

# The Chat

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# THE CHAT

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Cover: Tahiti Petrel, 29 May 2018, Offshore from Hatteras, NC  
Photo by Peter Flood

# Birds of Pond Mountain Game Land

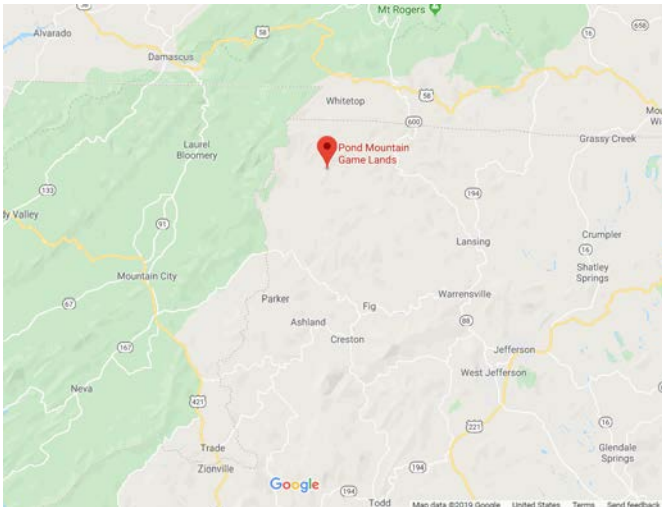
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Pond Mountain was, until recently, infrequently visited by birders in a county once described as an “ornithologically under-studied” section of the state (LeGrand and Potter 1979). Topping out at 4980 feet (1517 meters) in elevation in the very northwest corner of North Carolina, Pond Mountain has a mix of forest and open areas. Unique features, like natural ponds and rock outcrops, attract a diverse bird community. Following a lengthy lull, documentation of the bird community increased rapidly when the property was transferred from its former landowner, New River Tree Company, through the Blue Ridge Conservancy, to North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (hereafter, the

Commission) (Our State 2012). The acquisition process triggered wildlife inventories of the parcels. Most bird surveys were conducted on Pond Mountain proper with additional surveys conducted on recently acquired parcels south to Cut Laurel Gap. We kept a list of all bird species encountered during early visits to the game land (2008 to 2013) and then established permanent breeding bird



*Location of Pond Mountain Game Lands in  
northwestern North Carolina*

monitoring points across it. Since 2014 we conducted annual surveys of these points between late May and mid-June. In 2017 we visited the game land monthly and led public bird walks, culminating in publication of a four-season bird checklist with 123 species.

Historically, Pond Mountain was heavily forested with northern hardwoods, high elevation Red Oak, and rich cove forest (Oakley 1999). It was logged for timber, bark extract, and to support iron mining over a span of approximately ten years ending by 1918 when the railroad was abandoned (T. Blevins, pers. comm.). The mountain was burned extensively to remove logging slash, then seeded and converted to grazing land

for sheep, cattle, and horses. Christmas tree production began in 1982. In 1979, LeGrand and Potter described the mountain as having “extensive pastures at its summit”. For the 20 years before acquisition by the state, New River Tree Company managed 297 ha of the property in Christmas tree production (Fraser Fir) with the remainder forested. As Christmas tree production was gradually phased out between 2008 and 2016, the mountain transitioned to a mix of fallow fields and forest. Between 2013 and 2015, this transition accelerated when the company culled most of the remaining fir trees. Trees were cut and left at the stump or piled. The Commission began to manage the game land per the Pond Mountain Game Land Management Plan using prescribed fire, mowing, herbicide, and forestry practices (NCWRC 2015). Open areas are managed as 1/3 grassland, 1/3 shrub-scrub, and 1/3 young forest (e.g., seedlings, saplings) with the remaining acreage in mature forest. The diverse mosaic of habitats that is emerging is home to several priority species listed in the N.C. Wildlife Action Plan (NCWRC 2015). With changing habitats comes a changing bird community.

Here we provide a new baseline of the bird community as Pond Mountain transitions from Christmas tree production into this next phase. We highlight (1) priority species listed in the N.C. Wildlife Action Plan, (2) upland game birds, (3) winter raptors, and (4) birds of seven habitats found on the game land. Differences in survey area and survey time between our effort and the 1979 breeding bird foray are extensive, and the point of this summary is to provide a current baseline, not to make a direct comparison. However, we note that with the addition of our surveys in the nonbreeding season and of multiple years of visitation to the property, we found a total of 123 species, 44 of which were not documented in the 1979 Ashe County breeding season survey. Thirteen of the 44 are possible or confirmed breeders and 31 are passage migrants or wintering birds. We missed 18 species documented in Ashe County in 1979, although only one, Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), was explicitly noted on Pond Mountain in the 1979 survey. Our four-season bird checklist and map for Pond Mountain Game Land are available as a downloadable PDF from <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Outdoor-Activities/Bird-Watching>.

### Priority and listed species

We found 19 species listed in the N.C. Wildlife Action Plan as Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN), 21 as Knowledge Gap, and 14 as Management Priority (Table 1) (NCWRC 2015). Six species found are listed by the N.C. State Legislature (NCWRC 2019; 15A NCAC 10I .0103 - 0105). These included the NC Threatened Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) and Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and the NC Special Concern Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*), Vesper Sparrow (*Poocetes gramineus*), and Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*). The Bald Eagle and Red Crossbill were both flyovers with the nearest suitable breeding habitat at Watauga Lake, Tennessee, and Whitetop Mountain, Virginia, respectively. A fourth Special Concern species, Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*), sang from a mature White Pine plantation one third of a mile from the game land boundary on Flatwoods School Road across from Cut Laurel Gap Road on June 8, 2018.

### Upland game birds

The Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*) was uncommon in the higher elevations. We rarely flushed American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) from the former runway and wet grassy paths between Christmas tree plots, and along forest edges at elevations from 4300 to 4800 feet (1310 – 1463 m) in June and September, and Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) from the Christmas trees at 4800 feet (1463 m) in June. Nearly four decades after reintroduction efforts, the Eastern Wild Turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) was common on the game land during our surveys.

### Winter raptors

Winter surveys added interesting species of raptors more typical of the Grayson Highlands or Burke's Garden, Virginia. Northern Harriers (*Circus hudsonius*), Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*), and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) observations were all confined to the upper fields. Northern Harriers were observed hunting in September, October, and November. A Short-eared Owl flushed from the field on November 15, 2017, was a new county record and the only record of this species in the northern mountains. Rough-legged Hawks have been reported at Pond Mountain four times, most recently on November 15, 2017 and February 24, 2018 (G. McGrane) soaring over the upper fields. Unlike the other raptors observed during birding excursions, Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) were documented via a baited camera trap deployed at Pond Mountain in winter 2015 (Kelly and Tomcho 2017).

### Christmas tree plots

During Christmas tree production, the Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*) was the most common species among the firs. Vesper Sparrows were seen frequently in the firs, using rocks and the young fir trees as song perches and the dirt lanes between the plots for dust bathing. In 1979, LeGrand and Potter tallied 25 Vesper Sparrows on Pond Mountain. Unfortunately, we did not have a recent census of Vesper Sparrows until after Christmas trees had been culled.

### Fallow fields (former Christmas tree plots)

Vegetation structure changed when the fir crop was harvested or culled. Initially, the culled firs were left at the stump or piled. Immediately following harvest or culling, Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) and Eastern Towhees (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) became the most common species in these areas, conspicuously perching on piles of culled firs to sing. Field Sparrows (*Spizella pusilla*) were also found in the fallow fields. Brown Thrashers (*Toxostoma rufum*) were found regularly above 4600 feet (1402 m) during Christmas tree production and in thick vegetation encasing felled trees. Commission staff from the Wilkes Wildlife Depot progressively plowed and groomed the fields, removing rocks and stumps and burning cut fir trees. Following this management, Vesper Sparrows were less frequently observed and became primarily confined to hills and ridges with short, grass-dominated vegetation. They used fence posts, debris piles, remaining rocks, or trees on the forest edge as song perches. Fledglings were seen annually in June along the dirt game land roads. On May 31, 2017, we documented a Vesper Sparrow nest containing one egg at 4930 feet (1502 m) in the upper field which had been plowed and

burned earlier in the spring. A single Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) was seen on this hill on June 4, 2017. Grasshopper Sparrows (*Ammodramus savannarum*) were found (May 31, 2017 and June 6, 2018) at 4900 feet (1493 m) in taller grasses south of the hanger.

Fallow fields that had matured into a mix of grasses, forbs, blackberries (*Rubus* sp.), patchy shrubs, and scattered trees were dominated by Chestnut-sided Warblers (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) and Field Sparrows. On June 6, 2018, we documented the game land's first Golden-winged Warbler at 4374 feet (1332 m) in a field that was seven years fallow, and the first "Brewster's Warbler" (hybrid between Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers (*Vermivora cyanoptera*)) on the ridge to the south at 4500 feet (1371 m) in a field that was 10 years fallow. We also documented Black-billed Cuckoos (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) for the first time on June 7 and 18, 2018. In 2019, we tallied seven Black-billed Cuckoos in wet, shrubby thickets between 4130 and 4530 feet (1258 – 1380 m) that had been fallow for 10 years.

## Forests

Warbler species associated with forest cover were uncommon to rare and restricted to the forested slopes at mid-elevation and forested ravines. These included Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*), Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citrina*), American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), Northern Parula (*Setophaga americana*), Blackburnian Warbler (*Setophaga fusca*), Black-throated Blue Warbler (*Setophaga caerulescens*), Black-throated Green Warbler (*Setophaga virens*), and Canada Warbler (*Cardellina canadensis*). Likewise, Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), and Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*) were only found in similar wooded situations.



*Black-throated Blue Warbler by Mary Parker Sonis*

Notable species found in the forest included regular occurrences in mid-June of Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*), both listed as SGCN. Sapsuckers were detected in spring, summer, and fall along edges of hawthorn, American Beech, and other northern hardwood trees at 4600 to 4910 feet (1402 – 1496 m) and in two Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) stands at 3800 feet (1158 m). Hermit Thrushes were detected in spring and

summer in northern hardwoods at 4155 to 4855 feet (1266 – 1479 m) on Pond Mountain proper and south to Cut Laurel Gap. Unlike Veeries (*Catharus fuscescens*), which were found in northern hardwood stands having thicker understories, Hermit Thrushes were associated with more open understories dominated by ferns and mosses. A single Northern Saw-whet Owl responded to call playback on May 31, 2017 at 4772 feet (1454 m) in northern hardwood forest with an understory of rich herbaceous cover, rocks, and moss. All other nocturnal owl surveys produced only Barred Owls (*Strix varia*) in high elevation Red Oak, Montane Oak, and northern hardwood forests and one Great-horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*), the 123<sup>rd</sup> species for the game land.

### **Ponds and wetlands**

Alder Flycatchers (*Empidonax alnorum*) were found during most years near a pond adjacent to a shrubby, wet opening at 4750 feet (1447 m). On June 19, 2018, two were calling at this site. Two male Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*) were observed at a pond at 4450 feet (1356 m) on June 15, 2011. In June, Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) frequented ponds with cattail (*Typha* spp.) borders, some as high as 4685 feet (1427 m).

### **Forested riparian zones**

Alder Flycatchers and Winter Wrens (*Troglodytes hiemalis*) were regularly detected in forested riparian zones along headwater streams feeding Big Horse Creek near the Virginia border at 4200 feet (1280 m) in early June. An Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*) was found at 3700 feet (1127 m) along Gentry Creek near Cut Laurel Gap.

### **Rock outcrops**

A pair of Common Ravens (*Corvus corax*) nested on a rock outcrop at 4586 feet (1397 m) in 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, and possibly 2017. Two fledglings, identified by their pink gapes and gray irises, foraged in grass above the rock outcrop on June 6, 2018. Due to infrequent trips to this rock outcrop we can only narrow down the breeding window to between March 1, 2016 and June 1, 2016, during which time the nest changed from unlined and unused to lined with deer hair and moss and the surrounding rock face was splashed with bird droppings. Between 2009 and 2014 we did not observe ravens on the game land.

### **Edges**

Edge habitat is abundant on Pond Mountain Game Land, now as forest and fallow field, formerly as forest and Christmas tree plots. Some species associated with these edges were Least Flycatcher (*Empidonax minimus*), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*), and Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*). On June 18, 2018, we found a Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) nest in woods on the edge of a shrubby, wet opening.

**Table 1.** North Carolina state-listed species, Species of Greatest Conservation Need, Knowledge Gap, and Management Priority bird species observed at Pond Mountain Game Land since 2008<sup>1</sup>.

<b>Species of Greatest Conservation Need</b>	<b>Knowledge Gap</b>	<b>Management Priority</b>
Acadian Flycatcher	American Pipit	American Woodcock
Alder Flycatcher	American Woodcock	Bald Eagle <sup>T,2</sup>
American Kestrel	Bay-breasted Warbler	Canada Goose
Bald Eagle <sup>T,2</sup>	Black-billed Cuckoo	Great Blue Heron
Blackburnian Warbler	Brown Creeper <sup>SC</sup>	Mourning Dove
Common Raven	Cape May Warbler	Northern Bobwhite
Golden-winged Warbler <sup>SC</sup>	Cooper's Hawk	Pine Siskin
Hermit Thrush	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Red Crossbill <sup>SC,2</sup>
Lincoln's Sparrow	Golden Eagle	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Nashville Warbler	Least Flycatcher	Ruffed Grouse
Northern Bobwhite	Philadelphia Vireo	Wilson Snipe
Northern Harrier	Pine Siskin	Wild Turkey
Northern Saw-whet Owl <sup>T</sup>	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Wood Duck
Red Crossbill <sup>SC,2</sup>	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Ruffed Grouse	Short-eared Owl	
Rusty Blackbird	Swainson's Thrush	
Savannah Sparrow	Tennessee Warbler	
Veery	Tree Swallow	
Vesper Sparrow <sup>SC</sup>	Winter Wren	
	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	
	Yellow-rumped Warbler	

<sup>T</sup> NC Threatened, <sup>SC</sup> NC Special Concern, <sup>1</sup> residency status can be found in the checklist, <sup>2</sup> flyover

### Acknowledgments

The bird surveys conducted in 2017 to create a four-season checklist for Pond Mountain Game Land were greatly supported by volunteers from the High Country Audubon Society. Special thanks to Guy McGrane, Doris Ratchford, Jim Ratchford, Martha Cutler, Debbie Shetterly, and Doug Blackford for their in-depth survey efforts. Thanks to Jan Hayes for her illustration that is featured on the 4-season checklist, to Tom Blevins for historical information, to Mark and Diane Johnston, and to the Wilkes Wildlife Crew. This study was initiated and coordinated by the Commission, and funding was provided by Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration and the North Carolina Non-Game and Endangered Species fund.



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# Northernmost Nesting Record for Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) from North Carolina

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On the morning of 15 May 2019, while conducting aerial photography of a private conservation area using an unmanned aerial vehicle (DJI Phantom 4 Pro), I happened upon a wading bird rookery (Figure 1) on an adjacent property owned by the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The rookery was in a single large Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) tree, in an open canopy swamp, at 34°45'10.7"N, 77°54'27.7"W along the Northeast Cape Fear River near the town of Wallace, in Duplin County, NC. Photographs were taken from a safe distance, and no disturbance to the birds was observed.

Based on rough estimates from my aerial photographs, the tree contained: Great Egret (*Ardea alba*, 52 active nests and 100 individuals), Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*, 15 active nests and 25 individuals), and Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*, 2 active nests and 3 individuals). Adults, fledglings, and nestlings of Great Egrets and Great Blue Heron were discernible.

The tree also contained at least two active Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) nests and three individuals. A flock of six Wood Storks was photographed earlier on the same morning approximately 2km N-NE of the rookery flying north along the river, indicating additional individuals were in the area that may use the site for nesting or roosting. The site was reported to NC Wildlife Resources Commission staff who inspected it later that same month and confirmed nesting of the above reported species (Carmen Johnson, NCWRC, pers.com.)

Wading bird rookeries are tracked by the NC Natural Heritage Program as Important Animal Assemblages and the Wood Stork is listed as a Threatened species under both the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts (Ratcliffe, 2018). The Wood Stork population in the United States expanded its range northward into southeastern North Carolina in the early 2000s and the first nesting record was reported in 2005 (Schweitzer, 2018).

As of May 2019, the NC Natural Heritage Program Database contained only six records for Wood Stork roosting or nesting locations, with the nearest record occurring 34km southwest in Sampson County along the Black River near the town of Ivanhoe. The record reported here represents the first nesting site reported for Duplin County and the northernmost nesting record in North Carolina (Carmen Johnson, NCWRC, pers.com.), making this the northernmost record within the species' range.

Fortunately, for conservation purposes, the site is located on a property protected under a conservation easement held by The Clean Water Management Trust Fund and

lies adjacent to the Angola Game Lands (owned by NC Wildlife Resources

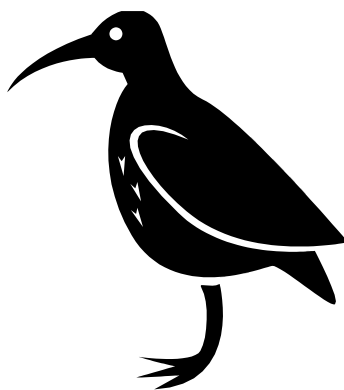
Commission) and to two private conservation easement properties held by North American Land Trust.



**Figure 1.** Great Egret, Great Blue Heron, Anhinga, and Wood Stork rookery photographed by unmanned aerial vehicle on May 15, 2019.

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## **A Tahiti Petrel (*Pseudobulweria rostrata*) off Hatteras, North Carolina USA**

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The Tahiti Petrel (*Pseudobulweria rostrata*) occupies warm waters of the tropical Pacific Ocean and (although listed as IUCN Near Threatened) is the most numerous of the extant *Pseudobulweria* species (Brooke 2004, BirdLife International 2019). The genus *Pseudobulweria* is the most endangered genus of seabirds and includes three critically endangered species — Fiji Petrel (*Ps. macgillivrayi*), Beck's Petrel (*Ps. becki*) and Mascarene Petrel (*Ps. aterrima*) (Rauzon, M.J. & Rudd, A.B. 2014). Tahiti Petrel breeds in the southwest and central Pacific and ranges from as far west as Taiwan east to waters off Middle America, and is often found in waters exceeding 25° C (Brooke 2004, Howell 2012).

### **Field observation**

On 29 May 2018 the authors and spotter Ed Corey along with 15 pelagic participants headed out from Hatteras, NC, on a pelagic trip run by Brian Patteson, Inc. aboard the *Stormy Petrel II*. Our destination was the continental shelf edge, deeper waters beyond the shelf edge and (when reachable) the variable western edge of the Gulf Stream approximately 25-35+ miles ESE of Hatteras Inlet.

As we jogged out past the shelf break on 29 May, it became clear that conditions had changed from the previous couple of days. The wide band of blended greenish water was gone, and we found bright blue Gulf Stream water pushing 80° F (27° C) just 27 miles offshore under mostly overcast conditions.

Around 11:40 EDT in the vicinity of 34° 55.06' N, 75° 11.47' W, sea surface temperature (SST) 26.89° C, Peter Flood observed a distant petrel flying up the chum slick toward the boat from astern. The bird possessed a dark hooded-like appearance, white belly, darkish underwings, and darkish under-tail coverts. From a distance, initial thoughts on the identification of this petrel leaned towards a light morph Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjonina*) as the plumage aspect between the two species is superficially similar – particularly at a distance. However, as the petrel came in closer, we realized it was something different. It was a bit too large for Trindade Petrel, appearing as large and longer winged than two nearby Black-capped Petrels (*Pterodroma hasitata*), and the underwings were quite dark.



*Tahiti Petrel, dorsal view. Offshore from Hatteras, NC 29 May 2018.  
Photo by Carol Hare*

Our next thought was Atlantic Petrel (*Pterodroma incerta*), but it didn't look right for that species either. The petrel continued flying up the chum slick with relatively smooth, languid wing beats and at times sailed around with its wings held out straight, not looking right for a *Pterodroma*. A few of us onboard were able to snap some photos before the petrel glided away and upon review, its identification as Tahiti Petrel became apparent. It was a species we had not seen before in life, but were familiar with based on pictures and video. However, it was in the wrong ocean, so it was not on our radar initially.

We feel confident in ruling out Beck's Petrel as a candidate given the direct comparison and relative size of our petrel with nearby Black-capped Petrels. Brooke describes Beck's Petrel as a "miniature" Tahiti Petrel with wing and tail measurements being 15% smaller and other measurements as much as 25% smaller (Brooke 2004). Upon careful assessment of our photos, literature review and much discussion, we settled on Tahiti Petrel as the correct identification.



*Tahiti Petrel, showing underparts. Offshore from Hatteras, NC 29 May 2018.  
Photo by Peter Flood*

### **Molt as an identification key**

The timing of molt in birds may be helpful in establishing age and possibly separating species (Howell 2010). Moreover, Howell (2012) noted wing molt in Tahiti Petrels in the Pacific region occurring March-October.

Tahiti Petrels breed throughout the year with apparent peaks that differ between localities. (Villard *et al.* 2006). This suggests a Tahiti Petrel may be in wing molt at any time of year. Observations of our Tahiti Petrel indicate that it was in approximate mid-primary molt at the time of our sighting. Unfortunately, with year-round breeding populations, there is little we can conclude about the age or origins of our petrel based on the observed molt timing.

### Provenance of our petrel

While this individual's pathway to the North Atlantic will never be known, it is interesting to consider the possibilities. Given the current portions of its range off Middle America, it is not unreasonable to imagine a Tahiti Petrel being swept up ahead of a tropical weather system, carried over the narrow landmass of Central America, and deposited into the western Caribbean Sea. From there, it seems plausible that one could find its way to the warm Gulf Stream waters off the southeastern United States.

Alternatively, our bird may have approached North America from the east. Lambert (2004) noted what were most likely Tahiti Petrels approximately 45-110 km off the coast of southern Mozambique, in the southwest Indian Ocean, on five separate occasions during November 1987 and December 1990. More recently, and quite intriguing, was an apparent Tahiti Petrel that was photographed during a pelagic trip on 11 November 2018 off Durban, South Africa, in the southwest Indian Ocean (Allan and Perrins 2019). Is it possible that a Tahiti Petrel may have followed some warm water around the southern tip of South Africa and worked its way into the North Atlantic?

Although a few records of Tahiti Petrel have been documented in Hawaii, as far as we are aware, this is the first occurrence and photographic documentation of a Tahiti Petrel in the North Atlantic and perhaps the first sighting anywhere in the Atlantic Ocean.

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## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 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.*

<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, **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.*



**Snow Goose:** 15 photographed in flight over the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 19 Oct (Susan Campbell, et al.) were somewhat early. A dark-morph individual that summered with Canada Geese on Lake Lure *Rutherford* NC remained until 8 Oct (Ryan Lubbers).

**Ross's Goose:** 23 in the fields near exit 548 on US-64 in *Washington* NC 22 Nov (Andrew Thornton, Matt Wangerin) was a notable count.

**Brant:** Two at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 18 Oct (Kent Fiala, et al.) and at nearby Jennette's Pier 9 Nov (Jeff Lewis) were somewhat early.

**Cackling Goose:** This small goose began to show up in NC in mid-November, with seven in Creswell *Washington* 12 Nov (Ronnie Hewlette, Kevin O'Kane), one at Cane Creek Reservoir *Orange* 13-27 Nov (Joe Donahue, m. obs.), six on the pond at Wilkes Community College *Wilkes* 20 Nov (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.), and six near exit 548 on US-64 in *Washington* 30 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Trumpeter Swan:** One was photographed in flight with Tundra Swans at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 23 Nov (Jelmer Poelstra, Roger Shaw, Matt Spangler).

**Cinnamon Teal:** A drake was seen and photographed by many at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 9 Nov into winter (Wendy Allen, m. obs.)

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A drake was seen at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 15 Oct into winter (m. obs.).

**Northern Pintail:** A hen photographed in the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 29 Aug (Dale Lambert) was somewhat early.

**Green-winged Teal:** 2500 in flight off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 9 Nov (Jeff Lewis) was an amazing count for the ocean. Lewis also noted high numbers of other dabbling ducks, Wood Ducks, American Wigeons, Northern Shovelers, and Northern Pintails, in flight off the pier that day.

**Common Eider:** One seen and photographed at the south end of the Bonner Bridge *Dare* NC 12 Aug (Ryan Hooks, m. obs.) was very unusual for early fall.

**Surf Scoter:** One on Price Lake *Watauga* NC 8 Nov (Steve Dowlan, et al.) and two on Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 23-24 (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz, et al.) were good finds for the mountain region. Sightings were made on four lakes in the NC Piedmont during the late fall, including three on Jordan Lake *Chatham* 9 Nov (Jonathan Cantrell).

**White-winged Scoter:** One seen and photographed on a pond in northeast *Durham* NC 18-19 Nov (Jeffery Blalock, m. obs.) was a good find inland.

**Black Scoter:** Individual hens on Price Lake *Watauga* NC 8 Nov (Steve Dowlan, et al.), on Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC (Dale Lambert, m. obs.), and on Lookout Shoals Lake *Catawba* NC 13 Nov (Dwayne Martin) were notable for those inland sites.

**Common Merganser:** A hen photographed at Valle Crucis Community Park *Watauga* NC 17-18 Aug (Judi Sawyer, Steve Dowlan) was unusual for that area.

**Horned Grebe:** One seen in flight from the Bull's Island Ferry *Charleston* SC during the Carolina Bird Club Fall Meeting 28 Sep (David McLean, et al.) was quite early.

**Red-necked Grebe:** Individuals were seen on four inland lakes in central NC in November—on Falls Lake *Durham* 2 Nov (Jelmer Poelstra), on Jordan Lake *Chatham* 9 Nov (Jonathan Cantrell), on Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 17-26 Nov (Henry Link, Matt Wangerin, m. obs.), and Lake Norman *Iredell* and *Mecklenburg* 25 Nov (Dennis Kent, et al.).

**Eared Grebe:** Individuals were seen at the Hemingway WTP *Williamsburg* SC 2 Oct through 23 Nov (Jay Chandler, et al.) and at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 11 Nov into winter (Audrey Whitlock, et al.).

**White-winged Dove:** Sightings were made at five sites along the coast in late October through November. Two visiting a feeder in North Myrtle Beach *Horry* SC 29-30 Nov (Deb Winter) were notable as almost all sightings in the Carolinas are of individuals.

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** The latest reported this fall were individuals at Cane Creek Park *Union* NC 19 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.), at Sandy Creek Park *Durham* NC 20 Nov (Heather Russell), along River Rd at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 24 Nov (Edward Landi, et al.), and on Sullivan's Island *Charleston* SC 25 Nov (Willy Hutcheson).



*Black-chinned Hummingbird*  
27 Oct 19, Orange Co, NC.  
Photo by Maria de Bruyn

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** An immature bird captured at the banding station on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 11 Nov (Daniel Errichetti, Josh Lefever, Dave Sandahl) was late.

**Eastern Whip-poor-will:** One in North Myrtle Beach *Horry* SC 28 Nov (Joe Gyekis) was late to depart.

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** An adult male visited a feeder in Chapel Hill *Orange* NC 26 Oct through 2 Nov (Maria de Bruyn, m. obs.) and was banded 29 Oct (Susan Campbell).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** Two were banded in the NC mountains this fall—an immature male visiting a feeder five miles west of Sparta *Alleghany* 19 Oct

through 20 Nov (Harrol Blevins) banded 2 Nov (Dwayne Martin), and a first-year female visiting a feeder near Brevard *Transylvania* 27 Oct into winter (Nathaniel Axtell) banded 5 Nov (Mark Armstrong).

**Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird:** Individuals not identified to species, though more likely Rufous Hummingbirds, visited feeders in Buxton *Dare* NC 19 Aug (Ann Maddock), in *Orangeburg* SC 26 Sep (Julie Mobley), and in *Charleston* SC 12 Nov into winter (Lacy & Russell Johnson).

**Calliope Hummingbird:** An adult male visited a feeder in Waynesville *Haywood* NC 12-18 Nov (Charles Pritchard) and was banded 17 Nov (Mark Armstrong).

**Clapper Rail:** One collected by a wildlife rehabilitator after a collision in James City *Craven* NC 11 Sep (*fide* John Fussell) was likely a migrant.

**Sora:** 14 at North River Preserve, in an impoundment that had dried up and grown thick grass during the summer and then reflooded in the fall, *Carteret* NC 23 Nov (John Fussell, Marty Wall) was a notable count.

**Common Gallinule:** A juvenile seen and photographed at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 27 Oct (Doug Johnston, m. obs.) was unusual for the mountain region.

**Limpkin:** Limpkins were again well-reported this period. Sightings included two continuing at the upper end of Goose Creek Reservoir *Berkeley* SC throughout August and intermittently into winter (m. obs.), one photographed by a wildlife camera along Goodland Creek in *Orangeburg* SC 3 Sep (Whit Gibbons), one at the northeast corner of Lake Moultrie *Berkeley* SC 7 Sep (Mark Johnson), two along the Little Salkehatchie



*Limpkin, 26 Nov 19, Stanly Co, NC.  
Photo by Matt Wangerin*

River in *Colleton* SC 3 Nov (Elizabeth Thomas), one near the dam on Lake Tillery *Stanly* NC 21 Nov through 2 Dec (Bonnie & Casey Lowder, m. obs.), and three on Big Otter Creek at the upper end of Lake Marion *Sumter* SC 25 Nov (Cathy Mathias). Limpkin is still on the review list in NC, so the report from *Stanly* requires review by the NC BRC.

**Sandhill Crane:** From the Fall 2018 period, 21 in flight over Lenoir *Caldwell* NC 28 Nov 2018 (Sharon Williams Bates, Peggy Hatley) provided a new record high count for the NC Piedmont.

**Black-necked Stilt:** Stilts bred at Cedar Island NWR *Carteret* NC this summer, as evidenced by a juvenile bird seen there with adults 4 Aug (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

**American Avocet:** Multiple sightings were made at inland sites this fall, including ten at Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary *Aiken* SC 7 Aug (Lois Stacey, m. obs.), one in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 19 Aug through 6 Sep (Jim Capel, Corinne Hibbard, m. obs.), three at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 5 Sep (Karen Lebing), one at



*American Avocet*  
1 Nov 19, Charleston Co, SC.  
Photo by Jerry Kerschner

Cane Creek Park *Union* NC 9 Oct (George Andrews), one at Buckhorn Reservoir 13 Oct through 10 Nov (Ricky Davis, m. obs.), one at Brier Creek Reservoir *Wake* NC 27 Oct (Brain Pendergraft, m. obs.), and one in Washington *Beaufort* NC 24 Nov (Ted Powell). A noticeable movement through western NC occurred 23 Oct, with 23, a new record high count for the mountain region, on Lake Junaluska *Haywood* (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz, et al.), five on Lake Julian *Buncombe* (m. obs.), and eight on a pond in *Cleveland* (Kade Lockhart, m. obs.) all seen that day.

**Black-bellied Plover:** Two along Middleton Loop in *Stokes* NC 20-21 Aug (Jesse Anderson, m. obs.) were a possible first for that county.

**American Golden-Plover:** Sightings were down this fall compared to the past couple of years. Three at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 29 Aug (Vicky Burke) and 30 Aug (Shelby Birch, Donnie Coody) was the high count. One at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 21 Sep through 4 Nov (Ricky Davis, m. obs.) was a first for that county.

**Upland Sandpiper:** The high count at Wilmington International Airport *New Hanover* NC this fall was six on 24 Aug (Mark Kosiewski). Locally unusual were two at Shaw Air Force Base *Sumter* SC 2 Aug (Christopher Moellering), one at the salt pond at Cape Point *Dare* NC 5 Aug (John Fussell, Steven Howell, Sage Church) and 17 Aug (m. obs.), and two to three at Vandemark Sod farm in *Nash* NC 17 Aug through 2 Sep (Ricky Davis).

**Long-billed Curlew:** Sightings involved one on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 1 Sep and 30 Sep (John Fussell, Steven Howell), two on Deveau Bank *Charleston* SC 12-13 Sep (Nathan Senner, et al.), and one on the Big Bay Creek mudflats in Edisto Beach *Charleston* SC 14 Sep (Pam Ford, Craig Watson).

**Bar-tailed Godwit:** One seen on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 30 Sep (John Fussell, Steven Howell) was almost certainly the same individual that has wintered at that site for the past few years.

**Hudsonian Godwit:** Individuals were seen at the Wright Brothers National Monument *Dare* NC 9-28 Sep (Jonathan Cooley, m. obs.) and at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 16-27 Oct (Nancy Houlihan, Pat Moynahan, m. obs.). The latter sighting requires review by the SC BRC, as the species is still on the state's review list.

**Purple Sandpiper:** Four on the jetties at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal *Carteret* NC 24 Nov (Marty Wall, John Fussell) was a notable count for a site away from the ocean.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** About a dozen were reported in NC this fall, mid-August through mid-October. One at the Murfreesboro WTP *Hertford* NC 24-25 Aug (Elisa & Nick Flanders, m. obs.) was a first for that county.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** One where SC-243 crosses West Prong Little Beaver Dam Creek in *Anderson* SC 26 Nov (Steve Patterson) was rather late.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** Sightings were typical this fall, with reports from five sites, three of those sod farms, between 17 Aug and 21 Sep.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** About half a dozen were reported this fall at scattered sites in coastal plain from late August through October, the latest being one at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 15-28 Oct (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** 14 were seen at the American Turf farm in *Washington* NC 6 Sep (Ed Corey) following the passage of Hurricane Dorian. One was photographed along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 31 Oct through 1 Nov (Gary Harbour, m. obs.) following a period of heavy rain.



*Black-legged Kittiwake*  
5 Nov 19, *Dare Co, NC.*  
Photo by Jim Gould

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** An immature bird was seen resting on the beach in Southern Shores *Dare* NC 5 Nov (Jim Gould).

**Sabine's Gull:** A possible Sabine's Gull was seen and distantly photographed resting on the water of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 23 Oct (Jonathan Cantrell). Unfortunately, the bird was never seen in flight, which, with that species' diagnostic upper-wing pattern, would have clinched the identification.

**Little Gull:** A first-year bird seen on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 24 Aug (Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.) was incredibly early and also very unusual for a site away from the coast.

**Laughing Gull:** Pairs on Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 11 Sep (Frank Porter, m. obs.) and on Lake Hartwell *Anderson* SC 31 Oct (Andy Norris, Steve Patterson) were notable for sites so far from the coast.

**Franklin's Gull:** Two were seen on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 24-27 Oct (Mark Kosiewski, Matt Spangler, Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.). One was seen at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 3 Nov (Ricky Davis, m. obs.).

**Iceland Gull:** Sightings began in late November with one on Harris Lake *Wake* NC 22-30 Nov (Eddie Owens, m. obs.), one off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 23 Nov (Andrew Thornton, et al.), two on Coquina Beach *Dare* NC 23-24 Nov (Jesse Anderson, Ed Corey, Trevor Sleight, m. obs.), and one off the Bogue Inlet Pier *Carteret* NC 25 Nov (Jacob Farmer).

**Glaucous Gull:** A second-winter bird was seen at Cape Point *Dare* NC 30 Nov (Logan Kahle).

**Brown Noddy:** Two, an adult and a juvenile, were seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 23 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). One seen and photographed along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC during the passage of Hurricane Dorian 6 Sep (Jonathan Cooley, m. obs.) was a great find ashore.

**Sooty Tern:** The passage of Hurricane Dorian resulted in multiple sightings on 6 Sep—an adult off Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC (Paul Laurent), an adult on East Kiawah Beach *Charleston* SC (Jake Zadik), an adult along US-64 near Creswell *Washington* NC (Ed Corey), an adult along US-64 near Roper *Washington* NC (Corey), an adult at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC (Andrew Thornton), an adult at Falls Lake *Durham* and *Wake* NC (Jelmer Poelstra), and two, an adult and a juvenile, over Cane Creek Park *Union* NC (Martina Nordstrand). An adult seen off Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 4 Sep (Michael Adams) was likely pushed closer to shore ahead of the storm. Two were collected by a wildlife rehabilitator in *Carteret* NC following Dorian, but later died (*vide* John Fussell).

**Gull-billed Tern:** One at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 31 Oct (Paul Laurent, et al.) was quite late.

**Common Tern:** 270 on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 5 Sep (Jelmer Poelstra), just prior to the passage of Hurricane Dorian, provided a new record high count for the Piedmont region. Other notable counts related to Dorian were 128 at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 6 Sep (Andrew Thornton) and 50 at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 6 Sep (Ann Brice).

**Royal Tern:** Inland sightings made 6 Sep following the passage of Hurricane Dorian included four on Lake Marion *Orangeburg* SC (Matt Malin), four at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC (Ann Brice, m. obs.), two just east of Greenville *Pitt* NC (Howard Vainright),

two on Harris Lake *Wake* NC (Dale Lambert), and one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC (Lambert).

**Sandwich Tern:** Following the passage of Hurricane Dorian, individuals were seen at Falls Lake *Wake* NC 6 Sep (Brian Bockhahn) and at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 8 Sep (Dale Lambert)

**Red-throated Loon:** Sightings on inland lakes included one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 17 Nov through 16 Dec (Steve Shultz, m. obs.), two on Jordan Lake 29-30 Nov (Jonathan Cantrell), and one on Lake Wheeler *Wake* NC 30 Nov through 3 Dec (Harry LeGrand, m. obs.).

**Trindade Petrel:** A light-morph bird was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 10 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

**Cory's Shearwater:** Individuals over the ocean near Cape Point *Dare* NC 3 Aug (Ricky Davis) and off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 4 Aug (Davis) were good finds from shore.

**Manx Shearwater:** Individuals off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 9 Nov (Jeff Lewis) and 23 Nov (Ricky Davis) were somewhat early.

**Wood Stork:** Notable inland sightings made during the period of post-breeding dispersal included four at Aberdeen Lake Park *Moore* NC 6 Aug (Susan Campbell), eight in Chappells *Newberry* SC 8 Aug (Lewis Burke), seven at Rocky River Nature Park *Anderson* SC 17 Aug (Steve Patterson), one at Cane Creek Lake *Union* NC 20-21 Aug (Martina Nordstrand), nine along Old Cash Rd in *Chesterfield* SC 22 Aug (Kevin Kubach), 40 along Village Gate Rd in *Bertie* NC 18 Sep (Kimberly McCargo), two at Gibson Park *Guilford* NC 19-21 Sep (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.), 17 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 22 Sep (Jonathan Cantrell), three along Coker Rd in *Greenwood* SC 5 Oct (Chris Contakos), eight at the Flat River Waterfowl Impoundment *Durham* NC 8 Oct (Jeffrey Blalock), and 25 in flight over Cary *Wake* NC 31 Oct (Eddie Owens)

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** Individuals were seen at Oyster Creek *Carteret* NC 16 Aug (James Walter Morley), over Ocracoke Island *Hyde* NC 23 Aug (Letitia Lussier), over Holden Beach *Brunswick* NC 31 Oct (Scott Walker), and over Bulls Bay Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 31 Oct (David McLean, et al.).

**Brown Booby:** Three were reported this fall—an adult on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 9 Aug (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.), a juvenile on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras 18 Aug (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.), and a juvenile off the north end of Folly Island *Charleston* SC 8 Nov (Keith McCullough, et al.).

**Great Cormorant:** One seen and photographed just below the dam on Lake Thurmond *McCormick* SC 15 Nov into winter (Milton Hobbs, m. obs.) was notable for an inland site.

**Anhinga:** Farthest inland were individuals at Tall Pines WMA *Greenville* SC 5 Aug (Michael Robertson) and at Lake Brandt *Guilford* NC 8 Aug (Paul Sumner, Matt Wangerin) and 21-22 Oct (Lee Capps, m. obs.).

**American White Pelican:** 96 on Kings Mountain Reservoir *Cleveland* NC 30-31 Oct (Bill Hooker, Pat Wilkinson, m. obs.) was a very high count for the NC Piedmont.

**Brown Pelican:** An immature bird photographed at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 24 Aug (Ricky Davis) was the only inland report.

**Snowy Egret:** During the period of post-breeding dispersal, Snowy Egrets were reported as far inland as *Guilford* NC and *Anderson* SC. One at the west end of Hyco Lake *Caswell* NC 3 Aug (David Pennebaker) was a possible first for that county.

**Tricolored Heron:** Farthest inland were two at Lake Lynn *Wake* NC 18-20 Jul (Ray Korpi, m. obs.), three in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake *Durham* NC 31 Jul (Ben Graham, Sarah Connette), one in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Durham* and *Chatham* NC 1-11 Aug (Matt Spangler, m. obs.) and 22 Sep (Jonathan Cantrell), and one at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 16 Aug (Jo Anne Keasler).

**Reddish Egret:** NC and SC's respective high counts were four on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 22 Sep (John Fussell, Steven Howell, Suzanne Wheatcraft) and ten on Marsh Island in Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 29 Sep (John Cox).

**Cattle Egret:** 900 over North River Preserve *Carteret* NC, in flight towards recently harvested fields at the adjacent Open Grounds Farm, 25 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) was an impressive count. One at Cane Creek Reservoir *Union* NC 11-23 Aug (Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.) was locally unusual and a possible first for that county.

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** One along the Dan River in *Rockingham* NC 6 Oct (Marty Wall) was a possible first for that county.

**Glossy Ibis:** One at South Cove County Park on Lake Keowee *Oconee* SC 30 Sep (Stephen Schutt) was unusual for a site so far inland.

**Roseate Spoonbill:** One at Rocky River Nature Park *Anderson* SC 8-16 Aug (Linda Montgomery, m. obs.) was notable for the Piedmont region. Farthest north along the coast were one to three around the Rivers Edge Golf Club in Shallotte *Brunswick* NC 14 Aug though 1 Oct (David Wilson, m. obs.). 130 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 14 Nov (Robin Armetta, Steve Calver) was the high count in SC.

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** Post-breeding dispersal resulted in sightings of four at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 3 Aug (Wayne Forsythe), 15 along SC-88 in *Anderson* SC 4 Aug (Luke Bower, Allison Guggenheimer), one along I-40 in Statesville *Iredell* NC 5 Aug (Ed Corey), one along US-421 in *Randolph* NC 11 Aug (Jacob Hall),



one over Oconeechee Mountain State Natural Area *Orange* NC 15 Aug (Brian Bockhahn), one over a field along NC-501 in *Scotland* NC 15 Aug (Gary & Helen Smith), one in Asheville *Buncombe* NC 20 Aug (Elizabeth Goldsmith), one along Jacks Creek Rd in *Yancey* NC 29 Aug (Joseph Tomcho), and one at the Macon County Airport *Macon* NC 7 Sep (Don Jones, *fide* Chris Kelly)

**Golden Eagle:** Sightings included a juvenile near Devotion *Surry* NC 16 Oct (Ron Storey), an adult near Devotion *Surry* NC 13 Nov (Royce Hough), an adult at Francis Marion National Forest *Berkeley* SC 19 Nov (Bob Dellinger), and a juvenile at Mason Farm Biological Reserve *Orange* NC 22 Nov (Fleeta Chauvigne).

**Mississippi Kite:** NC and SC's respective high counts were 50 over the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 24 Aug (Wayne Forsythe) and 145 over the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 6 Aug (Robin Armetta, Steve Calver).

**Snail Kite:** Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent juvenile Snail Kite near the northeast corner of Lake Marion *Clarendon* SC 31 Oct through 7 Nov (Carl Bussells, Judson Riser, m. obs.). If accepted, the report would become the fourth official record for SC.



*Snail Kite*  
3 Nov 19,  
*Clarendon Co, SC*  
Photo by Pamela Ford

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** 29 over the west end of the Roosevelt Natural Area *Carteret* NC 11 Oct (John Fussell) was a notable count away from a hawk-watch site in the mountains.

**Swainson's Hawk:** Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with a photograph of an apparent Swainson's Hawk in flight in Awendaw *Charleston* SC 7 Nov (Tim Baerwald).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** One seen at Walnut Cove WTP in *Stokes* NC 21 Nov (Tony & Cara Woods) was a good find.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Two along Mayo River Rd in *Rockingham* NC 13 Sep (Brian Bockhahn) were notable for the Piedmont region.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** Five were reported this fall. Individuals were photographed along the Port Royal Boardwalk *Beaufort* SC 22 Oct (Steven Guy), at Clanton Park in Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 31 Oct and 1 Nov (Greg Maxwell, m. obs.), at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 7 Nov (Greg Hudson), at the banding station on Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 13 Nov (Aaron Given, et al.), and at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 17-25 Nov (Mike Scott, m. obs.). The reports from SC and from *Mecklenburg* NC require review by the states' BRCs.



*Ash-throated Flycatcher*  
7 Nov 19, *Dare* Co, NC.  
Photo by Greg Hudson

**Western Kingbird:** One at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 24 Sep (John Koon, m. obs.) was extremely unusual for the mountains, the first ever documented with photographs in that region. Along the coast, individuals were seen at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 14 Oct (Howard Ferguson), in Salvo *Dare* NC 18 Oct (Karen Lebing), at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 21 Oct (David Perry, m. obs.), at the Ft Fisher Ferry Terminal *New Hanover* NC 23 Oct (Jelmer Poelstra, m. obs.), at the Coastal Studies Institute on Roanoke

Island *Dare* NC 28 Oct (Jeff Lewis), and near Gilliard *Georgetown* SC 17 Nov (Pam Ford, Craig Watson, et al.).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** Individuals were seen at Lake Monroe *Union* NC 14 Aug (Rick Spencer) and at Currituck Beach Lighthouse *Currituck* NC 8 Nov (Frank Lenik).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** About a dozen were reported this fall between 12 Aug and 10 Oct, most in the NC mountains. Individuals at Fants Grove WMA *Anderson* SC 28 Aug (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.) and in *Saluda* SC 12 Sep (Lewis Burke) were good finds for SC.

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Individuals along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC 22 Sep (Al Hooks, Jeff Lewis) and at Little Kinnakeet Lifesaving Station *Dare* NC 22 Sep (Michael Gosselin, m. obs.) were unusual for the Outer Banks. Three were banded on Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC this fall, with one 23 Oct being somewhat late (Daniel Errichetti, Josh Lefever, et al.).

**Vermilion Flycatcher:** Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent first-year male Vermilion Flycatcher at Mackay Island NWR *Currituck* NC 12 Oct (Allen Bryan, Amresh Vaidya). If accepted the report would provide NC with its sixth record and its first in almost a decade.

**Loggerhead Shrike:** Individuals at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 20 Sep (Karen Lebing, m. obs.) and at the CMAST building in Morehead City *Carteret* NC 22 Oct (Craig Harms) were unusual for those areas.

**Bell's Vireo:** Pending review by the SC BRC is the report of an apparent Bell's Vireo seen 23 Oct and then photographed 24 Oct at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC (Michael Adams).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** One seen and photographed at Lake Lynn *Wake* NC 1 Nov (Lynn Erla Beegle, Fleeta Chauvigne, Harry LeGrand, Lori White, et al.) was quite late.

**Common Raven:** One in southwest *Halifax* NC 10 Nov (Merrill Lynch) was unusual for that area.

**House Wren:** 26 at North River Preserve *Carteret* NC 13 Oct (John Fussell, Steven Howell) was a notable count.

**Sedge Wren:** Individual migrants at Jackson Park *Henderson* NC 7-11 Oct (Vicky Burke, m. obs.), at Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* NC 10-18 Oct (m. obs.), and at Island Ford Landing *Transylvania* NC 15-16 Oct (Nathaniel Axtell, m. obs.) were good finds for the mountain region.

**Bicknell's Thrush:** The NC Museum of Natural Sciences received a leg-banded specimen (catalog # NCSM 27226) after a window collision in Edenton *Chowan* NC 9 Oct (*vide* Brian O'Shea). The leg-band revealed it was banded in Vermont in July 2015.

**Swainson's Thrush:** Individuals photographed in Davidson *Mecklenburg* NC 8 Nov (Arch McCallum) and at Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge *Mecklenburg* NC 25 Nov (Kevin Metcalf) were late.



*Lapland Longspur*  
6 Nov 19, *Buncombe* Co, NC.  
Photo by Jay Wherley

**Cedar Waxwing:** A nest with two juveniles at Carver's Gap on Roan Mountain *Mitchell* NC 28-29 Sep (Rick Knight) was rather late in the season for an active nest.

**Pine Siskin:** One amongst a flock of goldfinches at Mason Farm Biological Reserve *Orange* NC 8 Sep (Roger Shaw) was very early for a site outside of the mountains, especially during a non-irruption year.

**Lapland Longspur:** An immature bird seen and photographed at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 4-7 Nov (Aaron Steed, m. obs.) was a great find for the mountain region and a possible first for that county.

**Snow Bunting:** One was photographed on the beach near Cape Point *Dare* NC 17 Nov (Elizabeth Wilkins).

**Lark Sparrow:** About a dozen sightings of individuals were made this fall, most at sites along the coast. One at Archie Elledge WTP *Forsyth* NC 30 Aug (John Haire) was unusual for the Triad area. Wintering birds began to return to feeders in *Camden* NC 7 Nov, with up to five seen there into winter (James Harrison).

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** About a dozen sightings were made 25 Sep through November, most at sites along the coast. Individuals photographed along the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail *Rockingham* NC 2 Oct (Marty Wall) and at the Gibson Rd Soccer Complex *Lexington* SC 22 Oct (Jennifer Shockley, m. obs.) were notable for those areas.

**LeConte's Sparrow:** One well-photographed at Ebenezer Point on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 9 Nov (Brian Strassburger) was the only one reported this fall.

**Nelson's Sparrow:** Inland, individual migrants were photographed in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 5 Oct (Mark Kosiewski, Jelmer Poelstra, Matt Spangler), at Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* NC 10-11 Oct (Miles Buddy, m. obs.), and at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 19-20 Oct (Simon Thompson, m. obs.).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Dozens of sightings were made October through November. One captured and banded on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 28 Oct (Josh Lefever, et al.) was unusual for that area.

**Swamp Sparrow:** One at Cane River Park *Yancey* NC 30 Sep (Lucas Bobay) was somewhat early.

**Orchard Oriole:** An immature male photographed along the Sullivan's Island Nature Trail *Charleston* SC 27 Nov (Willy Hutcheson) was incredibly late.

**Northern Waterthrush:** 22 captured and banded in one day on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 10 Sep (Josh Lefever, et al.) was a notable count. One at Tanglewood Park *Forsyth* NC 1 Nov (Carol Cunningham) was late for a site in the Piedmont. In southeast SC, where a few tend to linger or over-winter each year, individuals were seen at Savannah NWR *Jasper* 23 Nov (Ed Blitch, Matt Johnson) and at Caw Caw Interpretive Center *Charleston* 26-27 Nov (Marc Regnier, m. obs.).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** An immature male captured and banded on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 31 Oct (Daniel Errichetti, et al.) was very late.

**Tennessee Warbler:** One at Fred Fletcher Park *Wake* NC 8 Nov (Harry LeGrand, Geneva Pigott, et al.) was late.

**Nashville Warbler:** Dozens of reports were made this fall, mostly late September to mid-October. A count of four around the north end of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 19 Oct (Kent Fiala, John Fussell, et al.) was notable. One seen along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC 23 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.) was quite late.

**Connecticut Warbler:** Individuals were seen at Mayo River SP *Rockingham* NC 13 Sep (Brian Bockhahn), at Price Park *Guilford* NC 28 Sep (Matt Wangerin), at Warren Wilson College *Buncombe* NC 30 Sep (Aaron Steed), and at Jackson Park *Henderson* NC 7-14 Oct (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.). Notably, two were seen at Jackson Park 10 Oct (Kevin Burke, Jay Wherley).

**Mourning Warbler:** Nine reports were made this fall, 4 Sep through 9 Oct, mostly at sites around Asheville NC. An immature bird captured and banded on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 23 Sep (Josh Lefever, et al.) was notable for SC.

**Hooded Warbler:** Individuals at the Asheville School *Buncombe* NC 6-9 Nov (Seth Buddy, Michael Hill) and along the Boone Greenway *Watauga* NC 10 Nov (Steve Dowlan) were late.

**American Redstart:** Individuals at Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 18 Nov (John Lawshe), at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 23 Nov (Ed Blitch, Matt Johnson), and in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC 30 Nov (Pam & Randall Sale) were late.

**Kirtland's Warbler:** Individuals were seen and photographed on Flat Top Mountain *Buncombe* NC 24 Sep (Cathy Adair, Richard Meltzer) and at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 14-15 Oct (Doug Johnston, Simon Thompson, m. obs.).

**Northern Parula:** Three along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC 23 Nov (Lucas Bobay, et al.) was an amazing count for that late date.

**Magnolia Warbler:** One photographed in the Cuddo Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC 13 Nov (John Becker) was late.

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** A count of 125 migrating through Balsam Gap *Buncombe* NC 1 Oct (Aaron Steed, et al.) was notable.

**Blackburnian Warbler:** Individuals photographed at the Asheville School *Buncombe* NC 24 Nov (Seth Buddy, Michael Hill) and on the jetty on the south side of Murrells Inlet *Georgetown* SC 26 Nov (Elizabeth Anderegg, m. obs.) were very late.

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** An adult male at Greenfield Lake *New Hanover* NC 22 Nov (Jim Holcomb) was the latest one reported this fall.

**Townsend's Warbler:** Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Townsend's Warbler along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC 28-29 Sep (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.). If accepted, the report would provide NC with its fifth record.

**Canada Warbler:** One along the Duck Park Boardwalk *Dare* NC 15-19 Sep (Ricky Davis, m. obs.) was unusual for the Outer Banks. One photographed in Beaufort *Beaufort* SC 25 Sep (Tammy Hester) was unusual for that area as well.

**Scarlet Tanager:** One on East Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC 1 Nov (Josh Lefever, et al.) was somewhat late.

**Western Tanager:** One photographed at Ft Raleigh on Roanoke Island *Dare* NC 18 Oct (Jeff Lewis, et al.) was somewhat early. By late November, individuals had shown up at feeders in Raleigh *Wake* NC 25-29 Nov (Sam Jolly) and in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 29 Nov (Craig Kittner).



*Black-headed Grosbeak*  
17 Oct 19, New Hanover Co, NC.  
Photo by Samuel Cooper

**Black-headed Grosbeak:** A female was seen and photographed along Burnt Mill Creek in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 17 Oct (Sam Cooper) though unfortunately never relocated.

**Blue Grosbeak:** An immature bird photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park *Greenville* SC 11 Nov (Kevin Kubach) and 12 Nov (Anthony Martin) was late.

**Lazuli Bunting:** Pending review by the NC BRC is the report of a male Lazuli Bunting at a feeder in Beaufort *Carteret* NC 19 Aug (Patricia Finch). If accepted, the report would provide the third record for NC.

**Indigo Bunting:** Individuals photographed at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC 21 Nov (Charles Donnelly) and at a feeder in Forestbrook *Horry* SC 23 Nov (John Hutchens) were the latest ones reported this fall.

**Painted Bunting:** An adult male at Prairie Ridge Ecostation *Wake* NC 10 Oct (Brian O'Shea) was unusual for the Triangle area.

# CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

[www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://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	Lewis Burke, Columbia SC	<a href="mailto:lewisburkej@yahoo.com">lewisburkej@yahoo.com</a>
NC Vice-Presidents	Guy McCrane, Deep Gap NC Martina Nordstrand, Indian Trail NC	
SC Vice-President	Craig Watson, Mount 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 Marilyn Westphal, Hendersonville NC Vacant Position	
SC Members-at-Large	Ed Blitch, Charleston SC Mac Williams, Hartsville SC	

## EX-OFFICIO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chat Editor	Steve Shultz, Apex, NC	<a href="mailto:chat@carolinabirdclub.org">chat@carolinabirdclub.org</a>
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Immediate Past President	Christine Stoughton Root, Merritt NC	

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