

## Lark Bunting at Pea Island, N.C.

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On 27 October 1970 my husband and I were on Pea Island going out to the observation platform when I noticed a dark junco-like bird with its back toward me. I gave a squeaking noise, and the bird jumped around to face me. It then flew about 3 feet to another low bush, showing the big white patches in the wings. I called to my husband to hurry back and see the Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*), and we called the bird out several times along with many juncos and sparrows. Seeing a Lark Bunting still in spring plumage was quite a start, but we both had excellent looks at the bird before it flew into a small live oak tree and refused to show himself again. The wind was blowing very strong and gusting up to 40 mph.

We have had several Lark Bunting records (five, I think) at Back Bay, Virginia, the last one in late August 1968.

[Two other sightings of this western bird have been made in North Carolina. One was just north of the current observation at Bodie Island on 2 September 1963 (*Chat*, 28:31-32).—DEPT. ED.]

## White-crowned Sparrow Near Raleigh, N.C., in June

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On 19 June 1969 I observed an adult White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) at Lake Wheeler, Wake County, N.C. The bird was feeding in short grass near a boat house. All field marks were carefully checked. The bird was chased away by a Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*). An attempt to locate and collect the bird later was unsuccessful. Apparently this is the first June record for the state although there are many early May observations.

## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Compiled by ROBERT P. TEULINGS  
Route 2, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514  
(All dates are for the 1970-71 winter season.)

RED-NECKED GREBE - Two were sighted near the Hatteras Island, N.C., ferry landing on 25 December by Douglas and Elaine Kibbe.

HORNED GREBE - Unusual numbers were noted in early winter and late winter at Roanoke Rapids Lake in the northern piedmont section of North Carolina where 73 were counted on 20 December and 89 on 6 March by Merrill Lynch.

WHITE PELICAN - Three immatures were seen together in the vicinity of the Citadel, Charleston, S.C., 12 through 14 January by D.M. Forsythe and B.J. Kelley Jr.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - One was seen at Savannah N.W.R. near Hardeesville, S.C., on 3 February by Marie Mellinger and Caroline Newhall.

**BLUE GOOSE** - A peak winter population of 400 was recorded at Mattamuskeet N.W.R. in Hyde County, N.C., in mid-January, as reported by Dan Benfield.

**FULVOUS TREE DUCK** - One was seen on 21 December at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C., and remained in the area for at least a month, Ted Beckett. Elsewhere, hunters were reported to have bagged 11 Fulvous Tree Ducks from a single flock near Delco in Columbus County, N.C., on 19 December. Two of the specimens were given to J.F. Parnell for the collection at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

**EUROPEAN WIDGEON** - A male was sighted among a raft of several hundred American Widgeon at Santee N.W.R. on 17 January by Dennis M. Forsythe and party. The specific location of this sighting was at Potato Creek impoundment south of Davis Station, Clarendon County, S.C.

**LESSER SCAUP** - An enormous flock estimated at more than 50,000 birds was concentrated in Charleston harbor on 23 January. Jay Carter watched the birds take flight en masse ahead of a nuclear submarine leaving the harbor.

**OLDSQUAW** - Inland occurrences were noted at Lakeview near Southern Pines, N.C., where an individual was observed on 9 January by Jay Carter, and at Roanoke Rapids Lake north of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., where Merrill Lynch found a single bird on 7 February and three on 21 February.

**HOODED MERGANSER** - Sizable numbers were present in late January through February at Roanoke Rapids Lake, where a peak of 93 was recorded on 31 January by Merrill Lynch.

**COMMON MERGANSER** - One was seen at Beaver Lake, Asheville, N.C., on 22 November by Robert C. Ruiz. Single birds were also found at Salem Lake near Winston-Salem on 7 January and 6 February by Ramona Snavely, Charles Frost, and Robert Witherington. At Raleigh, individuals were recorded on 12 December by Harry and Edmund LeGrand and on 26 February by T.L. Quay et al.

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** - An impressive inland count of 149 was recorded at Roanoke Rapids Lake near VEPCO dam on 28 March by Merrill Lynch.

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** - One was closely observed by Robert M. LaVal on 16 February in Charleston County, S.C., about 8 miles west of McClellanville. This sighting constitutes only the second winter record of this species for the state.

**ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK** - One was sighted near Durham, N.C., on 29 December by Norman Budnitz and party. This well-documented record, along with additional occurrences reported around the region during the Christmas count period (*Chat*, 35:21), indicated a significant and unusual winter influx.

**MARSH HAWK** - Jay Carter reported an unusual sighting of six birds simultaneously over a field near Marston in Richmond County, N.C., on 24 January.

**PEREGRINE FALCON** - R.M. LaVal reported an individual present through the winter at Cape Romain N.W.R. on the South Carolina coast.

**GOLDEN EAGLE** - One was seen in Francis Marion Nat'l Forest by Ted Beckett on 28 February. Beckett also reported seeing two birds regularly during the winter at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C.

- BALD EAGLE** - A wandering immature was recorded inland at Lake Benson near Raleigh, N.C., in early February by T.L. Quay and others. The bird was first seen on 6 February and lingered there for several days.
- RAILS** - At least 20 Yellow Rails and one Black Rail were observed after being flushed into view during the annual burn-off of grass at the Beaufort, N.C., airport on 17 February, as reported by John Fussell.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER** - A single bird was seen at Pawley's Island, S.C., on 3 February by F.M. Probst.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** - Twelve were seen and positively identified by their characteristic single-note call at Pea Island, N.C., on 30 January by Harry and Edmund LeGrand.
- HUDSONIAN GODWIT** - One was carefully identified at Pea Island on 27 February by Robert L. Ake and several members of the Cape Henry Bird Club. The bird was observed closely in flight as well as on the ground.
- GLAUCOUS GULL** - A second year bird was seen on the North Carolina coast several miles south of the Virginia border on 23 December by Robert L. Ake. Nine days later on 1 January an individual in similar plumage (same bird?) was found near the Bodie Island lighthouse by David Sonneborn and party.
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** - Increasing numbers are wintering along the South Carolina coast where the species was formerly rare. Repeated sightings were recorded during the 1970-1971 season at Pawley's Island by F.M. Probst, and seven were counted at Isle of Palms on 13 February by James Hebrard and Sidney Gauthreaux. Inland, two immature birds were found at Salem Lake near Winston-Salem, N.C., on 12 February by Charles Frost, Dwight Lee, Ramona Snaveley, and Robert Witherington.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** - Two adults were found in the company of Ring-billed Gulls at Collington Harbor on Croatan Sound, N.C., 6 and 7 February by Henry Haberyan. Identification was based on the birds' similarity in size to the Ringbills and by their yellowish leg color. This constitutes the second sight record for the state.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL** - As many as 25 were seen inland at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., on 5 and 6 February, Darryl Moffett, Donna Goodwin, Harry LeGrand, and Edmund LeGrand.
- ALCIDS** - The remains of two birds believed to be Razorbills were found at Oregon Inlet on 30 December by Mike Browne. Identification was made from wing parts recovered for museum examination. A Dovekie was also found dead at Oregon Inlet by Mike Browne on the same date.
- LONG-EARED OWL** - One was present through the winter at North Wilkesboro, N.C., where Wendell Smith regularly heard the bird's distinctive call.
- WHIP-POOR-WILL** - A lingering bird was heard at New London, N.C., in Stanly County as late as the third week in December by Naomi Goforth.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** - One was positively identified at Roanoke Rapids, N.C., on 19 December by Merrill Lynch.

- SWAINSON'S THRUSH** - A bird was present out of season at Greenfield Lake in Wilmington, N.C., during the first week in February, reported by Edna Appleberry. Another was seen at a roadside park near Smithfield, N.C., on 10 February by Dwight Lee, Polly Lee, and Ramona Snavelly.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** - One at Roanoke Rapids, N.C., in the northern piedmont section of the region on 26 December was unusually late for that locality, Merrill Lynch.
- CAPE MAY WARBLER** - Terry S. Moore recorded a lingering individual near Beaufort, S.C., on 14 December.
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** - Two birds, a male and female, were seen near Moore's Landing on the South Carolina coast, 12 February, by Thomas H. Davis. This is one of very few records from the coastal section.
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** - The wintering population ranged last season as far westward as Forsyth County in the North Carolina piedmont, as evidenced by a confirmed report of at least 7 winter residents at Winston-Salem, Ramona Snavelly.
- ORCHARD ORIOLE** - An adult male was present as late as 15 December at Hilton Head Island, S.C., Caroline Newhall.
- WESTERN TANAGER** - A bird in winter plumage was observed closely in a yard at Roanoke Rapids, N.C., 11 February by Merrill Lynch.
- DICKCISSEL** - One was seen at a feeder in Clemmons, N.C., 26 March, immediately following a late-season snow storm, Margaret Gidley, Page Hill, and Fred Hill.
- EVENING GROSBEAK** - No significant invasion occurred in the Carolinas during the 1970-1971 season. In sharp contrast to the previous two winters, grosbeaks were scarce and in many places absent.
- HOUSE FINCHES** - Observed numbers of winter visitors were up at Raleigh, Chapel Hill, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem. At Greensboro, Mrs. I.W. Garrett recorded a flock of 37 at her feeder in mid-January. House Finches were reported for the first time in Beaufort County, N.C., at Washington (Ethel Barkley) and in Stanly County, N.C., at Albemarle and New London (Vivian Whitlock and Vera Crook).
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW** - One was carefully identified by John Fussell in the vicinity of Morehead City, N.C., on 29 November.
- LARK SPARROW** - A winter visitor was recorded at Wright Memorial, Kitty Hawk, N.C., on 30 January, Harry and Edmund LeGrand.
- SNOW BUNTING** - A single bird was seen at Sunset Beach, N.C., on 27 February by Evelyn Dabbs and Jay Carter.