

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

HARRY E. LeGRAND JR.

(All dates July 1982 to March 1983 unless otherwise indicated;
CBC = Christmas Bird Count)

- RED-THROATED LOON:** Quite rare inland was one seen by Albert Conway on the Chester, S.C., CBC on 30 December.
- NORTHERN FULMAR:** A dead individual was found at Pea Island, N.C., in late fall, according to Bonnie Woodall. It is now a specimen at the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History.
- AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN:** Dennis Forsythe and others again noted a wintering bird at Charleston, S.C., as it was observed from 19 November through February. Another was seen by Dorothy and Roger Foy in January at the junction of Greens Creek and Smith Creek at Oriental, N.C.
- BROWN PELICAN:** Most unusual inland was one seen by John Koenen on Hope Mills Lake in Cumberland County, N.C., on 14 and 15 January.
- DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT:** Rare for the mountains was a cormorant at Lake Julian, near Asheville, N.C., on 1 December (Jerry Young, Ken Lawson). A tally of 24 on the Chapel Hill, N.C., CBC on 26 December was excellent for an inland locality; observers were Dan Kaplan, Eric Garner, Jim McConnell, and Don Tarbet.
- ANHINGA:** Single birds were noted by Jay Carter over I-20 near Camden, S.C., on 26 January, and by Steve Wagner and others at Santee National Wildlife Refuge on Lake Marion, S.C., on 30 January.
- GREAT BLUE HERON:** Uncommon in the mountains in winter were one on 10 December (Jerry Young, Ken Lawson) and two on 22 February (Ruth Young) in the Cane Creek area near Asheville, N.C. Extremely rare for the Carolinas was an individual of the "Wurdemann's" race (of the Florida Keys), seen by Perry Nugent and party at Cape Island, S.C., on 19 December.
- GREEN-BACKED HERON:** Early winter stragglers were notable on North Carolina CBCs at Fayetteville on 19 December (Jim Wheeling), Chapel Hill on 26 December (Dan Kaplan et al.), Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge on 29 December (Glenda Ditto), and Hatteras on 31 December (Ken Knapp et al.).
- CATTLE EGRET:** Rare for the tidewater zone were one seen by Philip Crutchfield and party at Pamlico Point in Pamlico County, N.C., on 12 January, and one noted by Allen Bryan near Engelhard, N.C., on 20 February.
- BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON:** Jim Mulholland observed an immature near Raleigh, N.C., on 13 February.
- GREAT EGRET:** Noteworthy in winter in the piedmont were two on the Jordan Lake, N.C., CBC on 2 January (Dennis Alwon, Bill and Margaret Wagner) and approximately 20 near the Tega Cay part of Lake Wylie, York County, S.C., on 13 January (Dick Brown).

- WHITE IBIS:** An excellent count at any season for Pea Island was 50+ seen by Allen Bryan on 19 February.
- TUNDRA SWAN:** Unusual numbers so far inland were 515 on 16 February, 125 on 24 February, and 93 on 26 February in a large plowed cornfield at Caledonia Prison Farm near Tillery, Halifax County, N.C. (Merrill Lynch, Karen Masson). Other extralimital records in North Carolina were 19 flying over Jordan Reservoir on 12 December (Norm Budnitz, Jim McConnell), 30+ near Beaufort on 9 January (John Fussell), and 105 near Newport on 12 February (Fussell, Wayne Irvin).
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** Jeff Beacham observed three adults at Santee refuge, S.C., on 23 December. Three were also seen there on 29 January by Perry Nugent and Dennis Abbott.
- SNOW GOOSE:** One blue-phase individual was noted by John Fussell and Wayne Irvin on 12 February near Newport, N.C. One blue-phase bird and another in the white phase were seen by Merrill Lynch and Karen Masson near Tillery, N.C., on 16 February.
- ROSS' GOOSE:** One was again present for most of the winter at Pea Island, being reported on the CBC on 30 December (Paul Sykes et al.) and again during the Carolina Bird Club meeting in that area on 21 and 22 January (Philip Crutchfield et al.).
- FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK:** Rare for a North Carolina CBC was one on a small pond in Hatteras on 31 December, and again on the following day (Harry Armistead and others). Another was along the North Santee River delta, S.C., on 19 February (Peter Manigault).
- NORTHERN PINTAIL:** Eric Garner, Dan Kaplan, and Jim McConnell observed one at Chapel Hill on the CBC on 26 December.
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL:** Very rare for the mountains in winter was a male noted by Ron Warner on Lake Tahoma, N.C., on 15 December. Allen Bryan observed 16 at Lake Mattamuskeet, N.C., on 20 February.
- COMMON GOLDENEYE:** Anson Cooke saw three on Jordan Reservoir on 26 December, and Tom Howard observed single birds at two places on the Southern Pines, N.C., CBC on 2 January. This species, as well as most other waterfowl species, was in low numbers in the Carolinas during the winter owing to very warm weather in December.
- COMMON MERGANSER:** Five birds, including two males, were noted by Ricky Davis at Jordan Reservoir on 30 January, and Allen Bryan saw three males there on 13 February. Noteworthy for the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC were five on impoundments at Pea Island on 30 December (Paul Sykes et al.).
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** One was seen by David Wright just south of Charlotte, N.C., on 12 December. [I have been receiving too many reports of this rare species without adequate details. The above report contained no description, but I accepted it because of the experience of the observer. Many veteran birders have never seen this hawk in the Carolinas, and I feel that most observers who report this species have been too casual in the descriptions. It is a fairly easy bird to identify, in all color phases, and the field guide descriptions are reasonably accurate. However, many of

the reports have probably been of Red-tailed Hawks seen hovering or seen in poor light. Remember—there are skeptics who question nearly all Rough-legged reports from the Carolinas, so be *absolutely* positive before reporting one.—HEL]

GOLDEN EAGLE: An excellent find was an immature seen by Mike Tove and Kelly Nagel at Lake Mattamuskeet on the CBC on 29 December.

BALD EAGLE: Bill and Margaret Wagner noted three immatures in one tree at Jordan Reservoir on 9 February. Other records of note in inland North Carolina were individuals at Edenton on 4 December (Allen Bryan), near Vass on 2 January (Tom Howard), and at Lake Pinehurst on 8 February (Peggy Jansen).

OSPREY: Dick Brown saw one on an aerial survey for Bald Eagles on 13 January at Lake Wylie, S.C. Another was late at Lake Mattamuskeet, where seen by Mike Tove and Kelly Nagel on 29 December.

PEREGRINE FALCON: One was seen during count period of the Buncombe County, N.C., CBC (held on 18 December), as reported by Ruth Young. Five reports for Carteret County, N.C., during the winter (fide John Fussell) were notable for that area.

MERLIN: Steve Wagner observed one near Pendleton, S.C., on the Clemson CBC on 19 December. Philip Crutchfield and others noted two near Fayetteville on 21 February and another on 28 February.

YELLOW RAIL: One was flushed and studied in flight by David Wright at Magnolia Gardens, near Charleston, on 23 February.

BLACK RAIL: An excellent count for South Carolina was 15 to 25 seen by Peter Manigault during a rice harvest along the North Santee River on 25 November.

COMMON MOORHEN: Howard and Susan Chambers noted one on Stewart's Lake, near Fayetteville, on 25 December.

AMERICAN COOT: Bill and Margaret Wagner had good counts of 1500 on 6 December at Jordan Reservoir and 750+ on 19 February at Falls of the Neuse Reservoir in eastern Durham County, N.C.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: Infrequently seen in winter was an individual noted by Maurice Barnhill and Greg Massey on 24 December at Fort Fisher, New Hanover County, N.C.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS: Philip Crutchfield had a rare midwinter bird at Fayetteville from 25 January to 11 February.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: In North Carolina were individuals at North River near Beaufort on 19 December (Allen Bryan), at Harkers Island on several dates in January (Skip Prange), and at Woodlake, near Vass, on 5 February (Dick Thomas).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER: Bob Lewis observed one at Lake Mattamuskeet on the CBC on 29 December. This species perhaps winters regularly on the refuge there.

LEAST SANDPIPER: This shorebird is difficult to find in midwinter on the Outer Banks; therefore, six on 19 February were of interest at Pea Island (Allen Bryan).

DUNLIN: A tally of 57 was good at Lake Mattamuskeet on 29 December, as noted by Bob Lewis.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER: One was seen by Paul Hart, David Wright, and

- others at the McAlpine Sewerage Treatment Plant near Pineville, Mecklenburg County, N.C., on 29 August. It remained for approximately 10 days.
- POMARINE JAEGER:** Robert Hader saw one at Atlantic Beach, N.C., on 11 December, and one was noted by Allen Bryan on the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC on 30 December.
- PARASITIC JAEGER:** Four were seen at Atlantic Beach from 11 to 20 December (John Fussell et al.). Very rare in midwinter was another noted by John Fussell, Larry Crawford, Bob Holmes, and Harry LeGrand at Cape Hatteras point on 6 February.
- GLAUCOUS GULL:** Immatures were seen in North Carolina at Sunset Beach, in Brunswick County, on 15 December by Philip and Jim Crutchfield; at Oregon Inlet on 30 December by Mike Tove, John Fussell, and Bob Anderson; and at a landfill near Newport from 12 to 26 February by Fussell and others. One was photographed [print examined by the editor—HEL] at Breech Inlet, near Isle of Palms, S.C., on 26 March; it was seen by F. Glenn Smith, George McCoy, and Lex Glover.
- ICELAND GULL:** Very rare for South Carolina was one seen by Jackson Abbott at Kiawah Island on 7 February. North Carolina had a remarkable number of records this winter. Rather far inland was an individual seen in a parking lot in Elizabeth City on 23 January by Claudia Wilds. Others were at Manns Harbor on 29 December (Bob Lewis, John Fussell, Allen Bryan), near Hatteras on 31 December (Carl Perry), at Fort Macon State Park on 21 January (Fussell) and likely the same bird at Beaufort on 27 January (Fussell), at Ocracoke on 23 January (Philip Crutchfield, Morris Whitfield, John Roach), at Oregon Inlet on 28 January (Pat and Jim Culbertson) and likely the same bird there on 5 February (Fussell et al.), and at the Newport landfill on 18 February (Fussell). The last Iceland was an adult; all others were immatures.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Notable in South Carolina was an adult seen by Perry Nugent and party on the McClellanville CBC on 19 December. In North Carolina, four were seen on the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC on 30 December (fide Paul Sykes), and two were seen on the Cape Hatteras CBC on 31 December (Bob Lewis). Others in the latter state were seen near Avon on 1 January (Lewis, Mike Tove, Harry LeGrand), at Bodie Island on 21 January (Philip Crutchfield, Morris Whitfield), at Wanchese on 22 January (Claudia Wilds et al.), at the Newport landfill from 23 February into March and a second there from 23 to 26 February (John Fussell).
- COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL:** Good finds were individuals seen by Frances Needham, Dana Carter, and others at a sewage treatment plant at Carolina Beach, N.C., from 18 December to early March; and by Harry LeGrand and John Fussell at Hatteras on 6 February.
- BONAPARTE'S GULL:** Ramona Snavelly, Bobbie Page, and Sue Moore saw 16 on Oak Hollow Reservoir near High Point, N.C., on 15 January. At Jordan Reservoir, six were seen on the Chapel Hill CBC on 26 December (fide Bill Wagner) and one was noted on 29 January (Andy Towle and party).
- BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE:** Philip Crutchfield and Morris Whitfield observed an oiled bird on a sand bar with other gulls near Salvo, N.C., on 22 January.

- SABINE'S GULL:** Absolutely remarkable for early spring was an individual in breeding plumage seen by Henry Haberyan on the White Oak River near Swansboro, N.C., on 10 March. He noted the black head, pattern of triangles on the wings, and the square tail as it was seen closely in flight. This is the fifth record for the state.
- CASPIAN TERN:** John Fussell saw one on the Morehead City, N.C., CBC on 19 December.
- BLACK SKIMMER:** An excellent total of 610 was reported on the Morehead City CBC on 19 December, fide John Fussell.
- RAZORBILL:** Mike Tove and Bob Anderson noted one on the ocean at Pea Island on 30 December.
- THICK-BILLED MURRE:** Very rare was one observed by Carl Perry several miles off Hatteras Inlet on the Cape Hatteras CBC on 31 December.
- DOVEKIE:** One was found sick or injured on Shackelford Banks, N.C., on 19 December by Maureen Benson. The remains of another were found by John Fussell at Cape Hatteras point on 6 February; the bird had been dead for at least several weeks.
- SHORT-EARED OWL:** Harry LeGrand observed five at dusk on 6 January in the lakebed of Falls of the Neuse Reservoir along the line between Wake and Durham Counties.
- CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW:** Extremely rare in winter was one seen by Harry LeGrand on a road at dusk at Buxton, N.C., on 31 December. The large size (about as plump as an American Woodcock), brownish-sooty body, and brown throat were clearly seen in the headlights of a car.
- RUBY-THROATED (?) HUMMINGBIRD:** An immature male was present at Irene Doremus' feeder in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret County, N.C., from December to 20 January. A close study by John Fussell and Wayne Irvin indicated that the bird was almost certainly a Ruby-throated, especially as "some dark (reddish) feathers were coming in on the throat" (Fussell). A female or immature hummingbird was reported as this species, without details, from Charleston on 28 December (Louise Cauthen).
- LEAST (?) FLYCATCHER:** An *Empidonax* flycatcher was carefully observed at Cape Island, S.C., on the McClellanville CBC on 19 December. Perry Nugent and John Paquet identified it as a Least. [It is probably best called "Least (?)", as birds of this genus are very difficult to identify when not singing and not in typical habitat.—HEL]
- HORNED LARK:** Notable for the Outer Banks were two seen near Buxton on 22 January by Philip Crutchfield and Morris Whitfield.
- PURPLE MARTIN:** Early spring arrivals in coastal North Carolina were two at Sunset Beach on 16 February (Philip Crutchfield) and one at Atlantic Beach on 18 February (John Fussell, Bob Holmes).
- FISH CROW:** Philip Crutchfield noted one on the rather late date of 18 December at Fayetteville.
- SEDGE WREN:** On 30 and 31 July, Philip Crutchfield observed one and heard 10 to 12 others singing, apparently on territory, at Pamlico Point, N.C. The birds were in

Black Needlerush marshes. There have been scattered reports in recent years of apparently territorial singing in North Carolina by this species. Unfortunately, such behavior is not necessarily indicative of breeding, and no evidence of nesting has yet been found in the Carolinas.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER: Quite unusual for the piedmont was an individual that presumably spent the entire winter in Charlotte, N.C. It was seen in Heathy Walker's yard on 5 December, 9 January, and 2 and 3 March. Two were seen on the Jordan Lake CBC on 2 January (fide Barbara Roth) and one was seen on the Lake Mattamuskeet CBC on 29 December (Mike Tove).

WHITE-EYED VIREO: John Wright saw one at Lake Mattamuskeet on the CBC on 29 December, and Paul Sykes noted two at Buxton on the Cape Hatteras CBC on 31 December. Paul Hamel, Alan Avakian, and others noted two on 14 January at the Congaree River swamp, S.C., where the species is perhaps regular in winter.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: Individuals were seen on North Carolina CBCs at Durham on 19 December (fide Mike Schultz), at Lake Mattamuskeet on 29 December (Larry Ditto), and Jordan Lake on 2 January (Dan Kaplan, Steve and Maurice Graves). Others were seen at Fayetteville on 8 January (Norman and Barbara Scott), at Raleigh on 12 January (Jim Mulholland), and at Congaree River swamp on 14 and 15 January (three by Alan Avakian et al.).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: The Cape Hatteras CBC tallied an outstanding 52 individuals on 31 December (fide Carl Perry). Heathy Walker observed one at a suet feeder in Charlotte on 20 January.

NORTHERN PARULA: A very late bird was observed by Jim McConnell in Durham, N.C., on 7 December.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER: Steve Compton noted one late on 26 November at Hampton Park in Charleston.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER: Very rare in winter was an individual seen by Paul Sykes in Buxton Woods on the Cape Hatteras CBC on 31 December.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER: One was late at Charleston on 26 November (Steve Compton).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: North of the winter range was one seen by Paul Sykes at Buxton on 31 December.

PRAIRIE WARBLER: Paul Sykes noted one on the Cape Hatteras CBC on 31 December. This bird was seen in the same mixed-species flock as the Black-throated Blue and Yellow-throated Warblers.

NORTHERN (BALTIMORE) ORIOLE: Rare for extreme eastern North Carolina were birds on CBCs at Lake Mattamuskeet on 29 December (Mike Tove), at Wanchese on 30 December (two seen by Dan Cristol), and one at Buxton on 31 December (Harry LeGrand).

NORTHERN (BULLOCK'S) ORIOLE: Robert Hader reported that one was seen at a feeder in Raleigh on the CBC there on 18 December. Another male was noted at a feeder near Charleston from 1 October through the winter by Mrs. Gilbert Bradham.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: Ross Jervis and party observed two males in a cow pasture

with other blackbirds on the Chapel Hill CBC on 26 December. The faint purple overcast on the head and greenish body were noted on the birds.

WESTERN TANAGER: One was seen in an apple orchard and a yard between Hendersonville and Edneyville, N.C., on 4 and 5 January by Ron Warner. [Excellent slides were examined by the editor.—HEL] Another, apparently an adult male, was at Kathy Kirkman's feeder in Pine Knoll Shores, N.C., from early January to early March. It was confirmed by John Fussell on 17 January. A female or immature was seen by Mosely and Ruth Chesnutt in a yard in Fayetteville from early November to March, and a male (with some red on the face) was seen in a yard in a different part of that city from early December to late January (Bob and Becky White, Henry Rankin).

EVENING GROSBEAK: This species was quite rare in the Carolinas during the winter, with only scattered sightings. The highest count reported was 22 observed by Greg Massey at Wilmington, N.C., on 1 March.

HOUSE FINCH: Noteworthy for tidewater North Carolina were eight at Edenton on 4 December (Allen Bryan), two at Hatteras on 31 December (Harry Armistead), and two at a feeder in Wilmington from 13 January to 9 February (Greg Massey). Other notable sightings were as many as 20 at a single Fayetteville feeder during the winter (fide Philip Crutchfield); 100+ in one yard in Whispering Pines, Moore County, N.C., on 23 January (Jay Carter, Dick Thomas, et al.); 177 on the Clemson, S.C., CBC on 19 December (fide Paul Hamel); and one in Hendersonville, N.C., on 15 February (Ron Warner).

COMMON REDPOLL (?): One was reported at a feeder on the Chapel Hill CBC on 26 December. [As this species was essentially absent in the northeastern United States during the winter, there is concern about the sighting. Though fair details were provided, the House Finch was not entirely eliminated by the description. Birders who believe they have a redpoll, especially at a feeder, should make every effort to obtain a photograph of the bird or notify experienced observers to verify the sighting.—HEL]

PINE SISKIN: Like Evening Grosbeaks, siskins were very scarce this winter. There were somewhat more reports of this species than of grosbeaks, but most observers did not see either species all winter.

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: An adult male was seen by many birders at the feeder of Lucius Gage near Waxhaw, Union County, N.C., from 15 to 25 February 1982. The bird was photographed, and it was reported by Paul Hart. There were no reports of either species of crossbill during the winter of 1982-1983.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: Near the edge of the winter range was one noted by Harry LeGrand north of Beaufort, N.C., on 19 December.

LE CONTE'S SPARROW: One observed by Jim Mulholland just south of Raleigh on 19 February provided a very rare winter record for North Carolina. Numerous birders saw the Le Conte's on the same afternoon.

BACHMAN'S SPARROW: This species has recently been found to occur regularly in winter in the North Carolina Sandhills. This season Jay Carter saw up to four birds in western Fort Bragg on seven dates in December and two dates in January.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Harry LeGrand observed one in a flock of Field Sparrows at Buxton on 31 December (on the Cape Hatteras CBC).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW: A first record for Carteret County, N.C., was one seen by Skip Prange at his feeder on Harkers Island from 26 February to 22 March. He lives adjacent to a shrubby marsh that is a good habitat for the species. Alan Avakian noted another on 19 December on the Clemson CBC near Townville, S.C., the only place in the Carolinas (Anderson County and vicinity) where Lincoln's has been consistently recorded in winter.

SNOW BUNTING: Nine seen by Bob Lewis, Harry LeGrand, and Mike Tove on 1 January between Salvo and Avon, N.C., was the only report for the winter.

BOOK REVIEW

FINDING BIRDS IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA: A SMITHSONIAN NATURE GUIDE.

Claudia Wilds. 1982. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. Illus. Appendices. Index. 215 p. Softbound, \$10.95.

Guides to bird finding range from a few sheets of paper stapled together to hardbound books, but most tend to be softbound books that sell for about \$10 or less. They may be very general (e.g. the two-volume Pettingill work) or very localized (e.g. the Lane and Tveten Texas coast guide). The latter, with its habitat photographs, bar graphs, and detailed maps, is a well-written but strictly utilitarian book that has helped to make the Texas Gulf Coast a mecca for bird watchers. Recently we have seen the publication of several statewide bird-finding guides, notably Bierly's book for Tennessee (see Chat 44:119). Their greater geographic coverage makes the bar graphs impractical, and these books tend to emphasize habitat variations rather than avian specialties. Most of these books have been a labor of love accomplished by author/publishers with a minimum of professional advice on design and layout. The result has been a series of very helpful books marred by maps with legends too small for easy reading even under the best of conditions.

Now we have a new guide to the area within easy driving distance of Washington, D.C., which includes all or parts of six states. Of the bird-finding books I have examined, this is by far the most attractive in format and, as far as I can tell without field-testing it, the best illustrated and best written. The large-scale maps, prepared by Kai Yee, and the large-size, well-spaced type can be easily read in a moving car. The spacious design by Alan Carter and drawings by Doreen Curtin are pleasing to the eye. These "little things" *do* make a difference!

CBC members who attended the meeting at Nags Head in January 1983 no doubt recall how skillfully Miss Wilds explained some very difficult problems in shorebird identification—and to mention her directions for finding the Lesser Black-backed Gull at Wanchese. She is a "good 'splainer," as one child used to say about a favorite teacher.