

Huntley Meadows Birdathon 2009

After what has so far been a mild winter, the spring migration is almost ready to begin again. Cardinal, chickadee, and house finch can all be heard singing in the morning. Waterfowl numbers will soon be rising, and it won't be long before Green Heron and Bittern will be seen again in the wetland. Before you know it, there will be reports of warblers and thrush hiding behind leaves where recently there were just bare branches. And that means it will also soon be time for the 13th annual Birdathon on May 5th.

Every year, staff and volunteers set out in early in the morning to count exactly how many species are present. This event has grown from what was once an annual survey of species by park staff into something more important. It provides an opportunity to remember two volunteers, Ed Weigel and Ken Howard, who for years inspired a love of nature within the Park visitors they met. They shared their time, wisdom, wit, and enthusiasm with everyone, acting as true ambassadors for Huntley Meadows. Their good work continues to this day through the internships made possible by the donations made annually to this event.

An internship provides a young person with an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a future in conservation. Just think, your donation today could help the next Ken Howard or Ed Weigel get started. This year, as always, we will be hoping to reach 100 species for the day. We've done it five times now, with 108 species in 2004 the record. If you donate, say, a quarter per species, then reaching 100 species would produce a donation of \$25. That would go a long way towards helping us reach our annual goal.

I believe this is an outstanding cause. Like many of you, I knew Ken and Ed well, and count myself fortunate for the insights into the natural world that they provided me. I want to see their good work continue, and I hope you will feel the same way.

Thank you very much.

Andy Higgs

Birdathon at Huntley Meadows Park

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

DONATION AMOUNT: _____

Please make checks payable to FCPA-HMP and add on the memo line,
Donation - park ops.

Mail this form and check to:
Birdathon, Huntley Meadows Park,
3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria, VA 22306