

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2019-2020, unless otherwise noted)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **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: Sightings were made at about a dozen sites across the region. Eight around exit 548 on US-64 in *Washington NC* 18 Dec (Lucas Bobay) was a good count. Several were seen in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lake NWR *Hyde* and *Washington NC* intermittently throughout the winter, with a high count of six made 1 Feb (Ed Corey). Individuals around Hendersonville *Henderson NC* 4-15 Dec (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.), around Owen Park *Buncombe NC* 8-29 Dec (Denise Hargrove, m. obs.), and, possibly the same individual, on Lake Eden *Buncombe NC* 19 Dec through 14 Feb (Steve Yurkovich, m. obs.) were good finds for the mountain region. Individuals photographed on ponds in King *Stokes NC* 5 Dec (Thomas Gray, m. obs.), along Bostick Rd in *Allendale SC* 6 Dec (Cherrie Sneed), and along Buffalo Church Rd in *Cleveland NC* 25 Jan (Bill Hooker) were possible firsts for those counties.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Several flocks were seen at sites around Asheville including three at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe NC* 8-21 Dec (Denise Hargrove, m. obs.), nine at Owen Park *Buncombe NC* 22 Jan through 11 Feb (Alan Lenk, m. obs.), and up to 24 at the Mills River WTP *Henderson NC* 25-28 Jan (m. obs.). Individuals around Mid-Pines Rd in *Wake NC* 26 Nov through 15 Feb (Ray Kimsey, m. obs.), in western Winston Salem *Forsyth NC* 3 Feb through 1 Mar (John Haire, m. obs.), and at Pinewood Lake Park *Richland SC* 8-11 Feb (m. obs.) were locally unusual.

Brant: One at Lake Lynn *Wake NC* 6-8 Dec (Erla Beegle, m. obs.) was very unusual for an inland site. Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Brant at Yawkey Wildlife Center *Georgetown SC* 19 Dec (Chris Hill, et al.). 20 at the southern end of the Core Sound near Morgan Island *Carteret NC* 17 Feb (Trevor Sleight) was a notable count for that area.



*Cackling Goose with Canada Geese,
11 Feb 2020, Haywood Co, NC.
Photo by Jay Wherley*

Cackling Goose: Up to twenty were reported along US-64 just east of Creswell, near the border of *Tyrrell* and *Washington NC*, 25 Jan through 27 Feb (m. obs.). Individuals at Old Kernersville Lake Park *Forsyth NC* 9 Jan into spring (Nathaniel Watkins, m. obs.) and on Lake Junaluska *Haywood NC* 11 Jan (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz, Bob Olthoff, Paul Super, m. obs.) were locally

unusual. Pending review by the SC BRC is the report of four at the south end of Lake Robinson *Greenville SC* 19 Dec (Michael Robertson, Gary Harbour).

Trumpeter Swan: One was heard calling and then photographed in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Hyde* and *Washington* NC 1 Jan (Martina Nordstrand, Baxter Beamer) and again heard calling there 3 Jan (Erla Beegle, et al.), 6 Jan (Nordstrand, Beamer), 19 Jan (Angie Davis, et al.), and 27 Feb (Steven Howell).

Tundra Swan: Four photographed in a field along Jane Shaw Rd in *Scotland* NC 17 Nov 2019 (Whit Newton) and 120 seen in eastern *Bladen* NC 30 Jan (Ben Nickley, Alexander Worm) were possible firsts for those counties.

Tundra Swan (Bewick's Swan): A Eurasian race bird was seen among Tundra Swans in a field along NC-42 just southeast of *Conetoe Edgewcombe* NC 23 Feb (Wayne Hoffman) was almost certainly the same individual seen at that site 2-8 February 2019.



Tundra Swan considered to be of the Bewick's Race. This race nests in the Western Palearctic. 6 Feb 2019, Edgewcombe Co, NC. Photo by Michael Cheves

Cinnamon Teal: From the Winter 2019-2020 period, a drake was photographed on a pond in Salter Path *Carteret* NC 15 Jan (Michelle Mulchi). The drake first seen at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 9 Nov remained through 9 Jan (Michael Adams). Another drake was seen along Bennetts Point Rd in *Colleton* SC 19 Jan (Jean Cook Potter, et al.).

Eurasian Wigeon: Two were seen at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 6 Dec (Fleeta Chauvigne, et al.) and 18 Jan (David Anderson, et al.). Individual drakes were seen on North Pond Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC from fall through 17 Feb (m. obs.), on Pungo Lake *Hyde* NC 27 Dec (Ed Corey, Nathan Tarr), at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* SC 29 Dec (Russell & Lacy Johnson), and at Donnelley WMA *Colleton* SC 5 Feb (Peggy Blair) and 9 Feb (m. obs.).

Green-winged Teal: 33,678 at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell) was an amazing total.

Green-winged Teal (Common Teal): A Eurasian race Green-winged Teal was seen by many on North Pond Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 2 Jan (Martina Nordstrand, Baxter Beamer) into early March.

King Eider: Two hens were seen off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 7 Jan (Baxter Beamer, Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.) and 28 Jan through 10 Feb (m. obs.).

Common Eider: Eiders didn't venture as far down the coast as they did last winter. Sightings made in NC included a hen off the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center *Dare* 29 Nov

(Alan MacEachren), a first-winter drake off Coquina Beach *Dare* 8 Dec (Sheila Bremer, m. obs.), up to two at Masonboro Inlet *New Hanover* 9 Dec through 27 Feb (Howard Ferguson, m. obs.), a hen at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal *Carteret* 1 Jan (Bob Powell), a first-winter drake at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal 25 Jan and 2 Feb (Steven Howell, m. obs.), and up to four off Jennette's Pier *Dare* throughout the period (m. obs.). One at Murrells Inlet *Georgetown* SC 30 Nov through 12 Dec (Pam Ford, Craig Watson, m. obs.) and 13-16 Jan (Ritch Lilly, m. obs.) was the only sighting made in SC.

Harlequin Duck: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent drake Harlequin Duck at Murrells Inlet *Georgetown* SC 4-18 Dec (Steve Rhodes, m. obs.).



*Surf Scoters,
8 Dec 2019,
Haywood Co, NC.
Photo by Jay
Wherley*

Surf Scoter: 20 on Falls Lake *Durham* NC 19 Dec (Kyle Kittelberger) was an amazing count for an inland site. Six, including an adult drake, on Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC

8 Dec (Jay Wherley, m. obs.) was a notable count for the mountain region. Individuals at Cane Creek Park *Union* NC 19 Dec (Martina Nordstrand, et al.) and at Bishopville WTP *Lee* SC 29 Feb through 9 Mar (Mac Williams, m. obs.) were also good finds inland.

White-winged Scoter: Individuals on Lake Hickory *Alexander* NC 8-11 Dec (Dwayne Martin) and on Kings Mountain Reservoir *Cleveland* NC 20 Dec (Kade Lockhart) and 21 Dec (Marbry Hopkins) were good finds for those inland sites.

Black Scoter: 1750 in northbound flocks off Oceanana Pier *Carteret* NC 1 Dec (John Fussell) was an impressive count. Two hens on Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 11 Dec (Ian Davies, m. obs.) were unusual for an inland lake.

Long-tailed Duck: Five, two drakes and three hens, on Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 7-8 Dec (Henry Link, et al.) and one on Belews Lake *Rockingham* NC 19 Dec (Marty Wall) were notable for the Piedmont. Two hens on Seabrook Island *Charleston* SC 1 Dec (Aija Konrad, et al.) with one continuing there through 15 Dec (m. obs.) was the southernmost sighting made along the coast.

Common Merganser: 840 on the north side of Lake Phelps *Washington* NC 1 Feb (Ed Corey) was a notable count for this traditional wintering site for the species.

Red-breasted Merganser: 739 on Lake Phelps *Washington* NC during the Pettigrew SP CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Ed Corey) was an unusually high count for that lake.

Wild Turkey: A count of 133 in a field along NC-101 near Harlowe *Carteret* NC 10 Feb (Peggy Blair) was indicative of how common the species has become in that area.

Red-necked Grebe: Individuals were seen on Lake Randleman *Randolph* NC 5 Feb (Andrew Thornton) and on Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 14-16 Feb (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.).

Eared Grebe: Individuals were seen at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 14 Nov, 27 Nov, and 16 Dec (Robin Armetta, Steve Calver), off Bulls Island Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC 17 Dec (David McLean, et al.), and off the beach just west of Cape Point *Dare* NC 19 Feb (Megan Baker, Michael Gosselin).

Western Grebe: Individuals were seen off Bulls Island Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC, where photographed, during the Charleston CBC 5 Jan (Starr Hazard, David McLean) and off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 22 Feb (Robert Meehan, m. obs.).

White-winged Dove: Individuals were photographed along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse *Dare* NC 6 Dec (David & Susan Disher), at a feeder just south of Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 12 Dec (Wanda King), and on Sullivan's Island *Charleston* SC 14-16 Dec (Elizabeth Anderegg).

Mourning Dove: 2000 in agricultural fields around the Greenville WTP *Pitt* NC 4 Jan (Howard Vainright, et al.) was a remarkable count.

Chuck-will's-widow: One seen at the Frisco Campground *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (John Fussell) was a good find for winter.

Swift sp.: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photograph of an apparent swift species found in Columbia *Richland* SC 4 Feb (Christina Partin-Jones). Theoretically, a Vaux's Swift would be just as likely as a Chimney Swift in winter.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Unusual far from the coast in winter was a female visiting a feeder in West Columbia *Lexington* SC throughout the period (Allison Smith), a female in Durham visiting a feeder in Durham *Durham* NC throughout the period (*vide* Susan Campbell), a second-year male visiting a feeder in southern *Mecklenburg* NC 29 Dec through 12 Jan (Natasha Goins) and banded 9 Jan (Susan Campbell), and a first-year male visiting a feeder in northwestern *Union* NC and banded 9 Jan (Campbell). 18+ visiting feeders in a yard in Buxton *Dare* NC throughout the winter (Ann Maddock) was a notable concentration.

Rufous Hummingbird: Visiting feeders this winter was an adult female returning to a yard in Mars Hill *Madison* NC 13 Nov and remaining into winter (Lisa Sears), an adult male in northwestern *Henderson* NC 8 Dec through 19 Jan (Vicky Burke, m. obs.), an adult female in Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 19 Dec into January (Carl King) banded 9 Jan (Susan Campbell), a second-year male in southern *Mecklenburg* NC banded 9 Jan (Campbell, Natasha Goins), a second-year female in western *Wake* NC in late January and February (Kerry & Trish MacPherson) banded 25 Jan (Campbell), and a male near Forest Lake *Florence* SC 8-22 Feb (Janet Elvington).

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird: Birds not identified to species, though most likely Rufous Hummingbirds, visited feeders in Silk Hope *Chatham* NC mid-November into winter (Ursel Staudinger), in *Charleston* SC throughout the winter (Russell & Lacy Johnson), in southern *Buncombe* NC 3 Dec (Vicky Burke), in southern *Mecklenburg* NC in mid-December (Deborah Roy), and in West Columbia *Lexington* SC mid-February into March (*vide* Jerry Griggs).

Yellow Rail: Three were reported in *Dare* NC during the Bodie-Pea Islands CBC 28 Dec—two flushed at the north end of Pea Island NWR (Guy McGrane) and another heard responding to playback (*vide* Al Hooks).

King Rail: One heard calling along the American Tobacco Trail in New Hill *Wake* NC 19 Jan into spring (Eddie Owens, m. obs.) was unusual for the Piedmont in winter.

Virginia Rail: One seen and heard along Howerton Rd in *Guilford* NC 11 Dec into March (Jeffrey Greco, m. obs.) was a possible first for that county.

Sora: One seen at Renaissance Park *Mecklenburg* NC during the Charlotte CBC 28 Dec (Greg Hays, Taylor Piephoff) was a good find for the Piedmont in winter. 17 in the Williston Creek impoundment at North River Preserve *Carteret* NC 5 Jan (John Fussell, et al.) was a notable concentration.

Purple Gallinule: A juvenile bird seen and photographed at Donnelley WMA *Colleton* SC 1 Jan (Pam Ford, Craig Watson) 19 Jan (Elizabeth & Jonathan Anderegg) was unusual for the Carolinas in mid-winter.

Limpkin: Sightings included two continuing at the north end of Goose Creek Reservoir *Berkeley* SC throughout the winter (m. obs.), one at Hidden Cypress Golf Club *Beaufort* SC 28 Dec through 3 Feb (Steven Guy, m. obs.), one at Lake Hickory *Catawba* NC 5 Feb (Nathan Morin), and one on the Yadkin River near High Rock Lake *Rowan* NC 8 Feb (Rena Long). The reports from NC are pending review by the NC BRC.

Sandhill Crane: Some of the higher counts this winter were 39 in a field along NC-33 just east of Whitakers *Edgecombe* NC 1-23 Dec (Ann Brice, m. obs.), 82 in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC during the Santee NWR CBC 21 Dec (Brad Dalton, Roger Smith), 16 along NC-33 just south of Bethel *Pitt* NC 15 Jan (Mark Alt), 19 in southern *Halifax* NC 18 Jan (Howard Vainright), and 38 at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC

12 Feb (Imitaz Haque). A small flock was seen in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lake NWR *Hyde* and *Washington* NC throughout the period, starting with four on 30 Nov (Ricky Davis), growing to seven 27 Dec (Ed Corey, Nathan Tarr), and then eight 9 Feb (David Schroder). The pair that have wintered around the airport in Beaufort *Carteret* NC in recent years returned 27 Nov (John Fussell), were joined by a third bird 14 Dec (Marty Wall) through 29 Feb (Dawn & Sean Leahy), and remained through 12 Mar (Fussell).

Piping Plover: 40 in *Beaufort* SC during the Lowcountry CBC 14 Dec (*vide* Buddy Campbell) was a record number for that count

Wilson's Plover: 36 in *Beaufort* SC during the Lowcountry CBC 14 Dec (*vide* Buddy Campbell) was a great count for SC in winter, while six on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 26 Jan (Jamie Adams) was great count for NC in winter.

Long-billed Curlew: Individuals were seen at the mouth of Big Bay Creek in Edisto Beach *Charleston* SC 26 Jan (Matt Johnson) and 8 Feb (Elizabeth & Jonathan Anderegg) and at East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC 9 Feb (John Fussell, et al.) and 2 Mar (Steven Howell).

Bar-tailed Godwit: The individual that has wintered on East Shackleford Banks *Carteret* NC since Fall 2016 was seen 24 Jan (Steven Howell) and 11 Mar (Dave Fischer).

Ruddy Turnstone: 468 on Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* SC during its CBC 16 Dec (*vide* Susan Murphy) was the highest count made on any Audubon CBC this year.

Least Sandpiper: 58 at the McAlpine WTP *Mecklenburg* NC during the Charlotte CBC 28 Dec (Baxter Beamer, et al.) was a good count for the Piedmont.

Spotted Sandpiper: Late for sites in the Piedmont were two at Falls Lake *Durham* NC 15 Dec (Brian Bockhahn), one at a pond in *Cleveland* NC 13 Dec (Bill Hooker), one at McAlpine WTP *Mecklenburg* NC 28 Dec (Baxter Beamer, et al.), and one in Columbia *Richland* SC 21 Dec intermittently through 14 Feb (Tre Bray, m. obs.). Individuals just below the dam on High Rock Lake *Rowan* NC 27 Feb (Jeff Souther) and at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 29 Feb (Todd Arcos) may have been early spring migrants.

Red Phalarope: One on Harris Lake *Wake* NC 2 Jan (Duncan Fraser) and 3 Jan (Eddie Owens) was very unusual for an inland site and the first ever reported at an inland site in January.

Wilson's Phalarope: One seen on a pond in the River Dunes subdivision in *Pamlico* NC 7 Dec (Al Gamache) was extremely late.

Great Skua: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 16 Feb, 17 Feb & 23 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Dovekie: This small alcid was well-seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC in mid-February, with 272 seen 16 Feb and an astounding count of 731 seen on 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). Also, one or two were seen off Jeannette's Pier *Dare* NC 31 Jan through 22 Feb (m. obs.).

Common Murre: On pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC, two were seen 16 Feb and four were seen 23 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Razorbill: Razorbills began moving down the Outer Banks in good numbers in late January, with numbers peaking in mid-February. Counts from Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC

included 265 on 31 Jan (Ed Corey), 1000 on 16 Feb (David Fischer), 680 on 18 Feb (Bob Butler, Michael Plauché), and 375 on 23 Feb (Ricky Davis). Good counts were also made on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC in mid-to-late February, with 729 seen 16 Feb, 230 seen 17 Feb, and 408 seen 23 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). Only a few sightings were made south of *Dare* this winter, including 203 off North Topsail Beach Fishing Pier *Onslow* NC 30 Jan (Caleb Stand) and 64 off Johnnie Mercer's Pier *New Hanover* NC 6 Feb (Jamie Adams).

Black Guillemot: Two reports were made this winter, both pending review by the respective state BRCs—one photographed along the jetty at Murrells Inlet *Georgetown* SC during a Carolina Bird Club field trip 18 Jan (m. obs.) and the other seen off Jeannette's Pier *Dare* NC 9 Feb (Bruce Young, Ricky Davis, m. obs.).

Atlantic Puffin: One was collected by a wildlife rehabilitator after being found ashore away from the ocean in Buxton *Dare* NC in early January (*vide* Brian Patteson). An amazing count of 91 was made on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 16 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.), providing a new record high count for NC. Interestingly, only three were seen on a pelagic trip the following day, 17 Feb, possibly due to rough seas. 13 were seen on a pelagic trip 23 Feb (Patteson, Sutherland, et al.).

Black-legged Kittiwake: A first-winter bird was photographed on the beach in Kitty Hawk *Dare* NC 3 Dec (Jim Gould).

Black-headed Gull: Four were reported this winter—an adult at Mason Inlet *New Hanover* NC 8 Dec (Roger Shaw) intermittently through 9 Feb (Jamie Adams), a first-winter bird at Carolina Beach Lake *New Hanover* NC 28 Dec (Wayne Hoffman) through 1 Mar (m. obs.), a first-winter bird photographed at Cape Point *Dare* NC 8 Jan (Megan Baker, Michael Gosselin), and a first-winter bird off Johnnie Mercer's Pier *New Hanover* NC 29 Jan (Adams)

Little Gull: Sightings, all made in February in *Dare* NC, included two adults off Jennette's Pier 9 Feb (Ricky Davis), two adults on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras 16 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.), and an adult photographed in Hatteras village 21 Feb (Sutherland).

Iceland Gull: About a dozen were reported this winter. Along the NC coast, immature individuals were seen on the beach in Nags Head *Dare* 5 Dec (David & Susan Disher), off Holden Beach *Brunswick* 27 Dec (Maria Smith, David Weber), off Pea Island NWR *Dare* 19 Jan (Rick Payne, m. obs.), at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* 6 Feb (Ann Stinely, m. obs.) and on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.). An adult bird was seen off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 25 Jan (Michael Plauché, Noah Reid). At Cape Point *Dare* NC, after a first-winter bird was first seen 1 Jan (Nathan & Sarah Gatto), three immature birds were seen 31 Jan (Kate Sutherland) and 4 Feb (Megan Baker, Michael Gosselin), and up to two continued 9 Feb (Ricky Davis) into March (m. obs.). One seen at the South Wake County Landfill *Wake* NC 24 Jan (Brian Bockhahn, et al.) may have been the same individual seen at nearby Jordan Lake

Chatham NC 12 Dec through 10 Jan (Jonathan Cantrell, m. obs.). A first-winter bird at the Horry County Landfill *Horry* SC 17 Dec through 28 Jan (Chris Hill, m. obs.) was the only report from SC.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 424 at Buckhorn Reservoir *Wilson* NC 2 Feb (Ricky Davis) was a truly amazing count for a site away from the coast. 24 on Lake Townsend *Guilford*



Lesser Black-backed Gull with Ring-billed Gulls, 11 Feb 2020, Catawba Co, NC.
Photo by Dwayne Martin

NC 30 Jan (Henry Link, et al.) was a notable count for the Triad area. County firsts included three in a field near Clarkton *Bladen* NC 30 Dec (Amy Padgett), seven at the Rockingham County Landfill *Rockingham* NC 30 Jan (Marty Wall), three on Lake Randleman *Randolph* NC 5 Feb (Andrew Thornton), and eight at the Alamance County Landfill *Alamance* NC 12 Feb (David

Pennebaker). Farthest inland this winter was a first-winter bird on Lake Hickory *Alexander* and *Catawba* NC 11-25 Feb (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby, m. obs.).

Glaucous Gull: Sightings, all made in NC, included an immature at Pea Island NWR *Dare* 11 Jan (Jamie Adams, Jeff Lewis), an immature on Ocracoke Island *Hyde* during its CBC 29 Dec (Hal Broadfoot), an immature at Cape Point *Dare* 3 Jan (Baxter Beamer, Martina Nordstrand) intermittently into March (m. obs.), two immatures at Cape Point 31

Jan (Kate Sutherland), and a third-winter bird on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* 16 Feb and 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Sutherland, et al.).

Great Black-backed Gull: Three seen in central *Dorchester* SC during the Four Holes Swamp CBC 16 Dec (Dave Eslinger, David McLean) were a first for that count and possibly also that county.

Caspian Tern: One at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 3-31 Jan (Baxter Beamer, Martina Nordstrand, m. obs.) was unusual for a site so far north in mid-winter.

Royal Tern: One photographed on Lake Marion at Santee SP *Orangeburg* SC during the Santee NWR CBC 21 Dec (Irvin Pitts) was unusual for a site away from the coast.

Red-throated Loon: One on Roanoke Rapids Lake *Halifax* NC 24 Feb (Merrill Lynch) was a good find for an inland lake.

Pacific Loon: One was seen on Kerr Lake *Vance* NC during its CBC 2 Jan (Ann Brice, Fred Lobdell). After one was photographed off Johnnie Mercer's Pier *New Hanover* NC 2 Feb (Jamie Adams), two were photographed together there 11 Feb (Adams). Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Pacific Loon on Lake Jocassee at Devil's Fork SP *Oconee* SC 28 Feb (Jay Mager, Nina Schoch, et al.).

Northern Fulmar: One seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 16 Feb (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was the only one reported this winter.

Manx Shearwater: There was a noticeable movement along the Outer Banks 28 Jan through 23 Feb, with the highest counts being 17 off Coquina Beach *Dare* NC 29 Jan (Megan Baker, Michael Gosselin) and 20 off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 7 Feb (Ed Corey, et al.).

Wood Stork: Sightings were made at sites farther north in NC than is typical in winter, in January and February though strangely not in December, including two at Lake Auman *Moore* in early January (*fide* Susan Campbell), five photographed in flight over Alligator River NWR *Dare* 7 Jan (Michael Gosselin, et al.), one in Pine Knoll Shores *Carteret* 9 Jan (John Fussell), one in New Bern *Craven* 19 Jan through 3 Feb (Michael Cheves, m. obs.), one in Nags Head *Dare* 25 Jan through 6 Feb (m. obs.), two in Sneads Ferry *Onslow* 30 Jan and 10 Feb (Gilbert Grant), one in Emerald Isle *Carteret* 1 Feb (Kathleen Johnston), and one along Ware Creek *Carteret* 18 Feb (Bill Kirby-Smith). A second-year individual photographed along a small creek near the Little Tennessee River in *Macon* NC 15 Jan (Barbara McRae) was totally unprecedented for the mountain region in winter.

Northern Gannet: 1000 off the south end of Litchfield Beach *Georgetown* SC during a Carolina Bird Club field trip 17 Jan (Brad Dalton, et al.) was a notable count for SC. 150 at the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal *Carteret* NC 8 Jan (Amy Padgett) was a notable count for a site away from the ocean.

Great Cormorant: The individual found just below the dam on Lake Thurmond *McCormick* SC 15 Nov (Milton Hobbs) was seen throughout the winter (m. obs.). This species was well-reported at two sites on the NC coast—at Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* where up to five were seen 15 Dec into March (m. obs.) and at Masonboro Inlet *New Hanover* where up to six were seen 16 Nov into March (Sam Cooper, m. obs.).

Anhinga: One photographed just below Tuckertown Dam *Montgomery* and *Stanly* NC 19-20 Jan and 2 Feb (Allen Wolford) was the inland-most sighting made this winter.

American White Pelican: Sightings made outside of the coastal plain included one at Chris Taylor Memorial Park *Anderson* SC 11 Dec (Steve Patterson, m. obs.), one on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 10-11 Jan (Matt Spangler, m. obs.), and seven on Jordan Lake 10 Feb (Vern Bothwell, Don Pelly). The annual late winter congregation just below High Rock Dam *Davidson* and *Rowan* NC began with six on 19 Jan (Allen Wolford), grew to 61 by 21 Feb (Steve Coggin), and peaked at 96 on 3 Mar (Steven Fasciana).

Reddish Egret: One lingered on Bulls Island Cape Romain NWR *Charleston* SC through 30 Jan (David McLean).

Green Heron: A moribund bird found along NC-12 a mile south of Whalebone Junction *Dare* NC (Jeff Beane, Ed Corey, et al.) was unusual for a site so far north in winter. One photographed at Camp T.N. Spencer Park *Cabarrus* NC 27 Dec (David Hebert) was unusual for a site so far from the coast in winter.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: An adult photographed at Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC 18-19 Dec (Tom Bush, Jay Wherley, m. obs.) was extremely unusual for a site in the mountain region during the winter.

White Ibis: A juvenile at Lake Conestee Nature Preserve *Greenville* SC 2-7 Dec (JoAnne Keasler, m. obs.) was very unusual for a site in the Piedmont during the winter.

Golden Eagle: Sightings included an immature photographed by a trail camera in *Stokes* NC 2 Dec (*vide* Ed Corey), an adult in flight over northern *Watauga* NC 16 Dec (Merrill Lynch), an adult at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 16 Dec (Kevin O’Kane) intermittently through 2 Feb (Stacy Barbour, Jeff Blalock), an adult in the Lake Landing area of Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (Steve Shultz), an adult at the Savannah River Site *Barnwell* SC 14 Jan (Matt Malin), and an adult photographed in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Hyde* and *Washington* NC in late January (Mike Dunn).

Snail Kite: Already accepted by the NC BRC was the report with photographs of a juvenile bird in flight a few miles north of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 4 Dec (Chance Hines). The report provided NC with its second record, the first being a moribund bird found in *Columbus* NC in Apr 2009.

Rough-legged Hawk: One was seen throughout much of the winter at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC, 7 Dec through 23 Feb (m. obs.).

Long-eared Owl: Pending review by the SC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Long-eared Owl perched on a signpost on the beach at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown* SC 3 Dec (Ashley Miller, Mike Walker). If accepted, the report would provide SC with its first official record in five years.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: One was heard calling along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse *Dare* NC 9 Feb into early March (Allen Bryan, m. obs.).

Ash-throated Flycatcher: This species was extremely well-reported this winter. Individuals were seen on the south side of Oregon Inlet *Dare* NC 7 Dec (Jonathan Cooley, m. obs.) through 29 Dec (Trevor Sleight), on private land in *Calhoun* SC during the Congaree Swamp CBC 15 Dec (Carl Miller, et al.), along Swindell Rd in *Beaufort*



Ash-throated Flycatcher,
11 Jan 2020, Carteret Co, NC.
Photo by Rich Boyd

NC 18 Dec (Kevin O’Kane), at Yawkey Wildlife Center *Georgetown* SC during the Winyah Bay CBC 19 Dec (John Hutchens, Felicia Sanders), along the Moccasin Trail at Pettigrew SP *Washington* NC during its CBC 27 Dec (Randy Basnett, Brian Bockhahn), on Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* SC 23 Dec (William Wise), on private land in *Sampson* NC 1 Jan (Sharon Funderburk), at North River Preserve *Carteret*

NC 11 Jan (Rich & Susan Boyd) through 2 Feb (John Fussell, et al.), near the 1921 Monument at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 15 Jan (Jamie

Adams), at Alligator River NWR *Dare* NC 20 Jan (Joe Donahue, et al.) through 2 Mar (Karen Lebing), in the Cox Ferry Recreation Area at Waccamaw NWR *Horry* SC 26 Jan (Steve Coggin, et al.), presumably the same individual at the Grand Strand WTP along Jackson Bluff Rd in *Horry* SC, 27 Jan (Chris Hill) through 15 Feb (Ritch Lilly), at Watermark Lake in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 23 Jan (Starr Hazard) through 7 Mar (Brad Sale), at Sea Pines Forest Preserve on Hilton Head Island, presumably the same bird first seen on the island 23 Dec, 30 Jan (Mary Alice Tartler) through 9 Mar (Steven Guy), and along Alder Branch Rd in *Camden* NC 9 Feb (Elisa & Nick Flanders). By early February it became evident that there were actually two Ash-throated Flycatchers at Alligator River NWR, as individuals were seen at sites over two miles apart on 3 Feb

(Jim Gould). One wonders how long both individuals were present at the refuge. As this species is still on the review list in SC, all reports from that state are pending review by its BRC.

Western Kingbird: One seen and photographed along Tuttle Rd in *Stokes* NC 27-31 Dec (Tony & Cara Woods, m. obs.) was very unusual for the Piedmont region. In the coastal plain, where the species is more expected, individuals were photographed perched on powerlines in *Washington* NC 15 Dec (Steve Shultz, et al.) and in *Wanchese Dare* NC during the Bodie/Pea Island CBC 28 Dec (Brian Bockhahn, Kyle Kittelberger).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One seen and photographed along Jenkins Farm Rd on Johns Island *Charleston* SC 19 Jan (Pam Ford, Aaron Given, m. obs.) was extremely unusual for the winter period.

Common Raven: Near the southeast limit of the species' range were two in flight over NC-109 in northwestern *Richmond* NC 10 Jan (David Williams) and two around where US-1 crosses the Deep River *Chatham* and *Lee* NC intermittently throughout the winter (Jimmy Randolph).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One photographed at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 11 Dec (Michael Plauché, et al.) was quite late to depart.

Sedge Wren: One photographed at Ninety Six National Historic Site *Greenwood* SC 28 Dec and 4 Jan (Chris Contakos) was a good find for the Piedmont in winter.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: One at Mills River Park *Henderson* NC 31 Dec (John Campbell) was unusual for the mountain region in winter.

Pine Siskin: 160+ on Roan Mountain *Mitchell* NC 2 Jan (Rick Knight) was a notable count outside a major irruption year.

Lapland Longspur: Individuals were seen or heard along Mid-Pines Rd in *Wake* NC 6 Dec (Cathy Sue Harvey) and 25-31 Dec (Harry LeGrand, m. obs.) and along Hooper Lane in *Henderson* NC 4 Jan (Mike Resch) and 10 Feb (Kevin Burke).

Snow Bunting: One was seen in the parking lot at Coquina Beach *Dare* NC 5-8 Dec (David & Susan Disher, m. obs.). Up to two were seen on the south side of Murrells Inlet *Georgetown* SC 9-21 Dec (Linda Montgomery, m. obs.). 12 at Currituck NWR *Currituck* NC 17 Dec (Jonathan Cooley) was a notable count.

Grasshopper Sparrow: One photographed along Piedmont Dairy Rd in *Spartanburg* SC 1 Feb (Michael Robertson) was a good find for the Piedmont in winter.

Lark Sparrow: Up to six visited a yard with feeders along Alder Branch Rd in *Camden* NC throughout the winter (James Harrison). Two were seen at Pee Dee NWR *Anson* NC

during its CBC 4 Jan (Judy Walker, et al.). Individuals were seen in northeastern *New Hanover* NC 15 Dec (Derb Carter) through 22 Feb (Sam Cooper), at Veterans Park just south of Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 4 Jan (Jamie Adams), and at Ezell Farm Community Park *Mecklenburg* NC 11 Jan (Taylor Piephoff, et al.) through 17 Mar (Matt Janson).

Savannah Sparrow (Ipswich Sparrow): Nine in a flock on the beach at Ft Macon SP *Carteret* NC 16 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Will Cook) and twelve in a flock there 26 Feb (Marty Wall) were a notable concentration of this subspecies of Savannah Sparrow.

Clay-colored Sparrow: This species was reported at six sites in the NC coastal plain this winter, with one along Leggett Rd in *Edgecombe* NC 12 Jan (Ricky Davis) through 19 Jan (David Williams) being the farthest from the coast.

LeConte's Sparrow: One was photographed on a private farm in *Nash* NC during the Rocky Mount CBC 20 Dec (Ann Brice, et al.). One photographed just outside Brevard *Transylvania* NC 14 Feb (Bob Butler, Michael Plauché) was especially unusual for the mountain region.

Henslow's Sparrow: One seen and photographed at Latta Plantation Nature Preserve *Mecklenburg* NC 29 Feb (Chris Bolling, Patty Masten, et al.) and 1 Mar (m. obs.) was very unusual for a site in the Piedmont.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Two in northern *Dorchester* SC during the Four Holes Swamp CBC 16 Dec (Matt Johnson, Kristen Oliver, Jake Zadik) was this winter's high count. One photographed at Leicester Patch *Buncombe* NC 26 Dec (Doug Johnston) was unusual for the mountain region in winter.

Yellow-breasted Chat: Chats were found at ten sites in the NC coastal plain this winter, with one visiting a suet feeder in Greenville *Pitt* 9 Feb (John Daughtry) being the farthest inland.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: An adult male photographed at a feeder in Morrisville *Wake* NC 31 Jan (Myra Murphy) was the only one reported this winter.

Bobolink: One seen in *Gaston* NC during the Gastonia CBC 14 Dec (Taylor Piephoff) was extremely late. In fact, this Bobolink was only the third ever found in the Carolinas during the winter.

Orchard Oriole: A female photographed at a feeder in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 16-17 Dec (Connie Fowler) was incredibly late.

Bullock's Oriole: Adult males visited feeders at two sites in SC this winter—in Bluffton *Beaufort* 20 Dec through 4 Jan (Kevin Brady, m. obs.) and on the northwestern shore of Lake Moultrie *Berkeley* 15 Jan through 8 Mar (Bob & Monica Bradley, m. obs.).



Apparent Bronzed Cowbird (with Brown-headed Cowbird and Red-winged Blackbird), 28 Feb 2020, Carteret Co, NC. Photo by Dave Fischer

Bronzed Cowbird: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Bronzed Cowbird visiting a feeder in Morehead City *Carteret* NC 11 Feb (Carol Reigle, m. obs.) through 29 Feb (Sean Leahy, Dawn Lloyd). If accepted, the report would become the first record of this species in NC.

Brewer's Blackbird: 24 east of Pendleton *Anderson* SC during the Clemson CBC 19 Dec (Drew Lanham, et al.) and 32 in the Cuddo Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC during its CBC 21 Dec (John Grego) were good counts. One seen

along County Rd near Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 21 Dec (Stan & Connie Wulkowicz) was locally unusual.

Ovenbird: Nine in *Dare* NC during the Cape Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Karen Lebing) was a notable count for winter. Individuals in Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 8 Dec (Jeffrey Turner), in Seven Oaks *Lexington* SC 30-31 Dec (Carl Osborne), and in Durham *Durham* NC 8-10 Jan (Ryland Bowman) were notable for sites away from the coast in winter.

Northern Waterthrush: At least six were found in the SC coastal plain this winter, including one at Caw Caw Interpretive Center *Charleston* throughout the period (m. obs.) and two at that site 27 Dec (Marc Regnier) and 1 Feb (Keith McCullough, et al.).

Black-and-white Warbler: This species was well-reported across the coastal plain and Piedmont this winter, with record counts made on multiple CBCs.

Tennessee Warbler: One photographed in a yard in Cary *Wake* NC 20 Jan (David Ley) was extremely unusual for mid-winter.

Orange-crowned Warbler: 27 at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (*vide* Susan Campbell) was a notable count.

Nashville Warbler: Three were reported this winter—individuals at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC during its CBC 29 Dec (Allen Bryan, Marc Ribaud), at a feeder in West Ashley *Charleston* SC where photographed 12 Jan (Marc Regnier), and at Botany Bay Plantation WMA *Charleston* SC 26 Jan (Matt Johnson).

Common Yellowthroat: One visiting a feeder near Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC 8 Dec through 7 Jan (Diane Lombardi) was unusual for the mountain region in winter.

American Redstart: Three were reported this winter—female/immature-plumaged individuals at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 21 Dec (Mandy & Mark Johnson), just east of New Holland *Hyde* NC during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC 29 Dec (Allen Bryan, Marc Ribaud), and along Wildlife Drive at Mattamuskeet NWR *Hyde* NC 18 Jan (Robert Meehan, et al.).

Northern Parula: About half a dozen were reported this winter. Individuals along Brickhouse Rd in *Durham* NC 8 Dec (Jim Capel), at Saluda Shoals Park *Lexington* SC 28 Dec (Jerry Griggs, Irvin Pitts) and 8 Jan (Pitts), and at a feeder in north Raleigh *Wake* NC 30 Dec through 31 Jan (Erla Beegle) were especially unusual for sites away from the coast.

Yellow Warbler: One at Carolina Beach Lake *New Hanover* NC 1 Jan (Ryan Justice) through 26 Jan (Matt Wangerin) was a good find for winter.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's Warbler): A western race Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen in Sanderling *Dare* NC 19 Jan (Jeff Lewis).

Yellow-throated Warbler: 17 in *Beaufort* SC during the Lowcountry CBC 14 Dec (*vide* Buddy Campbell) was a record number for that count. Two along N Lake Rd in *Hyde* NC 28 Dec (Allen Bryan) was a good count for a site so far north. One visiting a suet feeder in *Greenville* SC 31 Dec and 23 Jan (Simon Harvey) was unusual for upstate SC in mid-winter.

Prairie Warbler: One at Clark's Creek Nature Preserve *Mecklenburg* NC 15 Dec (Jeff Lemons, et al.) through 26 Jan (Taylor Piephoff) was unusual for the Piedmont in winter.

Wilson's Warbler: Individuals in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR *Clarendon* SC 4 Dec (Dennis Forsythe) and at Savannah NWR *Jasper* SC 28 Feb (Bob Friedrichs) were good finds for winter.

Summer Tanager: Individuals were seen in a yard in eastern *Brunswick* NC 15 Nov through 10 Mar (Greg Massey), in a yard in Hillsborough *Orange* NC 1 Dec through 18 Mar (Carol Tuskey), visiting a feeder near Varnamtown *Brunswick* NC 3-11 Dec (Scott Stokley), in Myrtle Beach *Horry* SC 1 Jan (Ritch Lilly), in a yard on Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* SC 20 Jan through 17 Mar (Liz Cieszynski), and visiting a suet feeder in Manteo *Dare* NC in late January (*vide* Jeff Lewis).

Western Tanager: This species was well-reported again this winter. Individuals visited feeders in Raleigh *Wake* NC for the second year in a row 25 Nov through 25 Mar (Sam Jolly, m. obs.), in southern *Horry* SC 30 Nov through 1 Dec (Jordan Matejcek), in Salvo *Dare* NC 20 Dec (Connie Meekins), in Burlington *Alamance* NC 3 Jan through 10 Feb (Joe Donahue, m. obs.), in Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 11 Jan through 23 Feb (m. obs.), in

Trent Woods *Craven* NC for the second year in a row 18 Jan through 5 Mar (Lee Rouse), on James Island *Charleston* SC for the second year in a row 19 Jan through 17 Feb (Barbara Spence), in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC for the second year in a row 22 Jan through 19 Mar (Elizabeth Anderegg, m. obs.), in western *Johnston* NC for a second year in a row 23 Jan (Mary Ann Booth) through 22 Feb (David Williams), in northwestern *Charleston* *Charleston* SC 23 Jan through 16 Feb (Jennifer Marshall, m. obs.), in Winston Salem *Forsyth* NC 12-29 Feb (m. obs.), and in northeastern *New Hanover* NC 22 Feb (Sam Cooper). Two individuals were banded in the yard in Mt Pleasant 15 Feb (Lex Glover), and, amazingly, a third un-banded bird was reported there 17 Feb (Anderegg).



Western Tanager, 4 Feb 2020, Alamance Co, NC. Photo by Dave Fischer

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: Individuals photographed at feeders in Providence *Orangeburg* SC, a male, 27 Jan (Harold Donnelly) and in Waves *Dare* NC, a female, 15-17 Feb (Karen Lebing) were very unusual for winter.

Painted Bunting: Farthest inland this winter were individual adult males visiting feeders in Clayton *Johnston* NC 26 Jan (Ava Strickland), in Winston Salem *Forsyth* NC 15-16 Feb (*fide* John Haire), and on the southern shore of Lake Murray *Lexington* SC 24 Feb through 5 Mar (Irvin Pitts).

Dickcissel: Eleven were reported this winter, most at sites along the coast but also at four sites in NC Piedmont. Individuals photographed along US-264 just east of New Holland *Hyde* NC during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC 29 Dec (Allen Bryan, Marc Ribaud) and on Wadmalaw Island *Charleston* SC during the Sea Islands CBC 3 Jan (Dave Eslinger) were firsts for those counts.