

Tri-County Bird Club

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Newsletter

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443-497-6712

President's Message

Ah, the start of another bird club season, and fall migration has begun. I look forward to this at least as much as the spring, especially after a couple of hot, relatively quiet summer months. We've already seen Upland Sandpipers at the Salisbury Airport, looking in from Fooks Road toward the general aviation buildings. There was a Whimbrel who, somewhat weirdly, stood on the jetty at Nanticoke Harbor for several hours last week, and as I write this, a Marbled Godwit is at Skimmer Island in Ocean City. Worcester County has some famous shore birding locations and Somerset has Irish Grove and the places around Deal Island.

So, I decided to devote this column to good places to explore for these visitors in Wicomico County. Wicomico is probably the most underbirded county in our area. It has several places to look for migrating shore birds as well as those that undertake post-breeding dispersal. I'm going to start with a list of sod farms, which attract shore birds this time of year. In southern Wicomico, north of Allen there is a large farm off Noble Farm Road. You can get to it by following a dirt track past the Bordeleau Winery. A little farther north up Collins Wharf Road, there are several farms on either side of the road and an additional one on Yacht Club Road. Birding has been kind of hit and miss at these farms but they're worth checking out after heavy rains where puddles seem to attract birds. On the north side of the river we find lots of fields. On Old Railroad Road, across the street from Wright's Market, is a good spot. If you are in that area also check out the two little ponds just inside the entrance to the Plantations Development (just south of Rt. 50). Currently there are several Least Sandpipers and a couple of Spotted Sandpipers there.

On the north side of the county, Waller Road has many sod fields east of Jersey Road all the way out to the big Oakwood Farm near Delmar. Check Taylor Road there also. Look at the fields around the intersection of Jersey and Adkins Roads. They are recently tilled and if they get wet they could be good. Over the past few years, Log Cabin Road has been great. There are fewer spots this year, but the potential is there. West Road and along Naylor Mill hold more fields. Hampshire Road, behind Sam's Club can be excellent.

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(President's message cont)

All these spots would be helped by enough sustained or heavy rains to create puddles for our visitors. To whet the appetite, here are just some of the birds spotted in Wicomico in the recent years: Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Hudsonian and Marbled Godwit, both Yellowlegs, Stilt Sandpiper, Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes, all the peeps.

Of course, places like all the landings (Nanticoke Harbor, Cedar Hill Park, Roaring Point Park, etc.) are good right now. The impoundment between the Red Roost and the Wicomico River is also good.

I hope some of you find birds in these spots so there are some good times to share at the annual picnic at Paul Bystrak's home on September 14. Good birding!

Fall Meetings 2019—2020

We meet the fourth Monday of the month at the MAC Center, 909 Progress Circle, Salisbury, MD (off Snow Hill Rd) at 7 p.m. Contact Ellen Lawler at 410-982-8695 or emlawler534@comcast.net for more information.

Saturday, September 14—Annual Kick-off Picnic, 4 pm. (see details below) Home of Paul Bystrak and Marylee Ross, 5968 Rockawalkin Road, Salisbury, MD 21801. Bring a covered dish. Drinks are provided. For directions, call 443-783-1268 or e-mail shrike@comcast.net.

Monday, September 23—Program, "Holland—Birds and Art by Barge", presented by Ellen Lawler.

Monday, October 28—Program, "Students and Restored Habitats at Pickering Creek", presented by Mark Scallion, Director and Mary Helen Gillen, Education Manager, who will share stories of how the Center has restored over 100 acres of marginal cropland to wetland and meadow habitat at the center and how they have connected sixth grade students from Wicomico County Public Schools to these habitats as examples of how students can think about helping birds in their own community.

Monday, November 25—Program, "From Zero to 9000—a life of listing, presented by Peter Kaestner, retired diplomat and super birder. Among Peter's many accomplishments is being one of the first birders to see a species from each bird family in the world.

Monday, January 27, 2020—TBA

New TCBC Facebook Page!

The Tri-County Bird Club is excited to announce we now have a Facebook page! If you use Facebook, simply type 'Tri-County Bird Club' in the search bar or go directly to our page by using this link: fb.me/tricountybirdclub. We will be updating the page with all kinds of info of interest, including regular updates and details of our meetings, field trips and other club activities.

Field Trips 2019

All trips meet at the Ward Museum parking lot at 7:30 a.m. unless noted otherwise with the trip details. Bring drinks and snacks.

Thursday, September 5

Swift watch in downtown Salisbury, 7-8:00 pm.

Contact Nancy Roisum at nroisum@gmail.com or 410-845-8347.

Meet in front of the Wicomico Court House 15 minutes before sunset to watch swifts enter a roosting site through the chimney at the courthouse.

Sunday, October 1

Assateague National Seashore, Maryland section, 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

Contact Mike Walsh at 410-422-0428 or mik.walsh@comcast.net.

Meet at the Ward Museum at 7:00 a.m. or the National Seashore Visitors Center parking lot at 7:45 a.m. We will search for coastal migrants, especially hawks, warblers and sparrows.

Saturday, November 2

Irish Grove Sanctuary, 7:30a.m.-3 p.m.

For more information and to indicate you are coming, contact Ellen Lawler at 410-982-8695 or emlawler534@comcast.net.

Meet at Ward Museum parking lot at 7:30 a.m. or Irish Grove, in Somerset Co, at 8:15 a.m. to look for migrating and resident marsh species and to help with the annual workday. Lunch will be provided, our club will bring desserts, so contributions to that will be appreciated. We need to have a head count one week before the trip, so please contact Ellen Lawler at 410-982-8695 or emlawler534@comcast.net.

Saturday, November 23

Bombay Hook NWR, 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Contact Betty Pitney at 410-543-1853 or Ellen Lawler at 410-982-8695 or emlawler534@comcast.net.

Meet at the Ward Museum parking lot at 7:30 or the Bombay Hook Visitor Center parking lot to look for fall migrants and winter residents, including snow geese and other waterfowl, hawks and eagles.

Sunday, December 15

Wicomico Christmas Bird Count.

Join this traditional holiday birding event by contacting the compiler, Mike Walsh at 410-422-0428 or mik.walsh@comcast.net.

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(Trips continued)

Saturday, January 11, 2020

Annual Coastal Birding Trip

Contact Mike Walsh at 410-422-0428 or mik.walsh@comcast.net.

Coastal birding trip from Ocean City to Cape Henlopen for winter waterfowl and other winter visitors. Meet at the Ward Museum parking lot at 7:30 a.m. or the OC inlet parking lot at 8:15 a.m.

Annual Kickoff Picnic

Plan to be a part of the annual club picnic on Saturday, September 14, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the home of Paul Bystrak and Marylee Ross, 5968 Rockawalkin Road, Salisbury, MD 21801...rain or shine!! Everyone is asked to bring a covered dish. Drinks are provided. This is not only our kick-off get together for the 2019-20 year, but also a great time to see old friends and make new ones.

While at the picnic, we will have a bird walk around the property, so be sure to bring your binoculars if you are interested in joining us. In addition, there will be plenty of bird conversation to be had.

For questions and directions, or for a blank Fall Bird Count sheet, please contact Paul Bystrak at shrike@comcast.net. **Please RSVP so we know how many to expect!!**

Chimney Swift Watch

There are chimney swifts swirling about the courthouse chimney in downtown Salisbury!! Who knew?? That would be club member, Nancy Roisum. The swifts will only be around for a short time as they migrate south. Nancy has communicated with the organizers of the National Folk Festival, which begins on Friday, September 6th, to be sure we wouldn't be intruding on the set up on Thursday, September 5th, just before sunset. The plan is to meet in front of the courthouse before 8 p.m.

Fall Count

The Fall Counts for the tri-county area are on September 21-22, 2019. Compilers for this count are Paul Bystrak, Wicomico, 410-572-9950; Marcia Balestri, Worcester, 310-473-5098; and Pat Valdata, Somerset, 310-563-7180. Please contact them for information on dates and times.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Want to become a member of the Tri-County Bird Club? Would you like to renew your membership? We are glad to hear it! Registering and renewing memberships are both processes that can be done completely on line with just a few simple steps.

1. Go to <https://mdbirds.org>
2. Across the top is a row of options: choose 'Chapters', then select 'Tri-County Bird Club'
3. Click on the 'Membership' option on the next screen and follow the directions for either becoming a new member or renewing your membership

If you have any questions about the process, please contact our Treasurer, Jen Barnes @ jbarnes@comcast.net.

As always, you can still become a new member or renew a membership by contacting Jen at any of our meetings.

Membership in the Tri-County Bird Club includes membership in the Maryland Ornithological Society (MOS). The current annual membership year begins on September 1, 2019 and ends August 31, 2020. Dues are as follows:

Individual—\$30.00

Associate Individual—\$10.00*

Household—\$40.00

Associate Household—\$15.00*

Junior (under 18)—\$7.00

*Member of another MOS chapter