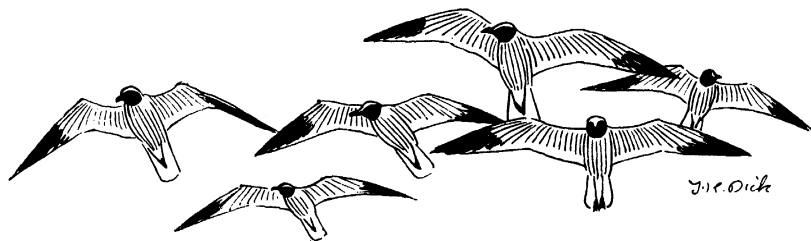


(*A.c. subvirgata*), Southern (*A.c. diversa*), James Bay (*A.c. altera*), and Nelson's (*A.c. nelsoni*). The occurrence of all five races in South Carolina is documented by specimens in the Charleston Museum. To say that field identification of two or three of the races is questionable, is an understatement.

Among writers commenting on this difficult group, Peterson (1947, *A Field Guide to the Birds*, p. 272) notes the similarity of the Nelson's and James Bay races, and says that "Most of the migrants that were once called *nelsoni* in N.Y. and N.E. are probably of this race [James Bay]. Sight records cannot be accepted." Hill (*in Bent, Life Histories of North American Cardinals, Grosbeaks, Buntings, Towhees, Finches, Sparrows, and Allies*, 1968) states that "... without the specimen in hand, and without adequate skins for comparison, it is my opinion that *diversa* vs *caudacuta* are inseparable, as are *subvirgata* vs *altera*, *altera* vs *nelsoni*, and perhaps *nelsoni* vs *caudacuta*." Further, that "In the field, *altera* cannot be separated from *subvirgata* on one hand, or from *nelsoni* on the other; even with the specimen in hand the diagnosis is difficult and sometimes impossible."

During the preparation of the first edition of *South Carolina Birdlife* (1949), the late H.C. Oberholser examined critically the Charleston Museum's specimens of Sharp-tailed Sparrows, in addition to those of many other species. His opinions concerning the identification of Sharp-tailed Sparrow races are reflected in the paragraph above.

In view of the uncertainties involved, compilers and researchers cannot be expected to accept sight record identifications of Sharp-tailed Sparrow subspecies.



BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Compiled by ROBERT P. TEULINGS
Route 2, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514

(Winter season, 1974-1975)

COMMON LOON: Inland, 22 were tallied at Roanoke Rapids Lake, Halifax County, N.C., on 4 January by Merrill Lynch.

RED-NECKED GREBE: One was a rare visitor on the South Carolina coast sighted in Charleston harbor on 9 March by Sidney Gauthreaux and Harry LeGrand.

HORNED GREBE: An impressive inland count of 196 was recorded by Merrill Lynch at Roanoke Rapids Lake, N.C., on 2 January.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: Four were uncommon inland visitors at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., observed on 30 March by James Mulholland.

LITTLE BLUE HERON: Three were noted on 24 March at Townville, S.C., by Harry LeGrand, a seasonally early occurrence for the species in that western piedmont locality.

CATTLE EGRET: Nine late lingerers were observed near Grandy in coastal Currituck

- County, N.C., on 14 December by Robert Tripician. Elsewhere three were reported by John Fussell to have overwintered on Bogue Bank in the vicinity of Atlantic Beach, N.C. Another was seen near McClellanville, S.C., on 24 January by Dennis Forsythe.
- WHITE IBIS:** A winter occurrence of an individual was recorded as far north as Buxton on the North Carolina Outer Banks on 18 February by Fred Pongrace, fide Joe Hudick.
- GLOSSY IBIS:** Seven were seen at Pea Island N.W.R. on 8 February by Robert Tripician, and small numbers lingered in the Charleston, S.C., area through the winter, as reported by Dennis Forsythe.
- WHISTLING SWAN:** Mattamuskeet N.W.R. in Hyde County, N.C., continued to attract a high wintering population of swans with a peak count of 18,000 recorded there in early December, fide Don Harke. Up to 200 also wintered at Pea Island N.W.R. according to census data furnished by Jack Hagan. A few wandered as far south as Cape Romain N.W.R. and Charleston along the South Carolina coast. Inland, scattered and uncommon piedmont occurrences were noted during the winter at Reidsville, Roanoke Rapids, Seaforth, and Whispering Pines, N.C.
- SNOW GOOSE:** Jack Hagan reported a peak winter concentration of 7,200 at Pea Island, N.W.R., including 25 birds of the blue form. At Garysburg, N.C., two of the latter form were seen on 5 January by Merrill Lynch and eight were noted on 19 January at South Island near Georgetown, S.C., by Ted Beckett.
- WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** One was seen at Santee N.W.R. on 18 February by Dennis Forsythe.
- FULVOUS TREE DUCK:** Nine were seen in a small flock at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C., on 8 February by Ted Beckett. In addition, three were recorded farther north at Bells Island, Currituck County, N.C., on 5 April by Frank Aycock, and 17 were seen at Cape Hatteras, N.C., on 7 April by Clay Gifford.
- NORTHERN SHOVELER:** Four were uncommon inland visitors at Raleigh, N.C., observed at Inwood Pond on 8 February by James Mulholland. Two were also seen inland at Clemson, S.C., on 24 March by Harry LeGrand.
- GREATER SCAUP:** Locally uncommon occurrences were recorded at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., where 18 were seen on 10 March by James Mulholland and four at Pendleton, S.C., on 29 March by Harry LeGrand.
- OLDSQUAW:** One was present inland at Clemson, S.C., 22-24 January, fide Harry LeGrand.
- COMMON GOLDENEYE:** Two were seen on the coast at Mt. Pleasant, S.C., on 21 January by Dennis Forsythe. Inland, one was found at Roanoke Rapids Lake in Halifax County, N.C., on 3 January by Merrill Lynch, and another was seen at Lake Surf near Vass, N.C., on 14 March by Jay Carter.
- COMMON EIDER:** A lone winter visitor was observed at Pea Island N.W.R. on the North Carolina Outer Banks on 27 December by John Williamson. At Charleston, S.C., one was seen at Fort Sumter on 9 March by Dennis Forsythe et al., and another sighting of the same or another individual was noted by Julian Harrison at Fort Moultrie on 20 March.
- COMMON MERGANSER:** One was seen near Morehead City, N.C., on 19 December by John Fussell. Elsewhere, three were found inland at Kerr Scott Reservoir near North Wilkesboro, N.C., by Wendell Smith on 3 January, and four were seen on the same date at Roanoke Rapids Lake in Halifax County, N.C., by Merrill Lynch.
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** One was observed by Stanley Alford and Angelo Capparella at Seaforth in Chatham County, N.C., on 8 March; later seen by many observers.
- BALD EAGLE:** An inland sighting of an immature bird was recorded at Townville, S.C., on 8 December by Sidney Gauthreaux and Harry LeGrand, and one was reported to have wintered at Davis Impoundment near Beaufort, N.C., by Robert Hader and Eugene Pond. On 19 January, Ted Beckett found a pair of nesting adults with young at South Island near Georgetown, S.C.

- PEREGRINE FALCON:** Reports by several observers indicated the presence of at least two individuals in the Georgetown-Cape Romain, S.C., area during early January. Also, an individual was seen inland in Warren County, N.C., on 31 January by Michael Schultz.
- MERLIN:** One was sighted in Edgecombe County, N.C., near Rocky Mount on 14 December by Louis Fink, and two were seen at Davis Impoundment near Beaufort, N.C., on 11 March by Robert Hader.
- SANDHILL CRANE:** One was seen flying over the Clemson University campus at Clemson, S.C., on 2 December by Sidney Gauthreaux, Harry LeGrand, and Frank Moore. Four were noted later in the Georgetown area at South Island on 19 January by Ted Beckett.
- BLACK RAIL:** One was a good find at Kiawah Island near Charleston, S.C., on 26 January by David Chamberlain.
- COMMON SNIFE:** An estimated 300 were seen at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C., on 13 February by Ted Beckett. Elsewhere, at Raleigh, N.C., at least 100 were present at Greenview Farm on 28 March, observed by Robert Hader.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER:** A good count of 20 was recorded on the north jetties of Winyah Bay at Georgetown, S.C., on 8 December by John E. Cely.
- DUNLIN:** Two were late lingerers at Lake Hartwell near Clemson, S.C., through early January, fide Harry LeGrand.
- RED PHALAROPE:** A flock of 28 were well seen near shore from a fishing pier at Wrightsville Beach, N.C., on 26 January by Jim Weigand. This unusual midwinter sighting followed a coastal storm.
- POMARINE JAEGER:** An individual in light-phase plumage was seen 2 miles off the Charleston, S.C., jetties on 9 March by Dennis Forsythe et al.
- RING-BILLED GULL:** Up to 4,200 wintered inland at Roanoke Rapids Lake in Halifax County, N.C., as reported by Merrill Lynch.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL:** Two inland transients were noted at Lake Surf near Vass, N.C., on 9 December by Jay Carter. On 22 March four were seen at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., by Robert Hader.
- FORSTER'S TERN:** An uncommon inland sighting was recorded at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., where a single bird was seen on 29 March by James Mulholland.
- RAZORBILL:** A fresh specimen was found dead by John E. Cely at Pawley's Island, S.C., on 22 February, marking the only reported alcid record for the winter season.
- WHIP-POOR-WILL:** A late lingerer was recorded near West End in Moore County, N.C., on 7 December by Jay Carter.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD:** One was observed at North Island, Georgetown County, S.C., on 8 December by John E. Cely.
- BEWICK'S WREN:** One wintered at Townville, S.C., where it was last seen on 6 March by Harry LeGrand.
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER:** Mr. and Mrs. Claude Dunn observed a hardy individual at Zebulon, N.C., on 22 January, fide Eloise Potter.
- WHITE-EYED VIREO:** One was an unusual winter-season find at Raleigh, N.C., observed on 2 February by James Mulholland.
- PROTHONOTARY WARBLER:** A very early singing male was heard at Fairlawn Plantation near Charleston, S.C., on 23 February by Ted Beckett.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER:** A very early spring transient was recorded in Forsyth County, N.C., by Charles Frost on 23 March.
- BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER:** One was found in the company of Yellow-rumped Warblers at Wilmington, N.C., on 29 December by Kitty Kosh.
- CAPE MAY WARBLER:** An early and unexpected visitor was present for 3 days in F.M. Probst's yard at Pawley's Island, S.C., 25-27 March.



BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK, Reidsville, N.C. (Photo by Edward Burroughs)

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: One was seen on 7 January at Garysburg in Northampton County, N.C., by Merrill Lynch. Another individual was a regular feeder visitor during February and March in Winston-Salem, N.C., observed by Dixie and Richard Proctor.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: Ted Beckett reported seeing numerous blackbirds of this species flocking at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C., on 11 January. Elsewhere, Merrill Lynch observed a single male at Tillery in Halifax County, N.C., on 9 January, and two males were seen on 31 March at Rock Hill, S.C., by Michael Boatwright. It appears that increasing numbers of this species may be extending their winter range into the Carolinas.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK: A well-marked male was present at the feeder of Pete Yount in Reidsville, N.C., from 19 January through early May, photographed by Edward Burroughs (see above).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW: An adult was well seen at Santee N.W.R. on 18 January by Dennis Forsythe.

TREE SPARROW: One was seen in Forsyth County, N.C., on 16 December by Fran Baldwin and Ramona Snavely.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW: 98 individuals were counted along a half-mile hedgerow at the Caledonia Prison Farm near Tillery, Halifax County, N.C., on 9 January by Keith Fielder and Merrill Lynch.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW: An individual wintered at Charleston, S.C., where it was seen regularly at Perry Nugent's feeder from 9 December through the end of April. Another was seen 7 January near Townville, S.C., by Harry LeGrand.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR: A flock of 15 to 20 again wintered at the Johnston Farm in the Oconeechee Neck section of Northampton County, N.C., where some have been found to be regular winter visitors the last several years. In addition to the population at this site, Merrill Lynch reported seeing two longspurs feeding with Horned Larks at

the Caledonia Prison Farm in neighboring Halifax County on 9 January. Elsewhere, a single bird was seen on the coast at Cape Point on Hatteras Island, N.C., on 5 March by Clay Gifford and Joe Hudick.

SNOW BUNTING: One was an unusual visitor at a feeder in Gastonia, N.C., 10-11 December, observed by Ruth Rice and reported by Alan Stout. Coastal sightings were rare with single birds recorded on 27 December by Joe Hudick and 18 February by Fred Pongrace at Cape Hatteras, N.C., and one at Bird Shoal near Morehead City, N.C., on 27 January by Tom Quay and John Fussell.



Roundtable

... with Louis C. Fink

An Invitation

CBC members are cordially invited to attend the fall meeting of Georgia Ornithological Society to be held at Jekyll Island 17-19 October 1975. Guest speaker for the Saturday night banquet will be Chandler Robbins. Ted Holloway will give a program on shore birds Friday evening. Field trips will range from the Altamaha estuary southward to the Florida line, and two pelagic trips also are in the planning stage. Further information and reservation forms can be obtained from late August through September by writing Wallace D. Dreyfoos, President, Georgia Ornithological Society, 4627 Tall Pines Drive, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30327.

New Curator

David S. Lee is the new Curator of the Bird and Mammal Collections at the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History. He is a graduate of Florida Southern College, where he studied under Museum Director John Funderburg, and holds a Masters degree from Florida Atlantic University. Prior to coming to North Carolina, the Maryland native taught elective high school biology courses, served as Curator of the Bird and Mammal Collections of the Natural History Society of Maryland, and was on the staff of the Florida State Museum. The author of some 80 scientific and popular articles, Lee presently is working on a book on the fresh water fishes of Maryland and Delaware. Although he is interested in nearly every field of natural history, Dave and his wife Barbara particularly enjoy bird study. They recently visited the mountains of North Carolina to record the songs of our confusing chickadees. One of Dave's fine bird photographs appears on the cover of this issue.