

## 2011 Fall Bird Counts in South Carolina

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Migration of fall 2011 held some interesting birds. A large number of hummingbirds, and both Calliope and Rufous Hummingbirds were seen as well. A total of 26 warbler species were seen throughout the state. One of the more unusual was a Canada Warbler in Aiken County as well as two individuals each in Greenville County and at Congaree National Park. Also two fall Blackpoll Warblers were noted in two counties. Overall only five species of sparrow were counted on all counts. A number of unusual shorebirds were found, mostly in Aiken County where water levels at the Silver Bluff Audubon Center were extremely low for an extended period of time. Buff-breasted Sandpiper, American Golden-Plover and Baird's Sandpiper were found in one pond there. A single Ring-necked Duck and Red-breasted Merganser were found in various counties and 26 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, including a number of immatures, were found in Aiken County. In addition both Philadelphia and Warbling Vireos were on the count as was an early Red-breasted Nuthatch.

### **Greenville—JB Hines**

The Greenville County 2011 Fall Migration Count was held on Saturday, September 17 and included the monthly GCBC walk at Lake Conestee. Weather conditions were decent this year with a low of 57 °F and a high of 67 °F under mostly clear skies and moderate wind. Nine parties/areas were covered by 18 participants. The group total was 110 species and 5431 individuals. In general this year's fall migration has been very good with excellent number of migrants showing up as early as late August and continuing through the end of September.

Notable species (rare/unusual, unusually high numbers, etc.): An average count of 675 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was estimated at Judy and Charles Webb's feeders on Lake Lanier. They had estimated 600–750 based on the 2.5 gallons of nectar being consumed daily. They also had an early Calliope Hummingbird. A very good total of 19 species of warblers was recorded for this count.

### **Cherokee County—Lyle Campbell**

Best birds were a Tennessee Warbler and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

### **Spartanburg County—Lyle Campbell**

Our two best birds were early Winter Wren and Red-breasted Nuthatch. We had a modest diversity of warblers with no unusual records. No Northern Bobwhite could be found. Perhaps the most peculiar aspect of our fall count was the extremely low numbers of blackbirds.

**Congaree—John Grego**

Participants included park staff and visitors. Areas covered were the boardwalk, Weston Lake, Oakridge and Bluff Trails as well as the longleaf campground, parts of Cedar Creek and the Congaree River, Bates Fork, and Western Boundary Roads. Weather was warm, light wind with some clouds and sun. The birders on the river added coverage that we do not typically have on Congaree National Park counts.

**Lexington—Patricia Voelker**

Our group concentrated on Saluda Shoals Park in Irmo but three of us also did feeder and/or stationary counts later in the day. Irvin Pitts heard the Marsh Wren in the area around the wetlands pond of the park. Sparkle Clark was able to get a digiscoped picture. Unfortunately for me, several of us had gone on to the rest room and missed the best bird of the day.

Table 1. Fall 2011 bird counts in South Carolina

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck	26	0	0	0	0	0	26
Canada Goose	46	335	54	0	107	0	542
Wood Duck	25	3	0	14	51	0	93
Mallard	1	156	1	8	56	0	222
Blue-winged Teal	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Ring-necked Duck	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Red-breasted Merganser	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Northern Bobwhite	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
Ruffed Grouse	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Wild Turkey	14	12	20	0	13	0	59
Pied-billed Grebe	1	2	1	0	4	0	8
Wood Stork	36	0	0	0	0	4	40
Double-crested Cormorant	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Anhinga	7	0	0	0	0	2	9
Great Blue Heron	6	25	2	1	10	11	55
Great Egret	12	5	1	0	1	6	25
Snowy Egret	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Little Blue Heron	17	0	0	0	0	6	23
Tricolored Heron	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cattle Egret	37	0	0	0	0	0	37
Green Heron	1	8	0	0	5	1	15
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
White Ibis	17	0	0	0	0	20	37
Black Vulture	67	30	7	2	60	19	185
Turkey Vulture	29	37	8	2	82	26	184
Osprey	1	3	3	1	3	6	17
Bald Eagle	1	0	0	0	4	3	8
Northern Harrier	0	2	0	0	1	0	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	4	0	0	1	0	6
Cooper's Hawk	2	1	0	0	3	0	6
Red-shouldered Hawk	20	4	1	2	12	8	47
Broad-winged Hawk	0	0	0	0	18	0	18
Red-tailed Hawk	9	14	2	2	8	1	36
American Kestrel	2	1	3	0	0	0	6
Merlin	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	0	0	1	1	2

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Virginia Rail	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Common Gallinule	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
American Golden-Plover	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Killdeer	55	40	33	0	7	0	135
Spotted Sandpiper	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
Solitary Sandpiper	7	0	0	0	1	1	9
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Ruddy Turnstone	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Western Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Least Sandpiper	95	0	0	0	0	0	95
Baird's Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	20	0	0	0	0	0	20
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Wilson's Snipe	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Forster's Tern	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Rock Pigeon	27	306	30	0	31	0	394
Eurasian Collared-Dove	5	13	0	1	0	0	19
White-winged Dove	157	0	0	17	0	0	174
Mourning Dove	0	195	65	0	174	14	448
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	2	0	0	3	0	20	25
Eastern Screech-Owl	3	1	2	0	10	0	16
Great Horned Owl	1	2	0	0	1	0	4
Barred Owl	6	7	1	1	2	10	27
Common Nighthawk	0	34	0	0	1	1	36
Chuck-will's-widow	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Chimney Swift	20	397	4	40	514	13	988
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	28	112	4	12	791	3	950
Calliope Hummingbird	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Rufous Hummingbird	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Belted Kingfisher	11	18	4	3	14	2	52
Red-headed Woodpecker	29	13	1	0	3	9	55
Red-bellied Woodpecker	45	36	17	13	57	24	192
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Downy Woodpecker	29	23	4	10	47	17	130
Hairy Woodpecker	4	2	1	0	4	2	13
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Northern Flicker	4	10	4	0	5	1	24
Pileated Woodpecker	36	7	2	3	18	51	117
Eastern Wood-Pewee	17	7	4	4	17	13	62
Acadian Flycatcher	4	0	1	0	0	13	18
Eastern Phoebe	12	14	12	5	29	0	72
Great Crested Flycatcher	7	0	0	0	2	2	11
Eastern Kingbird	2	4	0	1	0	1	8
Loggerhead Shrike	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
White-eyed Vireo	41	1	0	3	5	54	104
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	0	0	0	1	2	4
Blue-headed Vireo	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
Warbling Vireo	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Philadelphia Vireo	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Red-eyed Vireo	12	1	0	18	12	10	53
Blue Jay	60	86	35	5	118	19	323
American Crow	147	291	47	12	350	134	981
Fish Crow	8	1	2	0	7	2	20
Common Raven	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
Horned Lark	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tree Swallow	55	0	0	0	0	0	55

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	21	0	0	0	0	5	26
Bank Swallow	0	0	0	0	0	51	51
Barn Swallow	10	3	0	2	0	0	15
Carolina Chickadee	80	69	18	32	190	26	415
Tufted Titmouse	104	62	19	25	183	27	420
Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	11	21	2	0	73	7	114
Brown-headed Nuthatch	28	14	4	12	26	0	84
Brown Creeper	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Carolina Wren	85	73	26	21	126	36	367
House Wren	2	2	0	0	1	0	5
Winter Wren	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Marsh Wren	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	8	0	0	3	3	0	14
Eastern Bluebird	31	127	28	23	277	2	488
Veery	2	0	0	0	1	27	30
Swainson's Thrush	3	0	0	0	5	7	15
Hermit Thrush	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Wood Thrush	0	0	0	0	5	3	8
American Robin	0	181	14	0	81	2	278
Gray Catbird	2	9	2	1	14	0	28
Northern Mockingbird	65	87	26	15	55	1	249
Brown Thrasher	4	14	7	3	23	1	52
European Starling	122	267	38	0	392	0	819
Cedar Waxwing	0	0	0	10	25	0	35
Ovenbird	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Worm-eating Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Louisiana Waterthrush	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
Northern Waterthrush	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
Blue-winged Warbler	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Black-and-white Warbler	13	0	0	1	8	4	26
Tennessee Warbler	2	0	1	0	25	0	28
Common Yellowthroat	16	1	0	12	15	13	57
Hooded Warbler	7	0	0	1	8	7	23
American Redstart	35	7	4	18	27	34	125
Cape May Warbler	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Northern Parula	28	4	0	5	1	30	68
Magnolia Warbler	4	0	3	1	13	8	29
Bay-breasted Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Yellow Warbler	0	1	0	0	2	0	3
Chestnut-sided Warbler	13	1	1	3	13	4	35
Blackpoll Warbler	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	0	0	0	6	9	16
Palm Warbler	8	6	0	0	14	0	28
Pine Warbler	59	10	7	5	12	3	96
Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	21	0	0	0	0	21
Yellow-throated Warbler	3	0	0	0	0	2	5
Prairie Warbler	1	0	0	3	0	0	4
Black-throated Green Warbler	0	0	1	0	4	0	5
Canada Warbler	1	0	0	0	2	2	5
Yellow-breasted Chat	0	1	0	0	0	4	5
Eastern Towhee	19	11	2	1	17	3	53
Chipping Sparrow	7	58	6	9	55	0	135
Field Sparrow	0	12	0	0	26	0	38

	Aiken	Spart	Cherok	Lexing	Greenv	Congar	Total
Grasshopper Sparrow	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Song Sparrow	0	18	2	0	12	0	32
Dark-eyed Junco	0	1	0	0	9	0	10
Summer Tanager	26	1	0	1	1	15	44
Scarlet Tanager	1	0	0	0	5	3	9
Northern Cardinal	171	142	27	33	147	78	598
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	0	0	2	2	3	0	7
Blue Grosbeak	6	1	1	2	6	5	21
Indigo Bunting	11	0	0	5	20	15	51
Bobolink	0	0	0	0	55	1	56
Red-winged Blackbird	11	1	1	0	0	0	13
Eastern Meadowlark	1	5	5	0	1	0	12
Common Grackle	82	22	7	0	544	4	659
Brown-headed Cowbird	457	2	4	0	5	0	468
Baltimore Oriole	0	0	0	0	4	2	6
Purple Finch	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
House Finch	6	90	15	15	40	0	166
American Goldfinch	22	59	13	6	118	0	218
House Sparrow	1	21	19	0	44	0	85

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## **Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—March 1962**

There were 24 Christmas Bird Counts in 1961, and a new high overall species count of 193 was reached. Of the near 2.5 million individuals counted, a million were European Starlings and more than a million were blackbirds. Bewick's Wrens were reported on the Chapel Hill, Winston-Salem, and Great Smoky Mountains counts, a Western Grebe on the Raleigh count, and a Broad-winged Hawk on the Charleston count. A Harlequin Duck on the Wilmington count was a first record for the state.

Besides the Raleigh Western Grebe, there was a report of one at North Pond, Pea Island NWR on 30 March 1959. These were the first two records for the state.

A Harris's Sparrow at Spartanburg, SC in January 1962, seen by many, was apparently the state's first sight record.

—Kent Fiala, editor