

suggested that the birds were Cooper's Hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*). Subsequent comparison of the calls with recordings confirmed the identification.

Local summer records for the Cooper's Hawk are extremely rare, as is generally the case for the North Carolina piedmont. A recently compiled annotated checklist for the Chapel Hill area (Charles H. Blake, unpub.) cites a 1935 breeding record. No recent summer sightings have been reported.

Franklin's Gull in South Carolina

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On the morning of 8 May 1975, I was scanning a large plowed field about 1 mile SE of Townville, Anderson County, S.C., when I spotted a gull following a tractor that was replowing the field. With the aid of 7 X 50 binoculars, I immediately identified the bird as a Franklin's Gull (*Larus pipixcan*) in full breeding plumage. I watched the gull for approximately 5 minutes as close as 100 yards, and during this time it was either circling over the field or following the tractor, hawking for insects. The dark hood, slate-colored mantle, conspicuous white rear border of the wings, and characteristic white stripe near the wing tip were easily seen in flight. Even though the undersides of the wings were white, the white stripe near the tip was easily visible from below as a "window." The black tips to the primaries were visible from above, but they were more reduced in this bird than in those pictured in field guides, which show a narrow white stripe and a broader black tip.

About 20 minutes after the above observation, I returned to the field. The tractor had stopped running, and the bird was sitting in the field, occasionally feeding and occasionally circling in the air for a few seconds before returning to the ground. I was able to examine the resting bird closely through a 20X scope at approximately 100 yards. The legs were blackish, the bill was deep red, and a white eye ring (broken behind the eye and incomplete in front) was conspicuous. The tips of the folded wings were mostly white.

After watching the gull for several minutes, I returned to Clemson University and brought Frank Moore and Sidney Gauthreaux, who had a camera mounted on his Questar scope, to the field 3 hours later to obtain photographic documentation. Despite extensive searching, we were unable to locate the gull in the field, in surrounding fields, or on nearby Lake Hartwell.

Only one other record of the Franklin's Gull is known for the Carolinas. An immature was "wounded by gun shot at the Catawba River, within 12 miles of Charlotte, N.C.," on 13 October 1952 (*Chat*, 17:23-24). Although *South Carolina Bird Life* (Sprunt and Chamberlain, 1970) carries this record, it also states that the bird actually was found in North Carolina. Even though the 1952 bird probably visited South Carolina (there is no way of knowing for certain), the Franklin's Gull I observed near Townville is the first definitely within the state, and one of the relatively few spring records for the Atlantic Coast states.

Bell's Vireo Seen in Wake County, N.C.

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About 18:00 on 10 August 1974, my husband and I heard an unfamiliar finch-like song in the yard of our home 3.5 miles N of Zebulon, Wake County, N.C. The mysterious finch flew away before we could identify it; so Jack went into the house, leaving

me in the yard with a 7 X 50 binocular in hand. The resident chickadees and titmice still were calling excitedly and chasing about the trees near the edge of the golf course. The object of their attention seemed to be a small bird hovering at the tip of a branch. The small size, generally greenish color, white around the eye, and hovering flight reminded me of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet; therefore, I followed the bird when it flew to a nearby oak. Here, in good light at a distance of no more than 30 feet, I saw a vireo completely new to me. The crown, cheek, and back were uniform light olive-green. The tail and wings were dark greenish, and wing bars were not at all distinct. The throat and breast were white; the under tail coverts and belly were yellow; and the sides appeared to be white. White spectacles outlined the dark eye. I watched the bird for several minutes as it crept about the branches, hovered at their tips, and twice remained motionless in full side view. At no time did I see any field mark that suggests the bird was anything other than a Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*).

Red-eyed, White-eyed, and Yellow-throated Vireos nest in or near my yard, so I am accustomed to seeing juveniles of these species. I am aware that young White-eyed Vireos have dark eyes; but the white spectacles immediately eliminate this possibility just as effectively as the vireo's heavy bill removed the kinglet from consideration.

Although there is no published record of this Western and Midwestern species from the Carolinas, the Bell's Vireo is known to occur east of the Appalachian Mountains. The first collected specimen for the New York City area was taken on 25 September 1970 by Paul Buckley and party (*American Birds*, 25:35). In Florida the species is known as a fall transient and winter visitor. Four Bell's Vireos were seen at Key Biscayne on 14 September 1968, and one was banded at Homestead on 5 November 1968 (*American Birds*, 23:39). One Bell's Vireo was reported from Fort Lauderdale on 26 December 1966, where one had been found twice previously in winter (*American Birds*, 21:411).

[The acceptance by the records committee of this carefully documented observation and its publication in *The Chat* will allow Bell's Vireo to be placed on the Hypothetical List for North Carolina. This species, very difficult to identify unless the observer is thoroughly familiar with the species, will require further documentation before being placed on the official North Carolina list. Observers are urged to obtain photographs or if possible to arrange for the legal collection of such birds for positive verification.—DEPT. ED.]

The Advent of the Song Sparrow as a Breeding Species in the Southern Blue Ridge Mountain Province

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The Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) has extended its breeding range into the southern Blue Ridge Mountain Province and adjacent piedmont within recent historical times. Formerly, the bird occurred only as a winter resident in the region, arriving in early October and departing by late April (J.S. Cairns, unpublished records). In the early 1900s, however, the species became established as a summer resident down the main crest of the southern Appalachian mountains and then began extending its range onto the piedmont plateau (Pearson et. al., 1919; Burleigh, 1958; Sykes, 1966). Previous analyses of this influx, however, have overlooked several early records.

In an unpublished manuscript, J.S. Cairns (1894) made the following observation regarding the Song Sparrow in Buncombe County:

"An abundant winter visitor and a rare summer bird. Found on Craggy Mtn May 20th & June 1st 1892 & 93."

Cairns' previous publications (1887, 1889, 1891) had listed the species as a winter