

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Summer 2011, unless otherwise noted)

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.

<i>Winter</i>	<i>December 1–February 28</i>	<i>due March 20</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>March 1–May 31</i>	<i>due June 20</i>
<i>Summer</i>	<i>June 1–July 31</i>	<i>due August 20</i>
<i>Fall</i>	<i>August 1–November 30</i>	<i>due December 20</i>

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

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: Sixteen were counted at Donnelley Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Colleton Co, SC, 4 June (Ron Clark).

Mottled Duck: Much farther inland than all previous NC sightings was that of an individual at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 24 July through 5 Aug (Dwayne Martin, m.obs.).

Ring-necked Duck: For the second year in a row, a drake spent the summer on Salem Lake in Winston-Salem, NC (John Haire). The bird seen on the

Spring Bird Count (SBC) remained on Yates Mill Pond in Raleigh, NC, until at least 25 June (Erla Beegle, et al.).

Lesser Scaup: Two males remained on the waterfront in Morehead City, NC, throughout the summer (John Fussell). An individual was seen on the retention pond next to Concord Mills Mall in Concord, NC, 19 June (Jeff Lemons).

Common Eider: A lingering female was found in the Beaufort Channel, off the Rachel Carson Preserve, Beaufort, NC, 2 June (John Fussell, Paula Gillikin).

Surf Scoter: A juvenile male was seen at the ferry terminal on Ocracoke Island, NC, 10 June (Ali Iyob, Nathan Swick, Chris Ciccone). A female was seen in the surf off S Nags Head, NC, 8 July (Audrey Whitlock).

Common Merganser: A female with ten juveniles in tow was photographed on the Green River in Polk Co, NC, 14 June (Jerry Johnson, Zora Rhodes). According to the observers, this bird has raised young at this location for the past three years. There is only one previous report of this species breeding in our region.

Red-breasted Merganser: Lingering into summer were individual females just inside Oregon Inlet, NC, 15 June (Audrey Whitlock), and near the jetty at Huntington Beach State Park (SP), SC, 21 June (Paul Serridge).

Common Loon: Three, one adult in breeding plumage and two juveniles were seen on Lookout Shoals Lake in Catawba Co, NC, 18 and 25 June (Monroe Pannell). Two loons were also on Jordan Lake, NC, 25 June (Phil Warren). Both reports are interesting because most previous reports of summering loons on inland lakes are of individuals.

Herald (Trindade) Petrel: One was photographed from a NOAA research ship off South Carolina, 28 June (Tom Johnson), providing the state with its first record. Two were seen from the same ship, 80+ nautical miles SSE of Cape Hatteras, NC, 2 July (Johnson, *vide* Brian Patteson). Two were seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 17 July (Patteson, et al.).

Fea's Petrel: One was photographed from a NOAA research ship, 80+ nautical miles SSE of Cape Hatteras, NC, 2 July (Tom Johnson, *vide* Brian Patteson).

White-tailed Tropicbird: The spring's impressive counts continued on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC, with three on 12 June, one on 31 July, and four to five on 17 July (Brian Patteson, et al.). Five adults were seen from a NOAA research ship in the Gulf Stream, within 75 miles of the NC coast, 1 July (Tom Johnson).

Red-billed Tropicbird: Singles were noted on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 11 July (Brian Patteson, et al.) and from a NOAA research ship in the Gulf Stream, within 75 miles of the NC coast, 1 July (Tom Johnson).

Wood Stork: Flocks of post-breeding wanderers were found at two sites in the NC coastal plain—along the Black River, on the border of Bladen and Pender Co, NC, where about 40 were counted 18 June (David Stahle, Katheryn Perkins, Angie Carl, Daniel Griffin, Charles Robbins, Larry



White-tailed Tropicbird, 12 June 2011, off Hatteras, NC. Photo by Nathan Swick.

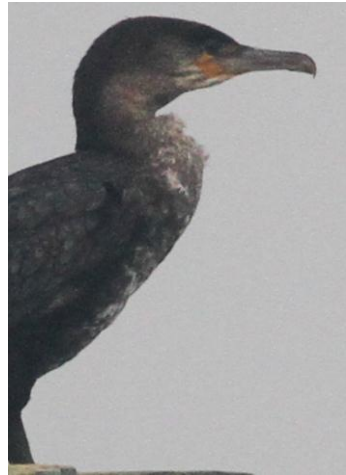
Myers, *vide* John Carpenter); and in a Carolina Bay near Orrum, Robeson Co, NC, where 30+ were seen during the period (*vide* Harry LeGrand).

Magnificent Frigatebird: One, either a female or a third/fourth year male, was seen flying up the coast at Surf City, NC (Paul Glass) and two hours later in Emerald Isle, NC, 5 July (Bo Howes). An adult male was seen soaring high over the ocean off Salvo, NC, 29 July (Bob Ake, Audrey Whitlock).

Brown Booby: A juvenile was photographed on the dunes at the S end of Wrightsville Beach, NC, 25 June (Tim Armstrong) but never relocated.

Great Cormorant: Immature birds were seen at Oregon Inlet, NC, 3 July (Jeff Lewis) and at the S end of Wrightsville Beach, NC, 16 July (Sam Cooper). It's been ten years since our region's last sighting of this species during the summer period.

Anhinga: One at Aberdeen Lake in Moore Co, NC, 15 June (Rex Badgett, *vide* Susan Campbell) was locally unusual.



Great Cormorant, 3 July 2011, Pea Is NWR, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Brown Pelican: An immature bird at Falls Lake, NC, 28 June (Ali Iyoob) was a good find for a site so far inland.

Least Bittern: One in a yard in Boiling Springs, NC, 11 June (Art Bottoms) was unusual for the mountain region.

Little Blue Heron: A first-spring bird was present at Salem Lake in Winston-Salem, NC, 3–5 June (John Haire) and a juvenile bird was present at the same location, 13–14 July (Carol Cunningham). Three juveniles were at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 9 July (Steve Shultz).

Reddish Egret: Two were seen at Hatteras Inlet, NC, 10 June (Ali Iyoob, Nathan Swick, Chris Ciccone). Three were reported from Hammocks Beach SP, NC, 13 July (*fide* Derb Carter).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: A juvenile seen out in the Gulf Stream during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 31 July (Brian Patteson, et al.) was unusual.

White Ibis: Inland sightings of post-breeding wanderers included one between Hickory and Lenoir, NC, 29 June (Dwayne Martin); a juvenile in Edneyville, NC, 29 June (Chris Bollar); three juveniles in NW Durham, NC, 5 July (Norm Budnitz); five juveniles at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 10 July (Nathan Swick); a juvenile at the Municipal Golf Course in Asheville, NC, 8–11 July (*fide* Joan Carr); 16 juveniles at Lynn’s Nursery in Leicester, Buncombe Co, NC, for two weeks in early July (Doug Johnston, Len Pardue); a juvenile on the Davidson River in Brevard, NC, 13 July (Norma Siebenheller, Wayne Forsythe); a juvenile in NW Mecklenburg Co, NC, 23 July (John Bonestell); a juvenile along the French Broad River, N of Asheville, NC, 17 July (Caroline Eastman); and one at Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 17 July (Paul Super).

Roseate Spoonbill: Sightings included six at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 9 June (Cherrie Sneed); one at Pleasant Point Plantation in Beaufort Co, SC, 14 June (Buddy Campbell); two at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 6 July (Jerry Kerschner, Jack Peachey); and a juvenile on Lady’s Island in Beaufort, SC, 15–17 July (Campbell).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Some of the better counts were 14 over a field off NC-87 on the outskirts of Riegelwood, NC, 12 June (John Ennis); and 40+ over fields near Allendale, SC, 16 July (Sparkle Clark, Carroll Richard, Ron Wright).

Mississippi Kite: Outside of the species’ typical breeding range was one in Charlotte, NC, 6 June (Ron Clark) and an active nest in a residential area of Greensboro, NC, in late July (Scott DePue, *fide* Henry Link).



Roseate Spoonbill, 7 July 2011, Huntington Beach SP, SC. Photo by Jerry Kerschner.

Broad-winged Hawk: Two were seen and heard in the Green Swamp of Brunswick Co, NC, 1 July (Mike Turner), suggestive of breeding in that area.

King Rail: One in Buxton, NC, 3 June (Jeff Lewis) was found in unusually salty/brackish habitat more typical of a Clapper Rail.

American Coot: One on Lookout Shoals Lake in Catawba Co, NC, 18 June (Monroe Pannell) was unusual for the region in summer.

Sandhill Crane: One, reportedly quite tame, spent the day at a condominium development in Salter Path, NC, 4 July (Betty Stierhoff, *vide* John Fussell).

Wilson's Plover: One near the ferry terminal in Cedar Island, NC, 31 July (John Fussell, Jack Fennell) was locally unusual.

Piping Plover: Sightings included four to five on the E end of Bear Island, Hammocks Beach SP, NC, in early June (John Voigt); and two on Kiawah Island, SC, 15 July (Aaron Given).

Black-necked Stilt: A good count of 46 was made in New Field, Pea Island NWR, NC, 28 July (Audrey Whitlock, Greg Moyers).

Spotted Sandpiper: One at the dam on Mayo Millpond in Nash Co, NC, 5 June (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late for a spring migrant. Early fall migrants included six at the ferry terminal in Cedar Island, NC, 3 July (John Fussell, Jack Fennell) and three at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 9 July (Steve Shultz).

Marbled Godwit: Respectable mid-summer counts included eight on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 23–25 June (Don Martin) and 16 at Captain Sam's Inlet, Charleston Co, SC, 6 July (Cherrie Sneed, Aija & Ed Konrad).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Four at Salem Lake in Winston-Salem, NC, 20–21 June (John Haire) must have been very late spring migrants.

Short-billed Dowitcher: One found at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 9 July (Jacob Socular, Carlos Peres) was unusual for a site so far inland.

Red-necked Phalarope: A pair, one of which was in breeding plumage, was found on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, NC, 12 June (Scott Winton).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 37 were counted around a sand dredging operation at S Nags Head, NC, 23 July (Audrey Whitlock), providing an excellent summer count.

Least Tern: Two seen on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 15 June (Thierry Besançon) were unusual for a site so far from the coast.

Roseate Tern: Two were reported from Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 July (Brian Taber, *vide* Ned Brinkley).

South Polar Skua: Three, two of which were feeding on a recently-killed Black-capped Petrel, were seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 11 July (Brian Patteson, et al.). An individual was also seen on a pelagic trip, 17 July (Patteson, et al.).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: One seen on Roanoke Island, NC, 2 July (Jeff Lewis) was a first for that island, though colonies are established in nearby Nags Head, NC.



White-winged Dove, 12 June 2011, Pea Island NWR. Photo by Scott Winton.

White-winged Dove: Sightings on the Outer Banks of NC continued into summer, with individuals seen at Pea Island NWR, NC, 11–12 June (Will Cook, Scott Winton); and at a feeder in North Ridge, Nags Head, NC, 29 June (*vide* Jeff Lewis). One was also seen on Bald Head Island, NC, 15 July (Brian O'Shea).

Mourning Dove: One to four seen throughout the season at Carver's Gap (5550+ ft), Roan Mountain, NC, were unusual for such a high elevation (Rick Knight).

Nanday (Black-hooded) Parakeet: An individual continued to be seen in downtown Morehead City, NC, throughout the period (John Fussell).

Alder Flycatcher: Sightings included two to six on Roan Mountain, NC, throughout the period (Rick Knight); three on territory at Black Balsam Mountain, near milepost 418 on the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP), NC, 13 June (Steve Compton); and ten along the Appalachian Trail near Roan Mountain, NC, 17–19 June (Jacob Socolar, Ali Iyoob, Scott Winton).



Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, 26 June 2011, near Pendleton, SC. Photo by Linda Montgomery.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: A female joined the male at last year's nesting site along Gunter Rd, near Piedmont, SC, 17 June (Cherrie Sneed), almost two months after the male arrived, though nesting was never confirmed. A male was seen at Forestview High School in Gastonia, NC, 15–24 June (Sam Braxton, Jeff Lemons, Keith Camburn), only a few miles from the country club where a male was seen



Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, 23 July 2011, Anilorac Farm. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

in June 2009. A pair successfully nested at the Simpson Research Center near Pendleton, SC, as a nest with four juveniles atop a utility pole was first noted 26 June (Rob Gentry, Scott Davis). A pair was found nesting on an antenna at Anilorac Farm in Orange Co, NC, 9 July (Jacob Socolar), and nestlings were photographed at the site 23 July (Jeff Lewis).

Loggerhead Shrike: A pair successfully nested on Pivers Island, near Beaufort, NC, as fledglings were noted 18 June (John Fussell, Paula Gillikin). This sighting may represent the first breeding record of this species in Carteret County since 1975.

Warbling Vireo: A singing individual continued along the shore of Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 18 and 25 June (Monroe Pannell).

Common Raven: Five, two adults and three juveniles, were seen at the Vulcan Rock Quarry in Charlotte, NC, 6 June (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders) where breeding was also confirmed last year.

Horned Lark: Eleven, including four juveniles, were counted at the Oakland Plantation Turf Farm in Bladen Co, NC, 3 June (Daniel Hueholt). A flock of 35 at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 12 June (John Fussell, Jack Fennell) was an unusually large concentration for the breeding season. Two heard singing at the same location, 16 June (Fussell), was suggestive of breeding at that location. Breeding was confirmed on the bald of Bearwallow Mountain, NE of Hendersonville, NC, as a pair was seen gathering food 2 and 17 June (Wayne Forsythe) and two adults and a juvenile were seen 2 July (Henry Link, et al.).

Cliff Swallow: Nesting around Havelock, NC, on the Hampton Inn and two nearby bridges, evidenced by 110 nests on 8 June (John Fussell) seemed “later than one might expect”. According to Fussell, “the timing of the nesting seemed to coincide with the worsening drought and presence of

exposed bottoms of storm water retention ponds, which provided access to wet clay.”

Swainson’s Thrush: One was noted between mileposts 355 and 360 along the BRP, NC, 1 July (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson). One was heard along the Appalachian Trail near Round Bald, Roan Mountain, NC, 17 June (Jacob Socolar, Ali Iyoob, Scott Winton) and 23 June (Scott Somershoe). Strong evidence of this species breeding in NC has not yet been obtained.

Hermit Thrush: Two to three were heard singing on Roan Mountain, NC, throughout the season, and a juvenile was seen 22 July (Rick Knight). Individuals were also heard singing on Mt Mitchell, NC, 18 June (Jacob Socolar, Ali Iyoob, Scott Winton); near Andrews Bald, near Clingmans Dome in Swain Co, NC, 9 July (Dean Edwards); and at Elk Knob SP, Watauga Co, NC, at dawn on 31 July, at 4926 ft (Merrill Lynch, Parker Backstrom).

Brown Thrasher: Two seen at Carver’s Gap (5500+ ft), Roan Mountain, NC/TN border, throughout the season (Rick Knight) were unusual for such a high elevation.



Fledgling Cedar Waxwing, 7 July 2011, Camden, SC. Photo by Kurt Krucke.

Cedar Waxwing: A fledgling was photographed in a yard in Camden, SC, 7 July (Kurt Krucke). Two were intermittently seen in Wilmington, NC, throughout the period (Sam Cooper).

Magnolia Warbler: Three to four singing males were observed on Roan Mountain, NC, 20 May through 1 July (Rick Knight). An adult male along the shore of Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 21 July (Monroe Pannell) must have been an early fall migrant.

Blackpoll Warbler: Two heard in S Nags Head, NC, 6 June (Audrey Whitlock) were somewhat late.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Two were seen at Carver’s Gap, next to Roan High Knob, NC/TN border, 18 June (Jacob Socolar, Ali Iyoob, Scott Winton). Their presence at this date suggested breeding.

Bachman’s Sparrow: One found at the end of Doyle Bottom Rd in the Clemson Experimental Forest, Pickens Co, SC, 10 June (Jessica Gorzo) was a first for that area.

Chipping Sparrow: Two singing males at the Cloudland parking lot (~6100 ft), Roan Mountain, NC, 14 June (Rick Knight) were unusual for that high elevation.

Vesper Sparrow: Two to three singing males were observed on Round Bald and at Engine Gap, Roan Mountain, NC, throughout the season (Rick Knight).

Swamp Sparrow: One that visited a feeder at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 9 July (Dwayne Martin) was unusual for the summer season.

White-throated Sparrow: An adult was present in a yard in Cary, NC, 7 June through the end of the period (Kevin Markham). Another adult was seen in Charlotte, NC, during the second week of June (*fide* Ron Clark). An individual was seen at the Prairie Ridge Ecostation in Raleigh, NC, 24 July (Brian O'Shea) but not seen again.

Indigo Bunting: Two to three singing males were observed on Roan Mountain, at ~5600 ft, 14 June through the end of the period (Rick Knight).

Dickcissel: 30 singing males were counted at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 12 June (John Fussell, Jack Fennell), providing a high count for that location. A male was seen singing in a field in Drake, Nash Co, NC, 4 June through mid-July (Ricky Davis). One was seen at Dobbins Farm in Townville, SC, 13 June (Bob & Judy Maxwell). A pair was found along Mid Pines Rd in Raleigh, NC, 25 June (Erla Beegle, et al.) and was present until at least 30 June (John Connors). Three, a male and two females, were seen at Ft Fisher, NC, 1–2 July (Bruce Smithson, Greg Massey).



Dickcissel, 25 June 2011, Mid Pines Rd, Raleigh, NC. Photo by James Meehan.

Red Crossbill: Four or more were seen throughout the season on Roan Mountain, NC (Rick Knight). About ten were seen at Carver's Gap, Roan



Red Crossbill, 25 July 2011, Grandfather Mountain, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Mountain, NC/TN border, 18 June (Jacob Socolar, Ali Iyob, Scott Winton). A pair was found along the Bald Knob Ridge trail, adjacent to Mt Mitchell, NC, 1 July (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson).

Pine Siskin: Two to eight were seen throughout the season on Roan Mountain, NC (Rick Knight). Seven were noted around Mt Mitchell, NC, 1 July (Marilyn Westphal, Mark Simpson).