

# Chesupioc



## Fall 2014 Newsletter

### Good News for Delmarva Fox Squirrels

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will soon file a formal proposal to delist the Delmarva fox squirrel from the Endangered Species list. Added to the list in 1967, this subspecies of the fox squirrel was then in serious trouble, occupying just 10 percent of its historical range. Once found throughout the Eastern Shore, by the mid-sixties it could only be located in four counties in the mid-Shore region. Of interest to Chesapeake Audubon members, Delmarva fox squirrels could then and can still be found at our Pickering Creek Audubon Center near Easton, Maryland. When we first viewed the future Center's property in 1980, having an endangered species present was very exciting, and one reason it was initially called Pickering Creek Audubon Sanctuary.



Delmarva fox squirrel, taken March 5, 2013. Courtesy of the Chesapeake Bay Program, license available at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/>

Delmarva fox squirrels are robust, the largest squirrel in North America. They have prominent ears, a white belly, a very bushy tail, and a light grey pelage. When disturbed, Delmarvas tend to run across the forest floor rather than head up the nearest tree. Accordingly, they require mature forests with large trees and a minimal shrub/sapling layer. They do not adapt well to

modern society, having the unfortunate propensity of dashing across a road and under the tires of oncoming vehicles. Staff members at Pickering Creek have called them "suicide squirrels," and a number have been killed even along the dirt road on the grounds of the Center by cars doing less than the 15 mph speed limit. However, the primary factor causing their decline has been logging of mature forests prior to development.

Staff at the Maryland Department of Natural Resources began a translocation program in the 1980's, trapping excess Delmarvas from areas with good population sizes and relocating them to areas of suitable habitat without the subspecies. One early success was on Assateague Island, and was aided by the willingness of the squirrels to use artificial nest boxes. Now, in 2014, Delmarvas occupy 28 percent of suitable habitat on the Eastern Shore, and the subspecies is doing well, no longer considered in danger. Along with Assateague Island, Pickering Creek remains one of the best places to see this beautiful squirrel.

*by Bryan MacKay*

## Fall Birdseed Sale!

If you have never patronized the CAS Fall Birdseed sale, you have been missing out! It is time to hop on the seed wagon and make your birds happy. A sampling of delectable edibles are black oil sunflower seeds, sunflower hearts, white millet, thistle, peanut halves, several types of suets, and safflower seeds. Place an order now and pick up your seed on November 22 at St. Bartholomew's Church in Catonsville.

**Orders due by November 15th.**

Order form, instructions, and directions to the church are available at <http://www.chesapeakeaudubon.org/>, or contact Robin at 410-277-9213 or [rjschless@yahoo.com](mailto:rjschless@yahoo.com).

Newsletter Contents:	Page
Field Trips .....	2
Chili Dinner.....	5
Patterson Park Walks.....	4
314 Species on the Brink .....	4

## Field Trips and Programs:

Some of the dates provide an opportunity to choose a trip or double up and participate in two. Beginner birders are welcome and encouraged to attend our walks!

**Sunday, October 12, 11am to 4pm**

### Harvest Hoedown at Pickering Creek Audubon Center

Join folks at Pickering Creek Audubon Center for some good ol' fashioned foot stompin' fun at their Annual Harvest Hoedown Festival. Enjoy hayrides, artisans selling their crafts, waterfront and children activities, delicious food, live music, and much more. Pick your choice of music on two stages: New & Used Bluegrass, Rick Forrest, Alan Girard, Oil City Ramblers, and Slim Harrison and Rock Candy Cloggers. **Cost: \$10 per car. Contact Susanna Scallion for more information: 410-822-4903.**

**Saturday, October 18, 8:00am**

### Mount Pleasant Farm (Howard County Conservancy)

Leader: Tim Houghton

Mount Pleasant Farm in Howard County is a premier place for field birds, including a large variety of sparrows. This is an easy walk in a beautiful location. **Contact Tim to register and for meeting location and directions: [thoughton@loyola.edu](mailto:thoughton@loyola.edu) or 410-510-7504.**

**Sunday, October 18 Annual Chili Dinner!**

Jim Brighton with talk about the Maryland Biodiversity Project. See details on page .....

**Sunday, November 2, 2:00pm to 5:00pm**

### Patapsco State Park: Grist Mill Trail

Leader: Bryan MacKay

Patapsco Fall Color Walk. Join naturalist Bryan MacKay for a 3-mile walk on the mostly paved Grist Mill Trail to look at birds, plants and fall color. At the halfway point, we'll hike 300 yards on a dirt trail to see a waterfall. This is a pretty section of Patapsco, with the river always in sight. **Please contact Bryan to register and for directions at least a day in advance: [mackay@umbc.edu](mailto:mackay@umbc.edu) or 410-747-7132.**

**Saturday, November 8, 9:00am—Day trip**

### Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge

Leader: Hugh Simmons

Famous for millions of Snow Geese in the winter, this refuge is also reliable for a variety of other waterfowl and winter land birds. We will meet at the refuge headquarters at 9am. **There is an entrance fee of \$4/ car. Contact Hugh Simmons at [lensonnature@gmail.com](mailto:lensonnature@gmail.com) or 410- 628-4246 (before 9pm) to sign up and for trip instructions.**

**Saturday, November 29, 8:00am**

### Oregon Ridge Nature Center

Leader: Ruth Bergstrom

Join us during Thanksgiving weekend at this 1110 acre park in Baltimore County as we concentrate on sketching and note taking in the field to learn the details of the birds we encounter. Trip is limited to 10 participants. Please bring a small notepad or sketchbook and pen or pencil you can carry easily on the hike. **Register with Ruth at [ruthb22@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthb22@yahoo.com) or call 443-752-1967.**

**Saturday, December 6, 8:00am**

### Loch Raven Reservoir

Leader: Hugh Simmons

A variety of waterfowl and usually a few Bald Eagles are likely to be seen on this trip, but there are often surprises. **Contact Hugh Simmons to [sign-up](#), and obtain meeting location and information: [lensonnature@gmail.com](mailto:lensonnature@gmail.com) or 410-628-4246 ([before 9pm](#)).**

**Saturday, December 13, 8:00am**

### Eagles at Conowingo Dam

Leader: Fred Brundick

Join photographer, naturalist, and Board Member Fred Brundick for a hike along the old railroad tracks in search of winter residents. Some years more than a hundred Bald Eagles can be viewed near the dam. Gulls and Great Blue Herons are present in large numbers too. **Bring your camera as well as binoculars. Contact Fred to [register](#) and get directions: [gpferd@gmail.com](mailto:gpferd@gmail.com) or 443-752-5607.**

(photograph from Jim Brighton, Maryland Biodiversity Project)



**Sunday, December 20, 8:30am**

### North Point State Park, Beginning Bird Walk

Leader: Ruth Bergstrom

Located in Edgemere, this 1,310 acre park is on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Fledgling birders are an especially welcome sight as we walk the jetty looking for waterfowl; we will then scan the marshes and trails for other winter visitors. \$3/vehicle. **Contact Ruth to register and for meeting instructions: [ruthb22@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthb22@yahoo.com) or 443-752-1967 .**

**Thursday, January 1, noon-2:30pm**

### Soldiers Delight (Owings Mills area)

Leader: Bryan MacKay

Start off the New Year with a 3-mile hike at Soldiers Delight (near Owings Mills). We probably won't see much, but Soldiers Delight is a lovely grasslands and a very pleasant place to hike. We'll start at noon (and finish by 2:30) for those recovering from the previous night. **Contact Bryan MacKay to register and for information and directions at least 24 hours in advance: [mackay@umbc.edu](mailto:mackay@umbc.edu) or 410 747 7132 at least 24 hours in advance.**

**Sunday, January 24, 11:00am**

### Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (Eastern Shore)

Leader: Ruth Bergstrom & Tim Houghton

Take a trip with Ruth and Tim to the Blackwater NWR on the eastern shore. You will search for Tundra Swans, Snow Geese, Brown-headed Nuthatches, wintering ducks, and other avian treasures. Join Ruth for dinner after the trip to compare bird lists and tally the results. **Contact Ruth to register: 443-752-1967, (email) [ruthb22@yahoo.com](mailto:ruthb22@yahoo.com).** Carpooling will be possible from the White Marsh park-n-ride.

Friend us on

facebook

# Chesapeake Audubon Society



**30th Chili Dinner**  
Saturday, October 18, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

*Featuring*

**Jim Brighton**

*“Maryland Biodiversity Project”*

Maryland Biodiversity Project (MBP) is cataloging all the living things of Maryland. The goal is to promote education and conservation by helping to build a vibrant general nature study community. The project was started in June 2012 by Bill Hubick and Jim Brighton. The MBP has already cataloged over 14,000 species, including over 5,000 species with photographs, and features the work of more than 300 naturalists and photographers. Join us for a wonderful presentation by the MBP's Jim Brighton, who will explain the project and show some of the more interesting Maryland creatures and plants that have been cataloged to date, from the humble Peacock Fly (photo above left) to the majestic Bald Eagle, and from the tiny Pink Earth Lichen (photo, right) to the mighty White Oak (photo, below). For more information on the MBP, check out their website at: <http://www.marylandbiodiversity.com/index.php>



**Where:** St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 4713 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore, MD



**Cost:** \$10.00 per person for dinner and the program, \$13.00 if you would like a glass of wine or a beer with dinner.

**Reservations:** Call (410) 203-1819; specify if you prefer vegetarian sauce. Please send checks payable to The Chesapeake Audubon Society PO Box 3173, Baltimore, MD 21228 or call (410) 203-1819 and leave a message with your name, telephone number and number of people you will be bringing.

**Directions:** Take Baltimore beltway to exit 15A (Rte. 40, Baltimore National Pike east, towards Baltimore.) Take Rte. 40 about 2 miles, just past the convergence of Route 40 and Edmondson Ave. The Church is on the right.

**We are again extremely fortunate to have a local guitarist and songwriter, Sean McCahill, performing for your listening pleasure during the dinner.**



*Please note: we ask that you reserve your meal ticket in advance. As always, walk-ins are welcome, but we can't guarantee there will be enough food for them.*

## Noteworthy Information

**Volunteer!** Do you enjoy helping out at special events, like to write letters, or have an idea for a field trip or workshop? Chesapeake Audubon is always looking for volunteers or new committee members. Please e-mail [information@chesapeakeaudubon.org](mailto:information@chesapeakeaudubon.org) if you'd like to become more involved with our chapter. Visit our Web site for a peek: <http://www.chesapeakeaudubon.org/>.

