

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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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: Apart from the resident group in the ACE Basin area of south-coastal South Carolina, three were at a golf course pond on Shaw AFB, Sumter County, SC 1 June (Julie Hovis, *fide* Lloyd Moon). It was not known if these were escaped individuals or not.

ROSS'S GOOSE: One in a field near Troy, Montgomery County, NC 3 June was a complete surprise (Susan Campbell), and was certainly a non-breeding lingerer.

CAKCLING GOOSE: Another lingering goose was the Cackling found mixed in with 100+ resident Canadas at L. Junaluska, Haywood County, NC 3–5 July (Bob Olthoff, Jonathan Mays). This bird most likely is the same one found at that location during the past winter.

REDHEAD: A drake Redhead was found in a canal at Cedar Is. NWR, NC 31 July (John Voigt, *fide* John Fussell), certainly a summering individual.

RING-NECKED DUCK: Several summering Ring-neckeds were present in central North Carolina this year. Single males were at a pond along Mid Pines Rd., Raleigh 4 June, at Lochmere, Cary 6 June, and Harris L., Wake County 21 July (Steve Shultz); and two males were at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County 4 July (Ricky Davis).

LESSER SCAUP: One was lingering where Goose Creek enters the Pamlico River, NC 8 June (Curtis Dykstra).

SURF SCOTER: Two female-plumaged Surfs were present at Oregon Inlet, NC from 8 July on into August, as noted by Jeff Lewis and several others.

RUDDY DUCK: Localized summering by this species is an annual occurrence in the Carolinas but breeding is not noted every year. This season a female and eight half-grown young were found at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC 17 July, as noted by Steve Calver.

COMMON LOON: Summer reports included one at L. Murray, SC 8 June (*fide* Robin Carter), one with a broken wing at Georgetown, SC 24 June (Jason Giovannone), a late high-flying migrant over the Green Swamp, Brunswick County, NC 12 June (Ricky Davis), and unusual numbers of lingering birds at Oregon Inlet, NC, with a peak count of 40 on 5 June (Davis).

PIED-BILLED GREBE: Noteworthy nesting records included one sitting on a nest at N. Topsail Beach, NC 11 June (Andy Webb) and a pair with one young at the Goldsboro, NC WTP 4 July (Ricky Davis). One at the Hendersonville, NC WTP 29–30 July (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was considered an early migrant.

HERALD PETREL: This summer's offshore sightings involved one each off Hatteras, NC, 11 and 19 June (Brian Patteson et al.).

BERMUDA PETREL: One photographed off Hatteras, NC 3 July (Brian Patteson) was somewhat unusual in that it had an obvious "white nape", thereby making it much more similar to a Black-capped in pattern.

FEA'S PETREL: This species made an impressive showing this season off Hatteras, NC with one 11 June and three (!) 19 June (Brian Patteson et al.).

CORY'S SHEARWATER: Sightings from shore included one in Port Royal Sound, Hilton Head Is., SC 12 June (Tim White) and four from the Bogue Inlet Pier, Emerald Isle, NC 12 June (Jamie Cameron).

GREATER SHEARWATER: This species annually migrates north along the Carolina coast each spring and summer. Excellent numbers were observed from both states, and the count of 237 off Charleston, SC 10 June

(Nathan Dias) was noteworthy for that state. This summer, strong SE–E winds in early June pushed many near the coast and good numbers were seen from shore including 35 at Emerald Isle, NC 12 June (Jamie Cameron). Along with this occurrence was one of the worst die-offs noted for this species since 1969. Many washed up on beaches, with reports such as 50+ on Kiawah Is., SC 13 June (Craig Watson) and many on Ocracoke beaches during the month (*vide* Jennifer Gordon). This phenomenon happens on a somewhat regular basis for this abundant species. The most likely cause seems to be starvation, as examined birds have mostly empty stomachs.

SOOTY SHEARWATER: One was among the Greater Shearwater casualties at Topsail Is., NC 12 June (Logan Williams).

MANX SHEARWATER: This species is a regular late-spring and early-summer transient off North Carolina and it was noted on “several” trips out of Hatteras during June (Brian Patteson et al.).

LEACH’S STORM-PETREL: A count of 26 off Hatteras, NC 19 June (Brian Patteson et al.) was the peak total reported this summer.

BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL: Singles were good finds off Charleston, SC 10 June and 15 July (Nathan Dias), where the species is observed much less frequently than in North Carolina.

WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRD: This summer’s reports included an adult off Manteo, NC 24 July and an immature off Hatteras, NC 25 July (Brian Patteson et al.).

RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD: There were three sightings of this rare-but-annual pelagic species. All off Hatteras, NC, single immatures were noted 12 June (Brian Patteson et al.), 16 June (Spurgeon Stowe, *vide* Patteson), and 30 July (Patteson et al.).

BROWN BOOBY: In North Carolina, an immature Brown Booby was off Hatteras 5 June (Brian Patteson et al.) and another or the same was along the shore at Coquina Beach 3 July (Sara Donovan) and Nags Head 7–8 July (Michael O’Brien, Louise Zemaitis). It is quite possible that these sightings were of the same immature present in the Oregon Inlet area in late May to early June. In South Carolina, an immature washed up on the beach at Isle of Palms 8 June (Mike Sanderson), providing another specimen for that state.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: Rare inland reports of this species involved three at L. Murray, SC 8 June (*vide* Robin Carter) and four at a small lake in Transylvania County, NC 11 June (*vide* Wayne Forsythe).

ANHINGA: Five at a Great Blue Heron colony at White Oak Cr., Chatham County, NC 5 June (Merrill Lynch) were interesting for that central NC location, although no nesting activity was observed.

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD: There were four Carolina reports of this annual visitor from the south. Singles were noted at Barden’s Inlet, C. Lookout, NC 5 June (*vide* Norm Budnitz), at Pea Is. NWR, NC 14 June (Scott & Melanie Arnold), at Ft. Macon, NC 23 June (*vide* Taylor Piephoff), and 66 miles se. of Charleston, SC 15 July (Nathan Dias). The latter bird was very unusual that far offshore, as the species almost always follows the coast.

SNOWY EGRET: Post-breeding dispersal by the long-legged waders occurs each summer, with some reaching the mountains. A Snowy Egret was noteworthy at Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC 14 July (Bob Olthoff), as this species is seen less frequently the farther west one goes.

REDDISH EGRET: This summer's Reddish Egret reports included one at Bear Is. WMA, SC 25 June (Tim Kalbach), two at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 27 June (Jack Peachey), one along the Pamlico Sound shore at Hatteras, NC 9 July (Brian Patteson), one behind Shackelford Is., Carteret County, NC 4 July (Wade Fuller), one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 14 July (Peachey, Bob Maxwell), and one at Mason Inlet, New Hanover County, NC 15 July (John Ennis).

CATTLE EGRET: One at Hooper Lane, NC 2 June (Wayne Forsythe) was locally unusual for that mountain locality in that it provided only the third or fourth county report.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL: Reports of this species seem to be increasing over the last several years. This summer 10 were at Savannah NWR, SC during late June to early July (*vide* Diana Churchill), one was at Bear Is. WMA, SC 8 July (Nathan Dias), one was behind Ocean Isle Beach, NC for a week in mid-July (Lou Skrabec), and one was at Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC 31 July (Eric & Celia Dean).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE: The only wandering Swallow-tailed reported this summer was the one over US 70, e. of North River, Carteret County, NC 15 July (Jo Anne Powell, *vide* John Fussell).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK: Rare summer sightings included singles at Durham, NC 9 July (Mike Tove) and at Doughton Park, Alleghany County, NC 19 June (Ricky Davis).

COOPER'S HAWK: Always noteworthy in the Carolinas, breeding Cooper's were found at Chapel Hill, NC in June and July with two juveniles being seen 19 July (Rob Gluck).

GOLDEN EAGLE: Very rare in summer, an adult Golden was an excellent find over Craggy Gardens, NC during the first week of June, as noted by Helmut Mueller.

AMERICAN COOT: A few individuals of this species spend the summer in the Carolinas each year. Reports included one at L. Medcalf, Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC 11 June (Ricky Davis), and two spent the entire period at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, NC (Davis).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER: One was late and locally unusual at Hooper Lane, NC 2-3 June (Danny Swicegood, Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey).

SEMPALMATED PLOVER: A surprising count of 16 Semipalmateds was had at Hooper Lane, NC 3 June (Danny Swicegood, Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), being late inland migrants.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER: Rooftop nesting by this species was noted in Morehead City, NC 15 June (John Fussell). One wonders if rooftop nesting by Oystercatchers will become as widespread as that by Least Terns?

WILLET: Rare for the mountain area was a migrant at Hooper Lane, NC 14-15 July, as noted by Marilyn Westphal.

UPLAND SANDPIPER: The first southbound fall migrant was noted at the Orangeburg, SC sod farm 10 July (Tim Kalbach). Also one was at the Roper, Washington County, NC research farm 27–30 July (Don Rote).

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: Three were back at C. Romain NWR, SC as early as 21 July (*fide* Nathan Dias).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: Three were in a flooded field at the Roper, NC research farm 22 July, as noted by Don Rote. These three slightly early fall migrants provided a very rare and unexpected inland report for the Carolinas.

MARBLED GODWIT: Two flying east along the beach at Ocean Isle Beach, NC 11 June (Ricky Davis) were considered to be late northbound migrants. Elsewhere three fall migrants were rare and unusual inland at the Roper, NC research farm 29 July (Don Rote).

SANDERLING: One was a complete surprise in a parking lot at Carrboro, NC 2 June (Ginger Travis)!

PEEPS: A grounding of several late spring migrants occurred at Hooper Lane, NC 3 June when 30+ Semipalmated, 2 Western, and 5 White-rumped Sandpipers were found (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey). In South Carolina, 32 Westerns were also late at a drawn-down pond in Hampton County 3 June (Carroll Richard).

PURPLE SANDPIPER: One was extraordinarily late at the Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC jetty 12 June, as noted by Stephen Thomas. This species had been found to linger into summer somewhere in the Carolinas the last several years.

CURLEW SANDPIPER: Only one was reported this summer, that being an adult in alternate plumage at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC 17 July (Steve Calver). This is only the third or fourth for that state.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER: Some of the first returning inland migrants noted involved three at Hooper Lane, NC 13 July (John Lindfors, Wayne Forsythe) and three at the Roper, NC research farms area 28 July (Don Rote).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK: Summer reports of this species in the Carolinas are always noteworthy. Two were at Waco, Cleveland County, NC 8 June (Simon Thompson); two were at Leland, Brunswick County, NC during June with an immature bird there in early July (John Ennis); one was at Kiawah Is., SC 13 July (Jim Jordan); and one was a fresh road-killed bird in Johnston County, NC in early July (Erik Thomas).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE: Four off Hatteras, NC 23 July (Brian Patteson et al.) were considered to be quite early for the fall migration.

SOUTH POLAR SKUA: There were few reports of this species this summer, with the only ones being off Hatteras, NC 6 June (*fide* Brian Patteson) and a mile off Shackleford Banks, Carteret County, NC 6 July (Ron White, *fide* John Fussell).

LONG-TAILED JAEGER: This summer's sightings included one near C. Hatteras point, NC 10 June (Brian Patteson) and three off Hatteras, NC 12 June (Patteson et al.).

CASPIAN TERN: Inland reports involved one at Lookout Shoals L., Catawba County, NC 4 July (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Pannell) and three at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, NC 30 July (Clyde Sorenson).

ARCTIC TERN: This was a poor spring migration for Arctic Tern off the North Carolina coast. Only one report came from the early June period of occurrence, that being one off Hatteras on 5 June (Brian Patteson et al.).

BRIDLED TERN: A good count for South Carolina offshore waters in early summer was the 13 off Charleston 10 June (Nathan Dias).

SOOTY TERN: South Carolina reports off Charleston included three 10 June and two 15 July (Nathan Dias). Off Hatteras, NC the peak count was a respectable 67 on 30 July (Brian Patteson et al.).

BLACK TERN: The first report of inland Black Terns for the fall migration was of eight at Lookout Shoals L., NC 16 July, as noted by Lori Martin.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE: Two at Hazelwood, Haywood County, NC 3–5 July (Beth Brinson, Bob Olthoff) provided the first county report of this species and one of the westernmost for the Carolinas.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: White-winged Dove is an annual visitor to the Carolinas and this season's sightings involved one at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 27 July (Phil Turner), one in e. Chatham County, NC 27 July (*vide* Cynthia Fox), and one in Ocracoke, NC 28 July (Susse Wright).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO: One heard calling at Bluff Mt., Ashe County, NC 9 June (Merrill Lynch) would be somewhat unusual at that elevation (3,300 ft) if it was on territory.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD: An adult male was a complete surprise at a feeder in Colington, Dare County, NC 15–16 July (Margarete Peterson, Marlene Schumm, Jeff Lewis, Skip Morgan). This provided that state's second record, the first being an imm. male near New Bern in October, 2001.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER: Very rare and somewhat late was one found along a BBS route in Fairfield County, SC 5 June (Robin Carter). Most amazing is that this was the second Olive-sided found on that route in the last five years!

WILLOW FLYCATCHER: One was present for several days in early June along Mid Pines Rd., Raleigh, NC (John Sneed). This species is regularly a late migrant throughout the Carolinas.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER: There were two reports of this regularly-occurring visitor including the one from the spring season near the L. Thurmond Dam, McCormick County, SC 4 June (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman) and one at Baruch Marine Lab near Pawley's Is., SC 5–8 July (Wendy Allen, Paul Rogers, Jack Peachey).

COMMON RAVEN: This species continues to be found at increasingly eastern locations in North Carolina. Two were in w. Carrboro, Orange County 29 June (Haven Wiley), one was in Durham 24 July (Mike & Lois Schultz), and one was present in the Greenville area from late June to the fall season (Veronica Pantelidis). It is probably only a matter of time before the species turns up along the coast in North Carolina.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: One heard at Table Rock St. Pk., SC 17 June (*fide* Scott Stegenga) was either a very late individual or a wandering non-breeder.

HOUSE WREN: One singing in Columbia, SC in early June was quite unusual for that location in summer (Robin Carter).

SWAINSON'S THRUSH: One was heard singing directly below the High Bluff overlook at Roan Mt., NC 26 June (Ricky Davis). Too late for a migrant, it was not determined if the bird was on territory or not, although it was heard repeatedly over the span of an hour. There are no breeding records from North Carolina but the species has been known to breed in Virginia not far from the state line.

HERMIT THRUSH: This species is present in North Carolina every breeding season at the higher elevations and seems to be increasing. Hermits were present at up to four different sites in the Balsam Mts. all summer (Marilyn Westphal), and there were five different territories established in the Roan Mt. area 26 June (Ricky Davis).

CEDAR WAXWING: This species once again remained at numerous sites to the east of the western Piedmont and Mountains this summer. The farthest-east waxwings were once again in Dare County, NC where an impressive count of 12 was had at Manteo 21 July (Jeff Lewis). Elsewhere near the coast, a pair was in se. Jones County 7 June (John Fussell), and one was in Craven County 16 July (Fussell). Nesting was documented in Tyrrell County for the second year in a row (Lewis).

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER: One in sw. Randolph County, NC 4 July (Jane Lewis) was hard to explain in that it was too late for a spring migrant and too early for a fall transient.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER: A male was singing as if on territory at the Roan Mt., NC Rhododendron Gardens area 26 June, as noted by Ricky Davis. This has been a regular location for the species in the North Carolina mountains for several years now.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER: This summer's reports included a singing male near the High Bluff trail at Roan Mt., NC 17 June (Thomas & J. T. McNeil) and again 26 June (Ricky Davis) when it was definitely on territory. No female was seen, however. Another male was at Mt. Mitchell, NC for at least the first half of June (Tom Driscoll, Marilyn Westphal). And, most amazingly, one was photographed at the coast in the Elizabethan Gardens on Roanoke Is., NC 1 July (Jeff Lewis)! This bird was obviously a wandering non-breeder and could not fit any migration pattern.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER: One was late at Skyland, NC 2 June, as noted by Simon Thompson.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: Another late spring migrant was the Northern Waterthrush found along the New R., Alleghany County, NC 4 June (Ricky Davis).

MOURNING WARBLER: A female was a good find at the Alleghany Unit of New River St. Pk., NC 4 June (Ricky Davis). The bird, apparently a

migrant, was observed at close range as it worked its way up a hillside and continued on out of the area.

SAVANNAH SPARROW: One singing at Hooper Lane, NC 13 June (Wayne Forsythe) was most likely unusually late, as the species is not known to nest anywhere near that southern mountains area.

SONG SPARROW: Another locally unusual summer sparrow was the singing Song Sparrow at McCormick, McCormick County, SC 4 June (Robin Carter), a rare Piedmont sighting for that season.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK: Quite late for central North Carolina were a female at a feeder in Chapel Hill 4 June (Jill Froning) and a male at a feeder in n. Chatham County 4–5 June (Melissa Troester).

PAINTED BUNTING: Two singing males were along the Newport R. estuary, Carteret County, NC 12 June (John Fussell), providing the first known report for that particular locality. Also providing a new sighting location was a singing male se. of Sardis, Florence County, SC 26 June, as noted by Robin Carter.

DICKCISSEL: This species made a rather impressive showing this summer, following on the heels of a better than average spring season. The most noteworthy report involved up to 27 at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC in June, with 21 of those being singing males (John Fussell, Jack Fennell). Breeding did occur as one juvenile bird was seen by early August. In South Carolina the best total was the 10 (nine singing males) in a field on Crowder Rd., Newberry County 6 June (Donna Slyce). Elsewhere six were singing in a field along SC 23 in Saluda County, SC 12 June (Robin Carter), several pairs were in Charleston County, SC during June (*fide* Craig Watson), two fledged young were seen at the Garner's Ferry area, Columbia, SC site 12 June (James Wilson, Slyce), several pairs were in the Cherryville–Waco area of Gaston and Cleveland Counties, NC during June (Alan Kneidel, Simon Thompson), and a nest was photographed in Pender County, NC during June (*fide* Chris Moorman).

BOBOLINK: Three (two males, one female) were quite late at the Garner's Ferry area of Columbia, SC 3 June, as noted by James Wilson et al.

PURPLE FINCH: A female was extraordinarily late when at a feeder until 17 June at Todd, Watauga County, NC (Walton Conway).

PINE SISKIN: One was also very late at a feeder near Chapel Hill, NC 9–10 June, as noted by Kent Fiala.