

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

HARRY E. LeGRAND JR.

(Dates extend from April 1980 to March 1981; CBC = Christmas Bird Count)

- COMMON LOON:** An all-time high CBC for North America was the 2503 seen at Morehead City, N.C., on 21 December, fide John Fussell.
- RED-NECKED GREBE:** Two were seen in a creek near the Stono River on Johns Island, S.C., on 23 December by Pete Laurie. Single birds were observed near Masonboro Island, New Hanover County, N.C., on 6 December (Greg Massey); on the McClellanville, S.C., CBC on 21 December (Gardner Miller, Perry Nugent, et al.); and on the Roanoke Rapids, N.C., CBC on 29 December (Merrill Lynch).
- HORNED GREBE:** Mike Tove noted a peak count of 10,000+ on Pamlico Sound, N.C., during the winter. He had a similar peak of Common Loons, and a peak of 1000 Red-throated Loons on this body of water during the winter.
- EARED GREBE:** An extremely rare record for South Carolina was a bird seen on the ocean at Pawleys Island on 30 December by Steve Graves and Toby Lorenzen.
- WHITE PELICAN:** One was noted at Huntington Beach State Park, S.C., on 12 December by Pat Probst and Greg Massey, and presumably the same bird was seen on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC on 30 December by Steve Graves and Toby Lorenzen. Apparently three birds were present during the winter in the Charleston, S.C., area, fide Dennis Forsythe: one in the Buck Hall section of Francis Marion National Forest, another at Shem Creek in Mount Pleasant since November, and a third at Colonial Lake in Charleston since January.
- GREAT CORMORANT:** Several immatures were seen at Huntington Beach State Park nearly all winter, with a record Carolina count of five on 22 February as noted by Perry Nugent et al. In North Carolina were single immatures at Oregon Inlet on 16 December (Steve Graves), at Pea Island 26 to 30 December (Bob Lewis et al.), at Cape Hatteras from 15 to 25 February (John Fussell, Mike Tove), and at Masonboro Inlet on 23 December (Bob Lewis).
- GREEN HERON:** One was seen by Alan Avakian near Pendleton, S.C., on 3 January.
- BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON:** A good count of 175 was made at the spoil area in South Carolina just north of Savannah, Ga., on 28 February by Jimmy Beatty et al.
- GLOSSY IBIS:** One was noteworthy at Lake Mattamuskeet, N.C., on the early date of 27 February by Steve Graves and Mike Tove.
- WHISTLING SWAN:** Outside of the usual winter range was one at Lake James in western North Carolina, as noted by Robert Ruiz on 8 December; and nine were seen near Cove City, N.C., on 7 February by R.J. Hader.
- BRANT:** Good North Carolina counts were 1000 in Hatteras Inlet on 9 January, as reported by Mike Tove and Steve Graves, and 200 near Cape Lookout on 16 February (Skip Prange).
- WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** Bud Pollock and Sparkie Betts noted 13 at Santee National Wildlife Refuge, S.C., on 7 December. Two were seen at Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, S.C., on 10 January by Anne and Vernon Waters and again on 17 January by Perry Nugent et al.
- SNOW GOOSE:** One adult and two immature Blue Geese were present at a farm pond

- near Morehead City, N.C., during most of February, as noted by John Fussell et al.
- ROSS' GOOSE:** An adult was studied at close range at Pea Island, N.C., from 31 December to 18 January. It was discovered by Bud Needham and was later seen by Harry LeGrand, Bob Lewis, Mike Tove, and many others.
- PINTAIL:** A flock of 25 was seen by Steve Graves at Beaverdam Reservoir in northern Wake County, N.C., on 20 February.
- GREEN-WINGED (COMMON) TEAL:** A male of this Eurasian race was carefully studied at Santee refuge, S.C., on 12 December by Anne and Vernon Waters. This is probably a first inland record of a Common Teal in the Carolinas.
- EUROPEAN WIGEON:** A male was seen by Charles Eastman on the McClellanville, S.C., CBC on 21 December.
- NORTHERN SHOVELER:** Rare inland in winter were four noted by P.J. Crutchfield at Fayetteville, N.C., on 23 December.
- RING-NECKED DUCK:** Good counts for the Burlington, N.C., area were 279 on Lake Cammack on 22 January and 275 there on 22 February (Allen Bryan).
- GREATER SCAUP:** At Lake Cammack, N.C., were four on 6 January and seven the following day, as reported by Allen Bryan. As many as three were observed by Harry LeGrand et al. near Clemson, S.C., from 3 to 8 January. One was rare for the Chapel Hill, N.C., area at Eastwood Lake on 15 February (Steve Graves). Also seen on Eastwood Lake during the winter by Graves et al. were two Redheads, three Canvasbacks, and a female Common Goldeneye, all of which are scarce in the Chapel Hill area.
- OLDSQUAW:** Perhaps a record Carolina count was the 5000 seen on Pamlico Sound, N.C., mainly in the Swanquarter area, on 28 February by Steve Graves and Mike Tove. One was notable at the Savannah River Plant, S.C., on 20 December, as seen by Anne Waters et al.
- KING EIDER:** Two females were observed by Steve Graves and Mike Tove at Oregon Inlet, N.C., on 11 January.
- WHITE-WINGED SCOTER:** Rare inland was an immature or female bird seen by C. Royce Hough and party at Salem Lake near Winston-Salem, N.C., on 18 to 20 January.
- SURF SCOTER:** Merrill Lynch noted an immature male on Roanoke Rapids Lake, N.C., on 29 December.
- RUDDY DUCK:** Bob Holmes reported that 20,000+ ducks, at least 95% Ruddies, were present on the lower Neuse River in Craven County, N.C., from 8 to 10 March. At least 3000 waterfowl (mainly Ruddy Ducks, American Coots, and Buffleheads) were seen by Jay Carter and Tim Stamps on Lake Surf, near Vass, N.C., on 15 February.
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER:** An outstanding North Carolina total was 150,000+ observed by Mike Tove from the Cedar Island to Ocracoke ferry on 9 January. A female was noted by P.J. Crutchfield at Fayetteville on 15 January.
- COMMON MERGANSER:** Small numbers (nine or fewer) were seen during the winter on the following lakes in North Carolina: Lake Wheeler near Raleigh (Steve Graves), Lake Cammack (Allen Bryan), Lake Surf (Tom Howard), and Kerr Scott Reservoir near North Wilkesboro (John Fussell, Mike Tove). One seen on the tidal pond at Cape Hatteras point, N.C., by Bob Lewis on 26 December was rare for the Outer Banks.
- BLACK VULTURE:** Rare for the mountains were three seen by Robert Ruiz and Bill Duyck at Enka, N.C., on 18 December.

- GOSHAWK:** An exciting find was an adult observed in Biltmore Forest, near Asheville, N.C., on 1 January by John Young.
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** Single birds were noted at Jordan Reservoir in eastern Chatham County, N.C., from 8 to 20 February (Steve Graves, Mark Crotteau, et al.), in western Chatham County in mid-January (Pat and Jim Culbertson), and near Cape Island on the McClellanville CBC on 21 December (Gardner Miller, Perry Nugent).
- GOLDEN EAGLE:** An immature was noteworthy at the Goat Island section of Lake Marion, S.C., on 31 January, as seen by Carl Helms and the Clemson University ornithology class. Two adults were noted at Roan Mountain, N.C., on 6 February by Fran and Wayne Irvin.
- BALD EAGLE:** In addition to scattered reports from the South Carolina coast, where the species is regular, single eagles were detected inland at Beaverdam Reservoir on 4 and 5 December (Jim McConnell), near Camden, S.C., on 25 January (Harry LeGrand), at Santee refuge on 25 January (Charleston Natural History Society), at Jordan Reservoir on 8 February (Steve Graves, Mark Crotteau), and at Congaree Swamp, southeast of Columbia, S.C., on 21 February (Paul Hamel).
- MARSH HAWK:** An extraordinary CBC total was 98 harriers on the New Hope River count on 4 January, fide Barbara Roth. Nearly all of the birds were seen in the lakebed of Jordan Reservoir.
- OSPREY:** Rare for the winter season was an individual seen by R.J. Hader at Beaverdam Reservoir on 22 December.
- PEREGRINE FALCON:** There were no reports a way from the tidewater zone during the winter, but an adult at Lake Mattamuskeet, N.C., on 27 February (Steve Graves, Mike Tove) was notable a way from the immediate coast.
- MERLIN:** An overdue first record for the North Carolina Sandhills was one seen by Tom Howard on 24 February at Weymouth Woods park near Southern Pines. Others inland were noted at Raleigh on 7 and 18 January by Gail Whitehurst and near Fayetteville on 8 January and 23 February by M.E. Whitfield and P.J. Crutchfield.
- RUFFED GROUSE:** Several were seen by hunters during the winter approximately 5 miles NE of Yanceyville, N.C., fide James Coman.
- YELLOW RAIL:** A notable find was a rail flushed from a salt marsh at Oregon Inlet on 10 January by Mike Tove and Steve Graves.
- WILSON'S PLOVER:** One was rare at Bird Shoal on the Morehead City, N.C., CBC on 21 December, as seen by Mike Tove.
- HUDSONIAN GODWIT:** The first definitive winter record for North Carolina was an individual seen by Paul Sykes et al. at South Pond on Pea Island on 30 December. The dark underwing linings were clearly noted by the observers.
- WHIMBREL:** John Fussell saw one near Fort Fisher, New Hanover County, N.C., on 24 January.
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS:** Rare inland in winter was an individual near Fayetteville on 9 January (P.J. Crutchfield, Kevin Mason), and another was seen at a different site near that city on 28 January by Crutchfield. Good winter totals of 120 Greater Yellowlegs and 75 Lesser Yellowlegs were made at the Savannah spoil area on 28 February by Jimmy Beatty et al.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** Most unusual inland were 15 at Swanquarter, N.C., as seen by Steve Graves and Mike Tove on 28 February. One was seen and heard at Huntington Beach State Park, S.C., on 21 February by Lex Glover et al.
- DUNLIN:** Two were late at Jordan Reservoir on 4 January, as noted by Norman

Budnitz.

- GLAUCOUS GULL:** Several immatures were seen this winter in coastal Carolina. At Cedar Island, N.C., one was noted on 9 January (Steve Graves, Mike Tove), with two there on 23 January (Tove, Allen Bryan), and one present on 14 February (John Fussell). One was at Cape Hatteras from 26 December to 23 January (Bob Lewis et al.), and another was seen near Hatteras, N.C., on 9 January (Graves, Tove). In South Carolina one was at Litchfield Beach on 29 December (Perry Nugent).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Extremely rare for the piedmont was an immature seen on Salem Lake at Winston-Salem on 20 January. Ramona Snavelly and others compared the gull with Herrings and Ring-billeds in the area.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Record numbers were present at Cape Hatteras during the season, with six seen there on 31 December by Bob Lewis, Mike Tove, and Harry LeGrand; three on 23 January by Mike Tove and Allen Bryan; and one still there on 28 February (Steve Graves, Tove). Lewis and Bryan saw one at Pea Island on 26 December, and Skip Prang saw another at Cape Lookout, N.C., on 30 January and again on 16 February.
- HERRING GULL:** Locally rare in the piedmont were three on the New Hope River CBC on 4 January (fide Barbara Roth), and at least three wintered at Beaverdam Reservoir (fide R.J. Hader), with a peak of 10 there on 26 December (Harry LeGrand).
- RING-BILLED GULL:** Three seen by Bill Duyck and Robert Ruiz were rare at Lake Junaluska, N.C., on 18 December.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL:** Noteworthy CBC totals inland were 102 at Raleigh on 20 December (Harry LeGrand, Merrill Lynch, et al.), nine at Lake Surf on the Southern Pines count on 21 December (Tom Howard), and two at New Hope River on 4 January (Steve Graves, Dan Kaplan).
- COMMON TERN:** One was somewhat north of the usual winter range at Sunset Beach, N.C., on 2 January, as noted by P.J. Crutchfield and Kevin Mason.
- SHORT-EARED OWL:** A remarkable number of owls were present in the fields and marshes in the lakebed of Jordan Reservoir during the winter. Three were seen by Jim and Elizabeth Pullman on 7 December, and many birders saw 10 or more owls there in a single day, with the highest count being 21 on 8 February (Steve Graves, Mark Crotteau, Marc Eisdorfer). One was seen by John Paquet, Jimmy Beatty, and Lex Glover at Carolina Beach, N.C., on 24 January.
- RUBY-THROATED (?) HUMMINGBIRD:** Single females or immature males were observed at Tryon, N.C., on 13 December by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Milner and on the McClellanville CBC on 21 December by Dennis Forsythe. Because a recent winter specimen of a female or immature hummingbird from Massachusetts was a Black-chinned (Am. Birds 34:254), and Florida recently had its fourth record of Black-chinned (Am. Birds 34:769), it cannot be assumed that non-rusty hummingbirds in winter in the Carolinas are Ruby-throated.
- RUFOUS (?) HUMMINGBIRD:** A female or immature was seen at Charleston on 24 January by Bowman Varn. The bird had rufous on the rump, tail, and sides. The possibility of "rusty" hummingbirds in our area being Allen's or Broad-tailed is remote, but (again) caution must be taken when dealing with hummingbirds that are not in adult male plumage.
- RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER:** Jay Carter and Tim Stamps noted three birds and 39 cavity trees in two colonies near Pembroke, N.C., on 3 February.
- BARN SWALLOW:** Very early "spring" migrants were observed by Vince Jackson et al. on 15 February at Savannah National Wildlife Refuge and by Merrill Lynch on

18 February near Waterlily, Currituck County, N.C.

SHORT-BILLED MARSH WREN: Noteworthy inland in winter were individuals on CBCs at Roanoke Rapids on 29 December (Harry LeGrand) and at New Hope River on 4 January (Jim and Elizabeth Pullman). The Pullmans saw another wren at a different location in Jordan Reservoir on 18 January, and P.J. Crutchfield found one near Fayetteville on 6 January.

FISH CROW: This species is now apparently wintering in the Lake Hartwell area of South Carolina, as one was seen and heard near Townville on 8 January and two were there on 28 February, as reported by Harry LeGrand.

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH: Rare for the mountains was an individual seen by Jean Gertz and party on 24 January in the Bent Creek area of Buncombe County, N.C.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER: Jim Mulholland found a late bird near Raleigh on 30 November.

WHITE-EYED VIREO: Notable records were one on the Roanoke Rapids CBC on 29 December (Harry LeGrand) and another at Sunset Beach on 25 January (P.J. Crutchfield, Kevin Mason, Dennis Boeke).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: Harry LeGrand, Julie Moore, and Merrill Lynch saw one on the Raleigh CBC on 20 December.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: Two birds were seen on the Raleigh CBC on 20 December by Ken Knapp and Wayne and Fran Irvin.

CAPE MAY WARBLER: A rare winter record was an individual noted by Lee DeNeef at Raleigh on 10 December.

PRAIRIE WARBLER: One was notable in a yard at Fayetteville on 23 February, as reported by P.J. Crutchfield and Mosely Chesnut.

OVENBIRD: One of the few winter records for North Carolina was a bird studied carefully at the Buxton Woods nature trail at Cape Hatteras on 23 January by Mike Tove and Allen Bryan.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Single birds were observed by Jay Shuler at his feeder in McClellanville on 23 and 24 December and by P.J. Crutchfield at Fayetteville on 31 December and 8 January.

WILSON'S WARBLER: An exceptional count of three was made at Santee National Wildlife Refuge on 25 January by Perry Nugent, Steve Compton, et al. A trace of a black cap was seen on one of the birds.

ORCHARD ORIOLE: Alan Feduccia noted a female or immature male at his feeder at Chapel Hill for several days in mid-February.

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE: The first convincing North Carolina record away from the lower coastal plain was a female carefully observed by P.J. Crutchfield in his yard in Fayetteville on 9 January. The bird was brown in color with an evident eye stripe, dark eye, tail approximately one-half the total length of the body, and size larger in length and bulk than Common Grackles (which were present for comparison).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: The only winter sighting was a male seen by Gail Whitehurst in her Raleigh yard on four occasions from 27 December to 12 February.

WESTERN TANAGER: One was seen at a feeder in Fayetteville on 15 February by P.J. Crutchfield, Kevin Mason, et al.

SUMMER TANAGER: Very rare in winter were females or immature males near Morehead City on 21 December (Alex Meadows, Kenny Baxter) and at a feeder in Fayetteville on 9 and 11 February (P.J. Crutchfield, Henry Rankin, et al.).

- ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK:** A male was observed at a feeder in Asheville on 3 January by Gilbert Tennent.
- BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK:** Jay Shuler noted a female at his feeder in McClellanville from 16 to 21 January. He saw the buffy underparts and fine streaking along the sides of the breast.
- BLUE GROSBEAK:** One was rare for the season near Pendleton, S.C., where seen by Harry LeGrand on 15 February.
- PAINTED BUNTING:** One wintered at the feeder of Mrs. John Griffith in Morehead City. John Fussell observed the bunting on 18 March.
- DICKCISSEL:** Jack Stewart discovered two pairs at Columbia, S.C., in late April. A nest was later found, with five young, by Oleta Beard and Oscar LaBorde. Jimmy Beatty noted three immatures from this nesting on several dates during the summer.
- WINTER FINCH FLIGHT:** The winter of 1980-1981 saw a rather heavy influx of Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins to all parts of the Carolinas, the first major invasion in three winters. Red-breasted Nuthatches were also present in fairly good numbers, but they were common in only a few areas.
- HOUSE FINCH:** Locally noteworthy were two males seen in Pinehurst, N.C., from 22 December to 1 January by Bob Rufa, and three seen at a feeder in Wilmington, N.C., by Greg Massey from 26 to 28 February. This species was seen this winter as far west as Asheville and as far east as Morehead City.
- COMMON REDPOLL:** On the Chapel Hill CBC on 3 January were one at Carol Hamilton's feeder (seen again on 11 January) and two at Cora and Ruth McLean's feeder. Wayne and Fran Irvin had one at their feeder in Raleigh on 4 January. It was present for several days and was observed by Steve Graves and Mike Tove on 5 January. The most unusual record was a group of six redpolls seen by Skip Prange on 6 January at Harkers Island, N.C.
- RED CROSSBILL:** This species was again essentially absent in the Carolinas during the winter, with the only sightings being of one at Raleigh in late November by Joshua Lee, three at Wilmington on 9 December by Greg Massey, several in mid-December in Brunswick County, N.C., by Ricky Davis, and one at Highlands, N.C., on 31 December by Jim McConnell.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW:** Notable in winter for North Carolina were one at Jordan Reservoir on 18 January (Barbara Roth) and another nearby at Mason Farm in Chapel Hill on 24 January (Steve Graves).
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW:** This rare and elusive sparrow again wintered in western Carteret County, N.C., in open pinewoods along Millis Road. At least one was seen on 22 December by Bob Lewis, Mike Tove, and Harry LeGrand, and two were there on 1 February (John Fussell et al.). At the abandoned golf course near Carolina Beach, Greg Massey et al. observed several on four dates from 20 December to 2 February.
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW:** Very rare for North Carolina was one studied carefully at the abandoned golf course near Carolina Beach on 25 January by Jimmy Beatty, Lex Glover, and John Paquet. Four were reported from South Carolina: a first for the Clemson area near Pendleton on 7 December (Sidney Gauthreaux, Harry LeGrand, et al.) and again on 3 January (Le Grand, Edmund Taylor); on the McClellanville CBC on 21 December (Perry Nugent); on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC on 30 December (many observers); and at Mount Pleasant on 11 January (Charles Eastman).
- VESPER SPARROW:** One was seen at Fort Bragg, N.C., on 14 December, and two were noted at Fayetteville on 8 January, as reported by P.J. Crutchfield.

- LARK SPARROW:** Very rare for the season was a brightly-colored individual found on 21 December by Larry Crawford at Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret County, N.C. Mike Tove photographed the sparrow the next day.
- BACHMAN'S SPARROW:** Jay Carter flushed an *Aimophila* sparrow from suitable habitat in the western part of Fort Bragg on 2 January, and two were flushed in the area on 4 January. The birds were presumably Bachman's. At the Henslow's Sparrow site in Carteret County were one Bachman's on 1 February (Steve Graves, John Fussell, Mike Tove) and three singing there on 28 February (Fussell et al.).
- DARK-EYED (OREGON) JUNCO:** One of the few records of this race for North Carolina was a female seen at Umstead State Park, near Raleigh, on 14 December by Steve Graves and Mark Crotteau.
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** North Carolina had three "first" winter records: one seen by Bob Holmes at Pea Island on 6 December, one seen by Greg Massey and Maurice Barnhill at the abandoned golf course near Carolina Beach on 24 December, and as many as three at Bodie Island from 30 December to 22 February. Allen Bryan discovered the first Bodie Island sparrow, and numerous birders saw them during the winter, with Wayne Irvin collecting two of the birds in February.
- HARRIS' SPARROW:** An exciting find was an individual seen at Alan Haney's feeder in Swannanoa, N.C., from 5 to 12 January.
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW:** Two parties noted this species on the Winston-Salem CBC on 3 January (Zack Bynum and Don White, Jim and Pat Culbertson). The only other winter report was of one seen on the Clemson CBC on 3 January by Harry LeGrand and Edmund Taylor.
- LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** Three were observed near Pendleton on 7 December by Harry LeGrand and Sidney Gauthreaux; four were noted at Cape Hatteras on 23 January by Allen Bryan and Mike Tove; and 13 were seen on the Roanoke Rapids CBC on 29 December, with three of the birds near Halifax (Merrill Lynch) and the remainder on Oconeechee Neck (Harry LeGrand, Mike Tove).
- SNOW BUNTING:** Perhaps the best flight into the Carolinas in a decade occurred during the winter, though the only records for South Carolina were eight seen by many observers on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC on 30 December, and one seen near Charleston on 13 January by Harry and Jeanette Anderson. The most remarkable record was 14 tallied on the Roanoke Rapids CBC on 29 December, with four near Halifax and 10 on Oconeechee Neck (Merrill Lynch, Harry LeGrand, Mike Tove). At Oconeechee Neck, six buntings had been discovered the day before the count in a flock of several hundred Horned Larks by Lynch, Bob Lewis, and Allen Bryan, and two were still there on 31 January (Tove, Steve Graves.) Along the North Carolina coast, counts in double figures were 45 on Masonboro Island on 28 February (Greg Massey), 32 on Radio Island at Morehead City on 21 December (Bob Lewis) and 36 there on 10 February (John Fussell), 19 on the Bodie-Pea Island CBC on 30 December (fide Paul Sykes), 15 at Cape Hatteras on 31 December (Lewis, LeGrand, Tove), and 15 near Avon on 10 January (Graves, Tove).

Correction

Harry E. LeGrand Jr. has noted a minor discrepancy in the published dates for the first sighting of the Black-tailed Godwit at Bodie Island, N.C., in December 1979 during the Christmas bird count. Tove and Hughes (*Chat* 45:13-14) give 26 December; *American Birds* (34:458) gives the date of the Bodie-Pea Island Christmas Bird Count as 27 December. The latter date is correct.