

The Chat

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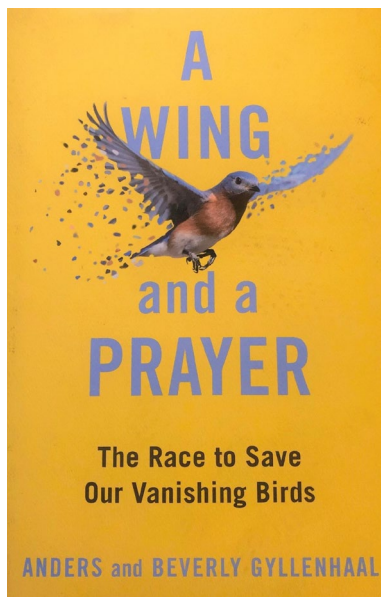
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Cover: Red-footed Booby, 03 March 2023, Yates Mill County Park, Wake County NC.
Photograph by Robert Oberfelder.

Birder's Book Review:

A Wing and a Prayer: The Race to Save Our Vanishing Birds **by Anders and Beverly Gyllenhaal**

Steve Shultz



Three billion birds. Groundbreaking work by Canadian Wildlife Service bird population specialist Adam Smith strongly suggests that North America lost this staggering number of birds over the last fifty years. To put that into perspective, the total population of North American birds, swelled by newly fledged young, is estimated to peak in late summer at between 30 and 40 billion. This is reduced by mortality over the winter to a former baseline spring estimate of 10 billion birds. Which is now just seven billion. The ability to quantitatively value the loss of birds across the North American landscape offers more than a tragic footnote in peer reviewed literature, rather it empowers myriad conservationists with a tool to grab the attention of an often distracted public and focus on local, state, national, and international efforts to reverse the tide of declining bird populations.

Anders and Beverly Gyllenhaal, who reside in Raleigh, NC, jumped headfirst into birding as “an antidote to city life” after careers in journalism that took them from Miami to Minneapolis and Washington, DC to Raleigh. Provided with a Covid-era opportunity to explore the United States via truck and Airstream trailer, they set out to discover the state of birds in America. The result of this journey, which visits central Florida prairies to witness efforts to keep the Florida Grasshopper Sparrow from tipping into extinction, searches for the “Oh God Bird” in the swamps of Louisiana, and visits farmers in Wyoming who are banding together locally to preserve habitat for Greater Sage Grouse, provides insight into the challenges and successes of stabilizing the recent freefall of bird populations.

Along the way we meet strange bedfellows. U.S. Army generals willing to prioritize woodpecker nesting against live fire exercises join with Hawaiian law students grubbing plants on the side of a volcano and a farmer in Ecuador, who converted from subsistence farming to become protector of one of the rarest birds in the world, in saving endangered species.

But how can we avoid species becoming endangered in the first place? The Gyllenhaals argue the economics of saving birds before that critical tipping point and demonstrate how much more successful and less expensive efforts to avoid getting to the precipice can be versus trying to bring a critically imperiled species from the brink of extinction.

I know, works delving deep into the state of nature as it exists today can sometimes be a bit dry and even depressing. Lots of numbers, lots of references, lots of bad news. *A Wing and a Prayer* successfully avoids the stereotype. Fast paced, with bits of travelogue interspersed with science, charming looks at birds, and interviews with leading figures in conservation, the book makes for an enjoyable read. Anders and Beverly allow us to experience again the excitement of being a fledgling birder, of travelling to see new species, and of joining a worldwide community of individuals enjoying all facets of birding. It is here that we see the importance of welcoming new birders, and especially young birders, who will be the next generation of voices promoting conservation.

The Gyllenhaals share experiences on their journey to learn more about the birds around them. On the outskirts of Washington, DC during fall migration, inclusive birders enjoying a rare Dickcissel sighting ensure that the newcomers not only appreciate the opportunity to tick off this grassland species in decidedly uncommon habitat, but forge lasting friendships. Unfortunately not all of the experiences are positive, as in trying to participate in a North Carolina app-based bird alert when “a nasty message from the group’s moderator” resulted in the understanding that “there do exist birders for whom two questions are one too many.”

A Wing and a Prayer weaves science and storytelling into a compelling and enjoyable read that not only explains the problem, but offers solutions. The final chapter provides 30 suggestions to save our vanishing birds, as well as links and contact information for organizations spanning Ducks Unlimited to eBird to your representative in Washington, DC.

In addition to compelling content, the quality of the printed product impresses. Thick, luscious pages make for a wonderful tactile experience, while the print size, font, and use of color make for an easy read. Notes are contained in an appendix that allows for the flow of reading to be uninterrupted, and photographs throughout the book add interest and create connections with birds and people highlighted throughout the work. *A Wing and a Prayer* earns a spot on the bookshelf as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act.

A Wing and a Prayer: The Race to Save Our Vanishing Birds. Anders and Beverly Gyllenhaal. 2023. Simon & Schuster, New York, NY. 310pp. ISBN 978-1-9821-8455-1. Hardcover, \$30.00.

Did You Know?

Full copies of *The Chat* dating back to the very first issue, March 1937, are available for viewing online. Find these and more at:

<https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/chat/>

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Spring 2023, unless otherwise noted)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All place names preceding NC/SC, also in italics, are counties.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: The individual continuing from fall at Lake Julian *Buncombe* NC was last seen 16 Apr (Lee Allen, m. obs.). Ten at a small pond near West Columbia *Lexington* SC 27 Mar (Jason Giovannone, et al.) was a notable count for that area.

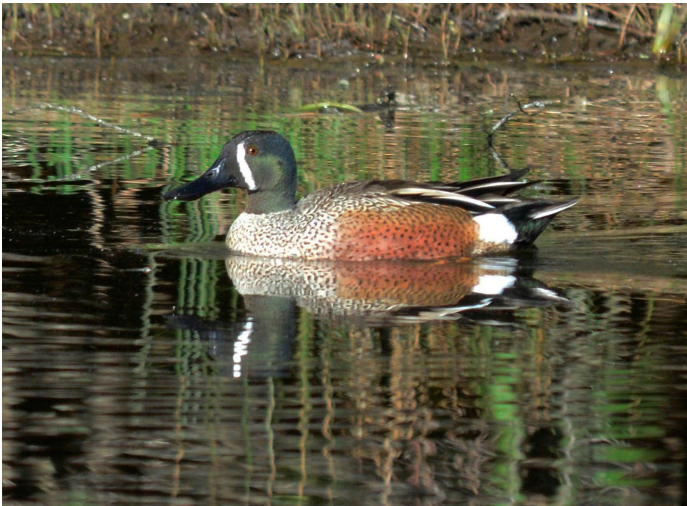
Snow Goose: A first-year dark-morph bird on Lake Tomahawk *Buncombe* NC 10-11 May (Jay Wherley, m. obs.) and a first-year white-morph bird in Mills River *Henderson* NC through 13 May (David Wright) were both quite late for sites in the mountain region.

Ross's Goose: One seen and photographed at the Mills River WTP *Henderson* NC 18 Apr (Cathy Ford, m. obs.) was somewhat late.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Individuals seen and photographed at Lake Townsend *Guilford* NC 6-13 Apr (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.), on Beaver Lake *Buncombe* NC 23 Apr (Jay Wherley), and on Cherokee Lake *Cherokee* NC 2 May (Mary & Ralph Erickson) were late. It is possible that all or some of these sightings involved the same individual.

Tundra Swan: A seemingly healthy first-summer individual photographed in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR *Hyde/Washington* NC 21 May (Barbara Houston, Judy Jones) was late.

Blue-winged Teal x Northern Shoveler: An apparent hybrid of a Blue-winged Teal and a Northern Shoveler was photographed on Price Lake *Watauga* NC 2 Apr (Steve Dowlan). This unique-looking duck, an adult drake, was found among a raft of 14 Blue-winged Teal.



Apparent Blue-winged Teal x Northern Shoveler hybrid, 2 April 2023, Watauga County, NC. Photograph by Steve Dowlan.

Eurasian Wigeon: A drake seen on South Pond at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 15 May (Max Epstein, Doug Gochfeld) was incredibly late.

American Wigeon: A drake lingering at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC through 23 May (Steve Patterson) was rather late for a site so far from the coast.

Mottled Duck: One or two reported at sites around Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC intermittently throughout the period (m. obs.) were unusual for NC.

Ring-necked Duck: Nine in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR *Colleton* SC 23 May (Elizabeth Anderegg, Julie Mobley) was a remarkable count for late May.

King Eider: A first-winter drake seen and photographed on the Bogue Sound alongside the boardwalk at Emerald Isle Woods Park *Carteret* NC 23-26 May (James Allen, m. obs.) was an extraordinary find for late May, especially when not following an eider irruption in winter.

Surf Scoter: Four on Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 14 Apr (Vince Kloster) and two on Lake Greenwood *Greenwood* SC 28 Apr (Adoniram Sides, Kara Zanni) were notable inland.

White-winged Scoter: Two on a small pond in Black Mountain *Buncombe* NC 18 Mar (Richard Bruce) were notable inland.

Bufflehead: A hen on Pinehurst Lake *Moore* NC 29 May (Kevin Markham) was late.

Common Merganser: Breeding was confirmed for the first time in *Transylvania* NC when a hen and 11 chicks were seen together along the French Broad River near Rosman 14 May (Kevin Burke). Breeding was confirmed again this year along four rivers in the NC mountains—on the Green River/Lake Adger *Polk* when two adults and eight recently fledged chicks were photographed 16 Apr (Keith Viglietta), on the South Toe River in *Yancey* when a hen and six recently fledged chicks were photographed 17 May (Debbie Segal, et al.), on the Laurel River in *Madison* when a hen and 11 juveniles were photographed 21 May (Kevin Metcalf), and on the Tuckasegee River in *Jackson* when a hen and 18 juveniles, an amazing brood size, were photographed 22 May (Jennifer Robin). Notable for SC and pending review by its BRC is the report of a hen and nine chicks along the Chattooga River in *Oconee* SC 29 May (Gavin Allvine). While the report confirms breeding in that area, it may be insufficient for the first breeding record inside SC, as the river itself forms the border between Georgia and SC and the exact nesting site is unknown.

Eared Grebe: Individuals were seen on Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 18 Mar (Harry LeGrand) and off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 26 Mar (Andrew Thornton).

White-winged Dove: One seen perched on a powerline in Kill Devil Hills *Dare* NC 19 Apr (Jeff Lewis) was the only one reported this period.

Chuck-will's-widow: One heard in Pritchardville *Beaufort* SC 7 Mar (Aaron Palmieri) was rather early. Two heard along Mt Zion Rd in eastern *Watauga* NC 9 May (Steve Dowlan) were unusual for the northern mountains.

Rufous Hummingbird: Migrants visited feeders at four sites in the NC Piedmont in mid-to-late March (m. obs.). An adult female visiting a feeder in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 10-22 Mar (Sam Cooper) was unusual for a site near the coast.

Virginia Rail: Two heard calling in a cattail marsh southwest of Boone *Watauga* NC, at 3600 feet above sea level, 19 May into summer (Andrew Rapp, m. obs.) was suggestive of attempted breeding there.

Sora: One audio-recorded calling at pond on Shortoff Mountain *Burke* NC 4 Mar (Benjamin Zeiger) was unusual for the mountain region so early in the season.

Common Gallinule: An adult individual photographed at Lake Keowee *Oconee* SC 4 Apr (Don Lenahan) was unusual for upstate SC.

Purple Gallinule: An adult seen and photographed at the Oriental WTP *Pamlico* NC 17 Apr (Christine Stoughton-Root, et al.) was notable for NC, as was a moribund individual found along NC-58 in Pine Knoll Shores *Carteret* NC 4 May (John Fussell).

Limpkin: A pair apparently nested at the upper end of Lake Marion in southern *Sumter* SC, as one was seen sitting on a nest there 16 Mar and 6 Apr (Cathy Mathias). Though it is unclear if nesting there was successful, four were seen together on the same lake in neighboring Calhoun SC 27 Apr (Mathias). Limpkins also continued around the two previously documented breeding sites in SC intermittently through the period, though no evidence of nesting was reported.

Sandhill Crane: One was seen at the site in *Brunswick* NC where nesting was reported last spring, this year 1-6 May (Robert Cowan, m. obs.). One, possibly injured, seen in an agricultural field in northern *Iredell* NC 30 May through 4 Jun (Dale Reynolds, m. obs.) was unusual for the upper Piedmont so late in the spring season.

Black-necked Stilt: Two at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 10 Mar (Mike & Peggy Eubank, m. obs.) may have been the same pair seen at that site in late December, as it was still very early for returning spring migrants.

Black-bellied Plover: Individuals along Hooper Ln in *Henderson* NC 10 May (Kevin Burke, et al.), at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 26 May (Aaron Jones), and in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt *Guilford* NC 27-28 May (Elizabeth & Henry Link, m. obs.) were notable inland in spring.

American Golden-Plover: Two at J. Morgan Futch Game Land *Tyrrell* NC 5 Mar (Ricky Davis) were rather early. More typical were individuals along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 23-26 Mar (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.), at Santee Coastal Reserve *Charleston* SC 4 Apr (Felicia Sanders, et al.), again along Hooper Ln 28-30 Apr (Tim Novak, m. obs.) and 10 May (Novak), and at the Cape Point Campground *Dare* NC 20-27 May (Ed Corey, m. obs.).

Piping Plover: One seen and photographed at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 28 Apr (Mike Resch, m. obs.) was a fantastic find, providing about the fifth record for the mountain region and fourth record for that particular site.

Upland Sandpiper: Individuals were seen at the Super Sod farm in *Orangeburg* SC 28 Mar through 2 Apr (Harold Donnelly, m. obs.), at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Ln in *Henderson* NC 28 Apr (Kevin Burke) 1 May (Mark Thomas) and 8-9 May (Eric Smith, m. obs.), at the Cape Point Campground *Dare* NC 2 May (Manon Guglia), at Huspa Plantation *Beaufort* SC 7 May (Travis Stewart), and at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 8 May (Steve Patterson).

Bar-tailed Godwit: The individual wintering on the eastern end of Kiawah Island *Charleston* SC for a second year in a row was last seen 16 May this year (Benjamin Clock).

Stilt Sandpiper: Individuals seen and photographed at small ponds in Pineville *Mecklenburg* NC 17-24 Apr (Chris Huffstickler, m. obs.) and at Lamaster Dairy Center *Pickens* SC 22-23 May (Kevin Kubach, m. obs.) were notable for inland sites in spring.

Dunlin: Inland sightings included eight along Hooper Ln in *Henderson* NC 29 Apr (Vicky Burke, et al.), 12 at Dobbins Farm *Anderson* SC 28 Apr (Brian Barchus, et al.), and four along Meadow View Rd in *Orange* NC 14-16 May (Mary & Ralph Erickson, m. obs.).

Purple Sandpiper: One photographed on the jetty at Ft Macon SP *Carteret* NC 24 May (Daniel Kaplan) and 25 May (Marty Wall) was very late to depart.

Baird's Sandpiper: One seen and photographed in a flooded agricultural area along Mission Church Rd in western *Stanly* NC 8 May (Greg Hays, m. obs.) was an excellent find in spring.

Western Sandpiper: One seen and photographed along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 26 Mar (Jay Lanier, Ian & Janelle McDonald) was quite early for a site in the mountain region.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Inland, individuals were seen along Hooper Ln *Henderson* NC 27 Apr (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.), at Pee Dee NWR *Anson* NC 6 May (David Schroder), and at Brookshire Park *Watauga* NC 17 May (Don Woodruff, m. obs.).

Short-billed/Long-billed Dowitcher: Five at Lake Crabtree *Wake* NC 14 May (Eddie Owens) were notable, as all other inland dowitcher sightings this spring were of individuals.

Spotted Sandpiper: 37 at Oak Hollow Lake *Guilford* NC 9 May (Andrew Thornton) was a notable concentration.

Willet: One photographed at a retention pond in Pineville *Mecklenburg NC* 24 Apr (Cody Little, m. obs.) was a good find inland.

Wilson's Phalarope: One at Dobbins Farm *Anderson SC* 6-7 May (Charlie Quattlebaum, m. obs.) was unusual for the Piedmont region in spring. Other sightings, all made in the SC Lowcountry, included three at Nemours Wildlife Federation *Beaufort* 20 Mar (Beau Bauer, Steven Guy) with two remaining 22 Mar (Bauer, et al.), one at Donnelley WMA *Colleton* 2-6 May (Michael Redmond, m. obs.), four at Bear Island WMA *Colleton* 7-8 May (m. obs.), and one at Widgeon Point Preserve *Beaufort* 16 May (Jenn Clementoni).

Red-necked Phalarope: Individuals at Dobbins Farm *Anderson SC* 18 May (Steve Patterson, m. obs.) and near Elloree *Orangeburg SC* 20 May (Matt Johnson), as well as five along Meadow View Rd in *Orange NC* 19 May (Carol Tuskey, m. obs.), were notable inland. Along or near the coast, sightings were made at about a dozen sites in mid-to-late May, likely related to a low-pressure system stalled off the coast, including a count of seven on Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP *Georgetown SC* 28 May (Wendy Allen, m. obs.).



Red-necked Phalarope, 28 May 2023, Carolina Beach, New Hanover County NC. Photograph by Liling Warren.

South Polar Skua: One photographed in flight over the ocean from Cape Point *Dare NC* 25 May (Josh Yoder, et al.) was an amazing find from shore. Individuals were also seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare NC* 14 May and 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Pomarine Jaeger: Seven seen in flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.) was a notable count from shore.

Parasitic Jaeger: 23 in flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.) was this spring's high count.

Black-legged Kittiwake: A first-year individual at Atlantic Beach Pier *Carteret* NC 31 Mar (Betsy Miner, John Fussell) through 5 Apr (Marty Wall), at Jolly Roger Pier *Pender* NC 12 May (Michele Skolmutch), and again at Atlantic Beach Pier 22-23 May (Wall) was late to depart.

Black-headed Gull: Individuals were seen at the Salt Pond at Cape Point *Dare* NC 20 Mar (Megan Baker) and at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC 21 Mar (Trenton Voytko).

Little Gull: One was seen in Atlantic Beach *Carteret* NC 4 Mar (Marty Wall) through 19 Mar (John Fussell).

Laughing Gull: One seen at Ecusta Pond *Transylvania* NC 1 Mar (Kevin Burke) was extremely early for a site in the mountain region. Two on Lake Norman *Mecklenburg* NC 7 May (Patty Masten, et al.) and one at Yadkin Memorial Park *Yadkin* NC 30 May (Ron Morris) were also unusual inland.

Heermann's Gull: An adult, presumably the same individual seen at multiple sites along the coast the past couple of years, was seen at Hatteras Point *Dare* NC 9 May (Brian Patteson), at nearby Cape Point later that same day (Christopher Gontarski), and on the beach near Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 12 May (Tammy Hester, m. obs.) intermittently through 22 May (Mark Hoffman).

Iceland Gull: Individuals seen around Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC 4-16 May (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.) and Cape Point *Dare* NC 12-25 May (Max Epstein, Doug Gochfeld, m. obs.) were late.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Several notable inland counts were made at Jordan Lake *Chatham* NC in March including 177 on 9 Mar (Trenton Voytko), 645 on 18 Mar (Jonathan Cantrell), and 400 on 23 Mar (Mel Green).

Caspian Tern: One seen over Lake Junaluska *Haywood* NC 2 Apr (Vince Kloster) was somewhat early for a site in the mountain region.

Black Tern: 80 tallied on a pelagic trip off Hatteras *Dare* NC, following a period of westerly winds, 5 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was a notable count for spring.

Roseate Tern: Up to two were seen around Cape Point *Dare* NC 5 May into June (m. obs.). Two at Bogue Inlet *Carteret* NC 26 May (Trevor Sleight), and three in Atlantic Beach near Beaufort Inlet *Carteret* NC 28 May (Marty Wall) were unusual for that area of the coast.

Sandwich Tern: Seven photographed together at Cape Fear Point on Bald Head Island *Brunswick* NC 17 Mar (Daniel Kaplan) were somewhat early.

White-tailed Tropicbird: An adult individual seen and photographed from Cape Point *Dare* NC 20 May (Jason Denesevich, Jack Rogers, m. obs.) was an amazing find from shore. On pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC, individuals were seen 14 May and 3 Jun, and a pair of adult birds were seen together 29 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).



*White-tailed Tropicbird,
29 May 2023, off Hatteras,
Dare County NC.
Photograph by Kate
Sutherland.*

Red-billed Tropicbird: An immature individual was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Red-throated Loon: One seen and photographed on Lake Hickory *Alexander/Catawba* NC 17-21 Mar (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.) was a great find inland.

Pacific Loon: One seen and photographed on Lake Jocassee at Devils Fork SP *Oconee* SC 4 Mar (Natasha Bartolotta, Jay Mager, m. obs.) through 2 Apr (Tim Kalbach) was a great find for inland-most SC and the second record for that lake, the first 28 Feb through 8 Mar 2020. Along the coast, up to two continued around Wrightsville Beach *New Hanover* NC through 31 Mar (Sam Cooper) and one was seen off Jennette's Pier *Dare* NC on the somewhat late date of 17 Apr (Andrew Thornton).

Wilson's Storm-Petrel: A low-pressure system stalled off the coast in late May contributed to multiple from-shore sightings including counts of 42 off Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.) and 40 off Atlantic Beach Pier *Carteret* NC 28 May (Zach Ambrose, Marty Wall).

European Storm-Petrel: One was briefly seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Leach's Storm-Petrel: 121 in flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.) was a remarkable count from shore. Three off Atlantic Beach Pier *Carteret* NC 28 Apr (Marty Wall) were notable for that area. Both sightings occurred following the passage of offshore weather.

Trindade Petrel: Individuals, all dark-morphs, were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 22 May, 29 May, and 1 Jun (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Bermuda Petrel: One was seen near the shelf break 30 miles southeast of Cape Point *Dare* NC during a research trip 24 Apr (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland).

Fea's Petrel: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 23 May and 29 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater: A few sightings were made from shore when a low-pressure system stalled off the Outer Banks in late May, including a count of 82 from Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.).

Sooty Shearwater: The peak count this spring was 136 in flight off Cape Point *Dare* NC 28 May (Peter Flood, et al.).

Magnificent Frigatebird: An immature bird photographed in flight over Fripp Island *Beaufort* SC 30 May (Jenn Clementoni) was our first report this year.

Masked Booby: An adult was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras *Dare* NC 22 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.).

Red-footed Booby: Pending review by the NC BRC is the extraordinary report with photographs of an apparent dark-morph Red-footed Booby at Yates Mill Pond *Wake* NC 3 Mar (Bob Oberfelder, m. obs.). If accepted, the report would provide NC its second record of this tropical sulid. Amazingly, because Yates Mill Pond is 110 miles from the coast, this report may also provide the inland-most record of this typically-oceanic species anywhere in the world.



*Red-footed Booby,
3 March 2023,
Wake County, NC.
Photograph by Bob
Oberfelder.*

Anhinga: Farthest inland this spring were four in Mosquito Den Swamp *Lincoln* NC 18 May (Will Bennett, et al.) and one in Cleveland Pike Marsh *Oconee* SC 21 May (James Sullivan).

American White Pelican: Five photographed on Mayo Lake *Person* NC 11 Mar (Jeff Blalock) were a first for that county. 194 at the upper end of Lake Greenwood in *Laurens* SC 16-17 Mar (Tamara King) was a remarkable count for that area.

American Bittern: One photographed at a small pond near the upper end of Fontana Lake *Swain* NC 29 Mar (Paula Caycedo Rosales) was a first for that county.

Snowy Egret: One in the Patterson Place wetland *Durham* NC 27 Mar (Maria de Bruyn) was somewhat early for a site so far inland. One at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 21 Apr (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.) was unusual for the mountain region in spring.

Tricolored Heron: An adult seen and photographed at Land Harbor Lake *Avery* NC 5 Apr (John Frazier, m. obs.) was an excellent find, providing the first record for that county and only the fifth record for the entire mountain region. One at Sandy Creek Park *Durham* NC 13 Apr (Vicki Nebes, m. obs.) was unusual for the Piedmont region in spring.

Glossy Ibis: One seen and photographed at ponds along Sally Gilreath Rd in *Greenville* SC 31 Mar through 11 Apr (Laura Harris, m. obs.) was notable for upstate SC in spring.

Roseate Spoonbill: Second-year individuals photographed along US-70 just north of Davis *Carteret* NC 10 May (Ruth King, *vide* John Fussell) and in the Brown Marsh Swamp near Clarkton *Bladen* NC 17 May (Amy Padgett) were notable for NC.

Swallow-tailed Kite: Both states' first reports this spring were made on the same date, 7 Mar. Individuals over Lake Cunningham *Greenville* SC 10 Apr (Laura Harris), over Old Bynum Bridge *Chatham* NC 3 May (Laurie Howlett, et al.), and over northern *Orange* NC 18 May (Angie Holt, et al.) were unusual for the Piedmont in spring.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: One at Carolina Beach SP *New Hanover* NC 13 May (*vide* Jesse Anderson) was a first for that island, likely a result of a controlled-burn management program.

Crested Caracara: Pending review by the NC BRC is the report with photographs of an apparent Crested Caracara along NC-20 in northern *Robeson* NC, where reportedly scavenging a deer carcass, 3 Mar (Jeff Marcus). If accepted, the report would provide the third record for NC and first for the inner coastal plain.

Western Kingbird: Individuals were seen at four sites along or near the coast in March—at Ft Moultrie *Charleston* SC continuing from winter through 20 Mar (Frank Ceravalo), around a horse pasture on Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* SC 17-21 Mar (Robert Steele, m. obs.), at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access) *Jasper* SC 23 Mar (Shane Guenin), and at Holly Ridge Golf Course *Currituck* NC 26 Mar (Al Hooks, Jeff Lewis).

Gray Kingbird: One was seen and photographed at Isle of Palms County Park Charleston SC 24-25 May (Jake Shorty, m. obs.).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One returned to last year's successful nesting site in Pineville Mecklenburg NC 20 Apr (Cody Little, et al.) though only continued through 29 Apr (m. obs.), likely departing due to lack of a mate. One returned to a suspected nesting site along Williamson Rd in York SC 23 Apr (Marcus & Cheryl Morris) and two were seen there 20-30 May (Morris). A pair returned to the traditional nesting site near the Rock Hill - York County Airport York SC 24 Apr (Cindy Stacy) and nest-building was observed there in May (m. obs.). One was briefly seen at the historic nesting site, active 2010-2017, along Gutner Rd in southern Greenville SC 29 Apr (Simon Harvey, Samuel Payne) but not thereafter.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individual migrants were seen in western Yancey NC 12 May (Doug Raybuck) and in Catawba NC 17 May (Andrew Rapp).

Alder Flycatcher: Individual migrants along the Thomas Trail in Winston-Salem Forsyth NC 15-17 May (John Haire, m. obs.) and at Unity Park Greenville SC 20 May (Tim Kalbach) were notable for the Piedmont.

Willow Flycatcher: One audio-recorded singing at North River Preserve Carteret NC 30 May (Marty Wall) was unusual for a site in the coastal plain.

Least Flycatcher: A noticeable passage of migrants through the western NC Piedmont occurred 6-10 May, with individuals reported at six sites (m. obs.).

Say's Phoebe: One was seen and photographed in an agricultural area of western Abbeville SC 20-25 Mar (Steve Patterson, m. obs.). The individual continuing from fall along Howerton Rd in Guilford NC was last seen 6 Apr (Lou Skrabec, et al.).

Bank Swallow: One photographed at Ecusta Pond Transylvania NC 25 Mar (Nick Accardo, Michael Plauché) was rather early for a site in the mountain region.

Cave Swallow: Two seen in flight over the marina at Carolina Beach SP New Hanover NC 21 Mar (Jesse Anderson) were extremely unusual in spring.

Sedge Wren: A count of two in an agricultural area just east of Brevard Transylvania NC 26-29 Apr (Nathaniel Axtell) was notable for the mountain region.

Evening Grosbeak: Six continued in a yard with feeders in southwestern Orange NC, where up to 20 visited in January, through 26 Apr (Madalyn Baldwin, Ethan Johnston).

Bachman's Sparrow: A singing male at Carolina Beach SP New Hanover NC 2-5 May (Jesse Anderson, m. obs.) was a first for that island, likely a result of a controlled-burn management program initiated at that park.

Lark Sparrow: A pair returned to the site where suspected of nesting last season along Champion Rd in southern *York* SC 23 Apr (Marcus & Cheryl Morris, m. obs.) though this year only continued through 29 Apr (Morris, m. obs.). One seen and photographed at the Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 1 Apr (Jay Wherley, m. obs.) was a great find for the mountain region in spring. Interestingly, this individual was seen at the exact same location inside the estate where a Lark Sparrow was found 23 Aug 2022 (Aaron Steed, m. obs.).

White-crowned Sparrow: Latest to depart this spring was one photographed underneath a feeder in Winston-Salem *Forsyth* NC 20 May (Paul Nielson).

Vesper Sparrow: One seen and photographed at Pea Island NWR *Dare* NC 12 May (Gerald Head, Peggy Eubank, m. obs.) was quite late for a site away from the species' breeding grounds.

Henslow's Sparrow: 92 singing males over a 7.5-mile tract at the Voice of America site in *Beaufort* NC 5 Apr (Abbie Valine) was a notable count.

Lincoln's Sparrow: One seen and photographed by many at Mason Farm Biological Reserve *Orange* NC 11 Mar (Ralph Perrine) and 13-23 Mar (Fleeta Chauvigne, m. obs.) was somewhat early for a site in the Piedmont. One photographed on Hilton Head Island *Beaufort* SC 25 Mar (Alan Biggs) was a first for that island. Individuals were also reported at about a dozen other sites this spring 28 Mar through 8 May (m. obs.).



*Lincoln's Sparrow, 14 March 2023, Orange County, NC.
Photograph by Kent Fiala.*

Bobolink: Triple-digit counts made along Mid-Pines Rd and adjacent Inwood Rd in *Wake* NC 27 Apr (Liling Warren) through 14 May (Eddie Owens), including a high count of 535 on 5 May (John Lynch), were notable for that area.

Bullock's Oriole: Individual adult males visited yards in Mt Pleasant *Charleston* SC 12 Mar through 4 Apr (*fide* Craig Watson) and in Manteo *Dare* NC from mid-March (Paul Creef) through 4 Apr (Pat Draisey, Jeff Lewis, et al.).

Rusty Blackbird: One photographed in western *Wake* NC 10 May (Sujata Roy) was rather late.

Louisiana Waterthrush: Individuals at Apex Community Park *Wake* NC 4 Mar (James Pretzsch) and at Silver Bluff Audubon Center *Aiken* SC 4 Mar (Andrew Lydeard) were early.

Northern Waterthrush: One photographed at Caw Caw Interpretive Center *Charleston* SC 15 Mar (Katrina Cheung) likely over-wintered in the area, as it was too early for a spring migrant.

Golden-winged Warbler: One seen and audio-recorded singing in northern *Wake* NC 29 May through 1 Jun (Reed Dunnagan) was quite late for a site outside the species' breeding range.

Black-and-white Warbler: One seen at New River SP *Ashe* NC 1 Mar (Tamara & Tom Sanders) was very early for a site in the mountain region.

Prothonotary Warbler: Singing males on territory along the French Broad River at Biltmore Estate *Buncombe* NC 18-28 Apr and again 9-16 Jun (Aaron Steed, m. obs.) and 15 miles downriver near Mills River *Henderson* NC 8 May through 2 Jun (Marilyn Westphal, m. obs.) were unusual for the mountain region, though likely did not find mates at those sites. Two to three singing males along the Tugaloo River in southwestern *Oconee* SC 29-30 Apr (Andrew Lydeard, m. obs.) were notable for westernmost SC.

Swainson's Warbler: Singing males acting as if on territory at Great Bend Park along the Haw River in *Alamance* NC 29 Apr through 23 May (Jeffrey Greco, m. obs.) and at Jacob Fork Park in *Catawba* NC 17-30 May (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.) were unusual for those areas.

Connecticut Warbler: Individuals were reported at five sites this spring, all but one in the mountain region, 14-19 May (m. obs.).

Mourning Warbler: A singing adult male seen and photographed at Reynolda Gardens *Forsyth* NC 9-13 May (Tom McNeil, m. obs.) was the only one reported this spring.

Cape May Warbler: An adult male photographed in flight over the Atlantic Ocean 30 miles southeast of Cape Point *Dare* NC during a pelagic trip 21 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was quite unusual offshore during spring migration.

Magnolia Warbler: An adult male photographed in flight over the Atlantic Ocean 30 miles southeast of Cape Point *Dare* NC during a pelagic trip 14 May (Brian Patteson, Kate Sutherland, et al.) was unusual offshore during spring migration.

Bay-breasted Warbler: An adult male photographed along the Basin Trail at Ft Fisher *New Hanover* NC 29 May (Dan Enders, et al.) was rather late, also unusual for the coast in spring.

Prairie Warbler: An adult male photographed at Ft Macon SP *Carteret* NC 14 Mar (Nick Bui) may have over-wintered in the area, as it was several weeks early for a returning spring migrant.

Townsend's Warbler: An adult male photographed in Colington Harbour *Dare* NC 13 Mar (David True) was almost certainly the same individual photographed there nearly two months earlier, 22 Jan (True), signifying that the bird successfully over-wintered in the area.

Wilson's Warbler: One photographed at Greenfield Lake *New Hanover* NC 1 Apr (Jan Hansen) likely was the same individual seen there during the winter through 18 Feb, suggesting that the bird successfully over-wintered at that site.

Western Tanager: Individuals visited feeders in Rocky Mount *Nash* NC from winter through 16 Mar (Ricky Davis), near Lake Keowee *Oconee* SC 18 Mar (Teri Krezdorn, Brooks Garrett, m. obs.), in Wilmington *New Hanover* NC 2-16 Apr (Sam Cooper, m. obs.), and in Columbia *Richland* SC 16 Apr (Clint Wills). One photographed perched in a tree-top along Trenton Rd in Raleigh *Wake* NC 14 Mar (Scott Ellis) was unusual for a site away from a feeder.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: An adult male visiting a feeder in Cary *Wake* NC 30 Mar (Doug Pratt) was rather early.

Painted Bunting: Farthest inland this spring was an adult male visiting a feeder just east of Charlotte *Mecklenburg* NC 27 Mar through 4 Apr (Leslie Barden). A singing adult male, presumably the same individual on territory there last summer, returned to Dorothea Dix Park *Wake* NC 25 Apr (Chris Moorman) where it continued into summer (m. obs.).

Dickcissel: As usual, Dickcissels began showing up at known/suspected breeding sites in early May. Up to four in an agricultural area along Reepsville Rd in *Lincoln* NC 17 May through 2 Jun (Andrew Rapp, m. obs.) and up to four near the intersection of Dairyland and Meadow View Rd in *Orange* NC 19 May into summer (Karen Hogan, Teresa Noel, m. obs.) were notable counts for those areas.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

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

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

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

ANNUAL DUES

Individual or non-profit.....	\$30.00
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Student.....	\$15.00
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Patron.....	\$50.00 and up
Life Membership (payable in four consecutive \$125 installments)	\$500.00
Associate Life Membership (in same household as life member).....	\$100.00

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