

## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2008–2009, unless otherwise noted)

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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.*

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** As one would expect, all sightings this winter were made in South Carolina. Three were seen during the week of the Winyah Bay Christmas Bird Count (CBC), 18 Dec, and were a first for the count (Jamie Dozier, *vide* Lex Glover). An amazing count of 250 was made on the ACE Basin, SC, CBC 28 Dec (*vide* Pete Laurie). At Savannah NWR, a juvenile was seen 1 Jan (Sandy Beasley) and 6 Jan (Royce Hough); and an

adult was seen 9 Feb (James Fleullan) through 23 Feb (Andrew Core). Several reports made from the Myrtle Beach area were most likely sightings of the local domestic population.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** This species is a rare but regular winter visitor to the Carolinas. An immature was found at Savannah NWR, SC, 6 Jan (Royce Hough). In the mountains, one was seen at a pond in Etowah, NC, 29 Jan–15 Feb (Wayne Forsythe) and two were seen in the nearby Deer Lake subdivision, Brevard, NC, 21 Feb through the end of the period (Tom Joyce). Six were found in Allendale Co, SC, 16 Feb (Carroll Richard). An immature was found amongst Snow Geese in Snowden, NC, 27 Feb (Shirley Remaley).

**Snow Goose:** Some of the larger flocks seen during CBCs in the North Carolina coastal plain were 79,660 at Pocosin Lakes NWR (*fide* Doug LeQuire), 25,582 at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR (*fide* Allen Bryan), and 1,519 at Bodie-Pea Island (*fide* Paul Sykes). A good count for South Carolina, 600, was made on the McClellanville CBC, 21 Dec (*fide* National Audubon Society [NAS]). Sightings away from these typical sites included one found on the CBC in Morehead City, NC, 14 Dec (*fide* John Fussell); one photographed at Waccamaw Hospital, Murrells Inlet, SC, 6 Jan (Jerry Kerschner); nine (five light-morph and four dark-morph), found at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, 13 Jan (Steve Calver); a dark-morph in Efland, NC, throughout January (*fide* Norm Budnitz); and an immature dark-morph at Savannah NWR, SC, 15 Feb (Richard & Dorothy Rosche) through 23 Feb (Andrew Core). Rare mountain sightings included an immature dark-morph at VanWingerden Pond, Henderson Co, NC, 6 Dec (Marilyn Westphal); a light-morph in the Deer Lake subdivision of Brevard, NC, 6 Jan (Tom Joyce); and two in Etowah, NC, 28 Jan–15 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Todd Arcos).



Ross's Goose, 13 Feb 2009, Winston-Salem, NC. Photo by David Disher.

**Ross's Goose:** This rare goose was found at multiple sites this winter, usually in the company of other species of geese. Sightings of individuals were made in Mooresville, NC, with Canada Geese, 23 Dec (Jonathan Cooley); at Pea Island NWR, NC, with Snow Geese, 30 Dec (Richard & Dorothy Rosche); at the Wright Brothers Memorial, Kitty Hawk, NC, with Canada Geese, 7 Jan (Derb Carter); in the Muddy Creek Greenway area of Winston-Salem, NC, with Canada Geese, 23 Jan (John Haire) through 20 Feb (Dennis Burnette, Gene Schepker); and in Murrells Inlet, SC, 30 Jan (Rosche). High concentrations were found at two sites in the coastal plain of North Carolina—at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, where five were counted during the CBC, 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan); and at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, where at least eight were found grazing amongst Snow Geese, 30 Dec (Derb Carter). At least two were seen in the North Carolina mountains this winter, with multiple sightings made within a fifteen mile radius of Etowah, NC—one in the Deer Lake subdivision of Brevard, NC, 20 Dec, continuing “off and on” for several weeks (Tom Joyce); two off Bryson Rd in Etowah, NC, 28 Jan (Todd Arcos, Wayne Forsythe) and two on Lake Julian, Skyland, NC, 7 Feb (Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

**Brant:** Rare outside the Hatteras/Ocracoke Inlet area, one was seen at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Jeff Lewis).

**Cackling Goose:** Sightings of this smaller, former subspecies of Canada Goose were made of individuals at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Derb Carter, Ricky Davis); inside a large flock of Snow Geese at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, 30 Dec (Carter); with a flock of Canada Geese in the Muddy Creek Greenway area of Winston-Salem, NC, 23 Jan (John Haire) through 20 Feb (Dennis Burnette, Gene Schepker); and amongst Canada Geese at North Pond, Pea Island, NWR, 24 Jan (Rich Boyd, Wade Fuller, Bob Holmes, Ken Wilkins). In the mountains, two were photographed at Warren Wilson College, Asheville, NC, 27 Dec (Todd Arcos) and two, possibly the same pair, were seen during the CBC in Brevard, NC, 30 Dec (Dick Blee) and were photographed 6 Jan (Wayne Forsythe).

**Mute Swan:** Possibly vagrants from the wild Chesapeake Bay population were eight at Pea Island NWR, NC, seen during the CBC, 28 Dec (*vide* Paul Sykes).

**Trumpeter Swan:** A group of four birds, three adults and one immature, was reported on a small pond on private property in Nash Co, NC, 20 Feb (Matthew Odress, *vide* Harry LeGrand) and reportedly had been present for “about the last two weeks.” In the following days, multiple birders observed and photographed these birds, which remained in the area through the end of the period (*vide* Ricky Davis). Though the birds showed no physical signs of captivity such as bands or clipped wings, they were reportedly tame enough to be hand-fed. If accepted by the NC Bird Records Committee, this sighting will provide the second state record.



Cackling Goose (with Canada Geese and Mallard), 13 Feb 2009, Winston-Salem, NC. Photo by David Disher.

**Tundra Swan:** Some of the higher totals from sites in the North Carolina coastal plain were 53,366 at Pocosin Lakes NWR, during the CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire); 32,186 at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, during the CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan); and 5800 at Alligator River NWR in early winter, as estimated by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (*fide* Jeff Lewis). Outside the coastal plain, a high inland count of 17 was made on Lake Crabtree, NC, 5 Dec (Roger Shaw). Inland individuals were also found on Falls Lake, NC, during the Durham CBC, 14 Dec (Brian Bockhahn) and on Arrowhead Lake, NC, during the Pee Dee NWR CBC, 3 Jan (Tom & Tammy Sanders, Ron Clark, Steve Tracy). Coastal South Carolina CBCs found this species as far south as the ACE Basin, where 83 were seen 28 Dec (*fide* Pete Laurie).

**Eurasian Wigeon:** An adult male on Lilliput Pond, New Bern, NC, first seen 25 Nov, continued until 13 Feb (Al Gamache). One was found on the Winyah Bay, SC, CBC, 18 Dec (Bruce Peterjohn, Lex Glover). Three were found on the CBC at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan). One was photographed on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, NC, 28 Dec (Jeff Lewis) and seen again during a Carolina Bird Club field trip, 29 Jan (Lewis). Most notable though, was one seen quite far inland, at a private impoundment in NW Davidson Co, NC, 24–25 Dec (Ron Morris, Pat Stewart, Phil Dickinson, John Haire).

**Mottled Duck:** The pair in Sunset Beach, NC, was periodically seen on Lake Medcalf and West Lake throughout the period (Mary McDavid). Surprising at such a northerly location was a pair found on a lake in Roanoke Rapids, NC, 27 Dec (Richard & Dorothy Rosche). A winter high count of 60 was made on the ACE Basin, SC, CBC, 28 Dec (*fide* Pete Laurie).

**Northern Pintail:** US Fish and Wildlife reported a record number of 32,000 at Alligator River NWR, NC, in early winter (*fide* Jeff Lewis).

Conversely, CBC numbers for this species were way down (*vide* Ricky Davis), including only 960 counted during the Alligator River CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Lewis). A good count for the mountains, 12, was made on Lake Osceola, NC, 25 Jan (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

**Canvasback:** Some of the more notable inland reports were of a female on Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, 10 Dec (Vin Stanton) and 19 Dec (Terry Seyden); one at Four Seasons Marsh, Henderson Co, NC, 14 Jan (Todd Arcos); two on Salem Lake, NC, 21 Jan (John Haire); nine on Lake Townsend, N of Greensboro, NC, 21 Jan (Henry Link); and 150 on Brier Creek Reservoir, Wake Co, NC, 1 Feb (Harry LeGrand), with a piedmont high count of 300 made there two weeks later, 15 Feb (LeGrand). A count of “1300 to maybe 3000” in the center of Roanoke Rapids Lake, NC, 27 Dec (Frank Enders) was large, even for a site inside the coastal plain.

**Redhead:** Individuals seen during CBCs at Kerr Lake, NC, 2 Jan, and Falls Lake, NC, 5 Jan, were both firsts for those counts (Brian Bockhahn). A peak count of six was made on Jordan Lake, NC, 26 Feb (Phil Warren). 15 were found on Lake Crabtree, NC, 17 Jan (Harry LeGrand). One was seen on Lake Townsend, N of Greensboro, NC, 21 Jan (Henry Link). A male was found on Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, 6 Feb (Aaron Steed). Two were seen on a gravel pit pond in Hillsborough, NC, 27 Feb (Barb Brooks).

**Ring-necked Duck:** A local high count of 4,140 was made on Harris Lake, NC, 17 Feb (Phil Warren).

**Tufted Duck:** A male with a relatively short tuft was discovered at Archie Elledge Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Winston-Salem, NC, 30 Jan (Hop Hopkins) and was seen by more than 750 birders from multiple states through 14 Feb (*vide* Hopkins). If accepted by the NC Bird Records Committee, this sighting will provide the first documented sighting of this species in the Carolinas.

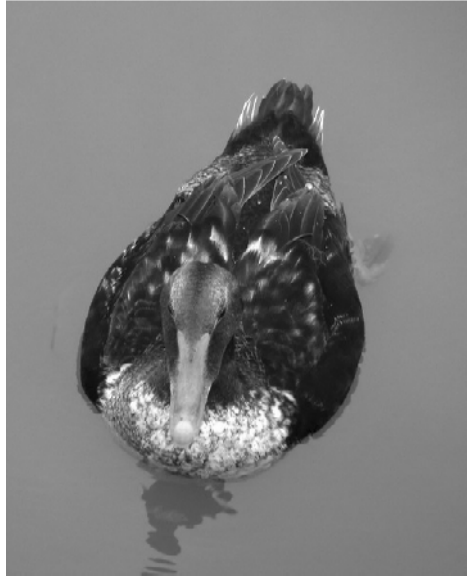
**Greater Scaup:** This species was found at several inland sites this winter. Thirty were seen at Brier Creek Reservoir, Raleigh, NC, 13 Dec (Harry LeGrand) and a high count of 100 was made there 1 Feb (LeGrand). An immature male was seen on Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, 19 Dec (Terry Seyden) through 6 Feb (Aaron Steed). Three males were found on Lake Crabtree, NC, 17 Jan (LeGrand). Four were found on Salem Lake, NC, 21 Jan (John Haire). A female was seen at Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 31 Jan (LeGrand) through 11 Feb (Ali Iyoo). A female was found at Four Seasons Marsh, Henderson Co, NC, 21 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

**Common Eider:** A rare but regular winter visitor to the Carolina coast, five were reported this period. A female was seen from the groin at Oregon Inlet, NC, 6 Dec (Andy Fairbanks, *vide* Jeff Lewis) through 16 Dec (Christian Newton). Another female was seen at the Cedar Island, NC, ferry terminal, 14 Dec (Brian Patteson) and 31 Dec (Richard & Dorothy Rosche). One was found feeding beneath a pier in Cherry Grove, SC, 19 Dec (Ritch Lilly). A female was present near the groin at the S end of Wrightsville Beach, NC, 25 Dec (Sam Cooper) through 22 Jan (Dean Edwards). An

immature male was seen from the fishing pier in Folly Beach, SC, 2 Jan (Andy Harrison) through 25 Jan (Chris Snook).

**Surf Scoter:** A very rare vagrant in the mountains, three were seen on Lake Junaluska, NC, 26 Dec (Connie and Stan Wulkowicz).

**White-winged Scoter:** Rare inland sightings included a female on Lake Hickory, NC, 22 Dec (Dwayne Martin); one on the Santee NWR, SC, CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Dennis Forsythe); a female on Jordan Lake, NC, 17 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen); a pair on Salem Lake, NC, 21 Jan (John Haire); and an immature male at Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 28 Jan (Haire)



Common Eider, 3 Jan 2009, Folly Beach pier. Photo by Cathy Miller.

through 4 Feb (Phil Dickinson). Most notable, though, were the unusually high inland counts of 15, including an adult male, at Falls Lake, NC, 8 Jan, (Ricky Davis) and nine on Lake Townsend, NC, 21 Jan (Henry Link).

**Long-tailed Duck:** Locally common on the Pamlico Sound, this species is much less likely to be seen anywhere else along the coast. One was seen from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Pier in Myrtle Beach, SC, 11 Jan (Ritch Lilly), with three seen there 18 Jan (Judy Walker) through 26 Jan (Richard & Dorothy Rosche), with two remaining 8 Feb (John Ennis), and only one present 22 Feb (Bob Maxwell). Five first-years, three females and two males, were seen from the rock outcroppings at Ft Fisher, NC, 19 Jan (Dean Edwards) through 24 Jan (Ennis). Three were seen from Kiawah Island, SC, 22 Jan (Aaron Given). Very rare inland sightings were made of three adult males on Lake Townsend, NC, 12 Dec (Henry Link) and of one male off Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, NC, 1 Jan (Kent Fiala).

**Common Goldeneye:** Sightings away from the coast included an adult male on Jordan Lake, NC, 5 Dec (Ricky Davis); an adult male at the WTP in Goldsboro, NC, 13 Dec (Eric Dean); a pair on Lake Pinehurst, NC, mid-December through the new year (Carol Bowman); three adult males on Lake Junaluska, NC, 22 Dec (Connie and Stan Wulkowicz); a female at the WTP in Conway, SC, 4 Jan (Chris Hill) through 8 Jan (Ritch Lilly); six on Lake Townsend, NC, 16 Jan (Henry Link); a female on Jordan Lake, NC, 17 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen); a pair at the Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 23–30 Jan (Gene Schepker, et al.), with the female

continuing through 11 Feb (Ali Iyoob); and a female, possibly the same bird there in November, on a pond in Meggett, SC, 25 Jan through the end of the period (Cherrie Sneed).

**Common Merganser:** Coastal reports were made of two females flying over the ocean at Atlantic Beach, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 14 Dec (Ricky Davis); a female at Oregon Inlet, NC, 28 Dec (John Fussell, Neal Moore); and two females on Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC, 6 Feb (Richard & Dorothy Rosche). Inland sightings were made of one in Clemson, SC, during the CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Drew Lanham); in Wayne Co, NC, during the CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Eric Dean); three at Pettigrew SP, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire); one on Lake Townsend, NC, 16–21 Jan (Henry Link); a pair on Lake Wheeler, NC, 14 Feb (Steve Shultz); and a pair on Lake Crabtree, NC, 21 Feb (Clyde Smith).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Notable inland sightings were made of two on the Lower Saluda, SC, CBC, 16 Dec (*fide* Jason Giovannone); 13 during the Southern Pines, NC, CBC, 21 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell); an inland high count of 233 during the Pettigrew SP, NC, CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire); a pair on Salem Lake, Winston-Salem, NC, 7 Jan (John Haire); and four in Waynesville, NC, 25 Feb (Blair Ogburn).

**Red-throated Loon:** Rare inland, individuals were found on Salem Lake, NC, 17 Dec (Royce Hough, John Haire) and at Jordan Lake, NC, during the CBC, 4 Jan (Todd Bishop, Chuck Byrd, Barbara Coffman, Kyle & Micky Mills, *fide* Norm Budnitz).

**Pacific Loon:** The bird on Lake Townsend, NC, first reported 18 Nov, continued until at least 3 Dec (Dan Chambers, *fide* Henry Link). Another was seen on the ocean from Wrightsville Beach, NC, 20 Jan (Dean Edwards).

**Horned Grebe:** Some notable inland concentrations included 110 in the cove W of Seaforth access, Jordan Lake, NC, 18 Dec (Nick Anich), with 152 there 22 Feb (Ricky Davis); 103 on Lake Crabtree, NC, 29 Dec (Steve Shultz); and 75 at Pee Dee NWR, NC, 29 Dec (John Scavetto).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Possibly the same bird seen for several months last winter was seen again on Lake Crabtree, NC, 3 Dec (Steve Shultz) through 6 Dec (Dan Kaplan). One was seen on Salem Lake, NC, 17–21 Dec (John Haire, Royce Hough) and another (same bird?) was seen there 25 Jan (Ann Newsome, Sven Halling), and stayed for about a week (*fide* Haire). One, transitioning out of winter plumage, was seen at the S end of Folly Beach, SC, 31 Jan (Shawn Hayes). “Two or three” were seen on the ocean from Pea Island, NC, 1 Feb (Linda Ward). One was found on Falls Lake, NC, from the Rolling View area, 21 Feb (Ricky Davis).

**Eared Grebe:** Individuals were seen from Ebenezer Point at Jordan Lake, NC, during the CBC, 4 Jan (Doug Pratt, Josh Southern, Sterling Southern); again at the same site 26 Feb (Nick Anich); and during the CBC on Hilton Head Island, SC, 14 Dec (*fide* Nan Lloyd). A high count of ten was made at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, 14 Jan (Steve Calver).

**Northern Fulmar:** This winter's high count was "over 100," seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 16 Feb (Brian Patteson). Other sightings included an individual 30 miles off Cape Lookout, NC, 10 Feb (Jack Fennell, *fide* John Fussell) and two SE of Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross McGregor).

**Black-capped Petrel:** This species is not often reported in winter, probably due to the small number of pelagic trips making it out to the Gulf Stream. Pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC found "maybe 10" on 7 Dec, "a few" on 27 Dec, and one on 28 Feb (Brian Patteson). Also, an individual was seen about 90 miles SE of Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross McGregor).

**Greater Shearwater:** Very rare in winter, "one or two" Greaters were seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 20 Feb, and one was seen 28 Feb (Brian Patteson).

**Sooty Shearwater:** Very rare in winter, one Sooty was sighted from a boat during the Hatteras, NC, CBC, 27 Dec, providing the first NC count day record (*fide* Patricia Moore).

**Manx Shearwater:** Though winter is one of the better times to find this cold-water pelagic species, only a few were reported this winter. One or two were seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 19 Jan, with another seen 28 Feb (Brian Patteson). One or two were seen SE of Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross McGregor).

**Audubon's Shearwater:** Rare in winter, "about half a dozen or so" Audubon's were seen SE of Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross McGregor).



American White Pelicans, 22 Feb 2009, Jordan Lake. Photo by Ricky Davis.

**American White Pelican:** Sightings of this species have been steadily increasing in recent years. Good numbers found on CBCs were 15 in the Hobucken Marshes IBA, Pamlico Co, NC, 16 Dec (Brian Bockhahn); 133 at Winyah Bay, SC, 18 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover); 108 in McClellanville, SC, 21 Dec (*fide* NAS); 10 at Pea Island NWR, NC, 28 Dec (*fide* Paul Sykes); 105 in the ACE Basin, SC, 28 Dec (*fide* Pete Laurie); and 64 at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan). Eighteen were seen at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, 30 Dec (Steve Calver). Seventeen were sighted



in Spring Creek, NC, 24 Feb (Al Gamache, Steve Shaffer). Most interestingly, 10, an unusually high number for the piedmont, were seen from the Farrington Rd causeway on Jordan Lake, NC, 22 Feb (Ricky Davis), with three remaining 27 Feb (Shiloh Schulte).

**Great Cormorant:** A rare inland report was made of a first-year bird, found perched on a large electric transmission tower on Lake Townsend, NC, 22-23 Dec (Henry Link). Locally unusual coastal reports were of individuals seen at the groin on the S end of Wrightsville Beach, NC, 17 Dec–18 Jan (Dean Edwards); on the Winyah Bay, SC CBC 18 Dec (*vide* Lex Glover); perched on a buoy on the Pamlico Sound, NC, seen from the Ocracoke to Swan Quarter Ferry, 28 Dec (Eric Scholz, Michelle Smith); and on a piling at the ferry dock in Swan Quarter, NC, 30 Jan (Helmut Mueller). As usual, this species was seen at Oregon Inlet, NC, with two found during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC, 28 Dec (*vide* Paul Sykes) and one seen near the old ferry landing, 29 Jan (Jeff Lewis, et al.).

**Anhinga:** Notable winter sightings included at least two at a series of small ponds on the NW side of New Bern, NC, throughout the period (Al Gamache); and two at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 8 Dec (Jesse Pope) and 4 Jan (Jeff Lewis).

**Reddish Egret:** Rare winter reports were made of dark-morph individuals on Shackleford Banks, NC, 4 Dec (Derb Carter) and 6 Jan (Jacob Socolar), providing the first winter record for Carteret Co, NC (*vide* John Fussell); on Portsmouth Island, NC, during the CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Peter Vankevich); and on Hilton Head Island, SC, mid-December through 5 Feb (Dave Lovett, Carole Jorgensen).

**Cattle Egret:** Rare winter reports were made of individuals at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 11 Dec (Brian Patteson) and again during the CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore); off US 264, N of Swan Quarter, NC, 17 Jan (Ken Lundstrom); and feeding in a yard in Sunbury, NC, 7 Feb (Shirley Remaley).

**Green Heron:** Some of the more northerly reports were made of individuals on CBCs in Morehead City, NC, 14 Dec (*vide* John Fussell); in Kitty Hawk, NC, 20 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis); and in Plantersville, SC, during the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill). Quite unexpected in the mountains this time of year, one was found at Osceola Lake, NC, 7 Jan (Wayne Forsythe) and another (same bird?) was found 30 miles north, at Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, 19 Jan (Ben Ringer).

**Glossy Ibis:** An unusually high winter count, 22, for such a northerly site was made during the CBC at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 29 Dec (Ricky Davis).

**Roseate Spoonbill:** Three lingered at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, until 16 Dec, with one remaining until 17 Jan (Steve Calver).

**Wood Stork:** Uncommon in winter, five were seen at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 7 Dec (Paul Serridge); and seven were seen flying over Spring Creek Impoundment, Goose Creek Game Lands, Pamlico/Beaufort Co, NC, 10 Jan (Chris Baranski, *vide* Harry LeGrand).

**Osprey:** Unusual winter sightings were made in Elizabeth City, NC, mid-December (Linda Ward); on the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 21 Dec (*vide* Taylor Piephoff); and at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 3 Jan (Clyde Sorenson). Five seen on the CBC in Morehead City, NC, comprised a record number for the count (*vide* John Fussell).

**Bald Eagle:** Unusual for the mountains were two adults seen along the French Broad River, Transylvania Co, NC, 3 Feb (Tom Joyce, Connie Ward, Stan Wulkowicz).

**Northern Goshawk:** This rare *Accipiter* was seen twice this winter—an adult flying over Six Forks Rd near the Beltline, Raleigh, NC, 1 Dec (Jim Mulholland) and an immature on James Island, Charleston, SC, 4 Feb (Dennis Forsythe).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** An adult seen at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Dec (Rich Boyd), must have been very disoriented!

**Swainson's Hawk:** Two (!), one immature and one sub-adult, were found at Alligator River NWR, NC, during the CBC, 30 Dec (Wayne Irvin, Bob Lewis, Jeff Lewis, Ricky Davis, et al.) with the sub-adult being seen again 1 Jan (Davis) and 23 Jan (Josh Southern).

**"Kridler's" Red-tailed Hawk:** A juvenile of this pale, Great Plains subspecies was seen at the North River Farms wetlands restoration area, Carteret Co, NC, mid-January through February (John Fussell, Jack Fennell, et al.). The observers got good looks at the bird several times and noted that "it perfectly matched" the illustration in the Sibley guide.

**Rough-legged Hawk:** This arctic *Buteo* occasionally wanders into the northern parts of our region each winter. This winter, individuals were reported over the pastures at MacAdam's Farm in Efland, NC, 8 Dec (Dave Snyder); and from Cheek Mountain Rd, near Sparta, NC, during the New River CBC, 20 Dec (Allen Boynton, Gale Kuebler) and was photographed there 3 Jan (John Haire). Notably, this is the first winter in years that this species has not been reported from Alligator River NWR, NC.

**Golden Eagle:** This winter's reports were of one, well-photographed, in front of the lodge at Donnelley WMA, SC, 8 Dec (Buddy Campbell); an adult male near Sparta, NC, found on the New River CBC, 20 Dec (*vide* Harrol Blevins) and seen again 22 Dec (John Haire); an adult at Alligator River NWR, NC, 2 Feb (Helmut Mueller); and a second-year bird at the airport N of Engelhard, NC, 17 Feb (Haire).

**Merlin:** Though regular in the coastal plain in winter, sightings in the piedmont and mountains are less common. An adult male was seen several times at Hillandale Golf Course in Durham, NC, 4 Dec–11 Jan (Dan Kaplan). Interestingly, the bird favored the same perch used by another Merlin seen there two years ago. The observer wondered if it was the "same bird or extraordinary coincidence?" Other piedmont/mountain sightings were made of individuals in Henderson Co, NC, 5 Dec (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); at Beaver Lake, Asheville, NC, 24 Dec (Simon Thompson); in Shelby, NC, during the CBC, 1 Jan (*vide* JoAnn Martin); in Spartanburg, SC, during the CBC, 2 Jan (*vide* Lyle Campbell); at Lake Conestee Nature Park,

Greenville, SC, 5 Jan (Paul Serridge); and at Salem Lake, NC, 21 Jan (John Haire).

**American Coot:**

A locally unusual high count of 3100 was made at Harris Lake, NC, 17 Feb (Phil Warren).

**Sandhill Crane:**

This winter's reports were of two in a field off NC 24 in Swansboro, NC, throughout the period (John Fussell); three flying over Henderson Field, Wallace, NC, 14 Dec (Walter Harriman); 17 flying over the same field where a smaller flock was reported last winter, between Hobgood and Oak



Golden Eagle, 8 Dec 2008, Donnelley WMA, SC. Photo by Buddy Campbell.

City, NC, 23 Dec (Jacob Socolar); one seen during the CBC at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan); 28 at Santee NWR, SC, 6 Jan (Jason Giovannone); three in a field along Amity Hill Rd in Cleveland, NC, 7 Jan (Chris Baranski, *vide* John Haire) through 7 Feb (Mike Boatwright); 30 flying over the marina in Georgetown, SC, 8 Feb (John Ennis); three in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 26 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Linda Smith); and two in Beaufort, NC, in February (Guy Senter, *vide* Fussell).

**Snowy Plover:** One was seen on the far E end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 27 Feb through the end of the period (Aaron Given).

**Wilson's Plover:** Several winter sightings were made of this typically warmer-weather plover. One was found on the Bird Shoal of the Rachel Carson Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 3 Dec (John Fussell), and three were seen there during the Morehead City CBC, 14 Dec (Sam Cooper, *vide* Fussell). One was found on Hilton Head Island, SC, during the CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd) and was seen through 9 Feb (Tom Prestby). Three were seen on Kiawah Island, SC, 22 Jan (Aaron Given). Individuals were also seen at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 24 Jan (Bruce Smithson) and at a pond in Meggett, SC, 25 Jan (Dan & Cherrie Sneed).

**Semipalmated Plover:** A very high concentration, 1400–1500, was observed on the N end of Hilton Head Island, SC, 31 Dec (Dave Lovett, Carole Jorgensen).

**Piping Plover:** The highest counts were 19 in Morehead City, NC, found during the CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* John Fussell) and 15 on the N end of Hilton Head Island, SC, 8 Feb (Tom Prestby).

**Black-necked Stilt:** Three to five were present at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, where this species has wintered before, throughout the period (Steve Calver). The only other report of this species was of one at Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, seen on the Winyah Bay CBC 18 Dec (Bruce Peterjohn, *fide* Lex Glover) and again 12 Feb (Richard & Dorothy Rosche).

**American Avocet:** The highest counts were 797 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Dec (Steve Calver); at least 200 at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 15 Jan (Liz Lathrop, et al.); and 600 at Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Feb (Richard & Dorothy Rosche).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Locally out-of-season individuals were found on Sandling Beach, Falls Lake, NC, during the CBC, 5 Jan (Brian Bockhahn); on the edge of the Catawba River at Riverbend Park, Conover, NC, 25 Jan (Dwayne Martin); and at Lake Julian, Skyland, NC, 22 Feb (Vin Stanton).

**Whimbrel:** This winter's best counts were seven on Shackleford Banks, NC, 6 Jan (Jacob Socolar) and 17 on the mudflats on the N end of Hilton Head Island, SC, 9 Feb (Tom Prestby).

**Long-billed Curlew:** Sightings of this large and distinctive shorebird were made at two of the traditional sites—one on Shackleford Banks, NC, 13 Dec (Derb Carter, *fide* John Fussell) and four at Cape Romain NWR, SC, 10 Feb (Richard Rosche, John Cox).

**Marbled Godwit:** Unusual inland, four were at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 8 Dec (Jesse Pope, et al.), and three remained there for the CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Fall migrants typically depart the Carolinas by November and are not known to over-winter here. Thus, of interest was the individual found at the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown, SC, on the Winyah Bay CBC, 18 Dec (Bruce Peterjohn, *fide* Lex Glover).

**Purple Sandpiper:** This wintering sandpiper was found at its favored sites throughout the period, on rock groins (jetties) at Oregon Inlet, NC, with a high count of three on 16 Dec (Christian Newton); at Fort Macon, Atlantic Beach, NC, with a high count of three on 17 Jan (Ross McGregor); three to four at the S end of Wrightsville Beach, NC, 18 Jan (Dean Edwards); and one at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 8 Feb (John Ennis).

**Dunlin:** A high count of 6022 was made at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Dec (Steve Calver).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** At the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, the only known regular wintering site for this species in the Carolinas, 62 were counted 16 Dec, and a few remained throughout the period (Steve Calver). The only other report this period was of one at the Bodie Island, NC, Lighthouse Pond, 1 Feb (Helmut Mueller).

**Ruff:** A female (Reeve) was found at Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 18 Dec (Bruce Peterjohn,

*fide* Lex Glover). Another Reeve (same bird?) was seen at Bear Island WMA, SC, 21 Feb (*fide* Chris Snook) and 26 Feb (Ron Clark).

**Red Phalarope:** Very rarely seen inland, one was photographed at the Hickory Hill boat ramp on Falls Lake, NC, during the Durham CBC, 14 Dec (Brian Bockhahn) and was seen again 15 Dec (Nick Anich). The highest ocean counts were an estimated 1000 seen 30 miles off Cape Lookout, NC, 10 Feb (Jack Fennell, *fide* John Fussell) and 800–900 seen SE of Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross McGregor).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** Only one was reported this winter—a first-winter bird (Tarrock) photographed on Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 25 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Ricky Davis, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen).

**Black-headed Gull:** At least four Black-headed Gulls were seen in the Carolinas this winter. Sightings of adults on the Outer Banks, NC, which were possibly all sightings of the same bird, were made in Kitty Hawk, NC, during the CBC, 20 Dec (Ricky Davis); in Nags Head, NC, 21 Dec (Davis); at Pea Island NWR, NC, 27 Dec (Jeff Lewis); and next to a small pond in Kill Devil Hills, NC, 8–23 Feb (Lewis). Two were found at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan); and one was seen there 17 Jan (Christian Newton); and again 5 Feb (Newton). At the WTP in Conway, SC, a first-winter bird was seen by multiple observers 8 Jan (Ritch Lilly) through 28 Jan (Richard & Dorothy Rosche).



Black-headed Gull, 22 Feb 2009, Kill Devil Hills, NC. Photo by Kent Fiala.

**Little Gull:** Sightings of this small, rare gull, which often associates with Bonaparte's Gulls, included an adult at South Nags Head Beach, NC, 21 Dec (Ricky Davis); an adult at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 Feb (Brian Patteson); one seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 16 Feb (Patteson); and an adult on Daniel Island, SC, 24 Feb (Shawn Hayes).

**Laughing Gull:** Rare inland in winter, individuals were found at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 5 Dec (Ricky Davis) and at Roanoke Rapids Lake,

NC, 4 Jan (Brian Bockhahn). A migrating flock of about 450 was seen flying very high in arrow-shaped formations, heading SE over Trenton, NC, 6 Dec (Davis). Three were found inside a huge inland gull flock, S of Scotland Neck, NC, 6 Feb (Davis).

**Mew (Common) Gull:** This European vagrant was discovered at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 24 Jan (Wade Fuller, Bob Holmes, Ken Wilkins, Rich Boyd) and photographed later that day (Brian Patteson). This sighting constitutes the fourth state record, with all records made at this same location.



Mew (Common) Gull, 24 Jan 2009, Cape Point, NC. Photo by Brian Patteson.

**Ring-billed Gull:** Some of the larger inland flocks were an estimated 28,000 at Jordan Lake, NC, seen during the CBC, 4 Jan (Diana Davis, Tom Krakauer) and 16,000+ in a field S of Scotland Neck, NC, 6 Feb (Ricky Davis).

**California Gull:** Only one was reported this winter—an adult seen at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 Feb (Brian Patteson).

**Herring Gull:** A good inland count of 226 was made at Jordan Lake, NC, during the CBC, 4 Jan (*vide* Norm Budnitz).

**Thayer's Gull:** Only one was reported this winter—an adult seen at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 Feb (Brian Patteson).

**Iceland Gull:** There were four sightings made of this rare, mostly-white gull. A first-year bird was found in White Plains, NC, during the Lake Mattamuskeet CBC, 29 Dec (John Fussell). A first-winter bird was seen at the WTP in Conway, SC, 8 Jan (Chris Hill) through 28 Jan (Richard & Dorothy Rosche). An adult was found at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 Feb

(Brian Patteson). A first-winter bird was seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 21 Feb (Patteson).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** A high count of 160 was made at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 11 Dec (Brian Patteson) and 120 were still there 25 Jan (Harry LeGrand). Rare inland reports included a third-year on Falls Lake, NC, 8 Jan (Ricky Davis); an adult on Jordan Lake, NC, 12 Jan (Nick Anich) and 17 Jan (LeGrand, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen); 31, an amazing inland count, with a huge gull flock in a field S of Scotland Neck, NC, 6 Feb (Davis); and an adult on Lake Wheeler, NC, 14 Feb (Steve Shultz). The southernmost sighting was made on Kiawah Island, SC, 23 Feb (Aaron Given).

**Glaucous Gull:** Most notable were the two “chase-able” individuals in the Carolinas this winter—a first-winter bird in the vicinity of Pea Island NWR, NC, seen by multiple observers 15 Dec (John Haire) through 1 Feb (Ron Clark) and another first-winter bird at the WTP in Conway, SC, seen by multiple observers 8 Jan (Chris Hill) through 28 Jan (Richard & Dorothy Rosche). Other sightings were one at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 5 Dec (Derb Carter, *vide* Brian Patteson); one (same bird?) at the same site, 26 Jan (Christian Newton); an immature on the Pamlico Sound, NC, seen from the Ocracoke to Swan Quarter ferry, 28 Dec (Eric Scholz, Michelle Smith); and two first-year birds seen during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 19 Jan, with one also seen 28 Feb (Patteson).



First-cycle Glaucous Gull (right, with Great Black-backed Gull), 26 Jan 2009, Cape Point, NC. Photo by Christian Newton.

**Great Black-backed Gull:** Farther inland than usual were a first-year bird on Jordan Lake, NC, 12 Jan (Nick Anich) and 17 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen); and one at Falls Lake, NC, during the Durham CBC, 14 Dec (Brian Bockhahn).

**Black Skimmer:** The sighting of a juvenile over the catfish ponds along Newland Road near Pettigrew SP, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Ed Corey) is quite interesting in that most inland skimmer sightings are usually associated with hurricanes.

**Great Skua:** Winter is the only season this rare vagrant is seen in the waters off the Carolinas. Individuals were found on pelagic trips from Hatteras, NC, 14, 16, and 28 Feb (Brian Patteson).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** A good find in winter, a dark-morph was found on a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 6 Dec (Brian Patteson) and two light-phase adults were seen flying off Nags Head, NC, 21 Dec (Ricky Davis).

**Parasitic Jaeger:** Three light-morph adults were seen flying N, off the Avalon pier in Kitty Hawk, NC, during the CBC, 20 Dec (Ricky Davis) and another was seen from Nags Head, NC, 21 Dec (Davis). Also, an individual was found on a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 16 Feb (Brian Patteson).

**Dovekie:** In general, sightings were not as numerous as they were during last winter's irruption. However, numbers were still good this year, and a count of 124 during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 21 Feb (Brian Patteson) exceeded last year's one-day total of 100+. Reports included one seen in Nags Head, NC, 23 Dec (Audrey Whitlock, *vide* Ricky Davis); two found on the



Dovekie, 19 Feb 2009, North Core Banks. Photo by Jon Altman.

beach in Corolla, NC, 17 Jan, and taken to a wildlife rehabilitator (*vide* Jeff Lewis); one found in a yard in Nags Head, NC, 18 Jan, taken to a rehabilitator, and released just W of Diamond Shoals, NC, 19 Jan, during a pelagic trip in which 13 others were seen (Patteson); and one, appearing in good health, found on the beach after a night of strong winds on North Core Banks, NC, 19 Feb (Joe Altman).

**Thick-billed Murre:** An individual seen near the jetty at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, NC, 26 Dec (Derb Carter), provided this winter's only report.

**Razorbill:** CBCs found thirteen in NC—three in Kitty Hawk, 20 Dec (Ricky Davis); six in Wilmington, 3 Jan (*vide* Sam Cooper); and four at Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, 4 Jan (*vide* Juanita Roushdy). One was seen from the Ocracoke to Hatteras Ferry, NC, during a Chapel Hill Bird Club field trip 18 Jan (Bruce Young). Four were seen flying S over the ocean from Kill Devil Hills, NC, 14 Feb and again 16 Feb (Scott Baron, Elisa Enders). One was found a few miles off Cape Lookout, NC, 21 Feb (Ross



McGregor). A high count of 133 was made during a pelagic trip from Hatteras, NC, 14 Feb (Brian Patteson). Noteworthy for its “not-on-the-ocean” location was one seen inside the harbor in Beaufort, NC, 27 Feb (Clyde Adkins, *vide* John Fussell).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Some of the higher counts were 60 in Morehead City, NC, on the CBC, 14 Dec, which was a record number for the count (*vide* John Fussell); a flock of 30–40 in Marshville, NC, 23 Dec (Josh Southern); 76 on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC, CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill); and six in Ocracoke Village, NC, 7 Feb (David Bridge).

**White-winged Dove:** Two reports were made this period—one photographed in a yard near Holden Beach, NC, 1 Dec (John Ennis) and one seen perched on a telephone wire near Garden City Beach, Horry Co, SC, 30 Dec (Dennis Forsythe).

**Common Ground-Dove:** Sightings of this declining species included two in Aiken, SC, during the CBC, 24 Dec (*vide* Calvin Zippler); seven in Charleston, SC, during the CBC, 4 Jan (*vide* Jeff Mollenhauer); and one at Bear Island WMA, SC, 22 Feb (Andrew Core).

**Barn Owl:** Reports included two at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 14 Dec (Rich Boyd); one continuing its residency on a private farm in Alleghany Co, NC, where it was counted on the New River CBC, 20 Dec (James Coman, Phil Dickinson); one photographed during the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 21 Dec (Jeff Lemons); one found at Alligator River NWR, NC, during the CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis); one seen at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, 23 Jan (Boyd); one found on Deveaux Bank, SC, 9 Feb (Chris Snook); and one seen flying over US 64 just before sunrise, W of Creswell, NC, 15 Feb (Ricky Davis).

**Long-eared Owl:** Though not seen, one was heard calling at Garris (Moore’s) Landing in Charleston, SC, 4 and 6 Jan (Hal Currey).

**Short-eared Owl:** Reports were made of individuals in McClellanville, SC, during the CBC, 21 Dec (*vide* NAS); at Alligator River NWR, NC, on the CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis) and on the W end of Daniel Island, SC, 29 Jan (Shawn Hayes).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Known to sporadically winter in evergreen patches along the coast, at least two Saw-whets were heard along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse Pond, NC, 8 Dec (Jesse Pope) and 4 Jan (Jacob Socolar).

**Chuck-will’s-widow:** Surprisingly, one was seen at midday, flying across NC 12 on Ocracoke Island, NC, during the CBC, 31 Dec (*vide* Peter Vankevich).

**Broad-billed Hummingbird:** The adult male that had visited a feeder in New Bern, NC, since last summer continued until a cold spell in early February (*vide* Al Gamache).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** At least 112 were seen in the Carolinas this winter (*vide* Ken Blankenship). Some of the better counts were four or five, three of which were adult males, wintering in a yard in Morehead City, NC (John Fussell); five wintering in a yard in Wilmington, NC (Amy

Williamson); “at least four” feeding around *Elaeagnus* flowers at two shrubby sites in Morehead City, 4 Dec (Fussell); ten banded at a feeder in Rockville, SC, 13 Dec (Doreen Cubie); 26 on the CBC in Kitty Hawk, 20 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis); and 18 on the CBC in Hatteras, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** Three were reported this winter—the female banded at a feeder in New Bern, NC, 23 Nov, continued until 21 Jan (*vide* Al Gamache); an immature male was banded at a feeder in Rockville, SC, 13 Dec (Doreen Cubie); and a female was banded at a feeder in Raleigh, NC, 16 Dec (Lena Gallitano, Susan Campbell).

**Calliope Hummingbird:** An immature male was banded at a feeder on Lake Lanier near Landrum, SC, 13 Dec (Doreen Cubie). In North Carolina, one was seen on the Tryon CBC, 20 Dec (*vide* Simon Thompson).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** At least thirteen were reported in the Carolinas this winter (*vide* Ken Blankenship). Banded adult males continued for the fourth straight winter in Morehead City, NC (Carol Reigle, *vide* John Fussell) and in N Raleigh, NC (*vide* Susan Campbell). Some of the higher concentrations were three females banded in Hickory, NC, by 3 Dec (Dwayne Martin) and four counted on the CBC in Charlotte, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Ken Kneidel).

**Allen’s Hummingbird:** One returned for the third winter in a row to a yard W of Columbia, SC (*vide* Doreen Cubie) and was recorded on the Lower Saluda, SC, CBC, 16 Dec (*vide* Jason Giovannone).

**Least Flycatcher:** One was found at the Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 18 Dec (Chris Hill, Felicia Sanders, Paige Grooms) and heard vocalizing later that day (Lex Glover, Bruce Peterjohn). Another was seen and heard in the “sparrow field” area of Patriot’s Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, 24 Jan–8 Feb (Bill Dobbins).

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** One was discovered near Catfish Lake, Croatan NF, NC, 2 Dec (Nathan Swick) and was seen by many through 17 Dec (Jim O’Donnell, Andy Webb). Another (same bird?) was seen in a yard in nearby James City, NC, 19–24 Dec (Diana Burke). The best spot in the Carolinas for this species, Alligator River NWR, NC, had one that was seen on its CBC, 30 Dec (Derb Carter, Jeff Lewis, Ricky Davis). Most interesting was one seen at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 16 Jan (Steve Shultz), as this species is not documented in the piedmont.

**Tropical/Couch’s Kingbird:** A kingbird of one of these two species was seen and photographed, but not heard vocalizing, during a Sierra Club field trip to Santee Coastal Reserve, SC, 7 Feb (David McLean, Bob Bradley), and relocated 8 Feb (*vide* Dennis Forsythe), but not seen again after that. Neither species has been previously documented in South Carolina; if accepted by the Bird Records Committee this would be the first state record of the species pair.

**Western Kingbird:** Two were reported this period—one seen on private property in Mann’s Harbor, NC, 19 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis) and one repeatedly

seen in the “sparrow field” area of Patriot’s Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, from December (Billy McCord) through 1 Feb (Bill Dobbins).

### Loggerhead

**Shrike:** One found in a grassy, undeveloped subdivision during the Morehead City, NC, CBC, 14 Dec (Ricky Davis), was unusual because “shrikes have been virtually absent in (the) area since about 1980” (*fide* John Fussell).

**White-eyed Vireo:** One found in a yard in Mill Creek, NC, 6 Dec, was “almost certainly the same bird that overwintered (here) last year” (Jack Fennell, *fide* John Fussell).

Other notable northern and/or inland sightings of individuals were made on CBCs in Raleigh, NC, 20 Dec

(*fide* John Connors); in Hatteras, NC, 27 Dec (*fide* Patricia Moore); in Southern Pines, NC, 27 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell); at Pettigrew SP, NC, 29 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire); and at Alligator River NWR, NC, 30 Dec (*fide* Jeff Lewis). Three found on the CBC at the Congaree Swamp, SC, 14 Dec, constituted a good count for that inland location. One found in a power line cut off NC 96, NE Wake Co, NC, 21 Feb, was either “a wintering bird or a very early spring migrant” (Ricky Davis, Duncan Frazier).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** Some of the farther inland sightings were made during CBCs at Hanging Rock SP, NC, 14 Dec (*fide* Phil Dickinson); at Southern Lake Norman, NC, 21 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff); in Charlotte, NC, 27 Dec (*fide* Ken Kneidel); in Shelby, NC, 1 Jan (*fide* JoAnn Martin); and in the Catawba Valley, NC, 3 Jan (*fide* Dwayne Martin).

**Common Raven:** Continuing their expansion in the Carolinas, ravens were seen east of their typical range at Archie Elledge WTP, Winston-Salem, NC, throughout the period (*fide* Phil Dickinson); at David B Waymer park in Huntersville, NC, where one was photographed during the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 21 Dec (Jeff Lemons, Alan Kneidel), providing the first documented record for Mecklenburg Co; around the quarry between Umstead SP and Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 10 Jan (Erik Thomas), 24



Ash-throated Flycatcher, 2 Dec 2008, Croatan NF, NC. Photo by Nathan Swick.

Feb (Ed Corey), and 26 Feb (Mike Tove); flying over Old Oxford Hwy just NE of Durham, NC, 23 Feb (Tove); and off US 321, a mile N of York, SC, 23 Feb (Ron Clark).

**Horned Lark:** Locally unusual was the high number, 150–200, seen at Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 14 Dec (Wayne Forsythe). Sightings of this species were firsts for CBCs in Morehead City, NC, 14 Dec (*vide* John Fussell) and Alligator River NWR, NC, 30 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis).

**Tree Swallow:** Far inland for winter were individuals found at Arrowhead Lake, Anson Co, NC, during the Pee Dee NWR CBC, 3 Jan (Tom & Tammy Sanders, Ron Clark, Steve Tracy) and at Ecusta Pond in Pisgah NF, near Brevard, NC, 19 Feb (Tom Joyce).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Rare winter sightings were made at Merchant's Shell Pond, New Bern, NC 7 Dec (Al Gamache); at the Sheraton pier in Atlantic Beach, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 14 Dec (Jim O'Donnell, Andy Webb, *vide* John Fussell); at the WTP in Georgetown, SC, 17 Jan (Richard & Dorothy Rosche); and at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, 17 Jan (Steve Calver).

**Cave Swallow:** Lingering from the fall influx were three at the catfish ponds in Creswell, NC, 2 Dec (Josh Southern), with one remaining 26 Dec (Ricky Davis); one on Hilton Head Island, SC, 14 Jan (Dave Lovett); and four to six perched underneath US 64 at the Vernon James Research Center in Roper, NC, 17 Jan (Ken Lundstrom). Also, a carcass was found at the Rest Area on NC 17 in Dismal Swamp SP, NC, 18 Dec (*vide* John Gerwin).

**Barn Swallow:** Rare winter sightings were made of one at the catfish ponds in Creswell, NC, 26 Dec (Ricky Davis) and of two on the Sun City-Okatie, SC, CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Helen Chatterton).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Not irrupting like last winter, the species gave a handful of sightings, the most southeastern of which was one individual on Kiawah Island, SC, 28 Feb (Aaron Given).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** Some of the more northern and/or inland sightings were made on CBCs in Wayne Co, NC, where two were found 20 Dec (*vide* Eric Dean); at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, where 11 were found, 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan); and at Jordan Lake, NC, 4 Jan, where one was found by Bob Chase and Shelley Theye (*vide* Norm Budnitz).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Well-reported in the coastal plain, John Fussell notes that "In December, this species seemed as common as I've ever observed." Some of the farther inland sightings were made at a suet feeder in Whispering Pines, NC, 1–27 Dec (Susan Campbell); at Evergreen Nature Preserve, Charlotte, NC, 14 Dec (Larry Barden); in Gastonia, NC, on the CBC, 20 Dec (*vide* Steve Tracy); and in Spartanburg, SC, on the CBC, 2 Jan (*vide* Lyle Campbell).

**Nashville Warbler:** Though this species is known to very rarely winter in the eastern part of our region, one seen at the Evergreen Nature Preserve, Charlotte, NC, 6 Dec (*vide* Larry Barden) and 11 Jan (Jill Palmer) was much farther inland than expected. Another apparent wintering bird was found at a

less unexpected location, along the causeway at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Jeff Lewis).

**Northern Parula:** Two were found at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, during the CBC 29 Dec—one along the causeway (Jeff Lewis) and another in the Lake Landing area (Ricky Davis). The only other winter sighting was made in Hatteras, NC, where one was seen during the CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore).

**Yellow Warbler:** A rare but regular winterer, one was seen on Roanoke Island, NC, during the Kitty Hawk CBC, 20 Dec (*vide* Jeff Lewis) and two were found along the causeway at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Lewis).

**Cape May Warbler:** Extremely rare but not unprecedented in winter, one, most likely a male due to bright coloration, was found on Harbor Drive, along the Neuse River, in New Bern, NC, 27 Jan (Al Gamache, Steve Shaffer).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** A male seen in the Elizabethan Gardens, Roanoke Island, NC, 26 Jan (*vide* Jeff Lewis) was very unexpected sight for the season.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** This is another very rare wintering warbler, and individuals were seen in the Elizabethan Gardens, Roanoke Island, NC, 8 Jan (Jeff Lewis) and on the campus of USC, Columbia, SC, 21 Jan–2 Feb (John Grego).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** Northerly winterers visited feeders in Wilmington, NC, throughout the period (Amy Williamson) and in Elizabeth City, NC, 4 Jan–6 Feb (Shirley Remaley). One found singing at Webb Wildlife Center, Hampton Co, SC, 15 Feb (Tom Prestby) was possibly the earliest of this year's spring arrivals. A dozen or more were singing in Meggett, SC, by 27 Feb (Cherrie Sneed).

**Prairie Warbler:** CBC reports of this rare but regular winterer totaled three on Hilton Head Island, SC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd), two in Morehead City, NC, 14 Dec (*vide* John Fussell); one at Winyah Bay, SC, 18 Dec (Lex Glover); one in McClellanville, SC, 21 Dec (*vide* NAS); six (!) at Cape Hatteras, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore); three at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan); one on Portsmouth Island, NC, 30 Dec (*vide* Peter Vankevich); one in Wilmington, NC, 3 Jan (*vide* Sam Cooper); one in Greenville, NC, 4 Jan (*vide* Veronica Pantelidis); and two on Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, NC, 4 Jan (*vide* Juanita Roushdy).

**Black-and-white Warbler:** Well-reported this winter, the species' higher CBC numbers were 30 at Santee NWR, SC, CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Dennis Forsythe); 19 on Hilton Head Island, SC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd); ten in the ACE Basin, SC, 28 Dec (*vide* Pete Laurie); six in Sun City-Okatie, SC, 14 Dec (*vide* Helen Chatterton); six at Cape Hatteras, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore); six on Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill); five at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan); four in Wilmington, NC, 3 Jan (*vide* Sam Cooper); and four on Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, NC, 4 Jan (*vide* Juanita Roushdy).

Notable northern and/or inland sightings were made of individuals in the Elizabethan Gardens, Roanoke Island, NC, where one apparently wintered, 17 Dec through the end of the period (Jeff Lewis); at Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chapel Hill CBC, 21 Dec (Doug Shadwick, *vide* Will Cook); during the week of the CBC in Charlotte, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Ken Kneidel); and in a yard in Elizabeth City, NC, 2 Jan (Shirley Remaley).

**American Redstart:** Very rare in winter, one was found during the CBC on Hilton Head Island, SC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd).

**Ovenbird:** One wintered in a yard on Roanoke Island, NC, where it regularly visited the bird feeders, 5 Dec through end of the period (Jeff Lewis). Nine were found in Buxton, NC, a known wintering site, during the Hatteras CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore) and one was seen again there 15 Feb (Scott Baron, Elisa Enders). Singles were also found on CBCs in McClellanville, SC, 21 Dec (*vide* NAS) and on Litchfield-Pawleys Island, 30 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill).



Ovenbird, 17 Dec 2008, Roanoke Island, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**Northern Waterthrush:** Assumed winterers were “at least two” at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC, a known wintering site, throughout the period (Steve Calver); one found on the nature trail loop across from the HQ at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 1 Feb (Kent Fiala, Richard Brown); and one seen at Savannah NWR, SC, 8 Feb (Carroll Richard).

**Wilson’s Warbler:** Only one was reported this winter—an adult male, photographed in Morehead City, NC, during the CBC, 14 Dec (Ricky Davis).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** This rare-but-regular winterer along on the coast was found at three different sites in Carteret Co, NC—in Morehead City, 4 Dec (John Fussell); and during the Morehead City CBC, 14 Dec, in Beaufort (Eric Dean, Gene Howe) and at North River Farms (Jamie Cameron, et al.). Other CBC sightings included one at Cape Hatteras, NC, 27 Dec (*vide* Patricia Moore); one on Bodie-Pea Island NWR, NC, 28 Dec (*vide* Paul Sykes); two at Lake Mattamuskeet, NC, 29 Dec, (*vide* Allen Bryan); and two on Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, 4 Jan (*vide* Juanita Roushdy).

**Summer Tanager:** Very rare winter sightings were made of individuals on Hilton Head Island, SC, during the CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd); visiting a feeder in Wilmington, NC, 14 Jan–26 Feb (Amy Williamson); and

in the “sparrow field” area of Patriot’s Point, Mt Pleasant, SC, where an immature male was seen 24 Jan–1 Feb (Bill Dobbins).

**Western Tanager:** Two were reported at feeders this winter—a male in Wilmington, NC, 17 Jan, almost daily through the end of the period (Bruce & Melinda Jones) and another in Conway, SC, 17 Jan (Steve Berkowitz, *vide* KC Foggin).



Western Tanager, 20 Feb 2009, near Wilmington, NC. Photo by Bruce Jones.

**Spotted Towhee:** An adult male, alternately reported as an aberrant Eastern Towhee, was seen at Savannah NWR, SC, 24–27 Feb (Dennis Forsythe). Only one previous record exists for the state—that of a specimen collected in Spartanburg in 1967.

**Bachman’s Sparrow:** Though a year-round resident in the pine savanna of the coastal plain, this species can be hard to find in winter, when not singing. Individuals were found at Holly Shelter Game Land SP, Pender Co, NC, 14 Dec (Dean Edwards); in Southern Pines, NC, during the CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Susan Campbell); at Camp Lejeune, NC, during the CBC, 19 Dec (*vide* Chad Garber); and at Webb Wildlife Center, Hampton Co, SC, 15 Feb (Tom Prestby). In the Croatan NF, NC, two were found in the Pringle Rd area, 5 Feb (John Fussell, Jeff Hall) and one was seen there 15 Feb (Fussell, et al.). John Fussell notes that “all birds I saw were associated with wiregrass and were at sites that had been burned within the previous 1 to 1 ½ years.”

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** Individuals were found in the “sparrow fields” on the W side of Lake Phelps, NC, 13 Dec (Christian Newton, John Haire); at the same site 5 Feb (Newton); and along Leggett Rd, E of Rocky Mount, NC, where one has been seen for several winters in a row now (Ricky Davis).

**Vesper Sparrow:** Some of the higher CBC totals for this species were eight at Santee NWR, SC, 27 Dec (*vide* Dennis Forsythe); nine in Pinewood, SC, 2 Jan (*vide* Lex Glover); six in Charleston, SC, 4 Jan (*vide* Jeff Mollenhauer); and nine on Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, NC, 4 Jan (*vide* Juanita Roushdy).

**Lark Sparrow:** This winter's reports were of two between Winnabow and Leland, NC, 16 Dec (John Ennis); an adult near Pettigrew SP, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (Ed Corey); one in Wilmington, NC, found on the CBC, 3 Jan (*fide* Sam Cooper); one photographed in Duck, NC, 10 Jan (*fide* Jeff Lewis); and two adults in Nags Head, NC, 6 Feb (David Bridge).

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** Rarely seen in winter, one was found at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 7 Dec (Jack Fennell, John Voigt) and again at the same site during the Morehead City CBC, 14 Dec (Susan Boyd). Other CBCs found individuals in New Bern, NC, 15 Dec (*fide* Bob Holmes); in Clemson, SC, 20 Dec (*fide* Drew Lanham); and at Santee NWR, SC, 27 Dec (*fide* Dennis Forsythe).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** Individuals were flushed at the Savannah River Site, SC, during the CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* Mark Vulkovich); at Santee NWR, SC, during the CBC, 27 Dec (*fide* Dennis Forsythe); and in the Millis Road Savanna, in southern Croatan NF, NC, 15 Feb (John Fussell, et al.). A good count of four was had on the ACE Basin, SC, CBC, 28 Dec (*fide* Pete Laurie).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** Another hard-to-see sparrow, one was well-photographed in the "sparrow fields" on the W side of Lake Phelps, NC, 13 Dec (Christian Newton) and was seen through 2 Feb (Ricky Davis). CBCs reported one at Santee NWR, 27 Dec (*fide* Dennis Forsythe); two at Pea Island NWR, NC, 28 Dec (*fide* Paul Sykes); one in the ACE Basin, SC, 28 Dec (*fide* Pete Laurie); and one on Litchfield-Pawleys Island, 30 Dec (*fide* Chris Hill). One was well-photographed at the Silver Bluff Audubon Center, SC, 9 Jan (Steve Kilpatrick). A high count of three was made at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 13 Jan (Steve Calver).



Le Conte's Sparrow, 13 Dec 2008, Lake Phelps, NC. Photo by Christian Newton



**Lincoln's Sparrow:** CBCs reported one in Morehead City, NC, 14 Dec (Ricky Davis); one at Alligator River NWR, NC, 30 Dec (Davis); two on Litchfield-Pawleys Island, 30 Dec (*fide* Chris Hill); three in the Catawba Valley, NC, 3 Jan (*fide* Dwayne Martin); two in Greenville, NC, 4 Jan (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis); and three on Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands, NC, 4 Jan (*fide* Juanita Roushdy). Other sightings were made of individuals along Leggett Rd, E of Rocky Mount, NC, where one has wintered for several years now, throughout the period (Davis); along Satterwhite Rd, eastern Pitt Co, NC, 6 Dec (Davis); in a clear-cut near Core Creek, NC, at the same spot one was seen last year, 8 Dec (John Fussell) and 12 Dec (Al Gamache); at Holly Shelter Game Land SP, Pender Co, NC, 14 Dec (Dean Edwards); and on the W side of Lake Phelps, NC, 21 Dec (Davis) and again 17 Jan (Christian Newton).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Some of the higher CBC totals of this uncommon sparrow were 48 in Henderson Co, NC, 4 Jan (*fide* Wayne Forsythe); 26 in Buncombe Co, NC, 14 Dec (*fide* Steve Semanchuk); 20 at Southern Lake Norman, NC, 21 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff); 20 in Alamance Co, NC, 27 Dec (*fide* Harry Shoffner); and 20 at Stone Mountain, NC, 3 Jan (*fide* Guy McGrane).

**Lapland Longspur:** Only one was reported this winter—in a field off Fork Shoals Rd in Townville, SC, 17 Jan (Jeff O'Connell, Anne Baker).

**Snow Bunting:** Few and far between on the Outer Banks of North Carolina this winter were five near Cape Point, Buxton, 11 Dec (Brian Patteson); four on the beach at Pea Island NWR, 9 Jan (Linda Ward); and one at the Wright Brothers Memorial, Kitty Hawk, NC, 25 Jan (Dave Briddon). At the opposite end of the state, two were found on top of Max Patch Bald in western Madison County, NC, 27 Dec (Mike Turner) and were photographed 1 Jan (Harry Sell).

**Blue Grosbeak:** Providing a rare winter record of this species was one, either a female or first-winter bird, seen near the intersection of Gay and Leggett Rd, E of Rocky Mount, NC, 23 Jan (Ricky Davis).

**Painted Bunting:** Some of the higher counts of wintering birds at feeders were “up to five” in Gloucester, NC, throughout the winter (*fide* John Fussell); several in Beaufort, SC, 2 Dec (Buddy Campbell); up to three in Wilmington, NC, 3 Dec through the end of the period (Bruce & Melinda Jones); and two in Beaufort, NC, 7 Dec, with at least one remaining throughout the period (Rich & Susan Boyd). A good count of three was made on the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Island CBC, 4 Jan (*fide* Juanita Roushdy). Individuals found on CBCs at Congaree Swamp, SC, CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* John Grego), and in Columbia, SC, 28 Dec (*fide* Caroline Eastman) were farther inland than usual.

**Dickcissel:** Two visited the same feeder in Myrtle Beach, SC—a female, 21 Dec, and another female, presumably a different bird due to its brighter plumage, 2 Jan (Phil & Sharon Turner). Amazingly, this yard has now hosted seven birds since 2000, most of which were seen in winter.



Painted Buntings, 4 Dec 2008, Wilmington, NC. Photo by Bruce Jones

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** One was seen in McClellanville, SC, during the CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* NAS). An immature male was found inside a large flock of blackbirds along US 64, two miles W of Columbia, NC, 1 Jan (Ricky Davis).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Some of the higher counts of this declining species were 319 in Southern Pines, NC, during the CBC, 21 Dec (*vide* Susan Campbell); 525 at Pettigrew SP, NC, during the CBC, 29 Dec (*vide* Doug LeQuire); 225 in Wilmington, NC, during the CBC, 3 Jan (*vide* Sam Cooper); a high count of 700–1000 at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, 15 Jan (Paul Serridge, Patti Newell); 300 at Tanglewood Park, Forsyth Co, NC, in mid-February (John Haire); and 130 in Hardeeville, SC, 14 Feb (Richard & Dorothy Rosche).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** A flock, reported as 50 to 70 birds, was seen and photographed in a cow pasture off McAdam's Rd in Townville, SC, 17 Jan (Jeff O'Connell, Anne Baker) through 22 Jan (Linda Kolb). Eight to ten were seen amongst cowbirds in a cattle feeding lot, during a Carolina Bird Club field trip to the Vernon James Research Center, Roper, NC, 31 Jan (Amy Williamson, et al.) and were seen again 2 Feb (Ricky Davis). Three were seen at Santee NWR, SC, during the CBC, 27 Dec (*vide* Dennis Forsythe).

**Bullock's Oriole:** A very rare western vagrant, a male visited a feeder in Stallings, NC, 1 Feb (John Scavetto).

**Baltimore Oriole:** Some of the better counts at feeders were "up to 12" in New Bern, NC, throughout the period (Al Gamache) and "at least 11, including an adult male," in Myrtle Beach, SC, throughout the period (Sharon & Phil Turner)..

**Purple Finch:** Well-reported this winter, some of the better counts were 32 in Spartanburg, SC, during the CBC, 2 Jan (*vide* Lyle Campbell); 58 at

Jordan Lake, NC, during the CBC, 4 Jan (*fide* Norm Budnitz); 45 in Pittsboro, NC, 15 Jan (Phil Warren); and 25 on feeders in Halifax, NC, 28 Feb (Frank Enders).



Baltimore Oriole, 16 Feb 2009, Myrtle Beach, SC. Photo by Phil Turner

**Red Crossbill:** The only one reported this winter was a male on a feeder at Bakers Mountain Park, Catawba Co, NC, 12 Jan (Frank Porch, John Sutton, *fide* Dwayne Martin).

**Pine Siskin:** This winter, this species staged its biggest irruption into the Carolinas in recent memory. Some of the better counts were 150 in Kings Mountain, NC, 16 Dec (Ron Clark); 598 on the CBC at Jordan Lake, NC, 4 Jan (*fide* Norm Budnitz); 349 on the CBC in Henderson Co, NC, 4 Jan (*fide* Wayne Forsythe); 250 at Falls Lake, NC, during the CBC, 5 Jan (*fide* Brian Bockhahn); 150+ around the feeders at Riverbend Park, Conover, NC, 8 Jan (Dwayne Martin); 300 to 400+ around the feeders at Bakers Mountain Park, Catawba Co, NC, 13 Jan (Dwayne Martin); at least 200 at feeders in Coinjock, NC, from mid-January through the end of the period (Linda Ward); and 250 in a yard in Aynor, SC, during the Great Backyard Bird Count in late February (Stephen Thomas).