

The Chat

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THE CHAT

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Cover: Kirtland's Warbler, 28 September 2018, Ridge Junction Overlook, NC
Photo by Alan Lenk

2017 Spring Migration Counts in North Carolina

Marilyn Westphal
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Twenty count areas completed surveys in 2017, one less than the previous year. Although Onslow County discontinued its count, Brunswick County picked up the slack to represent the coastal area. Also, the Grandfather Mountain count ran into some very inclement weather and could not complete the count this year, but intends to pick it up again next year.

Total species (239) was slightly lower than the past few years, but about average overall for the past dozen years. Total individual bird numbers (88,747) was also about average for that period. Although species and individual totals were average, participation (458 participants) bounced back to actually slightly above average in 2017 from a low 429 in 2016. The additional number of participants did not result in additional hours in the field, though. In fact, the field hours (1069.10) were well off the average of 1274.38 over the past dozen years.

A few of the rarities located included a Surf Scoter on the Kerr Lake count, a Common Merganser on the Pilot Mountain count, an Arctic Tern on the Falls Lake count, an Evening Grosbeak on the Rockingham County count, and a Wilson's Warbler and a Dickcissel on the Chapel Hill count. Many of the other species found on only one count were late departing winter residents. Some other unusual species located in two count areas included Mississippi Kite on the Rockingham and Brunswick counts, Warbling Vireo on the Pilot Mountain and Forsyth counts, Sedge Wren on the Mecklenburg and Chapel Hill counts, and Blue-winged Warbler on the Mecklenburg and Forsyth counts. Of course as the only coastal count, Brunswick County racked up a fantastic 34 species exclusive to that count. Perhaps it's time for another coastal area to give them some competition!

Most common (over 2000 individuals found) and widespread (reported on every count) species included Northern Cardinal (3852), American Crow (2928), Tufted Titmouse (2334), and Carolina Wren (2035). There were 22 species found on every count. The only warbler found on every count was Common Yellowthroat.

Details of individual counts including names of compilers and participants as well as count highlights and a list of species found exclusively on that count follow.

Mountains

Transylvania County – Count date May 3rd, 124 species, 3695 individuals, 19 participants, 64.70 party-hours. Elevation ranges from 2100 to 5600 ft.

Weather: Clear, calm and warm. Temperature 45-75°F, cooler at higher elevations.

Compiler: Michael Plauché (captainbluegill@gmail.com)

Participants: Marvin Barg, Michele Barg, Susan Causey, Ray Dunkelberg, Jerry Griggs, Gary Harris, Kathy Harris, Claire Herzog, Elizabeth Galloway, Tim Lee, Joan McDonald, Malcolm McDonald, Michael Plauché, Marcus Simpson, Norma Siebenheller, Martine Stolk, Charlie Threatte, Linda Threatte, and Marilyn Westphal.

Exclusives: None

Notes: The 2017 Transylvania County Spring Bird Count was a great success thanks to the participants. One hundred and twenty-four species were logged, which matches the previous high count from 2013. It seems the great weather and eager volunteers united for this fantastic outcome. The day was calm and clear, starting off cool (in the forties), and warming to a perfectly pleasant afternoon with temperatures in the mid-seventies.

Nineteen volunteer observers logged 65 hours and nearly 160 miles. We turned up 25 species of warbler, four species of vireo, both Summer and Scarlet Tanager, Bald Eagle, Osprey, an American Woodcock, Swainson's, Hermit, and Wood Thrushes, Veery, Blue Grosbeak, Great Egret and many other great birds. The Ecusta Great Blue Heron colony continues to grow. Seventy-three individuals were recorded this year.

The spring bird count creates a valuable picture of bird populations and migratory trends from year to year. We all should be proud of our contribution in continuing this great tradition.

Michael Plauché

Pisgah Ridge, Great Balsam and Plott Balsam Mountains IBA – Count dates spanned from May 18-22 with teams selecting one of those days to do their section, 74 species, 3304 individuals, 24 participants in 11 parties, 71.20 party-hours. Elevation ranges for this count run from 3500 to 6100 feet.

Weather: Mostly cloudy to clear, temperatures from 45 to 65°F and winds from 5 to 15mph.

Compiler: Marilyn Westphal (mjwestph@ret.unca.edu)

Participants: Seth Buddy, Tim Carstens, Nancy Casey, Savannah Clark, Robert Emmott, Tom Flagg, Kirk Gardner, Robert Johnson, Stacy Johnson, Gail Lankford, Charlie Lankford, Andrew Laughlin, Nora Murdock, Michael Plauché, Catherine Reid, Barbara Reynolds, Russell Roe, Mark Simpson, Simon Thompson, Tom Tribble, Lou Weber, Marilyn Westphal, Connie Wulcowicz and Stan Wulcowicz

Exclusives: None

Notes: Although there were more individual birds found this year, the total species count was lower than average. No swallows, bluebirds, or Peregrine Falcons were seen, and for the first time since the count began

there were no Pine Siskins found. First time for the count was a Summer Tanager. It was a good year for Alder and Least Flycatcher with 36 each.

Chestnut-sided Warbler took back the top spot again as most common species (300) after playing second fiddle the previous couple of years. Dark-eyed Junco returned to second (290) followed by Eastern Towhee (229), Black-throated Green Warbler (202), Golden-crowned Kinglet (191), Blue-headed Vireo (136), Canada Warbler (166), Black-throated Blue Warbler (141), Veery (136), and American Robin (116). Good sized flocks of Red Crossbills were present in the area and Northern Saw-whet Owls were nesting at known locations once again making them an easy find.

As always the participants made this count a success. Many thanks for all they do.

Marilyn Westphal

Henderson County – Count date period from May 13th to May 16th (teams select which date to do their count), 104 species, 2291 individuals, 22 participants in ten areas, 40.90 party-hours.

Weather: Variable

Compiler: Jim Neal (jlbjneal@gmail.com)

Participants: Phil Brown, Ruth Brown, Vickie Burke, Doug Carle, Muriel Carle, Barrie Cliff, Paulette Cliff, Liz Fitts, Cathy Ford, Joyce Gray, Liz Honnold, Michael McCurdy, Richard Meltzer, Barbara Neal, Jim Neal, Carol Palmer, Don Palmer, Nicole Salzman, Mark Simpson, Aaron Steed, Linda Wallace, and Marilyn Westphal

Exclusives: None

Notes: The 2017 Spring Migration Count for Henderson County was conducted over a four-day period from May 13 through 16, 2017. Twenty-two (22) people counted 10 areas within the county and found 104 species and 2291 individual birds. The 104 species is near the midpoint of our low of 95 species set in 2015 and our high of 120 species found in 2006. The 2291 total birds are well below the midpoint between our low of 1612 in 2014 and the high of 3904 in 2012.

There were six species with more than 100 individuals including Cliff Swallow (150), followed by Song Sparrow (139), American Crow (132), Northern Cardinal (122) and Eastern Towhee and European Starling tied at 115.

Normally we get around 20 species of warblers and this year we found 21. The Black-throated Green (28) was most prevalent, followed closely by Ovenbird (25), Common Yellowthroat (20) and four with 17, including Northern Parula, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart and Hooded Warbler.

Other really good birds found included Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Whip-poor-will, Acadian Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Grasshopper Sparrow and Bobolink. I want to thank all

those who helped with the count, particularly the several new people, for an excellent job.

Jim Neal

Buncombe County – Count dates ran from May 13-15 with each group selecting the date for their section, 113 species, 4024 individuals, 20 participants in nine parties, 60.90 party-hours.

Weather: Cool and fair, partly sunny over the period.

Compiler: Tom Tribble (ttribble@gmail.com)

Participants: Tom Bush, Nancy Casey, K. Hillegas, Doug Johnston, K Kelly, Herman Lankford, D. Liberatori, R. Liberatori, D. McFatter, Janie Owens, Liz Payne, Kitti Reynolds, J Rittenburg, Russell Roe, Mark Simpson, Vin Stanton, Tom Tribble, Marilyn Westphal, Jay Wherley, and Steve Yurkovich

Exclusives: Cerulean Warbler

Notes: Some comparisons from the last few years include:

2014 – 120 species, 5421 individuals

2015 – 112 species, 4902 individuals

2016 – 109 species, 4913 individuals

2017 – 113 species, 4024 individuals

Birds reported this year, but not reported the last few years include Gray-cheeked Thrush, Black-billed Cuckoo (two in different sections, but interestingly not at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary), and Common Nighthawk.

Most common birds included American Robin (220), European Starling and Cedar Waxwing (179), and American Crow (176).

There were 22 species of warbler, the same total as the last two years. No Pine Warbler found last year, and no Kentucky Warbler this year.

Tom Tribble

Black Mountains IBA – Count period ran from May 25th-30th with teams selecting one of those days to complete their section, 61 species, 2168 individuals, 14 participants in 14 parties with some teams covering a second section on a different day, 41.85 party-hours.

Weather: Enough pleasant weather during the count period that everyone could find a decent day to do their section. Elevation range for this count is 3000 to 6684 ft. with most of the count area above 4000 feet. This count has been conducted since 2006 with 2008 missed because of road closures.

Compiler: Marilyn Westphal (mjwestph@ret.unca.edu)

Participants: Seth Buddy, Miles Buddy, Bob Knight, Charlie Lankford, Gail Lankford, Andrew Laughlin, Nora Murdock, Michael Plauché, Barbara Reynolds, Debbie Segal, Aaron Steed, Mark Simpson, Simon Thompson, and Marilyn Westphal

Exclusives: None

Notes: It was a fairly typical spring count with average numbers of species and individuals and no unexpected species found with most species exhibiting typical numbers. Black-and-white Warbler, Ovenbird, Hooded Warbler, and Black-throated Blue Warbler numbers were higher than usual, but this probably was largely the result of better coverage at some of the middle elevations where these species are more common. It will take more years of counts to determine if any middle elevation species might be moving a little higher to breed. Higher elevation species showed no particular differences with previous years. However, Red Crossbill numbers were very good this year with some good sized flocks seen.

Much of the area covered in this count is high elevation spruce/fir habitat, and the most frequently found species are those common to that habitat. This year, as usual, the top ten species were largely dominated by spruce/fir specialists and included Dark-eyed Junco (256), Black-throated Green Warbler (189), Golden-crowned Kinglet (155), Blue-headed Vireo (135), Black-throated Blue Warbler (127), Canada Warbler (112), Red-breasted Nuthatch (87), Blackburnian Warbler (82), Ovenbird (75), and Eastern Towhee (73).

No Swainson's Thrushes were found this year and numbers have been declining for the past few years over the spring/summer season, so perhaps the small population that has been present over the past several years was not large enough to sustain itself over the long term. Also, since no nocturnal birding was carried out and no Northern Saw-whet Owls were found nesting in the area this year, the only owl species found was a Barred Owl.

Many thanks once again to all the participants. This count requires some significant hiking over sometimes steep and/or rocky trails, so their efforts are always greatly appreciated.

Marilyn Westphal

Hanging Rock State Park IBA – Count date May 3rd, 92 species, 1258 individuals, 14 participants in six parties, 20.00 party-hours. Elevation range 1200-2400 feet.

Weather: No report.

Compiler: Jean Chamberlain (jchamberlain1@windstream.net)

Participants: Farida Abbas, Gayathri Baliga, Brian Bockhahn, Jean Chamberlain, Nita Colvin, Allison Gagnon, John Harris, Derek Hudgins, Don Kautz, Kyle Kittelberger, Ron Morris, Laura Phail, Cara Woods and Tony Woods.

Exclusives: None

Notes: None

Piedmont

Iredell County – Count date April 23rd, 79 species, 1118 individuals, seven participants, 10.00 party-hours.

Weather: Rain, temperature ranged from 44-46°F; totally miserable weather.

Count area: Circle centered on South Yadkin River Bridge - Chipley Ford Road in Northern Iredell County.

Compiler: Ron Underwood (rongto@gmail.com)

Participants: Debbie Birnley, Cynthia Dickerson, Bill English, Larry Marlin, Jason Thiele, Garnet Underwood and Ron Underwood

Exclusives: Purple Finch, Vesper Sparrow

Notes: Totally dismal conditions prevailed on count day. Thanks to those who were able to come out or who were able to send in feeder reports. In spite of the conditions we had 79 species and 1118 individuals.

Ron Underwood

Mecklenberg County – count date April 23rd, 135 species, 6982 individuals, 35 participants, 86.15 party-hours.

Weather: No data

Compiler: Jeff Lemons (birdsallot@gmail.com)

Participants: Leigh Ann Carter, Bill Duston, Shep Foley, Jan Fowler, Noreen George, Robert Gilson, Jennifer Guyton, Jill Guyton, Jim Guyton, Chris Hanna, John Hanna, Greg Hays, Matt Janson, Dennis Kent, Malia Kline, Alan Kneidel, Ken Kneidel, Lenny Lampel, Dennis Lankford, Jeff Lemons, Joclyn MacLaughlin, Pat MacLaughlin, Kevin Metcalf, Roger Moyer, Jill Palmer, Taylor Piephoff, Lucy Quintilliano, Barry Rowan, Tammy Sanders, Tom Sanders, John Scavetto, Don Seriff, Will Stuart, Rob VanEpps, Judy Walker

Exclusives: Pectoral Sandpiper, Lincoln's Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird

Notes: None

Pilot Mountain State Park – Count date May 4th, 111 species, 1936 individuals, nine participants, five teams, 30.75 party-hours. Surry County - Pilot Mountain is the count center.

Weather: No data

Compiler: Jesse Anderson (jesse.anderson@ncparks.gov)

Participants: Jean Aldrich, Jesse Anderson, Brian Bockhahn, Jean Chamberlain, Don Kautz, Kyle Kittelberger, Ron Morris, Cara Woods, Tony Woods

Exclusives: Common Merganser

Notes: A small, but mighty crew counted 111 species, covering mostly park land, but unable to cover the entire count circle. The total was up from

109 last year, which was the first year of the count. Birding records in Surry County still have some potential, so quite a few county records were added.

Interesting contributions included county records of four Common Mergansers, likely the same two adult male/female pair seen by two parties at different locations on the Yadkin River, new to both Yadkin and Surry Counties according to NC Bird Records on the CBC website, a high count of 15 Broad-winged Hawks in Yadkin County, a Northern Harrier, a small group of Bobolinks and Grasshopper Sparrows (also Surry County records), and 21 species of warbler.

Jesse Anderson

Forsyth County – Count date May 6th, 124 species, 5660 individuals, 52 participants in 12 teams, 82.00 party-hours.

Weather: cloudy, temperature 55-65°F, wind 10 mph and gusty

Compiler: Ron Morris (ronmorris@triad.rr.com)

Participants: Mary Franklin Blackburn, Kim Brand, Malcolm Brown, Jean Chamberlain, David Collins, Nita Colvin, Donovan Conway, Mike Conway, Phil Crisp, Carol Cunningham, Doug Demerest, David Disher, Susan Disher, Cynthia Donaldson, Kerry Eckhardt, Karyl Gabriel, Allison Gagnon, Nathan Gatto, Carol Gearhart, Bill Gifford, Elnora Gore, John Haire, Roper Halverson, Hop Hopkins, Royce Hough, Derek Hudgins, Bill Jackson, Don Kautz, Don Lendle, Jim Martin, Craig McCleary, Jane McCleary, Heather Moir, Ron Morris, Ann Newsome, Laura Phail, Jeremy Reiskind, Nancy Russo, Lee Salisbury, Gene Schepker, Lois Schneider, David Shuford, Philip Stewart, Ron Story, Bill Sugg, Chuck Thompson, Cindy Thompson, Katherine Thorington, Andrew Thornton, Gray Tuttle, Jay Wilhelmi, and Lucia Zinzow.

Exclusives: None

Notes: It turned out to be a pretty average year despite the unpleasant weather. The average over 26 years is 126.2 species and 5658.2 individuals. This year 52 stalwart birders identified 124 species and counted 5660 individuals. We missed Louisiana Waterthrush, but we average only one or two each year and miss them altogether not infrequently. This is the second year in a row that we found no Prairie Warblers. The most disappointing was the absence of Yellow-crowned Night Heron. This is the second year in a row that we found none, but they have been in steady decline since the high count of 13 in 2003. Last year we had none, in 2015 we had two, and in 2014 we had one.

Good finds this year included a Great Egret near Tanglewood, the first in seven years and only the sixth in 26 years. Another excellent find was a Caspian Tern at Salem Lake, the first in four years and only the sixth in 26 years including three in 2013. Finally, a Blue-winged Warbler was found at Washington Park, the third in four years and just the fourth in 18 years.

Many thanks to all participants, especially the team leaders who organized coverage of their areas and got their teams' data to me promptly.

Ron Morris

Rockingham County – Count date May 2nd, 106 species, 1144 individuals, five participants in three parties, 15.75 party-hours.

Weather: Mostly clear skies and moderate winds, temperature 57-76°F.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Penny Barham, Brian Bockhahn, Kyle Kittelberger, Cara Woods and Tony Woods.

Exclusives: American Bittern, Evening Grosbeak

Notes: The Fifth Rockingham County Spring Bird Count was held on Tuesday, May 2nd, under mostly clear skies and moderate winds and temperature. The five observers tallied 106 species (average 108) and 1144 individuals (average 1632).

First count records include a surprise dawn flyover American Bittern over Mayo River Road, two Cliff Swallows seen over Groagan Lake, and a singing and seen Ruby-crowned Kinglet on Mayo River Road. But the female Evening Grosbeak continuing at a feeder in Mayodan was incredible!

Other goodies for the count records included our third Green Heron at May Park Ponds, a second Peregrine Falcon over Cedar Mountain, a pair of third record flyover American Woodcocks over Mayo River Road, a second Blackburnian Warbler, and a third record Cape May Warbler.

Misses included all three owl species normally found because of pre-dawn winds, Belted Kingfisher, Eastern Kingbird, Swainson's Thrush, Black-and-white Prothonotary, and Worm-eating Warblers, and, possibly another that may be blamed on wind, a Grasshopper Sparrow.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count!

Brian Bockhahn

Greensboro – Count date April 29th, 121 species, 9038 individuals, 34 participants, 98.35 party-hours.

Weather: The weather was warm for the time of year, with a low of 72 and a high of 86. Skies were partly to mostly cloudy and winds were light, averaging 10 mph with an occasional gust to 20 mph. There was no precipitation.

Compiler: Elizabeth Link (elzlink@yahoo.com)

Participants: Nancy Adamson, Carolyn Allen, Bruce Billings, Jim Buchanan, Dennis Burnette, Lynn Burnette, Sue Cole, Scott DePue, Jim Eldrett, Lynne Gray, Craig Lawrence, Jane Lawrence, Elizabeth Link, Henry Link, Clarence Mattocks, Lyn McCoy, Lynn Moseley, Jean Murdick, Lauren Murdick, Roberta Newton, Lane Oldham, Ann Presnell, Danny Royster, Tripti Sawal, Wallace Sills, Lou Skrabec, Ann Steighner, Jim Strickland, Emily Tyler, Ann VanSant, Ann Walter-Fromson, Matt Wangarin, Stella Wear, and Melissa Whitmire

Exclusives: None

Notes: The Spring Count in Greensboro was held on April 29. Thirty-four counters took part in the count, a few more than our average of 30 over the last 20 years. Those counters put in 98.25 party hours, slightly lower than our average of 103.

For this year's count, we had a total of 121 species, which is slightly lower than our average of 125, plus six count week birds. For the last 20 years, our highest species count was 136 in 2005, and lowest was 110 in 2010.

The number of individual birds counted was 9038. This was well above our 20-year average of 7221. I went back to 1995 for a year in which a larger number of birds (9625) were counted.

Notables included a Greater Scaup, found on an office park retention pond, the first occurrence of a Greater Scaup in the 50 years of our available records; and a Black-billed Cuckoo, which has turned up on our count only five times in the last 50 years.

Elizabeth Link

Southern Pines – Count date May 7th, 127 species, 5288 individuals, 28 participants in 11 teams, 69.95 party-hours.

Weather: Quite good for a change! Dry with light winds, temperature 43-71°, altogether a very pleasant day!

Compiler: Susan Campbell (susan@ncaves.com)

Participants: Jennifer Archambault, Rex Badgett, Doreen Blanchette, Carol Bowman, Susan Campbell, Jay Carter, Bob Ganis, Tina Ganis, Gabriella Garrison, Ryan Garrison, Scott Hartley, Yvette Haughney, Tom Howard, Charlie Jones, Linda Jones, Sheila Klein, Marjorie Ludwig, Jeff Marcus, Bill Mullin, Jon Rouse, Bruce Sorrie, Mike Stewart, Rick Studenmund, Michelle Wilcox, Dave Williams, Nancy Williams, Darryl Young and Shelly Young

Exclusives: Lark Sparrow

Notes: Count day was, again, later in the spring due to the conflict with the Carolina Bird Club Spring Meeting. A number of regular participants had conflicts, and so we had minimal to no coverage in some areas of the circle. Furthermore, Lake Surf was still mostly drained as a result of issues with safety of the dam and spillway. Loss of the largest body of water in the area affected our count, as it did during the Christmas Bird Count in December. Although we had a few species of shorebird there, it did not make up for the loss of diversity that has been typical of the lake area in the past.

We did have several species new to the count that were not unanticipated for our region, but were nice to see and helped bolster numbers given our deficits in certain areas. Little Blue Heron, Anhinga, and Mississippi Kites were all very nice surprises.

Some surprising misses included Eastern Screech-Owl and Field Sparrow. Sadly, we had no interesting warblers or thrushes. Bobolink and

Baltimore Oriole are fairly unusual finds, but they also never turned up during the day.

Regardless of what were lackluster results for the most part, participants all seemed to have had an enjoyable day. In spite of what seemed to be more challenges for our seasonal count, folks are enthusiastic about continuing the tradition into the future.

Susan Campbell

Chapel Hill – Count date May 13th, 130 species, 8381 individuals, 48 field observers and three feeder watchers, 127.7 party hours.

Weather: Low 53°F, high 65°F; wind variable 0-5mph, mostly cloudy, no rain.

Compiler: Will Cook (cwcook@duke.edu)

Participants: Julie Angerman, Todd Bishop, Brian Bockhahn, Richard Brown, Narm Budnitz, Jim Capel, Tait Chandler, Bob Chase, Laura Clifford, Will Cook, Deb Copeland, Maria deBruyn, Tom Driscoll, Cynthia Fox, Jill Froning, Tim Gerla, Vicki Glower, Mark Goodwin, Steve Graves, Beth Gregory, Lynda Haake, Bobbie Hahn, Jan Hansen, Karyn Hede, Gene Kingsley, Geraldine Kingsley, Mark Kosiewski, Ken Lundstrom, Mary McLelland, Adair McNear, David Murdock, Jane Oliver, Jeff Phippen, Jelma Poelski, Margaret Scott, Julia Shields, David Smith, Judy Smith, Paule Taille, Edith Tatum, Ginger Travis, Margaret Wainwright, Bill Ward and Zoe

Exclusives: Wilson's Warbler, Dickcissel

Notes: We had an excellent Chapel Hill spring count on Saturday, May 13, 2017 with the second highest species count in the last 30 years, though for numbers of individual birds it was quite average. The calm, cool overcast conditions made for very pleasant counting and no doubt helped the count by keeping the birds active throughout the day. The species total of 130 is nine above the ten-year average of 121, though the total number of birds, 8381, is close to the average of 8433. Effort on the count was average with 127.7 party-hours (average 128.2) as was the number of birds per party hour (63.6, average 65.9).

We had an absolutely incredible three species new to the count this year. Short-billed Dowitcher, Willow Flycatcher, and Dickcissel. I'm not sure when that last occurred, but it was probably decades ago. The Chapel Hill count has been going on continuously since 1957, so it isn't easy to add new species! The Short-billed Dowitcher was spotted by Jan Hansen on the rocky bank near the dam at University Lake. Jan also scored a Dickcissel at Maple View Farm and got a nice photograph. Mark Kosiewski found the Willow Flycatcher on the Briar Chapel trail. It cooperated nicely for photos, but couldn't be identified for sure without hearing its call. Fortunately, it responded to a tape of Willow by sounding off the fitz-bew call. Other goodies included Common Gallinule (Jill Froning, 4th count record), Semipalmated Plover (Hansen), Black-billed Cuckoo (Mark Goodwin, first since

1975), Hermit Thrush (Karyn Hede), Blackburnian Warbler (Brian Bockhahn), Palm Warbler (Kosiewski), both Canada and Wilson's Warblers at Mason Farm (Will Cook), and a count week King Rail (Ginger Travis, who couldn't get to Cub Creek on count day).

We set a good number of record highs this year: Spotted Sandpiper (97, average 16), N. Rough-winged Swallow (254, average 68), Cliff Swallow (62, average seven), Magnolia Warbler (14, average two). This is the second record-setting year in a row for Rough-winged Swallow and Magnolia Warbler. Also with unusually high numbers: Solitary Sandpiper (20, average 10), Eastern Wood Pewee (67, average 32), Acadian Flycatcher (81, average 59), Barn Swallow (179, average 74), Veery (11 is highest since 1978, average three), Louisiana Waterthrush (31 is highest since 1976, average 14), Yellow Warbler (15, average eight), Chestnut-sided Warbler (six, average one), and Black-throated Green Warbler (three, average one).

The one big miss was Blue-headed Vireo, the first miss of this local breeding bird since 1985. Remarkably scarce this year: Eastern Kingbird (15 is lowest since 1974, average 26), Purple Martin (19, average 53), Wood Thrush (38, average 60), White-throated Sparrow (one ties record low, average 17), and House Sparrow (13 ties record low set last year, average 47).

Team honors: Jan Hansen, covering both the University Lake and Dairyland Road areas, recorded an outstanding 97 species and 819 individual birds, the highest for both. Tom Driscoll got the highest individual count with 910.

Thanks to the 48-field counters and 2 feeder watchers for your help.

Charles W. "Will" Cook

Jordan Lake – Count date May 7th, 112 species, 7,532 individuals, 47 participants in 23 parties, 136.12 party-hours.

Weather: The temperature ranged from 43°F in the morning to 65°F in the afternoon. Winds were variable to about 10 mph and the sky was clear to partly cloudy.

Compiler: Norm Budnitz (nbudnitz@gmail.com)

Participants: Patsy Bailey, Barbara Beaman, Eliabeth Bishop, Todd Bishop, Brian Bockhahn, Vern Bothwell, Richard Brown, Norm Budnitz, Chris Canfield, Carol Chelette, Barbara Coffman, Patrick Coin, Will Cook, Joe Donahue, Tom Driscoll, Perry Haaland, Russell Herman, Loren Hintz, Bo Howes, Gene Kingsley, Terry Korab, Tom Krakauer, Susan Lyons, Kerry MacPherson, Trish MacPherson, Jennifer Maher, Beth Mancuso, Marty McClelland, Kyle Mills, Frank McKeever, Eddie Owens, Mark Owens, Rick Payne, Doug Pratt, Tommy Richey, Michael Ryan, Beverly Scalise, Roger Shaw, Josh Southern, Sterling Southern, Pam Timmons, Chris Tomazic, Ginger Travis, Andy Upshaw, Margaret Vimmerstedt, Rouse Wilson, and Joe Zellers

Exclusives: None

Notes: May 7, 2017, was a beautiful day for birding. The temperature ranged from 43°F in the morning to 65°F in the afternoon. Winds were variable to about 10 mph and the sky was clear to partly cloudy.

Forty-seven observers in 23 parties participated (our ten-year averages are 45 and 21, respectively). We tallied 7532 individual birds (avg. 8099) and 112 species (avg. 121) in 136 party hours (avg. 127). With more observers in more parties counting for more hours, we counted fewer species and fewer individual birds. Hmmm!

For the first year since I can remember, we did not report any record high numbers for any particular species for the count. Hmmm!

We also had some notable 'misses,' birds we usually see at least one or two of each spring: Solitary Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, Veery, Chestnut-sided Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. Hmmm!

There was plenty of competition in the area with a bicycle race, a swimming race, and a motorcycle rally. One party counted an astounding 349 motorcycles thundering past. Hmmm!

Okay everyone, hmmm along with me. Is any of this meaningful in the grander scheme of things? Probably not, but maybe so. Let's see how things develop over the next few years. Organizations such as the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology report seeing overall decreases in Neotropical migrants during the past several decades. We need to keep a watchful eye. Will Cook, working the Shearon Harris area, and Jennifer Maher and Roger Shaw, covering Big Woods Road, both reported 76 species. Brian Bockhahn reported five species of nocturnal birds: Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Chuck-will's-widow, and Eastern Whip-poor-will. It pays to get up early! Josh Southern, Sterling Southern, and Doug Pratt found two juvenile Great Horned Owls in an old Bald eagle nest. Roger Shaw turned up a Blue-winged Teal first thing in the morning and heard two Northern Bobwhites during the count period, though not on count day.

Norm Budnitz

Durham – Count date April 30th, 107 species, 3360 individuals, 13 participants in 7 parties, 41.60 party-hours.

Weather: Cloudy, light winds, temperature 71°-87°F.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Patsy Bailey, Brian Bockhahn, Norm Budnitz, Will Cook, Ruben Dario, Elizabeth Keating, Gene Kingsley, Mark Kosiewski, Tom Krakauer, Eddie Owen, Isabel Reddy, Lynn Richardson, and Jenny Stanley

Exclusives: None

Notes: The Durham Spring Bird Count was held on Sunday, April 30, 2017. Total species tallied was 107 (average 112), and total individuals was 3360 (average 4717).

Unlisted species included a pair of Mute Swans that were seen at Quail Roost. Tom Krakauer said it may be the last time he is able to count in this

area. We will miss his years of dedicated service and nice to see one more rare bird contribution! A total of nine Bonaparte's Gulls were seen from Hickory Hill, probably should be more regular, but they are lingering this spring in good numbers.

Other goodies include a flyover Common Loon over Knapp of Reeds Creek, two parties reporting Bobolink at Brickhouse Road and Lake Michie, and a male Baltimore Oriole in alternate plumage at Brickhouse Road.

Misses include Sharp-shinned Hawk, Solitary Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, and Northern Waterthrush.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered.

Brian Bockhahn

Falls Lake – Count date April 25th, 108 species, 2648 individuals, 15 participants in eight parties, 50.30 party-hours.

Weather: Heavy rains with clearing skies later in the day, temperature 61-73°F.

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Herb Amyx, Pat Amyx, Sebastian Bloc, Lucas Bobay, Brian Bockhahn, Todd Bishop, Norm Budnitz, Lena Gallitano, Kyle Kittelberger, Deborah Robertson, Mike Schultz, Deck Stapleton, Patty Tice, Pat Tyndall, and Russ Tyndall

Exclusives: Arctic Tern

Notes: The 14th Falls Lake Spring Bird Count was held on April 25th under heavy rains and increasing lake levels.

Most numerous birds were 397 Cliff Swallows followed distantly by 135 Double-crested Cormorants and 129 Northern Cardinals.

First records included an absolutely mind-blowing Artic Tern at Sandling Beach seen and photographed and even chased by a few local birders. Not only a new to the spring count species, but new to the Falls Lake checklist, which now stands at a whopping 319 species! Another first count record was a Semipalmated Plover at Rollingview.

Other goodies included our fourth Least Sandpiper and our fifth Laughing Gull at Rollingview, our fifth Common Tern at Sandling Beach, our second Forster's Tern at lake's center, and our fifth Bank Swallow at lake's center.

With the rain and floods misses were many and included Sharp-shinned Hawk for the third time, Solitary Sandpiper for the fourth time, Eastern Screech-Owl for the fifth time as well as Whip-poor-will (first miss), Chuck-wills-widow (second miss), Eastern Wood Pewee (fourth miss), Acadian Flycatcher (second miss), Yellow Warbler (first miss), Northern Waterthrush (fifth miss), and Rose-breasted Grosbeak (fourth miss).

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered for the count!

Brian Bockhahn

Kerr Lake – Count date April 27th, 117 species, 4307 individuals, 14 participants in seven parties, 45.90 party-hours.

Weather: Clear skies, moderate winds, mild temperatures (63°-77°F).

Compiler: Brian Bockhahn (birdranger248@gmail.com)

Participants: Jeff Blalock, Brian Bockhahn, Ann Brice, Adam D’Onofrio, Paul Glass, Bill Lindemuth, Joyce Lindemuth, Fred Lobdell, Carol Mauzey, Grace McCrowell, David Spears, Evan Spears, Deck Stapleton and Clyde Wilson.

Exclusives: Surf Scoter

Notes: The 14th Kerr Lake Spring Bird Count was held on April 27th under clear skies, moderate winds, mild temperatures, and increasing lake level. Most common species found were Double-crested Cormorant (406), Black Vulture (259), American Crow (178), and Turkey Vulture (172).

New to the spring check list were Least Bittern heard calling for 15 minutes at Dick Cross! Also, a wayward female Surf Scoter was seen above the dam with a flock of mergansers before taking flight.

Other goodies included a second record Dunlin, seen and photographed above the dam in the rising waters, a third record Horned Lark for the second year at the same site near Bullocksville, a fourth record American Kestrel at Dick Cross, a fourth record Red-breasted Nuthatch at Henderson Point, and fifth record Herring Gull above the dam and Broad-winged Hawk around Bullocksville.

Nothing was missed off the A-list, but misses include Acadian Flycatcher for the second time, Ruby-crowned Kinglet for the fourth time, Black-throated Green Warbler for the third time, Savannah Sparrow for the second time, and Baltimore Oriole for the fourth time.

Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to count.

Brian Bockhahn

Raven Rock State Park – Count date April 29th, 111 species, 4078 individuals, 17 participants in 11 teams, 73.15 party-hours.

Weather: Temperature - 72-92° F; wind SSW at 0-20 mph; water open. AM sunny, PM sunny. Count circle center at junction of NC210 and SR 1434.

Compiler: Erik R. Thomas (erthomas@ncsu.edu)

Participants: John Bartlett, Steve Buscynski, Charles Byrd, David DuMond, Martha Fisk, Michael Fisk, Molly Fullwood, Paul Hart, Tom Howard, Prudence Mainor, Tim McGreal, Jeff Mielke, Kevin Rease, Mitch Reese, Mary Stevens, Erik Thomas and Amber Williams

Exclusives: None

Notes: Our total of 111 species was the lowest in several years. In general, we found the species that occur regularly in the circle at this time of year, but came up short on irregularly occurring species such as Worm-eating and Yellow Warblers. We also missed certain lingering winter species such as Savannah Sparrow. Among the highlights, Bobolinks

seemed to be at the height of their migration, with five different parties finding them. Two parties (Michael and Martha Fisk; Kevin and Mitch Reese) reported Swainson's Warblers. Other good finds were two Northern Bobwhites by Tim McGreal, two American Woodcocks by Tom Howard and Chuck Byrd, and a Wilson's Snipe by David DuMond.

Erik R. Thomas

Coast

Brunswick County – Count date April 23rd, 158 species, 10,535 individuals, 21 participants, 63.00 party-hours.

Weather: Overcast skies, scattered light to heavy showers, wind NE from 5-15mph, temperature 59-71°F.

Compiler: Dave Weesner (david.weesner@yahoo.com) and Sam Cooper (dmcooper2@juno.net)

Participants: Jamie Adams, Ann Bobeck, Kathleen Bowman, Sam Cooper, Ed Corey, Shun Endo, Dalton Jackson, Mark Jones, Amanda Kiel, Sherry Lane, Pat PcPherson, Mary Lynn Meister, Ann Orsillo, Joanne Parker, Harry Sell, Hugh and Deborah Shaw, Bruce Smithson, Jerzy Smykla, Dave Weesner, Carson Wood

Exclusives: Lesser Scaup, Black Scoter, Horned Grebe, Clapper Rail, American Oystercatcher, Wilson's Plover, Piping Plover, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Sanderling, Western Sandpiper, Willet, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Least Tern, Gull-billed Tern, Royal Tern, Sandwich Tern, Black Skimmer, Common Loon, Northern Gannet, Brown Pelican, Snowy Egret, Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, White Ibis, Swallow-tailed Kite, Merlin, Seaside Sparrow, Boat-tailed Grackle, Painted Bunting

Notes: Spring counts were conducted years ago in the Wilmington Christmas Bird Count circle, which contains portions of Brunswick and New Hanover Counties, and a Spring North American Migration Count (NAMC) was conducted in Brunswick County in 1996, 1997, and 1998. The NAMC counts conducted in Brunswick County during the 1990s yielded 138 to 146 species during the dates of 9 and 11 May and participants ranged from 13 to 22. The count in 2017 was conducted on 23 April and yielded 158 species from the effort of 21 participants.

Brunswick County is the fourth-largest county in North Carolina and occupies over 1050 square miles, including over 40 miles of ocean-beach shoreline, portions of the Cape Fear, Brunswick, Waccamaw, and Lockwood Folly Rivers, and the southern half of the Green Swamp. Twenty-one observers in eight groups concentrated on some of the birding hotspots, including the beaches of Sunset, Ocean Isle, Oak Island, Bald Head, the southern portion of Ft. Fisher, the Green Swamp, Southport area, Orton Pond, Brunswick Nature Park, EV Henwood, and Indian Creek by boat (the only area covered by boat). Eagle Island and areas associated with the old Orton Plantation property were not surveyed due to access restrictions.

The count was hampered by some inclement weather, including scattered heavy downpours and cool, breezy NE winds. A small-craft advisory prevented boat coverage in areas that will hopefully be covered in future counts, including Battery Island, where over 10,000 White Ibis nests were surveyed this spring (including a few Glossy Ibis, which were missed). The count date was conducted a little early for some summer residents and some common birds were missed (i.e., Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Eastern Wood Pewee). Despite any setbacks, the count was a success and produced a respectable list including some lingering winter species and a good representation of water and shore birds. No crazy off-course birds and best sightings included three Swallow-tailed Kites just south of Leland, a good number of lingering Black Scoters, a horned grebe, and a variety of species that are present but not always easy to find like Black-throated Green Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Least Bittern, Wood Stork, Sedge Wren, and Whip-poor-will. One of the resident Monk Parakeets was found in the town of Northwest where a pair has been present for the past several years. Although they have built nests, no young have been reported, and the current status for species on the North Carolina list is "not established."

A count date in late April with more coverage (people and boats) and better weather could certainly yield even higher counts in the future.

Dave Weesner and Sam Cooper

Appendix

To view the Appendix detailing species identified on each count, click in the box below:

2018 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

Nathan A. Swick¹, Chair, Keith E. Camburn, Samuel Cooper,
Jan J. Hansen, W. Jefferson Lemons, Jeffrey S. Pippen,
Joshua L. Southern, Andrew K. Thornton, Robert W. Van Epps
¹ 4904 Jessup Grove Rd, Greensboro, NC 27410 nswick@aba.org

The make-up of the 2018 North Carolina Bird Records Committee included additions of Nathan A. Swick, Andrew K. Thornton, and Jan J. Hansen as voting members; and the retention of Richard J. Davis and Harry E. LeGrand Jr. in advisory capacities. Susan Campbell, Steven P. Shultz, and Z. Taylor Piephoff rotated off the Committee for at least a one-year hiatus.

Accepted as Valid. The following reports were judged to be valid.

Common Swift (*Apus apus*) (18-01). A written description with photos of an *Apus* swift near Pea Island NWR (*Dare*) on 7 October 2017 by Carol Hare was reviewed by the North Carolina Bird Records Committee (NCBRC) in 2018. The committee initially voted 6-3(ID) to accept, with those voting “No” citing the difficulty of identifying *Apus* swifts to species given the quality of the photographic evidence. Such a vote requires a second evaluation with outside review to place the species on the NC list. That review was invited and the report was resubmitted as a Class C report with comments from a number of Old World authorities, all of whom stated that the available evidence strongly suggested Common Swift. The NCBRC unanimously agreed, accepting the record 9-0 on the second ballot. This remarkable record represents the first for North Carolina and by virtue of submitted photographs it is placed on the Definitive List.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (18-03). The NCBRC reviewed a written description by Dwayne Martin and photos by Lori Owenby of a subadult individual of this species at Lake Hickory (*Catawba/Alexander*) on 17 November 2017. The report was unanimously accepted and represents the second record for the Piedmont region of North Carolina.

Broad-billed Hummingbird

(*Cyananthus latirostris*) (18-04). A report with photographs submitted by Susan Campbell of an adult female Broad-billed Hummingbird banded by the observer at a private home in Southern Shores (*Dare*) on 19 November 2017 was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This individual was first reported on 1 November 2017 and found dead by natural causes on 1 January 2018. This represents the state's fourth record of this species.



*Broad-billed Hummingbird,
19 Nov 2017, Dare Co, NC.
Photo by Steve Shultz*

Common Murre (*Uria aalge*) (18-05). The NCBRC reviewed a written description of at least 11 individuals, with photos of 1, submitted by Ed Corey from a Seabirding pelagic trip southeast of Oregon Inlet (*Dare*) on 10 February 2018. The report was accepted unanimously. This represents a high count of this species in North Carolina and the seventh time it has been observed in the state.

Kirtland's Warbler (*Setophaga kirtlandii*) (18-06). The NCBRC unanimously accepted a record of a subadult Kirtland's Warbler captured at a banding station near the Appalachian Trail in Pisgah National Forest (*Yancey*) on 3 October 2017, with written description and in-hand photographs by Mark Hopey. This record represents the seventh record of this endangered warbler in North Carolina, all but one of which have been in the fall.

Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*) (18-07). An exciting record of a Red-billed Tropicbird on 9 February 2018 at Nags Head (*Dare*), with written description and photographs from David Disher, was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This represents the first winter record for this species in North Carolina, and one of very few winter records of this species in the United States.

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*) (18-08). A stunning adult male Chestnut-collared Longspur seen at the Cape Point Campground, Cape Hatteras National Seashore (*Dare*) on 17 May 2018 was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. With written description and photographs by Michael Gosselin, this represents the fourth North Carolina record of this Great Plains songbird.

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*) The summer of 2018 saw an unprecedented incursion of Roseate Spoonbills into the Piedmont and

Mountains of North Carolina. The following reports were accepted by the NCBRC.

(18-09) Written description and photos by Biz Allen of a bird on the French Broad River in *Henderson* 3 June 2018. Accepted 8-1, with one member finding the report to be inadequately documented. This represents the first record for the mountains.

(18-12) Written description and photos by David Schroder of a bird near Davidson in *Mecklenberg* 27 May-27 June 2018. Accepted unanimously and representing the eighth Piedmont record.

(18-10) Written description and photos by Jacob Farmer of a bird at Crabtree Creek wetlands in *Wake* 16 June 2018. Accepted unanimously and representing the ninth Piedmont record.

(18-11) Written description and photos by Louis Skrabec of a bird at Plainfield Rd Marsh in *Guilford* 24 July 2018. Accepted unanimously and representing the tenth Piedmont record.

(18-13) Written description and photos by Shelley Rutkin of three birds at North Rugby Road in *Henderson* 21 July 2018. Accepted unanimously and representing the second record for the mountains.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) (18-14). The NCBRC unanimously accepted a written description and photos of a Curlew Sandpiper at Pea Island NWR (*Dare*), 24-26 July 2018, submitted by Karen Lebing. Formerly a rare but regular vagrant in North Carolina, this is the first record of this species in the state since 2008.

Tahiti Petrel (*Pseudobulweria rostrata*) (18-15). Easily one of the most incredible bird sightings in North Carolina's ornithological history, an adult Tahiti Petrel was seen from a Seabirding pelagic in the Gulf Stream out of Hatteras (*Dare*) 29 May 2018. The NCBRC received and unanimously accepted a written description from Ed Corey with photos from Peter Flood and Kate Sutherland. This record represents the first record of this species for the Atlantic Ocean, let alone North Carolina, and by virtue of submitted photographs it is placed on the Definitive List.

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) (18-16) The NCBRC received a written report and photographs from Kyle Kittelberger of a Common Ringed Plover first discovered at Pea Island NWR (*Dare*) on 12 October 2018. The committee was impressed by the quality of the documentation of this notoriously difficult species. This record represents the second for North Carolina. It is already on the Definitive List.

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) (18-17) The NCBRC unanimously accepted a written report with photos from Steve Ritt of an individual of this species discovered near Harbinger (*Currituck*) on 22 December 2018 and remaining present for several weeks afterwards. This record represents the first for North Carolina, and by virtue of submitted photographs it is placed on the Definitive List.



Golden-crowned Sparrow, 28 Dec 2018, Harbinger, NC. Photo by Bob Lewis

Kirtland's Warbler (*Setophaga kirtlandii*) (18-18) Documentation of a subadult Kirtland's Warbler seen at Ridge Junction Overlook (*Yancey/Buncombe*) from 25 September 2018 through 2 October 2018, with written documentation by Kent Fiala and Trevor Sleight and photos by Fiala, was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This bird was seen by many birders during its stay. This represents the eighth record for North Carolina, all but one of which have been in the fall.

Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*) (18-20) The committee unanimously accepted a report of this species with written documentation by Jacob Farmer and photos by Farmer and Audrey Whitlock of a bird seen from shore in Nags Head (*Dare*) on 26 December 2018. This represents the 3rd record of this species in North Carolina, but the first time it has been photographed in the state. By virtue of those submitted photos this species is moved from the Provisional List to the Definitive List.

Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) (18-21) Photographs taken by Jeff Pippen of an individual of this species seen at North River Farms (*Carteret*) between 30 September 2018 and 3 October 2018 were unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This represents the fourth record of this species in the state.



Townsend's Warbler, 30 Sep 2018, Carteret Co, NC. Photo by Martin Wall

Not Accepted. The following reports were judged to be not accepted.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) (18-02) The NCBRC considered a report with a single photo of a bird observed near Duck (*Dare*) on 3 September 2017 that the observer reported as a Yellow-legged Gull. While the committee noted that the individual was certainly interesting, members ultimately decided that the evidence was not sufficient to accept this potential first state record. Members cited the lack of additional photos, in particular those that would show the spread wing, and the similarity of this individual to locally common Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

Unresolved. The committee considered a report with illustrations of a Townsend's Warbler in *Mecklenburg*. There was some confusion with regard to the individual in *Carteret*, and the committee will re-consider the former in in 2019.

Summary

With this round of voting, Common Swift, Tahiti Petrel, and Golden-crowned Sparrow are added to the Definitive List, and Black Guillemot is moved from the Provisional List to the Definitive List. The total number of accepted species from North Carolina is now 484 (+3 over the final 2017 list) of which 470 are Definitive (+4 over the final 2017 list), two are considered Not Established, and 12 are Provisional (-1 over the final 2017 list).

Literature Cited

LeGrand, H., J. Haire, N. Swick, and T. Howard. 2016. Birds of North Carolina: their Distribution and Abundance.
<http://ncbirds.carolinabirdclub.org/>



BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2018, 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.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **Ln** – Lane, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **Mt** – Mount, **NC** – North Carolina, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

**All italicized place names are counties.*

Greater White-fronted Goose: One at Lake Junaluska, *Haywood NC*, 26 Jul and 23 Aug (Connie Wulkowicz, m. obs.) was unusual for late summer / early fall. Two were seen at the traditional goose gathering site where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd, *Washington NC*, 18 Nov (Michael McCloy, Dwayne Martin) and 8 Dec (Jeff Beane, et al.).

Cackling Goose: Found inside flocks of much larger Canada Geese was one along the causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, *Hyde NC*, 10 Nov (Derb Carter) and three where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd, *Washington NC*, 18 Nov (Michael McCloy, Dwayne Martin).

Trumpeter Swan: An adult photographed at Alligator River NWR, *Dare NC*, 17 Nov (Jeff Lewis, Dwayne Martin) was a first for Dare County.

Tundra Swan: Two at Lake Crabtree, *Wake NC*, the morning of 15 Nov (Eddie Owens) were locally unusual, probably the same two individuals seen that afternoon at nearby Falls Lake, *Durham NC*, (Kyle Kittelberger). Flocks of eight seen on Lake Julian, *Buncombe NC*, 14 Nov (Clifton Avery, Simon Thompson, et al.) and flying south over Lake Wheeler, *Wake NC*, 25 Nov (Owens, et al.) were unusual for those sites outside the coastal plain—was the same wandering flock responsible for both sightings?

Eurasian Wigeon: One at Pea Island NWR, *Dare NC*, 16 Sep (John & Paula Wright, m. obs.) was somewhat early. Up to two were seen at that site 28 Sep through 17 Nov (Al Hooks, m. obs.) with one continuing into winter. One photographed from the Haulover Day Use Area, *Dare NC*, 17 Nov (Mark Kosiewski, et al.) was unusual for the brackish water of the Pamlico Sound. Two drakes were seen on Fishburne Pond at Donnelley WMA, *Colleton SC*, 25-27 Nov (David Youngblood).

Common Eider: The first reports this fall involved a first-year drake photographed at Murrells Inlet, *Georgetown SC*, 11 Nov (Ken Oeser) and a hen photographed from Jeanette's Pier, *Dare NC*, 12 Nov (Michael Gosselin, Audrey Whitlock). Sightings of one to three eiders were made at multiple sites along the Outer Banks mid-November into winter. Three around the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, *Carteret NC*, 29 Nov (Alain Robert) was a notable count for that site away from the ocean.

Surf Scoter: Inland sightings included three on Lake Junaluska, *Haywood NC*, 19 Oct (Connie Wulkowicz, et al.); a hen on Lake Townsend, *Guilford NC*, 19 Oct (Henry Link); a hen at Charles D. Owen Park, *Buncombe NC*, 29 Oct through 2 Nov (Tim Carstens, m. obs.); and an adult drake on Lake Hartwell near Clemson, *Pickens SC*, 15 Nov (Kevin Kubach).

Black Scoter: Four hens on Lake Julian, *Buncombe NC*, 3 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.) was a remarkable count for the mountain region. Notable for the Piedmont were three, one drake and two hens, on Mountain Island Lake, *Mecklenburg NC*, 13 Nov (Kevin Metcalf); two hens on Lake Crabtree, *Wake NC*, 15 Nov (Dale Lambert); an adult drake at Price Park in Greensboro, *Guilford NC*, 18 Nov (Matt Wangerin); and a hen on Lake Johnson, *Wake NC*, 18-20 Nov (Michael McCloy, m. obs.). A report of 12,

including four adult drakes, in the Mountain Creek arm of Lake Norman, *Catawba NC*, made by hunters, 13 Nov (Ben Burrell, et al.) would represent a new inland high count if accurate.

Common Goldeneye: Three on Lake Osceola, *Henderson NC*, 16 Nov (Ron Selvey, m. obs.) was a good count for the mountain region. A hen photographed on a shopping center pond near the University of NC at Charlotte, *Mecklenburg NC*, 21 Nov (Scott Partridge) was unusual for such an urban area.

Common Merganser: Seven continued from summer on Big Laurel Creek, *Madison NC*, 1 Sep (Charles Donnelly).

Horned Grebe: Three on Lake Keowee, *Oconee SC*, 16 Aug (Don Lenahan) were unusual for August, probably early southbound migrants.

Red-necked Grebe: Individuals on Randleman Lake, *Randolph NC*, 20 Nov (Jeff Souther) and in Rodanthe, *Dare NC*, 28 Nov (Karen Lebing) were good finds.

Eared Grebe: One was seen on the Salt Pond at Cape Point, *Dare NC*, 7-18 Nov (Michael Gosselin, m. obs.).

White-winged Dove: Individuals were seen at Hunting Island SP, *Beaufort SC*, 2 Sep (Jeff Kidd); on East Kiawah Island, *Charleston SC*, 5 Nov (Michael Gamble); visiting a feeder in Mt Pleasant, *Charleston SC*, 9-14 Nov (Craig Watson, m. obs.); and visiting a feeder in Waves, *Dare NC*, 28 Nov (Karen Lebing).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: Like many migratory songbirds, the cuckoo's fall passage through the Carolinas continued later into the fall than is typical, possibly because of a stagnant weather pattern over the region during much of September. Dozens of sightings were made in November this year, considerably more than the two or three made in an average November. Individuals in Southern Shores, *Dare NC*, 25 Nov (Al Hooks, Audrey Whitlock) and at Fish Haul Creek Park, *Beaufort SC*, 25 Nov (Aaron Palmieri, et al.) were the latest.

Common Nighthawk: One seen and heard making its peent call at Donnelley WMA, *Colleton SC*, 18 Nov (Carl & Cathy Miller) was extremely late.

Chimney Swift: One in flight over the east end of Kiawah Island, *Charleston SC*, 8 Nov (Michael Gamble) was the last one reported this fall.

Clapper Rail: One photographed in a yard in southwest Charlotte, *Mecklenburg NC*, 1 Oct (Kam Myers) was likely a migrant forced down by inclement weather.

Purple Swamphen: Requiring review by the SC BRC was the report with photographs of an apparent Purple Swamphen on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, *Charleston SC*,

26 Oct (David McLean, Cynthia Worthington). If accepted, the report would become the first official record of this exotic, established in south Florida, anywhere in the Carolinas.

Black-necked Stilt: Two on Bird Shoal in the Rachel Carson Reserve, *Carteret* NC, 14 Aug (Amy Padgett) at one in a flooded field at Ogden Park, *New Hanover* NC, 16 Sep (Sam Cooper) were unusual for those areas.

American Avocet: Following the passage of Hurricane Michael, two were seen at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, 12 Oct (Ricky Davis) and five were photographed at Lake Crabtree, *Wake* NC, 14 Oct (Eddie Owens). Three on the north side of Mason Inlet, *New Hanover* NC, 7 Nov (Sam Cooper) were unusual for that site.

American Oystercatcher: One photographed at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, during the passage of Hurricane Florence, 15 Sep (Alec Hopping, Logan Kahle, m. obs.) was a fantastic find, as there are only four previous inland records in NC.

American Golden-Plover: About a dozen were reported this fall. Two at Lake Julian, *Buncombe* NC, following the passage of Hurricane Florence, 16 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.) were unusual for that site. One hung around for a while in the grassy area next to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, *Carteret* NC, 24 Sep through 1 Oct (Martin Wall, m. obs.). One seen along River Rd at Alligator River NWR, *Dare* NC, 17-22 Nov (m. obs.) was somewhat late.

Wilson's Plover: Four lingered on the east end of Shackleford Banks, *Carteret* NC, until at least 11 Nov (John Fussell, et al.).

Common Ringed Plover: Accepted by the NC BRC (see page 19) was the report of one seen and photographed at North Pond, Pea Island NWR, *Dare* NC, 12-13 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger, m. obs.). This report provides the second official record of this Eurasian stray in NC.

Long-billed Curlew: One seen on the east end of Shackleford Banks, *Carteret* NC, 7 Oct (Matt Spangler) through 11 Nov (John Fussell, et al.) was likely the same individual seen at that site last fall.

Bar-tailed Godwit: One seen on the east end of Shackleford Banks, *Carteret* NC, 10 Nov (Jamie Adams) and 11 Nov (John Fussell, et al.) was likely the same individual seen at that site the past two fall seasons. Amazingly, *two* Bar-tailed Godwits were seen at that site a week later, 18 Nov (Haven Wiley).

Hudsonian Godwit: Two were seen around North Pond, Pea Island NWR, *Dare* NC, 21-27 Sep (Audrey Whitlock, et al.) with one continuing there until 5 Nov (m. obs.). One on the beach on the north side of Oregon Inlet, *Dare* NC, 18 Nov (Ed Corey, et al.) was somewhat late.

Ruddy Turnstone: Following a period of heavy rain in the French Broad River Valley up to two were seen at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, *Henderson* NC, 1-3 Aug (Kevin Burke, m. obs.) and three were found in flooded grass fields east of Brevard, *Transylvania* NC, 3 Aug (Bob Butler, et al.).

Stilt Sandpiper: Four in a flooded grass field just east of Brevard, *Transylvania* NC, following heavy rain, 3 Aug (Claire Herzog, Mike Judd) were a first for that county.

Curlew Sandpiper: An adult molting out of breeding plumage photographed at South Point on Ocracoke Island, *Hyde* NC, 16 Aug (Chelsea Weithman, et al.) was almost certainly the same individual seen in adjacent Dare County in late July.

Dunlin: Individuals in an agricultural field at Warren Wilson College, *Buncombe* NC, 2-5 Nov (Jamie Adams, m. obs.) and at Lake Junaluska, *Haywood* NC, 15 Nov (Connie Wulkowicz) were unusual for those sites.

Baird's Sandpiper: One seen in an agricultural field at Warren Wilson College, *Buncombe* NC, 1 Nov (Aaron Steed, et al.) through 5 Nov (m. obs.) was a great find.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Good counts for fall were 21 at North River Preserve, *Carteret* NC, 9 Sep (John Fussell, et al.) and 12 along Hooper Ln, *Henderson* NC, following Hurricane Florence, 16 Sep (Vicky Burke, et al.). A juvenile photographed at the Cape Point Campground, *Dare* NC, 14 Nov (Michael Gosselin) was late.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Sightings made at Super Sod farms included two in *Martin* NC, 4 Aug (Ricky Davis); up to two in *Orangeburg* SC, 2-23 Sep (Shawn Smolen-Morton, m. obs.); and up to three in *Henderson* NC, 11-17 Sep (Kevin Burke, m. obs.).

Pectoral Sandpiper: 200 in the flooded fields at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, *Henderson* NC, following a period of heavy rain, 3 Aug (Ryan Lubbers, Jay Wherley) was the high count this fall.

Short-billed Dowitcher: One at the Super Sod farm in *Martin* NC, 4 Aug (Ricky Davis) and three in a flooded soybean field in *Lenoir* NC, 25 Aug (Stacy & Natalie Barbour) were possible firsts for those counties. Following a period of heavy rain in the French Broad River Valley up to eight were seen along Hooper Ln, *Henderson* NC, 1-5 Aug (m. obs.) and four were photographed in a flooded field just east of Brevard, *Transylvania* NC, 4 Aug (Bob Butler, et al.).

Solitary Sandpiper: One photographed on the Calabash River in Sunset Beach, *Brunswick* NC, 3 Nov (David Wilson) was late.

Willet: Following a period of heavy rain in the French Broad River Valley three were seen along Hooper Ln, *Henderson*, 3 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, et al.) and three were seen in a flooded field just east of Brevard, *Transylvania*, 3 Aug (Claire Herzog, et al.).

Wilson's Phalarope: Six at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), *Jasper* SC, 17 Aug (Steve Calver, et al.) was a great count. Individuals were photographed at Pea Island NWR, *Dare* NC, 14-17 Aug (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.); at Cane Creek Park, *Union* NC, 17-19 Aug (Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.); on the East Beach of Kiawah Island, *Charleston* SC, 31 Aug through 6 Sep (Kristin Attinger, m. obs.); on the spit at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover* NC, 5 Sep (Jamie Adams); and at Santee Coastal Reserve, *Charleston* SC, 6 Sep (Joshua Stone) and 7 Sep (Charles Donnelly).

Red-necked Phalarope: Multiple sightings were made at inland sites following the passage of Hurricane Florence in mid-September—one at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, 15 Sep (Alec Hopping); one or two on Salem Lake, *Forsyth* NC, 15-16 Sep (Nathan Gatto, m. obs.); 23, a new record high count for the mountains, at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln, *Henderson* NC, 16 Sep (Simon Thompson, et al.); two at the south end of Lake Marion, *Berkeley* SC, 16 Sep (Mark Vukovich); one at Lake Townsend, *Guilford* NC, 16-17 Sep (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.); four at Lake Crabtree, *Wake* NC, 17 Sep (Jamie Adams, m. obs.); and one along Meadow View Rd, *Orange* NC, 17 Sep (Ann Carter, m. obs.).

Parasitic Jaeger: Related to the passage of Hurricane Florence were the sightings of an adult at Jordan Lake, *Chatham* NC, 14 Sep (Mark Kosiewski, Matt Spangler) and an immature bird at the same site 17 Sep (Jelmer Poelstra).

Jaeger species: Jaegers not identified to species were seen over three inland reservoirs following the passage of Hurricane Florence in mid-September—over Lake Marion in *Orangeburg* SC, 16 Sep (Matt Malin, Mark Vukovich); over Lake Townsend, *Guilford* NC, 16 Sep (Andrew Thornton); and over Lake Murray, *Lexington* SC, 18 Sep (Irvin Pitts, et al.).

Sabine's Gull: An adult on Falls Lake, *Durham* and *Wake* NC, 18 Sep (Kyle Kittelberger, m. obs.) was the only one reported in the Carolinas this fall.

Black-headed Gull: Individuals were seen and photographed at Mason Inlet, *New Hanover* NC, 5 Nov (Jamie Adams) and 25 Nov (Sam Cooper); at Pettigrew SP, *Washington* NC, 14 Nov (Greg Hudson); and at the Georgetown WTP, *Georgetown* SC, 22 Nov (Ritch Lilly) into winter.

Laughing Gull: A first-winter bird photographed in Boone, *Watauga* NC, 17 Sep (Guy McGrane, et al.) was unusual for the NC High Country.

Franklin's Gull: 37 photographed circling in tight formation over Ecusta Pond, *Transylvania* NC, 2 Nov (Michael Plauché, et al.) was an unprecedented count for the Carolinas, shattering the previous record high count of seven.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: An adult photographed at Lake Junaluska, *Haywood* NC, following the passage of Hurricane Florence, 16-17 Sep (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m.

obs.) was a great find for the mountain region. 82 around fishing trawlers off the east end of Shackleford Banks, *Carteret* NC, 11 Nov (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count for a site away from the Outer Banks.

Glaucous Gull: A first-winter bird was seen at Pea Island NWR, *Dare* NC, 25 Nov (Jeff Lewis) into winter (m. obs.).

Brown Noddy: Two were seen during a chartered pelagic trip out of Hatteras, *Dare* NC, 31 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Sooty Tern: Inland sightings following the passage of Hurricane Florence included an adult in Ogden Park, *New Hanover* NC, 15 Sep (Sam Cooper); a juvenile over Lake Julian, *Buncombe* NC, 16 Sep (John Koon, m. obs.); and a juvenile over Lake Norman, *Lincoln* and *Mecklenburg* NC, 17 Sep (Kevin Metcalf, et al.). A juvenile at Ft Moultrie, *Charleston* SC, 11 Oct (Edward Patten) was the only report related to the passage of Hurricane Michael.

Least Tern: One over Lake Norman in *Lincoln* NC, 15-17 Sep (Kevin Metcalf) was the farthest inland of the inland sightings made following the passage of Hurricane Florence.

Gull-billed Tern: 140 at the Davis Impoundment, *Carteret* NC, 8 Aug (Chandra Biggerstaff) was a notable post-breeding aggregation.

Common Tern: Several high counts were made at inland reservoirs in NC following the passage of Hurricane Florence, including 200 at Lake Norman, *Mecklenburg*, 15 Sep (Rob Van Epps); 85 at Lake Brandt, *Guilford*, 15 Sep (Jeffrey Turner); 50 at Lake Hickory, *Caldwell*, 15 Sep (Caroline Martin); 100 at Lake Junaluska, *Haywood*, 16 Sep (Bob Butler, Simon Thompson); 55 at Ecusta Pond, *Transylvania*, 16 Sep (Mike Judd, Michael Plauché); and 55 at Falls Lake, *Durham*, 18 Sep (Ed Corey, et al.).

Arctic Tern: Following the passage of Hurricane Florence, individuals were reported from Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, 15 Sep (Alec Hopping, m. obs.); Harris Lake, *Wake* NC, 15 Sep (Sam Jolly); and Falls Lake, *Wake* NC, 18 Sep (Brian Bockhahn).

Royal Tern: Sightings were made at sites inland to the Triad following the passage of Hurricane Florence in mid-September. High counts at inland reservoirs were 115 at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, 15 Sep (Alec Hopping, Logan Kahle); 41 at Harris Lake, *Wake* NC, 15 Sep (Sam Jolly); 25 at Falls Lake, *Wake* NC, 15 Sep (Ed Corey); ten at Jordan Lake, *Chatham* NC, 15 Sep (Roger Shaw); nine at Lake Crabtree, *Wake* NC, 15 Sep (Edward Landi); and 20 at the southeast end of Lake Marion, *Berkeley* SC, 16 Sep (Matt Malin, Mark Vulkovich). Farthest inland were individuals over Lake Brandt, *Guilford* NC, 15 Sep (Andrew Thornton, et al.); over Belews Lake, *Stokes* NC, 16 Sep (Jesse Anderson); over Salem Lake, *Forsyth* NC, 16 Sep (David & Susan Disher, m. obs.); and over Lake Townsend, *Guilford* NC, 16-18 Sep (Thornton, m. obs.). Also inland

were eight at the Vandemark Sod farm, *Nash* NC, 14 Sep (Ricky Davis); four at the Pee Dee Research and Education Center in *Darlington* SC, 14 Sep (Shawn Smolen-Morton); one at Forest Lake, *Florence* SC, 15 Sep (Smolen-Morton); and one at Lake Robinson, *Darlington* SC, 16 Sep (Smolen-Morton).

Sandwich Tern: Sightings made at inland reservoirs following the passage of Hurricane Florence included one at Forest Lake, *Florence* SC, 14 Sep (Shawn Smolen-Morton); one at Lake Waccamaw, *Columbus* NC, 14 Sep (Alec Hopping, Logan Kahle); one at Jordan Lake, *Chatham* NC, 14 Sep (Mark Kosiewski, Matt Spangler); one at Lake Wheeler, *Wake* NC, 15 Sep (Edward Landi, et al.); up to eight at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson* NC, 15-16 (Hopping, Kahle, m. obs.); one at Harris Lake, *Wake* NC, 15-16 Sep (Sam Jolly, m. obs.); two at Lake Crabtree, *Wake* NC, 16 Sep (Eddie Owens); and one at Falls Lake, *Wake* NC, 16 Sep (Ed Corey, m. obs.). 2000 at Cape Point, *Dare* NC, 18 Oct (George Armistead, Jeff Phippen) was an amazing count.

Black Skimmer: Inland sightings following Hurricane Florence included a molting adult photographed at the southeast end of Lake Marion, *Berkeley* SC, 16 Sep (Matt Malin, Mark Vukovich) and an immature bird seen near the dam on High Rock Lake, *Rowan* NC, 17 Sep (Steve Coggin). 3,700+ at Mason Inlet, *New Hanover* NC, 25 Nov (Sam Cooper) was a remarkable concentration.

White-tailed Tropicbird: Sightings included a juvenile photographed from a NOAA vessel 60 miles south-southeast of Cape Lookout, *Carteret* NC, 5 Aug (Doug Gochfeld, Tom Johnson); a juvenile photographed from a cruise ship 173 miles east-southeast of Waves, *Dare* NC, (Rob Dickerson); and two, an adult and a juvenile, on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, *Dare* NC, 25 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-billed Tropicbird: Individual juvenile birds were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, *Dare* NC, 25 Aug and 8 Sep (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-throated Loon: One on Mountain Island Lake, *Gaston* NC, 14-15 Nov (Kevin Metcalf) was a good find inland.

Pacific Loon: One on Kerr Lake, *Vance* NC, 22-25 Nov (Jeffrey Blalock, m. obs.) was a great find because all sightings on Kerr Lake in recent years have been made on the Virginia side of the border.

Common Loon: 677 on Falls Lake, *Durham* NC, 14 Nov (Kyle Kittelberger) and 819 there 15 Nov (Kittelberger) were incredible counts for an inland site.

White-faced Storm-Petrel: One was photographed from a NOAA research vessel 38 miles east of Oregon Inlet, *Dare* NC, 5 Aug (Doug Gochfeld, Tom Johnson).

Trindade Petrel: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, *Dare* NC, 2 Aug and 24 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.). Requiring review by the NC BRC is an eBird report,

with photographs, of an apparent Trindade Petrel in flight over Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson NC*, during the passage of Hurricane Florence, 15 Sep (Alec Hopping, Logan Kahle). If reviewed and accepted, this report would become the Carolina's first inland record of this rare pelagic species.

Black-capped Petrel: 58 seen from a NOAA research vessel 107 miles southeast of Fripp Island, *Beaufort SC*, 4 Aug (Doug Gochfeld, Tom Johnson) was a notable count for SC.

Cory's Shearwater: There was a noticeable mortality event associated with the passage of Hurricane Florence in mid-September, with nine moribund birds found on Atlantic Beach, *Carteret NC*, 19-20 Sep (Martha Mayo, John Fussell) and five moribund birds found on North Topsail Beach, *Onslow NC*, 25 Sep (Gilbert Grant).

Sooty Shearwater: Requiring review by the NC BRC was the report of one seen over Lake Wylie, *Mecklenburg NC*, following the passage of Hurricane Florence, 15 Sep (Taylor Piephoff) and 16 Sep (Ron Clark). If reviewed and accepted, this sighting would provide the third inland record for NC.

Wood Stork: Far inland was one at Dobbins Farm, *Anderson SC*, 31 Jul through 13 Aug (Linda Montgomery, m. obs.) and three, an adult and two juveniles, at Cane Creek Park, *Union NC*, 14 Aug (Matt Janson, Martina Nordstrand). A juvenile at Alligator River NWR, *Dare NC*, until 10 Oct (Karen Lebing) was late for a site so far north.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Two were reported this fall, both associated with the passage of Hurricane Michael—a juvenile photographed over Myrtle Beach, *Horry SC*, 10 Oct (Ronnie Clark) and one seen over Kure Beach, *New Hanover NC*, 12 Oct (Mark Galizio)

Masked Booby: Sightings included a near-adult photographed 81 miles east-northeast of Oregon Inlet, *Dare NC*, 15 Aug (Rob Dickerson); two, an adult and a subadult, seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, *Dare NC*, 25 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.); an adult seen from a research vessel 138 miles southeast of Cape Fear, *Brunswick NC*, 28 Aug (Catherine McFadden); an adult seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, 6 Oct (Patteson, et al.); and a sub-adult photographed on Frying Pan Tower, 32 miles southeast of Cape Lookout, *Brunswick NC*, 29 Oct (Richard Neal). One wonders if just one or two individuals were responsible for all six sightings.

Anhinga: One seen and photographed on Lake Townsend, *Guilford NC*, 25 Nov through 3 Dec (William & Shellie Falls, m. obs.) was unusual for a site so far inland, especially so late in the season.

American White Pelican: 77 in flight over the dam on Lake Murray, *Lexington SC*, 18 Sep (Irvin Pitts, et al.) was a notable count of flyover migrants. One on Jordan Lake, *Chatham NC*, following the passage of Hurricane Michael, 12 Oct (Mark Kosiewski, m. obs.) was unusual for that site.

Brown Pelican: Individuals on Coddle Creek Reservoir, *Cabarrus* NC, 6-14 Aug (Lila Gandy, m. obs.) and 13 Sep (Randall McCarthy); and on Lake Murray, *Lexington* SC, 18-19 Aug (Kent Bedenbaugh, m. obs.) and 27 Aug (Zach Steinhauser) were unusual for those inland sites.

Great Blue Heron: A melanistic individual was seen and photographed at Forest Lake, *Florence* SC, 24 Nov into December (Shawn Smolen-Morton).



*Great Blue Heron,
24 Nov 2018, Florence,
SC. Photo by Shawn
Smolen-Morton*

The white-morph Great Blue Heron seen in the French Broad River Valley in *Henderson* NC, 17-25 Jul (Wayne Forsythe) was re-found along NC-191 just east of Mills River, 14 Aug (Forsythe).

Reddish Egret: Three around the east end of Shackleford Banks, *Carteret* NC, 12 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) through 8 Oct (Matt Spangler) were notable for NC.

Roseate Spoonbill: The epic irruption that occurred during the summer began to recede in early August, but a few spoonbills wandered around the Piedmont into early October, and good numbers lingered at sites along the SC coast into winter. Individuals were possible county firsts near Old Santee Canal Park, *Berkeley* SC, 1 Aug (Brad Sale, m. obs.); at the north end of Coddle Creek Reservoir, *Cabarrus* NC, 2-5 Aug (Eric Keith, m. obs.); along the Broad River in *Cherokee* SC, 25 Aug (Lisa Jenkins); and at River Park North in Greenville, *Pitt* NC, 7 Sep (Cindy McCraw). Three continued from summer at Cape Point, *Dare* NC, until 8 Sep (Kyle Kittelberger). Nine on Bald Head Island, *Brunswick* NC, 18 Aug (*fide* Derb Carter) and six at the Rachel Carson Reserve, *Carteret* NC, 18 Sep (Paula Gillikin) were good counts for NC. One was seen again in the Crabtree Creek Wetland in east Raleigh, *Wake* NC, after a near three-month absence, 7 Oct (Alysia Richard). Individuals in the Pine Island Unit of Santee NWR, *Clarendon* SC, 30 Oct (Irvin Pitts, et al.) and at Greenfield Lake, *New Hanover* NC, 30 Oct through 10 Nov (Tim Armstrong, m. obs.) were unusual for those sites. One seen at Twin Lakes in Sunset Beach, *Brunswick* NC, 25 Nov (Sarah Towne, m. obs.) was the latest fall sighting ever made in NC.

Swallow-tailed Kite: One seen just south of Newland, *Avery* NC, at ~3800 feet above sea level, 12 Aug (Thomas McNeil) was unusual for our northern mountains. Three along I-73 in north *Richmond* NC, 5 Aug (Nathan & Sarah Gatto) and up to three along Durbin Rd in *Laurens* SC, 14-17 Aug (Steve Cox, m. obs.) were unusual for those areas.

Golden Eagle: Individuals were seen by hawk-watchers at Hanging Rock SP, *Stokes* NC, 19 Sep (Brian Bockhahn) and at Grandfather Mountain, *Avery* NC, 29 Sep (Jesse Pope, et al.). An immature bird was seen by many at Webb Wildlife Center, *Hampton* SC, 30 Oct and 14 Nov (Elizabeth Anderegg, et al.).

Broad-winged Hawk: 4559 tallied at the hawk-watch on Grandfather Mountain, *Avery NC*, 29 Sep (Jesse Pope, et al.) was an excellent one-day total.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: A moribund individual collected by the NC Museum of Natural Sciences after colliding with a window in north Raleigh, *Wake NC*, 27 Nov (*vide* John Gerwin) was unusual for that urban area.

Ash-throated Flycatcher: One photographed along Buster Newbern Rd in *Currituck NC*, 18 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was the only one reported this fall.

Tropical Kingbird: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Tropical Kingbird at Huntington Beach SP, *Georgetown SC*, 12 Oct (Erinn Szarek, m. obs.). If accepted, this sighting would become SC's first official record of this very rare vagrant, though a report of one at Santee Coastal Reserve, *Charleston SC*, 7-8 Feb 2009 (m. obs.) is still pending review.

Western Kingbird: Individuals were seen and photographed at Holly Shelter Game Land, *Pender NC*, 7 Sep (Rebecca Hart); at Ft Moultrie, *Charleston SC*, 15 Sep (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); at Donnelly WMA, *Colleton SC*, 17 Nov (Steve Rhodes); in south Georgetown, *Georgetown SC*, 23 Nov into winter (Watson, m. obs.); and at Pawleys Plantation Golf & Country Club, *Georgetown SC*, 26 Nov (Mary Fenton, Steve Salisbury).

Gray Kingbird: One photographed at Mackay Island NWR, *Currituck NC*, 19 Sep (Betty Sue Cohen) was a great find for our northernmost coast and a possible county first.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individuals were seen and photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park, *Greenville SC*, 18-21 Aug (Paul Serridge, m. obs.); in a yard just southwest of Franklin, *Macon NC*, 21 Aug (Chayse Davis); and in a yard just northeast of Hillsborough, *Orange NC*, 31 Aug (Bert Fisher, m. obs.).

Willow Flycatcher: One seen along Burnt Mill Creek in Wilmington, *New Hanover NC*, 24 Aug (Sam Cooper) was unusual for southeast NC.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One at Riverbend Park, *Catawba NC*, 24-29 Nov (Dwayne Martin) was quite late.

Bank Swallow: Two seen at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover NC*, 3 Nov (David Weesner) and photographed there 4 Nov (Jamie Adams) were very late. Bank Swallows are less likely to linger into late fall than other swallows.

Cave Swallow: Sightings involved one over Greenfield Lake, *New Hanover NC*, 3-5 Nov (Sam Cooper, m. obs.); three at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover NC*, 3 Nov (Derb Carter); 12 at Ft Fisher, 4 Nov (Jamie Adams); and up to two over Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP, *Georgetown SC*, 16 Nov into December (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.).

Barn Swallow: Like many other migrant songbirds this fall, Barn Swallows were still moving down the coast in November. A total of 25 at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover NC*, 4 Nov (Jamie Adams) was a great count for that late date. One over Oak Hollow Lake, *Guilford NC*, 20 Nov (Andrew Thornton) was extremely late for a site in the Piedmont.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: There was a moderate irruption of this species into the Carolinas this fall, beginning in mid-to-late September and continuing into winter. 28 at Nags Head Woods, *Dare NC*, 17 Nov (Jacob Farmer, et al.) and ten+ at River Forks Recreation Area, *Anderson SC*, 21 Nov (Andy Norris, Steve Patterson) were the state high counts.

Marsh Wren: One seen and photographed at Warren Wilson College, *Buncombe NC*, 5-6 Nov (John Koon, m. obs.) was late for a site in the mountain region.

Swainson's Thrush: Seven sightings were made in November this year, the latest of which was one well-studied as it ate red cedar berries at the Theodore Roosevelt Natural Area in Pine Knoll Shores, *Carteret NC*, 24 Nov (John Fussell).

Wood Thrush: One was photographed at Savannah NWR, *Jasper SC*, on the very late date of 28 Nov (James Asmuth).

Purple Finch: A moderate irruption began in mid-October when Purple Finches started showing up at feeders and other sites across the Carolinas.

Snow Bunting: Individuals were seen and photographed along the Nags Head Causeway, *Dare NC*, 16-17 Nov (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.); foraging in the grass near the 14th tee at Pawley Plantation Golf & Country Club, *Georgetown SC*, 26 Nov (Mary Fenton, Steve Salisbury); and on the rock jetty on the south side of Oregon Inlet, *Dare NC*, 26 Nov (Whitlock).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Dozens of sightings were made along the Carolina coast from late September to early November. One seen and photographed along Howerton Rd in *Guilford NC*, 30 Sep (John Becker, Jeffrey Greco) was very unusual for a site in the Piedmont.

Lark Sparrow: It was a good fall for this species in the Carolinas, with at least a dozen sightings made. As usual, most sightings were made at sites along the coast—one at North Pond, Pea Island NWR, *Dare NC*, 9 Aug (David Littlepage); one in Wiggins, *Colleton SC*, 12 Aug (Carl Miller); one in Avon, *Dare NC*, 19 Aug (Scott Baron); one at North Pond again 28-31 Aug (Alan Dupuis, m. obs.); one in Waves, *Dare NC*, 30 Aug through 1 Sep and 19 Sep (Karen Lebing); two at North River Farms, *Carteret NC*, 3 Oct (Sam Cooper); one at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover NC*, 6 Oct (David Weesner); one at Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, *Charleston SC*, 12 Oct (Keith McCullough, et al.); one at Ft Fisher again 13-15 Oct (Sara Meissner, m. obs.) and 18 Nov (Meissner); and two in Alder Branch, *Camden NC*, 29 Nov (James Harrison). Individuals along Mid Pines Rd, *Wake NC*, 25 Aug (Harry LeGrand); at Schenck Forest, *Wake NC*, 8 Sep (Jan

Mouro, Jeri Smart); and at Warren Wilson College, *Buncombe* NC, 4-6 Nov (Bob Butler, m. obs.) were especially unusual for sites so far from the coast.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Several dozen sightings were made this fall starting 29 Sep, most at sites in the mountains and western Piedmont. A few of the higher counts were eight at Warren Wilson College, *Buncombe* NC, 18 Oct (Aaron Steed) and 23 Oct (Jay Wherley); six at Valle Crucis Community Park, *Watauga* NC, 24 Oct (Steve Dowlan, et al.); and four at Valle Crucis, 28 Oct (Sam Cooper).

Yellow-breasted Chat: One photographed in the parking lot for the NC Aquarium at Ft Fisher, *New Hanover* NC, 17 Nov (Sam Cooper) was late.

Bobolink: One photographed at Ramp 49 in Frisco, *Dare* NC, 10 Nov (Karen Lebing, et al.) was late.

Ovenbird: One photographed at Hunting Island SP, *Beaufort* SC, 22 Nov (Matt Johnson) was quite late.

Golden-winged Warbler: One photographed in a yard in Southern Shores, *Dare* NC, 27-28 Sep (James Gould) was unusual for the Outer Banks.

Prothonotary Warbler: Several were still moving down the coast in mid-October this year, including one photographed at Greenfield Park, *New Hanover* NC, 18 Oct (Sara Meissner).

Swainson's Warbler: One photographed along the Duck Park Boardwalk, *Dare* NC, 18 Oct (Lucas Bobay) was very unusual for the Outer Banks and also quite late.

Nashville Warbler: About a half-dozen sightings were made in early November when waves of late migrants were still passing through. One seen on the east end of Ocean Isle Beach, *Brunswick* NC, 18 Nov (Taylor Piephoff) was especially late, however, possibly attempting to over-winter in the area.

Connecticut Warbler: Individuals were seen at Prairie Ridge Ecostation, *Wake* NC, 7-9 Sep (Brian O'Shea, m. obs.); at Mayo River SP, *Rockingham* NC, 11 Sep (Tony & Cara Woods); and in Rosman, *Transylvania* NC, 7 Oct (Claire Herzog, et al.).

Mourning Warbler: About a half-dozen were reported this fall. A first-year male captured at the banding station on Kiawah Island, *Charleston* SC, 5 Sep (Meredith Heather, et al.) was the most noteworthy, as there are only a few records in SC.

Kentucky Warbler: One in Southern Shores, *Dare* NC, 25-28 Aug (Jim Gould, m. obs.) was unusual for the Outer Banks.

American Redstart: Redstarts were among the late waves of migrant songbirds noted this fall, with over a dozen sightings made in November. An adult male seen in a yard in north Asheville, *Buncombe* NC, 5 Nov (Simon Thompson) was very late for a site in the mountains. The latest to depart were individuals at North River Preserve, *Carteret* NC, 18 Nov (John Fussell, Jack Fennell, Steve Howell) and at Savannah NWR, *Jasper* SC, 4 Dec (Phil McNeil).

Kirtland's Warbler: All sightings of this species require review by respective BRCs before becoming official records. The Carolina's first "chase-able" Kirtland's Warbler was an immature bird seen and photographed by many along the Blue Ridge Parkway near the entrance to Mt Mitchell SP, *Buncombe* and *Yancey* NC, over the span of ten days, 24 Sep through 3 Oct (Trevor Sleight, m. obs.). A first-winter bird captured at a banding station on East Kiawah Island, *Charleston* SC, 4 Oct (Nancy Raginski, et al.) would provide SC with its second official record if accepted. From the Fall 2017 period, a first-winter bird was seen and photographed along the Duck Park Boardwalk, *Dare* NC, 2-5 Oct (Pat Draisey, m. obs.). Reportedly the observers were not aware of the bird's rarity until showing photographs to a birder a year later!

Cape May Warbler: Like many other migrant songbirds, this species' passage through the Carolinas extended several weeks later into the fall than is usual. Several dozen sightings were made during the month of November this year, a huge contrast to the average one or two reported in a typical November. One photographed at Cherry Farm in Clemson, *Pickens* SC, 20 Nov (Kevin Kubach) was one of the latest.

Cerulean Warbler: A first-winter female photographed in a yard in Southern Shores, *Dare* NC, 5 Aug (Jeff Lewis) was unusual for the Outer Banks.

Northern Parula: Four along Burnt Mill Creek, *New Hanover* NC, 4 Nov (Sam Cooper) and 8 Nov (Sara Meissner) was a good count for November. One photographed at Lake Julian, *Buncombe* NC, 20 Nov (Steve Barlow) was very late for a site in the mountains.

Bay-breasted Warbler: Like other migrant warblers, sightings of this species continued into early November this year. One photographed in a yard in *Greenville* SC, 22 Nov (Tim Kalbach) was especially late, however.

Yellow Warbler: One at Huntington Beach SP, *Georgetown* SC, 10 Nov (Marcia & Ted Horman) and 22 Nov (Evan Farmer, Brad Sale) was quite late.

Blackpoll Warbler: Because fall migration lasted for several extra weeks this year and Blackpolls are always one of the latest migrants, dozens of sightings were made in November. One at Ebenezer Point at Jordan Lake, *Chatham* NC, 8 Nov (Jelmer Poelstra) was late for a site away from the coast. Four along the Duck Park Boardwalk, *Dare* NC, 17 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.) was a remarkable count for that late date. A first-winter female photographed at Forest Lake, *Florence* SC, 25 Nov (Shawn Smolen-Morton) was the latest one reported.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: Several continued into November this year, with a male at Anderson Regional Airport, *Anderson SC*, 16 Nov (Steve Patterson) being the latest.

Townsend's Warbler: Accepted by the NC BRC (see page 20) was one seen and photographed at North River Preserve, *Carteret NC*, 30 Sep (Martin Wall, John Fussell, Steve Howell) through 3 Sep (Sam Cooper). This report provides NC with its fourth official record of this vagrant from the west.

Canada Warbler: One seen and photographed in a yard in Southern Shores, *Dare NC*, 24-29 Aug (Jim Gould, m. obs.) was unusual for the Outer Banks. One seen on a farm in north *Watauga NC*, 25 Oct (Merrill Lynch) was quite late.

Wilson's Warbler: Individuals photographed at Huntington Beach SP, *Georgetown SC*, 28 Nov (Linda Montgomery) and in a yard in Clemson, *Pickens SC*, 4 Dec (Montgomery) were very late.

Summer Tanager: A female photographed in a yard in North Augusta, *Aiken SC*, 3 Nov (Lois Stacey) was the last one reported this fall.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A female photographed at a feeder in Charlotte, *Mecklenburg NC*, 15 Nov (Judy Walker) was quite late.

Indigo Bunting: A male seen and photographed at a feeder north of Asheville, *Buncombe NC*, 19-23 Nov (Steve Semanchuk) was very late for the mountain region.

Corrigenda: The date given for the Ricky Davis' count of 307 Lesser Black-backed Gulls at Buckhorn Reservoir, *Wilson NC*, in the Spring 2018 "Briefs for the Files" was incorrect. The correct date of the sighting was 27 March 2018.



CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes to the extent allowable. Pay dues or make donations at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/dues>. Make change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile>. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to the Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at <https://carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit.....	\$30.00
Family.....	\$35.00
Student.....	\$15.00
Sustaining and businesses.....	\$30.00
Patron.....	\$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive \$100 installments)	\$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member).....	\$100.00

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Christine Stoughton Root, Merritt NC	cssrbdr@gmail.com
NC Vice-Presidents	Sherry Lane, Wilmington NC Steve Tracy, Gastonia NC	
SC Vice-President	Craig Watson, Mt. Pleasant SC	
Secretary	Jill Midgett, Charleston SC	
Treasurer	Paul Dayer, Durham NC	
NC Members-at-Large	Lester Coble, Ernul NC Karyl Gabriel, High Point NC Katherine Higgins, Wilmington NC Marilyn Westphal, Hendersonville NC	
SC Members-at-Large	Steve McInnis, Columbia SC Mac Williams, Hartsville SC	

EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	chat@carolinabirdclub.org
Newsletter Editor	Deborah McDougall Roy	newsletter@carolinabirdclub.org
Website Editor	Kent Fiala, Hillsborough, NC	webeditor@carolinabirdclub.org
Immediate Past President	Irvin Pitts, Lexington, NC	

HEADQUARTERS SECRETARY

Carol Bowman	9 Quincy Place Pinehurst NC 28374	hq@carolinabirdclub.org
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