

Black Scoter *Melanitta americana*

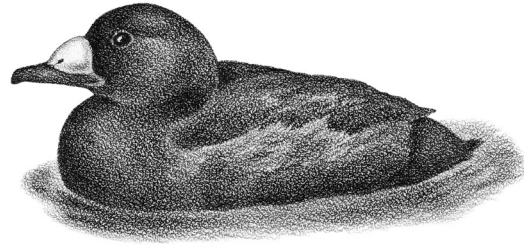


Folk Name: Sea Coot, American Scoter

Status: Migrant, Winter Visitor

Abundance: Very Rare

Habitat: Large lakes



Thousands of Black Scoters migrate in long stringy flocks up and down the coast of the Carolinas each spring and fall, but relatively few have been spotted this far inland. All Black Scoters reported in this region have been seen between 30 October and 2 January. The largest group found here numbered only six birds, and many of our sightings are of immature birds.

David Wright found a female Black Scoter swimming on Lake Norman at Ramsey Creek Park on November 4, 1989. This is the first known record of the species in Mecklenburg County and in the Central Carolina region. A decade later, Dwayne Martin spotted a lone male on Lookout Shoals Lake along the Catawba–Iredell county line on November 13, 1999.

In the twenty-first century, Black Scoter have been found on Lake Hickory on November 8, 2002, November

9, 2004, October 30, 2012, and November 8, 2015; on Lookout Shoals Lake on October 31, 2015; on Lake Tillery on December 6, 2009; on the Pee Dee NWR CBC in Anson County in January 2010; on Mountain Island Lake December 16, 2011; and on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg County on December 19, 2005, and December 11, 2013. The 2005 bird provided a new species for the Southern Lake Norman Christmas Bird Count. Our most recent report is from Kershaw County. Lex Glover and Steve Patterson discovered a total of four at Buck Hill Landing on Lake Wateree during the first week of January 2017.