

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Josh Southern
203 Hyannis Drive
Holly Springs, NC 27540
joshsouthern79@gmail.com

(All dates Winter 2011–2012, 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.

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 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.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Sightings included one with a flock of Canada Geese at a pond in Durham, NC, 18–20 Dec (Brian Bockhahn, multiple observers [m. obs.]); three at Silver Creek Plantation Country Club, Morganton, Burke Co, NC, 9–18 Jan (Joy Strachan, Dwayne Martin, m. obs.); three at Mary's House Pond, Bear Island Wildlife Management Area [WMA], SC, 20 Feb (Cherrie Sneed); and one on the campus of Charleston Southern University, and at nearby Wannamaker County Park, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Jan through the end of the period (Matthew Campbell, m. obs.).



Greater White-fronted Goose, 24 Jan 2012, Charleston Southern University, SC.
Photo by Cathy Miller.

Snow Goose: Outside of the species' typical wintering grounds were individuals on the Columbia, SC CBC, 16 Dec (*fide* Steve Dennis); on the Southern Lake Norman Christmas Bird Count [CBC], 18 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff); on the Falls Lake, NC, CBC, 4 Jan (*fide* Brian Bockhahn); amongst a flock of Tundra Swans at a borrow pit pond in E Edgecombe Co, NC, 15 Jan (Ricky Davis); and amongst a flock of Canada Geese in Meggett, SC, 5 Feb through late February (Cherrie Sneed).

Ross's Goose: Sightings included one near the Water Treatment Plant [WTP] in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 8 Dec (Wayne Forsythe); one at Wilkes Community College, and at "surrounding bodies of water around Wilkesboro, NC", 26 Dec through the end of the period (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.); two foraging inside a large Snow Goose flock at Pungo Unit, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge [NWR], NC, 29 Dec (Jacob Socolar); one at the Dobbins cow ponds in Townville,



Ross's Goose, 10 Jan 2012, Wilkesboro, NC. Photo by Dwayne Martin.

SC, 5 Jan (Linda Kolb); two inside several large flocks of Snow Geese at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 13 Feb (Scott Winton); and one, possibly the same bird that visited a pond in Cary, NC, in November, relocated at nearby ponds in the Crabtree Creek watershed, in late February (Jan Mouro, Eddie Owens, Jennifer Schrand).

Brant: Good numbers were had around Hatteras Inlet, with 250 estimated 11 Feb (Kyle Kittelberger, et al.); and 60 there 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.). Locally unusual were four seen flying NE up the coast at Fort Macon SP, NC, 10 Dec (John Fussell).

Cackling Goose: Sightings of this small goose were one at Salem Lake, Winston-Salem, NC, 20 Dec through mid-January (John Haire, m. obs.); and three at Silver Creek Plantation Country Club, Morganton, NC, 12–18 Jan (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.).



Cackling Goose, 20 Dec 2011, Salem Lake, NC. Photo by John Haire.

Tundra Swan: 2800 at borrow pit ponds along US-64 in E Edgecombe Co, NC, and in fields near Conetoe, 15 Jan (Ricky Davis) provided a good count for that site. One at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 18 Feb (Ron Clark) was locally unusual.

Eurasian Wigeon: Single drakes were had at Lilliput Pond in New Bern, NC, 8 Dec (Al Gamache) through at least 1 Feb (Gamache, m. obs.); and at Alligator River NWR, NC, 7 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen), a first for the refuge.

Mottled Duck: Two were photographed near Eagle Island, Brunswick Co, NC, during the Wilmington CBC, 31 Dec (Greg Massey, *vide* Sam Cooper).

“Common Teal”: One was found amongst the Green-winged Teal in the impoundments along Sawyer Lake Rd at Alligator River NWR, NC, 4 Feb (Derb Carter).

Canvasback: Locally unusual was a female inside a flock of scaup, in flight S off the Isle of Palms fishing pier, Charleston, SC, 1 Jan (Ian Davies); and one in the retention pond in the parking lot of Sugar Mountain Ski Resort, Avery Co, NC, 4 Feb (Ali Iyob).

Greater Scaup: One found during the Durham NC CBC, 18 Dec (John Hammond) was one of the very few reports of this species this winter.

Common Eider: Eider sightings were few and far between this winter. Singles were found along the jetty at Huntington Beach SP, SC, a female, 10 Dec (Stephen Thomas); off a pier in S Nags Head, NC, a first-winter male,

25 Dec (Audrey Whitlock) through 30 Dec (m. obs.); and on a bird club field trip to Bald Head Island, NC, 27–28 Jan (Scott Winton, et al.).

Harlequin Duck: Three found at the end of the jetty at Masonboro Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 5 Jan (Bruce Smithson) were seen by many through 2 Feb (Amy Williamson).

Surf Scoter: Inland sightings were one on Lake Julian, Skyland, NC, 6 Jan (Wayne Forsythe); and one at the pond at Concord Mills Mall, Cabarrus Co, NC, 13–15 Dec (Phil Fowler, Robert Gilson, m. obs.).



Surf Scoter, 13 Dec 2011, Cabarrus Co, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

White-winged Scoter: Inland sightings included a female/immature bird on Lake Julian, Skyland, NC, 5 Jan (Wayne Forsythe, Vin Stanton); and one on Lake Tillery, NC, next to the dam, 18 Feb (Ron Clark, et al.). At Mason Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 28 Jan (Thierry Besançon), 22 provided an impressive count.

Black Scoter: An adult was found at Latta Nature Preserve, near Charlotte, NC, 16 Dec (Ron Clark).

Long-tailed Duck: Sightings away from the Pamlico Sound included a female in Charleston Harbor, SC, 19 Jan (John Cox); two near the gazebo at Ft Fisher, NC, 15 Jan (Ron Clark); and one on the E end of Ocean Isle Beach, NC, in late January (Taylor Piephoff, et al.).

Common Merganser: Locally unusual was a raft of 12 females, observed from a kayak on the North River, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Dec (Dennis Chadwick, *vide* John Fussell) and one that remained for the Morehead City CBC, 18 Dec (Chadwick).

Red-breasted Merganser: Inland were one on the S end of Lake Norman, NC, 8–18 Dec (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders, Josh Sims); and seven at the WTP in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, 27 Dec (Todd Arcos, Wayne Forsythe).

Wild Turkey: A count of 49 on the Morehead City, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* John Fussell) was indicative of the species' range expansion in that area.

Red-throated Loon: Inland were individuals on the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* Taylor Piephoff); and on Jordan Lake, NC, 7 Jan (Peter Perlman).

Pacific Loon: One found amongst a raft of Common Loons off Johnnie Mercer's Pier in Wrightsville Beach, NC, 6 Dec (Jeff Phippen), was seen

during the Wilmington CBC, 31 Dec (Derb Carter), and through 26 Jan (Ron Clark, m. obs.). One was seen and photographed at Oregon Inlet, NC, during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC, 30 Dec (Brian Bockhahn, Scott Winton, Kyle Kittelberger). A first-year bird was seen and well-photographed on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 5–6 Jan (Wayne Forsythe).



Pacific Loon (with Common Loon), Lake Julian, NC. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

Red-necked Grebe:

Individuals were observed on the New Bern NC CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Bob Holmes); on the Pamlico Co, NC CBC, 15 Dec (Brian Bockhahn); at the N end of Oregon Inlet, NC, 22 and 28 Dec (Elizabeth White, James Meehan); on the ocean across from South Pond, Pea Island NWR, 27 Dec (Jeff Beane, et al.); on Lake Brandt, N of Greensboro, NC, 11–18 Dec (Henry & Elizabeth Link); and on Lake Murray, Dreher Island SP, Newberry Co, SC, 8 Jan (Irvin Pitts).



Red-necked Grebe, 28 Dec 2011, Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, NC. Photo by James Meehan.

Eared Grebe: Sightings included one on the ocean off Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 24 Jan (Brian Patteson); one off North Topsail Beach, NC, 26 Jan (Gilbert Grant); one off Ft Fisher, NC, 1 Feb (Harry Sell); two there 2 Feb (Greg Massey); and one near Fort Macon SP, Atlantic Beach, NC, 17 Feb (Al Gamache).

Black-browed Albatross: An adult was well-seen and photographed within very close range of the Stormy Petrel II, during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Northern Fulmar: On pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC, one was had 29 Dec, ten were counted on 11 Feb, and one was seen on 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Black-capped Petrel: Rarely seen in winter, a Black-capped Petrel was photographed from a research vessel off Brunswick Co, NC, 14 Feb (Bill Lotz, Eric Bowles).



Black-browed Albatross, 18 Feb 2012, about a mile east of Hatteras Inlet, NC. Photo by Scott Winton.

Great Shearwater: Also rarely seen in winter, a Great Shearwater was photographed from a research vessel off Brunswick Co, NC, 16 Feb (Bill Lotz, Eric Bowles). Two were seen on a pelagic out of Hatteras, NC, 29 Dec (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Manx Shearwater: From-shore sightings included one off Fort Macon SP, NC, 9 Jan (John Fussell); one off Pine Knoll Shores, NC, 11 Jan (Fussell); and one flying S off Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 24 Jan (Brian Patteson). Four were seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.). 15 were seen about 50 miles ENE of Oregon Inlet, NC, 15 Feb (Christopher Vogel).

Wood Stork: Winter sightings included 15 at Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 10 Dec (Stephen Thomas); five on the Santee NWR, SC, CBC, 22 Dec (*fide* Dennis Forsythe); and 14 at Mary's House Pond, Bear Island WMA, SC, 20 Feb (Cherrie Sneed).

Northern Gannet: Unusual inland, two gannets were seen on the Alligator River NWR, NC, CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Jeff Lewis). 4000 were estimated during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 26 Feb (Patteson, et al.).

Great Cormorant: Around rock jetties were one at Ft Macon SP, NC, 24 Dec (John Fussell); three at Masonboro Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 29 Jan (Scott Winton, et al.); and one at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 13 Jan (Ron Clark, et al.).

Anhinga: Winter sightings, which are increasing, included two at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 4 Dec (Jeff Lewis); one at the same site during the CBC, 29 Dec (Lewis); a pair around the quarry in New Bern, NC, throughout the period (*fide* Al Gamache); one at Eden Lakes in N Durham Co, NC, 18 Dec (Scott Winton, Tom Krakauer) through 15 Feb (Ali Iyoob); two in flight along the Roanoke River, along the border of Northampton and Halifax Co, NC, 8 Jan (Ricky Davis); and two at Greenfield Lake, Wilmington, NC, 26 Jan (Daniel Hueholt).

American White Pelican: Some of the larger counts were six on the Newport River near Morehead City, NC, 15 Dec (Rosemary D'Andrea); 11 at the same location, 14 Jan (D'Andrea); 14 in flight over Brett Bay in Carteret Co, NC, 20 Dec (Scott Winton, Ali Iyoob, Mike McCloy, Mark Kosiewski); six in flight over US-17 at Dixon, Onslow Co, NC, 26 Dec (Martin Korenek); and four on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC, SC, 29 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill). Two photographed on Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 9 Dec (Susan Jones) were new for that location.

American Bittern: Of the two at Lake Conestee, Greenville, SC, 4 Dec (*vide* Paul Serridge), one remained 5 Jan (*vide* Serridge).

Least Bittern: One was found along the causeway, near the entrance to Wildlife Drive, Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 10 Feb (Lewis Burke, Irvin Pitts, Roger Smith, Jeff Click), but was not relocated.

“Great White Heron”: One originally found along the Eno River in Durham, NC, in late November, remained for the Durham CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* Michael Schultz) and was seen until at least 1 Jan (Bill Majoros).

Great Egret: One in flight over Durham, NC, 22 Dec (Greg Dodge) was unusual for the season.

Reddish Egret: Winter sightings included one at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 10 Dec (Stephen Thomas); one on the Hilton Head Island, SC, CBC, 14 Dec (*vide* Nan Lloyd); and two on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC, CBC, 29 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill).

Cattle Egret: In eastern NC, two were found at Alligator River NWR, during the CBC, 30 Dec (Wayne Irvin, *vide* Jeff Lewis); and three were seen in a yard in Engelhard, 23 Feb (Ron & Anne Clark).

Green Heron: Wintering individuals were found on the Pamlico Co, NC, CBC, 15 Dec (*vide* Liz Lathrop); in Frisco, NC, 27 Dec (Lee Adams, Peggy Eubank); and on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC, CBC, 29 Dec (*vide* Chris Hill).

Glossy Ibis: Two were regularly seen at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, from early December through 8 Jan (John Fussell, et al.).

Roseate Spoonbill: Two were seen at Donnelley WMA, SC, 7 Jan (Patrick & Bonnie Markham).

Northern Goshawk: An adult was photographed at Alligator River NWR, NC, during the CBC, 30 Dec (Derb Carter, Wayne Irvin, Joan Kutulas, Jeff Lewis).

Golden Eagle: Sightings included two on the Alligator River NWR, NC, CBC, 30 Dec (Jeff Lemons, Mike McCloy, Marlene Schumm, Audrey Whitlock, et al.); one continuing there 7 Jan (Jeff Pippen); one on the Pettigrew SP, NC, CBC, 30 Dec (*vide* Doug LeQuire); an adult at Vernon James Research Station in Roper, NC, 4 Jan (Rich & Susan Boyd); and an adult in flight over Halifax Co, NC, 12 Feb (Nick Flanders).

Yellow Rail: Up to three were flushed in the North River Marshes of Carteret Co, NC, 20 Dec (Scott Winton, et al.).



Purple Gallinule, 25 Jan 2012, Alligator River NWR. Photo by Greg Hudson.

Purple Gallinule: One photographed at Alligator River NWR, NC, 25 Jan (Greg Hudson) was a first for that refuge.

Common Gallinule: Locally unusual were one seen on a bird club field trip to Bald Head Island, NC, 27–28 Jan (Scott Winton, et al.); one at Mackay Island NWR, NC, 29 Jan (Greg Hudson); and two at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 12 Feb (Winton). Five on the Morehead City, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* John Fussell) was the highest CBC count of the species since 1989.

Sandhill Crane: Sightings were made across our region again this winter—two on the Pamlico Co, NC, CBC, 15 Dec (*vide* Liz Lathrop); one near the dam on Lake Tillery, NC, 31 Dec (Ron Clark, et al.); three at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Jan (John Fussell, Matt Gould, Jack



Common Gallinule, 29 Jan 2012, Mackay Island NWR, NC. Photo by Greg Hudson.

Fennell); five on the Henderson Co, NC, CBC, 1 Jan (*vide* Wayne Forsythe); one in flight near a catfish farm in Roper, NC, 17 Feb (Scott Winton, Jeff Phippen, et al.); ten at Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 26 Feb (Nathan Gatto, Sarah Clark); and three in flight in Townville, SC, 28 Feb (Cherrie Sneed).

Wilson's Plover: North of the species' typical winter range was an individual on the W end of Shackleford Banks, NC, 3, 15 and 18 Dec (John Fussell, Sam Cooper, et al.).

Piping Plover: Some of the better counts were ten on the W end of Shackleford Banks, NC, 15 Dec (John Fussell, et al.); and seven around new channels created by Hurricane Irene, on the Bodie-Pea Island, NC, CBC, 28 Dec (Paul Sykes, Fussell, Neal Moore).

Spotted Sandpiper: Lingering individuals were found in Atlantic Beach, NC, in early December (Charles Lynch); at Core Creek during the Morehead City CBC, 18 Dec (Jack Fennell); in Morehead City, 25 Dec (John Fussell); at McAlpine WTP in Pineville, NC, during the Charlotte CBC, 26 Dec (*vide* Ken Kneidel) through 8 Jan (Ron Clark, et al.); and in the marsh behind the aquarium in Pine Knoll Shores, NC, 2 Jan (Scott Winton).

Solitary Sandpiper: One found on the Congaree Swamp, SC, CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* John Grego) was unusual for the season.

Hudsonian Godwit: One photographed at Mary's House Pond, Bear Island WMA, SC, during a Greenville County Bird Club field trip, 24 Feb (Jeff Click, Paul Serridge, et al.) was seen by many through 29 Feb (David McLean, et al.).

Marbled Godwit: 77 on the flats at Fish Haul Creek Park, N end of Hilton Head Island, SC, 28 Dec (Ian Davies) was a good count.

Red Knot: 84 on the E side of Seabrook Island, Charleston, SC, 13 Feb (David Gardner) was an impressive count.

Least Sandpiper: Up to 23 were seen at the McAlpine WTP, Mecklenburg Co, NC, throughout the period (Ron Clark, Jeff Lemons, Tom Clark, m. obs.). 12 seen in a



Hudsonian Godwit, 26 Feb 2012, Bear Island WMA, SC. Photo by Cathy Miller.

field near the WTP in Rocky Mount, NC, 8 Jan through the end of the period (Ricky Davis) were locally unusual. A flock of 15 found inside a roosting flock of shorebirds on the shore of Atlantic Beach, NC, 21 Feb (John Fussell) was unusual in that beach habitat.

Purple Sandpiper: Some of the higher counts were 11 on the W side of Breach Inlet, Charleston Co, SC, 2 Jan (Ian Davies); 10 at Masonboro Inlet,

Wrightsville Beach, NC, 15 Jan (Ron Clark); 23+ at the same site 28 Jan (Thierry Besançon); and 30 there 4 Feb (Ed Corey, Jeff Beane, et al.).

Red Phalarope: During pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC, 25 were seen 29 Dec, and 40 were seen 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.). High counts from a research vessel traveling up the coast included 92 off Georgetown Co, SC, 14 Feb, and 724 off Brunswick Co, NC, 18 Feb (Bill Lotz, Eric Bowles). From shore, a flock of 11 birds was seen at Mason Inlet, Wrightsville Beach, NC, 28 Jan (Thierry Besançon).

Black-legged Kittiwake: A first-year bird was photographed at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 27 Dec (Jeff Lemons).

Black-headed Gull: An adult found at the McAlpine WTP in Pineville, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 8 Dec (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders) remained for the Charlotte CBC, 26 Dec (*vide* Ken Kneidel) and was seen through 8 Jan (Jeff Lemons, m. obs.).

Little Gull: Two were seen amongst the Bonaparte's Gulls off Johnnie Mercer's Pier in Wrightsville Beach, NC, 2 Jan (Greg Massey).

Herring Gull: Farther west than typical were two over Lake Julian, Skyland, NC, 5 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Tom Joyce). 3000 were estimated on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 26 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).



Thayer's Gull, 18 Dec 2011, Lake Norman, NC. Photo by Chris Talkington.

Thayer's Gull: A first-year bird found on the Southern Lake Norman CBC, on the lake near Davidson, NC, 18 Dec (Chris Talkington) was well-photographed the same day (Talkington, Jeff Lemons) and remained for a day, 19 Dec (Ron Clark, Tom Sanders, David Wright, et al.). One was reported from Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 15 Jan (Mikey Lutmerding).

Iceland Gull: Sightings, all made along the coast, included an adult photographed at Cape Point, Buxton, NC, 27 Dec (Jeff Lemons, et al.); one at Pea Island NWR, NC, 15 Jan (Alan Van Norman); two at the landfill in Horry Co, SC, 17 Jan (Ian Davies); and singles on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC, 11 and 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Some of the higher inland counts were eight or nine at the landfill in Holly Springs, Wake Co, NC, 21 Jan (Derb Carter, Kent Fiala); ten in a large mixed gull flock at a borrow pit pond along US-64 E of Tarboro, Edgecombe Co, NC, 15 Jan (Ricky Davis); and 28 in a mixed gull flock in Halifax Co, NC, 13 Feb (Davis). Davis notes that “this species continues to increase as winter residents in inland NC; this is about the 3rd winter in a row that the gull flocks in this area have many ‘Lessers’ in them.” On the coast, where more expected, 150 were counted on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 26 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Glaucous Gull: Individuals were seen at North Topsail Inlet, NC, a first-year bird, photographed 18 Dec (Bruce Smithson); at the landfill in Holly Springs, Wake Co, NC, a first-year bird, 21 Jan (Derb Carter, Kent Fiala); and at the landfill in Conway, Horry Co, SC, 27 Feb (Chris Hill).

Common Tern: Rare in winter, three Common Terns were seen on the Santee NWR, SC, CBC, 22 Dec (*fide* Dennis Forsythe).

Sandwich Tern: Also rare in winter, a Sandwich Tern was seen at Sunset Beach, NC, 23 Jan (Greg Massey).

Great Skua: Two were seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 18 Feb (Patteson, et al.).

Parasitic Jaeger: Up to three were seen from the beach at Fort Macon SP, NC, 3 Dec (John Fussell, Scott Winton, m. obs.) through 6 Jan (Fussell). Other from-shore sightings included one at Emerald Isle, NC, 3 Jan (Winton); one during a field trip on Bald Head Island, NC, 28 Jan (Winton, et al.); and six on the Bodie-Pea Island, NC, CBC, 28 Dec (*fide* Paul Sykes).

Dovekie: It was a bad year for Dovekie sightings in our region, possibly due to warmer-than-usual waters close to shore. Two were seen just past the breakers off Kill Devil Hills, NC, 29 Dec (Peggy Eubank). An exhausted bird was found at Oregon Inlet, NC, 16 Jan (James Meehan) where it later flew off. One was seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 18 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).



Dovekie, 16 Jan 2012, Oregon Inlet.
Photographed in the hand by James Meehan.

Razorbill: From-shore sightings included 2180, mostly in flight, off North Topsail Beach, NC, 17 Dec (Ross Gallardy); 575+, mostly flying S, but 200+ on the ocean quite close to the beach, from the piers at Wrightsville Beach, NC, 2 Jan (Ricky Davis, Derb Carter); 30 on the ocean off Pine Knoll Shores, NC, 11 Jan (John Fussell); and seven on a pelagic trip, 18 Feb (Patteson, et al.). Fussell theorizes the southward movement of Razorbills, especially into the Wrightsville Beach area, was due to unusually warm water along the Outer Banks and the Central Coast. One photographed alongside the jetty at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 28 Jan (Stephen & Barbara Thomas) was one the southernmost reports.

White-winged Dove: One was seen with two Eurasian Collared-Doves in Mt Pleasant, SC, 4 Jan (Ian Davies);

Barn Owl: Two were seen in flight at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, pre-dawn 21 Dec (John Fussell, John Voigt, Scott Winton, et al.). Individuals were seen along Mid-Pines Rd in S Raleigh, NC, 6 Dec (Clyde Sorenson); on the Congaree Swamp, SC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* John Grego); and in Mecklenburg Co, NC, on the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 18 Dec (Jeff Lemons).

Snowy Owl: One was photographed at a turkey farm in Hartsville, SC, 12 Jan (Kellie Dudley, *fide* John Grego). A moribund bird was found in Kershaw Co, SC, in late February (*fide* Nate Swick).

Long-eared Owl: A bird found roosting in an area of thick, young pines at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 4–20 Dec (John Fussell, Matt Gould) provided the first documentation of that species in Carteret County. Another individual was seen perched on a guardrail along US-264 at the airport in Hyde Co, NC, 4 Feb (Derb Carter).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: One was heard at Bodie Island Lighthouse entrance road, 3 Dec (Jeff Lemons).

Common Nighthawk: One over a tennis court in Aiken, SC, 12 Dec (Peter Stangel) was incredibly late. Other species of nighthawks, such as Lesser and Antillean, are just as likely to be seen as Common here in winter.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Of four that visited feeders in a yard in Morehead City, NC, in early December, only one remained after early January (John Fussell), possibly due to the locally mild winter.

Black-chinned Hummingbird: One visited a feeder in Wilmington, NC, 6 Jan (Bruce Smithson, Greg Massey) through 2 Feb (Amy Williamson, m. obs.).

Anna's Hummingbird: The adult male that returned to a yard in New Bern, NC, 12 Nov (Bill & Inge Parker, Susan Campbell) remained until 17 Jan (Parker).

Rufous Hummingbird: Individuals visited feeders just N of Conway, SC, 7 Nov into the spring (Belinda Todd, Jay Chandler); and in Morehead City, NC, an immature male, 4 Jan through February (Carol Reigle). A male frequented honeysuckle at Coker Arboretum, UNC-Chapel Hill from about 16 Feb–3 March (Allen Hurlbert, m. obs.), see cover photo.

Allen's Hummingbird: The adult male that first visited a feeder at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 18 Nov, was last seen 19 Dec (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.).

Ash-throated Flycatcher: One found along Shore Drive, Pettigrew SP, NC, 14 Dec (Ed Corey) remained for the CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire).

Western Kingbird: Three were recorded on the Pettigrew SP, NC, CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Doug LeQuire).

Loggerhead Shrike: Locally unusual was one near the entrance to Open Grounds Farm in Carteret Co, NC, 20 Dec (Elisa Enders, et al.).

White-eyed Vireo: Rare in the mountains in winter, a White-eyed Vireo was found at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, during the Henderson County CBC, 1 Jan (Ron Clark, Ron Selvey, et al.).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One at the WTP in Henderson Co, NC, 26 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was quite early.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: 20+ were observed on Roan Mountain, NC, 18 Dec and 7 Feb (Rick Knight).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 16 on the Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, CBC, 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan) provided a good winter count.

Lapland Longspur: Singles were found in Horry Co, SC, 16 Jan (Stephen Thomas); and on Bearwallow Mountain, NC, 26 Feb (Nathan Gatto, Sarah Clark);

Snow Bunting: A female was found amongst a flock of Horned Larks along the entrance road to the WTP in Rocky Mount, NC, 8 Jan (Ricky Davis), but was never relocated. One was seen and photographed in the parking areas at Lowes Motor Speedway, Concord, NC, 14–16 Dec (John Bonestell, Mike McCloy, Will Stuart).

Ovenbird: One was found at a feeder on the Kitty Hawk, NC, CBC, 17 Dec (*fide* Peggy Eubank, Lee Yoder).

Northern Waterthrush: One was seen at Magnolia Plantation, Charleston, SC, 12–15 Jan (Ian Davies, m. obs.).

Tennessee Warbler: Very rare in winter, a Tennessee Warbler was seen at Magnolia Plantation, Charleston, SC, 9–12 Jan (Ian Davies, m. obs.).

Orange-crowned Warbler: In the western part of our region, where sightings are less regular, Orange-crowned Warblers visited feeders in Lenoir, NC, 20 Jan into spring (Walt Kent); and in Winston-Salem, NC, 28 Jan into spring (John Schultz). John Fussell noted that the species was more common than usual this winter in Carteret County, NC.

Nashville Warbler: Lingering/wintering in our region were individuals on the causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 20 Dec (Daniel Hueholt); and on private property in Craven Co, NC, 20 Jan (Matt Gould).

American Redstart: Rare in winter, redstarts were found on the Holly Shelter and Lea-Hutaff Island, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* Andy Wood); and at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, up to two females, 2 Jan (Matt Sarver, Lauren Morgens) through 5 Feb (Sandy Beasley).

Cape May Warbler: One that visited a feeder in Winston-Salem, NC, 28 Jan through 18 Mar (John Schultz) was most certainly the same bird that visited the yard last winter.

Northern Parula: Sightings included individuals photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville, SC, 11 Dec (Brad Dalton); in a private neighborhood in New Bern, NC, during the CBC, 14 Dec (Matt Gould), and continuing until at least 20 Jan (Gould); and on the Greenville, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis);

Blackpoll Warbler: Very rare in winter, a Blackpoll Warbler was photographed at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 26 Dec (Joe Sebastiani, *fide* Chris Hill).

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Almost unprecedented in the mountain region during winter, an adult male Black-throated Blue Warbler was photographed in Leicester, Buncombe Co, NC, 31 Jan (Doug Johnston).

Prairie Warbler: Four found along the causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 21 Dec (Daniel Hueholt) provided a good winter count. Singles were found at Alligator River NWR, NC, 13 Dec (Audrey Whitlock, Peggy Eubank) and 30 Dec (Edmund LeGrand); at Pea Island NWR, 28 Dec (Jeff Lewis, Jeff Lemons); and on Portsmouth Island, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Dec (Jeff Beane).

Wilson's Warbler: One was seen in a private subdivision in New Bern, NC, 19 Dec (Matt Gould) through 20 Jan (Gould, Scott Winton).

Bachman's Sparrow: Eight found at Holly Shelter Game Land, Pender Co, NC, during a bird club field trip, 27 Jan (John Fussell, et al.) was a good winter count.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Individuals were seen at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 4 Dec (John Fussell, Scott Winton) and 8 Jan (John Fussell, et al.); during the Greenville, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis); along Leggett Rd in Rocky Mount, NC, for the third year in a row, 18 Dec (Ricky Davis); and in the Red Hill area of N Edgecombe Co, NC, again for two of the last three winters, 13 Feb (Davis).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Singles were found on the Greenville, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis) and at Pettigrew SP, NC, 7 Jan (Tony DeSantis, Ed Corey).



Henslow's Sparrow, 3 Dec 2011, Craven Co, NC. Photo by Michael McCloy.

Henslow's Sparrow: Winter sightings included one photographed in a power-line cut in the Southwest Prong Flatwoods Natural Area in Craven Co, NC, 3 Dec (Scott Winton, Mike McCloy, David McCloy); two in the same area, 21 Dec (Winton, et al.); one on the Congaree Swamp, SC, CBC, 18 Dec (*fide* John Grego); and one photographed at North River Farms in

Carteret Co, NC, 8 Jan, remaining into spring (John Fussell, Harry Sell, et al.).

Le Conte's Sparrow: At least eleven were present at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, during the period, with five first seen 4 Dec (John Fussell, Scott Winton). Fussell noted that damp conditions and changes in land usage created prime habitat for the species at the site. Two were counted on the Gastonia, NC, CBC, 17 Dec (*vide* Steve Tracey) and one remained in the Gastonia Technology Park until 8 Jan (Mike McCloy). One was found on the Greenville, NC, CBC, 18 Dec (*vide* Veronica Pantelidis). Three were found on Bodie Island, Dare Co, NC, 1 Jan (Steve Shultz). Four were seen in a private neighborhood in New Bern, NC, 20 Jan (Matt Gould).



Le Conte's Sparrow, 11 Dec 2011, Bodie Island, NC. Photo by Ken Christison.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Sightings included two at North River Club golf course in Carteret Co, NC, 30 Nov into early December (John Fussell); one along Merrimon Road, just N of the North River community, Carteret Co, 6 Dec (Fussell); one at North River Farms, Carteret Co, NC, 11 and 18 Dec (Fussell, Matt Gould); one on the Columbia, SC, CBC, 16 Dec (*vide* Steve Dennis); two at a usual wintering site along Leggett Rd in Rocky Mount, NC, 18 Dec (Ricky Davis); one along Damascus Church Rd in Orange Co, NC, 25 Dec (Andrew Thornton); one in New Bern, NC, 3 Jan (Scott Winton, Gould); one at Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 3 Feb (Nathan Gatto); and one in the Red Hill area of N Edgecombe Co, NC, another usual wintering site, 13 Feb (Davis).

Summer Tanager: A female that returned to a feeder in Wilmington, NC, in November continued through 25 Feb (Amy Williamson). An adult male visiting a yard in Raleigh, NC, was seen during the Raleigh CBC for a second year in a row, 17 Dec (Sue Harvey).

Western Tanager: Individuals visited feeders near Pinehurst, Moore Co, NC, 5–11 Jan (Marjorie Ludwig, Mike McCloy, Jeff Lemons, m. obs.); in Myrtle Beach, SC, a female, 23–24 Jan (Sharon & Phil Turner); in Gloucester, NC, in February (*fide* John Fussell); and in N Durham Co, NC, a female, 10 Feb (Scott Winton) through 23 Feb (Nick Flanders).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A first-year bird found at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 10 Jan (Sandy Beasley, Carroll Richard) continued through mid-January (m. obs.).

Indigo Bunting: One seen during the Rocky Mount, NC, CBC, 16 Dec (*fide* Brian Bockhahn) was unusual for the season.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: One was picked out of a large flock of Red-winged Blackbirds at Pocosin Lakes NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 23 Feb (Ron Clark).

Rusty Blackbird: The wintering flock at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville, SC, peaked at 500+ on 12 Dec (Paul Serridge). Serridge notes that after January 3rd, when 250 were counted, the species “practically disappeared” from the park.

Brewer’s Blackbird: Individuals were found by the silos at Open Ground Farm, 20 Dec (Nick Flanders, Scott Winton, Mark Kosiewski, Mike McCloy, Ali Iyoob, Elisa Enders); near the WTP in the Mills River area of Henderson Co, NC, during the CBC, 1 Jan (*fide* Wayne Forsythe); and in the same area, 26 Feb (Nathan Gatto, Sarah Clark).

Bullock’s Oriole: Two, a male and a female, visited a yard in Hemingway, SC, late November through mid-to-late February (Jay Chandler, m. obs.).

Red Crossbill: Nine were seen on Roan Mountain, NC, 18 Dec (Rick Knight).

Common Redpoll: One visited a feeder near Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, NC, in mid-January (Mary Spears, *fide* Judy Walker).

Pine Siskin: 170+ were counted on Roan Mountain, NC, 18 Dec (Rick Knight, David Kirschke). Knight attributed the high number to a “good spruce cone crop this season.” Up to 13 visited a feeder in Kings Mountain, NC, in mid-February (Ron Clark).



Western Tanager, 10 Feb 2012, Durham Co, NC. Photo by Scott Winton.