

## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2007–2008, unless otherwise noted)

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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.*

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.*

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK:** This species continues to increase in south-coastal South Carolina, as evidenced by a record count of 211 on the ACE Basin CBC 30 Dec (*vide* Nate Dias).

**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE:** Most unexpected was the flock of 19 Greater White-fronteds discovered on the Alligator River NWR (ARNWR) CBC 30 Dec (Allen Bryan). This flock increased to 21 on 16–17

Feb (Ricky Davis, Larry Meade) and remained until at least 28 Feb (John Haire). In South Carolina, three were at Santee NWR late Dec into Jan (*vide* Robin Carter).

**SNOW GOOSE:** This species also continues to increase and this year's count at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC was up to 85,000 (sev. obs.)! There were also more inland reports of note such as 19 at the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, SC 14 Dec (Lloyd Moon) and 11 on the Pee Dee NWR, NC CBC 29 Dec (Judy Walker et al.).

**ROSS'S GOOSE:** There were also more reports of this goose than usual. The best counts involved four at the Pungo Unit, NC 26 Jan–2 Feb (Ricky Davis, Derb Carter), three at Camp Pinewood, Henderson County, NC 2 Dec (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), two on the Clemson, SC CBC 22 Dec (*vide* Drew Lanham), two at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC 5 Jan (Steve Calver), two at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 29 Dec (Davis), and two in Brevard, NC from the fall season until at least 10 Jan (Tom Joyce, sev. obs.). Other reports of note included singles at Meat Camp Creek, Watauga County, NC 11 Feb (Curtis Smalling), in Greensboro, NC the first three weeks of Dec (Melissa Whitmire et al.), at the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, SC 2 Dec (Carroll Richard, Kathleen O'Grady), and at Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC 4–5 Dec (Randy Climpson).

**CAKCLING GOOSE:** There were three sightings of this goose this winter, with singles being noted on the Southern Pines, NC CBC 16 Dec (Susan Campbell), at the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway 26 Jan (Ricky Davis), and at the Pungo Unit, NC 5 Feb (Derb Carter).



Cackling Goose, 5 Feb 2008, Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR. Photo by Derb Carter.

**TUNDRA SWAN:** Some interesting reports away from the usual northeastern NC wintering area included five at Pee Dee NWR, NC 26 Jan (Lena Gallitano et al.), two in the Cross area of L. Moultrie, Berkeley County, SC 4 Jan (Sean Williams), one at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, NC 7 Dec (Ricky Davis), and one at L. Brandt, Guilford County, NC 19 Dec (Robert Smith).

**WOOD DUCK:** An extraordinary count of this species was the 1,556 tallied on the Pinewood, SC CBC 4 Jan (*fide* Robin Carter). This was easily one of the highest counts of this species ever reported from the Carolinas.

**EURASIAN WIGEON:** North Carolina once again hosted this species, with up to three in the Bodie–Pea Islands area of the Outer Banks all winter (m. obs.), up to three at L. Mattamuskeet 27 Jan (Harry & Edmund LeGrand), and one on Lilliput Pond, New Bern 9 Feb into the spring (Al Gamache).

**MOTTLED DUCK:** The pair of Mottleds from the fall at Twin Lakes, Sunset Beach, NC was joined by another male 11 Dec (Randy Climpson). These birds were seen off and on throughout the winter; and then a male (the second one?) was seen at nearby Ocean Isle Beach 7 Feb paired up with a female Mallard (Climpson)!

**GREEN-WINGED TEAL:** A “Common” Green-winged Teal was a good find on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (Ricky Davis), in an area where this form has been seen several times before.

**COMMON EIDER:** North Carolina reports of Common Eider included at least two in the Beaufort–Fort Macon area throughout the winter (Randy Newman, Susan Boyd, sev. obs.), three at the Cedar Island ferry terminal 25 Jan (Chris Marsh, Bill Hamel) and 3 Feb (John Fussell, Jack Fennell), two flying south at Kill Devil Hills 15 Dec (Ricky Davis), one at Oregon Inlet 28 Dec–26 Jan (m. obs.), and one at Stumpy Point bay 8 Dec (Jeff Lewis) being somewhat unusual away from the beaches and inlets. South Carolina’s sightings this winter involved single immature male Commons at Folly Beach 18 Jan (Roger Smith) to at least 3 Feb (Cherrie Sneed), at the Springmaid Pier, Myrtle Beach 1 Feb (Robin Carter et al.), and at Hunting Island State Park 8 Feb (Carter, Dennis Forsythe). A female-plumaged bird was at the Apache Campground Pier, Myrtle Beach 29 Jan (Bob and Judy Maxwell, Jack Peachey).

**INLAND SCOTERS:** Inland scoters were mentioned frequently this winter. Surf Scoter reports included one off Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, NC 1 Dec (Phil Warren, Bob Rybczynski, Doug Shadwick), four in the Haw River section of Jordan Lake 1 Dec (Warren), one at L. Marion, Santee NWR, SC 14 Dec (Lloyd Moon), and one at Winston L., Winston-Salem, NC 24 Jan (Ferenc Domoki, John Haire). Two White-winged Scoters were on L. Tillery, Stanly County, NC 23 Feb (Ron Clark et al.).

**LONG-TAILED DUCK:** This winter’s noteworthy inland sightings involved three on L. Keowee, Oconee County, SC 14 Dec (Paul Champlin) and one at the Blewett Falls L., NC dam 26 Jan (Lena Gallitano et al.). South Carolina Long-taileds included two on the Charleston CBC 30 Dec (*fide* Jeff Mollenhauer), one at the Apache Campground Pier, Myrtle Beach 29 Jan

(Bob & Judy Maxwell, Jack Peachey), and one near Bulls Is., Cape Romain NWR 2 Feb (Robin Carter et al.).

**HOODED MERGANSER:** Hooded Mergansers seemed to be in the Carolinas in better-than-average numbers this winter; one of the better counts was the 1000+ wintering at the Goldsboro, NC WTP (Eric Dean).

**COMMON MERGANSER:** The best count of this species came from the usual wintering site at L. Phelps, NC when 50 were noted 31 Dec (Harry LeGrand). Elsewhere notable reports included at least four on L. Waccamaw, NC 25 Jan (Greg Massey, Harry Sell) and 20–21 Feb (John Fussell), four on L. Marion, SC 4 Jan (Sean Williams), two on the L. Wateree, SC CBC 3 Jan (*vide* Donna Slyce), one on the Portsmouth Island, NC CBC 31 Dec (Jeff Beane et al.), and one at Jordan L., NC 8 Jan (Ricky Davis).

**RED-THROATED LOON:** Only one Red-throated was found inland this winter, that being off Shull Island, L. Murray, SC 30 Jan (Robin Carter & Caroline Eastman).

**HORNED GREBE:** Sixteen Horned Grebes at L. Julian, Buncombe County, NC 11 Jan (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) provided a good winter count for that mountain locality.

**RED-NECKED GREBE:** There were few reports of this grebe in the Carolinas this winter. The only ones mentioned were singles at L. Crabtree, Wake County, NC 20 Dec until spring (Doug Shadwick, m. obs.), near Bulls Island, C. Romain NWR, SC 22 Dec (Nate Dias), and in the waterway at the Shallotte River, Brunswick County, NC 8 Jan (Roy Slack).

**EARED GREBE:** Eared Grebe reports included one to two at Jordan L., NC 26 Dec (Harry LeGrand) until at least 8 Jan (Ricky Davis, sev. obs.) and one at the Murrell's Inlet, SC jetty 5–6 Jan (Nate Dias, Roger Smith, Ricky Davis) and again 23 Feb (Jerry Kirschner).

**GREATER SHEARWATER:** One off Hatteras, NC 17 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.) was quite rare, being only the second found by Patteson during February.

**MANX SHEARWATER:** This species is a regular winter visitor offshore, thus sightings close to shore are of interest. Two were tallied on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (Brian Patteson, George Armistead), and one was seen from shore in the Nags Head, NC area 29 Dec (Marshall Iliff).

**NORTHERN GANNET:** The L. Mattamuskeet NWR, NC CBC had 142 Northern Gannets 29 Dec (*vide* Allen Bryan), a good number for the western portion of Pamlico Sound.

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN:** The best counts of this increasing species included 560 on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 30 Dec (*vide* Pete Laurie), 111 at the Nemours Wildlife Foundation, Yemassee, SC 21 Jan (Gretchen Nareff), 100+ at Pea Island NWR, NC 4 Jan (Ed Corey), 50 at Lake Landing, L. Mattamuskeet, NC 10 Feb (Mike Johnson), and 18 at Huntington Beach State Park, SC 28 Dec (Stephen Thomas). Very good finds inland were the 12 at the upper end of High Rock L., Rowan County, NC 16 Feb (Anthony Sharum).

**GREAT CORMORANT:** Very rare inland were the two Greats found with Double-cresteds off Ebenezer Point, Jordan L., NC 8 Jan (Ricky Davis). How many of this species are overlooked at inland sites with large flocks of Double-cresteds?

**ANHINGA:** Anhingas seem to be wintering in the Carolinas in ever-increasing numbers. This winter 270 were reported on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Helen Chatterton); a most amazing total for the season. In North Carolina, one to two were at L. Mattamuskeet 29 Dec (Jeff Lewis) until at least 16 Feb (Allen Bryan), a good total of eight was had on the New Bern CBC 17 Dec (Bob Holmes), and one was a good find on the Wayne County CBC 15 Dec (Clyde Sorenson).

**MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD:** A very rare and unexpected winter record was provided by the Magnificent Frigatebird photographed near Avon, NC 17 Feb (Larry Meade). This was only about the fifth winter sighting for that state.

**GREAT EGRET:** Noteworthy western North Carolina Great Egret reports involved one to two at Beaver L., Asheville 2–4 Dec (Vin Stanton, Kevin Caldwell), and one on the Tryon CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Simon Thompson).

**SNOWY EGRET:** Three on the Santee NWR, SC CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Robin Carter) provided a good count for that locality in winter.

**REDDISH EGRET:** Always good finds during the winter in the Carolinas, Reddish Egrets were noted at the Yawkey Wildlife Center, SC 2 Feb (Carolina Bird Club meeting participants), at nearby Murphy Island, SC 10 Feb (Nate Dias, John Cox), and at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 9–29 Dec (Jeff Lewis, Gene Howe et al.). The latter bird possibly represented the most northerly winter report ever for this species.



Reddish Egret, 9 Dec 2007, L. Mattamuskeet. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**ROSEATE SPOONBILL:** The Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC once again harbored lingering spoonbills, with five still there 5 Jan (Steve Calver).

**WOOD STORK:** One near Fuquay-Varina, Wake County, NC 23 Feb (Richard Carter) provided a very rare inland winter sighting for that state.

**OSPREY:** Ospreys are found in small numbers along the immediate coast of North Carolina from about Morehead City south each winter. Inland winter Ospreys are considerably more unusual, and this season singles were on the Pee Dee NWR, NC CBC 29 Dec (Judy Walker et al.), at Coddle Creek Res., Cabarrus County, NC 25 Jan (Tomm Lorenzin), and at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, NC 4 Feb (Ricky Davis). The latter two could possibly represent early returning spring migrants.

**WHITE-TAILED KITE:** One was apparently present in the southern Richland County, SC area near Wateree this winter, although it was seen by only a few observers. First noted 16 Dec during the Congaree Swamp CBC (John Grego, Robin Carter et al), it was also seen briefly 31 Dec (Caroline Eastman) and again 31 Jan (Matthew Moskwik). There are now about a dozen reports of this species in that state.

**ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK:** Only one was mentioned this winter, that being from the usual Alligator River NWR, NC area 30 Dec (John Fussell, Ricky Davis) and 2 Feb (Derb Carter).

**GOLDEN EAGLE:** Golden Eagles were found in both states again this season. In North Carolina an immature was near Wallace, Duplin County in early Dec (*vide* John Bartlett), an immature was noted at Peach Bottom Mt., Alleghany County 22 Dec (Allen Boynton), two adults were noted near Gibsonville, Guilford County 16 Feb (Derb Carter, Kent Fiala), and an immature was at Pee Dee NWR 23 Feb (Ron Clark et al.). In South Carolina one was found on the Winyah Bay CBC 20 Dec (*vide* Lex Glover).

**MERLIN:** Noteworthy inland Merlin reports included singles on the Brevard, NC CBC 28 Dec (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) and near Gibsonville, Guilford County, NC 16 Feb (Derb Carter, Kent Fiala).

**PEREGRINE FALCON:** Locally unusual winter Peregrine Falcons were noted at Ebenezer Point, Jordan L., NC 14 Dec (Ginger Travis et al.), on the Falls L., NC CBC 2 Jan (Brian Bockhahn), and on the Roanoke Rapids, NC CBC 5 Jan (Merrill Lynch et al.).

**BLACK RAIL:** This elusive species winters in small numbers in the Carolinas, thus any report is worth mentioning. Single Black Rails were noted on the Southport, NC CBC 4 Jan (Sam Cooper et al.) and on the Wilmington, NC CBC 5 Jan (Greg Massey).

**SORA:** One found at the L. Wylie headwaters in Mecklenburg County, NC on the Charlotte CBC 22 Dec (Alan Kneidel) was locally unusual for the winter.

**COMMON MOORHEN:** The Common Moorhen from the fall season in Henderson County, NC was present all winter into the spring season (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Marilyn Westphal). This is most likely an unprecedented wintering record for this species in the mountains.

**SANDHILL CRANE:** Sandhill Cranes were widely reported across the Carolinas this winter. South Carolina reports involved a possible record state total of 20 on the Santee NWR CBC 29 Dec (*vide* Robin Carter), six near Heath Springs, Lancaster County late Dec–18 Jan (Lex Glover, Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman), four at Palm Key, Jasper County 19 Jan (*vide* Gary Phillips), three over Brookgreen Gardens, Georgetown County 8 Dec (Paul Serridge), and three on the Columbia CBC 5 Jan (Robin Carter et al.). North Carolina reports included nine in southeastern Guilford County 4 Dec (*vide* Dennis Burnette), nine near Hobgood, Halifax County 27 Jan (Ricky Davis) which were joined by another 5 Feb until the spring (Derb Carter, Davis), six over Greensboro 18 Dec (Henry Link et al.), two at North River, Carteret County 16–18 Dec (Dennis Chadwick, John Fussell, Carol Reigle) and possibly the same two near Swansboro, Carteret County in mid-Jan (*vide* Fussell), one flying with Canada Geese in Madison County 12 Dec (Kevin Caldwell), one in Henderson County 22–30 Dec (Marilyn Westphal, sev. obs.), and one in Happy Valley, Caldwell County 28 Jan–19 Feb (Jim Wagner, Dwayne Martin).



Sandhill Cranes, 27 Jan 2008, Halifax Co., NC. Photo by Ricky Davis.

**WILSON'S PLOVER:** Six was the peak winter count of this species at Ft. Macon, NC 16 Dec, as noted by John Fussell. Five were still present there 12 Jan (Fussell et al.).

**BLACK-NECKED STILT:** Four lingered at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC until 19 Dec, while one wintered there for the second winter in a row (Steve Calver).

**SPOTTED SANDPIPER:** Good numbers of this species lingered at several sites this winter, with the best count being an impressive 32 tallied on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC 16 Dec (*vide* Helen Chatterton). Other interesting Spotted Sandpiper reports included one to the north at Ocracoke, NC 30 Dec (Jeff Beane et al.), a good count of three inland on the Wayne County, NC

CBC 15 Dec (John Fussell, Tommy Wade), and one farther inland on the Southern Pines, NC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell).

**WILLET:** Two were locally good finds on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan).

**LONG-BILLED CURLEW:** The traditional wintering site for this species at Cape Romain NWR, SC harbored at least seven this year (Nate Dias).

**RUDDY TURNSTONE:** One at Falls Lake, on the Durham, NC CBC 17 Dec (Brian Bockhahn) provided a very rare and unexpected winter sighting for that inland location.

**SANDERLING:** Another rare inland winter sandpiper from Falls Lake, NC was the Sanderling found there 17 Feb, as noted by Brian Bockhahn.

**WESTERN SANDPIPER:** One at Jordan Lake, NC 22 Dec (Derb Carter) was most likely a very late lingering fall migrant.

**LEAST SANDPIPER:** This species lingered at several inland sites in impressive numbers, no doubt due to the low water levels from the ongoing drought. The best counts were the 238 at Jordan Lake, NC 21 Dec (Phil Warren), 175+ at the Goldsboro, NC WTP 8 Dec (Eric Dean et al.), and 80 at Buckhorn Res., Wilson County, NC 7 Dec (Ricky Davis). Also the S. Lake Norman, NC CBC had a respectable tally of 17 on 16 Dec (Taylor Piephoff).

**STILT SANDPIPER:** This species regularly winters at a few sites in south-coastal South Carolina and this season's reports included 31 on the Hilton Head Island CBC 15 Dec (*fide* Nan Lloyd), 20 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County 5 Jan (Steve Calver), and two at Bear Island WMA 16 Feb (Steve Tracey).

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER:** The peak count at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC this winter was an impressive 505 on 23 Jan, as noted by Steve Calver.

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE:** The Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC has long been recognized as the best place to find Wilson's Phalaropes in the Carolinas from spring to fall. This season one spent the entire winter there, a most unusual event (Steve Calver).

**RED-NECKED PHALAROPE:** One found on the Salt Pond at Cape Hatteras, NC 27 Dec (Chris Eley, Ricky Davis) was extremely rare, as there are only a couple of previous winter reports on land in that state.

**RED PHALAROPE:** The most interesting sightings of this regular offshore wintering species included 18 just off the beach during the Cape Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (Brian Patteson, George Armistead) and 40 only 10 miles off Cape Lookout, NC 7 Jan (Jack Fennell).

**LAUGHING GULL:** Locally good inland winter sightings included two at Nutbush, Kerr Lake, Vance County, NC 15 Dec (Harry LeGrand) and one on the Goldsboro, NC CBC 15 Dec (John & Paula Wright).

**LITTLE GULL:** This species was noted several times off Hatteras, NC this winter, with the best count being three on 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.). Only one was mentioned from shore, that being an adult flying south with Bonaparte's Gulls at Kill Devil Hills, NC 15 Dec (Ricky Davis).



**BLACK-HEADED GULL:** The adult Black-headed Gull returned for the third winter at the causeway at L. Mattamuskeet, NC in Dec and remained throughout the period (sev. obs.).



Black-headed Gull, 12 or 13 Jan 2008, L. Mattamuskeet. Photo by David Disher.

**BONAPARTE'S GULL:** An impressive count of 6,900+ Bonaparte's flying south was made at Kill Devil Hills, NC 15 Dec (Ricky Davis).

**CALIFORNIA GULL:** This rare but regular winter visitor was noted more often than usual with reports involving an adult at C. Hatteras, NC 3 Dec (Brian Patteson), two (adult, second-winter) at Oregon Inlet, NC 28 Dec (John Fussell, Neal Moore; Ricky Davis), and single adults off Hatteras, NC 19 and 23 Jan (Brian Patteson, Inc.).

**THAYER'S GULL:** Only one was mentioned this winter, that being an adult off the beach during the Cape Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (Brian Patteson, George Armistead).

**ICELAND GULL:** Coastal sightings included a first-winter bird at the north end of Carolina Beach, NC 5 Dec (Ricky Davis), a second-winter at C. Hatteras, NC 21 Jan (Brian Patteson) and 26 Jan (Bruce Young, Rick Payne), and one off Hatteras, NC 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.). Less expected inland were a second-winter bird at the North Raleigh, NC landfill 2 Jan (Clyde Smith, Jim Mulholland, Will Kimler) and a first-winter at the Jacksonville, NC landfill 11 Feb (Greg Massey, Harry Sell).

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL:** Noteworthy reports of this species usually involve inland sightings now, as coastal numbers continue to increase. Inland reports also are increasing as evidenced by the following: up to two adults and one first-winter at Falls Lake, NC 9 Dec–3 Feb (Ricky Davis, Harry LeGrand), at least three adults and one first-winter at the North Raleigh, NC landfill during the winter (Derb Carter, Jeff Phippen, Davis, sev.

obs.), four (one adult, two third-year, one second-winter) on the Goldsboro, NC CBC 15 Dec (John Fussell, Tommy Wade), one first-winter at Jordan Lake, NC 26 Dec (LeGrand), and an adult at the Winslow Sod Farm, Scotland Neck, NC 20 Jan (Davis). Also an adult on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (Davis) was a first for that count.

**GLAUCOUS GULL:** This winter's reports involved single first-winter birds at Ft. Fisher, NC and Carolina Beach, NC 5 Dec (Ricky Davis), a first-winter at the North Raleigh, NC landfill 28 Jan (Nathan Swick) and 9 Feb (Brian Bockhahn), a second-winter bird at Bulls Island, SC 27 Dec (Stephen Thomas), and a second-winter at the Jacksonville, NC landfill 9 Feb (Andy Webb).



Glaucous Gull, 9 Feb 2008, Jacksonville, NC. Photo by Andy Webb.

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL:** The best inland count was the three at Falls Lake, NC 18 Jan, as noted by Jacob Socolar. This species has become regular at a few inland sites in the eastern half of North Carolina.

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE:** This species is usually found offshore during the winter, thus of note are sightings from shore. This winter an adult was flying south just off the beach at Kill Devil Hills, NC 15 Dec (Ricky Davis) and a first-winter bird was noted at C. Hatteras, NC 12 Jan (Brian Patteson).

**SANDWICH TERN:** This species is normally gone from the Carolinas during the winter season, thus of note were one on the Sun City-Okatie, SC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Helen Chatterton) and two on the Winyah Bay, SC CBC 20 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover).

**GREAT SKUA:** This species is regularly found on pelagic trips off Hatteras, NC during the winter. This season they were noted during at least five trips in Jan and Feb with the best counts being two to three on 17 and 23 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.).

**POMARINE JAEGER:** This species is noted much less frequently during the winter than Parasitic, thus of interest were the singles at the north end of Carolina Beach, NC 5 Dec (Ricky Davis) and off the Garden City, SC beach 2 Jan (David Abbott).

**PARASITIC JAEGER:** This winter's reports involved one off the beach on the C. Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (Brian Patteson, George Armistead), one during the Charleston, SC CBC 30 Dec (*fide* Jeff Mollenhauer), one just off the beach at Wrightsville Beach, NC 5 Jan (Ricky Davis), and one off Hatteras, NC 9 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.).

**DOVEKIE:** Dovekies staged one of their best movements into North Carolina in several years this winter. Many reports involved sick or injured birds on or near shore such as one being "rescued from a cat" at Salvo 23 Dec (Gabe White), one picked up from Masonboro Inlet 23 Dec that later died (*fide* Robin Wood), one picked up on the beach at Nags Head 26 Dec (*fide* Skip Morgan), and at least eight that were picked up alive but later died in Carteret County during the winter (*fide* John Fussell). Other reports included one off the beach during the C. Hatteras CBC 27 Dec (Brian Patteson, George Armistead), one at Onslow Beach during the Camp Lejeune CBC 5 Jan (Craig TenBrink), two just off C. Hatteras point 9 Jan (Patteson), six in the waterway near Southport 16 Jan (Juanita Roushdy), one at C. Hatteras point 3 Feb (Derb Carter), one at Coquina Beach 17 Feb (Ricky Davis), and one off Shackleford Banks, Carteret County 6 Jan and mid-Feb (*fide* Fussell). Dovekies were also present offshore in good numbers, with the best counts during pelagic trips off Hatteras being 80 on 26 Jan and 100+ on 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.).

**RAZORBILL:** Razorbills were also in the Carolinas in good numbers, with the best offshore counts off Hatteras, NC being 70+ on 26 Jan and 35 on 2 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.), and off Charleston, SC being six on 8 Feb (*fide* Nate Dias). Other reports of note included 16 at Coquina Beach, NC 17 Feb (Ricky Davis), 13 on the Wilmington, NC CBC 5 Jan (Sam Cooper, Davis), two at Figure Eight Is., NC 28 Dec (Derb Carter), three just off C. Hatteras point 8 Jan (Patteson), and two at Nags Head, NC 2 Jan (Carter).

**BLACK GUILLEMOT:** One in winter plumage showed up at the Murrell's Inlet, SC jetty 29 Dec (Gary Graves) and was seen very sporadically (sev. obs.) until at least 3 Feb (*fide* Jerry Kirschner). Photographs nicely documented this third record of the species for South Carolina.

**ATLANTIC PUFFIN:** There were two to three individuals found on at least four pelagic trips out of Hatteras, NC this winter. The most interesting sighting was an adult, rarely found this far south, on 23 Feb (Brian Patteson, Inc.).

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE:** One in Myrtle Beach, SC 27 Feb (Dick Rosche, *fide* Nate Dias) provided the only report this winter.

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE:** Four in southern Richland County, SC 31 Dec (Robin Carter, Caroline Eastman) were locally good finds, as this species continues to be found at an increasing number of inland sites.

**SHORT-EARED OWL:** Locally noteworthy were one to two at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC 19 Dec–5 Jan (Steve Calver), one on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 30 Dec (Nate Dias), and three at North River, Carteret County, NC 3 Feb (Jack Fennell).

**NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL:** This species apparently wintered across the Carolinas in good numbers. Reports involved one being banded at Hilton Pond, York, SC 14 Dec (Bill Hilton, Jr.), one heard on the Winyah Bay, SC CBC 20 Dec (Chris Hill, *fide* Lex Glover), one heard in the Bodie Island, NC lighthouse woods 29 Dec (Marshall Iliff), one found dead in Orange County, NC 1 Jan (Cynthia Fox), and one being seen near Halifax, NC 28 Jan (Mary Enders).

**NIGHTHAWK SP.:** One seen flying in a parking lot near Oriental, Pamlico County, NC 18 Dec (Olwen Jarvis et al.) was not observed well enough to determine the species. Lesser Nighthawk is just as likely a possibility as Common during the winter season.

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW:** Three Chucks being found during one winter season was quite unusual for this rare winter lingerer. Singles were noted on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Helen Chatterton), at Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, SC 22 Dec (Nate Dias), and in the Bodie Island, NC lighthouse woods 28 Dec (John Fussell, Harry & George Armistead).

**WHIP-POOR-WILL:** Only one Whip was located this winter, with a bird being flushed near Ridgeway, SC 2 Dec (Donna Slyce).

**BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD:** A male was at the feeder of Annabeth and Donald Proctor in Rockville, Charleston County, SC from mid-Dec through Jan (Bill Hilton, Jr., m. obs.). The bird was banded and photographed, and was the second for that state, with the first being a male seen at Seneca 30 July 1985.

**RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD:** Rare inland away from the usual coastal areas in winter, good sightings included an immature male during the Southern Pines, NC CBC 16 Dec (Susan Campbell) and one in Durham, NC 26 Jan (Campbell).

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD:** This winter's Black-chinned Hummingbirds included a female on James Island, SC 17 Dec until the end of the month (John Weinstein, Doreen Cubie), an adult male for the third winter in a row at Murrell's Inlet, SC (Gary Phillips), an immature male at feeders in Manteo, NC 12 Jan–17 Feb (Jeff Lewis), and one near Wilmington, NC in mid-Jan (Bruce Jones).

**CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD:** This winter saw an increase in the number of Calliope Hummingbird reports over the last several years. A female was on James Island, SC throughout the winter (John Weinstein, Doreen Cubie), an immature male was at a feeder in Monroe, Union County, NC early Dec until spring (Sharon Funderburk, Taylor Piephoff, m. obs.), an immature was at Price Park, Greensboro, NC in late Dec (Scott DePue, Melissa Whitmire, sev. obs.), one was in northern Greenville, SC 29 Dec (J. B. Hines, Robin Carter), and two were present at the same feeder at L. Lanier, SC from the late fall through early winter (Charles Webb, *fide* Simon Thompson). The latter report of two at one location is a first for this rare hummingbird in the Carolinas.

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER:** A female Vermilion was a good find at Slanns Island, Charleston County, SC 13–18 Jan (Nate Dias; sev. obs.). There are now about a dozen reports of this western flycatcher for that state.



Vermilion Flycatcher, 18 Jan 2008, Slanns Island, SC. Photo by Steve Kilpatrick.

**WESTERN KINGBIRD:** This winter's reports of Western Kingbird involved one at Manteo, NC from the fall until at least 16 Dec (Jeff Lewis), one at the north end of Ocracoke Island, NC 30 Dec (Paul DeAnna, Hal Broadfoot), one at Bear Island WMA, SC 5–12 Jan (Sean Williams, Nate Dias, Chris Snook), one at Brookgreen Gardens, Georgetown County, SC 27 Jan–2 Feb (Melinda Stamp; Carolina Bird Club meeting participants), and one on Kiawah Is., SC 3 Feb (Peter & Adam Nelson).

**LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE:** One in the southern Hendersonville, NC area, present from the fall into mid-winter (Wayne Forsythe, Marilyn Westphal, Peggy Franklin, Tom Cameron), was rather unusual for that mountain locality.

**WHITE-EYED VIREO:** The farthest north that this species was found this winter was at Manteo, NC 15 Dec during the Kitty Hawk, NC CBC (Jeff Lewis). Also, one was a good find on the nearby Bodie-Pea Islands CBC 28 Dec (*vide* Paul Sykes).

**BLUE-HEADED VIREO:** One singing at Bakers Mt. Park, Catawba County, NC 10 Feb (John Sutton, *vide* Dwayne Martin) was interesting, as the species does not normally winter there, and it was too early for a spring migrant! One was also locally unusual on Portsmouth Island, NC 31 Dec (Paul DeAnna).

**FISH CROW:** Several were present in a large (1500+) American Crow roost at Greensboro, NC this winter (Melissa Whitmire), indicating that a few individuals of this species now winter in the piedmont. Numbers of coastal wintering Fish Crows have been declining the last several years, thus

of interest was the tally of 41,000+ on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 30 Dec (Nate Dias).

**COMMON RAVEN:** Sightings continued in the Raleigh–Durham, NC area with one at the Butner Game Lands, Durham County 16 Dec and 23 Jan (Norm Budnitz, Patsy Bailey), two on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC 23 Dec (Jane Brinkley, *fide* Will Cook), and one at Occoneechee Mt., Orange County 28 Dec and 3 Feb (Greg Dodge, Brian Bockhahn).

**HORNED LARK:** Locally rare were the five to six Horned Larks on the beach in the Cape Hatteras, NC area 27 Dec (Pat Moore et al.) until at least 17 Feb (Moore, Nathan Swick, Ricky Davis).

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW:** One, a rare winter find at the Goldsboro, NC WTP 29–30 Jan (Eric Dean), was possibly a very early returning spring bird.

**CAVE SWALLOW:** This species lingered from the fall season influx in good numbers again this winter. The best counts involved 15 at the Tidewater Research Station, Roper, NC 31 Dec (Harry LeGrand) with at least five still there 7 Jan (Rick Knight) and up to 10 at Pawley's Island, SC 2–3 Jan (Wendy Allen et al., Jack Peachey). Other reports included one at Bulls Is., Cape Romain NWR, SC 22 Dec (Nate Dias), three at L. Landing, L. Mattamuskeet, NC 29 Dec (Ricky Davis), five in the Pea Island–Oregon Inlet, NC area 2 Jan (Derb Carter), and two at Ft. Fisher, NC 4 Jan (Davis).

**RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH:** Large numbers continued into the winter throughout the Carolinas. A count of 25 on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC 23 Dec was their best since 1981 (*fide* Will Cook).

**HOUSE WREN:** Two on the New River, NC CBC 22 Dec (Jack & Elizabeth Scott) were good finds for that mountain locality during winter.

**GRAY CATBIRD:** One found during the Buncombe County, NC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Steve Semanchuk) provided a rare mountain winter sighting.

**NORTHERN PARULA:** Rare in winter, Northern Parulas were found at Ft. Fisher, NC 4 Jan (Ricky Davis) and at Meggett, SC 19 Jan (Cherrie Sneed).

**YELLOW WARBLER:** Only slightly less rare in winter than the preceding species, noteworthy Yellow Warbler reports involved one along the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway 27 Dec (Allen Bryan), one on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 30 Dec (Nate Dias), and one at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County, SC 5 Jan (*fide* Steve Calver).

**MAGNOLIA WARBLER:** One at the Georgetown, SC WTP 13 Jan (Dick Rosche, *fide* Nate Dias) was most unusual, as the species is not normally found in the Carolinas during winter.

**YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER:** This species is a regular winter resident along the immediate southern coast, usually in very small numbers. This winter some impressive counts were had including 63 on the Sun City–Okatie, SC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Helen Chatterton) and 38 on the Hilton Head Is., SC CBC 15 Dec (*fide* Nan Lloyd). Other interesting reports away from the coast included a good count of four on the Santee NWR, SC CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Robin Carter) and one on the Raleigh, NC CBC 15 Dec (Clyde Smith et al.).

**PRAIRIE WARBLER:** There were several good counts along the coast, where the species is a regular winter resident in very small numbers. Up to five were noted at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC during the winter (John Fussell) and three were found on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan). Much rarer inland, locally noteworthy Prairies were found at Columbia, SC 16 Jan (John Grego) and at Charlotte, NC 4–22 Dec (Taylor Piephoff). The latter bird was most unusual in that this species is practically never found in the piedmont during winter.

**PALM WARBLER:** Locally rare during winter were the three to six Palms present in the Mills River, Henderson County, NC area throughout the winter period (Marilyn Westphal, Wayne Forsythe et al.).

**AMERICAN REDSTART:** One of the rarest warblers in the Carolinas during winter, the American Redstart was noted twice this season. One was at Savannah NWR, SC 3 Jan (Steve Kilpatrick), an area that has hosted the species in winter previously. Much more unusual and totally unexpected in the piedmont was the American Redstart seen well at close range near Statesville, NC 27 Feb (Patric Patterson). One wonders if this was an extremely early spring migrant or a very lost wintering bird.

**OVENBIRD:** A record winter count of 19 was had on the Cape Hatteras, NC CBC 27 Dec (John Fussell, Paul Sykes et al.) from an area that has historically harbored a small wintering population.

**NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH:** Only one of this rare-but-regular wintering warbler was noted, that being at the usual Savannah Spoil Site, SC area 5 Jan (Dennis Forsythe, *fide* Steve Calver).

**MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER:** One was a total surprise on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (Ricky Davis; Allen Bryan, John Wright). The bird, found in the L. Landing area of the refuge, was noted (and photographed) again 1 Jan (Derb Carter et al.). This was only the second to be found in North Carolina, with the first being a road-killed bird found only about 10 air miles away on the south side of the lake 6 Nov 1998!



American Redstart, 3 Jan 2008, Savannah NWR. Photo by Steve Kilpatrick.



MacGillivray's Warbler, 1 Jan 2008 Mattamuskeet NWR. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

**COMMON YELLOWTHROAT:** One was locally unusual for the winter near the French Broad River, Henderson County, NC 16–25 Feb (Marilyn Westphal, Peggy Franklin).

**WILSON'S WARBLER:** This species is a rare-but-regular winter visitor, and this year's sightings involved one in the L. Landing area of L. Mattamuskeet, NC 1 Dec (John Gerwin et al.) and 29 Dec (Ricky Davis), and one at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 13 Jan (John Fussell et al.).

**YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT:** This winter's sightings included singles at Wilmington, NC 6 Dec (Bruce Smithson), on the L. Mattamuskeet, NC CBC 29 Dec (*fide* Allen Bryan), at Ft. Fisher, NC 4 Jan (Ricky Davis), and at Eagle Island, Wilmington, NC 4–5 Jan (John Ennis et al.).

**SUMMER TANAGER:** This species is normally not found in the Carolinas during winter, thus of note were several in the Carteret–Craven counties area of the central North Carolina coast. One wintered at a Gloucester, Carteret County feeder for the second year in a row (*fide* John Fussell), one also wintered at a feeder in Morehead City (*fide* Fussell), and one was at a feeder in Trentwoods, Craven County 17 Dec and 4 Jan (Joanne Harley). Interestingly, all three birds were adult males!

**WESTERN TANAGER:** The number of reports of this regular winter visitor was down considerably from the last couple of winters. A male wintered at Conway, SC again, returning for its second year in a row (Gary Phillips), while another male was noted at a feeder in Thrushwood, Lexington County, SC 28 Jan (Marion Clark).

**AMERICAN TREE SPARROW:** The only report of this rarely found species was of two on the Alligator River NWR, NC CBC 30 Jan (Jan DeBlieu, *fide* Jeff Lewis).

**CLAY-COLORED SPARROW:** Noteworthy reports of this locally rare but regular winter visitor included one at Mt. Pleasant, SC 12 Dec and 25 Jan (David Abbott), one at Myrtle Beach, SC 2 Feb (K.C. Foggin), one at Kill Devil Hills, NC 15 Dec (Audrey Whitlock), two at Hobucken, Pamlico County, NC 18 Dec (Bob Holmes, Gene Howe), one at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 2 Dec and 3 Feb (John Fussell et al.), several near Trenton, NC in early Feb (Clancy Ballenger), and three to six at the usual site near the western end of L. Phelps, NC 27 Dec (Allen Bryan; sev. obs.).

**VESPER SPARROW:** The best count received of this uncommon wintering sparrow was 13 on the Southern L. Norman, NC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Taylor Piephoff).

**LARK SPARROW:** The only ones mentioned this winter were found on the Pee Dee NWR, NC CBC, when two were noted 29 Dec (Judy Walker et al.).

**GRASSHOPPER SPARROW:** South Carolina had the only reports this winter with singles at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper County 5 Jan (*fide* Steve Calver), on the Savannah River Site CBC 20 Dec (*fide* Mark Vukovich), and one on the Pinewood CBC 4 Jan (*fide* Robin Carter).



**HENSLOW'S SPARROW:** This species is regular but very local in pinewoods habitats in the coastal plain. This winter's reports included two near Columbia, SC 24 Dec (Paul Champlin), one on the Savannah River Site, SC CBC 20 Dec (*fide* Mark Vukovich), one on the Southport, NC CBC 4 Jan (Sam Cooper et al.), and one at the Millis Rd. savanna, Croatan Nat. Forest, NC 26 Jan (John Fussell, Chris Marsh, Bill Hamel).

**LECONTE'S SPARROW:** There were only three reports of this sparrow during the winter, which is about normal for the season. One was in eastern Pamlico County, NC 18 Dec (John Fussell, Carol Reigle), one was on the Pinewood, SC CBC 4 Jan (*fide* Robin Carter), and three were at North River Farms, Carteret County, NC 10 Feb until the spring (Fussell et al.).

**LINCOLN'S SPARROW:** The number of reports of this local but regular winter resident was about average for the Carolinas. This season's sightings involved one near Core Creek, Carteret County, NC 7 Dec (John Fussell), one in the Green Swamp, Brunswick County, NC 9 Dec (Bruce Smithson, Harry Sell), one far inland on the Southern Pines, NC CBC 16 Dec (*fide* Susan Campbell), one near L. Phelps, NC 27 Dec (Allen Bryan), two on the Southport, NC CBC 4 Jan (Greg Massey et al.), and one on the Wilmington, NC CBC 5 Jan (John Ennis et al.).

**DARK-EYED JUNCO :** An individual of the western "Oregon" race of this species was photographed at Greensboro, NC 21 Feb (*fide* Jenny Palmer), providing one of a handful of documented records of this form in the Carolinas.

**LAPLAND LONGSPUR:** This winter's reports included five in flight at the Tidewater Res. Station near Roper, NC 26 Jan (Harry LeGrand, Edmund LeGrand), three at Hooper Lane, Henderson County, NC 13 Dec (Wayne Forsythe), and two at the Savannah Spoil Site, SC 5 Jan (Dennis Forsythe, *fide* Steve Calver).

**SNOW BUNTING:** This species was present in the Carolinas in somewhat better numbers this winter when compared to the last several. The best counts included 13 at C. Hatteras, NC 26 Jan (Bruce Young, Rick Payne), 10 on Portsmouth Island, NC 31 Dec (Peter Vankevich et al.), seven at C. Hatteras 17 Feb (Pat & Neal Moore, Nathan Swick, Ricky Davis), and five at the jetty at Huntington Beach St. Pk., SC 4 Jan (*fide* Nate Dias). Others included a "flock" near Frisco, NC 1 Dec (Brian Patteson), several there 27 Dec (Pat & Neal Moore et al.), two at Ft. Macon, NC 12 Jan (John Fussell), and one in flight somewhat inland at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC 2 Feb (Derb Carter).

**ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK:** Only one Rose-breasted Grosbeak was mentioned this winter, that being a female-plumaged bird at a feeder in Fairfield Harbour, Craven County, NC 8–17 Dec (Inga Parker).

**INDIGO BUNTING:** One was a good find on the Southport, NC CBC 4 Jan (Greg Massey et al.), while one was very rare and unusual far inland at Evergreen Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg County, NC 9 Dec (Larry & Louise Barden).

**PAINTED BUNTING:** North Carolina had multiple reports of Painted Buntings again this winter. A good count of nine was had on the Southport CBC 4 Jan (Greg Massey et al.) and five were in one yard at Marshallberg, Carteret County during the winter (*fide* John Fussell). Much rarer inland were single male Painteds in Princeton, Johnston County 20 Jan (Diane Rose) and nearby Goldsboro 27–30 Jan (Eric & Celia Dean)—possibly the same bird? In South Carolina a male at Mt. Pleasant 15 Feb (David Abbott) was probably too early for a returning spring bird.

**DICKCISSEL:** One heard in flight during pre-dawn hours at Mt. Pleasant, SC 11 Dec (David Abbott) was most likely a late fall migrant.

**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD:** This species is usually found somewhere in the Carolinas each winter. This season's reports involved an immature male near Eastover, Richland County, SC 23 Dec (Nate Dias), a male at Alligator R. NWR, NC 30 Dec (Allen Bryan), a female at the Pungo Unit of Pocoson Lakes NWR, NC 26 Jan (Ricky Davis), and probably the same female just to the north near L. Phelps, NC 27 Jan (John Haire).

**RUSTY BLACKBIRD:** Some excellent counts of this declining species were had and included 1,143 on the ACE Basin, SC CBC 30 Dec (Nate Dias) and 816 in the piedmont on the Chapel Hill, NC CBC 23 Dec (*fide* Will Cook).

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD:** A good count of 28 was had on the Clemson, SC CBC 22 Dec (*fide* Drew Lanham), from an area where the species has been regular in the past.

**PURPLE FINCH:** This species was present throughout the Carolinas in decent numbers this winter. The best count received was of 100+ at Riverbend Park, Catawba County, NC 16 Dec (Dwayne Martin).

**RED CROSSBILL:** Reports of this species are always worth mentioning, thus of note were singles at Riverbend Park, Catawba County, NC 28 Dec (Dwayne Martin) and Clemson, SC 3 Jan (Katie Fenlon), and six at the Sandy Mush Game Land, Buncombe County, NC 23 Feb (Jason Giovannone).

**COMMON REDPOLL:** After the flurry of late fall sightings, North Carolina had five reports during the winter, easily many more than normal for this rarely noted species. Twelve were at Balsam Mountain Preserve, Jackson County 30 Nov–1 Dec (Blair Ogburn, *fide* Don Hendershot), one was at a feeder in Durham 11 Dec (Ryan Bakelaar), one was found (with juncos!) at Whispering Pines during the Southern Pines CBC 16 Dec (Susan Campbell), one was at a feeder in Nags Head 4 Jan (Skip Morgan), and one was at Bakers Mt. Park, Catawba County 6 Jan (John Sutton, *fide* Dwayne Martin).

**PINE SISKIN:** The best counts reported involved 100+ at Balsam Mountain Preserve, Jackson County, NC 5 Dec (Dwayne Martin) and 50+ in a yard near the coast at Merrimon, Carteret County, NC during Feb (*fide* John Fussell)!