

DELMARVA ALMANAC

May 2010

Between The Shore Lines **Confessions Of A Drive By Birder**

I am relatively new to birding. I don't know whether to call it a new hobby - my latest form of art - my current obsession – or even possibly my present form of meditation. I only know that now I carry my camera with me most of the time. And, that my favorite Sunday afternoon pass times, reading the paper and watching a good movie have been replaced by a leisurely ride home from church meandering through the country side, stopping along the way at some of my favorite birding spots.

For many, birding is about keeping score. How many birds are on my life list? Well, I actually don't have one. That isn't really what does it for me. I admit there is some satisfaction in being able to identify a wide variety of birds, say - knowing the difference between a laughing gull and a Forester's tern; or better yet the difference between a great white egret and a snowy egret. However, I am more interested in simply being in the presence of these beautiful creatures.

Most of the time this is a fairly lazy endeavor. I drive on quiet country roads. If I see something birdlike on a wire or branch, after a quick check of the rear view mirror for cars behind me, I slow down and pull over to get a shot. I've gotten some pretty interesting pictures this way. Though parking and actually getting out of the car and staying awhile yields even better results. But being a "drive by birder" isn't just about whether I get out of the car or even whether I get a good photo. It is being aware all the time of the birds around me; whether it is on the feeder outside my window, or at the convenience store.

I am trying to be more intentional about my birding. Recently, one early foggy morning, my husband and I visited a spot in Libertytown, Maryland where I got some nice pictures including this woodpecker. But because of the weather conditions the pictures were more art than identification. Yet those are some of the best pictures. It isn't about merely getting a crisp clear image in one split second. It is about saying something about the relationship we have with these creatures who are, after all, our neighbors.

I suppose birding for me is one part art, one part meditation, and one part connection to all of creations blessed community.

Delmarva History This Month

May 23, 1774 - In solidarity with Boston's response to British taxes, the citizens of Chestertown, Maryland enacted a set of "Resolves" forbidding all sale and use of tea in Chestertown. In broad daylight and without disguise they boarded the British brigantine the Geddes and dumped her cargo of tea in their harbor.

In May, 1774 – A British commercial vessel the Severn, on its way to Philadelphia sank during in a storm in the Roosevelt Inlet at Lewes, Delaware.

May 7, 1779 - Continental Navy sloop Providence captures British brig Diligent off Cape Charles, Virginia.

May 25, 1798 – The HMS DeBraak, a Sloop-of-War of the Dutch Royal Navy, sank off Cape Henlopen after "a sudden flaw of wind" losing thirty-five of her crew, and twelve Spanish prisoners.

May 20, 1815 - Commodore Stephen Decatur native of Berlin (Sinepuxent), Maryland, sails with 10 ships to suppress Mediterranean pirates' raids on U.S. shipping.

May 6, 1916 - First ship-to-shore radio telephone voice conversation from USS New Hampshire off Virginia Capes to SECNAV Josephus Daniels in Washington, DC.

May 14, 1963 - Gloria Richardson, one of the founders of the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee, was arrested for trespassing when attempting to be served at a local restaurant in Cambridge, Maryland. This and other events set off a series of riots which resulted in the Maryland National Guard being brought in through May 1965.

The Garden Of Good Living

Time To Get Busy Gardening – by Dana Kester-McCabe

Pat Hendrickson is on hiatus this month.

No more excuses. It's time to get outside and get the yard and garden ship shape. There's all those cool garden projects I've been daydreaming about since the holidays. I have to quit procrastinating. Taking a picture of a flower is not the same as planting one!

I am so inspired by the flowers I see blooming in my travels around Delmarva. Right now irises are in full display mode. They come in lots of varieties but I especially love to see those that grow wild along the edges of ponds and ditch banks.

And, speaking of wildflowers, there are plenty to see this time of year. Roadside meadow plantings really look great. I know - they're not really wild - just wild looking. But they are pretty as are these wild phlox growing along the Pocomoke River. The other day, on Taylor's Island in Dorchester County I saw these lovely late season naturalized daffodils. Then there are the dune flowers, stark yet cheery. And of course there is the lawn owner's nemesis, but my friend, the dandelion.

Most counties have ordinances against just giving up mowing and letting our yards go altogether wild. But planting low growing native ground covers reduces the amount of lawn that needs to be mowed. It saves water and is one more thing homeowners can do to reduce pollution in our water ways.

I've said it before but it bears repeating. I love all the little flowering weeds growing in my yard. They are my contribution to the native plants movement. And speaking of that, this month there are native plant sales all over the Shore which benefit local environmental groups. They will have some though not all the wild flowers I mentioned here and actually many more.

Guess I better get me to one of those sales or dandelions will be the only flowers I get to enjoy in my own yard this year! Be sure to check the Garden of Good Living webpage to get links to more information about gardening in our area.

Rhythms' & Tides

Outdoors In May On Delmarva

It is great to get back out on the water now that the weather is warming up, especially because the crowds have not begun to arrive. Now is a good time to catch your own bait as minnows and fiddler crabs are plentiful.

Upper Shore Chesapeake & Delaware Bays

In the tributaries white perch, shad, and a few catfish can be had on live bait.

Mid Shore Atlantic Ocean & Coastal Bays

Trout have finished spawning and are moving down the Delaware Bay to the Atlantic region where they are best caught around jetties and bridges. By now the flounder have begun, but be sure they are big enough. Sea Bass are running and Bluefish in earnest two weeks either side of Mother's Day.

Mid Shore Chesapeake Bay

Croakers and Hardheads are being caught on the Wicomico River. Meanwhile carp, herring, bass, pickerel and cruppy can be found in tributaries at places like Whiton and Porter's Crossing.

Lower Shore Chesapeake Bay & Atlantic Ocean

Speckled Tout can be found around Crisfield and Dames Quarter. In the shallows look for Red Drum; and in deeper waters Black Drum.

And don't forget to check with your local department of natural resources for license requirements and catch limits. Get links to their sites, tides, and local fishing forums for more hot spots, on the Rhythm and Tides web page.

The Delmarva Birding Weekend was held recently and all the trips had a good time even with the threat of a little rain. I went kayaking on Ayers Creek where I saw this eagle. I saw another eagle in southern Worcester County recently having a little fracas with a red tailed hawk. Eagles are certainly making a comeback in this area on a big way.

This past week I went to the Black Water Refuge in Dorchester County where I saw a number of hawks and this osprey, an eastern kingbird, and of course the ubiquitous great white heron. Closer to home there seems to be lots of nesting going on. This little killdeer I spotted wasn't too happy with me. She put on her wounded act to protect some nearby chicks. Another family unit seen in the same vicinity was this immature blue heron and parent.

I also noticed an interesting site at a farm near the Pocomoke River. These guinea fowl were out strolling about on their own, unfenced. They are not native here but there have been some feral flocks in the area. Odd looking critters aren't they?

Sunrise & Sunset

Sunrise at the beginning of the month: 6:06am
Sunrise at the end of the month: 5:41am

Sunset at the beginning of the month: 7:54pm
Sunset at the end of the month: 8:20pm

Moon Phases

May 14 - New Moon
May 27 - Full Moon

Names for the May Full Moon - Bright Moon,
Flower Moon, Frogs Return Moon

Moon rise at the beginning of the month: 11:34pm
Moon rise at the end of the month: 11:31pm

Moon set at the beginning of the month: 7:05am
Moon set at the end of the month: 8:49am

Other Sky Events

May 1-12 - Phi Bootid Meteors - These meteors began in April and peak on the 1st. Best seen around midnight high in the eastern sky.

May 3-4 - Alpha Scorpiid Meteors - Faintly seen in the east at about 9PM and overhead at about 1AM.

May 9-11 - Eta Aquarid Meteors Peak -Debris cloud left by Haley's Comet seen near the eastern horizon from the end of dusk till midnight.

Venus can be seen as an "evening star" throughout Summer, 2010.

Mars and Saturn are all visible during evening hours.

Jupiter, Uranus and Neptune are visible in the dark hours before dawn.

Celestial Navigation

by Valerie Morrissey

This month's sign is Taurus the Bull, a feminine earth sign ruled by Venus. It is appropriate that Earth Day is observed annually on or close to the day the Sun enters this sign in April. Taurus loves the outdoors, gardening, farming, picking up rocks, and looking after the environment. They don't mind getting their hands dirty and usually have a carefully landscaped property. They prefer the country life. Living in the city is too hectic for them.

They are laid back people who take a long time to accomplish things. They can be lazy and if they don't feel like it, they won't do it. They know better than anyone how to relax. Quite passive, they smile politely and just sit there. Being a fixed sign, they are probably the most stubborn and set in their ways than anybody. They procrastinate.

Taurus men and women make good bankers, stockbrokers and realtors. They like to accumulate money and real estate. They are good at making money and hold on to it too tightly. They must learn to share the wealth and not be stingy. Taurus folks appreciate fine art, music and architecture. They love gourmet food and fancy restaurants. They have tastefully decorated homes with quality furnishings. They don't go for the ostentatious like Leo, but their furniture must be sturdy and finely crafted, such as Ethan Allen for example.

They tend to be short and stocky, and have great physical strength. They are prone to neck injuries and sore throats. But since they don't get as stressed out as most people do, they are healthy and hardly ever sick. They rarely get angry but when they do, they explode. Get out of the way. They work hard if they want to achieve something, and have great patience and endurance.

Jupiter & Uranus - Part 1

Jupiter and Uranus become dance partners in May. That is, they are in conjunction. The ballroom is in Pisces, which is a congenial place for Jupiter, since in ancient tradition he was the ruler of Pisces. Jupiter expands or increases whatever he touches. Jupiter makes people gain weight or drink too much, especially in Pisces, but he also expands the mind and awareness. On a global level we have a wonderful combination of inspiration, charity, humanitarian progress and social reform. One example has already

occurred in the health care reform bill, since Uranus can make things happen before the exact aspect forms.

Even though it has some issues to be worked out, the intention is change for the greater good of the people. In some ways we will have the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Generous funding could come out of nowhere. There will be greater concern with public welfare, food pantries, and building houses for the homeless, and caring for people affected by the recent floods and earthquakes. Since Uranus also rules revolution, there may be unexpected upheavals in various places. Leaders who have become too fat and arrogant (Jupiter) may be deposed.

In your personal lives, it could be a very exciting time. There will be opportunities and surprise developments in your work. It will feel like standing in a thunderstorm and enjoying the thrill of every rumble and lightning bolt. Wonderful new ideas come to you, as well as solutions to old problems. Jupiter and Uranus will travel together until early next year. On June 8th they will be exactly in conjunction in 0° of Aries. Because of the decidedly different character of Aries, the scene will become highly energized. No longer the gentle waves of Pisces, but more like a forest fire. Tempers will flare and confrontations will occur. Progress will be forced upon us, so get ready. Stay tuned!

Aries (Born between March 21 - April 19)

This month the planets are spread out all over the place for a change. This is reflected in a changing kaleidoscope of activities for almost everyone. Each day will be new and different from yesterday. Rams should be on the lookout for vampires and subversives at work. There could be some power plays going on, and women could figure into this. Uranus will come marching in on the 28th, so get ready for some surprises.

Taurus (Born between April 20 - May 19)

New Moon here on the 14th. Mercury camping out here will go direct on the 12th, and after that you make decisions, sign contracts and legal documents. If there is any tension in your relationships, it should let up after this time, and you can talk things over. At the end of the month, keep your eyes open. Deception and dishonest practices are afoot, if you are involved in public affairs. Someone at home may not be telling the truth.

Gemini (Born between May 20 - June 20)

Venus is here during the first half of the month, in a T-square to Saturn, Jupiter and Uranus on the 18th-20th, which could cause some brief problems in the romance department. There could be short flings that burn out quickly, or an affair might not last because of obstacles or separation. Get out and connect with people but try not to have great expectations, and keep an open mind about your lover's shortcomings.

Cancer (Born between June 21 - July 22)

When Venus moves in on the 20th it will be a nice time for you. You will get the TLC and sympathy you crave, and the time to relax and do nothing, even if only for a day or two. Treat yourself well, get a haircut or go to the beach. Don't let anyone push your buttons. And since you are in a period of transformation because of Pluto, you might get a complete makeover. Change your style of dress and put on a new persona.

Leo (Born between July 23 - August 21)

Because of Mars you are still, fortunately, in an active, creative period. Even if you are moving in high gear, take care to notice what your colleagues are up to, as well as your partner. Coming up at the end of the month with Mars opposite Neptune there could be some misunderstanding. Also at this time you should be very careful of food, drink and medications. Overdoses or food poisoning sometimes occur because of Neptune.

Virgo (Born between August 22 - September 22)

Saturn is stationary/direct on the 31st, so you might feel positively stuck in the mud. Read about Gemini. This will help clarify things, if you are having relationship issues. And try not to get discouraged. Make sure you get enough rest and take care of your body. You are not Superman and you don't have to save the world all the time. By August 1st, Saturn will have left your sign and you will feel lighter and cheerier.

Libra (Born between September 23 - October 22)

Read about Aries, because there may be some interesting stuff going on with your career. Women could be very helpful to you, behind the scenes or anonymously. But there could be some manipulation you didn't know about. Go with the flow and learn from the experience. Some Librans might fall in love and elope in the next few months with Uranus blowing into your house of relationships. It will be something to talk about.

Scorpio (Born between October 23 - November 21)

Any communication problems with your spouse will be ironed out after the 12th. This is a good time for business partnerships also, with the New Moon on the 14th. All new projects are favored at this time. Because of Mars and Neptune getting ready for a showdown, there may be scandal, misrepresentation or dishonest practices revealed in a public display, concerning your company or position. Somebody could be embarrassed!

Sagittarius (Born between November 22 - December 21)

Full Moon here on the 27th, when matters come to a climax. The aspects between Venus, Saturn, Jupiter and Uranus could create some fireworks early in the month, if you are in a committed relationship, but it will blow over quickly. This is not a good time to get engaged. Wait a while. Channel your energies into creative projects, sports or workouts. You've got a lot of steam going in your engine, so put it to good use.

Capricorn (Born between December 22 - January 20)

With the New Moon on the 14th, creative projects can be initiated, and some Goats will find new job opportunities. All new beginnings are favored. After the 20th will be a good time to form new partnerships of all kinds, such as weddings, engagement announcements and social events where you can meet new lovers. Get ready for some excitement at the end of the month when Uranus starts acting up in your career house!

Aquarius (Born between January 21 - February 19)

Neptune slows down this month so you might feel lazy, distracted and less productive than usual. You're not paying attention and you'd rather be outside at a park instead of the office. Read about Leo. You should take care with foods, medications and so on. You could have misunderstandings with your partner. Don't hide things from each other. With Venus, romance, recreation, children's activities, and the arts are favored.

Pisces (Born between February 20 - March 20)

This is a continuation of last month, with Jupiter and Uranus in a close conjunction, as I described above. Since Saturn is in the mix, some of you with birthdays in mid March may feel excited and inspired one day and then frustrated and cynical the next day. There is no perfect way to deal with it, except take things as they come, with an attitude of acceptance. If a plan derails, wait until a better time when the way opens.

Holidays & Observances This Month

This is: Archaeology Month in Delaware.
National Physical Fitness & Sports Month
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

May's Flower: Lilly-of-the-Valley, Hawthorn
May's Birthstone: Emerald

May 1 - May Day
 Beltane (Celtic)
May 2 - Brothers and Sisters Day
May 3 - World Press Freedom Day
May 5 - Cinco de Mayo
May 6 - National Nurses Day
May 8 - V-E Day
 World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day
 International Migratory Bird Day

May 9 - Mothers Day
 Peace Officer Memorial Day
May 15 - Armed Forces Day
May 18 - International Museum Day
May 23 - Pentecost Sunday
May 21 - National Waiter/Waitress Day
May 22 - National Maritime Day
 National Safe Boating Week Begins
May 28 - Vesak (Buddha's Birthday - Buddhist)
May 31 - Memorial Day

Out & About This Month

Wednesday, May 5

42nd Annual Seafood Festival
Chincoteague Island, Virginia

Saturday, May 8

Berlin Blues & Jazz Bash
Downtown Berlin, Maryland

Friday, May 14

4th Annual Black Drum World Championship
Fishing Tournament
Bay Creek Marina - Cape Charles, Virginia

Saturday, May 15

17th Annual Drums on the Pocomoke Native
American Indian Pow-Wow and Festival
Cypress Park - Pocomoke City, Maryland

Saturday, May 22

2nd Annual Greene Turtle Diamondback Dash -
5K Race
Indian River Inlet, Delaware

Friday, May 28

Chestertown Tea Party
Chestertown, Maryland

Saturday - May 29

Spring Arts & Crafts Show
40th Street and the Bay - Ocean City, Maryland

*Don't miss this month's Art Stroll at your local
arts district. Also watch for cruising season to
begin this month on most sailing vessels and
party boats on the Chesapeake and the Atlantic.*

*Be sure to visit Delmarva Almanac online for an extensive community calendar which covers the entire
peninsula, tide tables, original photography and much more: [Delmarva-almanac.com](http://delmarva-almanac.com)*

Resources for some of the information contained in this publication include:

<http://archives.delaware.gov>

<http://www.arksky.org>

<http://www.earthcalendar.net>

<http://www.e-referencedesk.com>

<http://en.wikipedia.org>

<http://www.loc.gov>

<http://www.msa.md.gov>

<http://www.ocmuseum.org/>

<http://www.vahistorical.org>

<http://www.noaa.gov>

<http://www.seasky.org>

<http://www.skyandtelescope.com>

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