

Sprague's Pipits at Rocky Mount, N.C.

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On the M.C. Braswell farm 5 miles E of Rocky Mount, on NC 97, I found Sprague's Pipits (*Anthus spragueii*) as follows, all three sightings in the same specific location: 8 birds on 5 January 1975, 4 birds on 26 January, and 12 birds on 9 March.

The straw-colored legs, striped back, and absence of tail-wagging were all clearly evident. The birds were not feeding in short grass as usually reported, but on a well-packed dirt farm road between barbed-wire fence and a field. The area was wind-swept, a favorite condition for Sprague's Pipits. They allowed me to approach within 10 feet, and then flew only a few feet to the grassy field. They did not fly high in the air as often reported, nor did they sing.

The area is a favorite of winter sparrows, and there was an abundance of Field Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, and White-throated Sparrows as well as up to 18 White-crowned Sparrows this winter. On the third observation, the Sprague's Pipits were in loose association with Water Pipits, so the difference in field marks could be noted.

This appears to be the third published report of Sprague's Pipit in North Carolina. The first observation was by George Smith at Chapel Hill on 9 May 1959 (Chat 23:89). The second report was from Raleigh on 18 March 1972 (Silcock et al. Chat 37:25).

[Dept. Ed.—With the publication of this third observation, Sprague's Pipit can be placed on the official North Carolina list.]

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Compiled by ROBERT P. TEULINGS
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(All dates 1976)

COMMON LOON: Seven in breeding plumage were seen in Roanoke Sound near Whalebone, N.C., on 14 July by Robert Fleischer. Another in winter plumage was seen in the surf off Pea Island, N.C., 10 August by Robin Carter.

RED-THROATED LOON: One was found inland at Stevenson's Goose pond near Garysburg, N.C., on 6 November by Merrill Lynch.

RED-NECKED GREBE: One was an uncommon find near Nags Head, N.C., on 12 November, observed by Gail Whitehurst.

HORNED GREBE: An impressive inland count of 161 was recorded at Roanoke Rapids Lake in the vicinity of Roanoke Rapids, N.C., on 26 November by Merrill Lynch.

PIED-BILLED GREBE: An early fall visitor was recorded at Chapel Hill, N.C., on 3 September by James Pullman and Elizabeth Teulings.

WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD: One was seen offshore 35 miles SSE of Beaufort Inlet, N.C., during a fishing cruise on 24 August by Allyn Powell, as reported by John Fussell.

BROWN PELICAN: An estimated 600 were seen from the Hatteras-Ocracoke, N.C., ferry on 24 September by James Pullman and Elizabeth Teulings.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: An inland visitor was found near Fayetteville, N.C., on 8 May by Phil Crutchfield, Jack Wingate, and Bryan Wingate. At other inland locations, four were seen at Greenwood Lake, Greenwood, S.C., on