

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2015, 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.

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: **BRP** – Blue Ridge Parkway, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** - Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NP** - National Park, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **WMA** - Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Snow Goose: An adult at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 28 Sep (Wayne Forsythe) was incredibly early—Snow Geese don't typically arrive in our region until November. Two photographed at a private pond near Meggett, Charleston Co, SC, 29 Nov (Cherrie Sneed) were unusual at a site so far south.

Ross's Goose: Individuals were photographed at Lake Hills, Forsyth Co, NC, 4-15 Nov (Cynthia Donaldson, m. obs.); at the Ocean Isle Beach WTP, Brunswick Co, NC, 24 Nov (Donnie Coody, et al.); on the campus of Furman University, Greenville Co, SC, 27 Nov (Joan Baker, m. obs.); and on a pond in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, 29 Nov (Tony DeSantis) through 2 Dec (m. obs.). Three at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 29 Nov (Marty Wall) was a good count.

Brant: One on North Pond at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Oct (Nathan Gatto, et al.) through 24 Oct (Jeff Phippen, m. obs.) was interesting, possibly the same individual seen at that refuge last October.

Eurasian Wigeon: At Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, after one was found on North Pond, 30 Sep (Henry Link), at least one continued at the refuge into winter (m. obs.), and two were seen on South Pond, 21 Oct (Ricky Davis, m. obs.) through 31 Oct (Karen Lebing).

American Wigeon: One at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Aug (Craig Watson, et al.) was unusually early.

White-cheeked Pintail: Pending review by the NC Bird Records Committee was the report, including distant photographs, of a White-cheeked Pintail on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Sep (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock). NC's two previous sightings of this tropical species, in 2008 and 2010, the latter of which was also made at Pea Island NWR, were unaccepted due to questionable origin.

Northern Pintail: One on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 2 Sep (Audrey Whitlock) was slightly early.

Ring-necked Duck: 10150 at Singletary Lake SP, Bladen Co, NC, 18 Nov (Brian Bockhan) was a remarkable count.

Common Eider: An adult drake in flight off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 20 Oct (Christine Stoughton-Root) was the only one reported during the period.

Surf Scoter: Unusual for inland sites were two drakes on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 8 Nov (Steve Shultz) and a hen photographed on Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 18 Nov (Allen Boynton).

Black Scoter: A first-year hen off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Aug (Gary Wiggins, et al.) was early. Inland sightings included six, three drakes and three hens, on Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 31 Oct (Dwayne Martin); seven on Lake Hartwell in Clemson, Pickens Co, SC, 5 Nov (Kevin Kubach); two hens on nearby Lake Hickory, Alexander Co, NC, 8 Nov (Martin); and one drake on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 8 Nov (Steve

Shultz).

Common Merganser: A hen photographed on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 29 Nov (Lee Adams, Michael Gosselin, Marty Wall) was unusual for that site.

Red-throated Loon: Juvenile individuals photographed on Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Nov (Brian Bockhahn) and at Lake James SP in Burke Co, NC, 28 Nov (Dwayne Martin) were good finds for those inland lakes.

Common Loon: 105 in the Paddy Creek arm of Lake James in Burke Co, NC, 10 Nov (Jamie Cameron) was a noteworthy count for that inland site.

Horned Grebe: One, still in breeding plumage, photographed on Lake Hickory, border of Alexander Co, and Catawba Co, NC, 7 Aug (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby) was incredibly early. One photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 11 Nov (Kevin Kubach, Ben Lam) was a first for that park.

Northern Fulmar: A moribund, light-morph individual was found on the beach in south Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 6 Oct (Audrey Whitlock). Another light-morph individual was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 10 Oct (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater: One over Cape Lookout Bight, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (John Fussell, et al.) may have been pushed there by storms in the previous weeks.

Wood Stork: 1050 around Mullet Pond, Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 15 Oct (Don Crutchfield) was an incredibly high number at any location in the Carolinas.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Individuals were seen over the Roanoke Sound off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 3 Aug (fide Jeff Lewis) and off Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, where photographed, 18 Nov (Lewis Burke, Irvin Pitts).

Masked Booby: Individuals were seen and photographed on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 1 Aug, a first-summer bird, and 21 Aug, a second-summer bird (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Brown Booby: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 7 Aug and 21 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Cormorant: Up to two were present around New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Oct through 23 Nov (Gilbert S. Grant).

Anhinga: Two at Cane Creek Park in Union Co, SC, 5 Aug (George Andrews) were unusual for a site so far inland.

American White Pelican: Sightings made in NC included one photographed on a spoil island in the Cape Fear River off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper); 17 on the Bogue Sound near Morehead City, Carteret Co, 22 Nov (Ed Dombrofski, Lou Teer); and 36 in flight over Sneads Ferry, Onslow Co, 30 Nov (Gilbert Grant). White Pelicans returned to

Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Oct (Peggy Eubank) with a high count of 75 there 16 Nov (Karen Lebing). More sightings were made in SC than in NC during the period, however. White Pelicans were present at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Sep (Jay Chandler, et al.) through the end of the period (m. obs.), with a high count of 31 on 14 Nov (Carl Miller). A few of the higher counts at other sites in SC included 50 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 2 Aug (Roger Smith); 145 near the Bull Island Ferry terminal, Charleston Co, 29 Sep (Craig Watson); 68 on Dewees Island, Charleston Co, 9 Nov (Judy Fairchild); 90 off the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, 13 Nov (Casey Weissburg); and 69 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, 23 Nov (Steve Calver).

American Bittern: Individuals at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 14-15 Sep (Simon Harvey, m. obs.) and at Osceola Lake, Henderson Co, NC, 9 Nov through 1 Dec (Ron Selvey, m. obs.) were good finds for those inland sites.

Least Bittern: A moribund individual was found on the sidewalk in downtown Marion, McDowell Co, NC, after apparently colliding with a window during a period of heavy rain, 5 Oct (Brian and Catherine Fannon, *vide* Curtis Smalling). This species is a rare transient in the western part of our region, and this sighting was a first for McDowell County.

Great Egret: One at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 21 Nov (Bob Rybczynski, et al.) was somewhat late for that inland site.

Snowy Egret: Sightings made outside of the coastal plain included one on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 21 Jul (Lou Skrabec) through 13 Sep (m. obs.); two in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 4 Aug (David Anderson); three at Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 6 Aug (Steve Tracy); up to three in Eighteenmile Creek, Anderson Co, SC, 10 Aug through 1 Sep (Kevin Kubach); one near the dam on Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 11 Aug (Irvin Pitts); one at the north end of Coddle Creek Reservoir, Cabarrus Co, NC, 21-26 Aug (Jan Fowler, Rob Van Epps); four in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug (Scott Winton) and 5 Sep (Mark Kosiewski); and five in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, 13 Sep (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.).

Little Blue Heron: A few of the higher counts at inland sites were 12 in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 27 Jul (David Pennebaker); seven on Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 2 Aug (Steve Tracy); and seven in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 30 Aug (Mark Kosiewski). An immature individual photographed at Ray's Mill Park in Aberdeen, Moore Co, NC, 6 Oct (Mike McCloy) was rather late for that inland site.

Tricolored Heron: An adult at Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 2-16 Aug (Steve Tracy) was a good find for a site so far from the coast. An individual

with an injured leg was seen at Sandy Creek Park in Durham Co, NC, 10 Aug (Randy Neighbarger), and by many others through 30 Sep (James Meehan).

Reddish Egret: One around Pea Island NWR and the newly formed inlet just south of South Pond, Dare Co, NC, 22 Oct (Ricky Davis, Kent Fiala) through 12 Nov (Bobby Koch) was locally unusual. High counts for NC and SC respectively were five at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, 11 Oct (John Fussell, et al.) and eight on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 16 Oct (David McLean).

Cattle Egret: One photographed in a cattle pasture in Vass, Moore Co, NC, 20 Oct (David McCloy, Mike McCloy) was locally unusual, somewhat late for an inland site.

White Ibis: A few of the higher counts of post-breeding wanderers at inland sites were six at the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 13 Aug (Derek Hudgins); 14 at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 18 Aug (Richard Kline); and nine on the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug (Scott Winton) and 30 Aug (Mark Kosiewski).

Glossy Ibis: Two at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 13 Aug (Tom Ledford) were unusual for a site so far from the coast.

Roseate Spoonbill: Our region's high count was 138 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 23 Nov (Steve Calver). Interestingly, none were reported in NC during the period.

Swallow-tailed Kite: SC's high count was 70 over agricultural fields just south of Allendale, Allendale Co, NC, 21 Jul (Natalie Osborne Smith). Sightings in NC included two in northwestern Jackson Co, 14 Aug (Todd Arcos) and up to five amongst Mississippi Kites over agricultural fields in Scotland Co, 18-26 Aug (Charles Gause, et al.).

Mississippi Kite: SC's high count was 200 over Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Aug (Craig Watson). 20+ over agricultural fields just east of Old Fort, McDowell Co, NC, 26 Aug (James Poling) provided a good count for western NC.

Broad-winged Hawk: High counts at hawk watch sites included 9714 at Grandfather Mountain, Avery Co, NC, 23 Sep (Jesse Pope, et al.); 2718 at Pilot Mountain SP, Surry Co, NC, 23 Sep (Phil Dickinson, et al.); and 2172 at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 30 Sep (Brian Bockhahn).

Golden Eagle: One photographed over the Muddy Creek Greenway in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 14 Nov (David Disher, Cara Woods, et al.) was very unusual for the Piedmont region and a first for that county.

Yellow Rail: An injured individual was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator in Surfside Beach, Horry Co, SC, where it had to be euthanized, 12 Nov (fide Chris Hill).

Clapper Rail: Individuals photographed at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 25 Aug (Mark Kosiewski) and at Maple View Farm, Orange Co, NC,



Limpkin, 12 Aug 2015, Catawba Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

20-22 Sep (Ryan Justice, m. obs.) were unusual so far inland, possible firsts for those counties.

Sora: Three at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 4-5 Oct (Wayne Forsythe) was a good count for the mountains.

Purple Gallinule: One on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Nov (Jack Rogers) was unusually late.

Limpkin: The individual found on the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 28 Jul (Dwayne Martin) was seen by many in early August until last seen 16 Aug (Mike McCloy). An individual photographed in a hard-to-access area of the Sparkleberry Swamp in southern Sumter Co, SC, 16 Sep (Elizabeth Anderegg) was not re-found.

Black-necked Stilt: Three in the brackish pond adjacent to the Cedar Island Ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 2-16 Aug (John Fussell) and five at Pamlico Point, Pamlico Co, NC, 6 Aug (Cody Stone) were unusual for those sites away from the ocean.

American Avocet: Inland sightings included two at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 1 Aug (Jan Hansen); 11 at Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 8 Aug (Rob Van Epps); 11, possibly the same individuals seen at Lake Norman three days prior, in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 11 Aug (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.); and one photographed at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14-20 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.). In Carteret Co, NC, one at the Rachel Carson Reserve, 1 Sep (John Fussell) and seven on the shore of the Bogue Sound in Morehead City, 19 Oct (Ed Dombrowski) were considered locally unusual. The high count at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, was 400 on 10 Oct (Steve Calver).

American Oystercatcher: 119 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Aug (John Fussell) and 75 at the east end of Shackelford Banks,



American Avocet, 20 Oct 2015, Moore Co, NC. Photo by Michael McCloy.

Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.) were good counts for those sites. 1193 along the Intercoastal Waterway near Awendaw, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Nov (Mary-Catherine Martin) was a simply amazing count.

Black-bellied Plover: Inland sightings included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 5-7 Aug (Steve Patterson); up to three in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7-10 Sep (Tom Driscoll, Eddie Owens); one on the Ledge Creek arm of Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); and one at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 16 Oct (Mike McCloy, Nancy Williamson). 490 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Sep (John Fussell) was our region's high count.

American Golden-Plover: Sightings included one in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 5-15 Sep (Scott Winton, m. obs.); one in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Eddie Owens); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Sep (Audrey Whitlock); four at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Oct (Simon Harvey); two at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 11 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson); one on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (Stan Rule, et al.); and one photographed in Topsail Beach, Pender Co, NC, 2 Nov (Greg Perry).

Snowy Plover: One, presumably the same individual seen in the area in June, was seen on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug and 29 Aug (Derb Carter).

Wilson's Plover: On the barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, nine, five adults and four juvenile birds, 2 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) was a notable count for a non-coastal area. A few of the

higher post-breeding aggregations at sites along the coast included 50 on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug (Derb Carter); 80 on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, 2 Aug (Sam Cooper); 95 on Bird Shoal, 18 Aug (Fussell); 26 at Rich Inlet, 29 Aug (Carter); and 49 on Bird Shoal, 1 Sep (Fussell). Five were seen at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, a site where this species has wintered in past years, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.).

Semipalmated Plover: A few of the higher counts at inland sites were 12 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 19 Aug (Simon Thompson); 16 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, border of Chatham Co and Durham Co, NC, 25 Aug (Mark Kosiewski); and 20 in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Eddie Owens). Several large counts were made at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, in late August, including 3000 on 24 Aug (Greg Massey) and 1400+ on 29 Aug (Sam Cooper, Harry Sell).

Piping Plover: One seen at the upper end of Falls Lake, moving between Durham Co and Granville Co, NC, 22 Aug (Steve Shultz) was a great find for that inland site. Two on the barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 6 Sep and 20 Sep (John Fussell, et al.) were unusual at that site away from the coast. Peak counts at sites along the coast were 31 at the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug (Derb Carter); 11 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Aug (Fussell); and 22 at the south end of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 9 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger).

Spotted Sandpiper: Individuals at nearby sites in Dare Co, NC— at Pea Island NWR, 24 Oct (Jeff Lewis) and the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, 4 Nov (Peggy Eubank) were somewhat late to depart. One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 21 Nov (Harry LeGrand) was likely the same individual seen at that site last winter.

Willet: Inland sightings involved one photographed at Iswa Nature Preserve, along the Catawba River in western Mecklenburg Co, NC, 20 Aug (Alan Kneidel, et al.); one near the Russell Dam, McCormick Co, SC, 30 Aug (James Flynn, Pat Markey); and four at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 31 Aug (Lucas Bobay).

Upland Sandpiper: Sightings made at sod farms included two in the Riley Unit of Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Aug (Roger Smith); two at Modern Turf in Sumter Co, SC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); one at Super Sod along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 18 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Simon Thompson); 11 at American Turf in Washington Co, NC, 23 Aug (Audrey Whitlock); and one remaining at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, 24 Aug (Steve Compton, Irvin Pitts). One was heard calling in flight over the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 16 Aug (Ricky Davis, David Howell). One was flushed from atypical saltmarsh habitat at the newly formed inlet just

south of South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 22 Aug (Jeff Lewis). In the grassy areas around the Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, NC, a traditional fall stop-over for the species, six were seen 22 Aug and two were seen 28 Aug (Sam Cooper).

Whimbrel: Bi-weekly shorebird surveys on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, tallied 73 on 2 Aug (Sam Cooper); 128 on 18 Aug (John Fussell); 45 on 1 Sep (Fussell); and only six by 16 Sep (Fussell).

Long-billed Curlew: Sightings included two at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Oct (John Cox, et al.) and 3 Nov (Mary-Catherine Martin), and two in a marsh just north of the campground at Edisto Beach SP, Colleton Co, SC, 30 Oct (Luke Cannon, et al.) and 10 Nov, when photographed (Julie Mobley).

Hudsonian Godwit: One was seen on the Salt Flats at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 20 Oct (Christine Stoughton-Root).

Marbled Godwit: One in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7 Sep (Eddie Owens) and 8 Sep (David Anderson, Mark Kosiewski) was a great find for that inland site. A few of the better counts from sites along the coast were 58 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Sep (John Fussell); 130 at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 16 Sep (Audrey Whitlock); 477 along the Intercoastal Waterway near Awendaw, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Sep (Mary-Catherine Martin); 100 on the eastern end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.); 576 near Awendaw, 18 Oct (Martin); and 350 at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 22 Oct (John Cox).

Ruddy Turnstone: Inland sightings included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 5 Aug (Steve Patterson); an adult in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 7-9 Aug (Jacob Farmer, Brad Wood, et al.); a juvenile in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 5-7 Sep (John Finnegan, et al.); and a juvenile photographed at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 7 Sep (Jan Hansen).

Red Knot: Some noteworthy counts were 220 on sandbars around Barden's Inlet, Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Aug (Sam Cooper); 265 at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Aug (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); 536 on Marsh Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 17 Oct (Mary-Catherine Martin); and 516 at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, 15 Nov (Carl Miller, Catherine Miller).

Ruff: A male in late-summer molt plumage was seen at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Sep (Ed Blitch, Perry Nugent). A very tame, possibly sick or injured, juvenile bird was photographed at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 6 Oct (Scott Hartley, Ann Wilson) and 7 Oct (Robert Gallucci). Amazingly, at least six different Ruffs were seen in SC during 2015.

Stilt Sandpiper: Sightings at inland sites included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); 27 in the Ellerbe Creek arm of



Ruff, 06 Oct 2015, Horry Co, SC. Photo by Ann Wilson.

Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 11 Sep (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly); two in the Reedy Fork arm of Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 13-20 Sep (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.); 12 in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 19 Sep (Matt Spangler); two at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 9 Oct (Tom Austin); and one at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Doreen Blanchette, Carol Bowman, Linda Jones, Mike McCloy).

Sanderling: Inland sightings included up to eight at the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 23 Aug through 19 Sep (John Finnegan, m. obs.); one at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 27 Aug (Ricky Davis); one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 28-31 Aug (Lucas Bobay); one where Richland Creek borders Schenck Forest, Wake Co, 29 Aug (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); one in the New Hope arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug through 7 Sep (Scott Winton, m. obs.); four on the Catawba River in western Mecklenburg Co, NC, 16-18 Sep (Tom Sanders, m. obs.); and two off Farrington Point, Jordan Lake, 19 Sep (Matt Spangler).

Dunlin: Inland sightings included 13 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson); two at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.); one at Shelley Lake, Wake Co, NC, 19 Oct (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); one at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 23 Oct (Linda Montgomery); two at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, 24 Oct (Lucas Bobay, et al.); 16 in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 31 Oct (Cherrie Sneed, et al.); and one at the Swann WTP in Forsyth Co, NC, 1 Nov (Phil Dickinson, Shelley Rutkin, et al.).

Baird's Sandpiper: Sightings included one in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 8-9 Aug (Scott Winton, m. obs.); one at Archie

Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 20 Aug (John Haire, Shelley Rutkin, et al.); a juvenile in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, 27-28 Aug (Brad Wood, m. obs.); two on Lake Jeanette, Guilford Co, NC, 29 Aug (Henry Link, Nate Swick) through 6 Sep (m. obs.); an adult in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, 30 Aug (Steve Shultz) into September (m. obs.); one at Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, 4-7 Sep (Link, m. obs.); three at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Sep (Ed Blich, Perry Nugent); three in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, 10 Sep (Mike McCloy); one in the New Hope arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 11 Sep (Loren Hintz, et al.); and one at Lake Surf, eastern Moore Co, NC, 1 Oct (McCloy).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Four at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Doug Johnston, Tom Tribble) and four at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.) were good counts for those sites.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Sightings at sod farms included two at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Aug (Irvin Pitts); four at Modern Turf near Rembert, Sumter Co, NC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); and at least one at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, through much of August and early September (m. obs.). On the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, after one was found 5 Sep (Scott Winton); a high count of four was made in the Ellerbe Creek arm, 8 Sep (Jan Hansen); and one remained through 18 Sep (Robert Meehan). Up to four were seen at Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Charleston Co, SC, 8-12 Sep (Sean McElaney, Nancy Raginski, Mattie VandenBoom, Casey Weissburg). Individuals were seen at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 2 Sep (Greg Hudson) and at Iswa Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 16 Sep (Kevin Metcalf) through 22 Sep (Metcalf, Tom Sanders, m. obs.).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Six at the campground at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 6 Nov (Elizabeth Wilkins) were somewhat late.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Inland sightings included one on the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 11-13 Aug (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); one on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 8 Sep (Rob Van Epps) through 12 Sep (Kevin Metcalf); and one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 23 Aug (Edward Landi). At the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, after one was found 15 Aug (John Finnegan), a high count of seven was made 30 Aug (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.), and two remained through 12 Sep (David Howell). At the upper end of Jordan Lake in Chatham Co, NC, after three were found in the Morgan Creek arm, 7 Sep (Eddie Owens), five in were seen in the New Hope arm, 11 Sep (Loren Hintz, et al.), a fantastic count of 25 was made 20 Sep (Will Cook, Mark Kosiewski, et al.).

Wilson's Phalarope: Sightings included two on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 4 Aug (David McLean, Irvin Pitts, Nolan



Black-legged Kittiwake, 29 Nov 2015, Wake Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

Schillerstrom); one at the Modern Turf farm near Rembert, Sumter Co, NC, 7 Aug (Steve Patterson); and one on Bull Island, 17 Sep (McLean, et al.). Interestingly, none were found in NC this fall.

Red-necked Phalarope: Individuals at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 2 Sep (Greg Hudson) and at the Silver Bluff Audubon Center, Aiken Co, SC, 19 Sep (Drew Grainger) were great finds. Four at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 3 Oct (Wayne Forsythe) provided the highest count ever made in the mountain region. Two remained at that site through 6 Oct (Jay Wherley).

Pomarine Jaeger: One well-seen just past the breakers at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 Nov (Ricky Davis) was unusual, as almost all jaegers seen from shore are Parasitic Jaegers.

Parasitic Jaeger: "From-shore" sightings included one off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 23 Oct (Al Batt, Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen); a dark-morph bird off North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 26 Oct (Gilbert Grant); one off Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, 15 Nov (Jan Hansen); one off Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 26 Nov (David); three off Caswell Beach, 27 Nov (Davis); and one off Kill Devil Hills, Dare Co, 28 Nov (Grant). Most observers noted that the jaegers were harassing gulls.

Black-legged Kittiwake: A first-year bird photographed at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 11 Sep (Doug Johnston) provided our first record of this oceanic species for the mountain region. Another Tarrock, this one possibly sick or injured, seen and photographed on the Beaver Dam portion of Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 29 Nov (Harry LeGrand, m. obs.) provided our first record for the Piedmont.

Franklin's Gull: A large migratory movement of Franklin's Gulls down

the east coast his fall resulted in a higher-than-usual number of sightings in the Carolinas. Sightings included six, the second-highest count ever made in the Carolinas, on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 13 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); one on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 13 Oct (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.); a first-year bird at the Jacksonville WTP, Onslow Co, NC, 20 Oct (John Fussell); two immature birds at Shalotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 25 Oct (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper, Sherry Lane); one photographed at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 9 Nov (Mark Kosiewski); a first-winter bird photographed at Waites Island, Horry Co, SC, 14 Nov (Chris Hill); two on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 15 Nov (Derb Carter); an adult around Breach Inlet, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Nov (Matthew Campbell, et al.) and 20 Nov (Craig Watson); and an adult at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, 26 Nov (Ricky Davis).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 22 at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 5 Oct (John Fussell) was a good count for that area. A first-winter bird photographed at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 7 Oct (Doug Johnston), and remaining through 6 Nov (Wayne Forsythe), was a first for the mountain region.

Sooty Tern: Several impressive counts were made on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in early August—33 on 7 Aug; 38 on 8 Aug; and 28 on 14 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.). An adult seen off the Folly Beach Fishing Pier, Charleston Co, SC, flying southeast towards Bird Key, 20 Aug (Dennis Forsythe) may have bred in that area.

Caspian Tern: 16 on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 21 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby) was a good count for a site in the western Piedmont. High counts at sites along the coast included 123 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Sep (Sam Cooper); 148 at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 29 Sep (Gilbert Grant); and 56 at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 20 Oct (Paul Serridge).

Black Tern: 146 at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Sam Cooper, Harry Sell) was a good count. Locally unusual was one at Shiloh Airport, Rockingham Co, NC, 11 Aug (Marty Wall); two on Lake Wylie in York Co, SC, 22 Aug (Stephen Thomas); and three at Chapel Hill Country Club, Orange Co, NC, 31 Aug (Jan Hansen). One on Rankin Lake, Gaston Co, NC, 21 Sep (Steve Tracy) was somewhat late.

Roseate Tern: One found amongst a large flock of roosting terns on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Sep (Derb Carter) was a great, unexpected find.

Common Tern: 85, along with 15 Forster's Terns, over Lake Hickory, border of Alexander Co and Catawba Co, NC, 10 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Parnell) was a remarkable count for a site away from the coast. The next day, 87, along with six Forster's Terns, were seen over Jordan Lake, Chatham Co,



White-winged Dove, 28 Nov 2015, New Hanover Co, NC.
Photo by Sam Cooper

NC, 11 Oct (Ricky Davis). Because such large flocks of Common Terns over inland lakes are so unusual, it's likely both sightings were of the same flock of terns. Other notable inland counts were 13 over Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 13 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.); 12 over Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 2 Oct (Nathan Gatto); ten over Mountain Island Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 4 Oct (Kevin Metcalf); and six over the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 4 Oct (Tom Austin). 230 on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Sep (John Fussell) was a good count for this species which is declining in our region.

Forster's Tern: 17 on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 27 Oct (Dwayne Martin) was a good count for site in the western Piedmont during late October.

Sandwich Tern: 550+ at Cape Fear, Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper) was a noteworthy count for mid-November.

Black Skimmer: Our region's high count was 1200 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 17 Nov (Sam Cooper).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: One on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) was noteworthy for an area devoid of human settlement. 90+ on power-lines in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 31 Oct (Fussell) and 75 in Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Nov (Pam Ford) were impressive counts.

White-winged Dove: This vagrant made an unprecedented irruption along our coast in late October. In Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, after one was found on a power-line amongst Collared-Doves, 19 Oct (Don Faulkner, Paul Serridge), four were seen near the intersection of Sundial Drive and Lazy Lane, 24-30 Oct (Pam Ford, Cherrie Sneed, Craig Watson, m. obs.), and three remained through at least 21 Nov (Ford, et al.). Also found amongst Collared-

Doves was one on a power-line in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Oct through 2 Nov (John Fussell, m. obs.); six on power-lines in Edisto Beach, Colleton Co, SC, 9 Nov (Susan Moody); and one in the parking lot for the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 27-29 Nov (John Ennis, m. obs.). Individuals visited feeders on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15-21 Oct (Barbara Spence); in Sneads Ferry, Onslow Co, NC, 30 Oct (Gilbert Grant); in downtown Wilmington, New Hanover Co, 31 Oct (Ben Watkins); in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 31 Oct through 10 Nov (Karen Lebing); in Meggett, Charleston Co, 1 Nov (Sneed); and on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 1 Nov (Tammy Hester). Two frequented a feeder in Kill Devil Hills, Dare Co, 21 Nov into December (Jim Gould). Also, individuals were seen on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 30 Oct (Dennis Hargrove); in flight over Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, 14 Nov (Lucas Bobay); and along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, 20-24 Nov (Bobby Koch, m. obs.). Most sightings were documented with photographs.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Nov (Michael Gamble, et al.) was late to depart.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Locally unusual were individuals on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, where mist-netted, banded, and then released, 15 Aug (Aaron Given, et al.); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 11 Oct (Chris Peak); on the campus of UNC-Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Oct (Sam Cooper); and at Congaree NP, Richland



Burrowing Owl, 05 Nov 2015,
New Hanover Co, NC.
Photo by Janie Adams.



Buff-bellied Hummingbird, 22 Sept 2015, Forsyth Co, NC.
Photo by David Disher.

Co, SC, 17 Oct (John Grego, et al.).

Burrowing Owl: One seen and photographed around a jetty at the north end of Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 4 Nov (fide Derb Carter) through 6 Nov (m. obs.) provided NC with its third definitive record of this species.

Common Nighthawk: One with a badly injured wing found in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, NC, was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator where it had to be euthanized, 4 Nov (fide John Fussell). November is late for this species in the Carolinas.

Chimney Swift: 13000 roosting at Vienna Elementary School in Forsyth Co, NC, 17 Sep (Phil Dickinson) was a notable concentration.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 20+ were set to over-winter in a yard with multiple feeders in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 22 Nov (Ann Maddock).

Rufous Hummingbird: An immature male was banded in a yard in Southern Pines, Moore Co, NC, 13 Nov (Mike McCloy, et al.).

Buff-bellied Hummingbird: One seen and photographed by many at feeders along Royall Drive in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 22 Sep into winter (Susan Campbell, Bill & Mindy Conner, m. obs.) provided NC with its second definitive record.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: One photographed at Jordan Lake State Educational Forest in Chatham Co, NC, 9 Oct (Natalie Barbour, W.S. Barbour) was seen in the company of a second individual 12 Oct (Mark Kosiewski) through 31 Oct (Will Cook). One remained in that area through at least 14 Nov (Kosiewski). Before this sighting, it had been more than two decades since this endangered species was last seen in the Greater Triangle area.

Merlin: Individuals at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Aug (Sam Cooper) and in agricultural field near West Craven Middle School, Craven Co, NC, 1 Sep (Al Gamache) were somewhat early. Locally unusual were individuals at Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 15 Sep (Rick Knight); at North Wake Landfill District Park, Wake Co, NC, 6-15 Nov (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); and at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 27-29 Nov (Paul Serridge, m. obs.).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individuals were seen along the Lenoir Greenway, Caldwell Co, NC, 3 Sep (Dwayne Martin); at the bridge over Eastatoe Creek near Sunset, Pickens Co, SC, 14 Sep (Steve Compton, Claire Herzog, et al.); at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 15 Sep (Mike McCloy); at Mount Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 19 Sep (Ricky Davis, David Howell, et al.); and at Glenburnie Quarry (limited access), Craven Co, NC, 15 Oct (Al Gamache, Steve Shaffer).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: One seen along Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 7 Nov (Pam Ford, Irvin Pitts, et al.) was somewhat late.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Individuals were seen at Carolina Beach SP, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jamie Adams, Greg Massey); in the Thornburg Tract of Uwharrie NF, Randolph Co, NC, 16 Sep (Andrew Thornton); near Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Josh Southern); at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Sep (Keith McCullough); along the Six Mile Greenway in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 19 Sep (Tom Sanders, Rob Van Epps); at Historic Bethabara Park, Forsyth Co, NC, 23-30 Sep (David & Susan Disher, John Haire, m. obs.); and at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 30 Sep (Ron Selvey). An immature bird mist-netted, banded, and released on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Oct (Sean McElaney) was somewhat late.

Alder Flycatcher: Three were mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, this fall—hatch-year individuals 3 Sep, 15 Sep, and 17 Sep (Sean McElaney, Nancy Raginski, Casey Weissburg, et al.). 42 “Traill’s” Flycatchers were also captured during the period, but could not be definitively identified to species, and were more likely to be Willow Flycatchers.

Western Kingbird: One photographed on a fence along Kapp Rd in Forsyth Co, NC, 14 Aug (Cynthia Donaldson, et al.) was somewhat early, a first for that county, and very unusual for a site in the western Piedmont. Less unusual were multiple transients in the Coastal Plain in October—one photographed near Hemingway, Williamsburg Co, SC, 7 Oct (Jay Chandler); one at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Oct (Ed Dombrowski, Steven Howell, Lou Teer); one on the power-line along the entrance road to the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 15 Oct (Andy Mason); two along that entrance



Gray Kingbird, 03 Oct 2015, Wake Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

road, 16 Oct (Nathan Gatto); one in the “sparrow field” on the western side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 18 Oct (Brian Bockhahn); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 24 Oct (Lee Adams, Jeff Phippen, m. obs.); and one along Milltail Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Jeff Lewis, et al.).

Eastern Kingbird: Two of the higher concentrations of migrants were 170 at Patriot’s Point, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Sep (Pam Ford) and 123 within a 15 minute span at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Sam Cooper).

Gray Kingbird: One seen and photographed at Yates Millpond County Park and along adjacent Mid-Pines Rd in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 3 Oct (John Finnegan, Lucas Bobay) was only the third ever documented outside the Coastal Plain in NC. Along the southern coast of SC, the area of our region where sightings are most likely, individuals were seen on the Isle of Palms, Charleston Co, 3 Sep (Michael Abrams); on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, 5 Oct (Tammy Hester); and at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, 10 Oct (Shelley Watson Keenan, Craig Watson, et al.) and 11 Oct (Alex Dopp).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Individuals were seen and photographed in Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 24 Oct (Jay Gamble, et al.); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 4 Nov (Marie D’Auteuil, Harry Sell) through 6 Nov (Sherry Lane); and at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 19 Nov (Amy Clark Courtney, Cherrie Sneed).

Philadelphia Vireo: Two at the southern end of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 13 Sep (Andrew Thornton) were nice finds. Multiple sightings were made at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 17 Sep (Aaron Steed) through 6 Oct (Doug Johnston), with a high count of three birds on 30 Sep (Jay Wherley). One seen on a farm in Williamsburg Co, SC, 23 Nov (Catherine Gamble, Jay Gamble) was incredibly late, though regrettably not photographed.

Common Raven: Locally unusual were four over US-1 in Sanford, Lee Co, NC, 3 Sep (Kyle Kittelberger) and two over Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 17 Sep (David Howell).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Two amongst Tree Swallows in Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, 10 Nov (David McCorquodale) were rather late.

Cave Swallow: Multiple sightings were made at sites along the coast in late November—two along the dunes at Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 15 Nov (Ricky Davis); one at the North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Nov (John Fussell, Nell Moore); one amongst Tree Swallows near the southern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 21 Nov (Ed Corey); two to three at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 21 Nov (Jay Chandler, Scott Hartley, et al.); four at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Nov (Pam Ford, Andy Harrison); one amongst Tree Swallows in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, 24 Nov (Joe Gyekis); two in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, 24 Nov (Moore); 12 to 15 along the dunes at North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 24 Nov (Gilbert Grant); three along the dunes at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 26 Nov (Davis); and 11 on Sullivan’s Island, Charleston Co, 27 Nov (William Hutcheson).

Barn Swallow: Late to depart were eight at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 6 Nov (Andre Coquerel); two at Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 8 Nov (John Fussell); two at Edisto Beach SP, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Nov (Susan Moody); two at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper); one at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 15 Nov (Mike Stewart, et al.); and four at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, 21 Nov (Cooper).

Winter Wren: Somewhat early for a site in the Piedmont was a singing individual along the Black Walnut Bottom Trail in Bethania, Forsyth Co, NC, 28 Sep (Phil Dickinson, Shelley Rutkin, et al.).

Sedge Wren: Locally unusual was one along Brandon Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, 30 Sep (Martina Nordstrand); one in the ditch along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, for several days in early October (Wayne Forsythe); and two along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 28 Oct (Nate Swick, Andrew Thornton).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Somewhat late for inland sites were individuals at Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 15-18 Nov (Lucas Bobay, Neil Skoog, et al.); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 16 Nov (Jane Kramer); on the southeastern shore of Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 25 Nov (Irvin Pitts); along Gay Rd in western Edgecombe Co, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis); and at Boyd Pond Park, Aiken Co, SC, 29 Nov (Peter Stangel).

Townsend’s Solitaire: Possibly the most exciting find of the season was that of a Townsend’s Solitaire at the Swinging Bridge on Grandfather Mountain, Avery Co, NC, 13 Aug (Curtis Smalling). Many birders saw the solitaire through 18 Aug (Mark Kosiewski, m. obs.) until it wasn’t seen

despite hours of searching 19 Aug (Jesse Pope, et al.). Amazingly, the solitaire reappeared in the same area 8 Sep (Pope) where it was seen by many through 14 Sep (Audrey Whitlock). These sightings provided the first record of this western species in NC.

Swainson's Thrush: One photographed at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Nov (Nancy Williamson) was late to depart.

Wood Thrush: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Nov (Casey Weissburg) was somewhat late.

Sage Thrasher: Another rare vagrant from the western United States visiting our region this fall was Sage Thrasher. Discovered on the edge of the cattle pasture on the southern side of Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 31 Oct (James Poling, Steve Yurkovich), it was seen and photographed by many until last seen 6 Nov (Tom Ledford, Mark McShane). This bird provided NC with its third definitive record.

Snow Bunting: One was photographed on the northeastern beach of Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper).

Ovenbird: One lingered in a yard in Carrboro, Orange Co, NC, 25 Nov through 15 Dec (Jan Hansen).

Swainson's Warbler: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 7 Oct (Sean McElaney) was somewhat late.

Nashville Warbler: Sightings made in the eastern half of our region, where more noteworthy, included one in Leesburg, Richland Co, SC, 13 Sep (Lex



Sage Thrasher, 31 Oct 2015, Buncombe Co, NC. Photo by James Poling.



Snow Bunting, 14 Nov 2015, Brunswick Co, NC. Photo by Sam Cooper.

Glover); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jeff Lewis); one along Mid-Pines Rd, Wake Co, NC, 27 Sep (Brian Pendergraft); two near the lower end of Falls Lake, Wake Co, 6 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger); one at the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, 12-17 Oct (Jim Gould, Lewis, m. obs.); one at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 13-15 Oct (Steve Howell, m. obs.); and one photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Chandra Biggerstaff). Individuals were mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 27 Sep, 6 Oct, and 16 Oct (Sean McElaney, Casey Weissburg, et al.). One found amongst a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 14 Nov (Jack Colcolough) was quite late.

Connecticut Warbler: One well-seen along the Lenoir Greenway in Caldwell Co, NC, 25 Aug (Dwayne Martin) was very early.

American Redstart: Late to depart were individuals in northern Wake Co, NC, 2 Nov (Kevin Durso); at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 8 Nov (Pam Ford); and at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Nov (Marie D'Auteuil).

Northern Parula: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15 Nov (Michael Gamble) was quite late. Another individual seen along the Tar River Trail at Battle Park, Nash Co, NC, 29 Nov (David Howell) was very late, possibly attempting to over-winter.

Magnolia Warbler: One lingering along the NC-94 causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 21 Nov (Derb Carter) may have been attempting to over-winter there.

Blackburnian Warbler: One found amongst a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 14 Nov (Jack Colcolough) was quite late. Blackburnian Warblers typically depart our region by mid-

October.

Yellow Warbler: One lingering along the NC-94 causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 21 Nov (Derb Carter) may have been attempting to over-winter there.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: A few of the later sightings involved an adult male photographed along Faulkner Rd in York Co, SC, 3 Nov (Steven Biggers); an adult male photographed at a feeder in Dorchester Co, SC, 4 Nov (David Youngblood); an adult female at Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 8 Nov (Ben Nickley); two that were mist-netted, banded, and then released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 8 Nov (Michael Gamble, et al.); and one mist-netted, banded, and released on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, 11 Nov (Casey Weissburg).

Wilson's Warbler: Individuals were seen on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Sep (Casey Weissburg); on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 19 Sep (Rick Knight); at Mount Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 19 Sep (Ricky Davis, David Howell); along the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 8 Oct (Jim Gould); along Brandon Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, 11 Oct (Martina Nordstrand); and at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Oct (Chandra Biggerstaff). An immature male mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, 26 Oct (Nancy Raginski, et al.) was rather late. An adult male lingered at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary, Buncombe Co, NC, 21 Oct (Aaron Steed, et al.) through 5 Dec, an extremely late date for this species at a site in the mountain region (Simon Thompson).

Yellow-breasted Chat: One mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, on the very late date of 20 Nov (Michael Gamble, Nancy Raginski, et al.) was inadvertently recaptured 24 Nov (Aaron Given, Cathy Miller, et al.), suggesting it might have been attempting to over-winter in that area.

Bachman's Sparrow: Five along Sam Hatcher Rd in the southern Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 10 Nov (John Fussell) was a good count for late fall. Fussell notes there had been a prescribed burn in that area during the summer, creating favorable habitat.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Individuals were seen on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, where mist-netted, banded, and released, 13 Sep (Michael Gamble, et al.); at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, 15-18 Sep (Andy Harrison, m. obs.); at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 10 Oct (Steve Calver); along Brandon Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, where photographed, 12 Oct (Martina Nordstrand); in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 15 Oct (Irvin Pitts); on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Oct (John Fussell, et al.); at the southern end of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 19 Oct (Brian Bockhahn) through 21 Oct (Ricky Davis); along River Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Jeff Pippen); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Nov (Amy Williamson); and on Roanoke

Island, Dare Co, 24 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

Vesper Sparrow: A few of the better counts were four in a field near Coastal Carolina University, Horry Co, SC, 5 Nov (Chris Hill); seven in Sandy Mush Game Land, Buncombe Co, NC, 5 Nov (Doug Johnston); four at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Nov (Tom Austin); and five at Sutton Lake, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Nov (Greg Massey).

Lark Sparrow: This regular vagrant was well-reported this fall and, as usual, most sightings were made at sites along the coast. Those sightings included one at Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.); two at that same site, 25 Aug (Nell Moore); one at Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, 28-30 Aug (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); one on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, NC, 1 Sep (David McLean, Steve Moore, Irvin Pitts); one on Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Derb Carter); one photographed in Nags Head Woods, Dare Co, 13 Sep (Michael Gosselin); one at the northern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 16 Sep (Audrey Whitlock), 19 Oct (Brian Bockhahn, et al.), and 11 Nov (Jim Gould); one in the campground at Cape Point, Dare Co, 26 Sep (Gosselin); one at Wrightsville Beach Park, New Hanover Co, 6-7 Oct (Tom Forwood Jr., m. obs.); two at that same location 8 Oct (Ryan Bakelaar); one at Hatteras Landing, Dare Co, 23 Oct (Brian Patteson); one on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, 4 Nov (Lewis); and one photographed at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 27-28 Nov (Sherry Lane, John Ennis). One photographed near Merchants Millpond SP, Gates Co, NC, 1 Aug (Floyd Williams) was a potential first for that county. Two seen in a pasture adjacent to Schenck Forest, Wake Co, NC, 4 Oct (John Finnegan) were good finds for a site in the Piedmont. Remarkably, four Lark Sparrows were found in Orange Co, NC, this fall—distinct individuals photographed at Mason Farm Biological Preserve, 11 Sep (Mary Sonis) and 14 Oct (Kent Fiala, et al.), and two birds at Maple View Farm, 19 Sep (Jan Hansen, m. obs.).

Grasshopper Sparrow: One photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Nov (Tom Austin) was a great find for a site so far inland in late fall.

Henslow's Sparrow: One of the very few reported during the period was and individual at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, SC, 12 Oct (Craig Watson, et al.).

Le Conte's Sparrow: Individuals were seen at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, SC, 14 Oct (Craig Watson) and in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 15 Oct (Irvin Pitts).

Nelson's Sparrow: One along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 5 Oct (Luke Cannon, Wayne Forsythe) was a good find for a site away from the coast.

“Nelson's x Saltmarsh” Sparrow: A classic “Sharp-tailed” Sparrow,



Lincoln's Sparrow, 15 Oct 2015, Gaston Co, NC. Photo by Lee Weber.

exhibiting characteristics of both Nelson's Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sparrow, was seen near Ft Sumter, Charleston Co, SC, 24 Oct (Jack Rogers).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Sightings included one at Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 30 Sep (Luke Cannon) through 22 Oct (Aaron Steed) ; one mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 14 Oct (Casey Weissburg); one photographed at River Street Park, Gaston Co, NC, 15 Oct (Lee Weber); three at Price Park in Guilford Co, NC, 15 Oct (Andrew Thornton); one on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, 17 Oct (Sean McElaney, et al.); one photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 18 Oct (Tom Austin); one at Maple View Farm, Orange Co, NC, 18-20 Oct (Jan Hansen, m. obs.); three at Valle Crucis Community Park, Watauga Co, NC, 21 Oct (Martha Cutler, et al.); and two in Butner Game Lands in Durham Co, NC, 25 Oct (Ed Corey, et al.).

White-throated Sparrow: One that visited a feeder in Gaston Co, NC, 20 Aug (Keith Camburn) was very unusual for the month of August.

"Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrow: Individuals of the gambellii race from the western United States were seen in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, an immature bird, 3 Oct (Jeff Lewis) and in Randolph Co, NC, an adult, mist-netted, banded, photographed, and released, 17 Oct (Scott Winton, et al.).

Scarlet Tanager: An adult male in non-breeding plumage at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 6 Nov (Mike Stewart) was quite late.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A first-fall male at Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 8 Nov (Allen Boynton) was rather late.



Bobolink, 16 Oct 2015, Orange Co, NC. Photo by Jan Hansen.

Blue Grosbeak: A first-winter individual photographed at Socastee Park, Horry Co, SC, 10 Nov (Diana Doyle) was somewhat late, while a female/first-winter individual near the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 28 Nov (Sam Cooper) and 29 Nov (Greg Massey) was very late.

Dickcissel: Sightings included two singing birds at North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Aug (John Fussell, et al.); an adult female visiting a feeder with House Sparrows in Waves, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 31 Aug and 12-13 Oct (Karen Lebing); one at McDowell Prairie, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 12 Sep (Ken Kneidel); one in Nags Head, Dare Co, 14 Sep (Jeff Lewis); one at Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); a first-winter female photographed on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Oct (Tammy Hester); one or two first-winter birds at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 7-8 Oct (Linda Montgomery, m. obs.); one at the northern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 15 Oct (Audrey Whitlock) and 21 Oct (Ricky Davis); and an adult male in non-breeding plumage in Mills River, Henderson Co, NC, 28 Oct (Steve Ritt).

Bobolink: 12100 at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Sep (Jeff Lewis) provided an amazing count. Up to 35 along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Doug Johnston) was a good count for the mountain region. Three along Dairyland Rd in Orange Co, 18 Oct (Jan Hansen) and one photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 28 Oct (Linda Montgomery) were somewhat late.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Sightings included one photographed in a yard in south Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 17 Aug (Bob & Judy



Rusty Blackbird, 27 Nov 2015, New Hanover Co, NC. Photo by John Ennis.

Maxwell); a female visiting a feeder with cowbirds in Waves, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 24 Sep through 6 Oct (Karen Lebing); one photographed amongst a flock of cowbirds and starlings in a field near Lake Landing, Hyde Co, NC, 26 Oct (Lee Adams, Peggy Eubank); and one amongst Red-winged Blackbirds at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, 17 Oct (Louise Barden, Tom Ledford, Penny Soares, Judy Walker).

Rusty Blackbird: 520 in the parking lot for the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 28 Nov (Sam Cooper) was an impressive concentration.

Baltimore Oriole: Somewhat early was one in Manteo, Dare Co, NC, 21 Aug (Jeff Lewis); one at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 22 Aug (Sam Cooper); and 13, also a good count, on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.).

Red Crossbill: This species was present in the Black Mountains and Balsam Mountains in western North Carolina throughout the period. High counts for those two areas were, respectively, 52 on Bald Knob Ridge, southern Yancey Co, 31 Oct (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal) and 31 along the BRP near Bearpen Gap, Haywood Co, 28 Nov (Simpson, Westphal). Westphal also notes that while most calls heard on Bald Knob Ridge were “type 1” calls, at least one “type 2” was heard, and a rare “type 3” call was heard on 31 Oct. Up to ten were seen on Roan Mtn Mitchell Co, NC, 21 Aug-19 Sep (Rick Knight).

Pine Siskin: Large flocks began arriving in the NC mountains in late October, with 92 along the BRP at the border of Buncombe Co and Yancey Co, 24 Oct (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal) and 60 on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, 4 Nov (Rick Knight).