

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

HARRY E. LeGRAND JR.

(All dates winter 1978-79; CBC = Christmas Bird Count)

- RED-THROATED LOON:** Two were studied carefully at Lake Moultrie, S.C., on 26 January by Bob Lewis, and one was seen by Anne Waters on the Savannah River Plant, S.C., on 23 December.
- WHITE PELICAN:** One was a rare find on 2 February at Hatteras Inlet, N.C., by Robert Soots and Eugene Pond.
- GREAT CORMORANT:** Two were seen on the Wilmington, N.C., CBC on 16 December, probably the same birds seen during the fall at Wrightsville Beach.
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT:** Bob Lewis saw nine at Lake Marion, S.C., on 26 January and two at Lake Greenwood, S.C., on 6 January. Another was noted by Bill Lazar at Lake Surf, N.C., on 10 December.
- CATTLE EGRET:** One was rare for the winter season near Lowland, N.C., on 23 February, as reported by Philip Crutchfield and M.E. Whitfield.
- GLOSSY IBIS:** Four were observed on 21 January by Perry Nugent et al. at Magnolia Gardens near Charleston, S.C.
- AMERICAN FLAMINGO:** One was seen by many observers at Pea Island, N.C., throughout the winter.
- WHISTLING SWAN:** An adult was rare at Lake Wheeler near Raleigh, N.C., as seen by Jim Mulholland on 30 December.
- WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** Six to eight were present at a farm pond near Raleigh from 16 February to 5 March, as noted by Jim Mulholland et al. An adult was seen by John Henry Dick at Poco Sabo Plantation in Colleton County, S.C., on 21 January.
- SNOW GOOSE:** A white-phase bird and a blue-phase bird were noted by Tom Howard at Lake Surf on 7 December. Another (of unspecified color phase) was seen by Margaret Gidley and Jerry Shiffert at Clemmons, N.C., from 20 December to 2 January.
- GADWALL:** A good mountain record was the sighting of five birds on Price Lake near Blowing Rock, N.C., on 12 December by Tom Haggerty.
- NORTHERN SHOVELER:** A pair was seen by Jim Mulholland near Raleigh on 13 January, and an immature male wintered near Pendleton, S.C., as reported by Harry LeGrand.
- CANVASBACK:** A male observed by Tom Haggerty near Blowing Rock on 5 December was rare for that area.
- GREATER SCAUP:** Three males and three females were rare for midwinter at Pendleton on 17 January, as noted by Harry LeGrand.
- COMMON GOLDENEYE:** Noteworthy reports for North Carolina were a remarkable 35 on 17 February at Lake James (Tom Haggerty); nine females near Raleigh from 23 to 26 February (Jim Mulholland); as many as two males and four females at Parker Creek impoundment in Chatham County during January and February (Barbara Roth et al.); two males near Blowing Rock on 16 December (Tom Haggerty); and single birds at Lake Surf on 31 December (Marion Jones) and Fayetteville on 13 February (Philip Crutchfield).
- BUFFLEHEAD:** Tom Howard had a locally high total of 45 birds at Lake Surf on 15 January.
- OLDSQUAW:** Rare inland were three individuals seen by Clyde Smith on Lake Wheeler near Raleigh on 27 December.
- KING EIDER:** An adult male and a female were seen flying over the surf at Carolina Beach, N.C., on 20 January by Ricky Davis.

COMMON MERGANSER: Good North Carolina counts were 16 (10 males) at Lake Surf on 22 February (Kevin Mason), 13 (11 males) on Lake James on 17 February (Tom Haggerty), 6 on Lake Wheeler on 11 January (Jim Mulholland) and 5 at the latter lake on 11 February (Dennis Alwon, Steve Graves).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: Kevin Mason observed two males and a female at Lake Surf on 26 December.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK: A light-phase bird was seen near Seaforth in Chatham County, N.C., from 10 December to 10 February by Barbara Roth et. al. Another in similar plumage was noted by Perry Nugent, Tom Reeves, and Jim Roberts at Magnolia Gardens on 24 February.

GOLDEN EAGLE: One was seen by Carl Leibrandt near Burlington, N.C., on 15 February.

BALD EAGLE: Many reports of this species, mainly of immature birds, were received from inland localities, where it is quite rare. Most noteworthy were individuals far inland at the Savannah River Plant on 23 December (Anne Waters), at Beaverdam Reservoir north of Raleigh in late January (Bill Wagner), and at Lake Surf on 15 January (Tom Howard).

MERLIN: One was rare at Chapel Hill, N.C., on 19 February, as seen by Steve and Gary Graves. There have been a surprising number of inland winter sightings over the past few years.

VIRGINIA RAIL: Rare early winter reports were individuals at Lake Benson near Raleigh on 9 and 16 December (R.J. Hader), and near Clemson on 1 December (Harry LeGrand).

SORA: Unusually late were individuals heard at Clemson on 1 December by Harry LeGrand, and near Raleigh on 9 December by R.J. Hader. The latter bird was also seen on 16 December by Hader.

BLACK RAIL: John Fussell heard birds responding to taped calls at North River marsh, Carteret County, N.C., on 13 and 17 December; at Wanchese, N.C., on 30 and 31 December; and Cedar Island, N.C., on 16 January (two individuals). Another was flushed at Magnolia Gardens on 24 February by Tom Reeves, Jim Roberts, and Perry Nugent. There seems little doubt that this rail winters along the entire coast of the Carolinas, at least as far north as Roanoke and Bodie Islands.

COMMON GALLINULE: One was noteworthy near the Intracoastal Waterway in north-eastern Pamlico County, N.C., on 23 February, as seen by Philip Crutchfield and M.E. Whitfield.

AMERICAN COOT: Jay Carter noted that 800 wintered at Lake Surf, and 500 spent the winter at Lake Pinehurst, both in Moore County, N.C.

WILSON'S PLOVER: A late individual was observed by John Fussell near Beaufort, N.C., on 20 December.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS: A rare inland winter sighting was of one near Fayetteville, N.C., on 20 January, as noted by Philip Crutchfield et al.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS: Bob Lewis saw seven at Lake Moultrie on 26 January, and 16 there two days later.

PURPLE SANDPIPER: An excellent count of 200 was made at Sullivan's Island, S.C., on 7 February by Tom Reeves.

LEAST SANDPIPER: A group of 28 wintered at Clemson, fide Harry LeGrand. Also in South Carolina, Bob Lewis saw eight at Lake Greenwood on 6 January, 30 at Lake Moultrie on 26 January, and 50 at Santee Refuge on Lake Marion on 28 January. At Raleigh, two were seen on 11 February by Dennis Alwon, and one on 27 February by R.J. Hader. Inland winter records have greatly increased over the past few years.

DUNLIN: A notable winter record was one seen by Bob Lewis and Harry LeGrand on 28 January at Santee Refuge on Lake Marion.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER: For the second consecutive winter this species was

- observed at Santee Refuge, as Bob Lewis and Harry LeGrand counted 18 there on 28 January. John Fussell saw nine at a Davis, N.C., impoundment on 3 February, as well as one out of habitat on saltwater mudflats at nearby Beaufort on 7 and 20 December.
- RED PHALAROPE:** One was seen by John Fussell and Bill Moffitt at Oregon Inlet, N.C., on 30 December (Bodie-Pea Island CBC).
- GLAUCOUS GULL:** Single immatures were observed in North Carolina at the Cape Hatteras lighthouse on 3 February by Allen Bryan and Kevin Hints, and on Bogue Sound near Morehead City on 18 February by John Fussell.
- HERRING GULL:** Bob Lewis noted 40 at Lake Moultrie on 28 January, a good inland total.
- BLACK-HEADED GULL:** A subadult was carefully observed at Bodie Island on 7 January by Owen McConnell et al., apparently the fourth North Carolina record.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL:** Surprisingly high numbers were seen on inland lakes this winter. Noteworthy in South Carolina were 160 at Lake Greenwood on 6 January, 130 at Lake Wateree on 7 January, 120 at Lake Moultrie on 26 January, 50 at Fishing Creek Reservoir on 26 January, and 50 at Lake Marion on 26 January, all seen by Bob Lewis. Also in that state, 80 were at Clemson on 25 February and 30 were at Townville on 10 January, as noted by Harry LeGrand. In North Carolina, 55 were seen by Kevin Mason at Lake Surf on 26 December, and 30 were seen by Steve Graves at Raleigh on 11 February. Four were locally rare at Parker Creek impoundment on 26 December, as reported by Jim Pullman and Elizabeth Teulings.
- FORSTER'S TERN:** Noteworthy inland were eight at Lake Marion on 26 January, 20 at Lake Moultrie on 26 January, and 150 at the latter on 28 January, all seen by Bob Lewis.
- RAZORBILL:** Single individuals were seen in the surf off Masonboro Inlet, N.C., on 16 December by Jay Carter et al. (Wilmington CBC), and at Pea Island on 31 December by Harry LeGrand and Merrill Lynch.
- DOVEKIE:** One was seen by Claudia Wilds near Oregon Inlet on 30 December, as part of the Bodie-Pea Island CBC.
- SNOWY OWL:** A very rare sighting was an individual at Cedar Island, N.C., noted by Eugene Pond on 27 January.
- SHORT-EARED OWL:** One seen on four dates from 18 December to 11 January by Jay Carter at Lake Surf was the first North Carolina Sandhills record since 1926.
- SAW-WHET OWL:** An unusual occurrence was the sighting of one at Isle of Palms, S.C., on 28 December and 22 January by Mrs. Harry Welch and family. Two different calls were also heard.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD:** One was late at Pea Island on 9 December, as seen by Robert Teulings et al.
- ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW:** An early individual was seen on 7 March near Fayetteville by Philip and J.B. Crutchfield.
- BARN SWALLOW:** Rare for the winter were singles seen on the Wilmington CBC, 16 December, by Frances Needham; on the McClellanville CBC, 17 December, by Pete Laurie and Nelson Taylor; and at the Savannah NWR, S.C., on 28 January by Jim Orgain.
- FISH CROW:** Kevin Hints noted the first arrival at Raleigh on 16 February, somewhat early for that locality.
- SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN:** One was seen and heard calling at a snow-covered weedy field at Clemson on 19 February by Harry LeGrand, a noteworthy inland record.
- GRAY CATBIRD:** An excellent winter find was an individual studied at Moses Cone Park near Blowing Rock by Tom Haggerty on 10 January.
- SPRAGUE'S PIPIT:** One was seen for 5 minutes in a field near Charleston on 30 December (CBC) by Pete Laurie, Nelson Taylor, and Perry Nugent. The observers noted the walking habit, overall buffy coloration, striped back, pink legs, and white outer tail feathers.

- WHITE-EYED VIREO:** John Fussell observed individuals near Newport, N.C., on 13 December and nearby Core Creek on 14 December. Another was seen by Ricky Davis at the University of North Carolina—Wilmington campus on 16 February.
- SOLITARY VIREO:** Single birds were seen 10 miles apart in the Durham, N.C., area on 8 and 9 December by Charles Saunders. One was also noted in McCain, N.C., on 19 December by Libba Watson.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER:** Noteworthy North Carolina reports were individuals at Durham on 9 December (John Horn, Charles Saunders), at Newport on 8, 13, and 20 December (John Fussell), near Fayetteville on 20 January (Philip Crutchfield et al.), and near Orton Plantation in Brunswick County on 2 February (Ricky Davis).
- ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER:** The first winter record for the Clemson area was one seen near Townville on 11 February by Harry LeGrand.
- CAPE MAY WARBLER:** Very rare winter sightings were singles seen at Raleigh (CBC) on 16 December by Gail Whitehurst, and at McCain, N.C., on 19 December by Libba Watson.
- OVENBIRD:** One was seen on the Aiken, S.C., CBC on 26 December by Anne Waters.
- COMMON YELLOWTHROAT:** A rare mountain winter record was a male seen by Harry LeGrand et al. near Oconee State Park, S.C., on 10 February.
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** Gail Whitehurst saw a male in her Raleigh yard on 19 January.
- BLUE GROSBEAK:** Individuals were observed on CBCs at Durham on 17 December (Dennis Alwon et al.), and at Chapel Hill on 31 December (Jim Pullman, Elizabeth Teulings), as well as at a feeder near Easley, S.C., from 17 January to the end of the month (Adair Tedards).
- EVENING GROSBEAK:** Despite very low numbers of the winter finches in the Carolinas this winter, a surprising 300 were noted at Carol Hamilton's feeders in Chapel Hill during the last half of February.
- HOUSE FINCH:** The species was again locally abundant in Raleigh and Winston-Salem, and 150 were at Carol Hamilton's feeders in Chapel Hill on 18 February. At long last the Southern Pines, N.C., area has its first House Finch record: four seen at Whispering Pines on 18 December, fide Jay Carter.
- COMMON REDPOLL:** Over the past several winters a moderate number of reports of redpolls at feeders in the Carolinas have been received and published. However, I am now aware that on several occasions inexperienced observers have identified House Finches as redpolls. Since House Finches winter commonly at feeders in our region, and redpolls are very rare, it seems likely that some of the recent published records are actually of House Finches. I must now insist on full, convincing details on all redpoll reports, and I ask that experienced birders corroborate any redpoll report they might receive, especially at a feeder.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW:** Notable in winter were single birds in a Pinehurst, N.C., yard from 7 February to the end of the month, as seen by Marion Jones and Jay Carter; and near Townville, S.C., on 10 January and 11 February, as noted by Harry LeGrand.
- DARK-EYED (OREGON) JUNCO:** One was seen nearly daily in a Columbia, S.C., yard from 17 January to at least 7 March by Lucy and Edward Whitmire and Kay Sisson.
- TREE SPARROW:** A rare coastal plain record was as many as five at a feeder in Corapeake, N.C., during the winter. Danny Bystrak verified the report by observing two on 18 February.
- LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** Excellent numbers for the Carolinas were 20 at a plowed field near Townville on 10 January (Harry LeGrand), and 30 there on 27 January (Sidney Gauthreaux).