

piedmont province. There are published reports of up to 23 individuals from this area and adjacent Chesterfield County, S.C. The habitat at this site is strikingly different from the Roanoke River sites. The flat floodplain levee is restricted to a very narrow zone along the river channel and is bordered on both sides by steeply rising upland slopes. Almost all of the land bordering the river is forested except for clearcuts, and there is little open farmland.

Floodplain habitat similar to that of the Roanoke River sites does exist along the Pee Dee River downstream in South Carolina where the river enters the relatively flat coastal plain. I believe that the Anson County kites are nesting in South Carolina and using the Anson County site primarily for feeding purposes.

One habitat feature present at all three sites is extensive open areas of beaver ponds ranging in size from several acres to 100 acres. These ponds provide optimum breeding conditions for numerous species of dragonflies, mayflies, and other large flying insects and may provide important feeding habitat for the kites. I have noted flocks of kites feeding over beaver ponds in the Buzzard Neck area.

Parker and Ogden (*Am. Birds* 33:119-129) have documented the Mississippi Kite expansion and population increase throughout the southern United States. The question arises as to how far north the species' historic breeding range extended. Evidence supports a recent range expansion and not a reoccupation of former range, at least for the Roanoke River population. The species, by virtue of its gregariousness and preference for open areas, is highly visible and not easily overlooked, even by farmers and others who have no real interest in birds. Personal communication with several farmers in the Buzzard Neck area revealed that they had noticed the kites at the site since the late 1960s or early 1970s. They did not recall having seen any earlier than that, even though the memories of some went back to the 1920s and 1930s. I believe that these birds represent a recent range expansion as a result of the "spillover effect" from population increases further south in South Carolina and Georgia.

I predict that breeding evidence will soon be confirmed in North Carolina and that additional populations will be discovered in areas of suitable habitat in the coastal plain. Potential habitat exists in the flood plains along the major brown-water rivers, i.e., the Cape Fear, Neuse, and Tar systems. Sections that contain the best habitat include the Cape Fear from Fayetteville downstream to Elizabethtown, the Neuse from Clayton downstream to Kinston, and the Tar from Rocky Mount downstream to Greenville.

Second Sight Record of Say's Phoebe in South Carolina

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Ruth Ittner and I spent the afternoon of 30 September 1979 watching birds on Bulls Island in Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, Charleston County, S.C. After an hour we met the assistant refuge manager, Dick Munoz, and proceeded by vehicle to the refuge boat basin on the west side of the island. Upon our arrival at 1430 EDT, I noticed a bird perched on the corner of the roof covering the boat basin. The dark-colored bird exhibited an upright flycatcher posture and wagged its tail. When we left the vehicle, the bird flew a short distance and perched approximately 5 m above the ground in the top of a small tree. While the bird was flying, we noted the rusty abdomen and flycatcher-like flight. With 7 x 35 binoculars, we viewed the stationary bird for approximately 4 minutes from a distance of 10 m. We saw the dark brown-gray head, gray back, and dull black tail. The wings were also dull black with gray edging on the secondaries and coverts. The throat and breast were light gray. After this period of observation, the bird flew toward and past us. It then perched for approximately 2 minutes on an I-beam supporting the roof of the boat basin. Again we saw the characteristics previously mentioned. The bird was last seen flying southeast over the salt marsh toward the interior of the island.

All observers identified the bird as a Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*). To confirm our identification of this Western flycatcher, we immediately referred to *The Birds of North America* (Robbins, Bruun, Zim and Singer 1966, Golden Press, New York, N.Y.) All three members of the party are familiar with the species, Munoz having lived in Montana for 16 years before moving to South Carolina, Andre having attended graduate school in Idaho and Utah, and Ittner having visited Arizona.

Munoz and I independently searched for the Say's Phoebe the following day (1 October) without success.

Say's Phoebe was given hypothetical status by E. Milby Burton in his Supplement to *South Carolina Bird Life* (1971, p. 641-642) on the basis of a single bird seen in Richland County on 18 January 1969 (Chat 35:112). The species has also been seen once in Wake County, N.C., on 23 October 1965 (Chat 30:28-29).

[NOTE: A specimen, suitable photograph, or a third adequately documented sight record will be required to remove this species from the South Carolina hypothetical list.—JRH]

First Record of Vermilion Flycatcher in North Carolina

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The *Checklist of North Carolina Birds* (J.F. Parnell, Chmn. CBC Records Committee, 1978, CBC and N.C. State Museum, p. 36) includes the Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) among the species that probably would warrant hypothetical status if the published record contained adequate details for documentation. The Vermilion Flycatcher discussed here was mentioned in *American Birds* (27:43, 1973).

Gard Otis, Sebastian Patti, and I met Paul DuMont and Robert Ake on the Outer Banks of North Carolina the afternoon of 1 October 1972. They told us that they had just seen a Vermilion Flycatcher perched on the fence of the waterworks at Nags Head, Dare County, N.C. An hour later, the three of us found the bird in the same place. We decided it was an immature male because it had red underparts with a mottling of dark feathers. The bird flew from its perch several times, and we had ample time to observe it at close range through binoculars and spotting scopes. To the best of my knowledge, this bird was the first Vermilion Flycatcher found in North Carolina, and there are no subsequent published reports. A specimen and several additional sightings have been reported from South Carolina (South Carolina Bird Life, 1971, p. 614-615).

Unusual Behavior of a Barred Owl

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At 2000 EDT on 20 August 1979, I saw a Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) hang upside down by one foot from a limb of an oak tree in the back yard of my home in Awendaw, Charleston County, S.C. I had watched the owl perched in its normal upright position for about 5 minutes from a distance of about 25 yards. From its perch about 25 feet above ground, the bird alternately scanned the ground and looked toward me and my German Shepard. It then flew toward another oak set back from the first by about 4 yards. As it neared the tree, the owl brought its feet forward, grasped a branch with one foot, and hung upside down for at least 8 seconds. Its wings were fully spread the entire time, and it was facing the dog and me. It is possible that the owl was exercising a scare tactic directed at the dog. Lill (Auk 96:489-498) documented a Superb Lyrebird (*Menura superba*) using the wing-spread character in a threatening posture. The lyrebird reacted in this manner to Lill's inspection of her nest containing fledglings.