

## General Field Notes

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*General Field Notes* briefly report such items as rare sightings, unusual behaviors, significant nesting records, or summaries of such items.

*First, second, or third sightings of species in either state must be submitted to the appropriate Bird Records Committee prior to publication in The Chat.*

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### **First Record of Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) for North Carolina**

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An unidentified hummingbird showed up in the yard of Mickey and Elayne Kodroff in Manteo, Dare County, NC, on 19 January 2003. Several wintering *Archilochus* hummingbirds, later identified as Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (*A. colubris*), were already present at the Kodroffs' hummingbird feeders. It was not until 11 March that a licensed hummingbird bander (author Susan Campbell) was able to visit the Kodroffs to capture, band, and identify the bird. Campbell's initial identification of Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) was confirmed by Bob Sargent, a hummingbird bander from Alabama, through photographs of the hand-held bird. (Fig. 1)



Allen's Hummingbird, 11 March 2003, Manteo, NC. Photo by Susan Campbell.

Once word of the presence of an Allen's Hummingbird was announced to the general public by email on 17 March, several dozen birders were able to observe the bird, which was last seen by the Kodroffs on 29 March 2003. A few photographs of the bird coming to a feeder were also taken.

The Allen's Hummingbird was an immature male, in heavy molt when banded. When first seen in January, it had a pale rufous wash along the flanks, and the back was a dark green. One red feather was present on the left side of the gorget, which was otherwise whitish with numerous tiny dark spots. By 11 March, however, some new bright green feathers were appearing on the back, mixed with the older dark green feathers. On the very similar Rufous Hummingbird (*S. rufus*), new feathers on the back of an immature male should be reddish-brown instead of green. Also, the bird showed uniformly rounded tips on the newly emerged innermost two pairs of tail feathers (rectrices 5 and 6); a Rufous Hummingbird would have a clear notch on the inner web of the second pair of tail feathers (rectrix 5).

In its breeding season, the Allen's Hummingbird is restricted to the Pacific coast from southern Oregon to southern California. It is migratory over most of its range, with the more northerly breeding population (*S. s. sasin*) withdrawing to central Mexico for the winter (American Ornithologists' Union 1998). As with nearly all migratory hummingbirds, strays occur well away from the normal range. At the time of the North Carolina record, there had already been one record for the Virginia mountains in the winter of 1997–98 (Rottenborn and Brinkley 2007) and at least seven records from Georgia (Georgia Ornithological Society 2003). The first record for Allen's Hummingbird in South Carolina came from Lexington in January 2007 (Slyce et al. 2008).

This report of Allen's Hummingbird in Dare County was accepted by the NC Bird Records Committee (LeGrand et al. 2004). Because the photographs of the hand-held bird were considered to document this species, the species was added directly to the state's Official List.

### **Literature Cited**

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