

## BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2009, 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.*

<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:** Birds that are part of the wild, breeding population in Florida often wander into southern South Carolina. In Jasper County, seven were seen at the Savannah Spoil Site, 31 Aug (Steve Calver) and 30+ were counted in a water-lily-covered pond off SC-17, 2 Oct (Dennis Forsythe).

**Snow Goose:** Exceptionally early was an individual seen with a flock of Canada Geese around Eagle Springs, NC, 28 Aug (Michael McCloy) and 10 Sept (Jeff Beane, Todd Pusser). Somewhat early were three found at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), NC, 3 Oct (Bob Holmes, Rich Boyd, Wade Fuller).

**Ross's Goose:** Typically, a few of these small, rare geese are found in our region each winter, usually amidst flocks of more common geese. This November, one was photographed with a flock of Canada Geese in Surfside, SC, 3–4 Nov (Phil Turner, Jerry Kerschner, et al.) and two were found amidst a flock of Snow Geese at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Brant:** This species is becoming more regular at Oregon Inlet, NC, where up to ten were seen from 21 Nov (Alan Kneidel) through the end of the period (multiple observers).

**Cackling Goose:** This small, former subspecies of Canada Goose was reported only once this period—an individual amongst a flock of Snow Geese at the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Mute Swan:** Thought by the observers to be of wild origin were the (up to) three birds at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 7 Aug–13 Oct (Steve Calver, Ellie Covington).

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A drake photographed at Pea Island NWR, NC, 19 Sept (Jeff Lewis) was not only early, but also still in basic plumage, a molt not expected in our region. Two drakes were seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis), with at least one continuing through 22 Nov (Alan Kneidel). An individual found on Kerr Lake, NC, 3 Nov, provided the first record of the species for that reservoir (Adam D'Onofrio, *vide* Brian Bockhahn). A drake found on the Bodie Island, NC, Lighthouse Pond during the Wings over Water Festival (WOW) in early Nov, continued into winter (Kent Fiala, multiple observers). A drake, presumably the same bird seen there last winter, returned to Lilliput Pond in New Bern, NC, for the second winter in a row, 19 Nov (Al Gamache).

**Common Eider:** Possibly an indicator of a potential influx of this rare winter visitor into our region was the season's first sighting, that of an ADULT male, seen flying S over the ocean from Pea Island, NC, 6 Nov (Ricky Davis). Other sightings included two juveniles off S Bald Head Island, NC, 6 Nov (Maureen Dewire); five off Nags Head, NC, 14 Nov (Alan Kneidel); up to two females at Oregon Inlet, NC, 14 Nov into winter (Kneidel); two near the jetty at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 26 Nov (Ritch Lilly); and one at Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 28 Nov (Taylor Piephoff).

**White-winged Scoter:** Three seen from Sandling Beach on Falls Lake, NC, during the "Big Sit", 12 Oct (Brian Bockhahn, et al.) provided the only inland report.

**Black Scoter:** A lone female was found at the inland location of Lake Brandt in Greensboro, NC, 17 Nov (Henry Link, George Wheaton).



Common Eider, 28 Nov 2009, Shallotte Inlet in Brunswick County, North Carolina. Photo by Taylor Piephoff.

**Long-tailed Duck:** Inland, a female was seen from Ebenezer Point on Jordan Lake, NC, 29 Nov (Robert Meehan, Steve Shultz, Scott Winton). Interestingly, a female was seen from the same location around the same time last year.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** Four were seen 1 Aug at Huntington Beach SP, SC, where, apparently, they had been present throughout the summer (Stephen Thomas). The 30 seen on Lake Julian in Skyland, NC, 18 Nov (Wayne Forsythe) provided a good count for that mountain location.

**Common Loon:** Apparently summering were individuals on Falls Lake, NC, throughout the period, originally discovered 30 June (Matt Daw, Randy Emmitt, Ali Iyob) and on the S end of Lake Norman, NC, 15 Aug, where, according to a local resident, the bird had been present for 3–4 weeks (Jeff Lemons). The 152 seen on Lake Julian in Skyland, NC, 15 Oct (Wayne Forsythe), provided an unusually high count for the mountain region.

**Eared Grebe:** An individual returned to the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 18 Sept, and four were present 29 Sept into winter (Steve Calver). One returned to the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) in Goldsboro, NC, 19 Sept

(Eric Dean). One was seen on Falls Lake, NC, from the US-50 boat launch, 2 Oct (Brian Bockhahn).

**Cory's Shearwater:** A fantastic count of 400+ was had on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 21 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**White-faced Storm-Petrel:** One was briefly seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, NC, 17 Aug (Brian Patteson).

**White-tailed Tropicbird:** An adult with a full tail streamer was seen at close range during a fishing charter out of Hatteras, NC, 6 Sept (Brian Patteson).

**American White Pelican:** This species, which seems to be increasing in our region, apparently summered at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, where up to eight were seen throughout the period (Ricky Davis, Alan Kneidel). Arriving at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, in mid-July, numbers of this species grew to 174 by 12 Nov (Steve Calver). Eight to ten had arrived at Pea Island NWR, NC, by 23 Oct (Jeff Lewis), with the number growing to 30 by 25 Nov (Linda Ward). A flock of 20 was seen circling over Morehead City, NC, 26 Oct (Ron White, *vide* John Fussell). 40 were seen on Langley Pond in Langley, SC, 6–11 Nov (Gary Dexter, Lois Stacey, Dennis Forsythe, et al.). Nineteen were found on a small island just off Atlantic, NC, 27 Nov (Sean Williams).

**Anhinga:** Unusually far inland were the two seen at Cowan's Ford Wildlife Refuge, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 19–21 Sept (John Scavetto, John Buckman). Somewhat late were individuals at Lake Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 4 Nov (Brian Bockhahn) and on a pond at St Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg, NC, 15 Nov (Mark Gretch).

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** A juvenile was observed soaring 100–150 yards off Edisto Beach, SC, 9 Oct (Jason Giovannone), providing the season's only report of this tropical wanderer.

**American Bittern:** Notable for their inland location were individuals at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, 25 and 27 Sept (John Lindfors); in a wetland in Harnett Co, NC, 21 Oct (Alan Kneidel); and at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Columbia, SC, 14–19 Nov (Shelby Birch, Jeff Catlin, *vide* Paul Serridge).

**Great Egret:** Notable high counts of this common species included 731 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 18 Sept (Steve Calver) and 250 at the N end of Falls Lake, NC, 2 Oct (Brian Bockhahn).

**Little Blue Heron:** Some of the farther inland sightings included three in the Yanceyville Marsh in N Greensboro, NC, 1 Aug (Dennis Burnette); 20 juveniles on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, 22 Aug (Tom Driscoll, et al.); and one juvenile along the Catawba River at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 31 Aug (Dwayne Martin).

**Tricolored Heron:** Ten found on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, 22 Aug (Tom Driscoll, et al.) provided a great count for a location so far inland.

**Reddish Egret:** Post-breeding wanderers included two at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 1 Aug (Stephen Thomas), with one remaining 7 Nov (Ritch Lilly)

(see cover photo); a juvenile at Pea Island NWR, NC, 2–17 Aug (Jeff Lewis, David Abbott); a juvenile on the N end of Portsmouth Island, NC, 18 Aug (Abbott); two juveniles in the E inlet of Sunset Beach, NC, 30 Aug (Ricky Davis); a juvenile at the S end of Litchfield Beach, SC, 31 Aug (Paul Serridge); seven at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 9 Sept (Steve Calver); two on the E end of Shackleford Banks, NC, 20 Sept (John Fussell, et al.); and at least one at the Rachel Carson Preserve, just S of Beaufort, NC, throughout the period (Clyde Adkins, Paula Gillikin, et al., *vide* Fussell).

**White Ibis:** In the mountains, where this species is rare, juveniles were seen at Highlands Falls Country Club in Macon Co, NC, 2–4 Aug (Brock & Patty Hutchins) and in the Jonathan Creek area of Haywood Co, NC, 5–7 Aug (Joanne Strop, Ann Putnam, *vide* Paul Super). The relative dates and locations of these two sightings suggest that both sightings involved the same bird. Also locally unusual were two juveniles photographed at Pee Dee NWR, NC, 29 Aug (Michael McCloy, Cassie Willis).

**Glossy Ibis:** An individual was found on Falls Lake, NC, 18 Aug (Dave Lenat), providing the farthest inland report.

**Roseate Spoonbill:** Continuing from post-breeding dispersal in late summer, unprecedented numbers of this species were found in our region. Present throughout the period at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, and Huntington Beach SP, SC, high counts reached 372 on 9 Sept (Steve Calver) and 11 on 10 Sept (Jerry Kerschner), respectively. Up to four were present around Twin Lakes in Sunset Beach, NC, in September (Greg Massey, Mary McDavit, et al.). Three at Pea Island NWR, NC, 16 Sept (Jay Ross, *vide* Jeff Lewis), with two continuing until 20 Oct (Linda Ward), provided the most northern report for the Carolinas. Farthest inland was an individual at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 11–12 Aug (Monroe Pannell, Dwayne Martin), providing the state's second record of this species outside the coastal plain.



Roseate Spoonbills, 14 Oct 2009, Huntington Beach SP, SC. Photo by Jerry Kerschner.

**Wood Stork:** Sightings of post-breeding wanderers included a first-year bird photographed at a pond in S Person Co, NC, 12 Aug (David Cox, *vide* Harry LeGrand); a kettle of about 40 birds over US-74 near Lumber River SP in Robeson Co, NC, 22 Aug (Ed Corey, David Cooper); 26, including adults and juveniles, in Boykin, SC, 28 Aug (Lex Glover); 36, including adults and juveniles, at Congaree NP, SC, 9 Sept (Lex Glover, Curtis Walker); and two juveniles at Pee Dee NWR, NC, 10 Sept (*vide* Susan Campbell), a first for the refuge. High counts at traditional sites were 105 around Twin Lakes in Sunset Beach, NC, 26 Aug (Mary McDavit); about 200 at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 26–30 Aug (Phil Turner, Paul Serridge, et al.); and 414 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 9 Sept (Steve Calver).

**Northern Harrier:** The summering individual continued on Bodie Island, NC, 2 Aug (Jeff Lewis). Early to arrive were the individuals seen at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 7 Aug (Steve Calver) and at the N end of Falls Lake, NC, 23 Aug (Matt Daw).

**Broad-winged Hawk:** Locally unusual were the two seen at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 21 Aug (Steve Calver).

**“Krider’s” Red-tailed Hawk:** This pale morph was photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 23 Nov (Steve Calver).

**Merlin:** There was a definite migratory movement of this species through the NC mountains in late September, with sightings of two at Carver’s Gap on Roan Mountain, NC, 23 Sept (Rick Knight); one at Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 23 Sept (Wayne Forsythe, Bob Olthoff); a juvenile along the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) in Haywood Co, NC, 24 Sept (Chris Kelly); one in Weaverville, NC, 29 Sept (Steve Semanchuk); and one at the Ridge Junction Overlook along the BRP, 3 Oct (Ricky Davis). Seven at Cape Lookout, NC, 20 Sept (John Fussell, et al.) provided a good one-day count.

**Black Rail:** One was seen at very close range in the impoundments on Bear Island, Charleston Co, SC, 31 Oct (Michael Bernard).

**King Rail:** Locally unusual was one found at Lake Phelps, NC, 24 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Ali Iyoob, et al.).

**Sora:** Six found in flooded fields along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 21 Sept (Wayne Forsythe), provided a good count for the mountain region.

**Purple Gallinule:** Good counts were had at the Savannah NWR, SC, with 16 adults and “as many” chicks, 7 Aug (Cherrie Sneed) and 40, including adults, juveniles, and chicks, 1 Sept (Brenda Brannen, Sandy Beasley).

**Common Moorhen:** Locally unusual was one found at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 16 Aug (Ali Iyoob).

**Sandhill Crane:** One photographed in a cornfield about 15 miles N of Rockingham, NC, 23 Sept (Mitch Binnarr) and four seen flying E-SE over SE Asheville, NC, 29 Nov (Chris Kelly) were the only cranes mentioned this fall.

**Black-bellied Plover:** Inland reports of this species included one on the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 18 Aug (Ali Iyoob, Matt Daw) through 1 Sept (Dave Lenat); one on the mudflats in the New Hope area of Jordan Lake, NC, 8–21 Sept (Alan Kneidel, Doug Shadwick, Mark

Kosiewski); five in the fields along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); one, quite late, at the same location, 11 Nov (Wayne Forsythe); and one, also quite late, at the Super-Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 12 Nov (Jeff Lemons). The 875 seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis) provided an excellent count for that somewhat inland location.

**American Golden-Plover:** Some of the better counts of this fall migrant included nine at the sod farm in Creswell, NC, 6 Sept (Ricky Davis); two at the sod farm in Turbeville, SC, 6 Sept (Lex Glover); 59 (!) in heavily flooded fields along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 21 Sept (Wayne Forsythe); five on the New Hope Creek mudflats at Jordan Lake, NC, 17 Oct (Steve Shultz); and ten at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Davis). Also found were individuals at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 1 Sept (Dave Lenat); at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, 4 Sept (Al Gamache); at the NPS campground in Buxton, NC, 8 Sept (Brian Patteson); at Pea Island NWR, NC, 30 Sept (Jeff Lewis); and at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Oct (Steve Calver, Ellie Covington). Three found on a sandbar just W of Pivers Island, near Beaufort, NC, 7 Aug (Ross McGregor) were somewhat early, while two found on Pelican Island, just W of Oregon Inlet, NC, 7 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Lewis, et al.) were somewhat late.

**Snowy Plover:** An individual in non-breeding plumage was discovered at the S point of Ocracoke Island, NC, 15 Sept (Sidney Maddock, *vide* Jeff Lewis). Interestingly, Maddock found a Snowy Plover at the same location on 17 Sept 2009!

**Semipalmated Plover:** Notable inland reports were of three along Jeffress Rd in Hendersonville, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); 50+ at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 1 Sept (Dave Lenat); and 13 at Jordan Lake, NC, 19 Sept (*vide* Will Cook).

**Piping Plover:** Some of the higher counts of this threatened species were 117 at the N end of Portsmouth Island, NC, 18 Aug (David Abbott); 13 on Bear Island at Hammocks Beach SP, NC, 3 Sept (Al Gamache); 14 on Kiawah Island, SC, 25 Oct (Carl Miller); and 16, including six color-banded birds from the endangered Great Lakes population, on the S end of Topsail Island and N end of Lea/Hutaff Island, Pender Co, NC, 8 Nov (Gilbert Grant).

**Black-necked Stilt:** Seven at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 8 and 16 Aug (Ricky Davis) were unusual for that inland location. The 173 seen at the W end of the Georgetown Impoundments in Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Aug (David Abbott) were a good count.

**American Avocet:** Inland sightings of this species are rare, and thus of interest were the reports of one at the upper end Falls Lake, NC, 13 Aug (Dave Lenat) through 29 Aug (Ricky Davis); one along the Catawba River at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 22 Aug (Monroe Pannell, *vide* Dwayne Martin); and four, photographed, at Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 8 Sept (Phil Dickinson). Coastal region high counts included 123 at

Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis) and 1014 at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Oct (Steve Calver, Ellie Covington).



American Avocets, 8 Sept 2009, Archie Elledge WTP, Winston-Salem, NC. Photo by Phil Dickinson.

**Spotted Sandpiper:** One found near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 3–4 Nov (Matt Daw, Ali Iyoob) was somewhat late for that inland location.

**Willet:** The farthest inland Willet sighting made this fall was of one in the Seaforth area of Jordan Lake, NC, 13 Aug (Ginger Travis).

**Upland Sandpiper:** The best counts of this migrant “grasspiper” were six at the Super-Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 17 Aug (Jeff Lemons); eight at the same location 23 Aug (Michael McCloy, et al.); 13 at the American Turf Co. sod farm in Creswell, NC, 27–29 Aug (John Register, Jeff Lewis); and four at the sod farm in Turbeville, SC, 29 Aug (Lex Glover, David Dobson). Individuals were also found at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 2 and 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) and in a field in Townville, SC, 14 Aug (Jeff O’Connell, Anne Baker).

**Whimbrel:** The only inland reports of this species came from Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, where one was seen 8 Aug (Ricky Davis) and 30 Aug (John Haire) and two were seen 25 Oct (Davis). Along the coast, some of the better concentrations were 12 on Shackleford Banks, NC, 7 Aug (Ross McGregor); 28+ on the mudflats along Folly Rd in Charleston, SC, 9 Aug (Chris Snook); and 16 feeding in rain puddles at the airport in Beaufort, NC, 8 Sept (Rich & Susan Boyd).

**Long-billed Curlew:** One found amongst a flock of Marbled Godwits on the N end of Portsmouth Island, NC, 18 Aug (David Abbott) provided the period’s only report.



**Hudsonian Godwit:** An individual was seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 1 Aug (Jeff Lewis) through 20 Sept (Ricky Davis), and two were at the same location 25 Oct (Davis). Fifteen (!) were seen “feeding in a deep rain pool across from the Hatteras Island KOA” campground in Rodanthe, NC, 8 Sept (Brian Patteson), providing the highest count of this species in several years. Interestingly, none were reported from Pea Island NWR, NC, this fall.

**Marbled Godwit:** The only inland sightings of this species were made at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, where three were seen 8 Aug and 20 Sept (Ricky Davis), and 21 were present by 25 Oct (Davis).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** Inland sightings were made of a breeding-plumaged male at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 12 Aug (Brian Bockhahn) through 22 Aug (Ali Iyoob); an individual on the upper end flats of Roanoke Rapids Lake, NC, 17 Oct (Ricky Davis); and three at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Davis).

**Red Knot:** This sandpiper is very rarely found away from the immediate coast, and thus of interest were sightings of one at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, 13 Aug (Bob Holmes); “three to four” at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 30 Aug (Audrey Whitlock, John Haire); eight at the same location, 20 Sept (Ricky Davis); and 15 there on 25 Oct (Davis).

**Sanderling:** Inland sightings included two at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 25 Aug (Dave Lenat) through 13 Sept (Gordon Brown, Steve Dinsmore); one at the Super-Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 30 Aug (Paul Serridge); one along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe); and nine on the New Hope Creek mudflats at Jordan Lake, NC, 12 Sept (Bruce Young, et al.).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Some of the better counts of this uncommon peep were nine at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 25 Aug (Dave Lenat); two in the fields along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (John Lindfors); two at Jordan Lake, NC, 18 Sept (Lenat); and 17 at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis).

**Baird’s Sandpiper:** In the Carolinas, this rare migrant sandpiper is almost exclusively found only during fall migration. This year’s reports were of three, “well-seen...at rest and in flight”, at Pea Island NWR, NC, 17 Aug (David Abbott); up to four at the Super-Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 30 Aug (Paul Serridge, John Buckman, et al.); one at the Tar River Reservoir, Nash Co, NC, 5 Sept (Ricky Davis); one at Falls Lake, NC, 13 Sept (Gordon Brown, Steve Dinsmore); two at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 20 Sept (Ricky



Sanderling, 31 Aug 2009, Henderson Co, NC. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

Davis); and three along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 1 Sept (Wayne Forsythe).

**Sharp-tailed Sandpiper:** A report of a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at a sod farm in Craven Co, NC, 31 Aug (Bob Holmes), has been submitted to the NC Bird Records Committee. If accepted, this sighting will provide the first documented sighting of this species for North Carolina.

**Dunlin:** Inland reports included three in the fields off Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 14–15 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) with one remaining 11 Nov; six on the New Hope Creek mudflats at Jordan Lake, NC, 14 Oct (Jacob Socolar); and 19 on the mudflats at Lake Townsend, NC, 28 Oct (Henry & Elizabeth Link). An extraordinary count of 3800 was made at Mattamuskeet, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis).

**Curlew Sandpiper:** An adult female was found on the beach on the E side of Portsmouth Island, NC, 18 Aug (David Abbott) providing the first report of this rare Eurasian stray in over two years.

**Stilt Sandpiper:** Impressive numbers were had at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, where 420 were seen 8 Aug and 340 were seen 25 Oct (Ricky Davis); on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, where 75+ were seen 13 Sept (Steve Shultz); and at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, where 200 were counted 23 Nov (Steve Calver).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** The best counts of this grass/mud-piper were 14 at the American Turf Co. sod farm in Creswell, NC, 12 Sept (Allen Bryan); two at the sod farm in Turbeville, SC, 29 Aug (Lex Glover, David Dobson); five along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 31 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); three at the upper end of Falls Lake, NC, 6 Sept (Mark Kosiewski); and four on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, 12–14 Sept (Bruce Young, Mark Kosiewski, et al.). Individuals were also found at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 8 and 16 Aug (Ricky Davis) and again 27 Aug (Ali Iyoob, Dave Lenat); at a sod farm in New Bern, NC, 31 Aug–1 Sept (Bob Holmes, Al Gamache); on S Topsail Beach, NC, 9 Sept (Angela Mangiameli); at the Super-Sod farm in Orangeburg, SC, 13 Sept (Paul Serridge); near Ashley High School in Wilmington, NC, 24 Sept (John Ennis); and in Sunset Beach, NC, 2 Oct (Ennis).

**Ruff:** This rare Eurasian stray was reported twice in the Carolinas this fall. A sub-adult was photographed at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 27 Aug (Ali Iyoob, Dave Lenat) and remained for only a day, as it was last seen 28 Aug (Al Gamache). One in non-breeding plumage was found on the Morgan Creek



Baird's Sandpiper, 1 Sept 2009, Henderson Co, NC. Photo by Wayne Forsythe.

mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co Fall Bird Count (FBC), 19 Sept (Doug Shadwick, Scott Winton, *fide* Will Cook), but was not subsequently relocated.



Buff-breasted Sandpiper, 2 Oct 2009, Sunset Beach, NC. Photo by John Ennis.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** This rare but regular fall migrant was found at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 8 Aug and 20 Sept (Ricky Davis); on the New Hope Creek mudflats of Jordan Lake, NC, during the Chatham Co FBC, 19 Sept (Doug Shadwick, *fide* Will Cook); and at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, where two were seen 7 Aug, an amazing count of 12 (!) was made 31 Aug, and one was seen 30 Oct (Steve Calver).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** Rarely found inland, a Red-necked Phalarope was photographed at the Archie Elledge WTP in Winston-Salem, NC, 24 Aug (John Haire, Carol Cunningham).

**Black-headed Gull:** Three of these rare Eurasian vagrants were found in the Carolinas this fall—one in Sanderling, NC, 29 Oct (Ben Watkins, *fide* Jeff Lewis); one photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 12 Nov (Steve Calver, Ellie Covington); and an adult near the causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Laughing Gull:** Locally unusual was a flock of five birds on Falls Lake, NC, 12 Oct (Brian Bockhahn); at the same location 29 Oct (Ricky Davis); and on Lake Crabtree in Morrisville, NC, 18 Nov (Steve Shultz). One could assume that the same five birds accounted for all three sightings.

**Franklin's Gull:** An adult found at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, at the S end of the causeway, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis) was the fall's only report of this gull from the Great Plains.

**Herring Gull:** Four were "forced down in bad weather" to the WTP in Henderson Co, NC, 18 Nov (Wayne Forsythe, Vin Stanton), providing a rare mountain report of this species.



Red-necked Phalarope, 24 Aug 2009, Archie Elledge WTP, Winston-Salem, NC. Photo by John Haire.

**Gull-billed Tern:** A large congregation of 102 birds, including a disturbingly low ratio of juveniles, only four, was noted at Davis Impoundment in Carteret Co, NC, 9 Aug (John Fussell, et al.).

**Caspian Tern:** Some of the more notable counts of this species included 145 at the W end of the Georgetown Impoundments in Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Aug (David Abbott); 212 at the Savannah Spoil Site in Jasper Co, SC, 18 Sept (Steve Calver); and 275 at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 25 Oct (Ricky Davis).

**Black Tern:** Noteworthy were the inland counts of 12 at Lake Julian in Skyland, NC, 19 Aug (Simon Thompson, Tom Joyce); 44 near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 23 Aug (Matt Daw); and 15 at the N end of Jordan Lake, NC, 8 Sept (Alan Kneidel). Coastal high counts included 510 flying S over the surf in Kitty Hawk, NC, 19 Aug (David Abbott) and 70+ over the ocean off Fort Macon in Atlantic Beach, NC, 22 Aug (Dave Lenat).

**Roseate Tern:** Two adults were “well-studied” as they flew S over the surf in Kitty Hawk, NC, 16 Aug (David Abbott), providing the fall’s only report.

**Common Tern:** One was seen perched on a buoy on Lake Julian in Skyland, NC, 15 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey), providing a rare mountain report of this species.

**Black Skimmer:** One seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, NC, 8 Aug (Ricky Davis) was the farthest inland skimmer reported this fall.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** Two were reported this fall—a juvenile off Wrightsville Beach, NC, 30 Oct (Dean Edwards) and an adult flying S off Pea Island, NC, 5 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**White-winged Dove:** This stray from the southwestern US was seen perched on a telephone wire near the British Cemetery in Ocracoke, NC, 18 Aug (David Abbott) and visiting a feeder in Goldsboro, NC, 9–13 Nov (Mark Simpson, Eric Dean).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** Individuals were found at Crabtree Meadows, NC, off the BRP, 8 Aug (Taylor Piephoff); in a yard in Watauga Co, NC, 9 Aug (Merrill Lynch); at Bethabara Park in Winston-Salem, NC, 2 Sept (Phil Dickinson); along the BRP at Hefner Gap, NC, 8 Sept (William Haddad, et al.); at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, 14–19 Sept (Wayne Forsythe, Jon Smith); in a yard in Weaverville, NC, 23–25 Sept (Steve Semanchuk); at 17 Acre Woods in Durham, NC, 1 Oct (Robert Meehan); along the BRP at the Ridge Junction Overlook, NC, 3 Oct (Ricky Davis); and at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 3 Oct (John Buckman, Ron Clark, et al.).

**Short-eared Owl:** One was well observed hunting over a field at dusk on Hooper Bald in Graham Co, NC, 1 Nov (Tom Howe, *vide* Dean Edwards). Sightings of this species in the NC mountains are quite rare.

**Chuck-will’s-widow:** One photographed while roosting in a tree at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, 1 Sept (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) was unusual for the mountain location.

**Chimney Swift:** Two were seen in Rocky Mount, NC, on the very late date of 15 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Black-chinned Hummingbird:** A juvenile male visited a feeder on James Island, SC, 31 Oct through the end of the period, where it was also banded (John Weinstein).

**Calliope Hummingbird:** An adult male visited a feeder in Seven Lakes, NC, 17–21 Nov (Dick & Lois Dole, *vide* Susan Campbell) and was photographed.

**Rufous Hummingbird:** The fall’s reports were of a male in Carolina Shores, NC, 2 Aug, returning for the sixth season in a row (Jo O’Keefe, *vide* Susan Campbell); a female at a feeder in North Wilkesboro, NC, 31 Aug (Ary Bottoms); one at a feeder in Myrtle Beach, SC, 6 Sept (Phil Turner); a female near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 8 Sept (Matt Daw, Ali Iyob); and a first-year male in Southern Pines, NC, 16 Nov (Wayne & Fran Irvin).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** This rare migrant was seen hawking insects from an exposed perch along the BRP, just N of Crabtree Meadows, NC, 8 Aug

(Jon Smith); heard in a yard in Zebulon, NC, 10 Aug (Harry Wilson); and seen in a yard in Black Mountain, NC, 17 Sept (Stu Gibeau).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** Reports of this rare transient *Empidonax* included one captured in a mist-net and banded at Weymouth Woods in Southern Pines, NC, 9 Sept, providing a second record of this species for the park (Susan Campbell, Michael McCloy); two seen at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, 12 Sept (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, Peggy Franklin); one well-studied along the Bethabara Greenway in Winston-Salem, NC, 14 Sept (John Haire); one seen and heard calling at Riverbend Park in Conover, NC, 21 Sept (Dwayne Martin), providing the first park record; one seen and heard at Ribbonwalk Nature Preserve in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 21 Sept (Tom Sanders); and one seen and heard calling at Hickory Top Waterfowl Management Area in Clarendon Co, SC, 26 Sept (Lex Glover, David Dobson).

**Alder Flycatcher:** One was captured in a mist-net, banded, and identified in-hand, at the Light House Creek Heritage Preserve in Charleston Co, SC, in mid-Sept (Chris Snook). If accepted by the Bird Records Committee, this will provide the state with its first and long overdue record of this species.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** One was found at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 1 Nov (Jack Fennell, John Fussell).

**Western Kingbird:** A few of these birds are found along the coast each fall. This year, one was seen near the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in Buxton, NC, where it was photographed 30 Sept (*fide* Nathan Swick); one at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, where it was photographed 13 Oct (Steve Calver, Ellie Covington); and one at Fort Raleigh in Manteo, NC, during a WOW field trip, 6–7 Nov (Jeff Lewis), also photographed.



**Loggerhead Shrike:** Locally unusual was an individual seen along a busy roadway in Brevard, NC, 15 Sept (Tom Joyce).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** In the Carolinas, this uncommon migrant is much more often found in fall than in spring. This year, individuals were found in Buxton Woods, Buxton, NC, 12 Sept (Ricky Davis); near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 21–29 Sept and 8 Oct (Matt Daw, Ali Iyoob); at the Big Bald banding station in Yancey Co, NC, 25 Sept (Chris Kelly); at Jackson Park in Hendersonville, NC, 27 Sept (John Lindfors); at Bethabara Park in Winston-Salem, NC, 30 Sept (Ron Morris); at Latta Park in Charlotte, NC, 1 Oct (Tom Sanders, et al.); at Owen Park in Swannanoa, NC, 3 Oct (Ricky

Western Kingbird, 6 Nov 2009, Fort Raleigh, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Davis); along the BRP, N of Craggy Gardens, NC, 4 Oct (Ricky Davis); and at Jackson Park, 10 Oct (Ernie Hollingsworth).

**Fish Crow:** Continuing their expansion into the western parts of our region, three Fish Crows were seen and heard calling near the airport in Asheville, NC, 13 Sept (Wayne Forsythe).

**Common Raven:** Sightings of ravens away from the mountains included one just N of Greensboro, NC, 20 Sept (Dennis Burnette); one at Penny's Bend Preserve, NE of Durham, NC, 25 Sept (Harry LeGrand); two in Winston-Salem, NC, 30 Sept (Ron Morris); two just N of Sanford, NC, 6 Oct (Parker Backstrom); one in downtown Raleigh, NC, 20 Oct (John Connors); and one near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 19–20 Nov (Ali Iyob, Matt Daw).

**Horned Lark:** A peak count of 100 was made at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 16 Aug (John Fussell, et al.), but, as typical, only a handful remained in Sept.

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** Two were seen over East Lake in Sunset Beach, NC, on the very late date of 28 Nov (Taylor Piephoff).

**Cave Swallow:** Reports of this rare vagrant, which is most often found in late fall, seemed to be down this year. Thirteen, the season's high count, were seen foraging over the small pond next to the ferry terminal in Cedar Island, NC, 27 Nov (Sean Williams). At least one was seen over East Lake in Sunset Beach, NC, 28 Nov (Taylor Piephoff). An individual was found amongst a Tree Swallow flock over a catfish farm in Roper, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis).

**Barn Swallow:** Late to depart our region were four over the lighthouse pond on Bodie Island, NC, 14 Nov (Alan Kneidel); one over a catfish farm in Roper, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis); and several over the pond next to the ferry terminal at Cedar Island, NC, 29 Nov (Harry Sell).

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** One was seen at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville, SC, 16 Nov through the end of the period (Shelby Birch, Donnie Coody, *vide* Paul Serridge). Gnatcatchers don't often over-winter at a site so far from the coast.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Migrants found away from the mountains included a female, seen briefly, at Reynolda Gardens in Winston-Salem, NC, 1 Sept (Phil Dickinson); an adult male near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 21–25 Sept (Matt Daw, Ali Iyob); one in the Bates Fork tract of Congaree NP, SC, 4 Oct (Gary Sowell, John Grego); and one in the primitive camping area of Huntington Beach SP, SC, 6 Oct (Ritch Lilly).

**Nashville Warbler:** Migrants found away from the mountains included one at Sandling Beach on Falls Lake, NC, 16 Sept (Brian Bockhahn); one at Pea Island NWR, NC, 13 Sept, and two there 29 Sept (Jeff Lewis, et al.); one at Duke Forest in Durham, NC, 26 Sept (Nathan Swick); one at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 30 Sept and 11 Oct (John Fussell, et al.); one at Fort Macon in Atlantic Beach, NC, 1 Oct (Fussell); and one near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 7 Oct (Ali Iyob). Five seen at Jackson Park in

Hendersonville, NC, 30 Sept (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey) provided a great one-day count of this species for our region.

**Northern Parula:** Noteworthy for sheer volume was the half-day count of about 200 made around Mattamuskeet, NC, 20 Sept (Ricky Davis).

**Cerulean Warbler:** Rarely found outside the mountains, a first-fall Cerulean was seen at Reynolda Gardens in Winston-Salem, NC, 25 Aug (John Haire).

**Northern Waterthrush:** One found on the W side of Lake Phelps, NC, 24 Nov (Brian Bockhahn) was either a late migrant or possibly an over-wintering bird.

**Connecticut Warbler:** Only one was reported this fall—an individual well-seen at Buxton Woods, Buxton, NC, 6 Oct (Henry & Elizabeth Link).

**Mourning Warbler:** A female was found at Reynolda Gardens in Winston-Salem, NC, 27 Aug (Phil Dickinson). As is often the case with this species, subsequent attempts to locate this bird were unsuccessful.

**Wilson's Warbler:** Noteworthy sightings included a male near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 5 Sept (Ali Iyoob); one in the Roanoke Gardens in Manteo, NC, 29 Sept (Jeff Lewis); a female near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 7–12 Oct (Matt Daw, Ali Iyoob); and one at Huntington Beach SP, SC, 17 Oct (Ron Clark, et al.).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** Individuals found near the dam on Falls Lake, NC, 3 Nov (Matt Daw) and along Leggett Rd, just E of Rocky Mount, NC, 15 Nov (Ricky Davis) were somewhat late.

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** A small number of these transients from the Great Plains visit our region each fall and winter. This fall, individuals were found at the NPS campground in Frisco, NC, 4 Oct (Brian Patteson); in Hatteras, NC, 6 and 8 Oct (Patteson); at the Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper Co, SC, 17 Oct (Steve Calver); in a private field in New Bern, NC, 17 Oct (Al Gamache); and one at Fort Fisher, NC, where it was photographed, 3 Nov (Amy Williamson).

**Vesper Sparrow:** Six found at Dinkins Bottoms in E Yadkin Co, NC, 9 Nov (John Haire) provided a good count of this declining species. Two were seen at Sutton Lake in Wilmington, NC, where this species has now been seen for four winters in a row, 17 Nov (John Ennis).

**Lark Sparrow:** Individuals were found at the NPS campground in Buxton, NC, 9 Sept (Jeff Lewis); at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 30 Sept (John Fussell); and in Williamston, NC, 28 Nov (Ed Corey)

**Savannah Sparrow:** Unusual for the mountain location was one found along the BRP at the Ridge Junction Overlook, NC, 3 Oct (Ricky Davis).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** One found at the Beaverdam Lake spillway on Falls Lake, NC, 31 Oct (Brian Bockhahn) was a great find, especially for a site outside the coastal plain.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Sightings of this sparrow, which is rare in our region, were of one at Carver's Gap on Roan Mountain, NC, 23 Sept (Rick Knight); three in the Camp Creek marshy area in Burke Co, NC, 4 Oct (Ricky Davis); one along the BRP near Moses Cone Park, NC, 4 Oct (Davis); one at North



River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 25 Oct (John Fussell, et al.); one along Gaston Dam Rd in Halifax Co, NC, 17 Oct (Davis); and one on the W side of Lake Phelps, NC, 25 Nov (Brian Bockhahn, Matt Daw, et al.).

**Lapland Longspur:** Ricky Davis found the only longspurs this fall—one at the N end of Pea Island, NC, 7 Nov; and two amidst a large flock of Horned Larks in a field along Shields Rd in NE Halifax Co, NC, 15 Nov.

**Summer Tanager:** An individual found at Fort Raleigh in Manteo, NC, during a WOW field trip, 7–8 Nov (Jeff Lewis, et al.) was quite late.

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** Somewhat late were individuals seen at feeders in Manteo, NC, 2–5 Nov (Jeff Lewis); in Beaufort, SC, 8 Nov (Buddy Campbell); and in Winston-Salem, NC, 23 Nov (Jeremy Reiskind, *fide* Phil Dickinson). A great count of 86 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks was made at Carver’s Gap on Roan Mountain, NC, 23 Sept (Rick Knight).

**Indigo Bunting:** An individual found at the N end of Pea Island, NC, 5 Nov (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late.

**Painted Bunting:** Lingered “green birds” were found in a yard in Southern Shores, NC, 1 Nov (*fide* Jeff Lewis) and at Alligator River NWR, NC, 4 Nov (Derb Carter, Ricky Davis). Both these sites are north of the species’ typical range.

**Dickcissel:** At least ten birds continued from the summer at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, through August (John Fussell, et al.).

**Bobolink:** A huge flock of 3000 Bobolinks was seen at North River Farms in Carteret Co, NC, 6 Sept (Ross McGregor, et al.).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** An adult male photographed at a feeder in Morehead City, NC, 8 Sept (Jeff Mayo, *fide* John Fussell) was the state’s only fall report.

**Brewer’s Blackbird:** A flock of an unspecified number was found at the same location where this species was found last winter, in a cow pasture in Townville, SC, 25 Nov (Linda Kolb).

**Purple Finch:** Somewhat early were females/juveniles in Vulture, NC, 17 Oct (Ricky Davis); in Black Mountain, NC, 21 Oct (Stu Gibeau); in New Bern, NC, 21 Oct (Inge Parker); and in Winston-Salem, NC, 22 Oct (Phil Dickinson).

**Red Crossbill:** This species apparently bred on Bald Ridge Knob, near Mt Mitchell SP, NC, where pairs were observed throughout the period and a high count of 25–30, including adults and fledglings, was made 30 Aug (Marilyn Westphal, et al.).