

## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2019, unless otherwise noted)

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*Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.*

Winter	December 1–February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1–May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1–July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1–November 30	due December 20

*Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.*

*Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.*

*Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.*

*I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.*

*If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.*

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **CBC** – Christmas Bird Count, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **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.*

**Ross's Goose:** Multiple birds were seen amongst the large flocks of Snow Geese in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Washington* NC throughout the winter, with counts of nine+ on 3 Dec (Derb Carter) and 16 on 10 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra). Individuals were reported at about a half-dozen other sites during the period as well.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Though no large flocks were reported this winter, sightings of individuals and pairs were made at scattered sites throughout the period.

**Cackling Goose:** Several continued from late fall in the fields around the Beasley Rd exit on US-64 in *Washington* NC throughout the period (m. obs.) with counts of four on 8 Dec (Ed Corey, et al.) and seven on 11 Dec (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly). A small irruption occurred in the northwestern NC Piedmont in mid-February, with sightings including three at a pond along Howerton Rd in *Guilford* 4-26 Feb (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.), two in Wilkesboro *Wilkes* 15 Feb into spring (Dale Reynolds, m. obs.), and one at Farris Memorial Park *Rockingham* 16 Feb through 5 Mar (Marty Wall).

**Trumpeter Swan:** Sightings of this largest swan have increased in recent years. This winter sightings involved one or two at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 8 Dec (Jeff Lewis), one in the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR 5 Jan (Jelmer Poelstra), one in a field along NC-42 just southeast of Conetoe *Edgecombe* NC 4 Feb through 3 Mar (Derb Carter, m. obs.), and one or two in the Northeast Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 26 Feb (Louise Belk). The last sighting is pending review by the NC BRC due to its inland locality.

**Tundra Swan:** A Eurasian race Tundra Swan [Bewick's Swan] was seen and photographed amongst a large flock of Tundra Swans in an agricultural field along NC-42 just southeast of Conetoe *Edgecombe* NC 2-8 Feb (Ricky Davis, m. obs.).



*Tundra Swans, 6 Feb 2019,  
Edgecombe Co, NC.  
Photo by Michael Cheves*

**Cinnamon Teal:** A drake seen and photographed by many along River Rd at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 17-22 Jan (Lester Coble, m. obs.) provided the first definitive report of this duck in NC in 18 years!

**Eurasian Wigeon:** Sightings included up to two continuing at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC from fall through 6 Feb (m. obs.), one at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 8 Dec (Jeff Lewis) and 31 Jan (m. obs.), one at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 6 Jan (Derb Carter, m. obs.), and two amongst American Wigeons in a flooded agricultural field near Gull Rock Game Land *Hyde* NC 10 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra).

**Green-winged Teal:** A Eurasian race Green-winged Teal [Common Teal] was seen by many along River Rd at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 17 Jan (Lee Adams, et al.) through 8 Feb (Andrew Thornton).

**Canvasback:** There was a widely reported irruption into the western half of the Carolinas beginning in late January, almost certainly related to a period of below-freezing temperatures to the north. New record high counts were made in multiple counties including 24 on Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 30 Jan (Michael Plauché, et al.), 11 at the Woodland Lagoon WTP in *Lexington* SC 30 Jan (John Ebert), eight on Lake Julian *Buncombe* NC 31 Jan (Bob Butler), eight along Woodfield Way in *Wilkes* NC 9 Feb (Dale Reynolds), 23 on a pond along Stamey Valley Rd in *Greenville* SC 12-13 Feb (Gary Harbour, m. obs.), 15 on a pond along Buffalo Church Rd in *Cleveland* NC 14 Feb (Bill Hooker), 15 on a pond along Farmstead Way in *Iredell* NC 18 Feb (Jeff Martin), 19 on Osceola Lake *Henderson* NC 20 Feb (Kevin Burke), and eight at Cherry Farm in *Pickens* SC 8 Mar (Austin Pickhardt).

**Redhead:** 15000 on South Pond at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 8 Dec (Susan Campbell, et al.) and 2000 on the Newport River estuary north of Morehead City *Carteret* NC 26 Jan (Jeannie Kraus) were notable concentrations. Like Canvasbacks, Redheads numbers increased in the western half of the Carolinas in the late winter, with 318 on Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 1 Mar (Frank Porter) providing an incredible total for the mountain region.

**Ring-necked Duck:** 8000 at ACE Basin NWR *Charleston* SC during its CBC 30 Dec (Christopher Davies, Pam Ford, Craig Watson) was an amazing count, the highest on any Audubon CBC this year.

**Tufted Duck:** Pending review by the SC BRC was the report of an apparent Tufted Duck seen and photographed on Bulls Island at Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 8 Feb (Scott Davis, David McLean, Linda Montgomery). This individual is almost certainly the same individual reported in that area Feb-Mar 2018.



*King Eider, 7 Jan 2019,  
Dare Co, NC.*

*Photo by Marty Wall*

**King Eider:** A hen was briefly seen around the jetty on the south side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC where photographed 7 Jan (Marty Wall).

**Common Eider:** This species was well-reported this winter, with sightings made along much of the Carolina coast from Carova Beach *Currituck* NC, where a sick/injured hen was photographed 17 Dec (Marissa Bijarro), south to Hunting Island SP *Beaufort* SC where a first-winter drake was seen 19 Jan to 18 Feb (Steven Guy, m. obs.). Three, two hens and a first-year drake, were seen at Johnnie Mercer's Pier and later Masonboro Inlet *New Hanover* NC 7-9 Dec (Sam Cooper, David

Weesner). Two hens were seen and photographed by many in Edisto Beach *Colleton* SC 23 Dec through 9 Feb (Sidney Gauthreaux, m. obs.). Five in *New Hanover* NC during the Wilmington CBC 29 Dec (Sam Cooper) was a good tally. Three first-year drakes around

the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal *Carteret* NC 6 Jan through 3 Feb (John Fussell, et al.) were likely the same three eiders seen there 29 Nov (Alain Robert). Three, two hens and a first-year drake, were photographed in flight together off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 16 Jan (David Wilson).

**Harlequin Duck:** A drake seen and photographed by many around the pilings under the south end of the Bonner Bridge over Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 12 Jan (Michael Gosselin, Jeff Lewis) through 17 Feb (m. obs.) was the only one reported this winter.

**White-winged Scoter:** A sub-adult photographed at River Park North *Pitt* NC 4 Feb (Trevor Sleight) was a first for that county.

**Black Scoter:** A drake on Lochmere Lake *Wake* NC during the Raleigh CBC 15 Dec (Josh Southern, Sterling Southern) was unusual for a site in the Piedmont.

**Long-tailed Duck:** An adult hen photographed on Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 1 Feb (Eddie Owens) and an adult drake on Lower Springdale Estates Lake *Wake* NC 6-18 Feb (Karaleah Reichart, m. obs.) were good finds for the Piedmont, probably displaced to those sites by below-freezing temperatures north of the Carolinas.

**Common Goldeneye:** Sightings increased in late winter during of period of below-freezing temperatures north of the Carolinas. A few of the higher counts were 25 at Riverbend Park *Catawba* NC 4-7 Feb (Dwayne Martin), seven on Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 8 Feb (Roger Smith, m. obs.) and 23 Feb (Wendy Allen), and ten on a pond along Woodfield Way in *Wilkes* NC 23 Feb (Martin)

**Common Merganser:** Individual hens wintering on Forest Lake *Florence* SC 6 Dec through 23 Mar (Shawn Smolen-Morton) and at James Island County Park *Charleston* SC 15 Dec through 2 Mar (Carl Miller, m. obs.) were unusual for sites in SC. Eight on Lake Hartwell *Anderson* SC 26 Jan (Joe & Liz Dunkleman) was a notable count for SC. Multiple sightings were made in northwestern NC in late winter including two drakes on Powder Horn Mountain *Watauga* 5 Feb (Janet Paulette, m. obs.) and 12 on Belews Lake *Stokes* 16 Feb (Tony & Cara Woods).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Individuals were seen at multiple sites in *Dare* NC—just off the beach in Nags Head 23 Dec (Eric Kershner), on the Salt Pond at Cape Point 28 Dec through 19 Jan (Jack Rogers, m. obs.), at Oregon Inlet 19 Jan (m. obs.), off Coquina Beach 19 Jan (Derb Carter), off Jennette's Pier 19-29 Jan (Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.), and off the beach at Pea Island NWR 14 Feb (Allen Bryan).

**Eared Grebe:** One was photographed at the Jacksonville WTP *Onslow* NC 6 Feb (Brad Dolak).

**Western Grebe:** Individuals were photographed on the ocean off Kill Devil Hills *Dare* NC 13 Dec (Audrey Whitlock, et al.) and off Bulls Island at Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 7 Feb (David McLean, et al.).

**White-winged Dove:** Individuals, possibly the same individual, visited feeders on opposite sides of Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 4 Dec (Bruce Smithson) and 14-20 Jan (Elizabeth Gordon).

**Chuck-will's-widow:** One heard calling in the I'on Swamp *Charleston* SC during the Charleston CBC 5 Jan (Ed Blitch, et al.) was a great find for winter.

**Rufous Hummingbird:** Sightings included a first-winter male visiting Elaeagnus flowers and later a feeder in Morehead City *Carteret* NC 11 Dec (John Fussell) through 26 Jan (Steve Howell), possibly the same individual at another feeder in Morehead City 30 Jan through 3 Feb (Carol Reigle), a second-year female visiting a feeder in Asheville *Buncombe* NC 23 Dec through 29 Mar (*fide* Simon Thompson), an adult female in Buxton *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (Lena Gallitano, Audrey Whitlock) banded 31 Jan (Susan Campbell) and continuing through 17 Feb (Ann Maddock), and an adult female visiting a feeder in Apex *Wake* NC for the fifth consecutive winter 1 Jan through 25 Feb (Susan Davis, m. obs.).

**Selasphorus sp.:** Birds not identified to species but probably Rufous Hummingbirds visited feeders in Davidson *Mecklenburg* NC in early December (*fide* Taylor Piephoff), in *Charleston* SC 8-31 Dec (Russell and Lacy Johnson), in Huntersville *Mecklenburg* NC 21 Jan (Dennis Kent, et al.), and in Mars Hill *Madison* NC 16 Feb (Jay Wherley).

**Virginia Rail:** One seen at The Park at Flat Rock *Henderson* NC 6-28 Jan (Catherine Ford, m. obs.) was unusual for the mountain region in winter.

**Common Gallinule:** Seven+ photographed at Forest Hill Park in Emerald Isle *Carteret* NC 17 Feb (John te Raa) was a good count for that area in winter.

**Sandhill Crane:** The peak count of the wintering flock in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC was 93 cranes on 4 Feb (Scott Davis, Linda Montgomery). 34 in flight over west Asheville *Buncombe* NC 26 Feb (Bryant Anderson) was a notable count for the mountain region. Three were seen in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Washington* NC through much of the winter, 22 Dec through 22 Feb (m. obs.). Five hung around for several days at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in *Henderson* NC 23-28 Jan (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.). One seen at Lake Murray in southwestern *Newberry* SC 3 Feb (Marion Clark) was unusual for that area. The pair that wintered around Beaufort *Carteret* NC again this year were last seen 12 Mar (Chandra Biggerstaff).

**American Avocet:** 600 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton SC, 9 Feb (Christopher Davies, et al.) was a remarkable count.

**Wilson's Plover:** 15 on Harbor Island *Beaufort* SC 17 Feb (Tammy Hester) was a notable count for the winter period. It's likely that at least some of those birds wintered south of the Carolinas and were already moving northward along the coast. One on east Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 10 Feb (John Fussell, Suzanne Wheatcraft) was the northernmost sighting made this winter.

**Long-billed Curlew:** This winter's sightings were of two at Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 16 Dec (John Cox, et al.), four at the mouth of Big Bay Creek in Edisto Beach *Colleton* SC 23 Dec (Sidney Gauthreaux) with three continuing there through 10 Feb (m. obs.), and one on east Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 10 Feb (John Fussell, Suzanne Wheatcraft).

**Bar-tailed Godwit:** One, almost certainly one of the two seen there 18 Nov (Haven Wiley) and probably the same individual that wintered at the site the previous two years, was seen on east Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 12 Jan (John Fussell, Marty Wall), 10 Feb (Fussell, Suzanne Wheatcraft) and 23 Mar (Jesse Anderson).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** One photographed at North Pond at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 8 Dec (Audrey Whitlock, et al.) was very late.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** Farthest inland were individuals at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 3-12 Dec (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.), at McAlpine WTP *Mecklenburg* NC 22 Dec (Matt Janson, et al.), at University Lake *Orange* NC 23 Dec (Jan Hansen), in Clemson *Pickens* SC 4-10 Jan (Kevin Kubach), and at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 26 Jan through 24 Feb (m. obs.).

**Great Skua:** Individuals were seen on Seabirding pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 26 Jan and 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). Notably, the latter sighting was made south of Diamonds Shoals, "just a few miles off the beach."

**Parasitic Jaeger:** Seven in flight off the end of Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 7 Jan (Jelmer Poelstra) was a noteworthy 'from-shore' total.

**Dovekie:** A few sightings were made along the Outer Banks beginning in late December with six+ in flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 27 Dec (Kyle Kittelberger, Kate Sutherland) being the high count. One in flight off Johnnie Mercer's Pier *New Hanover* NC 12 Jan (Sam Cooper) was the only sighting made south of Dare County.

**Common Murre:** One was seen and well-photographed during a Seabirding pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 18 Jan (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

**Thick-billed Murre:** One, possibly sick or injured, was photographed on the ocean off Kill Devil Hills *Dare* NC 2 Feb (Stephen Garvey).

**Razorbill:** There was a moderate irruption along the Outer Banks beginning in late December. 1100 off Cape Point *Dare* NC 19 Jan (Ed Corey, et al.) and 2000 off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 9 Feb (Andrew Thornton) were two of the higher counts. Only a

few sightings were made south of Cape Point, the southernmost being an individual off the Folly Beach Fishing Pier *Charleston* SC 25 Jan (Edward Patten).

**Black Guillemot:** One seen and photographed around the pilings of Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 26 Dec (Jacob Farmer, Josh Sims, m. obs.) was only a one-day-wonder. Already accepted by the NC BRC, this report provided the third official record for NC, and the first with photographs.

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** This species made an incredible flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec, when 89, mostly first-year birds, were counted flying eastward around the cape (Kyle Kittelberger, Kate Sutherland). Kittiwakes continued to be seen there, albeit in single-digit numbers, through 31 Dec (m. obs.). In February, a first-year bird was photographed on the beach there 16 Feb (Jonathan Cantrell, Matt Spangler).

**Black-headed Gull:** Adults continued from fall at the Georgetown WTP *Georgetown* SC 22 Nov (Ritch Lilly) through 19 Jan (m. obs.), and at Mason Inlet *New Hanover* NC 5 Nov (Jamie Adams) intermittently through 3 Mar (Ricky Davis). A first-year bird photographed at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* SC during the ACE Basin CBC 30 Dec (Carl Miller, et al.) was a first for that count.

**Little Gull:** Individual adults were seen off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 27 Dec (Jack Rogers) and 12 Jan (Michael Gosselin, Jeff Lewis), and during Seabirding pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 26 Jan and 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). Two adults were seen amongst Bonaparte's Gulls over the surf a few miles north of Jennette's Pier 3 Feb (Scott Barnes, Linda Mack).

**Laughing Gull:** Individuals at Lake Benson *Wake* NC 15 Dec (*fide* John Connors) and at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 22 Feb (Eddie Owens) were unusual for the Piedmont region during the winter period.

**Iceland Gull:** A first-winter bird photographed on the beach in Myrtle Beach *Horry* SC 23 Feb (Tom Parmeter) was a great find for a site away from the Outer Banks. All other sightings this winter were made in *Dare* NC. Individuals were seen on the beach in Kill Devil Hills 14 Dec (Al Hooks, Alan MacEachren, Audrey Whitlock), on the beach on the south side of Oregon Inlet 17 Dec (Peggy Eubank, MacEachren, Whitlock) and 22 Dec (Steve Ritt), at Cape Point 28 Dec through 29 Jan (Jack Rogers, m. obs.), and on Seabirding pelagic trips out of Hatteras 26 Jan, 2 Feb, 10 Feb and 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). Three on a Seabirding pelagic trip 18 Feb (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.) was a great count.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** 213 in Kitty Hawk *Dare* NC during its CBC 15 Dec (*fide* Jeff Lewis) was a good count for that part of the Outer Banks. 18 on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 9 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra) was a notable count for a site in the Piedmont.

**Glaucous Gull:** A first-year bird seen and photographed on Lake Norman *Iredell* and *Mecklenburg* NC during the Southern Lake Norman CBC 16 Dec (Dennis Kent, John Scavetto, Chris Talkington) and continuing through 18 Dec (m. obs.) was a first for the greater Charlotte area. In *Dare* NC, first-year individuals were seen around Pea Island NWR 25 Nov (Jeff Lewis) throughout the period into spring (m. obs.), at Cape Point 31 Dec (Jacob Farmer, Nathan Gatto) through 16 Feb (Jonathan Cantrell, Matt Spangler), and on a Seabirding pelagic trip out of Hatteras 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

**Red-throated Loon:** Sightings on inland reservoirs involved one just above the dam on Lake Gaston *Northampton* NC 9 Feb (Ricky Davis), one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 1-6 Feb (Jelmer Poelstra), two on Jordan Lake 3 Feb (Stacy & Natalie Barbour), and two on Belews Lake *Rockingham* NC 14 Feb (Marty Wall).

**Pacific Loon:** One seen on Kerr Lake near Nutbush Bridge *Vance* NC 19 Dec (Bruce Young) may have been the same individual seen on that lake from nearby Satterwhite Point 22-25 Nov (Jeffrey Blalock, m. obs.).

**Manx Shearwater:** An impressive northbound flight took place along the Outer Banks in early January with 100 off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 2 Jan (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock), four off Cape Point *Dare* NC 3 Jan (Alan MacEachren), and 29 off Jennette's Pier 7 Jan (Jelmer Poelstra).

**Wood Stork:** A few immature birds that wandered around eastern NC were unusual for the winter period—one on Harkers Island *Carteret* 19 Jan (Karen Altman), one in Merritt *Pamlico* 28 Jan (Allan Porter), one in Manns Harbor *Dare* 30 Jan through 5 Feb (Sherry Foreman, m. obs.), two in Folkstone *Onslow* 5 Jan (Gilbert Grant), and two in New Bern *Craven* 20-25 Feb (Michael Cheves, m. obs.).

**Great Cormorant:** Seven at Masonboro Inlet *New Hanover* NC during the Wilmington CBC 29 Dec (Sam Cooper) was this winter's high count. The only sighting made south of Cape Fear this winter was of one on a jetty at the entrance of Charleston Harbor *Charleston* SC 17 Jan (John Cox).

**American White Pelican:** This species' annual (at least since 2007) early spring feeding congregation below the dam on High Rock Lake *Davidson* and *Rowan* NC began with 20 pelicans 9 Feb (Jesse Anderson). 50 were seen there by 19 Feb (Liz Cope) and numbers continued to increase in March. Not too surprisingly, hundreds of Double-crested Cormorants were reported feeding below the dam at the same time.

**American Bittern:** One photographed at Biltmore Lagoon *Buncombe* NC 5 Jan (William Ensign) was very unusual for the mountain region in mid-winter.

**Great Egret:** One at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 1-7 Dec (Michael Plauché, m. obs.) was late for a site in the mountain region.



**Reddish Egret:** One lingered on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC from fall until at least 17 Jan (Aaron Given, m. obs.).

**Glossy Ibis:** North of the species' typical winter range were two+ at Mackay Island NWR *Currituck* NC throughout the winter into March (m. obs.) and up to 32 in flooded agricultural fields southeast of Lake Landing *Hyde* NC 29 Dec (Allen Bryan) through 12 Jan (Ricky Davis).

**Roseate Spoonbill:** Record counts on several CBCs along the SC coast may have been an after-effect of the 2018 northward irruption.

**Golden Eagle:** Sightings included a first-year bird photographed at Congaree National Park *Richland* SC during the Congaree Swamp CBC 16 Dec (Brad Dalton), a second-year bird at the Savannah River Site (restricted access) *Barnwell* SC 28 Jan (Raymond Geroso) and along nearby Burma Rd in *Aiken* SC 25 Feb (Matt Malin), and an adult in Fairfield Harbor *Craven* NC 22 Feb (Rob Tarkenton).

**Northern Goshawk:** An adult seen along Florence Rd in *Pamlico* NC during its CBC 18 Dec (Ronnie Hewlette, Christine Stoughton-Root) was the only one reported this winter.

**Red-tailed Hawk:** A "Krider's Hawk" variant Red-tailed Hawk was photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 13 Dec and 5 Jan (Steve Calver, et al.).

**Short-eared Owl:** Individuals on the south side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 6 Dec (Michael Gosselin) and 7 Dec (Karen Lebing), along Daughtry Rd in *Cumberland* NC during its CBC 20 Dec (*vide* Brian Bockhahn), and at Mackay Island NWR *Currituck* NC 29 Dec (Mark Kosiewski) were unusual for those sites.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** A moribund individual was found along US-70 near Oyster Creek in *Carteret* NC 5 Dec (*vide* Sam Cooper). Two were heard at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC, in the trees between the aquarium and the ferry terminal, 6 Dec (Cooper) with one continuing through the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands CBC 30 Dec (Ricky Davis). Along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse *Dare* NC, a traditional roosting site for one or two saw-whets some winters, one was seen and heard 16 Dec (Jesse Pope, Gordon Warburton), two were heard calling 19-23 Dec (Susan Mac, Steve McInnis, m. obs.), and one continued at the site through 17 Feb (m. obs.). One heard responding to playback in *Rockingham* NC during its CBC 26 Dec (Marty Wall, Danny Yount) was a good find for a site in the Piedmont.

**Tropical/Couch's Kingbird:** One, either a Tropical Kingbird or a Couch's Kingbird, was reportedly briefly seen near the gazebo at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC during the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands CBC 30 Dec (*vide* Ron Clark).

**Western Kingbird:** Sightings, quite numerous this winter, included one continuing in *Georgetown* SC from 23 Nov (Craig Watson) through 2 Jan (Caroline Eastman), one in

the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Washington* NC 1 Dec (Jamie Adams, m. obs.), one at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 1 Dec (Pam Ford, Craig Watson, et al.), one at North River Preserve *Carteret* NC 4 Dec and 23 Dec (John Fussell, et al.), one along River Rd at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 11-14 Dec (Greg Hudson, m. obs.), one at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 13 Dec through 23 Mar (David Perry, m. obs.), one on north Folly Island *Charleston* SC 15 Dec (Chris Snook), one at James Island County Park *Charleston* SC 18 Dec through 26 Feb (Irvin Pitts, m. obs.), two at Ft Moultrie 25 Dec through 7 Jan (Marc Regnier, m. obs.), one at Glenburnie Park *Craven* NC 2 Jan (Lester Coble), one at the north end of Ocracoke Island *Hyde* NC 5 Jan (Susan Campbell), and two at James Island County Park 7-25 Jan (Andy Harrison, m. obs.).

**Say's Phoebe:** Pending review by the SC BRC was the report of an apparent Say's Phoebe seen and photographed at Clemson University's Simpson Research Station *Anderson* SC 6 Dec through 2 Feb (George McHenry, m. obs.).

**Common Raven:** 18 in the Dan River Game Land *Rockingham* NC 23 Dec (Marty Wall) was a noteworthy count. Two heard and then seen flying north along I-95 near Four Oaks *Johnston* NC 15 Jan (Conor McKearney) were very unusual east of the fall line. One captured by a trail camera in north *Cabarrus* NC 26 Jan (Mike Walter) was unusual for that area.

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** One photographed at Lake Busbee *Horry* SC 7 Dec (John Hutchens) was late to depart.

**Bank Swallow:** One photographed at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* SC 10 Feb (Dave Eslinger, et al.) was an incredible find for the winter period. There are only four previous records of this small swallow in the Carolinas during the winter.

**Cave Swallow:** One or more were seen over Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 16 Nov through 12 Dec (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.) with a high count of four made there 8 Dec (Ian Hearn, William Hearn).

**Barn Swallow:** Individuals at Annandale Plantation *Georgetown* SC during the Winyah Bay CBC 20 Dec (Jack Rogers) and along River Rd at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 18 Jan (Ricky Davis) were very late.

**Swainson's Thrush:** An individual seen and photographed at Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC 2-6 Jan (Aaron Steed, m. obs.) was incredibly late and a first for the mountain region in winter.

**Evening Grosbeak:** This large finch staged a small irruption into the northern half of NC this winter. Sightings included one at a feeder in Williamston *Martin* NC 8 Dec (Angela Bagley), three at a feeder in Chapel Hill *Orange* NC 9 Dec (Maria de Bruyn), one in *Durham* NC 16 Dec (Tom Driscoll, et al.), one at a feeder in Granite Falls *Caldwell* NC 30 Dec (Arlene Neal), one heard calling in *Durham* NC 13 Jan (Jeff Phippen), and one heard calling in *Nash* NC 17 Jan (Sam Cooper).

**Purple Finch:** This irruptive finch was well-reported this winter, with high counts near 40 in both states.

**Pine Siskin:** This finch was also well-reported this winter, with high counts nearing 100 at some sites in mid-February.

**Lapland Longspur:** One heard and then seen along Butler Bridge Rd in *Henderson* NC 15 Dec (Simon Thompson, Steve Yurkovich) was the only one reported this winter.

**Snow Bunting:** Two were seen and photographed by many at Huntington Beach SP, near the base of the jetty on the south side of Murrells Inlet, *Georgetown* SC 19 Dec through 3 Feb (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.).

**Lark Sparrow:** Up to three visited a feeder along Alder Branch Rd in *Camden* NC 11 Jan into spring (James Harrison). Individuals were seen at Willow Dale Cemetery in Goldsboro *Wayne* NC 15 Dec through 1 Feb (Mary Bridges, m. obs.), at Myrtle Beach SP *Horry* SC 10 Jan into spring (John Hutchens, m. obs.), and at the Simpson Research Station *Anderson* SC 18 Jan (Joe & Liz Dunkleman).

**Golden-crowned Sparrow:** Already accepted by the NC BRC was the report with photographs of an immature Golden-crowned Sparrow foraging with White-throated Sparrows behind a gas station in Harbinger *Currituck* NC 22 Dec through 14 Feb (Steve Ritt, m. obs.). This report provided the first official record of the species in NC.

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Lingering or over-wintering were individuals in Washington *Beaufort* NC 12 Dec, 20 Jan and 5 Feb (Betsy Kane), at Airlie Gardens *New Hanover* NC 13 Dec (Jim Holcomb), at Foxcroft Lake *Wake* NC 22 Dec (Jason O'Connor), at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 29 Dec (Allen Bryan), at Lake Raleigh *Wake* NC 5-7 Jan (Edward Landi, m. obs.), in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 16 Jan (John Cox) and possibly the same individual visiting feeders across town 16 Feb (Sally West) and 23 Feb (Jim Buxton, et al.), at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 19 Jan (Sidney Gauthreaux), and at New Field, Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 27 Jan (Courtney Check, et al.).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** Individuals were found amongst other species of blackbirds on the lawn around the monument at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 12 Dec (Mark Jones, *fide* Sam Cooper), in a field along Stewart Rd in *Greenville* SC 27 Jan (Simon Harvey), and along US-264 west of Lake Mattamuskeet *Hyde* NC 16 Feb (Jamie Adams).

**Baltimore Oriole:** A total of 33 visiting feeders in West Ashley *Charleston* SC 12 Jan (Russell & Lacy Johnson) was a fantastic count.

**Brewer's Blackbird:** For a fourth winter in a row Brewer's Blackbirds were seen in a horse enclosure along Gum Swamp Rd in *Hyde* NC, 29 Dec through 26 Feb (m. obs.), with a high count of 16 made there 5 Jan (Michael Gosselin, et al.).

**Ovenbird:** Though a few are typically reported at sites along the coast each winter, one well-seen near Cullowhee *Jackson* NC 21 Jan (Jeremy Hyman) was incredibly unusual for the mountains in winter.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** One heard and then seen at Saluda Shoals Park *Lexington* SC 23 Feb (Irvin Pitts) was very early.

**Northern Waterthrush:** Lingering or over-wintering in the SC coastal plain were two at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* 5 Jan (Lewis Burke, Roger Smith), one at Santee NWR *Clarendon* 11 Jan (Irvin Pitts) and 2 Feb (Donna & Harold Donnelly), one at Charleston Southern University *Charleston* 15 Jan (David Perry), and one at Savannah NWR *Jasper* 16-27 Jan (Donald Thompson, m. obs.).

**Waterthrush sp.:** A waterthrush heard calling in Buxton Woods *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (John Fussell) was probably a Northern Waterthrush.

**Nashville Warbler:** Individuals were seen around the aquarium pond at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 23 Jan through 2 Feb (Jim Holcomb, m. obs.) and at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 28 Jan through 1 Feb (Keith McCullough, m. obs.).

**American Redstart:** Individuals at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 4 Dec (Phil McNeil) and 5-27 Jan (John Hammond, m. obs.) and at Saluda Shoals Park *Lexington* SC 10 Feb and 23 Feb (Patricia Voelker, m. obs.) were great finds for winter.

**Cape May Warbler:** Individuals seen visiting a feeder in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 31 Dec through 5 Jan (Sam Cooper, m. obs.), around Swan Lake at Furman University *Greenville* SC 25 Jan (Joan Baker, et al.) and 5 Feb (Denise DuPon), and at a feeder in Rock Hill *York* SC 26 Feb (Bob Olson) were fantastic for winter. Sightings of lingering/over-wintering Cape May Warblers, most of birds visiting suet feeders, have steadily increased over the past couple of decades.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** One seen at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC during the McClellanville CBC 16 Dec (Ed Blitch, et al.) was incredibly late.

**Yellow Warbler:** Individuals at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC during the McClellanville CBC 16 Dec (Charles Donnelly) and at Demetre Park *Charleston* SC 15-19 Jan (Nicole-Marie Pettinelli, m. obs.) were great finds for winter.

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** The northernmost sightings were of one on the campus of Davidson College *Mecklenburg* NC throughout the period (Eric Keith, m. obs.), one at a feeder in northern *Union* NC 9 Dec (Ed Simpson), one at a feeder in Chapel Hill *Orange* NC 9 Dec through 31 Jan (Lillian Brown, m. obs.), one in Buxton Woods *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (John Fussell), and one at a feeder in *Pasquotank* NC 29 Jan through 9 Feb (Greg Hudson).

**Wilson's Warbler:** One photographed in Clemson *Pickens* SC 4 Dec (Linda Montgomery) was likely a very late fall migrant, while one at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 27-30 Jan (Charles Donnelly, m. obs.) must have been over-wintering along the coast.

**Summer Tanager:** A female visited a feeder in eastern *Brunswick* NC for a fifth winter in a row 2 Dec into spring (Greg Massey).

**Western Tanager:** Individuals visited feeders in Salisbury *Rowan* NC 5-12 Dec (Ann Brownlee) and 6-12 Mar (m. obs.), in Fort Mill *York* SC 8-10 Dec (Stephen Thomas), in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Sam Cooper), on James Island *Charleston* SC 29 Dec through 30 Jan (Jennifer Tyrrell, m. obs.), in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 1-11 Jan (Craig Watson), in a different yard in Mt Pleasant 14 Jan through 21 Feb (Elizabeth Anderegg), in a different yard in Wilmington 27 Jan through 17 Mar (Amy McLane, m. obs.), in western *Johnston* NC 5 Feb (Mary Ann Booth), in Raleigh *Wake* NC 10 Feb through 25 Mar (Sam Jolly, m. obs.), and in a different yard on James Island 11 Feb through 22 Mar (Barbara Spence). One photographed at the east end of Pettigrew SP *Tyrrell* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (Floyd & Signa Williams, Ed Corey) was a first for that area of NC.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Immature males photographed at feeders in eastern *Johnston* 17 Feb (Scott Schulz) and in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 28 Feb through 3 Mar (Dennis Forsythe, m. obs.) were very unusual for the winter period.

**Indigo Bunting:** A female/immature-type bird in Wanchese *Dare* NC during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC 28 Dec (Kyle Kittelberger) was a great find for winter.

**Painted Bunting:** Individual males visiting feeders in *Spartanburg* SC 27 Jan through 15 Feb (David Campbell, m. obs.) and in Endy *Stanly* NC 25 Dec through 5 Jan (Kyle Cook, m. obs.) were unusual for sites so far from the coast.

**Dickcissel:** Individuals at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 26 Dec (Christopher Burney), in Harbinger *Currituck* NC 30 Dec through 4 Feb (Mark Anthony, m. obs.), and at Lake Johnson *Wake* NC 3 Jan (Niki Robertson) were unusual for winter.

**Corrigendum:** In the Fall 2018 "Briefs for the Files," the date given for the last sighting of the Townsend's Warbler at North River Preserve *Carteret* NC was incorrect. The correct date is 3 Oct (Sam Cooper).