

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

HARRY E. LeGRAND JR.

(All dates Fall 1989 through Spring 1990; CBC = Christmas Bird Count)

HORNED GREBE: David Wright noted as many as 180 at Lake Norman, N.C., during the winter for an excellent inland count.

RED-NECKED GREBE: There was a surprising influx into coastal waters during the winter. Two were seen by Lex Glover et al. from the Ocracoke - Cedar Island, N.C., ferry on 4 February. Single birds noted in that state were at Figure Eight Island in New Hanover County on 10 December (Derb Carter), at Atlantic Beach on 17 December (Paul Spitzer), at Cape Hatteras point on 11 January (Marcia Lyons), at Rodanthe on 16 January (John Fussell), and at Nags Head on 4 February during the Carolina Bird Club meeting (Ricky Davis et al.). In South Carolina one was seen by Lex Glover at Huntington Beach SP on 31 December, and perhaps the same bird was there on 3 February (Peter Worthington).

EARED GREBE: Eric Dean reported that one of the grebes present during the fall at the Goldsboro, N.C., water treatment ponds remained through 16 December. In the Cape Hatteras vicinity, one was seen on several dates from 12 December (Mark Crotteau, Todd Hass) to 11 March (Russ Tyndall); it was also noted by some members of the Carolina Bird Club on 3 February.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: The flock of pelicans at Pea Island, N.C., in November remained in the general area at least through 23 February, when nine were counted by Rick Knight; surprisingly the birds were missed on the Bodie-Pea Island CBC in late December. Single pelicans were also notable at Hatteras Inlet, N.C., on 2 December (Henry Haberyan), near the Charleston, S.C., airport on 11 January (D. Watts), and at Bear Island, S.C., on 24 February (Perry Nugent et al.).

GREAT CORMORANT: This species continues to increase as a winter visitor to Carolina waters. An excellent count was 11 on old pilings at New River Inlet, N.C., on 12 February, as noted by John Fussell. He also observed three birds in the bight at Cape Lookout, N.C., on 11 February.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: Notable in the mountains in winter was one seen by Robert Ruiz on Lake Tahoma in McDowell County, N.C., on 17 February.

ANHINGA: Perhaps a record count for North Carolina was a flock of at least 60 soaring in a thermal at Goldsboro, N.C., on 24 September. Eric Dean believed they were displaced by Hurricane Hugo, which passed the area two days prior to the sighting. Notable winter records inland were single birds at Lugoff, S.C., on 25 January (Lex Glover) and at Jessup's Mill Pond in Cumberland County, N.C., on 16 February (Philip Crutchfield).

GREAT EGRET: Rare in the piedmont in winter was one present at Lake Crabtree near Morrisville, N.C., from 28 January to 10 February (Harry LeGrand, Robert Hader, Chapel Hill Bird Club).

- GLOSSY IBIS:** An outstanding winter count was 77, perhaps early spring migrants, at Bear Island, S.C., on 24 February (Perry Nugent et al.). One was at Huntington Beach SP, S.C., on 3 February (Peter Worthington).
- FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK:** The only report for the winter was a count of up to seven birds during the season at an impoundment near Davis, N.C. (Dallas Salter).
- TUNDRA SWAN:** This increasing species wintered in unprecedented numbers in Carteret County, N.C., where up to 1000 were at the Davis impoundment during the season (Dallas Salter). A count of five was notable at Savannah NWR, S.C., on 13 January (Paul Raney). Rare for the piedmont were single birds seen by Harry LeGrand south of Raleigh, N.C., on 21 January and by Fred Hill in northern Mecklenburg County, N.C., in February.
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** Tim Kalbach observed one at Santee NWR, S.C., on 30 December for the only winter report for the Carolinas.
- SNOW GOOSE:** One white phase individual was seen at Raleigh on 16 December by Robert Hader, who noted that two blue phase birds joined the former bird in January. In northern Mecklenburg County, David Wright observed a white phase bird from 26 December to the end of the winter and a blue phase bird from 14 January to late February. Dennis Forsythe and party saw six Snows at Savannah NWR on 10 December, and John Fussell saw one near Drum Inlet, N.C., on 24 February.
- ROSS' GOOSE:** The first inland record for the Carolinas was one seen well by Derb Carter at Pungo Lake, N.C., on 1 February. One was much less unusual, though still notable, at Pea Island, N.C., on 28 December (Paul Sykes, Mike Tove, et al.).
- BRANT:** The exceptionally cold weather in December caused the freezing up of many bays to the north of the Carolinas, forcing Brants and other waterfowl into the Carolinas in heavy numbers. Excellent counts for South Carolina included 107 in the Charleston harbor on 27 January (Perry Nugent), 46 at Raccoon Key on 28 January (Nugent), 25+ at Moore's Landing on 31 December (Dennis Forsythe), and 20+ at Huntington Beach SP on 14 January (Forsythe). Notable counts in North Carolina were 67 on the Southport CBC on 31 December (fide Bill Brokaw) and 52 on the Wilmington CBC on 30 December (fide Frances Needham).
- NORTHERN PINTAIL:** Herb Hendrickson observed six near Greensboro, N.C., on 20 January; the species is rather rare in midwinter in the piedmont.
- BLUE-WINGED TEAL:** Quite unusual inland in midwinter was a female seen at Cowans Ford Refuge north of Charlotte, N.C., on 14 January (David Wright).
- EURASIAN WIGEON:** A male was again present at the impoundment at Davis, N.C., being seen from 3 December (Henry Haberyan) into March, when two pairs were reported on 5 March by Rich Boyd. Males were seen at two impoundments at Pea Island on 28 December by Mike Tove and Paul Sykes.
- GREATER SCAUP:** Herb Hendrickson observed a male on 20 January, and two males on 30 and 31 January, at Greensboro. In inland South Carolina, noteworthy were five at the Savannah River Plant on 19 December (Anne

Waters) and two males and two females at Dreher Island SP, S.C., on 9 January (Tim Kalbach).

COMMON EIDER: An immature male was present in the Beaufort Inlet, N.C., area from 10 to 27 December, as noted by John Fussell. Elsewhere along the North Carolina coast were single birds on the Wilmington CBC on 30 December (fide Sam Cooper), at Cape Hatteras on 11 January (Marcia Lyons), and at Pea Island from 2 to 4 February (Philip Crutchfield, Carolina Bird Club). A female and an immature male were noted on 13 January at Huntington Beach SP, S.C., by Lex Glover and Roger McNeill.

KING EIDER: There were surprisingly only three reports with details for the winter. One was seen on the Bodie-Pea Island CBC on 28 December (fide Paul Sykes), another was on the Wilmington CBC on 30 December (Sam Cooper), and a first-winter male was present during the winter at Huntington Beach SP (Dennis Forsythe, Tim Kalbach).

HARLEQUIN DUCK: An outstanding "flight" reached coastal Carolina this winter. Four were present near the Cape Hatteras lighthouse on 11 January (Marcia Lyons) and 2 February (Lex Glover party). Four were also at a pier at Topsail Island, N.C., on 26 January (John Fussell, Deb Squires), and three birds — perhaps from the above group of four — were at the nearby pier at Surf City on 12 February (Fussell). Four individuals were also found at Wrightsville Beach, N.C., on 30 December (Sam Cooper). Also in North Carolina were two females seen much of the winter at the Oregon Inlet bridge (Fussell, John Wright, et al.), one at the Cedar Island ferry terminal on 3 December (Henry Haberyan), and one at a pier at Nags Head on 4 February (Ricky Davis, Carolina Bird Club). The only reports for South Carolina came from the jetties at Huntington Beach SP, where as many as two birds were present during the winter (Dennis Forsythe, Peter Worthington).

OLDSQUAW: Ken Knapp observed two birds on Jordan Lake in Chatham County, N.C., on 31 December; five Oldsquaws were there on 13 January (Knapp, Tom Street, Henry Link, Herb Hendrickson). A single bird was seen on the Buncombe County, N.C., CBC on 17 December (fide Ruth Young). In inland South Carolina, two were present on Par Pond at the Savannah River Plant for more than a month during the winter (Anne Waters, Peter Stangel); one was seen near Clemson on 16 and 17 December (Ben Sill party); and one was at Dreher Island SP from 25 February to 3 March (Tim Kalbach).

SURF SCOTER: An excellent inland count was a group of five females or immatures at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange County, N.C., on 2 December, as seen by Doug Shadwick and party.

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER: One spent the period from 16 December to late January on Lake Brandt and Lake Higgins near Greensboro, as seen by Henry Link and others. Another White-winged inland was a female noted by Taylor Piephoff and David Wright at the southern end of Lake Norman, N.C., on 15 December. Outstanding numbers were present along the coast during the winter, highlighted by 298 on the Bodie-Pea Island CBC on 28 December (fide Paul Sykes).

- COMMON GOLDENEYE:** Notable inland totals for North Carolina were 16 on the Pamlico River near Aurora on 20 January (Russ Tyndall) and six at Jordan Lake on 13 January (Ken Knapp).
- COMMON MERGANSER:** Perhaps unprecedented was a count of 205 birds, at least 30 being adult males, on Lake Phelps, N.C., made by Merrill Lynch on 13 January. The species was widespread on many North Carolina CBC's this winter, the best report being of 11 on the Southport CBC on 31 December (fide Bill Brokaw). Herb Hendrickson and others noted as many as eight birds in the Greensboro area from January to 1 February.
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER:** A notable inland count was 90 reported in late November on Par Pond at the Savannah River Plant (Peter Stangel).
- ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** The most "co-operative" Rough-legged Hawk ever seen in the Carolinas was a dark-phase bird that perched on telephone wires along US 70 between LaGrange and Kinston, N.C., from 22 January to 25 February. It was found by Betty Grady and was seen by dozens of birders; photos by her and John Fussell have been submitted to the State Museum of Natural Sciences for documentation. A light-phase bird was seen by Allen Bryan on 7 January and by Ricky Davis two days later along I-85 in western Davidson County, N.C. John Wright saw two birds flying over NC 11 near Ayden, N.C., on 1 February, and Russ Tyndall saw a light-phase bird north of Aurora, N.C., on 20 January.
- GOLDEN EAGLE:** An immature was a notable find at Santee NWR, S.C., on 13 January by Tim and Mark Kalbach. In the mountains of North Carolina, one was seen on 9 January at Big Bald Mountain (Rad Mayfield), and perhaps the same bird was noted at nearby Roan Mountain on 6 and 11 February (Brian Cross, Tom McNeil).
- MERLIN:** The only inland report for the winter was one seen near Goldsboro on 27 February by Eric Dean.
- PEREGRINE FALCON:** Formerly very rarely reported inland in winter, there were at least seven such reports this season. Single birds in North Carolina were observed near Greenville on 11 December (John Wright), near Goldsboro on 23 January (Eric Dean), in downtown Charlotte from 29 January to the end of February (fide David Wright), at Roan Mountain on 6 and 8 February (Brian Cross, Rick Knight), and at Jordan Lake on 27 February (Paul Saraceni). Inland South Carolina records were of birds on the Clemson CBC on 16 December (fide Steve Wagner) and at Santee NWR on 13 January (Tim Kalbach).
- YELLOW RAIL:** Although not seen, individuals were heard calling in response to rock-tapping east of Columbia, S.C., on 8 December by John Cely and on 16 December by Tim Kalbach, and at Santee NWR on 30 December by Kalbach. [None of the birds heard calling in the Columbia area over the past few years has been seen to prove without a doubt that Yellow Rails are present, but the answering of clicking and the wet grassy habitat seem to provide little doubt about the records. — HEL]
- SORA:** Rare in midwinter in the piedmont were one or two on 13 January at a marsh in a quarry in southern Mecklenburg County, N.C. (David Wright, Taylor Piephoff, Jeff Wright).

- COMMON MOORHEN:** At the same marsh where the Sora was found, two moorhens were seen on 30 December by Heathy Walker, David Wright, and Kevin Hennings. This species is seldom reported in winter in the piedmont.
- AMERICAN AVOCET:** The only shorebirds seen by John Fussell, John Wright, and Paula Wright along 5 miles of beach north of Corolla, N.C., on 4 February were two avocets. Fussell also noted another bird in the Beaufort, N.C., area, where locally rare, from 14 December to 12 January.
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER:** Three were notable on 16 December at Goldsboro (Gene Howe, Betty Grady, Russ Tyndall); two were still there on 6 January (Eric Dean).
- WHIMBREL:** Despite a very cold December, with a foot of snow on 23 December, up to eight Whimbrels managed to spend the entire winter at Bird Shoal near Beaufort, N.C., as noted by John Fussell. He also saw two more birds at the southeastern end of nearby Shackleford Banks on 9 February.
- LONG-BILLED CURLEW:** An excellent Carolina count was six seen by Perry Nugent at Lighthouse Island in Cape Romain NWR, S.C., on 28 January. One spent the winter at Bird Shoal near Beaufort, N.C., and a second bird was seen there on 31 January (John Fussell).
- LEAST SANDPIPER:** A notable inland count for the species was 48 tallied on the Goldsboro CBC on 16 December (fide Eric Dean).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER:** Normally arriving in the Carolinas by mid-March, one was quite early in the mountains on 25 February, when seen by Norma and Bill Siebenheller in a flock of Killdeers between Rosman and Brevard, N.C.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER:** Probably a record total for the North Carolina Outer Banks was five birds at the base of the Oregon Inlet bridge on 28 December (John Fussell et al.).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** Rather rare in southeastern North Carolina, 100+ Long-billeds were seen by Sam Cooper on the athletic fields at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington on 2 December.
- PARASITIC JAEGER:** Henry Haberyan observed a light-phase adult at Hatteras Inlet, N.C., on 2 February.
- POMARINE JAEGER:** An immature was noted by Lex Glover and party at Hatteras Inlet on 4 February.
- LAUGHING GULL:** One was late inland on 9 December in a field with Ring-billed and Herring gulls near Lake Glenwood, Greenville, N.C. (Howard Vainwright).
- LITTLE GULL:** The three reports for the winter were from the Outer Banks, with one at Bodie Island on 28 December (Ricky Davis), one at Nags Head on 3 February (Davis, Harry LeGrand), and two at Cape Hatteras on 11 March (Russ Tyndall).
- COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL:** The only report for the winter was an adult seen at Morehead City from 15 to 18 December by John Fussell, and again on 14 January by Paul Saraceni.
- HERRING GULL:** Impressive numbers of gulls were found on inland lakes during the winter because of the very cold temperatures in December. Most

- notable was the count of 252 Herring Gulls on the Goldsboro CBC on 16 December (fide Eric Dean).
- THAYER'S GULL:** Derb Carter carefully studied a first-winter individual at Cape Hatteras point on 5 December. There are only six or seven previous records for North Carolina.
- ICELAND GULL:** An adult was a good find at a landfill near Newport, N.C., on 25 January (John Fussell).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** This species was found on most of the coastal North Carolina CBC's, with a peak of seven at Cape Hatteras on 27 December (fide Harry LeGrand). An adult was notable at the New Hanover County, N.C., landfill north of Wilmington on 27 January (Sam Cooper, Kevin Markham).
- GLAUCOUS GULL:** Always noteworthy in South Carolina, one was seen by Pete Laurie at Huntington Beach SP on 10 January. In addition to several reported on coastal North Carolina CBC's, one was present at the New Hanover County landfill on 27 January (Sam Cooper, Kevin Markham).
- GLAUCOUS X HERRING GULL (HYBRID):** Perhaps the first report of this hybrid in the Carolinas was one carefully studied by Mike Tove, John Wright, Harry LeGrand, and Ricky Davis at Cape Hatteras point on 26 and 27 December.
- SANDWICH TERN:** Rarely seen after late November, two were notable on 12 December at Cape Hatteras point (Todd Hass, Mark Crotteau), as was one on the Wilmington CBC on 30 December (fide Frances Needham).
- RAZORBILL:** The only report of an alcid for the winter was an injured, immature Razorbill picked up at Atlantic Beach, N.C., on 10 February. The bird died a few days later and was examined by John Fussell.
- NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL:** One was heard calling during daylight by David Wright and Heathy Walker just east of Hatteras, N.C., on 3 February. The bird was calling from a thicket of cedars but was not seen despite a search of the area.
- RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD:** A female present at a Greenville, S.C., feeder on 16 December, at the home of Muffy Wilkins, was induced to come into a greenhouse, where it stayed through the winter (fide Peter Worthington). Dorothy and Roger Foy banded and measured the bird to confirm its identification on 3 April.
- ARCHILOCHUS HUMMINGBIRD (SP.?):** At least seven individuals of this genus, none an adult male, were present in December at feeders at several locales in central Carteret County, N.C. (fide John Fussell). None were seen after the blizzard on 23 December.
- RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER:** The first records for Merchants Millpond SP, N.C., in 12 years occurred this winter, when Floyd Williams saw two on 25 January. He and Tim Lisk noted three birds along the park boundary on 1 February.
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER:** One of the few winter reports for the Carolinas was one seen on 5 December at the western end of Emerald Isle, N.C. (fide Henry Haberyan and Betsy Gallagher).
- BARN SWALLOW:** Ricky Davis observed one flying over Croatan Sound, N.C., on the very late date of 26 December.

COMMON RAVEN: Brian Cross and Rick Knight noted a large flock of 23 ravens at Roan Mountain, N.C., on 8 February. The species dispersed from its usual montane range into the western and central piedmont during December. Three were noted on the Tryon, N.C., CBC on 16 December (fide Simon Thompson); four were seen and heard on the Rockingham County, N.C., CBC on 17 December (fide Julia Gunn); two were seen on the Winston-Salem, N.C., CBC on 30 December (fide Marbry Hopkins); and one was seen on the Spartanburg, S.C., CBC on 30 December (fide Irvin Pitts). Most significant was the reporting of ravens nesting and rearing three young in a rock quarry near Reidsville, N.C., during the summer of 1989 (Julia Gunn), the easternmost site known for nesting by the species in the state.

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE: Three were seen and one was heard singing at an elevation of 3600 feet along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Asheville, N.C., on 17 December. The observers were Norma and Bill Siebenheller. [The abundance of the species in the mountains in winter, away from known breeding sites, is poorly documented. In most cases, the reports contain either few or no details. Any reports of the species away from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park or the Blue Ridge Parkway from the Smokies to Devil's Courthouse, at any season, should contain considerable details. — HEL]

HOUSE WREN: One seen by Herb Hendrickson on 31 January north of Greensboro was rare for that area in midwinter.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER: Three seen on the Goldsboro CBC on 16 December was a good tally for the inner coastal plain at that season (fide Eric Dean).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: Noteworthy for the inner coastal plain, where a few individuals of this species possibly overwinter regularly, were one each at Goldsboro on 16 December (John Fussell) and near Fayetteville on 26 February (Philip Crutchfield).

CAPE MAY WARBLER: Todd Hass observed one, apparently an adult male, in his yard in Chapel Hill, N.C., from 16 January to 15 February.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: One was notable on 5 January near Chapel Hill, as seen by Doug Shadwick.

OVENBIRD: Though observers have provided a number of winter records in coastal forests of North Carolina in recent years, one seen well by Merrill Lynch on the south side of Lake Phelps, N.C., on 30 December was quite unusual.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: John Fussell saw one at his feeder in Morehead City during the blizzard on 23 and 24 December. However, he found the bird dead later in the winter.

PAINTED BUNTING: An adult male was seen on 22 December at a feeder in Buxton, N.C. (fide Marcia Lyons). Painted Buntings were known to have survived the 23 December blizzard at several other coastal feeders in that state. Lois Howland and Shirley Cuthrell saw at least three birds at their feeders in Beaufort all winter, and three more birds wintered near Queen's Creek in Onslow County (Gus Forte, fide John Fussell).

- DICKCISSEL:** Always notable in winter, one was seen on the Goldsboro CBC on 16 December by Ricky Davis and re-located later in the day by Eric Dean and others.
- AMERICAN TREE SPARROW:** One was seen by Bob Pilch at Pea Island on 28 December.
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** Very rare in winter was one seen in northern Mecklenburg County on 10 and 11 December by David Wright, Taylor Piephoff, and others.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW:** Philip Crutchfield observed one on 31 January at a landfill at Fort Bragg in Cumberland County, N.C.
- HENSLOW'S SPARROW:** Seldom reported in the piedmont, particularly in winter, was one (and possibly two) seen by Peter Worthington on 31 January near Townville, S.C.
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW:** Always a good find was one seen within five feet in central Gates County, N.C., on 25 January by Floyd Williams.
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW:** Two were noted just northwest of Lake Phelps, N.C., on 30 December (Merrill Lynch); two were seen near Townville, S.C., on 20 January (Peter Worthington, Steve Cox, Vicky Cox); two were seen near Stokes, Pitt County, N.C., on 18 February (John Wright, Russ Tyndall); and one was seen in northern Mecklenburg County on 20 February (David Wright).
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW:** Evelyn Dabbs and Lex Glover noted at least one immature from 5 November through February near Mayesville, S.C. John Fussell observed another immature in his yard in Morehead City during January and February. This species is quite rare at these locations.
- LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** The species wintered at Bird Shoal near Beaufort, N.C., as five were present from 14 to 17 December (John Fussell, Sam Cooper) and three were there from 29 to 31 January (Fussell). The only winter report from South Carolina came from the Clemson area, where somewhat regular at one or two sites; two were on the CBC there on 16 December (fide Steve Wagner).
- SNOW BUNTING:** Unlike the longspur, this species is apparently not regular anywhere in the Carolinas from one winter to the next. However, eight on Currituck Banks, N.C., north of Corolla on 4 February (John Fussell, John Wright, Paula Wright, Russ Tyndall) were found in an area where there have been several reports in recent years. One at Round Bald on Roan Mountain from 3 January to 8 February (Rick Knight et al.) was also at a site of a handful of records in recent years.
- BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** The sole report for the season was of four birds that wintered near Santee NWR, S.C., according to Tim Kalbach.
- RED CROSSBILL:** The winter reports were restricted to the mountains, with 30 seen on Roan Mountain on 29 December by Brian Cross and an undescribed number seen at Table Rock SP, S.C., in January by Scott Stegenza.
- WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL:** One of the few records in recent years was an excellent count of 20 birds, with the above mentioned Red Crossbills, in the spruce-fir forest on Roan Mountain, as observed by Brian Cross on 29 December.

PINE SISKIN: There was a moderate flight into the Carolinas during the fall and winter. The best single-observer count was 100+ at Lex Glover's feeders at Lugoff, S.C., on 20 January. On the other hand, Evening Grosbeaks staged a poor flight into the region, with most CBC's either missing the species or recording them in just single digits.

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