

The Bluebird

Newsletter of the Prince George's Audubon Society

PGAS is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society

April-May 2015

President's Perch



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Transition is a recurring theme - in life and past issues of *The Bluebird*. New seasons, migration, emailing newsletters, board members coming and going - the list goes on. Another stares you in the face as many of you recognize this former newsletter format. We are grateful to have had Tonya Harris volunteer to re-create *The Bluebird*. Re-create it she did, and is now moving on. For now, you've got me back cutting and pasting into our previous format.

Spring Notes:

- Our March speaker, Desiree Narango, gave us much to think about and *do*. WE can create the green space that birds, butterflies, bees, and insects need, not just to prosper, but to survive. Her studies on the Carolina Chickadee showed that native trees, the White Oak being the champion, had larger numbers of caterpillars than non-native trees, particularly important when fueling birds and their fledglings. *Our* yards, it turns out, be they acres or a small plot, can transform our fragmented urban and suburban spaces to the benefit of wildlife when planted with native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and other plants. Check out this link, <http://nationalzoo.si.edu/scbi/migratorybirds/education/birdfest.cfm#presentation> – a talk on this subject in our area by Doug Tallamy.
- Starting April 1, those enrolled in Desiree's Neighborhood Nestwatch: Food Web Study will begin checking its plastic nest tubes and other nest boxes on their property for evidence of nesting materials and whose. Last year, a pair of Carolina Chickadees nested in a cedar nest box my daughter gifted me years ago, and fledged 7 young! This year, an unbanded pair has explored a box only rarely used by a House Wren, and none had evidence of nesting. Whatever species chooses whichever nest box, I look forward to observing this year's backyard birds.

Birds give us such enjoyment. Within these pages are many opportunities to see more species, in more places, and learn even more about them.

Happy spring,

Maureen

301-262-5148 (h); mblades5@verizon.net

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Audubon's Mission Statement: To conserve & restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, & their habitats for the benefit of humanity & the earth's biological diversity.

Upcoming Program Meetings

Programs are held the 2nd Tuesday of the month, September-June, at the College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Cpl. Frank Scott Drive, College Park, MD 20740. Join members of the Prince George's Audubon Society and Patuxent Bird Club for a variety of bird, wildlife and environmental topics by experts in their fields. Doors open at 7:00 pm to mingle; refreshments available. Programs are open free of charge to all who are interested. Bring a friend! Contact: 301-262-5148. See www.pgaudubon.org for directions and more information, and follow us at <http://facebook.com/princegeorgesaudubonsociety>.

Shore Bird Identification

presented by

Michael (Mikey) Lutmerding

7:30 pm – Tuesday, April 14

If you have trouble telling the peeps apart, or an Eastern Willet from a Western Willet, or a Short-billed Dowitcher from a Long-billed Dowitcher, be sure to attend this meeting! Mikey will clarify these points of identification through carefully chosen photos that he has taken.

Mikey has a degree in wildlife biology from Frostburg State University and currently works at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in the Breeding Bird Survey group. In addition he leads pelagic trips, is an eBird reviewer and well known for his ability to spot rare birds wherever he goes.

Wonderful World of Whoopers

presented by

Ken Lavish

7:30 pm – Tuesday, May 12

Ken has worked as a volunteer at the Patuxent Research Refuge for the last nine years to learn about the efforts to save the endangered Whooping Crane from extinction. One of the areas he has found most rewarding is working to save endangered Whooping Cranes. He works as a surrogate crane dad for the young birds, educates the public on their plight, and will share some of his experiences of what it is like to work with newly hatched Whooping Crane chicks. He also serves as the chair of the Adopt A Whooper Committee (a fund raising program sponsored by the Friends of Patuxent).

Ken retired as an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2004 after 32 years. Besides working with Whoopers at Patuxent, he has been active as an Environmental Education Specialist at the Refuge and as the refuge coordinator for Project BudBurst.

Join Ken Lavish as he discusses characteristics of Whooping Cranes, how they became so endangered, recovery efforts prior to the current protocols, and the current protocols in place to save these magnificent birds.

Upcoming Spring Bird Walks, Events & Other News

PGAS sponsors bird walks at two natural areas of the Patuxent River Park co-managed with the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCCPC), and at the Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia Natural Area, each offering a variety of habitats and opportunities to see resident and migrant songbirds, waterfowl and raptors. Free. All skill levels. For complete details, directions and more, go to www.pgaudubon.org.

Thurs., Apr. 2 & 16, May 7 & 21, 6:00 pm – BIRD WALKS: Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia. Meet in parking lot at Berwyn Rd. & Ballew Av., Berwyn Heights, MD. No reservations needed. Contact: David Mozurkewich, Patuxent Bird Club, 301-509-2212 or mozurk@bellatlantic.net

Sat., Apr. 4 & May 2, 7:30 am – BIRD WALKS: Fran Uhler Natural Area. Meet in parking lot at end of Lemons Bridge Rd. off Rt. 197, Bowie, MD, just n. of Bowie State U. No reservations needed. Contact: Bill Sefton, 240-603-5201; kiwisuits@msn.com

Sun., Apr. 12, 7:30 am – FIELD TRIP: Jug Bay Natural Area, Patuxent River Park, Croom, MD. Joint Field Trip with PBC. Meet 7:30 am, parking lot at end of Croom Airport Rd. before 1st gate. Will bird river landings/fields/woods; take the Driving Tour to Merkle Wldlf. Sanc. for early spring migrants. Leader: David Mozurkewich, 301-509-2212, mozurk@bellatlantic.net.

Sat., Apr. 18 & May 16, 7:30 am – BIRD WALKS: Governor Bridge Natural Area. Meet in parking lot, Governor Bridge Rd., Bowie, MD, about 1 mi. east of Rt. 301. No reservations needed. Contact: Bill Sefton, 240-603-5201 or kiwisuits@msn.com.

Magnificent Whooping Crane Month – May 2015. National Wildlife Visitor Center, Laurel. Exhibit on saving Whooping Cranes, kids' puppet shows and other activities, whooping crane observatory tours, lecture presentations, videos and more. Free. See the entire calendar of activities at: http://www.friendsofpatuxent.org/images/Calendar-MWCM_2015.pdf. Contact: Ken Lavish; 301-384-4557; devish@verizon.net.

Sat., May 9 – International Migratory Bird Day, and all-day May Count. Join us to see spring migrants throughout the month on the bird walks and field trips on this page!

Fri., May 15-Sun., May 17: 2015 – MOS Annual Conference (Maryland Ornithological Society, Hagerstown MD. See www.mdbirds.org.

Sat., May 15 – Endangered Species Day. 2014 was the 100-year anniversary of the death of Martha, the last Passenger Pigeon. We have brought back the Bald Eagle & Brown Pelican. Whooping Cranes & Kirtland Warblers are still here because of conservation efforts. See <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/ESDay/index.html> for more information - and attend the May 12 program!

Mon., May 25 (Memorial Day), 7:30 a.m. – FIELD TRIP: Watkins Regional Park. Joint trip with PBC. Meet at the far end of Nature Center parking lot. Park entrance off Watkins Park Rd., the extension of Enterprise Rd./Rt. 193, just south of Central Av./Rt. 214. Leader: Marcia Watson.

Sun., May 31, 7 am – FIELD TRIP: DE beaches. Joint field trip with PBC. All-day trip for shorebird feeding frenzy on horseshoe crab eggs. Meet at Bowie Park & Ride off Rt. 197 just s. of Rt. 50. Bring water, lunch, scope if possible. Reservations needed. Contact: Fred Fallon, 410-286-8152 or fwallon@ymail.com.

Project SNOWstorm Update

Project SNOWstorm thanks everyone who contributed to their fund-raising campaign via Indiegogo.com. At campaign's end, they reached \$17,745 – 118% of their \$15,000 goal. Our chapter is proud to play a part in this important work. At our Mar. 24 board meeting, PGAS voted to send \$200 for this effort. They pledge to spend all of it on the research needed to physically analyze Snowys, as well as the voluminous data they acquired when birds were banded and that they have been collecting from their transmitters. Stay tuned. Better yet, you can follow their progress on www.projectSNOWstorm.org

Election of PGAS 2015-2016 Officers & Board of Directors

This slate will be presented for election at the May 12 meeting. Current PGAS members of the National Audubon Society are eligible to vote or run for office. Nominations are welcome from the floor, or can be called in beforehand to 301-262-5148.

OFFICERS:

President: Maureen Blades (Incumbent)
Vice-President: Ken Cohen (Appointed)
Treasurer: Larry Williams (Incumbent)
Secretary: Sherry Williams (Incumbent)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Jeanine Dorothy (Appointed)
Lynette Fullerton (Incumbent)
Beth Kantrowitz (Incumbent)
Katy Pape (Appointed)
Teresa Watson (Incumbent)

Many thanks to outgoing board members. Bill Sefton will continue as FUNA and GBNA bird walk leader and will lead the FUNA/GBNA Committee. Mike Sampson continues as substitute leader, walk recorder, and eBird reporter as available. Bob Elvander needs more time to play tennis and hockey - and bird! Meghan First is concentrating on www.Polyxenes.com, her fledgling bird seed company.

Help Needed!

Our chapter will participate in the following local events to let the community know we are an active group and make and our bird walks, programs, clean-up efforts, and other activities. We talk with people about their bird and nature questions and tell them what PGAS does to help. Our table has diverse handouts on birds/butterflies/other wildlife, *The Bluebird*, items for kids, etc. We hopefully gain new members to make our chapter stronger.

The **Bowie Green Expo** is Sat., April 11, 1-4 pm, at Bowie Kenhill Center, 2614 Kenhill Drive. We look forward to our 2nd year there.

It will be our 1st time at the **Greenbelt Green Man Festival**, 10 am-6 pm on Sat., May 9, with many other groups involved in making our world more conservation minded.

Bowiefest is Sat., June 6, 10am-6pm. This annual event is well-attended. This would be our 1st time and a good opportunity for exposure, but our regulars are unable to be there that day. We would be grateful for volunteer(s) to coordinate our presence there and help.

We will participate for our 2nd year on Sat., Sep. 5 at **Information Day of the Greenbelt Labor Day Festival** with many other non-profit organizations.

We would appreciate and can use volunteers at all. You need not volunteer for all day. Being there lends a hand for extra help and a break when needed – and it's fun! There is a lot of camaraderie between those volunteering, those visiting our table, and the other groups participating as well. Please consider helping "man the table" at any event, particularly the first two events right around the corner, and let us know now by contacting Sharon Williams, 301-249-7535 (h); shrws@gmail.com; or Maureen Blades at 301-262-5148 (h); mblades5@verizon.net.

Thank you so much,

Sharon Williams
Member, Community Outreach Committee

Trip Report: Cape Henlopen, DE

On Saturday, 2/28/2015, the last day of the ornithological winter, Fred Fallon led 7 birders to Cape Henlopen and Indian River Inlet in Delaware – Jane Fallon, Beth Kantrowitz, Ed Kirk, Diana Grimley, Bill Sefton, Lisa Streckfuss, and me. Fred's first accomplishment was taming the weather. The sun was out, the wind was low, and temperatures were not too cold. The conditions were ideal for using a spotting scope. Fred's best accomplishment was finding the birds. The trip's highlights included Cedar Waxwings, great looks at Brown-headed Nuthatch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ipswich subspecies of the Savannah Sparrow, Snow Buntings, and Yellow-rumped Warblers at Cape Henlopen. Indian River produced all three species of Scoters, Common Eider, Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, and a variety of other water birds. We saw over 50 species on this trip. Another great day in the field.

Ken Cohen



Prince George's Audubon Society

P.O. Box 1311

Bowie, MD 20718-1311

The Prince George's Audubon Society (PGAS) was established 42 years ago as a chapter of the National Audubon Society to serve northern Prince George's County and parts of Anne Arundel County. In the ensuing years, PGAS was instrumental in the clean-up & creation of the Fran Uhler Natural Area (FUNA), the creation of the Luther Goldman Birding Trail at Lake Artemesia, starting bluebird nest box trails, conducting clean-ups, and providing free nature/bird walks, field trips & countless programs to its membership & the general public. In cooperation with the Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), PGAS has led bird walks at FUNA for 27 years & at the Governor Bridge Natural Area (GBNA) for 11. Incorporated in the State of Maryland, PGAS is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization of over 800 members with officers elected by the general membership. Membership in PGAS comes automatically from joining the National Audubon Society. Members receive *The Bluebird*, official newsletter of this chapter, keeping them informed of bird walks, field trips, monthly programs, events, and other news of interest. In 2001, the PGAS and the Patuxent Bird Club, a chapter of the Maryland & Ornithological Society, began jointly planning monthly programs & field trips. Come join us - and learn more about the natural world, birds, their challenges, and what we can all do to help.

New Member Application

Join the **National Audubon Society** for an introductory rate of \$20.00 & receive these benefits:

- Four issues of renown *Audubon* magazine
- Membership in the local chapter (PGAS)
- PGAS newsletter, *The Bluebird*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Please make membership check payable to: National Audubon Society & mail to: PGAS, P.O. Box 1311, Bowie, MD 20718-1311

____ Yes, I would like to add a donation for the work of the PGAS: \$_____. Please make donation check payable to PGAS and mail to address above. Thank you!

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Prince George's Audubon Society Chapter C2ZL010Z