

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2002–03)

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

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

Reports can be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you type them and list the sightings according to the birds in checklist order (not according to dates or locations). If you submit your report to me through e-mail, please type your report directly into the message or copy it from a word processing program directly into the message. You may also attach your file to the e-mail, but if you do, please let me know the program used and also send a second version saved as a text (.txt) file.

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.

RED-THROATED LOON: The only inland Red-throated Loon reported was at Roanoke Rapids Lake, NC Feb. 9 (Ricky Davis). This species seemed to be present in higher than normal numbers along the coast, as evidenced by the 2,775 on the Southport, NC Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Jan. 5 (*vide* Davis).

PACIFIC LOON: Figure Eight Island, NC once again hosted this species. Birds were present most of the winter as usual with the peak count being 3–4 on Dec. 26 (Derb Carter). Either one of these or another was at nearby Wrightsville Beach on Jan. 4 (Carter).

RED-NECKED GREBE: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, this winter's sightings included one on the New Bern, NC CBC Dec. 16 (Rich & Susan Boyd et al.), two at Isle of Palms, SC Jan. 27 (David Abbott), one at Avon, NC Feb. 7 (Rich & Susan Boyd), one at Oregon Inlet, NC Feb. 7–19, (Boyd, sev. obs.), one inland at Harris L., Wake County, NC in mid-Feb. (Mike Swaim), one at C. Hatteras, NC Feb. 20 (Mary McDavid), and one at Sullivans Island, SC Feb. 26 (Abbott).

EARED GREBE: Reports of this annual winter visitor included two on the L. Norman, NC CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* Taylor Piephoff), one in Pamlico Sound, NC from the Swan Quarter ferry Dec. 31 (Josh Rose), one at the Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston County, SC Feb. 4 (Jack Peachey et al.), one at Rodanthe, NC Feb. 14 (Wayne Irvin, Jeff Lewis, Shantanu Phukan), one at C. Hatteras, NC Feb. 15 (Scott Baron), and one at Wrightsville Beach, NC Feb. 28 (Derb Carter). Also the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC hosted from one-to-four throughout the winter (Steve Calver).

WESTERN GREBE: Very rare was the Western Grebe found at L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC Dec. 14–15 (Tim Lewis, Lori Unruh; Len Pardue, Marilyn Westphal, Tom Joyce et al.). Although there are about 6–7 previous reports for the state, this one was the first for the mountains.

SOOTY SHEARWATER: A Sooty Shearwater was a surprise, seen flying over the surf near Nags Head, NC Feb. 22 (Eric Dean et al.). This was North Carolina's third winter report of this species, which is normally gone from the western Atlantic during this time of year.

MANX SHEARWATER: There were several sightings from shore along North Carolina's Outer Banks this winter. Two were seen from Pea Island NWR Feb. 12 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall), one was at Rodanthe Feb. 5 (Jeff Lewis), one was near Salvo Feb. 15 (Eric Dean), and one was at Avon Feb. 22 (Dean et al.). Surprisingly only one was seen offshore on the pelagic trip out of Hatteras Feb. 15 (Brian Patteson et al.).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: The number of reports of this species was up this season. In the ACE Basin area of South Carolina, where a sizable flock has been present for some time, the best counts included 119 on the ACE Basin CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Pete Laurie) and 100 at Bear Island WMA Feb. 10–13 (Jack Peachey, Paul Rogers; Perry Nugent et al.). Also 11 were on the nearby Hilton Head Island CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Nan Lloyd). In North Carolina, reports included an impressive flock of 24 on the L. Mattamuskeet CBC Dec. 28 (Wayne Irvin, Don Temple), 10 at Pea Island NWR Dec. 4 (George West et al.), two at Mackay Island NWR Dec. 14 (Karen Beatty et al.), two in the South River area of Carteret County Jan. 9 (*fide* John Fussell), and two flying over Wrightsville Beach Feb. 22 (Ken Lundstrom, *fide* Will Cook).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: This species continues to increase as a winter resident at inland reservoirs. The Jordan L., NC CBC doubled its previous high with 2,103 counted Dec. 29 (*fide* Norm Budnitz) and a record total of 1,257 was had on the L. Wateree, SC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Donna Slyce). Numbers were high along the coast too, as evidenced by the 60,796 tallied on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Pat Moore).

ANHINGA: Always noteworthy in North Carolina during winter, three Anhingas provided a good count near Greenville Jan. 18 (John Wright et al.), and one was at Kinston Jan. 12 (John Fussell).

LEAST BITTERN: Very rare in winter in the Carolinas, one was a good find at the Savannah NWR, SC Jan. 18 (Sharon Brown).

GREAT EGRET: Inland winter sightings of note included singles at Raleigh, NC Dec. 21 (*fide* John Connors) and at Jordan L., NC Jan. 26 (Harry LeGrand).

CATTLE EGRET: There were several reports of Cattle Egrets from the Carolinas this winter. The best counts were of eight on the Hilton Head Island, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Nan Lloyd), six in the L. Landing area of L. Mattamuskeet, NC Jan. 12 (Brad & Pat Carlson), and four in Hyde County, NC Dec. 7 (Jeff Beane et al.). Others included singles at Silver Lake, Ocracoke, NC Dec. 29 (Beane et al.), one at C. Hatteras, NC for several weeks in December (sev. obs.), and one on the ACE Basin, SC CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Pete Laurie).

GREEN HERON: This species was present in the Carolinas this winter in much higher than normal numbers. Some rather impressive counts included seven on the Hilton Head Island, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Nan Lloyd), six on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* Helen Chatterton), four on the McClellanville, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Pete Laurie), and four on the Charleston, SC CBC Jan. 5 (*fide* Bob Chinn). Others in South Carolina included two on the Litchfield–Pawleys Island CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Jack Peachey) and two on the ACE Basin CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Pete Laurie). In North Carolina, one was at Ft. Fisher Dec. 8–28 (Jeff Phippen, Harry LeGrand), one was on the Central Beaufort County CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* James Albera), one was at Atlantic Beach Dec. 17 (*fide* John Fussell), one was on the Pamlico County CBC Dec. 17 (*fide* Liz Lathrop), one was at Ocracoke in late December (*fide* Peter Vankevich), two were on the C. Hatteras CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Pat Moore), one was on the Bodie–Pea Island CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Paul Sykes), and two different birds were in the L. Mattamuskeet area Dec. 28 (Fussell) and Jan. 12 (Brad & Pat Carlson). And finally one was very rare and unusual inland on the Jordan L. CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Norm Budnitz).

GLOSSY IBIS: This species is quite hard to find on the Outer Banks in winter, thus of note was a single Glossy at the C. Hatteras salt pond Dec. 30 (Allen Bryan, Ricky Davis), and three there Feb. 7 (Rich & Susan Boyd).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: This season's reports included two at Ocracoke, NC Feb. 7 (Rich & Susan Boyd), two at the Sneads Ferry,

NC WTP Jan. 19 (Andy Webb), and a flock of up to 16 at Townville, SC from early January to late February (Steve Patterson, Jeff Catlin, sev. obs.).

ROSS'S GOOSE: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, this annual species was found at several sites this year. At usual coastal plain sites, one was at L. Mattamuskeet, NC Dec. 6 (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand), and one was on the Pettigrew, NC CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Lisa Williams). Farther inland were one near the Columbia, SC WTP Dec. 14 (Mike Turner), one along Dairyland Rd., Orange County, NC throughout February (Jeff Pippen, Derb Carter, Will Cook, sev. obs.), and two at Hooper Lane, NC Jan. 24–25 (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

BRANT: Always good finds in South Carolina, six were at Bull Island Jan. 5 (Nathan Dias et al.) and 11 were at Mt. Pleasant Jan. 7 (David Abbott).

TUNDRA SWAN: Some reports of note, away from the usual Coastal Plain wintering areas, included a flock of up to 66 near Stateburg, SC Dec. 17 to early February (Lloyd Moon, Mike Turner), one at L. Crabtree, Wake County, NC Jan. 18 (Gordon Brown), and three on L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC Jan. 24–25 (Danny Swicegood, Wayne Forsythe).

EURASIAN WIGEON: Reports of this annual visitor were down, with only one being found, a male at L. Mattamuskeet, NC Jan. 17 (Josh Rose et al.).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: One at L. Crabtree, NC Jan. 18 was a good find for that inland site in winter (Gordon Brown).

CANVASBACK: An impressive flock of at least 1,015 was at Roanoke Rapids L., NC during the winter, as noted by Ricky Davis.

RING-NECKED DUCK: This species wintered in the Carolinas in good numbers this year. Some high counts included over a thousand at the Jacksonville, NC WTP Dec. 28 (Nell Moore, Jim & Laura O'Donnell), 1,369 on the Pee Dee, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Laura Fogo), and over 4,000 at Roanoke Rapids L., NC during Dec. and Jan. (Ricky Davis).

GREATER SCAUP: Easily a record count for North Carolina was the 179 Greater found on the Southport CBC Jan. 5 (Derb Carter).

KING EIDER: King Eiders are much rarer in the Carolinas than Common Eiders. Thus of note were two different Kings in the Ft. Fisher, NC area during December. A 1st-winter female was found Dec. 3–10 (Bruce Smithson, sev. obs.) and a second 1st-winter bird was seen Dec. 10 (Andy Webb). Later, on Dec. 12, one of the birds was found dead (Smithson). What happened to the other bird is not known.

COMMON EIDER: Reports of this eider, all in North Carolina, included five female types flying past Ft. Fisher Jan. 5 (Ricky Davis), a female in the C. Hatteras area Feb. 1 (Haven Wiley et al.), one at Oregon Inlet Feb. 5–17 (Jeff Lewis, Bob Anderson, sev. obs.), and a female at the Rodanthe pier Feb. 13–14 (Wayne Irvin, Jeff Lewis, Shantanu Phukan).

HARLEQUIN DUCK: Two females at Oregon Inlet, NC Jan. 20 (Doug Shadwick et al.) were excellent finds. This duck has been very scarce in North Carolina the last several years.

SURF SCOTER: Rare inland was one near the Columbia, SC WTP Dec. 2 (Mike Turner). This species annually winters in good numbers in North Carolina's Pamlico Sound, but the count of over 10,000 Jan. 18 was quite exceptional (Harry LeGrand et al.).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER: There were two inland reports this winter; two at L. Crabtree, Wake County, NC Jan. 25–Feb. 2 (Steve Shultz, m. obs.) and one at Roanoke Rapids Lake Feb. 9 (Ricky Davis).

BLACK SCOTER: Another rare inland scoter was the Black near the Columbia, SC WTP Dec. 2 (Mike Turner). Also the count of 2,815 on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Pat Moore), along with good counts elsewhere, indicated a larger than normal presence of scoters in the area this winter.

LONG-TAILED DUCK: This species was reported more often this season than in winters past. The farthest south were one at Myrtle Beach St. Pk., SC Dec. 7 & Feb. 28 (Tim Kalbach and Gary Sowell, Jack Peachey) and one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC Dec. 1 & 30 (Peachey). Very good inland finds included one at Jordan L., NC Jan. 11 (Doug Shadwick et al.) and two at Robinwood L, Gastonia, NC Feb. 17–18 (Steve Tracy, Duane Crane, Lamar Ashe). Southern coastal North Carolina reports of note involved one at Ft. Fisher Jan. 5 (Ricky Davis) and four at Wrightsville Beach Feb. 28 (Derb Carter).

COMMON GOLDENEYE: An excellent inland count was the 30 at Falls L., NC Dec. 16, as noted by Brian Bockhahn.

COMMON MERGANSER: Reports of this species were about average this season. The highest count received was of nine at the usual wintering spot of L. Phelps, NC Dec. 22 (Rich & Susan Boyd). Some other sightings of note included four on L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC Jan. 16 (Wayne Forsythe), one at Shelley Lake, Raleigh, NC Dec. 21 (Karen Bearden), one from the Ocracoke–Swan Quarter ferry Dec. 31 (Josh & Airlie Rose), one at Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC Jan. 26 (Jim & Marianne Clark), three near Greenville, NC Jan. 18 (Brad Carlson), one on the New Bern, NC CBC Dec. 16 (*fide* Bob Holmes), and two on the Southern L. Norman, NC CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* Taylor Piephoff). In South Carolina, where decidedly much harder to find, one was near Stateburg, Sumter County, Dec. 17 (Lloyd Moon) and one was on the Savannah River Site CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* Adrienne DeBiase).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: Inland reports of note included 14 at Roanoke Rapids L., NC Feb. 9 (Ricky Davis), two on the L. Wateree, SC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Donna Slyce), and one on the Brevard, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Norma Siebenheller).

OSPREY: Osprey reports were up this winter, mostly at coastal sites. Of particular interest were a couple of inland sightings. One was very far inland at L. Don T. Howell, Cabarrus County, NC Jan. 8 (Tomm Lorenzin) for a rare winter report. Also of note were two on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC Dec. 28 (John Fussell) and one on the Pettigrew St. Pk., NC CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Lisa Williams). Finally the count of 17 on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover) was very impressive for that inland location.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK: This season's Rough-leggeds included the annual bird at Alligator R. NWR, NC Dec. 22–Jan. 20 (Jeff Lewis, sev. obs., Doug Shadwick et al.), an adult at Fountain Inn, Greenville County, SC Jan. 24 (Pete Worthington), and one at Max Patch, Haywood County, NC Dec. 31–Jan. 7 (Jonathan & Wendy Mays, Bob Olthoff).

GOLDEN EAGLE: An immature Golden was a good find south of Sparta, NC Jan. 23, as noted by Harrol Blevins. Other reports came from the coast with immatures noted at New Bern, NC Jan. 18 (Ken Wilkins), L. Mattamuskeet, NC Jan. 17 (Kelly Davis, Hop Hopkins), and Charleston, SC Jan. 30 (Craig Watson).

MERLIN: Merlins are rather uncommon inland during the winter, but there were more reports than normal this year. Some of the more interesting reports involved one at Hooper Lane, Buncombe County, NC Jan. 25–Feb. 22 (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Tom Joyce), one on the Brevard, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Norma Siebenheller), one near Townville, SC Jan. 2 (Mike Turner), one on the Iredell County, NC CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Sam Cathey), one on the Columbia, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Robin Carter), one on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover), two different ones in Moore County, NC Dec. 15 & Jan. 12 (Jeff Beane), and one on the Falls L., NC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Brian Bockhahn).

PEREGRINE FALCON: Locally unusual was a Peregrine in downtown Rocky Mount, NC Dec. 1 (Katrina McDougald, *fide* Marshall Brooks). Also of note was one at Hooper Lane, NC Dec. 29–Jan. 2, as noted by Wayne Forsythe and Bob Olthoff.

RUFFED GROUSE: The new Balsam, NC CBC reported 15 Ruffed Grouse Jan. 4 (*fide* Bob Olthoff). This was certainly an impressive total for such a secretive species.

YELLOW RAIL: The elusive, rarely seen Yellow Rail was observed twice this winter. One was seen briefly near Permuda Is., Onslow County, NC Dec. 28 (Nell Moore) and one was flushed from a ditch near Nebraska, Hyde County, NC Jan. 4 (*fide* Kelly Davis).

SANDHILL CRANE: There were many more reports than normal of Sandhill Crane this winter. The most amazing report was of the 100 in a field near Weaverville, NC Feb. 16, as noted by Nancy Clark. This total easily surpassed any previous count of this species in the Carolinas! Other good counts included 17 at Santee NWR, SC Jan. 6 (*fide* Taylor Piephoff), 17 at the Santee Coastal Reserve, SC Jan. 19 (Nathan Dias), 13 over Low Falls Landing, L. Marion, SC Dec. 17 (Mike Turner), 15 along I-26 in Dorchester County, SC Jan. 31 (Turner), and 11 over Haywood County, NC Feb. 15 (Tony Scardaci). Other sightings of note involved three in Carteret County, NC Dec. 15 (Rich & Susan Boyd, JoAnne Powell), two near L. Landing, L. Mattamuskeet, NC Jan. 11 until at least Feb. 11 (Kelly Davis, Steve Shultz, Brian Pendergraft, sev. obs.), two over Mt. Pleasant, SC Feb. 28 (David Abbott), and two at L. Junaluska, NC Jan. 12 until sometime in March (Don Hendershot, Bob Olthoff).

WILSON'S PLOVER: This winter's Wilson's Plovers were found only in the usual locations. Three were at Bird Shoal, Beaufort, NC during December (John Fussell) and one was at Ft. Fisher, NC Jan. 5 (Fussell et al.).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER: An excellent total of 918 was had on the Charleston, SC CBC Jan. 5 (*vide* Bob Chinn).

AMERICAN AVOCET: The L. Mattamuskeet, NC area continued to host this species with an impressive flock of 75 being noted Dec. 7 (Ricky Davis et al.). There were still six present on the CBC there Dec. 28 (Davis, Andy Webb). Also one at Bird Shoal, Beaufort, NC Dec. 7 (Fussell) was a good find for that locality.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS: A good count inland during winter was the 20 Lessers on the Wayne County, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Eric Dean).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: Fewer Spotteds were reported this winter than last, with the best counts being four on the Hilton Head Island, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Nan Lloyd), two on the Wayne County, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Eric Dean), and two on the Aiken, SC CBC Dec. 24 (*vide* Calvin Zippler). Elsewhere singles were found at Atlantic Beach, NC during Dec. and Jan. (*vide* John Fussell), on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* Jack Peachey), on the Charleston, SC CBC Jan. 5 (*vide* Bob Chinn), and the Sun City-Okatie, SC CBC Dec. 15 (*vide* Helen Chatterton).

WHIMBREL: This winter's sightings involved one at Bird Shoal, NC Dec. 7 (John Fussell), one on the Litchfield-Pawleys Island, SC CBC Dec. 30 (*vide* Jack Peachey), and two at Ft. Caswell on the Southport, NC CBC Jan. 5 (Jeff Pippen, Will Cook).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: There was only one report of this species this winter from the Carolinas. Two were on the McClellanville, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Perry Nugent).

MARbled GODWIT: This species provided a locally rare occurrence at L. Mattamuskeet, NC with one there Dec. 7 and two present Dec. 28 (Ricky Davis et al.).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER: A Pectoral found on Sullivans Island, SC Feb. 16 (David Abbott) was extremely early, probably beating the previous record by several days.

PURPLE SANDPIPER: An excellent count of 80 Purples was had at Breach Inlet, Sullivans Island, SC Feb. 22 (Dennis Forsythe et al.). This species was reported in good numbers at the other usual locations in the Carolinas also.

RED PHALAROPE: Only three were found offshore of Hatteras, NC on the Feb. 15 pelagic trip (Brian Patteson et al.). The only other report was of one found dead on the beach near Salvo, NC Feb. 17 (Bob Anderson).

GREAT SKUA: The Hatteras, NC pelagic trip on Feb. 15 once again was successful at finding this species with three being seen (Patteson et al.).

ONSHORE JAEGERs: Of interest locally at Isle of Palms, SC were single Pomarines Jan. 21 & 27, and a Parasitic Feb. 16 (David Abbott).

LAUGHING GULL: Several excellent winter counts included an impressive inland total of 11 on the Wayne County, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide*

Eric Dean) and 80 at the Jacksonville, NC WTP Feb. 8 (Jim & Laura O'Donnell, Bob Holmes et al.).

LITTLE GULL: This winter's reports involved singles at Emerald Isle, NC Feb. 15 (Jamie Cameron et al.), off Hatteras, NC Feb. 15 (Patteson et al.), and at C. Hatteras point Feb. 16–18 (Derb Carter, Jeff Phippen, Ricky Davis).

BLACK-HEADED GULL: The only report this winter came from the recent "inland" location along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Jan. 9 (Kelly Davis).

CALIFORNIA GULL: The Outer Banks again hosted this species with single adults being noted at C. Hatteras Feb. 17 (Jeff Phippen et al.) and at Oregon Inlet Feb. 23 (Steve Rottenborn et al.).

HERRING GULL: One at L. Junaluska, Haywood County, NC Feb. 17 provided a locally unusual sighting for that mountain area (Bob Olthoff, Wayne Forsythe).

THAYER'S GULL: This species was present in the C. Hatteras, NC area this winter with one adult on the CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Pat Moore), one adult and two 1st-winter birds Feb. 16 (Derb Carter, Jeff Phippen, Ricky Davis, Brad Carlson, Wayne Irvin, Jeff Lewis), and one adult Feb. 23 (Steve Rottenborn et al.).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: The Triangle area again had Lessers this winter with three on the Falls L. CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Brian Bockhahn), one at Falls L. Jan. 26 (Ricky Davis), and one on the Jordan L. CBC Dec. 29 (Will Cook).

GLAUCOUS GULL: Only one report was received this winter, that being a 1st-winter individual at Ft. Moultrie, SC Feb. 26 (David Abbott).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: The number of inland reports of Greaters was up this winter. The best counts were four on the Falls L., NC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Brian Bockhahn) and four on the Jordan L., NC CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Norm Budnitz). Elsewhere two were on the Durham, NC CBC Dec. 15 (Will Cook), two were at Falls L. Feb. 1 (Harry LeGrand), and two were at Peck's Landing, L. Marion, SC Jan. 16 (Mike Turner).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: Always noteworthy from shore, four were seen at C. Hatteras, NC Dec. 30 (Harry Armistead et al.), and single adults were seen at Isle of Palms, SC Jan. 21, 27, and Feb. 16 (David Abbott).

FORSTER'S TERN: One was a locally good find on the Jordan L., NC CBC Dec. 29 (Brian Bockhahn).

DOVEKIE: This species staged what could be called a minor invasion into the Carolinas this winter. One seen flying close to shore at Ft. Fisher, NC Dec. 4 was definitely a surprise (Bruce Smithson). Then later about the first of February, the birds really started showing up. Some initial sightings included one at Southern Shores, NC Feb. 2 (Jeff Lewis & Joan Kutulas), an injured one at Rodanthe, NC Feb. 3 (Ed Hiestand), two-to-three at Rodanthe Feb. 6–7 (Lewis, Rich & Susan Boyd), one at Oregon Inlet, NC Feb. 7 (*fide* Ned Brinkley), one at Nags Head, NC Feb. 8 (Lewis), and two-to-three at Pea Island NWR, NC Feb. 8 (Norm Budnitz). Several were seen at Pea

Island Feb. 12 with one being injured (Lewis, Russ & Patricia Tyndall). On the pelagic trip out of Hatteras, a total of eight were seen Feb. 15 (Brian Patteson et al.). Two were seen at Kill Devil Hills and one was at Nags Head February 14 (Will Cook). On Feb. 16, two specimens were obtained, one at Avon and the other at Pea Island (Brad Carlson et al.). Two were still at Pea Island Feb. 18, as noted by Jeff Phippen. In South Carolina, where the species is much rarer, one was seen flying into the harbor at Sullivans Island Feb. 26, as noted by David Abbott.

RAZORBILL: As can be expected during an alcid invasion, Razorbills were present in good numbers. The best counts received were the 200+ from Pea Island NWR, NC Feb. 12 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall), 75+ near Salvo, NC Feb. 15 (Eric Dean), 59 on the pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC Feb. 15 (Brian Patteson et al.), and 40 off of C. Lookout, NC Jan. 28 (Robin Baird). Other reports included 22 “large alcid sp.” (most assuredly Razorbills) on the Bodie–Pea Island CBC Dec. 29 (George Armistead), five at Ocracoke, NC Feb. 18 (Peter Vankevich), four at Kill Devil Hills, NC Feb. 14 (Will Cook), and several in the Rodanthe area Feb. 5–11 (Jeff Lewis, Rich & Susan Boyd). Farther south, reports involved one at Bald Head Island, NC Jan. 5 (Derb Carter), two at Wrightsville Beach, NC Jan. 4 (Carter) and two there again Feb. 28 (Carter).

BLACK GUILLEMOT: North Carolina’s second report of Black Guillemot was of one in the surf at Kill Devil Hills Feb. 15 (Scott Baron). The bird was well described by the observer who watched it at varying distances for over an hour. Unfortunately, the bird was not found again after the initial discovery.

LONG-BILLED MURRELET: North Carolina’s second Long-billed Murrelet was found in the surf at Ft. Macon, NC Dec. 15 (Eric Dean, Sharon Funderburk, Tommy Wade). Although the observation was brief, the bird was seen well. As with the previously mentioned Guillemot, this bird was not seen by others later that day, despite intensive searching.

BARN OWL: It is a memorable event to be able to see a family of this very local, uncommon owl. Of note was a nest with four young in a silo at L. Mattamuskeet, NC (Kelly Davis, sev. obs.). Three of the young fledged successfully in January.

LONG-EARED OWL: Rare and unexpected was a Long-eared found injured in Raleigh, NC Jan. 8 (*vide* Will Cook). Unfortunately, the bird was too injured to be released and was delivered to a wildlife rehabilitator for keeping (Steve Stone).

SHORT-EARED OWL: Sightings of note included one in the mountains at Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC Dec. 11 (Danny Swicegood, Wayne Forsythe), six at South Pond, Pea Island NWR, NC Feb. 8 (*vide* Taylor Piephoff), one at L. Mattamuskeet, NC Dec. 28 (John Fussell), one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC Dec. 7 (Tim Kalbach, Gary Sowell), one on the McClellanville, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Perry Nugent), and one at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC Jan. 26 & Feb. 19 (Steve Calver).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL: Only a handful of Saw-whets were found this winter. Two were on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (John Fussell et al., Ricky Davis), three were along the Hammock Hills Trail, Ocracoke Island, NC Feb. 7–8 (*vide* Taylor Piephoff), and one was heard calling in the Mt. Mitchell, NC area Feb. 22 (Stu Gibeau).

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW: A female of this species was found dead at Folly Beach, SC Jan. 29 (Nathan Dias, Donna Forsythe). This specimen, sent to the Charleston Museum, provided only about the second documented winter record for the state.

WHIP-POOR-WILL: This species was also found with a male being picked up on Bald Head Island, NC Feb. 9 (Allison Sill et al., Kate Finlayson, Chris Canfield). Another was seen in flight at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC Dec. 23 (Steve Calver).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD: This species seems to keep increasing as a winter resident along the immediate coast. Of particular interest was the report of up to 12 at a feeder in the L. Mattamuskeet, NC area in December (Kelly Davis). And very unusual far inland was the adult male that wintered at Simpsonville, SC (Pete Worthington).

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: The number of Black-chinned Hummingbirds in the Carolinas also increased. There were three adult males found this winter with birds at feeders in Shipwatch, New Hanover County, NC mid-Dec.–Jan. 23 (Ricky Davis, Sam Cooper), Sunset Beach, NC Jan. 12–early March (Mary McDavid), and on Edisto Island, SC Feb. 17 (Gary Phillips). Others included a 2nd-year female banded at James Island, SC Jan. 22 (Phillips), an adult female banded at N. Myrtle Beach, SC Feb. 23 (Phillips), an imm. male at Brevard, NC Dec. 14 (*vide* Norma Siebenheller, Wayne Forsythe), and one in Bethania, Forsyth County, NC Nov. 25–Jan. 10 (Ramona Snaveley, Linda Davis).

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD: Calliopes also increased with at least seven reports. An imm. male was banded near Cayce, SC Dec. 7 (Gary Phillips), another imm. male was banded at Greensboro, NC Dec. 11 (Susan Campbell), the adult male near Hillsborough, NC from the fall was last seen Jan. 23 (Ginger Travis), an imm. male was in Charlotte, NC Dec. 16–Jan. 3 (Harriett Whitsett), a female was in Charlotte Jan. 13–23 (*vide* Susan Campbell), an imm. male was in Irmo, SC Jan. 28–Feb. 8 (Jerry Griggs), and an imm. male was near L. Hartwell, Pickens County, SC most of the winter (*vide* Susan Campbell).

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD: Reports of this species were once again too numerous to mention. A couple of reports were of particular interest however. A female recaptured in Shelby, NC was documented as returning for its fourth year in a row, a record for North Carolina (Susan Campbell). Also a male banded in Raleigh, NC in the winter of 2002 was found to have spent the summer and is still present at this time (Campbell). This is most likely the first record of a summering Rufous in the East!

WESTERN KINGBIRD: Always noteworthy in winter, this season's sightings included single birds at Southern Shores, NC Dec. 15 (*vide* Jeff

Lewis), at Alligator River NWR, NC Dec. 22 (Lewis, Wayne Irvin), along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Jan. 7–19 (Howard Vainright, Brad & Pat Carlson, Carolina Bird Club), and on Bull Island, Charleston County, SC Jan. 5 (Nathan Dias et al.).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE: There were several interesting reports of this local, uncommon species in North Carolina this winter. One of the most encouraging was the total of 32 found on the Raven Rock St. Pk., NC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Paul Hart), most likely a record count for the Carolinas. Elsewhere four was a good count at Ft. Fisher Dec. 8 (Shantanu Phukan). Single shrikes at Atlantic Beach Dec. 15 (*vide* John Fussell) and at N. Topsail Beach Dec. 28 (Nell Moore, Jim & Laura O'Donnell) were great finds since they had not been seen in those areas for many years. Also one was locally unusual in the mountains near Turkey Knob, Alleghany County Dec. 10 (James Coman).

HORNED LARK: Good numbers were present at Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC this winter with up to 100 being counted during January (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW: Very rare in winter, one-to-two Rough-wingeds were good finds at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC Jan. 19 (Pete Worthington).

CAVE SWALLOW: The most impressive invasion of this species on the East Coast, which started during late fall, continued this winter with many reports being received. The Sunset Beach, NC area had birds until at least Dec. 7 (Rich & Susan Boyd, Sam Cooper) with the best totals being 15 on the 1st (Keith Camburn, Heathy Walker) and an impressive 40 on the 2nd (Ritch Lilly). The nearby Ocean Isle, NC area had four Dec. 1 (Brad Carlson, Wayne Irvin) and two were at Long Beach, NC Dec. 6–8 (Mike Tove). Also one at Ft. Macon, NC Dec. 3 (Bob Holmes) was the farthest north in the Carolinas reported. In South Carolina, two were at the Caw Caw Park, Ravenel Dec. 1 (Lilly), two were at Garden City Dec. 5 (Lilly), two were at the Santee Coastal Reserve Dec. 6 (Lloyd Moon), and five were noted at Huntington Beach St. Pk. Dec. 7 (Tim Kalbach, Gary Sowell). The birds were also present by the end of the month on into January. Two were noted at Carolina Beach, NC Dec. 25 (Derb Carter) until at least Jan. 5 (Ricky Davis) with the birds being counted on the Wilmington CBC Jan. 4 (Taylor Piephoff et al.). One was still present farther up the coast at Onslow Beach, NC Jan. 4 (Jamie Cameron). On the Southport CBC Jan 5, one was seen in the Sunny Point Terminal area of Brunswick County, as noted by Sam Cooper. In South Carolina, two were at Savannah NWR Jan 4 (Kathleen O'Grady, Carroll Richard) with one still present as late as Jan. 19 (Robin Carter & Caroline Eastman). At Huntington Beach St. Pk., several were present from Jan. 11 (Bob Maxwell, Jack Peachey) until at least Jan. 19 (Pete Worthington), with a peak of four there Jan. 13 (Ritch Lilly).

BARN SWALLOW: Notable winter sightings included three at the Santee Coastal Reserve, SC Dec. 6 (Lloyd Moon), one at Carolina Beach, NC Dec. 25 (Derb Carter), and two on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Lex Glover).

HOUSE WREN: A House Wren at Table Rock St. Pk., SC Feb. 5 & 15 (Scott Stegenga) was quite unusual at that elevation in winter.

GRAY CATBIRD: This species is normally absent from the Piedmont in winter, thus of note were one on the Falls L., NC CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Brian Bockhahn), one on the Charlotte, NC CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Wayne Covington), one amazingly in the mountains on the Balsam, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*vide* Bob Olthoff), and one at Wake Forest, NC Jan. 18 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall).

AMERICAN PIPIT: In what must be a record count for the Carolinas, an estimated 12,000 pipits flew by Ft. Moultrie, SC in one hour Jan. 23 during a snowstorm (Nathan Dias, Burton Moore).

CEDAR WAXWING: This species invaded the Outer Banks area of North Carolina this winter in large numbers. Thousands were present along Hwy. 12 from Pea Island NWR south through Ocracoke. Several thousand were in the village of Ocracoke Feb. 14, and at least 3,000 were near Avon Feb. 19 (Peter Vankevich). An estimate of 5,000 came from Hatteras north to Pea Island Feb. 14–18 (Jeff Pippen).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: Rare in winter away from the Coastal Plain, single Orange-crowneds were good finds on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC Dec. 22 (Will Cook et al.) and the Charlotte, NC CBC Dec. 28 (*vide* Wayne Covington).

NASHVILLE WARBLER: This winter's reports involved up to two at Caw Caw Park, Ravenel, SC Jan. 8–Feb. 5 (Perry Nugent et al.), one at Magnolia Plantation, SC Dec. 8 (Nugent et al.), one along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Dec. 7 (Ricky Davis), and one on the Morehead City, NC CBC Dec. 15 (John & Paula Wright).

NORTHERN PARULA: This species was present in the Carolinas this winter more than usual. One was on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC Dec. 15 (*vide* Helen Chatterton), one was at Ft. Fisher, NC Dec. 28–Jan. 5 (John Brunjes, Ricky Davis), two were along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Dec. 28 (Jeff Lewis), and one was on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (Paul Sykes).

CAPE MAY WARBLER: There were two reports of this rare wintering warbler this season. One was on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Dec. 28 (Jeff Lewis) and one was at a feeder in Wake Forest, NC from early Jan. until at least mid.-Feb. (*vide* John Connors).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER: Another species of warbler present along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway this winter was a Black-throated Blue Dec. 7 (Ricky Davis) and Dec. 28 (Jeff Lewis) until at least Jan. 18 (Carolina Bird Club).

“AUDUBON’S” YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER: A female was seen well at the Frisco, NC airstrip area Jan. 19 (Bob Perkins). Reports of this rare western form need to be detailed so as to rule out the possibility of hybrids with the “Myrtle” form.

BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER: One was an excellent find at L. Norman, NC Jan. 5, as noted by Tomm Lorenzin. The bird, a female,

provided about the 5th report for the state. Unfortunately, the bird was not relocated the following day.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER: One was a very rare winter find at Beaufort, NC Jan. 19 (Taylor Piephoff, Rob Van Epps).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: This species wintered in the Carolinas in good numbers this winter. Some of the more interesting reports involved eight on the Hilton Head Island, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Nan Lloyd), three on the Southport, NC CBC Jan. 5 (Mark Galizio, Harry LeGrand, Taylor Piephoff et al.), one at the Savannah River Site, SC Dec. 19 (*fide* Adrienne DeBiase), one on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover), one on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (Paul Sykes), and one on the Kitty Hawk, NC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Jeff Lewis).

PRAIRIE WARBLER: Locally unusual winter sightings of this species included three on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover), two on the Alligator River, NC CBC Dec. 22 (*fide* Jeff Lewis), two on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC Dec. 28 (Lewis), and one in a Morehead City, NC yard Dec. 21 (John Fussell).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: Some excellent totals of this regularly wintering warbler were reported. The best were 14 on the Hilton Head Island, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*fide* Nan Lloyd), eight on the Savannah River Site, SC CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* Adrienne DeBiase), and six on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover). The farthest inland were one on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC Dec. 22 (Jeff Pippen, Toni Rexrode) and two on the L. Wateree, SC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Donna Slyce).

AMERICAN REDSTART: A sighting of redstart in the Carolinas was left out of last winter's report. One was at a feeder in Seneca, SC Jan. 1 & Feb. 3, 2002, as noted by Bruce Glick. Winter redstarts are very rarely reported in our area and most are found along the immediate coast.

OVENBIRD: One was present in a Southern Shores, NC yard at least until Feb. 5 (Joan Kutulas, Jeff Lewis). This is somewhat north of the usual wintering area around Buxton on the Outer Banks.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: This species is almost annual in the Carolinas during winter. Sightings of note this season included one at Walker's Millpond, Carteret County, NC Dec. 12 & 15 (John Fussell), which provided the first known local wintering report. Also at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC where the species is somewhat regular, one was seen Jan. 4 (Dennis Forsythe) and three were found Feb. 19 (Steve Calver).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT: Rare in winter away from the Coastal Plain were singles on the Southern L. Norman, NC CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* Taylor Piephoff) and on the Balsam, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Bob Olthoff).

WILSON'S WARBLER: Another somewhat regular-in-winter warbler is the Wilson's. Sightings this season involved a male on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Dec. 7 (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand, Ricky Davis), one at the Savannah NWR, SC in early January (*fide* Robin Carter), and a female at a feeder in Simpsonville, SC Feb. 24 (Pete Worthington).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Noteworthy sightings included three on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway Dec. 28 (Jeff Lewis), two at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC Dec. 23 (Steve Calver), one on the Morehead City, NC CBC Dec. 15 (Eric Dean, Sharon Funderburk), one at a feeder in Sumter, SC Jan. 17 (*fide* Evelyn Dabbs), and one at Fountain Inn, Greenville County, SC Jan. 24 (Pete Worthington).

WESTERN Tanager: Western Tanagers staged a minor “invasion” into the Carolinas this winter. In Morehead City, NC, a female was present in a yard from Dec. 26 through February (John Fussell). Amazingly, this bird was joined by a second female during part of January! Elsewhere a female was seen at Buxton on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (Ricky Davis), one was found on the ACE Basin, SC CBC Dec. 29 (*fide* Pete Laurie), and a male was present at a feeder in Summerville, SC Jan. 28 through February (Shirley Hales).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: One on the Morehead City, NC CBC Dec. 15 (John & Paula Wright) was the only one reported this winter.

VESPER SPARROW: A count of 20 Vespers at Townville, SC Feb. 9 (Jim Edwards) was quite noteworthy considering that this species has been hard to find and in reduced numbers for many years now.

LARK SPARROW: This winter’s Lark Sparrow reports included two on the Wayne County, NC CBC Dec. 14 (Russ & Patricia Tyndall, Ricky Davis) for the second year in a row, and one on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (Susan Campbell).

SAVANNAH “IPSWICH” SPARROW: An excellent count of this strictly coastal form was the 14 in about a mile of dunes at Coquina Beach, north of Oregon Inlet, NC Feb. 17 (Bob Anderson).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: Always noteworthy finds in winter, two were on the Savannah River Site, SC CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* Adrienne DeBiase); one was on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC Dec. 30 (Wayne Irvin); one was on the Pee Dee, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*fide* Laura Fogo); and one was on the Tryon, NC CBC Dec. 27 (*fide* Simon Thompson) for a very unusual mountain sighting during the winter.

HENSLOW’S SPARROW: Reports were down this winter with one on the Charleston, SC CBC Jan. 5 (*fide* Bob Chinn), one on the Pettigrew, NC CBC Dec. 30 (*fide* Lisa Williams), and four on the Savannah River Site, SC CBC Dec. 19 (*fide* Adrienne DeBiase).

LE CONTE’S SPARROW: The only reports received involved two on the Santee, SC CBC Dec. 28 (*fide* Lex Glover) and one on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC Dec. 15 (*fide* Helen Chatterton).

NELSON’S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW: One was present near Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC Feb. 15 until the spring (Marilyn Westphal, Wayne Forsythe, Bob Olthoff, sev. obs.). This is most likely the first inland winter record for the Carolinas, certainly for the mountain region.

LINCOLN’S SPARROW: Numbers of this regular wintering species were down this year. The only reports received involved two on the Long Cane, SC CBC Dec. 21 (Lex Glover et al.; Don & Steve Cox); two on the

Southport, NC CBC Jan. 5 (Greg Massey et al.); one at the Congaree Swamp National Monument, SC Jan. 20 (Robin Carter); and one on the Balsam, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*vide* Bob Olthoff) providing a very rare mountain winter sighting.

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW: A count of 51 White-crowns at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC Dec. 23 (Steve Calver) was impressive for that southern coastal locality.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR: Two were good finds on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC Dec. 22 (Derb Carter). The birds were seen by others until at least Jan. 20 (Taylor Piephoff et al.). At Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC, 6–8 were seen Jan. 5 (Simon Thompson et al.) and an impressive flock of 28 was there Feb. 6 (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), easily setting a record count for the mountains.

SNOW BUNTING: The only Snow Buntings reported this winter were in the mountains where six were along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Parkway School, Watauga County, NC Jan. 6 (*vide* Walt Conway).

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK: A first-winter male showed up at a feeder in Elizabeth City, NC Feb. 8 until some time in April (Shirley Remaley). This bird, the first for our area in several years, was seen by many and photographed during its stay.

INDIGO BUNTING: Very rare inland sightings in the winter were provided by two on the Long Cane, SC CBC Dec. 21 (Steve Wagner et al.; Lex Glover et al.) and one in southwestern Randolph County, NC Dec. 23–29 (Jane Lewis).

PAINTED BUNTING: Always noteworthy in winter, Painted Buntings found included singles on the Morehead City, NC CBC Dec. 15 (*vide* John Fussell), on the Congaree Swamp, SC CBC Dec. 15 (*vide* Robin Carter), on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC Dec. 28 (Allen Bryan), on the Southport, NC CBC Jan. 5 (Ricky Davis), on the Litchfield–Pawleys Island, SC CBC Dec. 30 (Jack Peachey), and at a feeder in Harleyville, SC in January (*vide* Nathan Dias).

DICKCISSEL: Interesting reports included a female in a yard at Myrtle Beach, SC Dec. 10 (Phil & Sharon Turner, Ritch Lilly) and a female present from the fall at a feeder in Nags Head, NC at least until January (Skip & Linda Morgan).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: A female found on the Pee Dee, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*vide* Laura Fogo) was the only one reported this winter.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: This winter's sightings involved 29 on the Clemson, SC CBC Dec. 14 (*vide* Drew Lanham), 20 at the Pungo unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC Dec. 22 (Rich & Susan Boyd), and one on the Pee Dee, NC CBC Jan. 4 (*vide* Laura Fogo).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE: Baltimore Orioles wintered in the Carolinas in good numbers this winter. There were several areas reporting a dozen or more such as the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway with 12 on Dec. 28 (Jeff Lewis).

EVENING GROSBEAK: Once again, this species was more or less absent from our area. The 12 reported on the Jordan L., NC CBC Dec. 29 (*vide* Norm Budnitz) were almost unbelievable!