

SPRING BIRD COUNT — 1972

ELOISE F. POTTER

The 1972 Spring Bird Count in the Carolinas is another record breaker with 266 species and two additional hybrid warblers found in the 25 count areas. Last year 259 species were recorded in 23 localities. Wilmington tallied 182 species, four short of last year's all-time high but still well ahead of second-place Morehead City's 163. Winston-Salem, Raleigh, and Roanoke Rapids listed over 130 species to lead the inland counts; and Buncombe County observers found 118, the best species total yet for their mountain region.

Success of the present census is partly the result of having new or reorganized counts at Bodie-Pea Island, Roanoke Rapids, Statesville, and Yancey-McDowell Counties. On the other hand, excellent coverage is undoubtedly an important factor. With only seven more field observers than last year, the present census had an additional 19 field parties. At Charlotte birders were in the field from 4:00 AM to 9:00 PM, and they were owling around Elkin until 10:00 PM. Weather conditions were generally favorable during the period from the last weekend in April through the first weekend in May when 18 of the 25 counts were made. Only five localities (Rocky Mount, Fayetteville, Roanoke Rapids, Avery County, and Yancey-McDowell) had enough rain to hinder coverage, and only Bodie-Pea Island and Avery County reported unfavorable wind conditions. Temperatures ranged from lows in the mid-40s to highs in the mid-80s, averaging about 55 to 75 degrees F.

Although the Lawrence's hybrid warbler at Southern Pines and the Brewster's at Winston-Salem were excellent finds, the most exciting and difficult to identify bird was the Le Conte's Sparrow at Southern Pines, apparently the first spring record for North Carolina since C. S. Brimley collected one near Raleigh on 21 April 1894. For details please see Compilers' Comments.

COMPILERS' COMMENTS

COAST

BODIE-PEA ISLAND, N. C. (center: 2.4 miles SSE of Bodie Island Lighthouse, excluding part of South Pond on Pea Island and intentionally not covering Roanoke Island).

10 May. *Northern Phalarope* (EL) was a female in breeding plumage seen and heard in flight at close range at a shallow pool on Bodie Island. Six Stilt Sandpipers at Pea Island and five more the day before at Bodie Island were probably not unusual for the area. *White-rumped Sandpipers* were scattered throughout large flocks of Semipalmated Sandpipers on both Bodie and Pea Islands and were more easily identified by call notes than by their white rumps. The two *Yellow-crowned Night Herons* were on nests in pines at Bodie Island. *Pigeon Hawk* (HL) was a female well studied at Pea Island. Land bird count was unusual. The *Blue Jay* at Bodie Island and another the previous day near the U.S.C.G. Station at Pea Island are very rare in this area. No migrant warblers were found on the count, but 15 to 20 *Blackpolls* were found in one hour in mature hardwoods the next day between Kitty Hawk and Duck. Three *Rose-breasted Grosbeaks* and a *Baltimore Oriole* seen the following day near Duck, coupled with those recorded on count day, indicated a definite coastal migration for these species.—EDMUND LEGRAND and HARRY LeGRAND, 331 Yadkin Drive, Raleigh, N. C. 27609.

MOREHEAD CITY (center: same as Christmas count).

23 April. *Purple Gallinule* (JF III) was at Huntley's Impoundment 8 and 13 May. *American Golden Plover* (JF III) was at North River Marsh and was seen again on 9 May. There are previous spring records for Upland Plovers, but these are first on a count day. The jaeger was seen by Will Hon from Bogue Bank, too far off shore for specific identification. *Traill's Flycatcher* (JF III), a first record for the county, was singing

fee-bee-o song near Walker Pond. *White-crowned Sparrow* (Charles Lincoln) showed up at a feeder on count day and remained until 13 May; it is first local spring record for species.--JOHN FUSSELL III, Box 520, Morehead City, N. C. 28557.

WILMINGTON, N. C. (center: Myrtle Grove Junction).

29 April. Two *Black Rails* were flushed in salt marsh across from Wrightsville Beach by Bobby Austin, Joyce Bennett, and compiler. *White-rumped Sandpiper* (Edmund LeGrand) was in rice field at Orton. Two *Black-necked Stilts* were seen by Edmund LeGrand and four were reported to Mrs. Appleberry by Lawrence Sprunt. The *Whip-poor-will* (Jay Carter and E. LeGrand) was calling. *Black-throated Blue Warbler* (Polly Mebane), *Black-throated Green Warbler* (Carter and E. LeGrand), and *Blackpoll Warbler* (Carter, E. LeGrand) were good finds. - FRANCES NEEDHAM, P. O. Box 204, Wrightsville Beach, N. C. 28480.

CHARLESTON, S. C. (center: 14 miles NE of Mt. Pleasant and 0.5 mile E of Hwy 17).

23 April. *White Pelicans* (Perry Nugent, Nelson Taylor) were over marsh between Moore's Landing and Bull's Island; birds were seen in same vicinity by others during count period. *Gray Kingbird* (Dr. and Mrs. John K. Reed) was seen at close range at Stratton Place near Mt. Pleasant; previous spring records exist for area. Shortage of observers permitted coverage of only half of the areas in the total count circle. Data for each area are on file and available to anyone interested.--JULIAN R. HARRISON, Department of Biology, College of Charleston, Charleston, S. C. 29401.

COASTAL PLAIN

BEAUFORT COUNTY, N. C. (center: where Upper Goose Creek enters Pamlico River).

7 May. Weather caused several winter species to linger at feeders.--GERALDINE COX, Route Box 151 A, Merritt, N. C. 28556.

PAMLICO COUNTY, N. C. (center: in Florence at intersection of 1324 and 1329).

30 April. Painted Buntings seen in area, but not on county day.--MARVIN TURNAGE, Route 1, Box 25, Bayboro, N. C. 28515.

ROCKY MOUNT, N. C. (center: Battleboro, N. C.).

14 May. Rocky Mount has recently completed a 20,000-acre reservoir, and that is where the gulls and *Common Tern* were seen. The *Sanderlings* were not at the old sand pit where they have been found in the past but on some newly flooded land along NC 1717, the road to the new reservoir.--JOHN L. THOMPSON, 500 Evergreen Road, Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801.

SOUTHERN PINES, N. C. (center: Niagara, 3 miles NE of Southern Pines).

30 April. Long-billed Marsh Wren was present for third year in a row. *Lawrence's Warbler* (L. M. Goodwin Jr.) was seen briefly on the ground before it flew into trees and disappeared. Goodwin reported seeing a wide black line through the eye, black bib, yellow crown, and yellow breast clearly; but the wing was hidden by a twig. First record for area. [For another Moore County record of the Lawrence's Warbler in the spring of 1972, see Brief for the Files in this issue.--EFP] The *Le Conte's Sparrow* was found by Sandy Bishop, Jay Carter, James F. Parnell, and Dana Taylor, who flushed the bird at least 15 times at the extensive pasture and marsh complex known as Little River Farm. It showed a definite preference for wet sedges and was easily distinguished from Savannah Sparrows in flight because of its very pale back with definite streaking. Parnell and Carter plan to submit a note giving full details for publication in *Chat.*--J. H. CARTER III, Box 891, Southern Pines, N. C. 28387.

FAYETTEVILLE, N. C. (center: Methodist College).

5 May.--JOHN S. BUTLER JR., P. O. Box 3512, Fayetteville, N. C. 28305.

DILLON, S. C. (center: Dillon).

6 May. *Swainson's Warbler* was a good find, but not exactly unexpected in view of recent records from southeastern North Carolina (Southern Pines, Wilmington).--JOHN H. WILSON, Box 535, Dillon, S. C. 29536.

PIEDMONT

ROANOKE RAPIDS, N. C. (center: intersection of Seaboard Coastline tracks and Weldon city limits).

22 April. Both *Dunlin* (H. LeGrand) and *Short-billed Dowitcher* (E. LeGrand, Lynch) were rare spring transients at Occoneechee Neck. *Turkeys* (John Wright) were heard at Roanoke River. The 14 *Barred Owls* are not unusual for area but interesting in comparison with generally low numbers in other parts of state. Two *Swainson's Warblers* (Lynch, H. LeGrand, J. Wright) were heard distinctly singing in widely separated swampy canebrakes at Occoneechee Neck and were suspected of nesting. Lynch sighted one in May to confirm presence of species in area. Adult *Purple Gallinule* was at Occoneechee on 15 April and again on 13 May, but not on count day. Also during count period Lynch found three singing male *Cerulean Warblers* on 23 April in a mature flood-plain forest along the Roanoke River at Occoneechee Neck.--J. MERRILL LYNCH, 539 Henry Street, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. 27870.

HENDERSON, N. C. (center: Henderson).

29 April. *Cerulean Warbler* was found by the Carter-Hunter party. [This sighting is particularly interesting in view of the three singing males reported at nearby Occoneechee Neck six days earlier.--EFP]--NEITA ALLEN, 152 Lakes View Drive, Henderson, N. C. 27536.

RALEIGH, N. C. (center: Norfolk and Southern RR Crossing on Lake Wheeler Raod).

29 April. *Philadelphia Vireo* (Gail Whitehurst) was watched for some time at close range while perched in a small dogwood tree; all field marks indicated in Peterson were noted, including light yellow underparts.--R. J. Hader, 3313 Cheswick Drive, Raleigh, N. C. 27609.

CHAPEL HILL, N. C. (center: Franklin and Columbia Streets).

30 April. This spring has been characterized by consistently good conditions for migration, producing a steady flow of migrants but no spectacular waves. Our count reflects this, with good numbers of summer residents, a rather spotty list of transients, and small numbers of wintering species. The four *Pintails* (Forrest Calhoon) were locally unusual and our first for a spring count, as was the Snowy Egret seen during the count period by Pullman.--JAMES O. PULLMAN, Route 6, Box 149, Chapel Hill, N. C. 27514.

GREENSBORO, N. C. (center: WBIG transmitter).

29 April. [No details on Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.--EFP]--DONALD ALLEN, 2611 David Caldwell Drive, Greensboro, N. C. 27408.

WINSTON-SALEM, N. C. (center: intersection of I-40 and Silas Creek Pkwy).

29 April. *Philadelphia Vireo* (Hough party) was a singing bird watched closely. *Bachman's Sparrow* (Hough party) was compared with accompanying Field Sparrows; habitat, field marks checked. Janice Levitt saw the *Brewster's* hybrid warbler well enough to note all field marks.--C. ROYCE HOUGH, 713 Lankashire Road, Winston-Salem, N. C. 27106.

STATESVILLE, N. C. (center: Yadkin River 10 miles N of Statesville).

30 April. *Mourning Warbler* was seen by Jane Mullen. [No further details were given, but the record is not the first for that part of the state. Mark Simpson Jr. saw a Mourning Warbler in western Cabarrus County on 8 May 1967 (*Chat*, 31:77) along the

Rocky River, a tributary of the Yadkin-Pee Dee system.--EFP]--LOIS T. GOFORTH, Olin, N. C. 28660.

[In a letter dated 12 July 1972 Mrs. Mullen states that she saw the *Mourning Warbler* in an alder thicket along Rocky Creek at Sloan's Mill. Concealed by the thicket, she was able to see the grey hood and absence of eye ring and wing bars at close range. She also saw the *Tennessee Warblers* along the same stream.--EFP]

STANLY COUNTY, N. C. (center: about 2 miles NW of Badin).

29 April. Nina and Malcolm Chandler studied the *Dickcissels* carefully in their yard; one previous record for area. Bluebirds are increasing as more boxes are being placed. *Cliff and Barn Swallows* are plentiful under river bridges. *Bonaparte's Gulls* (Crook et al.) were on Badin Lake.--MRS. BARRETT CROOK, Route 2, Box 54, New London, N. C. 28127.

CHARLOTTE, N. C. (center: South Boulevard and Woodlawn Road).

6 May. *Canada Geese* (Flo Cobey) included two goslings. Yellowlegs was too far away for visual identification of species; call, if any, was indistinct. *Least Sandpiper* (Bill Cobey) was well seen at 20 feet.--JOE AND BECKY NORWOOD, 1329 Goodwin Avenue, Charlotte, N. C. 28205.

GREENVILLE, S. C. (center: Hwy 291 and 29).

6 May.--ROSA LEE HART HARDIN, Cleveland, S. C. 29635.

ELKIN-RONDA, N. C. (center: 3 miles N of Elkin on US 21).

6 May. *Tree Sparrow* was seen by Clara Henderson.--LIN HENDREN, Box 148, Elkin, N. C. 28621.

CALDWELL COUNTY, N. C. (center: Lenoir)

29 April. One Common Grackle had white in wing and tail feathers.--HELEN MYERS, 310 Beall Street, Lenoir, N. C. 28645.

MOUNTAIN

AVERY COUNTY, N. C. (center: Grandfather Golf and Country Club entrance, Linville, N. C.).

9 May. [No details given on Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.EFP]--MRS. RICHARD C. PROCTOR, 381 Westview Drive SW, Winston-Salem, N. C. 27104.

YANCEY-McDOWELL COUNTIES, N. C. (center: 2.3 miles S of Buck Creek Gap on NC 80).

22 April. *American Widgeon* (Halls) was on Lake Tahoma. *Red-breasted Merganser* (Halls) was a female at close range on small pond. The number of *Osprey* sightings was large for the area; locations were Catawba River near Greenlee, Morgan Lake, and Lake Tahoma. Two adult male *Prothonotary Warblers* were seen in good light singing at Lake Tahoma (Halls). *Rusty Blackbird* (Halls) was associating with Red-winged Blackbirds in marsh at northern end of Lake Tahoma; sighting confirmed by call. *Brewer's Blackbird* (Halls) was on a power line by NC 80.--ROBERT C. RUIZ, 300 Wilson Avenue, Swannanoa, N. C. 28778.

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N. C. (center: intersection of US 70 and SR 2740 in Swannanoa).

29 April. Count center moved 1.1 mile SW to take in more accessible territory. Elevations range from 2,018 feet at the intersection of US 74 and NC 81 to 6,085 feet at Craggy Dome on the Blue Ridge Parkway north of Asheville.

Common Loon (Margaret Finch, Robert Ruiz) was on north end of North Fork Lake. One *Ruby-throated Hummingbird* (Gorden Mahy, et al.) was at Craggy Gardens (elevation 5,000 feet). *Common Raven* (Holt party) was at low elevation in Montreat. *Brown-headed Nuthatch* has been at Mrs. Stanley Masters' feeder since middle of April; continued presence of two birds on 10 May suggests possibility of nesting nearby, which would be very unusual for this area. *Swainson's* and *Nashville Warblers* were found by Hall family in Fairview area. Three *Tree Sparrows* (Linda and Wendell Cisco) were at Oteen, and fourth was in Mary F. Sawyer's yard. *White-crowned Sparrows* were seen by Mrs. S. M. Rauchwerger in her yard at Chunn's Cove.—ROBERT C. RUIZ, 300 Wilson Avenue, Swannanoa, N. C. 28778.

OBSERVERS

BODIE-PEA ISLAND, N. C.: Edmund LeGrand, Harry LeGrand.

MOREHEAD CITY, N. C.: John Fussell II, John Fussell III, Will Hon, Charles Lincoln, Don McCrimmon, C. J. Spears, Dick Williams, Doris Williams.

WILMINGTON, N. C.: Chris and Bill Alexander, Mrs. S. L. Alexander, Edna Appleberry, Bobby Austin, Joyce Bennett, J. H. Carter III, Betty and Lloyd Davis, Dot Earle, Janet and Haskell Hart, Frank Kosh, Kitty Kosh, Harry Latimer III, Edmund LeGrand, Harry LeGrand, Billie McEachern, Polly Mebane, Frances Needham, Ann T. Nicholson, James F. Parnell, Mary Urich, John Waggett, Mrs. J. M. Waggett.

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BEAUFORT COUNTY, N. C.: Ethel Barkley, Geraldine Cox, Louise Gambel, Bobby McKenzie, James McLaurin, Mary McLaurin, Polly Rowlett, Louise Satterthwaite, Mary Lee Smith, Marvin Turnage, Mary Elizabeth Williams, Mary Wilson.

PAMLICO COUNTY, N. C.: Geraldine Cox, Marvin Turnage.

ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.: E. Carr Speight, Sarah Speight, John L. Thompson.

SOUTHERN PINES, N. C.: Sandy Bishop, Eleanor Carter, J. H. Carter III, L. M. Goodwin Jr., Frances Parnell, James F. Parnell, Dana Taylor, Lura Williams, Mary K. Wintyen, Ethel Wotton.

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STATESVILLE, N. C.: Lois Goforth, Ralph Goforth, Jane Mullen, Ellie Jones, P. Flippen Jones III, Bobby Mize, Mark Simpson.

STANLY COUNTY, N. C.: Nina Chandler, Malcolm Chandler, Margaret Crawley, Vera Crook, Claude Hinson, Nelle Hinson, Frances Hinson, Vera Littleton, Susan Manly, Heath Morgan, Bessie Morgan, Harold Morris, Anne Olsen, Vivian Whitlock, John Whitlock.

CHARLOTTE, N. C.: Genevieve Barber, Elsie Brewer, Godfrey and Beverly Browne, Bill and Flo Cobey, Adrian, Beth and Susan Dykema, Herbert Hechenbleiker, Brem Mayer, Elizabeth Millwee, Joe and Becky Norwood, Al Ross, Bill Sayward, Bill Smith, Janice Spangler (Mecklenburg Audubon Society).

GREENVILLE, S. C.: Ruth Gilreath, Rosa Lee Hardin, Gladys Hart, May Puett.

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New and Timely. A beautiful book, **SWAMPS, RIVER BOTTOMS, AND CANEBRAKES**, by Brooke Meanley, has just been issued by Barre Press, Barre, Massachusetts. The excellent text is complimented by many photographs by Brooke and other naturalists, and it describes swamps and river bottoms from Dismal Swamp to the Everglades. Of special interest to Carolinians are the chapters on I'On Swamp, Big Swamp on the Edisto, and the Pinetown Pocasin. Birders will enjoy the accounts of the Bachman's Warbler, the Swainson's Warbler, and the Ivory-billed Woodpecker of the Tensa Bottoms. Anyone who enjoys the watery wilderness areas of the south will want this book.