

A Wintering Pectoral Sandpiper in Northwestern South Carolina

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The Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*) is a regularly occurring spring and fall migrant in the Carolinas, but it normally winters in South America. Winter records for the United States are rare. Thus, of great interest is a Pectoral Sandpiper that spent the winter of 1976-77 in northwestern South Carolina. The record is even more unusual because the fall and winter in northwestern South Carolina may have been the coldest in recorded history.

I first saw the bird on 13 December 1976 on a large mudflat at the mouth of Little Beaverdam Creek at Lake Hartwell, 2 miles SE of Townville in Anderson County. The rough *purrrt* call attracted my attention to it, and I clearly saw the heavily streaked breast ending abruptly at the white belly. The legs were pale yellowish-flesh in color, and the size was slightly smaller than nearby Killdeers (*Charadrius vociferus*). I found the bird again on 5 January 1977 and 8 January 1977. A Least Sandpiper (*Calidris minutilla*) was present in January to afford size comparison with the Pectoral. Sidney Gauthreaux and Carl Helms also observed the Pectoral on 8 January. Very cold weather moved into the region until mid-February; however, the Pectoral was still present with the Least on 13 February. By March migrant Pectorals had arrived at the flats, as 6 were present on 5 March. Whether the wintering individual was one of the 6 is not known.

This may well be only the second winter record for South Carolina. On 27 December 1944 R.C. Murphy and H.S. Peters saw four birds on Bull's Island, Charleston County (*South Carolina Bird Life*, 1970, p. 241). The major significance of the record, however, is that a Pectoral Sandpiper spent the entire winter in the United States, probably one of the few documented instances of such a happening.

Probable Rufous Hummingbird at Raleigh, N.C.

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On 2 November 1976 we found a late hummingbird feeding on a cluster of pineapple sage (*Salvia rutilans*) in the yard of Mrs. Jack Duffield in suburban Raleigh. At first glance it appeared to be a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*); however, upon prolonged and close observation we noted a pale rufous wash along the flanks and eventually got a momentary glimpse of stronger rufous at the base of the tail.

Two days later we again studied the bird carefully with 10 x 50 binoculars and 20-power scope at close range and in excellent light as it fed on the sage flowers, and as it rested in small trees nearby. On three or four occasions we were able to see the full tail pattern as it spread its tail while preening. This was exactly as shown for the female Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) in Robbins, Brunn, and Zim *Birds of North America*; that is, rufous at the base of the tail separated from white-tipped outer tail feathers by a narrow dark green area. Otherwise the bird had white underparts with dark throat spots, a dull rufous wash along the flanks and a small white spot immediately behind in the eye. The head, back, and folded tail were a metallic green. At rest its wings were noticeably darker than the back.

Later in the day an unsuccessful attempt was made to collect the bird, after which it disappeared. It was last seen on the following day, 5 November, when several additional observers got good clear views of the tail pattern.