

First Wilson's Warbler Collected on the Coast of South Carolina

D. GREEN
80 Prospect Street
Paramus, N.J. 07652

P.S. COLEMAN and W. POST
The Charleston Museum
360 Meeting Street
Charleston, S.C. 29403

In 1984-1986, we mist-netted two Wilson's Warblers (*Wilsonia pusilla*), in Charleston County, South Carolina. The first was caught by Green on 18 October 1984 at Hog Island, Mount Pleasant, in coastal scrub (*Celtis-Myrica-Baccharis*) at the edge of a salt marsh. The bird (ChM 1987.3.231) was an immature female; weight, 7.1 g; wing chord, 51.7 mm. The second bird (ChM 1987.3.232), a male of undetermined age, weighed 6.5 g and had a wing length of 54.5 mm. Coleman caught the bird in a wax-myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) coppice near Fort Moultrie, Sullivan's Island on 14 October 1986.

Although three specimens of Wilson's Warbler have been secured in the Piedmont, at Clemson and Chester (Contr. Charleston Museum XI:484-485, 1949), we can find no evidence that a coastal specimen has been taken before, and indeed Burton (Suppl. Contr. Charleston Museum XI:626, 1970) says that "on the coast it is extremely rare." Norris (Contr. Charleston-Museum XIV:58, 1963) reports that J.B. Hatcher picked up a specimen under a TV tower near Aiken (Beech Island) on 17 October. The location of this specimen is unknown, and it would be the only specimen for the upper coastal plain.

The little information that we now have on this species indicates that it is a rare transient throughout the state, 5 September-9 November and 25 March-19 May.



Attempted Nesting of Marsh Wren in Guilford County, N.C.

H.T. HENDRICKSON
Department of Biology
University of N.C. at Greensboro
Greensboro, N.C. 27412

PEGGY FEREBEE
Natural Science Center
4301 Lawndale Drive
Greensboro, N.C. 27408

On the morning of 3 July 1987, the distinctive song of a Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*), was heard by one of us (HTH) in a clump of cattails (*Typha latifolia*), at the point where Horsepen Creek empties into Lake Brandt, approximately 6 miles northwest of Greensboro, Guilford County, N.C. The bird was singing from one corner of a band of marsh that totals no more than four acres at the west end of one reservoir in the city water system. The vegetation is dominated by Yellow Water Buttercup (*Ranunculus flabellaris*), and a variety of grasses. Cattails occur in four clumps of about two thousand square feet each.

A return trip in the afternoon with chest-high waders allowed sighting the bird. It showed the white superciliary stripe, and the back stripes. The lack of strong contrast between the back and belly colors suggest that the bird was most probably of the prairie subspecies *C. p. dissaetus*, and not the subspecies of coastal North Carolina *C. p. waynei*.

On 5 July the identification was confirmed by the junior author. The bird was observed singing in flight and carrying nesting material.

Additional visits were made on 7 through 9 July without seeing the bird again. A nest found on 8 July was photographed on 9 July. It appeared to be a classic example of the Marsh Wren "dummy nest".

Marsh Wrens are known as breeders in North Carolina only from the coastal marshes where they are subspecifically distinct from the birds found to the north on the Delmarva Peninsula and those to the south in South Carolina (Pearson, et al., 1942). Migrant birds of the northern and inland races have been found as far inland as the mountain counties (Potter, et al. 1980), and coastal birds have been blown inland by hurricanes (Crawford, 1957), but we have found no records of nesting attempts by these birds. The eastern inland subspecies of Marsh Wren is known to breed as far west as Michigan and western Ontario, and as far south as Blacksburg, and Charlottesville in Virginia (Murray, 1952). The species has been recorded as breeding at Kerr Reservoir in Virginia without subspecific identification (Kain, 1987). The presence of this bird in Greensboro in July with a nest suggests a significant inland expansion of the breeding range of this species.

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