

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT-1970	COAST			COASTAL PLAIN						PIEDMONT										MTN.					
	Bodie-Pea Island, N.C. 30 December	Wilmington, N.C. 2 January	Charleston, S.C. 27 December	Hilton Head Island, S.C. 30 December	Beaufort Co., N.C. 3 January	Pamlico Co., N.C. 27 December	Rocky Mount, N.C. 3 January	Southern Pines, N.C. 22 December	Dillon, S.C. 26 December	Columbia, S.C. 28 December	Aiken, S.C. 3 January	Hertson, N.C. 29 December	Raleigh, N.C. 23 December	Chapel Hill, N.C. 1 January	Greensboro, N.C. 2 January	Winston-Salem, N.C. 2 January	Stanly Co., N.C. 2 January	Charlotte, N.C. 2 January	Greenville, S.C. 1 January	Elkin-Ronda, N.C. 26 December	North Wilkesboro, N.C. 28 December	Calwell Co., N.C. 31 December	Buncombe Co., N.C. 2 January	Great Smoky Mtn. Natl. Park - 3 January	
Purple Finch -----					4	9	8	5		6	2	43	79	21	24	92	45		2	1	4	17	3		
House Finch -----					3	3					7	1	2	22	21	*	1								
Pine Siskin -----					2							15	4	16	1	*									
American Goldfinch -----					8	37	41	4	103	73		63	137	63	161	101	62		66			30	223		
Red Crossbill -----																									
Parus-sided Towhee -----					43	16	51	14	31	48	29	126	105	97	68	259	210			29	8	22	70		
Indiv. Totals -----	133	200	160	207																					
Indiv. Totals -----	4	246	38	74	24	23	12	20	51	25		36	20		3	4	17								
Savannah Sparrow -----																									
Grasshopper Sparrow -----	1																								
Sharp-tailed Sparrow -----	107																								
Seaside Sparrow -----	3	49	5	2																					
Vesper Sparrow -----																									
Lark Sparrow -----		*	40	104			6	70		24		6													
Bachman's Sparrow -----																									
Slate-colored Junco -----	2				367	56	417	137	232	68	121	551	621	1,007	483	736	441		218	58	146	147	483		
Chipping Sparrow -----	1	93	148	113	15	63	30	12	3	30	27	6	1	9	21	9	21		30	77	10	3	162		
Field Sparrow -----	30	30	60	174	12	35	52	116	63	71	20	73	280	58	206	90	285		77	10	14	50	50		
White-crowned Sparrow -----	2,194	45	96	199	12	35	116	63	71	120	20	73	280	58	206	90	285		77	10	14	50	50		
Indiv. Totals -----	52										5	5	20	3	9	9	9		5	1	7	2	2		
White-throated Sparrow -----	6,068	36	357	296	673	163	25	70	145	88	117	156	441	739	303	475	345		263	53	248	28	500		
Fox Sparrow -----	408	9	98	18	11	10	*	23	58	3	7	3	45	1	2	2	66		1	4	2	24	24		
Lincoln's Sparrow -----	2																								
Swamp Sparrow -----	269	509	162	62		10	42	14		17		61	72	6	2	1	5						30		
Song Sparrow -----	220	108	130	87	37	3	35	188	45	58	2	137	312	95	138	93	157		63	16	22	75	281		
Snow Bunting -----	3																								
Total number species -----	151	156	156	143	86	52	64	78	60	75	52	82	81	82	85	80	77		41	60	32	37	54	58	
Total number individuals -----	41,397	16,193	38,469	14,643	8,609	1,960	4,645	6,628	1,428	3,803	1,566	9,135	6,364	8,344	5,933	11,052	39,516	354	2,735	611	1,301	2,173	5,011		
Field observers -----	22	18	21	50	8	3	4	6	3	9	6	14	13	27	23	24	23		8	16	1	0	7	52	
Yard observers -----	0	0	0	2	10	0	5	3	2	0	0	3	16	5	2	6	37		1	3	0	23	2	1	
Field parties -----	7	6	9	13	3	1	1	3	1	3	5	2	6	8	9	10	10		3	3	1	0	3	17	
Party-hours -----	70	56	78	105	24	10	10	33	10	19	38	8	60	54	83	84	98		56	8	9	10.5	32	114	
Party-miles -----	156	301	302	466	18	79	64	160	43	151	191	25	178	112	222	432	136		315.5	60	95	22	135	406	

* Seen in count area during count period but not on count day.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT — 1970

ELOISE F. POTTER

The 1970 Christmas Bird Count in the Carolinas was another record breaker. The total number of species reached a new high of 217, and three count areas listed more than 150 species. Charleston and Wilmington tied for first place with 156 species, and Bodie-Pea Island listed 151. Outstanding inland counts came from Beaufort County, N.C. (86 species) and Winston-Salem (85). Charlotte reported the best winter list in 28 years, and Elkin-Ronda had the best count since 1953.

The total of 217 species is actually only one better than 215 (not including Rock Doves) tallied in 1965. Wilmington's local record of 164 species set in 1961 still stands. The total number of individuals (255,137) doesn't begin to approach the more than 3 million birds counted in 1963 when the huge blackbird roost was at Greensboro.

Snow kept the Caldwell County, N.C., participants mostly in their own yards and somewhat restricted coverage in other upper piedmont and mountain areas; but elsewhere the weather was not particularly unpleasant for the time of year.

The present count probably sets a new record for rare species and common ones found out of season in the Carolinas. An immature Great Cormorant seen by two parties at Bodie-Pea Island is the first known sight record for North Carolina. Birders in the same count area also found a Greater Shearwater, Common Teal, Yellow Rail, and Black-legged Kittiwake. Wilmington recorded the Western Grebe and Hilton Head the Red-necked Grebe.

Hawk totals are surprisingly good. More Red-tailed, Marsh, and Pigeon Hawks were found than at any other time in a decade or longer. Peregrine Falcons appeared at Rocky Mount and Hilton Head; Broad-winged Hawks turned up at Charleston, Pamlico County, and Caldwell County; and Rough-legged Hawks were seen in Pamlico County, Rocky Mount, and Stanly County.

Passerine stragglers were truly notable: Eastern Kingbird (Dillon, Buncombe County), Great Crested Flycatcher (Hilton Head), Wood Thrush (Charleston, Beaufort County), Swainson's Thrush (Winston-Salem), Black-and-white Warbler (Hilton Head, Beaufort County), Prothonotary Warbler (Beaufort County), Parula Warbler (Hilton Head), Blackburnian Warbler (Hilton Head), Yellow-throated Warbler (Wilmington, Hilton Head, Beaufort County), Prairie Warbler (Charleston), American Redstart (Hilton Head), Blue Grosbeak (Southern Pines), Painted Bunting (Southern Pines during count period), and Lark Sparrow (Hilton Head during count period).

Evening Grosbeaks visited five of the 24 areas during the count period, and Purple Finches were noted in 18 localities. Considering the small number of northern finches tallied on the census, the sighting of a Red Crossbill in Stanly County was very unusual.

House Finches appeared in nine localities from Beaufort County in eastern North Carolina to Winston-Salem and Charlotte in the west. Greensboro listed 22 House Finches and only 21 Purple Finches, while Winston-Salem had 21 House Finches compared to 24 Purples. This introduced species, first recorded in North Carolina in November 1962 (*Chat*, 28:63), seems to be well established and rapidly spreading as a winter visitor in the southeastern United States. In January and February 1970 it was found as far south as McDonough, Georgia (*Oriole*, 35:29), approximately 800 miles SW of Long Island, N.Y., where caged birds were released 30 years ago.

COMPILERS' COMMENTS

BODIE-PEA ISLAND, N.C.: Greater Shearwater (EP, JP) was seen with 30X scope and 7 X 50 binocular in direct sunlight just beyond the breakers at a distance of about 100 yards from a vantage point on the dunes at N tip of Pea Island. Seen four times in 20 minutes, the bird was smaller than the Gannets it was with when first noticed. About the

size of a Black Skimmer, it flew on stiff wings with the slender black bill held downward. Dark above and white below, the bird had a black cap that sharply contrasted with the white cheeks and a distinctly seen white V on the rump. There is one previous North Carolina winter record from Wilmington (*Chat*, 11: 11, 1947).

Great Cormorant (HDP, RH, DH) constitutes the the first sight record for North Carolina. Pratt saw the immature bird flying directly overhead at 7:30 AM. Viewed with a 7X binocular for about 15 seconds, the bird had a white belly. At this time it was flying across Oregon Inlet from the ocean to Pamlico Sound. Hader and Hughes, unaware of Pratt's sighting, observed an immature Great Cormorant at 2:00 PM flying northward over the ocean parallel to the beach at a point about 6 airline miles S of Oregon Inlet. The large size and very white belly in contrast to dark upper parts were noted in excellent light at 150 to 200 yards with a 20X scope.

Glossy Ibis (PS, JW, et al.) was an adult bird. Common Teal (PS) was feeding with Green-winged Teal in shallow water on Pea Island N.W.R. Horizontal white stripe on side above wing and absence of vertical white stripe carefully noted with 30X scope. Second consecutive winter species has been in same general area. Common Eider (MB, HLJ, HDP, DS) was a brown plumaged bird at Oregon Inlet.

Yellow Rail (BW) was flushed from under foot in a brackish marsh on Bodie Island. About the size of a Sora, the bird was tawny above with white wing patches. It flew feebly with dangling legs for a short distance and disappeared under a shrub. Piping Plovers (HDP, MB, HLJ, DS) were on sand flat at southern tip of Bodie Island. Willet (MB, HLJ, HDP, DS) was also at Oregon Inlet. Short-billed Dowitchers (PS, JW, RH, DH) seen on Pea Island were identified by double call note. Marbled Godwits (MB, HLJ, HDP, DS) were on sand flats at southern tip of Bodie Island and have been in area all fall. American Avocets (3 parties) at Bodie Island by the lighthouse and at North Pond on Pea Island N.W.R. are a portion of a much larger group present in the area during the summer and fall.

Black-legged Kittiwake (JP, RT) was an adult bird carefully observed at 100 yards with 7X binoculars off the beach at northern end of Pea Island. Dovekie (EL, DEP, RHP) was seen in flight under excellent viewing conditions just offshore at southern end of Bodie Island. Dovekie remains were found at several places along the beaches in count area.

Grasshopper Sparrow (JC, HC, ET, RT) on Roanoke Island was studied carefully as it perched in open. Lincoln's Sparrow (ET) was also on Roanoke Island; observer is familiar with species.—Paul W. Sykes Jr.

WILMINGTON, N.C.: Western Grebe (HL III) was seen in good light with 30X scope at about 150 to 200 yards for about 3 minutes on the Inland Waterway at Myrtle Grove Sound. About the size of a Common Merganser, the bird had a prominent white throat and black crown, long needle bill. Red-throated Loon was present for comparison. The Western Grebe reported without comment as seen during the count period last year was found by John Irvine (see GFN this issue). Two parties saw Yellow-throated Warblers.—Frances B. Needham

CHARLESTON, S.C.: Broad-winged Hawk, Wood Thrush (NAC, AN, FHB), and Prairie Warbler (WFR, JRG) are somewhat unusual, but there are other winter records for area.—Julian R. Harrison

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C.: (center: Spanish Wells Landing to include Hilton Head, Pinckney, parts of Daufuskie, Buckingham and Bluffton).

Red-necked Grebe (RW, EW, SB, DB) came to surface several times in good light at close range; large size, large bill, topknot unmistakable. Wood Ibis (VM, SM) was in flight; four had been seen during count period. Peregrine Falcon (AH, OH, et al.) was a female seen perched and chasing a crow; bird remained throughout count period. Knots (LD, BN) were studied carefully among other shorebirds; seen throughout count period at Tybee and Hilton Head. Great Crested Flycatchers (BH, HL, et al.), Parula Warblers

(HL, MF, MS), American Redstart, and Blackburnian Warbler (SB, DB) were unusual stragglers. The latter was seen in sunlight at close range; light triangle around eye, wing bars, yellowish sides, and light streaking on back all noted.—Mrs. J.G. (Beany) Newhall

BEAUFORT COUNTY, N.C.: Osprey (EB) was seen on river several times in December. Wood Thrushes, Prothonotary Warblers, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak were all close studies of feeder visitors by Ethel Barkley. House Finches (EB, GC) are new for area with as many as 10 birds present at Barkley feeder since 7 December. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (HS) has been present all fall.—Geraldine Cox

PAMLICO COUNTY, N.C.: Broad-winged Hawk (GC et al.) was seen perched at 50 feet and in flight. Rough-legged Hawk (GC et al.) had been present for past two weeks. Common Gallinule nests in area and can be found at all seasons. Royal Tern (GC et al.) was a close observation of a sitting bird.—Geraldine Cox

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C.: Peregrine Falcon (JB, BD, LD, JLT) is unusual for this section of the state at this time of year. Rough-legged Hawk (JB, BD, LD, JLT) is rare. House Finches are present for second consecutive winter. Low water level in most ponds cut wildfowl count.—John L. Thompson

SOUTHERN PINES, N.C.: Robins were unusually numerous. Blue Grosbeak (JHC, EL, HL, RT), probably a young female, was studied closely perched in small tree; first winter record for count area. Painted Bunting first appeared at Mary Wintyen's feeders 24 December. Identity confirmed by Carter on 1 January.—J.H. Carter III

DILLON, S.C.: Eastern Kingbird (RAB) was on a power line in a residential area.—John H. Wilson.

AIKEN, S.C.: White-eyed Vireo (WP).—Gerald E. Knighton

HENDERSON, N.C.: House Finches for second consecutive year.—Mary Frances Chavasse

RALEIGH, N.C.: Rain hurt species total, especially hawks and owls. Male House Finch (EL) was one of several birds present at Rose Garden since early December. Blackbird roost at Garner disbanded by late November.—Harry E. LeGrand Jr.

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.: Species count of 81 equals record set last year. Unusual were 10 Brewer's Blackbirds (DB) and a Common Gallinule (JOP, DB). The latter, especially surprising in winter, was in shoreline brush at a large farm pond and was still present 10 days later.—James O. Pullman

GREENSBORO, N.C.: Ice and snow remaining from the storm of 31 December made ground and water conditions poor for birding even though the count day was nearly clear with light winds. The 22 House Finches were at Mrs. Garrett's feeder in the western part of the city. She had such a flock much of last winter and again earlier this winter.—Thomas E. Street

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.: American Bittern (RS, RH, et al.) was watched at close range at edge of fresh-water marsh. Clapper Rail (RS, RH, et al.) was heard calling repeatedly from same marsh; call well known to observers and compared to song recordings. [Although the Clapper Rail is normally a bird of the salt marsh, individuals occasionally wander inland. The *AOU Check-list* gives several inland records including one from Lexington, Virginia.—ED.] Swainson's Thrush (CRH) had conspicuous eye-ring and only one leg.—C. Royce Hough

STANLY COUNTY, N.C.: Male House Finch has been at Whitlock feeders every day since 4 January 1971. Red Crossbill (RB) was N of New London.—Mrs. J.U. Whitlock

CHARLOTTE, N.C.: House Finch has been present at Norwood feeder since 23 November. Number of Red-tailed Hawks was a record for area; number Barred Owls also noteworthy; Eastern Bluebird count highest in 11 years. Two large flocks of Starlings accounted for most of total but no roost was found. Improved coverage made this the highest winter count in 28-year history.—Joseph R. Norwood

ELKIN-RONDA, N.C.: Ring-billed Gull (JT) is first appearance on Christmas count, but a few are seen most winters. Two male Brown-headed Cowbirds (OH) were at a feeder. Bluebird count was highest since 1964; total species highest since 1953.—Lin Hendren

CALDWELL COUNTY, N.C.: Broad-winged Hawk was seen by Mrs. Ainsley A. Whitman and Mrs. Murray Bruner near their home about 4 miles from Lenoir. They have seen it frequently in a wooded section and near a marshy area of Lower Creek. Although *Birds of North Carolina* lists this species as a summer resident, Fred May confirms that it does occur here in winter.—Mrs. E.M. Manchester

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N.C.: Eastern Kingbird (MD) was at a feeder 31 December 1970. Common Snipe (GGM) was on Warren Wilson College grounds.—Robert C. Ruiz

OBSERVERS

BODIE-PEA ISLAND, N.C.: Robert L. Ake, Mike M. Browne, Jay H. Carter III, Clay L. Gifford, Sam B. Gifford, Robert J. Hader, David L. Hughes, H. Lee Jones, Robert S. Kennedy, Edmund K. LeGrand, Harry E. LeGrand Jr., Dwight E. Peake, Richard H. Peake Jr., Eloise F. Potter, Jack Potter, H. Douglas Pratt, Dave Sonneborn, Paul W. Sykes Jr., Elizabeth P. Teulings, Robert P. Teulings, B. Williams, John Williamson.—Paul W. Sykes Jr., P.O. Box 2077, Delray Beach, Florida 33444

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1971

Dates: 18 December 1971 through 2 January 1972
CBC forms will be sent to 1970 compilers about 1 December.
Reports received after 15 January 1972 will be published
in *Chat* only at the convenience of the editor.