

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*



Folk Name: Hudsonian Curlew, Jack Curlew

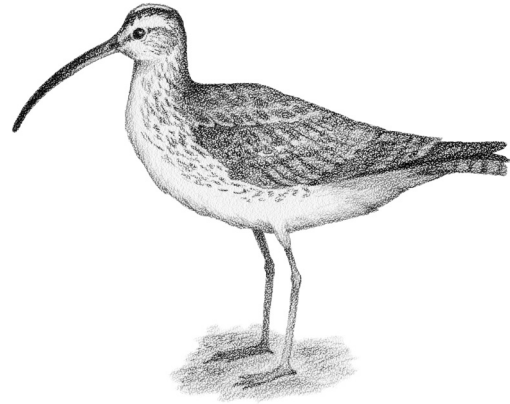
Status: Migrant

Abundance: Accidental

Habitat: Mudflats

The Whimbrel is a very large sandpiper (17 ½ inches) and is the only shorebird seen in our region that has a long decurved bill. This bill is usually quite noticeable from a distance. In addition to this key feature, the adult birds have obviously striped crowns. The Whimbrel is primarily a winter visitor along the coast of the Carolinas, but there are some present year-round in both states. It does not nest here. Whimbrel are known to use areas along the South Carolina coast as a “major staging area” during spring migration and flocks of close to 2,000 have been seen there. The species is a very rare find anywhere inland in the Carolinas. There are only two reports of Whimbrel found in our region.

The first Whimbrel reported in the region was found in a freshly plowed farm field near Concord in Cabarrus



County. The bird was reported by Russ Rogers on July 31, 1984. David Wright was the second person to report one here. He watched a Whimbrel as it flew over Lake Norman on September 22, 1989, just after Hurricane Hugo raged through the Carolinas.