

gansers. Between March and October the beautiful wood duck is often seen in the bay, although it is more common in Dyke Marsh, just south of the bay, where it breeds in hollow trees along the edge and collects in numbers up to 50 in September and October.

What brings this concentration of waterfowl and shorebirds to Hunting Creek Bay is a combination of shallow water, abundant food, and exposed sand and mud flats at low tide. The latter is particularly attractive to the shorebirds and dabbling ducks (i.e., mallards, blacks, pintail, teal, and shovellers), which find good feeding in the mud.

One of the charms of a place like Hunting Creek Bay is that in attracting the variety of birds that it does, one or more real rarities are also likely to be found each year. Just this past winter a whistling swan stayed in Hunting Creek Bay from November 19, 1967 to at least February 18, 1968, and was seen and watched by hundreds of people. Although this swan is a common winter visitor in Chesapeake Bay and in the lower Potomac River, it is a very rare wintering species this close to the District of Columbia. In 1962 two different iceland gulls (one adult, one immature) were seen in Hunting Creek Bay on four different dates between January 20, and March 17. Other rarities that have been seen in the bay since 1950 include, blue goose (twice, once in November and once in early May); red-necked grebe (three times); American avocet (once, in October); reeve (a European shorebird, stayed for 3 days and seen by many); Wilson's phalarope (twice, in September); glaucous gull (once, in January) and California gull (once, in February).

Although man has destroyed the marshes and mud flats west of Hunting Creek Bay, the bay itself continues to draw hundreds of waterfowl throughout the year and an almost equal number of both local and foreign bird students to watch them. It is *the one* easily accessible place within a few miles of the District of Columbia where such a wide variety of water birds and shorebirds can be seen nearly year around. What is left of it should be retained, with no further encroachment by man permitted so that along with the Jones Point Park on the north side and Dyke Marsh on the south, a relatively small patch of nature is left in suburbia for future generations to enjoy.

Sincerely,

JACKSON M. ABBOTT,
*Conservation Committee, Audubon Naturalist,
Society of the Central Atlantic States.*

FALLS CHURCH, VA., June 20, 1968.

HON. GEORGE H. FALLON,
*Chairman, Committee on Public Works,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. FALLON: The Falls Church Garden Club, with a membership of some 200 from Falls Church, Arlington, Fairfax County, and the District of Columbia, wish to file a vigorous protest against the building of a bulkhead on Hunting Creek. Our club is vitally interested in conserving natural estuaries as sanctuaries for wildlife, fishes, and plants for the benefit of the public. We suggest that the permit for the bulkhead on Hunting Creek be withdrawn or canceled.

Will you please see that this letter is referred to the Hon. Robert E. Jones, Chairman of the Natural Resources and Power Subcommittee, and is filed as part of the hearings?

Sincerely yours,

FALLS CHURCH GARDEN CLUB,
JAMES N. BRADFORD, *President.*

ALEXANDRIA, VA., June 20, 1968.

HON. ROBERT E. JONES,
*Chairman, Natural Resources and Power Subcommittee,
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. JONES: This is written to protest the recent action of Army Engineers, approving a land fill of Hunting Creek at the southern end of Alexandria.

Not only will this operation be detrimental to wildlife, but will increase flood danger. Moreover, high-rise apartments, planned for this area, tend to aggravate serious, existing problems.