lemon's Br Rd, off Rt 197 just n. of Bowie State College, in Bowie. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Sat Mar 12 – Field trip for displaying Woodcock at location to be decided soon before trip; meeting at ~ 5:30 pm, place to be determined according to conditions. Reservations required. Contact leader: David Mozurkewich mozurk@bellAtlantic.net.

Thu Mar 17 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 3 pm at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich mozurk@bellAtlantic.net for more information.

Sat Mar 19 - Walk at the Gov Bridge Park, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the parking lot off Gov Br Rd, ~ 1 mile from Rt 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Sat Apr 2 - Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the end of Lemon's Br Rd, off Rt 197 just n. of Bowie State College, in Bowie. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Thu Apr 7 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at **6** pm – note change in time. Meet at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Sat Apr 16 - Walk at the Gov Bridge Park, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 at the parking lot off Gov Br Rd, ~ 1 mile from Rt 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Thu Apr 21 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Sun May 1 – Trip to National Arboretum. Meet at Bowie P&R at 7 am. Leader: Jeannine Dorothy OZ-Girl2@verizon.net.

Thu May 5 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellAtlantic.net) for more information.

Sat May 7 - Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the end of Lemon's Br Rd, off Rt 197 just n. of Bowie State College, in Bowie. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Sun May 8 – Trip to McKeldin area of the Patapsco SP for migrants and breeding Cerulean Warblers. Meet at Bowie P&R at 6:30 am (1 hr drive to park.) Leader: TBA.

Sat May 14 – May Count. Count all day at a park/ WMA or just a few hours around your yard and n’hood. Contact compiler FredFallon (fwfallon@gmail.com) for information, and coordination of areas covered.

Thu May 19 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon . Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellatlantic.net) for more information.

Sat May 21 - Walk at the Gov Bridge Park jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the parking lot off Gov Br Rd, ~ 1 mile from Rt 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Thu Jun 2 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon . Meet at 6 pm. Meet at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellatlantic.net) for more information.

Sat Jun 4 - Walk at the Fran Uhler Natural Area, jointly with PG Audubon. Meet at 7:30 am at the end of Lemon’s Br Rd, off Rt 197 just n. of Bowie State College, in Bowie. No reservations needed. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Thu Jun 16 - Walk at Lake Artemesia, jointly with PG Audubon . Meet at 6 pm at parking lot, at end of Berwyn Rd in Berwyn Hts. No reservations needed. Contact David Mozurkewich (mozurk@bellatlantic.net) for more information.

Sat Jun 18 - Walk at the Gov Bridge Park, jointly with PG Audubon . Meet at 7:30 am at the parking lot off Gov Br Rd, ~ 1 mile from Rt 301. Contact Bill Sefton at kiwisuits@msn.com for more info.

Near-by Successes in saving Grasslands

(Taken from the Spring issue of the Baltimore chapter’s “Chip Notes”)

Last fall, while birders convened on Hydes Park in northern Baltimore County to try and see a locally rare Nelson’s Sparrow, County Parks & Rec chose that exact moment to mow down the grass and brush in which the sparrow was sheltering. Birders were outraged! But out of that outrage came a dialogue between the Baltimore chapter and the Parks Manager, who listened and offered to address birders’ concerns. The result was Parks’ decision to follow the MD Partners in Flight recommendation of mowing on a 3-yr rotation, so only 1/3 of the grassland is mowed at a time – win-win solution. At the same time a similar arrangement was agreed to for Cromwell Valley Park, another Baltimore County park with extensive grassland. After an uneven start, birders and birds have benefitted from the new arrangement. Best of all, potential adversaries have become partners in trying to work out what’s best.

In another success story – at Fair Hill in Cecil County, one of the last extensive grasslands in Maryland, birders had for many years pleaded with DNR management to stop mowing at least some of the grasslands during nesting season, but in vain. (Patuxent member Marcia Watson, then pres. of the Cecil chapter, spearheaded that effort). But recently DNR relented, setting aside ~ 100 acres for the benefit of Bobolinks and Savanna Sparrows. Today visitors coming in at the east entrance can hear the bubbling song of male Bobolinks on territory, as they were decades ago. Also come back are Savanna Sparrows at one of the few places they are to be found breeding in Md.

Unfortunately, similar attempts here in PG County to turn around mowing practices on DNR and Park & Planning properties have so far failed. But the success of our colleagues in Baltimore gives us hope that persistence and reasoned arguments will one day win acceptance.



**MOS/Patuxent Bird Club
Membership Application/Renewal
2015/2016**



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip code:** _____

Phone(s): _____

E-Mail: _____

Full dues include Chapter and MOS State membership, and subscriptions to *Maryland Yellowthroat*, *Maryland Birdlife*, and the Patuxent Bird Club Newsletter. (The newsletter will be sent by email unless US mail requested). Dues are tax-deductible; see note below.

Choose Membership category:

Chapter and State combined membership:

or

Chapter membership only:

(must be a full-paying member of another MOS chapter - indicate primary MOS chapter: _____)

- Household \$33
- Individual \$26
- Junior (Age < 18) \$6

- Household \$8
- Individual \$6
- Junior \$1

In addition, I have enclosed a tax-deductible contribution

to Patuxent Bird Club in the amount of _____

to Maryland Ornithological Society in the amount of _____

Make check payable to **Patuxent Bird Club** with this application to:

Jane Fallon, Treasurer PBC
6711 Venus Dr
Huntingtown, MD 20639

“The benefits received from Maryland Ornithological Society membership dues are not considered to be substantial, as determined by criteria in IRS Publication 526. Therefore, members can claim a tax deductible charitable contribution for the full amount of their membership dues.”

Yellow-billed Cuckoo with prey item

Sep 13, 2013

Huntingtown MD

