

The male was in full alternate plumage but seemed to have a small indistinct wing bar, a feature not shown in any of my field guides. The bill appeared to be smaller and less yellow than that of a Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). The tail and wings of the female appeared darker than those of a female Summer Tanager.

According to Post and Gauthreaux (1989, Contr. Charleston Museum XVIII), this is the first documented nesting record of Scarlet Tanager in the Lower Piedmont of South Carolina. They consider this species to be fairly common during the breeding season in the Upper Piedmont and Mountains, although few nesting records exist. This tanager is probably a more common breeder in the Lower Piedmont than this single record indicates as there are at least 8 records of singing males in appropriate habitat and season during 1984–92. A more comprehensive search during summer should provide additional information on the breeding status and distribution of this species in the Lower Piedmont of South Carolina.

Pine Siskin Nesting in the Southern Blue Ridge Mountain Province

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The Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*) is an erratic resident in the Blue Ridge Mountain Province of the southern Appalachians (Simpson 1992), where the species has been reported intermittently since the late 19th Century. In June 1885, Brewster (1886) noted singing birds in forests of Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*) and red spruce (*Picea rubens*) in the high elevations of North Carolina's Black Mountains, where Cairns (1889) later recorded the species as resident but gave no details to document breeding.

Subsequently, a number of observers have presented data suggestive of nesting at various localities within the southern Blue Ridge Province. From a series in the United States National Museum, Wetmore (1939) described a "young female barely grown" that was taken at 823 m (2,700 ft.) on 2 July 1932 near Cosby, Tenn., in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Stupka (1963) observed 3 siskins that he believed were recently fledged birds at Indian Gap, el. 1605 m (5266 ft.), in the Great Smoky Mountains on 13 June 1938. Williams (1987) reported what was believed to be a flightless Pine Siskin chick at Asheville, el. 670 m (2,200 ft.) in Buncombe County, N.C., on 7 June 1982, but gave few details.

McNair (1988) observed courtship behavior by several pairs in the Black Mountains, Yancey County, N.C. and described nest construction by a female siskin on the NE slope of Mt. Mitchell, just below the summit at 1962 m (6,438 ft.) elevation, on 2 June 1986, in an open forest of Fraser fir. This nest was abandoned within 6 days, however, and McNair did not observe evidence of

egg-laying or incubation. Most recently, Siebenheller and Siebenheller (1992) monitored nest construction and apparent incubation by Pine Siskins in a hemlock (*Tsuga* sp.) at 808 m (2,650 ft.) elevation in SE Transylvania County, N.C., from 12 April to 23 April 1991. The presence of eggs or young could not be verified, and the nest was abandoned during the period of observation. Although strongly suggestive of breeding, none of these previous reports includes direct observation of a nest containing eggs or young.

At 0900 on 14 June 1992, I discovered an active nest of Pine Siskins at an elevation of 1768 m (5,800 ft.) on the south slope of the main ridge line of the Plott Balsam Mountains, Jackson County, N.C., between Browning Knob and Mt. Lyn Lowry. The habitat was an open, disturbed, second-growth Fraser fir-red spruce forest about 30 m below the ridge crest on a steep, rocky slope. The nest was placed 8.5 m (28 ft.) above the ground in a red spruce that was 18 m (60 ft.) tall. The compact nest was in very dense foliage 2.5 m from the trunk and 0.3 m from the end of a horizontal branch. During a 2-hour period of observation, an adult male repeatedly visited the nest carrying food to 2 nestlings, whose heads were visible above the nest rim when the adult landed at the site.

On the morning of 17 June, I returned and again observed the male carrying food to the 2 noisy young. On some occasions, the male was accompanied by a female, but on most visits the male was alone. The male was often noted to be carrying insects to the young. Although siskin nesting is frequently correlated with the availability of seed crops, the fir and spruce in the high Plott Balsams had essentially no cone crop at that time.

Because this remote site and the access routes were on posted land, it was not possible to arrange additional visits to determine whether the young were successfully fledged. Nevertheless, this appears to be the first documented report from the southern Blue Ridge Mountain Province of a Pine Siskin nest containing either eggs or young. This represents an extension of the verified breeding range of the Pine Siskin southward down the Appalachian chain from Pennsylvania (American Ornithologists' Union 1983) and the south-central Alleghenies (Kain 1987, George A. Hall pers. comm.) to southwestern North Carolina.

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December Sight Record of Sooty Shearwater in South Carolina

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I observed a Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*) for 45 sec when it flew parallel to shore one km off North Folly Beach, Charleston County, South Carolina at 0815 hr on 3 December 1990. The sooty body coloration, rather large and slender size, long slender straight wings which were held rigidly in flight, and short rounded tail were distinctive. In a steady 40 km SE-S wind, the shearwater's arcing flight was also distinctive; the bird rose as high as 2-3 degrees above the horizon. These characteristics, except for body size, distinguish the Sooty Shearwater from any large dark *Pterodroma* petrel (Bailey et al. 1989). I never saw the shearwater flap its wings, nor did I see any apparent evidence of wing molt. The bird was flying north, in the appropriate migratory direction for the Sooty Shearwater at this season, though this may have been the result of the prevailing wind direction and storm conditions. Most seabirds, primarily Northern Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) and Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) were also flying north, an inappropriate migratory direction for them at this season.

The Sooty Shearwater is a rare to uncommon visitor offshore and the most likely shearwater seen onshore in the southeastern Atlantic States from May through July, peaking in late May and early June (Clapp et al. 1982, Lee 1986, Lee and Booth 1979, Post and Gauthreaux 1989). The Sooty Shearwater becomes much scarcer by September with few sight reports afterwards north of Florida (Clapp et al. 1982, Lee 1986, Lee and Booth 1979). In South Carolina, only one prior post-September report exists (few details) (*in* Clapp et al. 1982; ChM files; D. Forsythe, *in litt.*). T. Dobbs (*not* J.B. Kelley) saw one, possibly as many as three Sooty Shearwaters 19 km off Charleston on 13 (*not* 10) November 1972; this observation is probably correct (D. Forsythe, *in litt.*). While my record described herein was not verified nor confirmed, it is the first documented sight record of a Sooty Shearwater on a highly unusual out-of-season date in the Carolinas.

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