

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).

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.).



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

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.

