

General Field Notes

JAMES F. PARNELL, Department Editor

Department of Biology, University of North Carolina at Wilmington,
Wilmington, N.C. 28401

JULIAN R. HARRISON, Associate Editor

Department of Biology, The College of Charleston, Charleston, S.C. 29401

Red-necked Grebe in Buncombe County, N.C.

RICHARD E. PRICE JR.

P.O. Box 146, Mars Hill, N.C. 28754

ROBERT C. RUIZ

300 Wilson Avenue, Swannanoa, N.C. 28778

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On 21 February 1976 Price visited Lake Julian, south of Asheville, Buncombe County, N.C. There he found a female Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*) accompanied by a grebe he had never seen before. The bird was observed with a 20X scope in good light at approximately 75 feet. The bill was yellow and was approximately as long as the head of the bird. The chin and throat were white and extended to the side neck and up to near the crown. The neck was a uniform gray with similar coloration on the rest of the body. From this and the general appearance it was concluded that it was a Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*) in winter plumage. Price then called Roland Sargent, president of the local Blue Ridge Bird Club, and both returned to the lake for further study. They were able to judge the size of the bird by comparing it with the merganser. It appeared to be almost the same size, which ruled out the smaller Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*). They returned to Sargent's home and after reviewing his bird books, called Robert Ruiz. Ruiz and Sargent then visited the lake in mid-afternoon and using a 20-45X scope were able to study the bird further and confirm the identification. Ruiz and Bill Duyck returned to the lake on the 22nd to find the grebe still present. After observing it on the water, they were fortunate also to see it in flight, which was decidedly loonlike. The white wing patches showed up in marked contrast to the dark upper parts as it flew to the left, directly toward them, and then veered to the right and disappeared from sight toward the northern end of the lake. Enroute to this area Ruiz and Duyck saw the Red-breasted Merganser again and an adult Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*), but because a fog had begun to rise from the lake they were not able to relocate the Red-necked Grebe. According to Ruiz' records, this is the first report of the Red-necked Grebe in western North Carolina. We can only surmise that it may have been blown in on the 18th by a violent storm that had produced the first tornado in Asheville's history.

Early Summer Seabird Migration at Cape Hatteras

J. MERRILL LYNCH

CHRIS MARSH

North Carolina State Museum of Natural History
Raleigh, N.C. 27611

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The only published account of a seabird migration witnessed from shore in North Carolina is P.A. Buckley's study near Hatteras Inlet, Dare County, from late May through early June 1970. (*Am. Birds*, 1973, 27:8-10). During a 4-day period he