

The Osprey

Newsletter of the Southern Maryland Audubon Society



Great-crested Flycatcher
Photo by: George Jett

In This Issue

Presidents Perch June 2012

2012 SMAS Yard Sale

**Patuxent River Park Area
Field Trip**

Oddly Plumed Bluebird

South Florida Excursions

SMAS ANNUAL PICNIC!

*Sunday, June 3rd
1:30 p.m.*



<http://somdaudubon.org/>

Presidents Perch June 2012

Spring is here! Well for most of us it seemed like it was here from December on like we never really had a winter. For some of us my opening line may remind you of a bird call like the mnemonic of the Eastern Meadowlark. Perhaps it reminds you of the changing of the season and how this time of year brings many sights and sounds of birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, wildflowers, mammals and more. Maybe it makes you think about earlier times in your life. Perhaps it brings to mind some good and some bad environmental memories.

After having seen the new Dr. Seuss's "The Lorax" movie with a group of both young and "old" kids, and while Earth Day was approaching it made me think how far we have come with protecting the environment yet how far we still have to go. It brought back memories of reading Rachel Carson's Silent Spring and how DDT affected our bird populations, especially the raptor population in the Chesapeake Bay region. The comeback success stories of the Bald Eagle, Osprey and Peregrine Falcon have shown that changes we make as individuals and society can make a difference. Our changing global climate has to be affecting bird and other animal populations and perhaps that will be the next issue that we can help move in a positive direction for our natural environment and better stewardship of them.

Wherever we go in the United States in the near future with regards to conservation issues, it will be decided by how hard citizens help push for it. Politicians and our government should listen to citizens and do what we expect of them by acting in a way that will help protect our planet and ensure it is still livable for both the natural world and humans, too. Never be afraid to make them aware of your concerns, since that is what democracy is all about!

As Earth day approached this year I also realized that I could no longer introduce myself as the new President of SMAS. It is hard to believe it has been a year since you elected me to the office. It has been a great year and one of learning for me as President. You don't realize what is required of the position until you are wearing the hat. I would like to thank everyone who attended monthly meetings to see the programs, attended field trips, supplied refreshments for a meeting, attended a Board of Directors meeting, or served in a way to help SMAS and its mission of conservation in Southern Maryland.

I hope you will attend our Annual Meeting on June 3, 2012 at Battle Creek Cypress Swamp in Calvert County. The picnic is fun and you will also get to see Charter Member George Wilmot receive our Annual Conservationist of the Year Award. Raptor Conservation Awards will also be presented and the book store will be present with a great sale. You can also say thank you in person to retiring "storekeepers" Bev and Warren Walker for their years of service. Perhaps you will even consider volunteering to be the new "storekeeper" after talking to them. If you are at the annual meeting please introduce yourself to me in person so I can meet you and start putting names with faces.

Naturally,
Mike Callahan

2012 SMAS Yard Sale

A yard sale is scheduled for Saturday, June 16 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Will and Julie Daniel's house located at 6622 Leonardtown Road in Bryantown, MD. A rain date is set for Saturday, June 23. Donations are being accepted for this yard sale after May 24 (everything except for clothes and books). If you have items to donate or would like to volunteer on June 16, please contact Julie Daniel at 301-274-5756 or by e-mail at juliemdaniel@hotmail.com. Please make sure that all donations are in good working order and are clean. We do not have room to store things from year to year so we are really looking for things that you think will sell easily. We appreciate your help in raising money for our education fund by supporting the yard sale.

Directions to the Daniel's house from St. Mary's county: Take Route 5 or Route 235 north to Charles County. Continue on Route 5 past Hughesville. About 3.5 miles north of Hughesville watch for their house on the north side of the road, 1/4 mile north of Ted Bowling Drive. If you get to the intersection at Oliver Shop Road you have gone too far. The house is an old white farm house with a white board fence around the property.

From Calvert County take Route 231 west to Charles County. Follow directions above from Hughesville.

From Charles County go through Waldorf and then take Route 5 south towards Bryantown and Hughesville. In Bryantown, one half a mile past the intersection at Oliver Shop Road do a u-turn and go back north on Route 5, their house is 1/4 mile north of the u-turn. The house is an old white farm house with a white board fence around all of the property.

Flea Market/Yard Sale Committee

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Linda Baker, Bel Alton
Libby Blatt, Temple Hills
Alyssa Brookhart, California
Susan Gregg, Waldorf
Catherine H. Jensen, Cobb Island
Shari M. Kennedy, La Plata
George Kirby, Leonardtown
Abigail Moller, Prince Frederick
Jennifer Paulk, Park Hall
Anna Radtke, Welcome
Nathan Scherer, Huntingtown
Varanika Sharma, Waldorf
Taylor Stark, Waldorf

Patuxent River Park Area Field Trip by Fred Shaffer

I attended the annual joint field trip of the Patuxent Bird Club, Prince George's Audubon Society and Southern Maryland Audubon Society. An incredible 19 people attended and we visited several spots along the Patuxent River in Prince George's County. Highlights included a first summer Little Blue Heron near Jackson Landing (on the Prince George's County side of the river), a female Red-breasted Merganser at Jug Bay, and several new spring arrivals such as White-eyed Vireo, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Scarlet Tanager, Ovenbird, Hooded Warbler, Orchard Oriole, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Acadian Flycatcher. Some of the highlights from each stop are noted below.

Mt. Calvert - this stop was very productive as there were a lot of birds singing on the mansion grounds and surrounding woodlands and marsh. An adult female Orchard Oriole worked one of the trees near the historic site. Two Brown Thrashers were in the grass on the slope of the hill leading down to the river. Shorebirds seen included Greater Yellowlegs and one Wilson's Snipe. And, we had one singing White-eyed Vireo and a Yellow Warbler. Also of note was an Eastern Phoebe and Indigo Bunting. As usual, Osprey were numerous and one or two Bald Eagles passed overhead. A flock of Cedar Waxwings were also present.

Patuxent River Park - we viewed the marsh near Jackson Landing and then walked the trail to the observation platform. The marsh had 4 Great Egrets, 10 or so Great Blue Herons, and several Osprey and Bald Eagles. A first summer Little Blue Heron was present on a log along the river near the visitors' center. This bird was one of the highlights for the day and gave everyone great views. The mudflats opposite of Jackson Landing had 14 Lesser Yellowlegs and 4 or 5 Greater Yellowlegs. Along or near the entrance road we heard Ovenbirds, one Hooded Warbler, an Acadian Flycatcher, and a Wood Thrush. The walk out to the observation platform took us by several White-eyed Vireos, one or two Northern Parula, and a singing Scarlet Tanager. A female Red-breasted Merganser, several cormorants, and both yellowlegs were seen from the platform. We also had a calling Great-crested Flycatcher at this location.

Merkle WMA - this stop was fairly slow, but we did have lots of Purple Martins, Tree Swallows, two Brown Thrashers, and one Lesser Yellowlegs. We also got brief views of one Grasshopper Sparrow. Chipping Sparrows and Eastern Bluebirds were numerous. The yellowlegs was the only shorebird seen at the pond. The wind was also picking up at this point, which also may have kept activity down.

Milltown Landing - this stop was also slow, perhaps due to the time (we were there at mid-day). However, we got good views of several Savannah Sparrows, one singing Field Sparrow, and most saw a singing Prairie Warbler. Also of note were lots of Tree Swallows over the fields and a pair of White-eyed Vireos. Double-crested Cormorants were on the river and a few Laughing Gulls flew by.

Fred Shaffer
GlaucousGull@verizon.net Crofton, Anne Arundel

It's Raining Ducklings!

by Tyler Bell

On Thursday, April 26, I had just returned from a sampling trip to the Meadowlands in northern New Jersey. I had unpacked samples and equipment and was in my office working on my travel authorization. I heard a quacking outside the window. When I looked out, there was a female Mallard in the cement courtyard between my office window, a glass walled passageway, and the side of the lab next door. I figured she was scouting a place to lay eggs and went about my business.

Shortly after, I was done and ready to head for home to return the rental car. As I came out the side door, I noticed an intern standing outside my office and the Mallard flying repeatedly up against the glass wall. When I walked over, I noticed a duckling so figured she was trying to protect the baby so I herded them over to the grass and away from the courtyard then headed for the parking lot. When I got there, I could hear squeaking and couldn't figure out how the duckling could possibly have gotten that far but when I went to investigate, there were 4 ducklings all huddled together! Then I caught some movement out of the corner of my eye then saw a duckling bounce off of the ground nearby. I looked up and there was an open rectangle to the roof which allows drainage in extreme overflow conditions. There were three more ducklings in the opening but they fled when they saw me. There are many of these drains that open to all 4 sides of the building so it is possible that the ducklings might have flopped down out of a drain on the wrong side of the building from Mom. Fortunately, there is a roof access ladder in the courtyard so I found a plastic basket nearby and climbed up only to find 6 ducklings. I caught 4 but the other two split. Divide and conquer, I guess. Well, I caught them anyway but they were trying their best to get out so I had to shush them which made them pancake on the bottom of the basket.

When I got them safely down the ladder, Mom Mallard was nearby with the other assembled ducklings so I disgorged the basketful into the mass of ducklings and everyone was none the worse for wear!

Web Site of the Month

A coworker in my office was watching this video and she brought it to my attention. It's simply amazing. Make sure you have the sound on. You'll probably want to watch it again! If you have the capacity to watch it in HD, you won't be disappointed.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/04/30/yosemite-time-lapse-video-movie-shawn-reeder_n_1466107.html

SMAS Annual Picnic!

JUNE 3 – SUNDAY – 1:30 p.m.

Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Center, Calvert County
Gray's Road off of Sixes Road (Rt. 506), Prince Frederick, MD

ANNUAL MEETING

Potluck Lunch.....1:30 – 3:00
Host's Briefing3:00 – 3:30
Business Meeting3:30 – 4:00
Bird Walk4:00 – 5:00

Bring your family, friends, and favorite food dish and join us at this 100-acre nature sanctuary renowned for its primeval beauty. On the quarter-mile boardwalk trail gaze up at the 100-foot canopy of

Bald Cypress trees and listen to nature's harmony of frogs calling and birds singing. Call 410-535-5327 for directions and additional information or visit www.calvertparks.org

An additional incentive to the amazing scenery at Battle Creek is 25% off on all bookstore items as well as a special conservation award and raptor supporter award.

See you there!

Additional Board of Directors Nominee

SMAS will be deeply affected by the retirement from the Board of Directors of Director Warren Walker. In addition to being a Director, he and his wife Beverly devotedly ran the SMAS Bookstore for nearly two decades. At our last Board meeting they stated they will remain active members just more on their schedule. We cannot say enough thanks for all they have done for SMAS in their many years. We wish them both much enjoyment and fewer obligations in their birding endeavors. SMAS is looking for a replacement to fill Warren's vacancy.

Bob Lukinic- Nomination Chair

Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Photo by: Bill Hubick



Oddly Plumed Bluebird

by Patty Craig

Early this nesting season a pair of bluebirds nested in one of my bluebird houses. The female was not very confiding, but from a distance she looked oddly like an Eastern Phoebe. We all have a special attachment for bluebirds – their closeness to our homes, their beautiful appearance and personality and (for some of us) their colors appeal to our patriotic side. Well, this one is not very patriotic with only the blue and white – no reddish color what so ever! In this plumage it is very much like a female Mountain Bluebird of the west, though structural features imply this is just an aberrant plumage of an Eastern Bluebird.

The male of the pair is normally plumed so I am anxious to see the plumage of the young. I have not seen them since they fledged. Hopefully, the parents have taken them to a safe location until they are more mature.

Recently, I heard a theory that the last molt did not occur for an unexplained reason; therefore I was just noticing very worn plumage. That is a very interesting theory, but I don't think that is the case. See what you think!



Sierra Club Rejects Liquefied Natural Gas Export Terminal in Cove Point

Thursday, April 26, 2012
Contact: Jason Pitt, 202.675.6272

Cove Point, MD —Today the Sierra Club announced that they will reject a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility in Cove Point, MD. In a unique plot twist, a prior legal settlement entered in the 1970s and later revised gives the Sierra Club the ability to reject any significant changes to the purpose or footprint of the existing Cove Point LNG import facility.

Converting the facility to accommodate LNG exports would result in major damage to the Chesapeake Bay, coastal forests, and the local economy and tourism.

“As a regular visitor to the Bay and parks like Calvert Cliffs State Park, just north of Cove Point, I see first-hand how expanding this facility will tear into our protected forest land and destroy precious coastline,” said Dave O’Leary, Sierra Club’s Maryland Chapter Chair. “Sierra Club’s Maryland Chapter is proud to be the first of Sierra Club’s chapters to reject dirty LNG exports, and we will support other chapters in their efforts to stop these dangerous projects.”

“The damage that this project would bring to the Maryland coast as well as the disastrous effects of the fracking boom on communities in states like Pennsylvania make it clear that exporting liquefied natural gas is bad news for Americans’ air, water and health,” said Sierra Club Executive Director, Michael Brune. “The Sierra Club cannot and will not support LNG exports from Cove Point, and we will reject Dominion’s proposal.”

The export of LNG will result in increased, dangerous fracking in the Marcellus Shale. No federal agency has ever fully analyzed or disclosed these dangers to the public interest. Sierra Club’s letter makes clear that this failure of transparency is a key reason to oppose the project.

The Sierra Club sent a letter to Dominion, today laying out the details of their rejection of the Cove Point LNG export facility. Read it here:

http://content.sierraclub.org/sites/default/files/documents/4_26_12_DCP_Cease_and_Desist_Letter.pdf

And the Winner is...WATER!
Legislative Session Wrap-up
Maryland Sierra Club

It was a wild legislative session in Annapolis this year. Supporters came out in droves to lobby nights, participated in rallies, wrote thousands of letters to legislators, and volunteered on the streets canvassing. The hard work paid off. We are celebrating great victories on bills for clean water and we made huge progress for offshore wind, which is now poised for victory. See the results below and above all thank you so much for your efforts!

Results for 2012 Legislative Session Maryland Sierra Club
 Priorities: Big Wins for Clean Water!

Bay Restoration Fund, SB 240 / HB 446: Passed!

This bill doubled the flush tax to build the Bay Restoration Fund. The increased funding is necessary to upgrade the state's 67 major sewage treatment plants. The Fund also helps upgrade septic systems and supports planting cover crops. The Fund has been very successful, but has increasingly lacked the financial support needed to meet its goals. In this session, legislators addressed the anticipated funding short-fall by taking decisive action. The bill was approved by a 89- 48 vote in the House, and an 28 – 18 vote in the Senate.

Stormwater Management, SB 614 / HB 987: Passed!

This bill required the nine most populated counties and Baltimore City to collect a fee to reduce polluted runoff from rainwater. Polluted runoff is the fastest growing source of water pollution around the Bay watershed. As we change our natural filters like wetlands, forests, and farms to hard paved surfaces, we generate increasing levels of stormwater runoff pollution. This bill, for the first time in the state's history, creates a dedicated fund for addressing stormwater runoff. Success was achieved with a 91 – 45 vote in the House, and 33 – 14 approval in the Senate. Now these jurisdictions can use this money to clean up our rivers and streams!

Limiting Growth on Septics, SB 236/HB 445: Passed!

The intent of this bill was to limit poorly planned development and sprawl growth in rural areas of the state, such as forest, agricultural lands and conserved lands. Support for the bill was overwhelming, with a 93 – 45 vote in the House and 32 – 15 vote in the Senate.

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED



Southern Maryland Audubon Society sponsors the banding of nestling birds of prey, or raptors, with serially numbered aluminum bands in cooperation with the Bird Banding Laboratory of the U. S. Department of the Interior, as part of our bird research and conservation

activities in Southern Maryland. Limited numbers of Osprey and Barn Owl nestlings become available each year for adoption. The gift of \$10 for an Osprey adoption, or of \$25 for a Barn Owl adoption, contributes to a special fund for the support of raptor research and raptor conservation projects. The foster parent receives:

- A certificate of adoption with the number of the U. S. Department of the Interior band, and the location and date of the banding.
- Information on the ecology and migration patterns of the species, photo of a fledgling, and any other information on whereabouts or fate of the bird that may be available.

Interested?

Here's how to become a foster parent of an Osprey or a Barn Owl. Send \$10.00 for each Osprey, \$25 for each Barn Owl, or \$35 for each American Kestrel to:

Melissa Boyle
10455 Point Lookout Road
Scotland, MD 20687



ADOPT A RAPTOR

Name: _____

Address: _____

I wish to adopt (check one):

_____ (# of) Osprey, \$10.00 each

_____ (# of) Barn Owl, \$25.00 each

_____ (# of) American Kestrel, \$35.00 each

Amount Enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to:
Southern Maryland Audubon Society

See Fishermen, continued from Page 6

From The Associated Press:

A fourth-generation fisherman, Anello noticed something odd near his boat: three buoys floating nearby were moving. He motored closer to investigate. Anello and two others on his boat the Point Ommaney found the orange and white buoys connected to a whale that measured close to the length of his vessel, said Tony Anello, Mark's father. "They come up slowly alongside the whale, and the whale started fighting at first," the elder Anello said. "Then the whale decided to calm down." Using 12-foot, bamboo poles with hooks on the end, Mark Anello and his crew spent 90 minutes freeing the 40-ton mammal, which had been nicknamed "June" by rescuers who had earlier tried to free the marine mammal.

Once the creature was free from the ropes, nets and buoys it took a lap around the vessel. "The whale circled the boat, surfaced and took off," Tony Anello said. "It was like it was saying thank you." A smaller whale, possible the rescued whale's baby calf, swam away with June, the captain said.

Monica DeAngelis, the federal marine mammal biologist who led earlier rescue attempts, says the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration maintains a network of volunteer disentanglement teams trained to rescue animals in distress. She said the captain and the crew that rescued June were not part of the network, and that in general she would advise anyone who encounters a tangled whale to report the animal's location and stay with it but wait for trained rescuers to arrive, not least because such a massive animal can be dangerous. Generally, tampering with whales qualifies as a federal offense under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. But DeAngelis said Anello and his crew were exempted under the law's "good Samaritan" clause.

Fishermen Care Deeply About The Sea And Sustainable Fishing

Tony Anello echoed DeAngelis' fears, saying his son and crew could have been hurt by the large creature. But he also said while fishing gear was the cause of the whale's woe, many fishermen care deeply about the sea and a sustainable fishery. "There are fishermen who care about the ocean," he said. "We are stewards of the ocean and want a sustainable fishery."

And what a great story to demonstrate how fishermen who make their living from the ocean also have the greatest respect for that ocean. Thank you, Mark Anello, for showing us how this can be done.

<http://www.care2.com/causes/northern-california-fishermen-free-entangled-grey-whale.html>

Barn Owls & Breakfast, Charles County – Field Trip
Youths especially welcome!
Sunday, May 20, 2012
9:00am
\$5 fee to cover cost of breakfast

This trip is event you will watch a nest of Barn Owls get banded and enjoy breakfast beforehand on a scenic waterfront farm. We will eat breakfast followed by the banding. The River View Grange has volunteered to cook breakfast for us this year. As in the past, we request that each participant bring a reusable plate, eating utensils and mug in order to make this a greener event and minimize waste the trip leader will have to carry out of this private farm. We appreciate you joining us and helping leave a smaller environmental footprint. Also please bring a folding chair to sit on for the breakfast and banding. This trip is open to all ages and youth and their families are especially encouraged to attend.

We will meet at the driveway gate at no sooner than 8:45 am and pull in to the dirt road just inside the gate and wait until the leader escorts the whole group to the breakfast site. Please contact Mike Callahan at raptorsrule@juno.com or 240-765-5192 to sign up and get directions. There are a limited number of positions on this trip and in order to know the number for supplies you will need to register by May 12, 2012.

May 18, 19, 20 – Friday, Saturday & Sunday – Field Trip
Delaware Bay
"MIGRATING SHOREBIRDS & SPAWNING HORSESHOE CRABS"
!!!CANCELLED!!!
Leader: Millie Kriemelmeyer (301-372-8766, milliek@radix.net).

May 26 – Saturday – 8 A.M. – noon – Field Trip
Smallwood State Park, Charles County Youths especially welcome!
2750 Sweden Point Road, Marbury, MD 20658
"MULTI-HABITAT BIRDING"
Leaders: Lynne Wheeler (301-751-8097, fidsruschic@aol.com) and Jean Artes. This is one of our favorite parks as it has such a wonderful varied habitat. The walk will offer you forest interior dwelling species, field/meadow species, raptors, wading birds, shorebirds, and gulls. Previous trips have revealed Prothonotary, Hooded and Kentucky Warblers. No reservation required, so you can make a last minute decision! The park meeting location will be posted at the entrance gate. A \$3 vehicle fee is required. From Rt. 225(Hawthorne Rd)/Rt. 224 (Chicamuxen Rd) intersection take Rt. 224 approx. 3 miles to park entrance on right.

EDITOR: Tyler Bell **E-mail:** jtylerbell@yahoo.com

The deadline for the Osprey is the fifth of each month. Please send all short articles, reports, unique sightings, conservation updates, calendar items, etc. to the above address.