

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

Ricky Davis
608 Smallwood Drive
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
RJDNC@aol.com

(All dates Winter 2004–2005, 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 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.

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK: This winter's sightings came from the now-regular area of extreme southern coastal South Carolina. Twenty-eight were at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, 22 Dec (Steve Calver), three were on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 26 Dec (*vide* Robin Carter), and two were at Savannah NWR 23 Feb (Tim Miller, *vide* Russ Wigh).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, this season's birds included one at L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC 5–31 Jan (Ben & Carol Ringer, Wayne Forsythe, Luis Campos, sev. obs.), one (or the same) not too far away at an area on the east side of NC 191, Buncombe County 10–30 Jan (Forsythe, Danny Swicegood), and four at Santee NWR, SC 12 Feb (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman).

SNOW GOOSE: Unusual reports from the western parts of the Carolinas included an amazing flock of 185 flying south in Forsyth County, NC 1 Jan (Ann Newsome et al.), one at Table Rock Mt., SC 11 Dec (Scott Stegenga), and one at Black Mountain, NC 19 Dec (Stu Gibeau).

ROSS'S GOOSE: The only Ross's Geese reported in the Carolinas came from the usual Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, where four were on the CBC 30 Dec (Merrill Lynch et al.) and two were still present 10 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr., Derb Carter).

BRANT: A "Black" Brant was shot by a hunter in Pamlico Sound near Hatteras, NC 21 Dec (*vide* Brian Patteson). There are very few documented reports of this dark, western form on the East Coast.

CAKCLING GOOSE: This newly recognized species split from the Canada Goose was detected at both ends of North Carolina this winter. At L. Mattamuskeet, the five *minima* types first found at the L. Landing area during Nov were joined by three more *minima* types along the causeway 29 Dec–26 Jan (Derb Carter, Ricky Davis, Will Cook, Dave Lenat, sev. obs.). The slightly larger, paler-breasted form *hutchinsii* was found at two sites in the mountains, with singles at L. Junaluska, Haywood County, 27 Dec–8 Jan (Don Hendershot, Wayne Forsythe, Jonathan Mays, sev. obs.) and L. Julian, Buncombe County, 30 Dec (Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

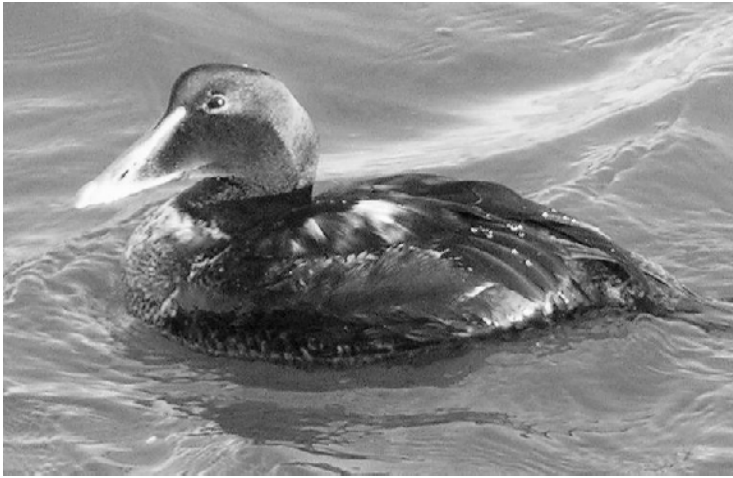
TUNDRA SWAN: This species continues to increase as a winter resident in eastern North Carolina. Of particular note was the total of 3700 in eastern Carteret County 28 Jan (Ricky Davis), apparently representing an increasing local wintering population.

EURASIAN WIGEON: This winter's Eurasian Wigeons involved single males at L. Mattamuskeet, NC along the causeway 29 Dec–late Jan (Jeff Lewis, sev. obs.) and in the C. Hatteras, NC lighthouse area 11 Dec (Richard Carter).

REDHEAD: Once again good numbers of this diving duck were noted during the late winter period. The best totals reported involved 118 at L. Keowee, SC 9 Feb (Paul Champlin) and 108 at L. Hickory, NC 20 Feb (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell).

LESSER SCAUP: An impressive count of 1101 Lessers was had on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Pat Moore). Counts like that are usually found farther south, not along the Outer Banks.

KING EIDER: One of the rarest ducks in the Carolinas, the King Eider was noted twice this winter. A female was found near shore in the ocean at Pea Island NWR, NC 5 Dec (Ricky Davis, Eric Dean et al.), and an imm. male provided excitement at Folly Beach, SC 31 Dec–8 Feb (Chris Wilson, m. obs.).



Common Eider at Oregon Inlet, 29 Dec 2004. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

COMMON EIDER: Common Eiders were present in the Carolinas in much-higher-than-normal numbers this winter. In North Carolina, one was at Oregon Inlet 14–22 Dec (Dave Lenat, Brian Van Druten), later up to five were there 5–16 Jan (Dwayne Martin, Steve Shultz et al.), and up to three were there until late Feb. Elsewhere in that state, one was at Ft. Fisher 2 Jan (*vide* Greg Massey), one was at the Rodanthe pier 20 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al.), one was at New River Inlet 19 Dec (Gilbert Grant), two were at C. Hatteras point 6 Feb (Ricky Davis), one was at Kure Beach 13 Feb (Davis), and an adult male was present at Ocean Isle Beach during much of the winter (Taylor Piephoff). In South Carolina, reports included one at Huntington Beach St. Pk. 30 Dec–25 Feb (Perry Nugent et al., m. obs.), one on the Charleston CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), and one at Edisto Beach 31 Jan (Robin Carter).

HARLEQUIN DUCK: Another rarely reported duck in the Carolinas is the Harlequin Duck. This winter there were two noted, with a female flying south at Pea Island NWR, NC 28 Dec (Ricky Davis) and a male present at a pier at Myrtle Beach, SC 13–19 Feb (Ritch Lilly, Steve Shultz, sev. obs.).

SURF SCOTER: Noteworthy inland during winter, three Surfs were good finds in Sumter County, SC 15 Dec (Lloyd Moon).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER: Rare inland in winter was one on L. Hickory, NC 25 Dec, as noted by Dwayne Martin. Along the coast of that state, higher-than-normal numbers were noted, including 50+ at Pea Island NWR 5 Dec (Ricky Davis) and 60 along the Outer Banks 20 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al.).

BLACK SCOTER: Another good inland scoter sighting was of a single Black on the S. Lake Norman, NC CBC 19 Dec (*vide* Taylor Piephoff).

LONG-TAILED DUCK: Quite rare as inland winter visitors, four Long-tailed Ducks were good finds on L. Hickory, NC 20 Dec, as noted by Dwayne Martin. Along the coast, the farthest south were five on the

Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.). The best total received was of the 28 on the ocean at Pea Island NWR, NC 2 Jan (Ricky Davis), a rather high count away from the Pamlico Sound wintering area.

COMMON GOLDENEYE: Three females were at the NC 191 WTP, Henderson County, NC 10–16 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), for a rather rare mountain report.



Common Goldeneyes in Henderson County, NC, 10 Feb 2005. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

COMMON MERGANSER: There were several noteworthy reports of this species in North Carolina this winter. The best count came as usual from L. Phelps where 317 were counted 30 Dec (*fide* Lisa Williams). Good western reports included four on the Henderson County, NC CBC 26 Dec (Dick Blee, Simon Thompson, Bob Olthoff) and one at Salem L., Forsyth County 27 Feb (Ann Newsome, Sven Halling). Two were at Falls L. 8 Feb (Brian Bockhahn), one was at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, 30 Jan (Ricky Davis), and one was at Woodlake, Moore County 28 Feb (Susan Campbell). Along the coast, a female was at Oregon Inlet during the last half of Feb (Davis, Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al., sev. obs.).

RED-THROATED LOON: There were two inland sightings this winter, with one on L. Keowee, SC 13 Jan (Paul Champlin) and one on Jordan L., NC 26 Feb (Steve Shultz, Will Cook, Shantanu Phukan).

PACIFIC LOON: Very rare inland was one at L. Keowee, SC 24 Dec–1 Jan (Paul Champlin, Tim Kalbach). Along the coast, where more expected, one was at S. Nags Head, NC 6 Jan (Jeff Lewis) and up to three were at Wrightsville Beach, NC 1 Jan (Derb Carter, Sam Cooper et al.). At least one of these was present there until at least 19 Feb (Rick Payne, Dan Williams).

RED-NECKED GREBE: Noteworthy coastal reports involved two at Bulls Island on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), from one to three at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 26 Jan (Michael Bernard) to 11 Feb (*fide* Dias), one in the Charleston, SC harbor 11 Feb (*fide* Dias), one at the Bogue Inlet Pier, Emerald Isle, NC 29 Jan (Ricky Davis), one in western Pamlico Sound, seen from the Swan Quarter ferry 20 Feb (Jeff Lewis, Joan Kutulas), and two at the salt pond at C. Hatteras point 20 Feb (Davis, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Jeff Phippen et al.). Only one inland report was received, that being of one on Salem L., Forsyth County, NC 27 Feb (Ann Newsome, Sven Halling).

EARED GREBE: There were several Eared Grebe reports this winter. In North Carolina, one was on the C. Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (Chris Eley, Brian Patteson, Andy Webb), one was at Ft. Fisher 30 Dec (Greg Massey, Maurice Barnhill), one was at Falls Lake 3 Jan (Gordon Brown), two were at Jordan Lake 2 Jan (Will Cook, Brian Bockhahn) and 20 Feb (Dan Kaplan), four

were there 11 Jan (Ricky Davis), and two were on the salt pond at C. Hatteras 20–26 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al.). In South Carolina one was at Huntington Beach St. Pk. 4 Dec (Robin Carter) to at least 1 Feb (Irvin Pitts), and the peak count at the Savannah Spoil Site was nine on 2 Jan (Steve Calver).

NORTHERN FULMAR: A good count of 86 Fulmars was had on the pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.).

BLACK-CAPPED PETREL: Two were good finds on a winter trip off of Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.).

MANX SHEARWATER: This winter's reports involved two off Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), and one being picked up dead on NC 12 just outside of Buxton, NC 6 Feb (Ricky Davis).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: This species continued to increase in the Carolinas this winter. The best total reported in South Carolina was an amazing 477 on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 26 Dec (*vide* Robin Carter). In North Carolina, noteworthy reports included 41 on the Bodie–Pea Islands CBC 28 Dec (*vide* Paul Sykes), 35 at L. Mattamuskeet 9 Jan (*vide* Rob Gluck), and one inland at Roanoke-Rapids Lake in mid-Jan (*vide* Taylor Piephoff).

AMERICAN BITTERN: One was locally unusual at L. Cunningham, Greenville County, SC 23 Dec, as noted by Bob Ellis.

LEAST BITTERN: Very rare in winter, a Least Bittern was present at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 25 Jan–2 Feb (Phil & Sharon Turner, sev. obs.).



Least Bittern at Huntington Beach St. Pk., 25 Jan 2005. Photo by Phil Turner.

REDDISH EGRET: Winter reports of this species are now annual and this year's sightings involved singles at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 4–30 Dec (Robin Carter, Perry Nugent, Allen Russell), at Southport, NC 2 Jan (Ricky Davis), and at Cape Romain NWR, SC 26 Feb (Sudie Daves).

GREEN HERON: There were considerably fewer winter reports of this heron, compared to the previous winter. One at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan) was the farthest north.

GLOSSY IBIS: Noteworthy winter sightings included three at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 29 Dec (Ricky Davis, Derb Carter), one on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (*fide* Nathan Dias), and one inland near Columbia, SC 11 Dec (Bob Ellis) for a very unusual occurrence.

WOOD STORK: A very good winter sighting for an inland area was the Wood Stork found at Taw Taw County Park, Clarendon County, SC 1 Jan (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman).

OSPREY: Ospreys are annual winter residents in small numbers along the immediate coast. Thus of note was one inland on the Falls Lake, NC CBC 3 Jan (*fide* Brian Bockhahn).

RED-TAILED HAWK: Very rare in the Carolinas, with only a handful of reports, a “Krider’s” Red-tailed Hawk was at a large farm in Carteret County, NC 7 Jan (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK: The only report received this winter was of one at Alligator River NWR, NC 4 Jan (Jeff Lewis).

GOLDEN EAGLE: Sightings this winter involved one on the New River St. Pk., NC CBC 18 Dec (*fide* Harrol Blevins), an immature over the Savannah River Site, Barnwell County, SC 29 Dec (Paul Champlin, Frank Spilker), an adult on the L. Wateree, SC CBC 3 Jan (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman), and an immature flying down the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway 15 Jan (Doug Shadwick et al.).

MERLIN: The count of eight on the McClellanville, SC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Nathan Dias) was quite impressive for one area in winter.

PEREGRINE FALCON: Another excellent winter total for an area was the nine Peregrines also found on the McClellanville, SC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Nathan Dias).

SANDHILL CRANE: In North Carolina, Sandhill Crane reports involved one at Four Seasons Marsh, Hendersonville 13 Dec (Reece Mitchell), three there 24 Dec–early Jan (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), one at Jordan Lake 19 Jan (Sue McBean, Greg Schneider), one over the Duke University campus 20 Jan (Jeremy Hyman), one flying along the Pee Dee River at Pee Dee NWR 19 Jan (Laura Fogo et al.), and one present in northeastern Guilford County from early Feb on into spring (Jim Ward, m. obs.). In South Carolina, one was at Tibwin Plantation on the McClellanville CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Nathan Dias), 11 were on the ACE Basin CBC 26 Dec (*fide* Robin Carter), one was on the Charleston CBC 2 Jan (Dias), and one was along Beckham Swamp Rd., Richland County 13–14 Feb (Mike Turner, Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman, Jason Giovannone).

NORTHERN LAPWING: One was photographed in a field at Mackay Is. NWR, NC 23 Dec (Tim Cooper). This totally unexpected find was only the second ever for that state, the first being one at Siler City 12 Nov 1926!

WILSON'S PLOVER: This species is a rare but annual winter resident in the Carolinas. This season two to three were at Bird Shoal, Beaufort, NC 17–19 Dec (John Fussell et al., Sam Cooper et al.), two were on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), and 11 were on Harbor Is., Beaufort County, SC 11 Feb (Lex Glover, *fide* Dias).

PIPING PLOVER: An excellent winter count of 25 was had at Bird Shoal on the Morehead City, NC CBC 19 Dec (Sam Cooper et al.).

BLACK-NECKED STILT: Practically unheard of in winter in the Carolinas, one was a surprise at Alligator R. NWR, NC 2–4 Jan (Elizabeth Morey & Tommy Fulcher, Jeff Lewis).

AMERICAN AVOCET: Locally unusual sightings included six at Eagle Is., Wilmington, NC 1 Jan (Taylor Piephoff et al.) and one at Harkers Is., Carteret County, NC in early Feb (Dennis Chadwick, *fide* John Fussell).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: North Carolina Spotted were at L. Crabtree, Wake County 4 Dec (Rob Gluck), on the New Bern CBC 15 Dec (*fide* Bob Holmes), on the Wayne County CBC 18 Dec (*fide* Eric Dean), on the Southern Pines CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell), and on the Jordan Lake CBC 2 Jan (*fide* Norm Budnitz).

WHIMBREL: Usually only a handful of Whimbrels are found in the Carolinas during winter. This year good counts included 39 on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), eight on the McClellanville, SC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Dias), and six on Shackleford Banks, Carteret County, NC 29 Jan (John Wright et al.).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: At least two spent the winter on Shackleford Banks, NC (John Fussell et al., John Wright et al.).

LEAST SANDPIPER: Rare inland winter reports were of three at Clemson, SC 12 Jan (Paul Champlin) and one in Henderson County, NC 12 Feb (Wayne Forsythe, Ray Sharpton).

STILT SANDPIPER: One near Folly Beach, SC 15–16 Jan (Andy Harrison et al.) was very unusual for that locality in winter. The regular wintering flock at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC peaked at 57 on 22 Dec, as noted by Steve Calver.

GREAT SKUA: The only pelagic trip scheduled in North Carolina this winter was out of Hatteras 19 Feb, and two individuals of this species were located (Brian Patteson et al.).

PARASITIC JAEGER: Noteworthy onshore sightings involved singles off Corolla, NC 4 Dec (Ricky Davis) and at Charleston, SC 11 Feb (*fide* Nathan Dias).

LITTLE GULL: Always noteworthy, Little Gull reports included singles at Oregon Inlet, NC 16 Jan (Steve Shultz et al.) and Ft. Macon, NC 16 Feb (Nate Bacheler), two at Hatteras, NC 6 Feb (Ricky Davis) and two on the Hatteras pelagic trip 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.). Much rarer was the Little

Gull inland at Jordan Lake, NC 19 Feb (Gordon Brown), providing the third inland report from that location.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: The L. Mattamuskeet, NC bird returned again this winter and was seen several times from 4 Dec (John Ennis) until at least 27 Feb (Elizabeth Morey et al.). Other Black-headededs were at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 17 Dec (*vide* Sharon Turner), at the Conway, SC WTP 20 Jan (Jack Peachey), and at the Jacksonville, NC WTP 29 Jan (*vide* John Fussell). Much more unusual was the adult seen inland at Jordan Lake, NC 16 Jan (Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen, Harry LeGrand, Jr.), providing the first truly inland sighting for that state.

CALIFORNIA GULL: An adult was a good find at C. Hatteras, NC 26 Feb (Ricky Davis, Derb Carter) while another adult at the Raleigh, NC landfill 22 Jan (Carter, Jeff Pippen, Harry LeGrand, Jr.) was exceptional, providing the first truly inland sighting for that state.

THAYER'S GULL: This winter's reports included adults at Oregon Inlet, NC 16 Jan (Steve Shultz et al.) and C. Hatteras, NC 26 Feb (Derb Carter, Ricky Davis).

ICELAND GULL: North Carolina Iceland Gull reports involved two on the C. Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Pat Moore), one first-winter at Ft. Macon 29–30 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Jr., Mike Tove et al.), an adult off Hatteras 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), a second-winter at C. Hatteras 26 Feb (Derb Carter, Ricky Davis), and a second-winter at C. Lookout 27 Feb (John Fussell et al.). In South Carolina, one was a good find at the Savannah Spoil Site 25–26 Feb (Steve Calver).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: Inland reports of note included nine at the Goldsboro, NC WTP 22 Jan (Eric Dean, Gene Howe), six at the Raleigh, NC landfill 22 Jan (Jeff Pippen, Harry LeGrand, Jr., Derb Carter), and 17 near Comfort, Jones County, NC 22 Jan (John Fussell, Jack Fennell). Along the coast, a count of 15 Lessers at C. Lookout 27 Feb (John Fussell et al.) was locally noteworthy, but the total of 180 on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Pat Moore) provided a new record count for the Carolinas.

GLAUCOUS GULL: South Carolina Glaucous Gulls were found at Sullivans Is. 7 Jan (*vide* Craig Watson) and at Huntington Beach St. Pk. 8 Feb (Dwayne Martin). In North Carolina, they were located at Oregon Inlet 4 Dec (Marcia Lyons), at Shackleford Banks 19 Dec (Wayne Irvin), at the Goldsboro WTP 7–8 Jan (Eric Dean), and at Ocracoke 5 Feb (Rich & Susan Boyd).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL: Inland reports of note included one at Falls Lake, NC 6 Dec (Brian Bockhahn), one at Jordan Lake, NC 20 Jan (Patrick Murphy, Carol Fisher), and two to three at the Raleigh, NC landfill 22 Jan (Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen, Harry LeGrand, Jr.).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE: Black-legged Kittiwake reports, always noteworthy, involved an adult at Oregon Inlet, NC 16 Jan (Steve Shultz et al.), three off Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), and an immature along Atlantic Beach, NC 28 Feb (John Fussell, Steve Benbow).

SANDWICH TERN: One on the Southport, NC CBC 2 Jan (*vide* Greg Massey) was a very good find for the winter season.

DOVEKIE: This species was present in the Carolinas in good numbers this winter. The best counts included 10–20 off Beaufort Inlet, NC 15 Feb (*vide* John Fussell), four off Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), three at Hatteras, NC 6 Feb (Ricky Davis), and three at Atlantic Beach, NC 27 Feb (Davis). Other reports involved singles at C. Lookout, NC 29 Jan (Jeff Lewis et al.), at the Sheraton Pier, Atlantic Beach, NC 29 Jan (*vide* Fussell), at Mercer's Pier, Wrightsville Beach, NC 7–23 Feb (Mary McDavit, Rick Payne, Dan Williams), and one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 30 Jan–13 Feb (Andy Siegler, Nathan Dias et al., Billy Fuller, Bob Maxwell, Kent Fiala).

THICK-BILLED MURRE: Thick-billed Murres staged a minor invasion into the Carolinas this winter. One was seen at Wrightsville Beach, NC 3 Jan (Ricky Davis, Derb Carter, Jim Parnell et al.) until at least 12 Feb (Mary McDavit). One was off C. Hatteras, NC 2 Jan (Brian Patteson). Several were in the Atlantic Beach area 30 Jan (Gail Lankford, Steve & Liz Semanchuk, sev. obs.) and one was there 27 Feb (Davis). From one to two were present at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 22 Jan (Nathan Dias) until at least 25 Feb (Rob Hilton) and were seen by many observers during this period.



Thick-billed Murre, Huntington Beach St. Pk., 30 Jan 2005. Photo by Steve Shultz.



Razorbill, Huntington Beach St. Pk., 30 Jan 2005. Photo by Steve Shultz.

RAZORBILL: Razorbills were present off the Carolina coast in excellent numbers this winter. The best counts received were the 612 off Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.), 350 from C. Hatteras point to Hatteras 6 Feb (Ricky Davis), 300 at Atlantic Beach, NC 27 Feb (Davis), 283 at Wrightsville Beach, NC 3 Jan (Davis et al.), 145 from Ft. Fisher to Wrightsville Beach 13 Feb (Davis), 100 off Beaufort Inlet, NC 15 Feb (*vide* John Fussell), and 12 at Pea Is. NWR 7 Jan (Jeff Lewis). Early-season sightings involved one at Pea Is. NWR, NC 3 Dec (Gordon Brown) and one at Emerald Isle, NC 4 Dec (Alan Johnston, John Fussell). In South Carolina, several spent Jan–Feb at Huntington Beach St. Pk. with a peak of 12 there 29 Jan (Nathan Dias).

ATLANTIC PUFFIN: The pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC 19 Feb (Brian Patteson et al.) found an impressive 31 puffins, providing only the fifth report and a record count for that state. Also, the sixth report of puffin involved 19 south of C. Fear 20 Feb (Chris Tessaglia-Hymes, *vide* Patteson).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: In South Carolina, two were good finds on the Hilton Head Is., SC CBC 18 Dec (*vide* Robin Carter). North Carolina reports involved singles at North River Farms, Carteret County, 12 Dec (John Fussell et al.) and in Ocracoke village 20 Feb (Peter Vankevich).

COMMON GROUND-DOVE: The peak count of this species at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC was an impressive 20 on 16 Feb, as noted by Steve Calver. Reported numbers of this declining species have not been this high for quite some time now.

SNOWY OWL: One was apparently in the Carova area of Currituck County, NC for two days in early Dec (*vide* Skip Morgan), providing the first occurrence in the state for several years.

SHORT-EARED OWL: This winter's sightings included one on Bulls Is., SC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), one on Kiawah Is., SC 11 Feb (*vide* Dias), and four at Alligator River NWR, NC 20 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al.).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL: One heard in the pre-dawn period on the Wilmington, NC CBC 1 Jan (Ricky Davis) provided a very rare and unexpected occurrence for that coastal locality.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK: One was very late at Fayetteville, NC 1 Dec, as noted by Hal Broadfoot, Jr. Another nighthawk, not identified to species, was near Columbia, SC 6 Dec (Jerry Griggs).

BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD: Reports of Black-chinned Hummingbirds involved one in Charleston, SC 18 Dec (Nathan Dias), one in Hampstead, NC mid-Dec to mid-Jan (Paulette Biles), and a specimen from Orange County, NC during the winter (*vide* Susan Campbell).

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: This species was present across the Carolinas again this winter. The best counts were of three on the S. Lake Norman, NC CBC 19 Dec (*vide* Taylor Piephoff) and three in a Raleigh, NC yard all winter (Lena Gallitano).

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER: Rare and local in the mountains, Red-headed Woodpeckers were present in Henderson County, NC this winter. Two were on the Henderson County CBC 26 Dec (*vide* Wayne Forsythe) while at least three were known to winter in the county (Forsythe, *sev. obs.*).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE: A pewee was found in Brown's Summit, Forsyth County, NC 13 Jan (Emily Tyler). The bird was heard calling and it was felt that it was an Eastern. This extremely unusual and unexpected occurrence was not without precedent though. There are three previous Dec reports from the Carolinas including a specimen from SC in late Dec.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER: An Ash-throated was found at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 5–19 Dec (John Fussell et al.) in the same area as one last year – most likely the same bird returning. Another one was located at Ft. Macon, NC 19–22 Dec (Randy Newman, Mike Tove) and,

along with the North River Farms bird, provided the Morehead City, NC CBC with an unprecedented two on one count!

WESTERN KINGBIRD: Rare winter reports involved one at Ft. Fisher, NC 19 Dec (Jeff Brengel, *fide* John Ennis), two at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 12–19 Dec (John Fussell et al., Rich & Susan Boyd et al.), and two in the C. Hatteras, NC area 11–21 Dec (Richard Carter, Brian Patteson).

FISH CROW: This species has been lingering later into winter in the inland portions of the Carolinas; thus, noteworthy were two on the L. Wateree, SC CBC 3 Jan and one at Congaree Nat. Park, SC 12 Jan (Robin Carter).

COMMON RAVEN: This species continued to be found in areas away from the mountains. One was at Bakers Mt., Catawba County, NC 1 Jan (Dwayne Martin), two were at Riverbend Park, Catawba County, NC 23 Jan (Martin), two were firsts for Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 8 Jan (Simon Thompson et al.), and an amazing count of 19 was had on the Greensboro, NC CBC 18 Dec (*fide* Herb Hendrickson). Farther east, two were just west of Chapel Hill, NC 12 Dec (Derb Carter) and two were in Chapel Hill 31 Jan (*fide* Rob Gluck).

HORNED LARK: Thirteen on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 26 Dec (*fide* Robin Carter) were quite noteworthy for that southern coastal location.

TREE SWALLOW: Two at L. Junaluska, Haywood County, NC 24 Feb (Jonathan Mays) were quite early for that mountain location.

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW: Three at Riverbanks Zoo, Columbia, SC 24 Feb (Jason Giovannone) were somewhat early spring returning birds.

CAVE SWALLOW: Although not as plentiful as the previous winter, there were still quite a few Cave Swallow reports from the Carolinas. In South Carolina, three to four were at Huntington Beach St. Pk. 13–16 Dec (Jack Peachey, Tim Kalbach), two were at Savannah NWR 18 Dec (Carroll Richard), one was at McClellanville 18 Dec (Will Post), one was at Garris Landing, Cape Romain NWR 4 Feb (Robin Carter), and one was at Bird Key, Charleston County 11 Feb (*fide* Nathan Dias). North Carolina sightings included one at the Ocean Isle WTP 1 Dec (Mary McDavit), five near L. Phelps 4 Dec (Ricky Davis), four on the New Bern CBC 15 Dec (Bob Holmes et al.), and one at Alligator River NWR 8 Jan (Davis).

SEDGE WREN: Sedge Wren is normally a rare and local winter resident in the western portions of the Carolinas. Thus of note was the impressive count of seven on the S. Lake Norman, NC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff).

VARIED THRUSH: One was reported at Ashmore Heritage Preserve, Greenville County, SC 15 Jan (Donnie Coody, *fide* Jeff Catlin). If accepted by the SC Bird Records Committee, it would be the fourth for that state.

GRAY CATBIRD: Normally very rare in the mountains during winter, Gray Catbirds were reported three times this year. Singles were at Hooper Lane, NC 18 Dec (Wayne Forsythe), at Saunook, Haywood County, NC 1 Jan (Jonathan Mays), and at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 9 Feb (Ron Selvey).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: One seen during the Charlotte, NC CBC 26 Dec (Alan Kneidel) was a good find for that western location during winter.

NASHVILLE WARBLER: This is a rare but regular winter visitor in the Carolinas. This season's sightings included singles on the Raleigh, NC CBC 18 Dec (John Connors et al.), at Ft. Fisher, NC 16 Jan (Greg Massey), and at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC 20 Feb (Steve Calver).

NORTHERN PARULA: Very rare in winter, Northern Parulas were on the Congaree Swamp, SC CBC 19 Dec (Robin Carter) and on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (Will Cook).

YELLOW WARBLER: Yellow Warblers are also rare in winter in the Carolinas; thus, of note were singles on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (Will Cook) and at Savannah NWR, SC 15 Jan (Andrea Ceselski et al.).

CAPE MAY WARBLER: A female at a feeder in Durham, NC 18 Feb (Mike Skakuj) was certainly a wintering individual, as it would be too early for a migrant.

"AUDUBON'S" YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER: There were two sightings of this very rarely noted western form in the Carolinas this winter. A male was at a feeder in Chapel Hill, NC 18–19 Jan (Judy Murray, Will Cook, sev. obs.) and one was at Ft. Moultrie, Sullivan's Is., SC 26 Feb (Dennis & Donna Forsythe).

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER: One at Santee NWR, SC 28 Feb (Dan Small) was also most likely a wintering bird, since the normal arrival of spring migrants usually comes a full month later.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: One at Cary, NC 20 Feb (Mark Johns) was possibly a very early migrant, since the species is very rare in winter that far inland.

PRAIRIE WARBLER: One was locally unusual in winter at Dreher Is. St. Pk., Greenville County, SC 22 Jan (Irvin Pitts et al.).

OVENBIRD: One was photographed in a yard in southern Charleston County, SC 30 Jan (Sharon Brown). This species is rare but regular as a local winter resident at a few coastal sites in the Carolinas.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: The peak count at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC was two on 22 Dec, as noted by Steve Calver, Robin Carter, and Caroline Eastman. This site regularly hosts wintering Northerns.

WILSON'S WARBLER: This species is a rare but annual winter resident in the Carolinas. This year's reports involved singles at Sunset Beach, NC 17–27 Dec (Mary McDavit) and near Rowland, Robeson County, NC 31 Jan (Dan Williams).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Noteworthy reports this winter included one near Roper, Washington County, NC 4 Dec (Ricky Davis), one on the New Bern, NC CBC 15 Dec (John Fussell), and one that spent the entire winter in a yard in Morehead City, NC (Fussell).

SUMMER Tanager: A female-plumaged bird was considered extremely rare at a feeder in Durham, NC 15–23 Dec (Oliver Ferguson, Norm

Budnitz). This is a very rare winter lingerer in the Carolinas, and very few sightings have been documented.

SCARLET TANAGER: One was found on the Alligator River NWR, NC CBC 2 Jan (Skip & Linda Morgan) for an extremely rare winter report for the Carolinas.

WESTERN TANAGER: This species continued to be found in the Carolinas during the winter. This year's reports included a male at a feeder in Greenville, NC 1 Dec (John Daughtry), a male at a feeder in Moncks Corner, SC early-to-mid Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff), one on the McClellanville, SC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Nathan Dias), a male at a feeder in Wilmington, NC 27 Dec–late Jan (Melanie Doyle, sev. obs.), and a female at a feeder in Clayton, NC 20 Feb (Clyde Sorenson).

BACHMAN'S SPARROW: Bachman's Sparrow is a regular winter resident in its coastal plain pinewoods habitat, but is rarely noted due to its secretive nature. Thus of note this winter was the finding of seven in Carteret County 20 Jan and one in Craven County 17 Feb, both in areas of Croatan Nat. Forest (John Fussell, Charlie Thomas). These birds were in recently (one to two years) burned areas and responded to taped songs of the species. In South Carolina, one was singing somewhat early in Colleton County 17 Feb (Robin Carter).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW:

This rarely-noted species was found in both states this winter. In North Carolina, one was on the Brevard CBC 17 Dec (*fide* Norma Siebenheller), one was near Rich Square, Northampton County 19 Jan (Dan Williams, Ryan Myers), and one was at Oregon Inlet at the north end of Pea



American Tree Sparrow, Oregon Inlet, 31 Jan 2005.
Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Island 30–31 Jan (Kent Fiala, Jeff Lewis). In South Carolina, one was east of Ridgeway, Fairfield County 3–25 Jan (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman, Donna Slyce).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW: Reports of this rare winter resident included a peak of seven (some present all winter) at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 12 Dec (John Fussell et al.), one near L. Phelps, NC 4 Dec (Ricky Davis), and one on the Litchfield–Pawleys Is., SC CBC 30 Dec (Gary Phillips).

VESPER SPARROW: This species continues to decline as a winter resident in the Carolinas. Thus of note were 12 on the S. Lake Norman, NC

CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff) and up to two at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 12–19 Dec (John Fussell, Rich & Susan Boyd et al.).

LARK SPARROW: This season's sightings involved two on the Wayne County, NC CBC 18 Dec (Ricky Davis) and one at Ft. Fisher, NC 21 Dec–2 Jan (Bruce Smithson, Davis).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: Reports of this secretive sparrow included one at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 19 Dec and 1 Jan (Rich & Susan Boyd et al., John Fussell et al.), an impressive count of nine at the Savannah River Site, Barnwell County, SC 31 Dec (Paul Champlin et al.), five at Daniel Is., SC 9 Jan (Burton Moore, Nathan Dias et al.), one on the Pee Dee NWR, NC CBC 2 Jan (*fide* Laura Fogo), and one at Clemson, SC 12 Jan (Champlin).

HENSLOW'S SPARROW: The only report of this secretive species involved two at the Savannah River Site, Barnwell County, SC 31 Dec (Paul Champlin et al.).

LE CONTE'S SPARROW: Only two Le Conte's Sparrows were found this winter, with singles at the Savannah River Site, Barnwell County, SC 31 Dec (Paul Champlin et al.) and near L. Phelps, NC 8 Jan (Ricky Davis).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW: This species was once again reported from across both Carolinas this winter. The best counts were the six near L. Phelps, NC 30 Dec (Ricky Davis) and up to three at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC all winter (John Fussell et al.). Noteworthy away from the usual coastal plain wintering areas was one on the Falls Lake, NC CBC 3 Jan (Patrick Murphy, *fide* Brian Bockhahn). Other Lincoln's reported included singles on the McClellanville, SC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Nathan Dias), on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Dias et al.), on the Southport, NC CBC 2 Jan (*fide* Greg Massey), near Goldsboro, NC 9 and 22 Jan (Davis, Eric Dean, Gene Howe), and at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 19 Feb (Anne Waters et al.).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, this winter's sightings involved one at Pea Is. NWR, NC 5 Dec (Ricky Davis), one on the Southern Pines, NC CBC 19 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell), three on Masonboro Island on the Wilmington, NC CBC 1 Jan (John Fussell et al.), four at Clemson, SC 12 Jan (Paul Champlin), one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 25 Jan (Jack Peachey et al.), one on Kiawah Is., SC 11 Feb (*fide* Nathan Dias), and one along Fanning Bridge Rd., Henderson County, NC 12 Feb (Tim Lewis, Lori Unruh).

SMITH'S LONGSPUR: South Carolina got its fifth Smith's Longspur when one was found at Huntington Beach St. Pk. 22–25 Jan (Judy Walker et al., Billy Fuller). The number of reports of this species in the Carolinas has increased the last several years.

SNOW BUNTING: Snow Buntings seemed to be present in the Carolinas in better-than-average numbers this winter. The best counts reported were the 18 on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (*fide* Pat Moore), the 16 at Pea Is. NWR, NC 22 Dec (Brian Van Druten), 14 at C. Hatteras 6 Feb (Ricky Davis), and 12 there 20 Feb (Harry LeGrand, Jr. et al.). Five provided an

excellent count for an inland area at Clemson, SC 12 Jan (Paul Champlin). Elsewhere four were on the Charleston, SC CBC 2 Jan (Nathan Dias et al.), three were on Portsmouth Is., NC 31 Dec (Peter Vankevich et al.), and two were at Pea Is. NWR, NC 5 Dec (Davis).

ROSE-BREADED GROSBEAK: A female-plumaged Rose-breasted Grosbeak provided a very rare winter report when photographed at a feeder in Buxton, NC on the C. Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (Susan Campbell, Ricky Davis, Allen Bryan, George Armistead et al.).

BLUE GROSBEAK: Very rare in winter, one was a good find inland on the Clemson, SC CBC 14 Dec (*vide* Robin Carter).

PAINTED BUNTING: This species tends to winter very locally in small numbers along the immediate coast in the Carolinas. This year's reports included one on the Alligator River NWR, NC CBC 2 Jan (Elizabeth Morey, Tommy Fulcher), two on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (*vide* Pat Moore), two at a feeder in Manteo, NC 7–17 Jan (Jeff Lewis), up to four in Morehead City, NC during late Jan (*vide* John Fussell), and at least three more in Carteret County, NC during Jan (*vide* Fussell).

DICKCISSEL: Rare winter sightings involved one at a feeder in Myrtle Beach, SC 1 Jan–18 Feb (Sharon & Phil Turner) and one at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 9 Jan (John Fussell, Jack Fennell).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD: The usual Carteret County, NC site hosted a peak of 20 on 7 Jan (John Fussell, Jack Fennell). Elsewhere, two in Wake County, NC 20 Feb (Gordon Brown) and one at Savannah NWR, SC 18 Dec (Carroll Richard) were locally good finds.

SHINY COWBIRD: The only Shiny Cowbird reported this winter was at Goose Creek St. Pk., NC 19–20 Jan (Curtis Dykstra).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE: This species wintered locally across the Carolinas again this season. Of particular note were the 18 on the Rocky Mount, NC CBC 18 Dec (Betty Davis), 14 in a Raleigh, NC yard all winter (Lena Gallitano), three on the S. Lake Norman, NC CBC 19 Dec (*vide* Taylor Piephoff), and one at Kernersville, Forsyth County, NC 11 Jan (Hop Hopkins).

EVENING GROSBEAK: This species has been more or less absent from the Carolinas the last several years. This winter, three reports were received, involving singles on the Wayne County, NC CBC 18 Dec (John Fussell), on the Durham, NC CBC 19 Dec (*vide* Mike Schultz), and one at a feeder near Chapel Hill, NC 26 Dec (Cynthia Fox).