

# BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Spring 2015, 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.*

<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.*

*Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.*

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Record Committee, **BRP** – Blue Ridge Parkway, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **TS** – Tropical Storm, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** Eight were photographed at a pond at the Cape Fear Country Club in New Hanover Co, NC, 13 May (Travis Lackey). One, quite wary of humans and showing no leg bands or feather-wear, on private property in Manns Harbor, Dare Co, NC, 18 May (Jeff Lewis) was a one-day wonder. Seven on Linville Land Harbor Lake in Avery Co, NC, 27 May (Patricia Burns, Dwayne Martin) was a first for that county and the third record of this species in the mountain region.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Spring sightings included two photographed at Clemson University Simpson Experiment Station, Anderson Co, SC, 2 Mar (Cherrie Sneed); two in Happy Valley, Caldwell Co, NC, 4 Mar through 1 Apr (Dwayne Martin); and one amongst Canada Geese at Bur Mil Park in Greensboro, Guilford Co, NC, 19 Apr (Nate Swick) through the late date of 2 May (Jamie Adams).

**Snow Goose:** A blue-morph individual photographed at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 2 Mar (Cherrie Sneed) was a good find for that area.

**Ross's Goose:** The two geese found at a pond in West Ashley, Charleston Co, 28 Feb (Chet Morse) remained until 18 Mar, when photographed (Cherrie Sneed).

**Northern Shoveler:** Four at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 3 May (Wayne Forsythe) were unusual for the mountain region in late spring. Redhead: A drake lingered at a pond in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, NC, to the end of the period (Ron Johnson).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Two hens off the Oceanana Pier in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) were unusual for saltwater.

**Lesser Scaup:** A drake on Bass Lake, Watauga Co, NC, 2 May (Ricky Davis, David Howell) was somewhat late.

**Common Eider:** Of the four eiders seen off Edisto Beach SP, Colleton Co, SC, during the winter, one of the immature drakes remained until 28 Mar (Jack Rogers).

**Harlequin Duck:** An adult drake was seen around the Oceanana Pier in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Mar (John Fussell) through 3 Apr (Steve Howell). An immature drake was seen flying north off of Johnnie Mercer's Pier in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Mar (Sam Cooper).

**White-winged Scoter:** Sightings were made on several inland lakes in March— one at the Schwann WTP in Lewisville, Forsyth Co, NC, late February through 29 Mar (Phil Dickinson, m. obs.); a hen at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 6-16 Mar (m. obs.); three on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 15 Mar (Brendan Klick); and one on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 8 Mar and 26 Mar (Wayne Forsythe, et al.).

**Long-tailed Duck:** Spring sightings included two off of North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 16 Mar (Gilbert Grant); one flying north off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Mar (Sam Cooper); and one lingering off of Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, until 17 Apr (Paul Serridge).

**Hooded Merganser:** One on Lake Hills in Forsyth Co, NC, 4 May (Cynthia Donaldson) was somewhat late, possibly attempting to breed in that area. Breeding was confirmed in Greensboro, Guilford Co, NC, when a hen was photographed with 13 ducklings, 2 May (Martin Wall); and at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, when a hen was seen with seven ducklings, 25 May (Thierry Besançon).

**Common Merganser:** One well-seen amongst Red-breasted Mergansers on the Bogue Sound off of Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) was unusual for brackish water.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** 420 around Sunset Beach and Ocean Isle Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 28 Mar (Sam Cooper) was an impressive count. Individuals on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 3 May (Rick Payne, Kerry & Trish MacPherson) and at Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 22 May (Cooper) were late to depart.

**Pacific Loon:** One was photographed amongst Common Loons off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Apr (Sam Cooper).

**Common Loon:** 720 off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Apr (Sam Cooper) was an impressive concentration.

**Horned Grebe:** Somewhat late was one on the Yadkin River in Forsyth Co, NC, 2 May (Rob Rogers); two at Pivers Island, Carteret Co, NC, 11 May (John Fussell); and one in a canal along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, 17 May (Fussell, et al.).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Sightings included one off Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 7 Mar (Caroline Eastman); one at the south end of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 8-9 Mar (Jeff Lewis); one on Belews Lake, Rockingham Co, NC, 13-19 Mar (Martin Wall); two off Cape Point, Dare Co, 19 Mar (Chloe Walker, et al.); one at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 Mar (Sam Cooper); and one around Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, 29 Mar (Lewis) through 3 Apr (Alan MacEachren).



Red-necked Grebe, 29 March 2015, Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC.  
Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**Eared Grebe:** One was seen on the ocean off of Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 7 Mar (Caroline Eastman). Three at the WTP along Fire Tower Rd in Onslow Co, NC, 1 May (Guy McGrane, Jim & Laura O'Donnell) were great finds.

**Western Grebe:** One was seen and photographed off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 19 Mar (Chloe Walker, et al.) and 28 Mar (Brian Patteson).

**Trindade Petrel:** On pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, one was seen 21 May; two were seen 22 May; and one was seen 24 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Bermuda Petrel:** This very rare petrel was seen and photographed during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 25 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Black-capped Petrel:** This species was seen on all 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of 85 made 22 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Fea's Petrel:** Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 22 May, 23 May, 25 May, and 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Zino's Petrel:** An "interesting" petrel, either a small, pale Fea's Petrel or the rarer Zino's Petrel, was briefly seen and photographed at distance during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 25 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). This petrel's true identity will probably remain a mystery as the bird was too far away to conclusively to prove this enigmatic species.

**Cory's Shearwater:** This species was seen on all of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of 261 on 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Great Shearwater:** This shearwater was seen on the latter ten of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, with numbers peaking at 164, an impressive count for the spring period, 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Sooty Shearwater:** Seen on all but the last of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, Sooty Shearwater numbers peaked at 35 on 27 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). Sightings made from shore included one off North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 25 May (Gilbert Grant) and five off the Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, 30 May (John Fussell).

**Manx Shearwater:** This cold-water shearwater was seen on six of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a total of 17 individuals seen during that period (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Leach's Storm-Petrel:** One was photographed in flight over Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, during the passage of TS Ana, 10 May (Sam Cooper). This storm-petrel was seen on all but the first of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of 25 made on the last trip, 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Band-rumped Storm-Petrel:** This larger storm-petrel was seen on ten of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, 20 May through 1 Jun,

with a total of 41 during that period (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Hydrobatidae species:** A storm-petrel of undetermined species was seen on Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, after the passage of TS Ana, 11 May (Ricky Davis).

**White-tailed Tropicbird:** Individuals were seen and photographed on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 26 May, an adult; and 28 May, a second-year bird (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** The passage of TS Ana resulted in multiple sightings along the coast in May—one over Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 9 May (Lucas Bobay); one over Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, 10 May (Susan Boyd) and 11 May (John Fussell, et al.); two over NC-12 between Avon and Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 12 May (Brian Patteson); and one off Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 May (David Gardner). A couple of sightings towards the end of month may not have been related to the passage of TS Ana—a juvenile bird over the Bogue Sound at Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 27 May (Ed Dombrowski); presumably the same juvenile bird over nearby Beaufort, one hour later (Jeannie Kraus); and one near Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 May (Sam Cooper).

**Brown Booby:** Pending review by the NC BRC was the report of an Brown Booby photographed off of North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 16 May (Jamie Adams).

**Great Cormorant:** An immature bird at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 22 May (David Weesner) and 26 May (Sam Cooper) was late to depart.



American White Pelicans, 22 March 2015, Haywood Co, NC.  
Photo by Connie and Stan Wulkowicz.

**Anhinga:** Locally unusual was a female at a pond in Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 25 Apr (Anne & Joan Galli, Carol Reigle, et al.) and two circling overhead where US-64 crosses over the Tar River in Nash Co, NC, 19 May (Ricky Davis).

**American White Pelican:** A few of the more impressive sightings involved 28 photographed on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 22 Mar (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz); 49 photographed on Belews Lake, Rockingham Co, NC, 7 Apr (Martin Wall); 246 at Canal WMA, Berkeley Co, SC, 11 Apr (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); and ten on the northern end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 4 May (John Finnegan).

**American Bittern:** Six, three of which were heard calling, at Rocky River Nature Park, Anderson Co, SC, 2 Apr (Brad Dalton) was an impressive count.

**Least Bittern:** One found at the pond along the Nature Trail at Fort Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Mar (Clyde Atkins) was early.

**Great Egret:** Two active nests were found in a Great Blue Heron rookery near where Ellerbe Creek empties into Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 19 May (Dan Kaplan). Active egret nests were first noted at this site last spring.

**Snowy Egret:** One at a farm pond just north of Zebulon, Wake Co, NC, 20 Apr (Ricky Davis) was unusual for an inland site in spring.

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** This species returned to two traditional nesting sites in urban areas of the NC Piedmont in March—near downtown Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, 11 Mar (Ron Clark); and Miller Park, Forsyth Co, 23 Mar (Phil Dickinson).

**White Ibis:** 12 in flight over I-40/85 in Alamance Co, NC, 16 Apr (Andrew Thornton) were unusual for the Piedmont in spring.

**Glossy Ibis:** Six in a flooded field near Belvoir Elementary School in Pitt Co, NC, 29 Apr through 1 May (Howard Vainright, et al.) were unusual so far from the coast.



Glossy Ibis, 29 April 2015, Pitt Co, NC.  
Photo by Howard Vainright.

**White-faced Ibis:** One photographed on the mudflats where Horsepen Creek empties into Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 4 Apr (Martin Wall) was a fantastic find. All previous records of this species in the Carolinas are from the coastal region, mostly from Mattamuskeet NWR, and this sighting was the first made in the Piedmont.

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** Two flying north from Rodanthe to Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 17 Mar (Chloe Walker, et al.) was a noteworthy sighting. Two were seen in a kettle of Mississippi Kites over Northwest, Brunswick Co, NC, 25 May (Jamie Adams), not far from the location of the active nest discovered in 2013.

**White-tailed Kite:** An adult seen and photographed at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Mar (Carl Miller) was a great find. It was also briefly seen the next morning, 8 Mar (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) but not thereafter. It had been seven years since this vagrant from the western United States was last seen in the Carolinas.

**Mississippi Kite:** One seen in Rocky Mount, Nash Co, NC, 8 Apr (Ricky Davis) was very early. Davis suspects this bird was part of the local breeding population rather than a migrant.

**Golden Eagle:** A first-year bird was seen in the Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, 10 Mar (Brian O'Shea) and again 21 Mar (Merrill Lynch).

**Black Rail:** Two were heard calling in the Cuddo Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 14 May (Dick & Dorothy Rosche). Two were also heard at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 31 May (Jack Rogers).

**King Rail:** Two at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, during its Spring Bird Count, 3 May (Deborah Copeland, Ginger Travis) were good finds.

**Common Gallinule:** One flushed from the shore of the lake adjacent to Schenck Forest, Wake Co, NC, 9 May (John Finnegan, Chris Moorman) was locally unusual.



Sandhill Cranes, 10 May 2015, Lee Co, NC.  
Photo by Jeff Beane.

**Sandhill Crane:** Two seen in a field adjacent to a Bojangles' restaurant in Tramway, Lee Co, NC, 7 May (*vide* Tom Snow), seen and photographed by many through 14 May (Dave Hart), were unusual for that area.

**Black-necked Stilt:** Individuals at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 20 Apr (Edward Pivorun) and on the mudflats at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 11 May (Sam Jolly, Ed Landi, m. obs.) were great finds for those inland sites.

**American Golden-Plover:** Individuals were found in Holden Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, where photographed, 24 Apr (Lynn Erla Beegle, Jeri Smart, et al.); at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 10 May (Pam Ford); and on Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, in late May (Helmut Mueller, et al.).

**Piping Plover:** The two highest counts for NC and SC were, respectively, 27 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, 24 Mar (John Fussell) and 71 on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, 17 Mar (Aaron Given).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** One at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 21 Feb (Caroline Eastman) was either an extremely early spring migrant or a rare wintering individual.

**Willet:** 18 at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 25 Apr (Wayne Forsythe) provided a new record high count for the mountain region. 12 Willets remained at that site 1 May (Bob Olthoff, Connie & Stan Wulkowicz).

**Whimbrel:** Some of the higher counts were 123 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 21 Apr (John Fussell); 350 at the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15 May (Michael Dorcas); and 124 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, 20 May (Fussell).

**Long-billed Curlew:** One, possibly the same individual seen at that site last October, at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 22 Mar (Chandra Biggerstaff, Jack Fennell, John Fussell, Stan Rule) was a good find.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** One on the mudflats at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 11 May (Eddie Owens) was noteworthy for that inland area.

**Red Knot:** A couple of impressive counts were made in Charleston Co, SC, in mid-April—6000 on Kiawah Island, 13 Apr (Aaron Given) and 1200+ at Breach Inlet, 17 Apr (Craig Watson). Though the count from Kiawah Island seems extreme, any count approaching that number would be noteworthy.

**Ruff:** A juvenile Ruff was seen at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Mar (Barbara & Steve Thomas) through 8 Mar (Jack Rogers). One photographed at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 22 Mar (Pam Ford) may have been the same individual seen at that site in February.

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** One at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 16-18 May (Eddie Owens, m. obs.) was a new species for that park.

**Limnodromus species:** Four dowitchers of undetermined species on the mudflats at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 11 May (Eddie Owens) were noteworthy for an inland site.



**American Woodcock:** Four birds flushed from a single spot in a wet bottomland of the French Broad River Valley in Henderson Co, NC, 3 May (Wayne Forsythe) were considered unusual.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Following the passage of TS Ana, one was seen on a flooded athletic field in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 May (Sam Cooper); two were seen on South Pond at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 10 May (Alan MacEachren); and 12 were seen at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 11 May (Ricky Davis). A high count of 43 was made on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 22 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Phalaropus species:** Of the 47 phalaropes seen at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, following the passage of TS Ana, 11 May, 35 of those were too distant to be identified to species, though were likely Red-necked Phalaropes (Ricky Davis).

**South Polar Skua:** Skuas were seen on nine of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of five, 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** This jaeger species was seen on 11 of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of eight on 20 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). One seen flying north off Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 May (Sam Cooper) was noteworthy for being so close to shore.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** Two seen off Seaview Pier in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 1 May (John Fussell) was the only “from-shore” sighting reported.

**Long-tailed Jaeger:** This elegant jaeger was seen on the last nine of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, 20 May through 1 Jun, with several impressive counts made on the later trips including 11 on 30 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Razorbill:** Three seen off Johnnie Mercer’s Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Apr (Sam Cooper) were somewhat late to depart.

**Black-headed Gull:** A first-summer bird found at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 23 May (Sam Cooper) was seen and photographed by many through 6 June (Scott Winton). This rare vagrant from Europe is found along the Carolina coast almost annually, but most sightings are made in winter. This sighting was the latest ever made in spring.

**Little Gull:** Individuals were found amongst flocks of Bonaparte’s Gulls at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, a first-winter bird, 7 Mar (Brian Patteson); off Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, NC, an adult, 10 Mar (John Fussell, et al.); and off the Oceanana Pier in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, a second-winter bird, 1 Apr (Fussell).

**Laughing Gull:** 68 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, following the passage of TS Ana, 11 May (Ricky Davis) was a noteworthy count for an inland site. Individuals at Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, an adult, 14

Apr (Dwayne Martin) and at Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, an immature bird, 26 May (Phil Dickinson, et al.) were good finds for those sites in the western Piedmont.

**Herring Gull:** Two at Lake James SP in Burke Co, NC, 16 Apr (Jamie Cameron) were locally unusual. 31 at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, following the passage of TS Ana, 11 May (Ricky Davis) was a good count for that site.

**Iceland Gull:** An immature bird was photographed on the Currituck Sound off Duck, Dare Co, NC, 2 May (Jim Gould, Jeff Lewis).

**Glaucous Gull:** First-winter individuals were seen and photographed at Fort Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 4 Apr (Ryan Justice) and at the north end of Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 19 Apr (Sam Cooper).

**Sooty Tern:** Two seen on a small island at New Topsail Inlet, Pender Co, NC, 17 May (Ann Brice) may indicate attempted breeding in that area.

**Bridled Tern:** This tropical tern species was seen on four of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, 20 May through 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Least Tern:** One on the mudflats at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 25 May (Thierry Besançon) was unusual for an inland site not following the passage of a tropical storm.

**Gull-billed Tern:** An adult at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, following the passage of TS Ana, 11 May (Ricky Davis) was a terrific find for a site so far from the coast. At the Rachel Carson Reserve in Carteret Co, NC John Fussell noted a disturbing absence of this species throughout April and May.



Iceland Gull, 02 May 2015, Currituck Co, NC.  
Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**Caspian Tern:** One at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 28 Mar (Bob Rybczynski, et al.) was somewhat early for an inland lake. One photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 7 Apr (Tricia Kyzer) was a new species for that park.

**Common Tern:** 1000+ at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 1 May (John DeLuca) was a noteworthy count of this declining species.

**Arctic Tern:** An adult was photographed in flight over Lake Waccamaw, Columbus Co, NC, after the passage of TS Ana, 12 May (Jeff Beane, Ed Corey, Bob Davis, John Finnegan, Stephanie Horton). Pending review by the NC BRC, this sighting will be only the third of this species at an inland site in NC, the first two also having been storm-related. On the immediate coast, an Arctic Tern photographed on North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 16 May (Jamie Adams) and seen again 21 May (Gilbert Grant) was noteworthy. Arctic Terns were seen on ten of 13 consecutive pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 20 May through 1 Jun, with a high count of 15+ made 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Forster's Tern:** Four on Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 14 Apr (Dwayne Martin) and three on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 20 Apr (Phil Dickinson, et al.) were locally unusual.

**Sandwich Tern:** Three at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 22 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) were a little early.

**Black Skimmer:** 400 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Apr (Sam Cooper) was a good count for the spring period. One at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, following the passage of TS Ana, 11 May (Ricky Davis) was



Arctic Tern, 12 May 2015, Columbus Co, NC.  
Photo by Jeff Beane.

a great find.

**White-winged Dove:** One was photographed in a yard in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 11 Apr (Phil & Sharon Turner).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Six were heard calling along a stretch of the Blue Ridge Parkway near Devil's Courthouse, Transylvania Co, NC, 4 May (Marilyn Westphal).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** The adult male that visited a yard in Lexington Co, SC, during the late winter was last seen 5 Apr (Edith & Marion Clark).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** Four on Pond Mountain, Ashe Co, NC, were suspected of being on breeding territory 12-13 May (Harry LeGrand, Merrill Lynch).

**American Kestrel:** One seen kiting over a field at Rich Mountain Gap, approximately 4400 feet above sea level, Watauga Co, NC, 15 May (Chris Kelly, Curtis Smalling) was unusual for that elevation during the breeding season.

**Merlin:** One seen in the area around Mid-Pines Rd in Wake Co, NC, during the winter, was last seen 21 Mar (Mike Turner).

**Monk Parakeet:** The pair first reported last year building a nest on a power pole in Northwest, Brunswick Co, NC, had returned to that site by 25 Apr (Greg Massey).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** The only one reported this spring was seen and photographed at Historic Bethabara Park in Forsyth Co, NC, 2 May (Phil Crisp, Phil Dickinson, Kerry Eckhardt).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Two were seen and heard calling at Valle Crucis Community Park, Watauga Co, NC, 26 Apr (Jesse Pope).

**Willow Flycatcher:** One seen and heard calling in a brushy ditch in Balsam Grove, approximately 2800 feet above sea level, Transylvania Co, NC, 25 May (Chris Kelly) was considered locally unusual.

**Least Flycatcher:** Two of the better counts were eight along the Cherohala Skyway near Robbinsville, Graham Co, NC, 28 Apr (Simon Thompson) and 13 along the BRP on the border of Haywood Co and Jackson Co, NC, 3 May (Marilyn Westphal).

**Eastern Kingbird:** A migratory flock of 24 kingbirds along the Tar River in Nash Co, NC, 22 Apr (Ricky Davis) was an interesting observation.

**Gray Kingbird:** Individuals were seen on Hunting Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 19-20 May (Tammy Hester) and at North River Farms (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 24 May (Jack Fennell, John Fussell, Steve Howell).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** Individuals were photographed at the McKinney Lake State Fish Hatchery in Richmond Co, NC, an adult male, 12 Apr (Jeff Beane) and along Kiker Rd in Anson Co, NC, an adult female, 20 Apr (J. D. Bricken, Will Stuart). A female had returned to the traditional nesting site along Gunter Rd in Greenville Co, SC, by 1 May (Jesse Dale, et

al.). Though the female was observed building a nest atop a utility pole in May (m. obs.), a male flycatcher was not seen in the area during the period.

**Warbling Vireo:** One observed singing at Lake Lynn, Wake Co, NC, 27 May (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.) through 31 May (Ricky Davis, m. obs.) was well east of the species' traditional breeding range. A pair had returned to a traditional nesting site at Charles D. Owen Park in Buncombe Co, NC, in May (Simon Thompson).

**Horned Lark:** One observed singing on the grounds of Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, NC, 30 May (Sam Cooper) was likely breeding in that area. Larks were also likely breeding at North River Farms (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, with six singing males there 13 May (John Fussell).

**Tree Swallow:** A pair nesting in a bluebird box at McKinney Lake State Fish Hatchery in Richmond Co, NC, in May (Jeff Beane) was unusual for the Sandhills region. Cliff Swallow: Two at Riverbend Park in Catawba Co, NC, 27 Mar (Dwayne Martin) were a little early.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** One in Southern Pines, Moore Co, NC, 5 May (Susan Campbell) was unusual because there was not a major irruption into our region this year.

**Sedge Wren:** One seen and heard calling at the PotashCorp Wetland Mitigation Site in Beaufort Co, NC, 28 Apr (Sam Cooper) was somewhat late to depart.

**Marsh Wren:** One seen along the Muddy Creek Greenway in Forsyth Co, NC, 20 May (Phil Dickinson) was late for a site in the Piedmont.

**Hermit Thrush:** One heard singing in a hardwood forest on Pond Mountain, Ashe Co, NC, 12 May (Harry LeGrand, Merrill Lynch) was interesting because this species' territory is usually in spruce-fir forests.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** One heard singing along Ledge Creek in Granville Co, NC, 12 Mar (Harry LeGrand) was early.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** One observed singing the "bee-bzzzzz" song of a Blue-winged Warbler along Ray Branch in Macon Co, NC, 8 May (Chris Kelly) was unusual.

**"Brewster's Warbler":** A male was on territory near Stecoah Gap, Graham Co, NC, 7 May and 12 May (Chris Kelly). Kelly notes that a Golden-winged Warbler occupied this same area during the past several breeding seasons.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** Because this species is rare along the coast during spring migration, individuals found in Corolla, Currituck Co, NC, a singing male, 17 May (Jeff Lewis); in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 20 May (Greg Massey); and near Leland, Brunswick Co, NC, a singing male, 21 May (Sam Cooper) were noteworthy.

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** 18 in the Croatan NF in southeast Jones Co, NC, 15 Mar (Jack Fennell, John Fussell) was a nice count for that somewhat early date.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** Three singing males on territory at South Mountains SP, Burke Co, NC, 31 Mar (Dwayne Martin) had returned somewhat early.

**Bachman's Sparrow:** Three were already singing along Sam Hatcher Rd in the Croatan NF in Carteret Co, NC, on the somewhat early date of 10 Mar (John Fussell). Fussell notes that areas burned the previous year tend to harbor more over-wintering sparrows and thus earlier singing sparrows as well.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** At North River Farms (limited access) in Carteret Co, NC, 17 was the peak count for the spring period, 19 Apr, and six remained at that site 26 Apr (John Fussell, et al.).

**Lark Sparrow:** An adult photographed at Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 24 Mar (Bob Olthoff, Connie & Stan Wulkowicz) was a great find for the mountain region and a possible first for that county.

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** Two were seen at North River Farms (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 1 Mar (John Fussell, et al.).

**Seaside Sparrow:** One seen in shrubs along a ditch at North River Farms (limited access). Carteret Co, NC, 31 Mar (John Fussell) was unusual away from a saltwater marsh.

**Song Sparrow:** Individuals found singing in shrubs along the barrier strand adjacent to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 14 May and 17 May (John Fussell) were some of the first on territory there since the passage of Hurricane Isabel in 2003. This area is around the southern limit of the breeding range of the Atlantic subspecies.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** One was seen at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 1 May (Jack Rogers) through 4 May (m. obs.).

**Scarlet Tanager:** A brilliant yellow-morph adult male was photographed at the Hooper Cove Overlook along the Cherohala Skyway near Robbinsville, Graham Co, NC, 26 Apr (Simon Thompson). Though orange-morph Scarlet Tanagers are rare-but-regular, yellow-morph adult males are unheard of!



Scarlet Tanager, 26 April 2015,  
Graham Co, NC.  
Photo by Simon Thompson.

**Western Tanager:** The male that visited a feeder in Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, during the winter, remained until 6 Apr (Jane & Maury Wolff), not 24 Feb as previously reported.

**Painted Bunting:** Three visiting a feeder in Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, in late March (Rich & Susan Boyd) were somewhat early. An adult male at the Wilson Educational Forest, Wilson Co, NC, 27 Apr (Ann Brice) into summer (m. obs.) was unusual for a site so far from our southern coast.

**Dickcissel:** The high count at North River Farms (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, was 25 singing birds, 24 May (John Fussell, et al.). Individuals were found at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 3 May (Audrey Whitlock); and at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, a singing male, 23 May (Jeff Lewis).

**Bobolink:** Some noteworthy counts were 75 along Sockwell Rd in northeast Guilford Co, NC, 4 May (Nate Swick); 932 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 9 May (Steve Calver); and 35+ in the fields around Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 10 May (Simon Thompson).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** One at the Unicoi Gap Overlook, approximately 4470 feet above sea level, along the Cherohala Skyway in Graham Co, NC, 19 March (Sheryl Bryan, Katherine Caldwell, Chris Kelly, Allen Ratzlaff) must have been migrating through that heavily forested, high elevation area.

**Purple Finch:** Individuals at Aunt Sue's Country Corner on SC-11 in Pickens Co, SC, a singing male, 10 May (Dick & Dorothy Rosche) and at Ridge Junction, Yancey Co, NC, 12 May (Marilyn Westphal) were late to depart.

**Red Crossbill:** Two alongside Cabin Creek Rd in Dehart, Wilkes Co, NC, 3 Apr (Eric Harrold) were noteworthy for the Foothills region.

**Common Redpoll:** One visited a feeder in West Columbia, Lexington Co, SC, 3-19 Mar (Susan Audé) where it was seen and photographed by many.



Lark Sparrow, 24 March 2015,  
Haywood Co, NC.  
Photo by Connie and Stan Wulkowicz.