

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

*Winter = December 1 - February 28, due March 20
Spring = March 1 - May 31, due June 20
Summer = June 1 - July 31, due August 20
Fall = August 1 - November 30, due December 20*

Reports can be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you type them and list the sightings according to the birds in checklist order (not according to dates or locations). If you submit your report to me through e-mail, please type your report directly into the message or copy it from a word processing program directly into the message. You may also attach your file to the e-mail, but if you do, please let me know the program used and also send a second version saved as a text (txt.) file.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

RED-THROATED LOON: The only inland report received was of one on the pond at the US 64 and NC 42 interchange in eastern Edgecombe County, NC, Feb. 25 (Ricky Davis).

RED-NECKED GREBE: This always noteworthy species was found several times in North Carolina, with two on the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC Dec. 28 (*vide*

Paul Sykes), one on the Wilmington CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* Sam Cooper), and one at the Avon pier Feb. 25 (Josh Rose).

EARED GREBE: The Goldsboro, NC, Wastewater Treatment Plant (W.T.P.) once again hosted wintering Eareds, with from one to three being seen (Eric Dean, sev. obs.). Other reports included 1-2 at C. Hatteras, NC, Dec. 27 until at least early February (Harry LeGrand, Brad Carlson, sev. obs.), one at Myrtle Beach, SC, Dec. 9 (Murray Honick), and one at the Savannah River Site, SC, Dec. 21 (Anne Waters).

WESTERN GREBE: One was seen at the pier in Avon, NC, Feb. 19-21 (Bob Holmes, Wade Fuller, sev. obs.), providing a very rare sighting for the Carolinas.

NORTHERN FULMAR: The only ones found this winter were three off Hatteras, NC, Feb. 18 (Brian Patteson *et al.*).

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL: This species winters off our coast, usually in the Gulf Stream waters. Thus one found several miles inshore of the stream out of Hatteras, NC, Feb. 18 (Patteson *et al.*) was surprising.

SOOTY SHEARWATER: One on a Hatteras, NC, pelagic Feb. 3 (Patteson *et al.*) was very rare. There are only a handful of records of this species off our coast in winter.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: This species continues to increase as an inland winter resident. An impressive count of 1,075 on Jordan Lake, NC, CBC Dec. 31 (*vide* Norm Budnitz) bears this out.

ANHINGA: A few individuals of this species often linger into early winter in the Carolinas. Thus of note were five at Kinston, NC, Dec. 13 (Gene Howe).

LEAST BITTERN: A very rare winter sighting of this species was had at L. Mattamuskeet, NC, Dec. 9, as noted by Brad Carlson and Gordon Smith.

GREAT "WHITE" HERON: The bird at Brevard, NC, present since the summer, was last seen about Jan. 25 (*vide* Norma Siebenheller). It is interesting to note that when individuals of this form end up in the Carolinas, they seem to hang around for long periods.

REDDISH EGRET: One on the Charleston, SC, CBC Dec. 24 provided a rare winter report for this species (*vide* Ed Blich III).

CATTLE EGRET: Lingering or wintering Cattle Egrets included two at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Dec. 4 (Lex Glover *et al.*), one at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, Dec. 15 (Steve Calver), and one on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC, CBC Dec. 29 (*vide* Allen Bryan).

GREEN HERON: Winter reports of Green Heron were up this year. Two were found on the Charleston, SC, CBC Dec. 24 (*vide* Ed Blich III), one was on the C. Hatteras, NC, CBC Dec. 27 (*vide* Harry LeGrand), one was at Sunset Beach, NC, Jan. 1 (Ricky Davis) and Jan. 21 (Will Cook and Randy Emmitt), and one was at Brevard, NC, Dec. 7 and 15 (Betty McIlwain). The latter sighting was quite rare and unusual for the mountains.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK: This species continued its presence in the Carolinas from the fall season. The fall's Savannah N.W.R., SC, bird was last reported Dec. 3 (Noel Wamer and Terry West); and the Magnolia Gardens, SC,

flock of four to seven was seen until at least Dec. 16 (Steve Compton). Others included one at the Goldsboro, NC, W.T.P. Dec. 1 until Jan. 1 (Josh Rose and Frank Rheindt; m. obs.), and a flock of 11 at the Crow Hill Impoundment, Carteret County, NC, Dec. 14 (*fide* John Fussell).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: The only reports this winter were of one on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC, CBC Dec. 29 (Will Cook) and four at Santee N.W.R., SC, Jan. 9 (Lex Glover).

ROSS'S GOOSE: Always noteworthy, this species was found a handful of times. One was on the Bodie-Pea Islands, NC, CBC Dec. 28 (Paul Sykes), one was on the L. Wateree, SC, CBC Jan. 5 (Lex Glover *et al.*), and one was at the Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary, SC, Feb. 22-28 (Anne Waters).

TUNDRA SWAN: Reports of Tundra Swan away from the usual wintering areas included one on L. Hickory, NC, Jan. 13-22 (Dwayne & Lori Martin) and ten in flight over the Goldsboro, NC, W.T.P. Dec. 6 (Ricky Davis).

EURASIAN WIGEON: The Greenfield Lake, Wilmington, NC, bird returned for its third winter in a row (Greg Massey, sev. obs.) and remained until the end of the period.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: One at Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, Jan. 2 (Tim Lewis) provided a rare winter mountains report.

CINNAMON TEAL: This winter there were three Cinnamon Teal reported. One at the Goldsboro, NC, W.T.P. Dec. 2 (Eric Dean *et al.*, m. obs.) remained until the spring season. Another was found at L. Medcalf, Sunset Beach, NC, Dec. 10 and remained until at least Feb. 5 (Mary McDavid, m. obs.). One was also present at Savannah N.W.R., SC, from Feb. 4 (Barry Lowes) to Feb. 16 (Jack Peachey and Gary Phillips). The latter bird probably is the same individual that has been found at that refuge for about three years in a row.

REDHEAD: Some excellent counts of this species were had inland with 132 on L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC, Feb. 28 (Wayne Forsythe and Ron Selvey) and 150 at Blewett Falls Lake Dam, NC, Feb. 28 (Dick Burk).

COMMON EIDER: Eiders were scarce this winter, thus of note was the flock of nine on the Bodie-Pea Islands, NC, CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Paul Sykes). The only other Common was at Atlantic Beach, NC, Feb. 22 until the end of the period (John Fussell).

HARLEQUIN DUCK: A female ranged between the Avon, NC, and Rodanthe, NC, piers from Jan. 27 until at least Feb. 25 (Brad Carlson, sev. obs., Jeff Lewis), for one of the few reports of this species during the last several years.

LONG-TAILED DUCK: Always noteworthy inland, reports of this duck included from one to four at Jordan Lake, NC, Dec. 31 until Jan. 7 (Will Cook, sev. obs., Ricky Davis), one on the Greensboro, NC, CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Dennis Burnette), and one at Roanoke Rapids Lake, NC, Jan. 28 (Davis). On the coast, one was locally rare on the Hilton Head, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Joe Williams).

COMMON GOLDENEYE: This species was reported in a widespread fashion this winter. Most counts were of a few birds, but the best total was the 22 at Jordan Lake, NC, Jan. 7 (Ricky Davis).

COMMON MERGANSER: There were more Common Merganser reports than normal this winter. Locally noteworthy sightings included seven at Jordan Lake, NC, Jan. 27 (Will Cook *et al.*), three at L. Townsend, Guilford County, NC, Feb. 17 (Dennis Burnette *et al.*), three in Transylvania County, NC, in early February (Tom Joyce), two near Furman, Hampton, SC, Jan. 24 (Lex Glover and Steve Lohr), and two on the Beaverdam arm of Falls Lake, NC, Dec. 27 (Brian Bockhahn). Singles were found at Kinston, NC, Dec. 8 until the end of the month (Betty Grady, Gene Howe, sev. obs.), L. Hickory, NC, Dec. 23 (Dwayne & Lori Martin), L. Julian, NC, Dec. 31 (Wayne Forsythe), and on the Shelby, NC, CBC Dec. 30 (Simon Thompson *et al.*). And finally the best wintering area for the species in the Carolinas, Phelps Lake, NC, hosted a large flock again with the highest count being 280 Dec. 26 (Derb Carter).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: The best inland totals reported included 22 on L. Julian, NC, Feb. 26 (Marilyn Westphal) and 20 at the Hendersonville, NC, W.T.P. Dec. 3 (Wayne Forsythe and Westphal).

OSPREY: In North Carolina wintering Ospreys can normally be found in very small numbers along the southern coastal areas. Thus of note were Ospreys found outside this region. Rare inland were one at the Goldsboro W.T.P. Dec. 2 (Eric Dean and Brian Pendergraft), one at Raven Rock State Park Dec. 16 (*vide* Paul Hart), and an amazing seven on the New Bern CBC Dec. 18 (*vide* Bob Holmes). Also of note were one at Duck Woods Golf Course on the Outer Banks Feb. 7 (Neal Moore), and one on the Pamlico County CBC Dec. 19 (*vide* Liz Lathrop).

NORTHERN GOSHAWK: This very rare visitor was found twice with an immature bird on the C. Hatteras, NC, CBC Dec. 27 (Derb Carter, Wayne Irvin, Keith Andre) and an adult on the north end of Roanoke Island, NC, Jan. 5 & 13 (Jeff Lewis).

GOLDEN EAGLE: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, rare coastal reports included one on the ACE Basin, SC, CBC Dec. 31 (*vide* Pete Laurie) and another (or the same bird) at the Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown, SC, Feb. 23 (*vide* Gary Phillips). Less unusual but still of interest was the immature in Alleghany County, NC, from late November until at least Dec. 23 (*vide* James Coman).

YELLOW RAIL: The only report of this elusive winter resident was of three at the Samworth W.M.A., Georgetown County, SC, Dec. 29, as noted by Lex Glover.

BLACK RAIL: One was very rare and unusual away from the immediate coast at the Conway, SC, W.T.P. Jan. 15-16 (Gary Phillips and Lex Glover).

PURPLE GALLINULE: This species is very rare in North Carolina during winter, thus of interest was the wing salvaged at Alligator River N.W.R. in January (Jeff Lewis).

SANDHILL CRANE: Some of the most interesting reports of this annual visitor included four in the Mills River, Henderson County, NC, area Dec. 6-12 (Wayne Forsythe), from two to three in the Murrell's Inlet, SC, area Jan. 21-26

(Judy Walker *et al.*, Gary Phillips), and several on the Santee N.W.R., SC, CBC Dec. 30 (Lex Glover).

WILSON'S PLOVER: Five Wilson's on the Charleston, SC, CBC Dec. 24 (*fide* Ed Blich III) provided the only report of this rare-in-winter species.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: The six on the McClellanville, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Perry Nugent) constituted an excellent total for this species in the Carolinas.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: Spotted Sandpipers were widely reported this winter. The best total was the 10 on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Joe Williams). Others included singles at Goldsboro, NC, Dec. 1 (Josh Rose and Frank Rheindt), at Myrtle Beach, SC, Dec. 11 (Jack Peachey), on the Morehead City, NC, CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* John Fussell), on the Santee N.W.R., SC, CBC Dec. 30 (Lex Glover), at Beaufort, NC, Jan. 27 (Simon Thompson), and along the Haw River just north of Jordan Lake, NC, Jan. 28 (John Terborgh).

SANDERLING: A very rare inland winter sighting was of one on the Columbia, SC, CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* Robin Carter).

STILT SANDPIPER: The only known wintering site for Stilt Sandpiper in the Carolinas is at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC. The peak count this year was 131 on Dec. 16, as noted by Steve Calver.

GREAT SKUA: The only report of this annual species was of three out of Hatteras, NC, Feb. 18 (Brian Patteson *et al.*).

LAUGHING GULL: Early returnees were 12 at the Jacksonville, NC, W.T.P. Jan. 31 (John Fussell). One in High Point, NC, Dec. 14 (Hop Hopkins) was very rare that far inland in winter.

LITTLE GULL: North Carolina had the only Little Gulls reported this winter. The best counts included four off Hatteras Feb. 18 (Patteson *et al.*), three at C. Hatteras point Feb. 4 (sev. obs.), and three at Atlantic Beach Feb. 22 (John Fussell). Others were singles at Pea Island N.W.R. Jan. 16 (Linda Ward and Skip Hancock), Rodanthe Jan. 21 (Eric Dean), and at Wrightsville Beach Feb. 4 (Sam Cooper); the latter providing a rare local sighting.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: The only one found this winter was at C. Hatteras, NC, Feb. 3-4 (Eric Dean *et al.*, sev. obs.).

CALIFORNIA GULL: Once again, this species was present in the C. Hatteras, NC, area with one there Dec. 27 (*fide* Harry LeGrand), two there Jan. 27 (Brad Carlson), and then one again Feb. 3-4 (Eric Dean *et al.*, sev. obs.).

THAYER'S GULL: At least three (maybe one or two more!) were found at C. Hatteras, NC, Feb. 17 (LeGrand *et al.*) providing a probable record one-day total.

ICELAND GULL: The only one reported this winter was an adult "Kumlien's" at C. Hatteras, NC, Feb. 17 (LeGrand *et al.*).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: Lessers are increasing as inland visitors each year. Of note in Wayne County, NC, were one Dec. 9 and four Dec. 16 (Eric Dean). One was at the Raleigh, NC, W.T.P. Dec. 21 (Brian Bockhahn) and a first-winter bird was at Roanoke Rapids Lake, NC, Jan. 28 (Ricky Davis).

Others included singles at Greenville, NC, Dec. 31 (*vide* John Wright), at New Bern, NC, Dec. 18 (*vide* Bob Holmes), and at the Jacksonville, NC, W.T.P. Jan. 31 (John Fussell). Other reports of note in North Carolina included three locally unusual birds at C. Lookout Jan. 27 (Fussell) and an impressive peak count of 65 in the C. Hatteras area Dec. 3 (Brian Patteson). In South Carolina, one was at Huntington Beach State Park Feb. 24 (*vide* Gary Phillips) and one was at Litchfield Beach Dec. 28 (Lex Glover).

GLAUCOUS GULL: The only one reported was a first-winter bird that hung out near C. Hatteras, NC, Point beginning Dec. 17 (Stephen Harris) for the whole winter.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: This species is also increasing inland each year. The best counts received included an impressive 48 on the Wayne County, NC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Eric Dean) and eight on the Falls Lake, NC, CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* Brian Bockhahn).

"HYBRID" GULLS: Intensive gull watching at C. Hatteras, NC, Feb. 17 once again proved just how confusing the gull situation there can be. There were at least two Herring X Lesser types, one Herring X Glaucous, one Herring X Thayer's, and one Thayer's X Iceland type observed (LeGrand *et al.*). One has to really study these birds carefully when trying to find the rare one, and be prepared to accept the fact that some will not exactly fit the description of anything!

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: Only one onshore report was had with a single bird at C. Hatteras, NC, Jan. 13 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall).

SANDWICH TERN: This species normally is gone from the Carolinas by December. Thus of note were three on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Joe Williams) and two on the Morehead City, NC, CBC Dec. 17 (Mike Tove).

RAZORBILL: There was a major flight into North Carolina waters this winter, although not quite as big as the flight of 1994-95. The best counts included 300 Feb. 3 and 830 Feb. 18, both off Hatteras (Brian Patteson *et al.*). From shore, 20 were at C. Hatteras Feb. 18 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall), two were on the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Paul Sykes), one was at Rodanthe Feb. 25 (Josh Rose), and one was at Ft. Fisher Dec. 31 (Ricky Davis).

ATLANTIC PUFFIN: North Carolina's fourth report involved an amazing count of 24 off of Hatteras Feb. 18 (Patteson *et al.*). Needless to say, this was the largest count of Puffins ever recorded this far south along the Atlantic coast.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: Reports of this now annual species included one on the Bodie-Pea Islands, NC, CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Paul Sykes) and one near Washington, NC, Jan. 26 (Jeff Lewis).

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: This is a rare wintering species in North Carolina with only a few records. Thus of note was one photographed at Buxton on the C. Hatteras, NC, CBC Dec. 27 (Paul Sykes *et al.*).

WHIP-POOR-WILL: This uncommon wintering species in southeastern North Carolina was found twice with singles on the Wilmington CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* Sam Cooper) and the Southport CBC Dec. 31 (Ricky Davis).

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: This was a huge winter for Black-chinned Hummingbirds in the Carolinas, with five being banded by Susan Campbell. North Carolina Black-chinneds included an immature male at Sunset Beach from early December until at least Feb. 1 (Mary McDavit, m. obs.), a female at Goldsboro Dec. 2 until early January (*fide* Eric Dean), an immature female at Charlotte early December until January (Ray & Linda Munozs), and an immature male at Wilmington during January (*fide* Susan Campbell). In South Carolina, an immature male was at Myrtle Beach January until late February (*fide* Campbell). The four documented in North Carolina were more than that state previously had altogether and the South Carolina one was only the second documented in that state.

EMPIDONAX FLYCATCHERS: Rare *empidonax* flycatchers this winter included an *empidonax* sp. near Conway, SC, Dec. 8 (Gary Phillips), a calling Least Flycatcher at Buxton, NC, Dec. 29 (Brian Patteson), and a silent *empidonax* at Buxton Dec. 27 (Paul Sykes *et al.*) which was felt to be an Acadian Flycatcher. The latter bird, which would be extremely rare and unexpected, shows that silent empids in winter are very problematical, even when studied very closely and carefully.

VERMILION FLYCATCHER: The male Vermilion which showed up near Goldsboro, NC, during late November, was last seen Dec. 2, right before the big early snowfall the next day (*fide* Eric Dean).

WESTERN KINGBIRD: Always noteworthy in winter, Westerns found included one at Hemingway, Williamsburg County, SC, Dec. 29 (Lex Glover) and one at Ocracoke, NC, Jan. 28 (Kendrick Weeks *et al.*).

WHITE-EYED VIREO: Good winter reports for inland areas involved two on the Wayne County, NC, CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Eric Dean) and one at Howell Woods, Johnston County, NC, in mid January (Jamie Sasser).

NORTHERN RAVEN: Away from the mountains, this species has been present in downtown Winston-Salem and Greensboro, NC, for some time now. Add to these a new Piedmont location; one in Davidson County halfway between Thomasville and Lexington, as noted Dec. 14 by Joe Poston. In Winston-Salem a nest with young was observed as early as Feb. 25 (Ramona Snavely and Regina Burt). Other reports included two on the Greensboro CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Dennis Burnette) and two on the Henderson County CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* Wayne Forsythe).

BARN SWALLOW: The only winter report was of one at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, Jan. 4 (Steve Calver).

HOUSE WREN: One was locally rare and unusual in the mountains at Mills River, Henderson County, NC, Jan. 28 (Wayne Forsythe and Marilyn Westphal).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER: Higher than normal numbers were found away from the coastal plain this winter. Good counts of three each were had on the Durham, NC, CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* Mike Schultz) and the Chapel Hill, NC, CBC Dec. 24 (*fide* Will Cook). Also one was on the Ralceigh, NC, CBC Dec. 16 (Dan Kaplan).

GRAY CATBIRD: Excellent for winter were the five on the Raven Rock State Park, NC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Paul Hart).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: This species is rarely found in the piedmont during winter, thus of note were singles on the Chapel Hill, NC, CBC Dec. 24 (Doug Shadwick) and the Jordan Lake, NC, CBC Dec. 31 (*vide* Norm Budnitz).

NASHVILLE WARBLER: This rare but regular wintering warbler was found once with an individual near Conway, SC, Dec. 21 (Gary Phillips).

NORTHERN PARULA: Very rare in winter on the Outer Banks, one was at Roanoke Island Dec. 12 & 18 (Jeff Lewis); and an amazing count of three birds was had on the C. Hatteras CBC Dec. 27 (*vide* Harry LeGrand).

MAGNOLIA WARBLER: Extremely rare was the Magnolia found at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Jan. 20 (Mike Chapman *et al.*). Winter reports of this warbler for the Carolinas are almost nonexistent.

CAPEMAY WARBLER: This species is reported somewhere in the Carolinas almost every winter. This season's was at a feeder at Howell Woods, Johnston County, NC, Feb. 28, as noted by Jamie Sasser and Melissa Miller.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER: One of our rarer winter warblers, the Black-throated Blue was located an amazing four times. One wintered at Durham, NC, Dec. 2 until at least Jan. 30 (Owen McConnell); one was present in Hillsborough, NC, for several days in late January until found dead on the 31st (Randy Dunston); one was on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Joe Williams); and one was at Brookgreen Gardens, SC, Feb. 23 (*vide* Gary Phillips).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: Locally good winter finds were singles on the C. Hatteras, NC, CBC Dec. 27 (John Fussell) and the Ocracoke, NC, CBC Dec. 30 (Jeff Beane *et al.*).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: This warbler was widely reported across the Carolinas this winter. The best totals included an impressive 11 on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Joe Williams) and six on the Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, CBC Dec. 29 (*vide* Allen Bryan). Harder to find further inland, one at Charlotte, NC, Dec. 30 (*vide* Wayne Covington) was noteworthy.

AMERICAN REDSTART: This species is very rarely found in winter, thus of note were two on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC Dec. 16 (*vide* Joe Williams) and one at Charlestowne Landing, Charleston County, SC, Feb. 6 (Dennis Forsythe *et al.*).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: Always noteworthy in winter, one was at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, Jan. 4, as noted by Steve Calver.

WILSON'S WARBLER: This species normally is found once or twice somewhere in the Carolinas each winter. This season was exceptional throughout the southeast. There were at least four reports this year with two at Savannah N.W.R., SC, Dec. 4 (Lex Glover, Giff Beaton *et al.*), one in Franklin County, NC, Nov. 30 & Dec. 18 (Sharon Funderburk), one on the Durham, NC, CBC Dec. 17 (Mike & Lois Schultz), and one at Conway, SC, Dec. 21 (Gary Phillips).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: This species was also found more than usual with reports including two on the Bodie-Pea Islands, NC, CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Paul Sykes), one at L. Mattamuskeet, NC, Dec. 29 (*fide* Allen Bryan) and Feb. 24 (Jamie Sasser *et al.*), one at Howell Woods, NC, Feb. 13 & 23 (Jamie Sasser), one on the Southport, NC, CBC Dec. 31 (Ricky Davis, John Fussell, Jim O'Donnell), and one on the ACE Basin, SC, CBC Dec. 31 (*fide* Pete Laurie).

SUMMER TANAGER: A very rare and unusual winter report of Summer Tanager was provided by a female at a feeder in N. Myrtle Beach, SC, Jan. 5 & 21 (Craig Smith, Rick Murray). The observers did rule out the more expected Western Tanager the couple of days it was seen.

WESTERN TANAGER: This species is practically annual as a winter visitor. This year's reports included one at Fayetteville, NC, Jan. 1 (Bob Perkins), one at Washington, NC, in early February (*fide* Taylor Piephoff), and one at Straits, Carteret County, NC, Jan. 15-27 (Don & Carolyn Hoss, Susan Campbell).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Two reports of this rare wintering sparrow included one in Wayne County, NC, Dec. 5 (George Armistead and Marshall Iliff) and one on the Southern Lake Norman, NC, CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* Taylor Piephoff).

LARK SPARROW: Always a good find in the winter, Lark Sparrow reports involved one at a feeder in Gloucester, Carteret County, NC, Jan. 20 (Jack Fennell, Libby Liles, John Fussell) and one east of Rocky Mount, NC, Feb. 11 (Ricky Davis).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: Noteworthy reports included up to three at the Samworth W.M.A., SC, Dec. 13 (Jack Peachey *et al.*) until at least Jan. 1 (Tim Kalbach) and eleven different birds at Alligator River N.W.R., NC, Feb. 8-9 (Jeff Lewis). The latter count is easily a record winter count for this species.

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: This elusive sparrow was found at several places this winter. Up to three were at the Samworth W.M.A., SC, until at least Jan. 20 (Lex Glover *et al.*), one was in Berkeley County, SC, Jan. 29 (Dennis Forsythe), and an impressive count of seven different individuals was had at the Savannah River Site, SC, Jan. 6-8 (Paul Champlin).

LeCONTE'S SPARROW: LeConte's Sparrows continued to be reported widely. The best counts included an amazing total of 19 at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, Dec. 16 & Jan. 4 (Steve Calver), up to ten at the Samworth W.M.A., SC, during late December until at least Jan. 20 (Lex Glover *et al.*, Chris Hill, Tim Kalbach), up to five at the Savannah River Site, SC, as late as Jan. 23 (Glover, Paul Champlin *et al.*), and three in Pamlico County, NC, Dec. 19 (*fide* Liz Lathrop). Others of note involved one at Vulture, Northampton County, NC, Jan. 28 until the end of the season (Ricky Davis), one at Cowan's Ford Refuge, NC, Feb. 10 (Stephen Harris), two at Sandhills N.W.R., SC, Feb. 18 (Glover), and one at Huntington Beach State Park, SC, Jan. 26 (Gary Phillips).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW: Reports were numerous this winter and the best count received was six at Alligator River N.W.R., NC, Jan. 16-17 (Jeff Lewis). Others of note included one on the Charlotte, NC, CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Wayne

Covington), one on the L. Mattamuskeet N.W.R., NC, Dec. 29 (*vide* Allen Bryan), one at Bird Shoal, Beaufort, NC, Dec. 21 (John Fussell), one near Darlington, Halifax County, NC, Feb. 11 (Ricky Davis), one at Pee Dee N.W.R., NC, Dec. 16 (*vide* Laura Fogo), and one at the Samworth W.M.A., SC, Jan. 1 (Tim Kalbach) until at least Feb. 2 (Jack Peachey and Bob Maxwell).

DARK-EYED "OREGON" JUNCO: This rare western form was located twice with one in Lexington County, SC, Feb. 4-11 (Molly Bonnell and Andrea Ceselski) and one near Rosman, Transylvania County, NC, from late February until early March (*vide* Norma Siebenheller).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR: The only winter reports of this species involved individuals on the Greenville, NC, CBC Dec. 31 (*vide* John Wright) and the L. Wateree, SC, CBC Jan. 5 (*vide* Donna Bailey).

BLUE GROSBEAK: Extremely rare in winter, one was found near the Samworth W.M.A. on the Litchfield-Pawley's Island, SC, CBC Dec. 28 (Chris Hill, *vide* Jack Peachey).

PAINTED BUNTING: The only ones reported this winter came from the usual wintering sites in Carteret County and on the Outer Banks. The best counts were three at a feeder in Morehead City during December (John Fussell) and two at Buxton on the C. Hatteras CBC Dec. 27 (*vide* Harry LeGrand). One was also a good find to the north on the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC Dec. 28 (Allen Bryan *et al.*).

DICKCISSEL: Rare and noteworthy in winter, singles were found at Buxton, NC, Dec. 27 (Paul Sykes *et al.*) and Jan. 14 (Pat & Neal Moore), and at Conway, SC, Jan. 18 (Gary Phillips). Also the one from the fall season in Transylvania County, NC, was last seen Dec. 14 (Betty McIlwain).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: This species is quite local in its occurrence in the Carolinas. In North Carolina the only usual spot is the large farm in Carteret County, and there were at least nine there during late January (Jack Fennell, John Fussell, *sev. obs.*). In South Carolina, 40 were on the Columbia CBC Dec. 17 (*vide* Robin Carter), and an impressive flock of 200 was found near Bowman, Orangeburg County Dec. 9 (Lex Glover).

RED CROSSBILL: The count of 102 on the Stone Mountain, NC, CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* John MacConnell) was truly amazing; and the only crossbill outside of the mountains was a one-day wonder at a feeder in Chapel Hill, NC, Jan. 31 (Doug Shadwick).

EVENING GROSBEAK: Grosbeaks were practically non-existent in the Carolinas this winter. One wonders if the six found on the Jordan Lake, NC, CBC Dec. 31 (*vide* Norm Budnitz) were completely lost!

Instructions for Authors

www.carolinabirdclub.org/thechat.html
