

# BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

---

Josh Southern  
203 Hyannis Drive  
Holly Springs, NC 27540  
joshsouthern79@gmail.com

(All dates Spring 2016, unless otherwise noted)

---

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

<i>Winter</i>	<i>December 1 - February 28</i>	<i>due March 20</i>
<i>Spring</i>	<i>March 1 - May 31</i>	<i>due June 20</i>
<i>Summer</i>	<i>June 1 - July 31</i>	<i>due August 20</i>
<i>Fall</i>	<i>August 1 - November 30</i>	<i>due December 20</i>

*Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.*

*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.*

*Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.*

Abbreviations: **BBS** – Breeding Bird Survey, **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **TS** – Tropical Storm, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** Two photographed in Clarks Hill, McCormick Co, SC, 21 May (Nathan Hollinger) were unusual for a site so far from the coast. One seen and photographed in Boiling Spring Lakes, Brunswick Co, NC, in early May (Brad Powers) was the only sighting from NC during the spring.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** Quite late to depart were individuals seen and photographed amongst Canada Geese along Brighton Park Blvd in Berkeley Co, SC, 1 May (Tom Austin) through 16 May (Matthew Campbell) and on Lake Marion in the southeastern corner of Calhoun Co, SC, 24 May (Donna & Harold Donnelly, et al.).

**Ross's Goose:** Spring sightings included two on Deer Lake in Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 2 Mar (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); one on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 1 Apr (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, et al.); and one in Bent Creek, Buncombe Co, NC, 2 Apr (Denise Hargrove).

**Tundra Swan:** Lingering in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, were two on 7 May (Mike McCloy) and one until 24 May (Nate Swick).

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A drake found in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late to depart.

**Northern Pintail:** Individual drakes lingered at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 14 May (Pam Ford, Andy Harrison, Craig Watson) and in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 May (Mike McCloy, Mike Stewart).

**Green-winged Teal:** Late to depart were two on the barrier strand next to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 15 May (John Fussell, et al.); one at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 28 May (David Youngblood); and four in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 May (Mike McCloy, Mike Stewart).

**Greater Scaup:** A drake in the Mulberry Fields along the Yadkin River Greenway, Wilkes Co, NC, 24 May (Guy McGrane) and 25 May (Issac Kerns) was both late and locally unusual.

**Common Eider:** After the first-winter drake around Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, was last seen 12 Mar (Andy Harrison), one, probably the same individual, was photographed from the Cherry Grove Pier, Horry Co, SC, 16 Mar (Lou Carpenter). Another first-winter drake, or possibly the same individual, around Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 21 May (Steve Howell) through 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie) was rather late.

**Surf Scoter:** At inland sites, sightings were made of two, a drake and a hen on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 15 Mar (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m. obs.) and three, two drakes and one hen, on Mayo Reservoir, Person Co, NC, 23 Apr (David Pennebaker).

**White-winged Scoter:** A hen amongst Black Scoters off Kiawah Island,

Charleston Co, SC, 26 May (Juliana Smith) was rather late.

**Hooded Merganser:** Breeding was confirmed at four sites in central NC— at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, when a hen and 11 juveniles were seen 10-17 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Jacob Farmer, m. obs.); in the Little Creek Waterfowl Impoundment, Durham Co, when a hen and seven juveniles were seen 7 May (Edward Landi); at Lake Betz, Wake Co, when three juveniles were seen 12 May (Eddie Owens); and at Sandy Creek Park, Durham Co, when nine ducks including juveniles were seen 14 May (Kent Fiala).

**Common Merganser:** Spring sightings included two drakes on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 5-7 Mar (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m. obs.); a hen photographed amongst Red-breasted Mergansers on Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Mar (Chris Davies, Pam Ford) and 19 Mar (Wendy Allen); two, a drake and a hen, photographed on the Dan River in Stokes Co, NC, 9 Mar (Ed Corey); two, a drake and a hen, on Lake Lure, Rutherford Co, NC, 2 Apr (Ryan Lubbers); a drake on the French Broad River in Buncombe Co, NC, 4 Apr (Kevin Burke); a hen photographed in the Green River Game Land, Polk Co, NC, 15 Apr (Aaron Steed, et al.); and two, a drake and a hen, on the Tuckasegee River near Dillsboro, Jackson Co, NC, 24 Apr (Paul Carroll). The latter two sightings likely involved ducks attempting to breed in those areas.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** 28 on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 12 Apr (Wayne Forsythe) was a notable count for the mountain region during the spring.

**Ruddy Duck:** Two, a drake and a hen, photographed at James Island County Park, Charleston Co, NC, 30 May (Carl & Cathy Miller) were rather late.

**Red-throated Loon:** Two of the higher concentrations of northbound migrants were 1250 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 20 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) and 500 off Jeannette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, in the span of 15 minutes, 22 Mar (Sam Cooper).

**Horned Grebe:** Late to depart were individuals at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 May (Sam Cooper) and at the WTP in Hemingway, Williamsburg Co, SC, 30 May (Jay Chandler).

**Red-necked Grebe:** Individuals were seen off Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 5 Mar (Marty Wall) and off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 13-14 Mar (Keith Rutter). A report of four at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Mar (Anne-Marie & Bob Taylor) would provide a new record high count for SC if accurate.

**Eared Grebe:** One was found at the WTP in Jacksonville, Onslow Co, NC, during the Onslow Co Spring Bird Count, 30 Apr (Barbara Gould, Guy McGrane, Andy Webb).

**Western Grebe:** One was seen in a cove near the Reeds Creek arm of Lake Norman in Iredell Co, NC, 10 Apr (Taylor Piephoff) through 30 Apr (Ian



Western Grebe, 10 Apr 2016, Lake Norman, Iredell Co, NC. Photo by Lee Weber.

Ruppenthal). This sighting was the first for that county, though not for Lake Norman, and fifth for the NC Piedmont.

**Trindade Petrel:** It was a good spring for this species, with seven individuals seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June—two, one dark-morph and one intermediate-morph, 20 May; two dark-morph, 22 May; two, one dark-morph and one light-morph, 30 May; and one light-morph, 5 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Fea's Petrel:** It was also a good spring for Fea's Petrels, with six found on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June—one on 23 May; one on 29 May; one on 30 May; one on 31 May; and two on 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Cory's Shearwater:** The passage of TS Bonnie off the NC coast in late May produced easterly winds that pushed Cory's Shearwaters closer to shore than typical. A couple of the higher from-shore counts during this period included 37 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, 30 May (Marty Wall) and 33 off Cape Point, Dare Co, 30 May (Lucas Bobay).

**Sooty Shearwater:** A few of the higher from-shore counts were 44 off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 May (Lucas Bobay); 12 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 29 May (Marty Wall, et al.); and 25 off Cape Point, 29 May (Bobay, Paul Taillie).

**Wilson's Storm-Petrel:** The passage of TS Bonnie off the NC coast in late May resulted in several from-shore sightings—three off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, 29-31 May (John Fussell, Marty Wall, et al.); three off Cape Point, Dare Co, 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie); and eight off Cape Point, 30 May (Bobay).



Brown Booby, 31 May 2016, Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC. Photo by Lori Owenby.

**European Storm-Petrel:** This very rare vagrant was seen and photographed on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 10 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.). Patteson noted that this European Storm-Petrel sighting “was the best we ever had” with the bird “very close to the boat for long periods . . . at least four hours!”

**White-tailed Tropicbird:** An adult was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 31 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Red-billed Tropicbird:** After an adult was first reported around the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 Mar (Steven Freed), another adult, probably the same individual, was seen at that site 18 Apr (Katie Walker) and over nearby Sandy Bay in Hatteras, when photographed, 25 Apr (Dan Berard, m. obs.) and 26 Apr (Andrew Thornton). This species has been seen around the Salt Pond at Cape Point in years past, in 2009, 2011, and 2013, always between March and June. On pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, an adult was seen 24 May and an immature was seen 3 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Wood Stork:** One in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 28 May (Brian Barchus, et al.) was farther inland than is typical for the species during the spring.

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** Individuals were seen off Pawleys Island,



Georgetown Co, SC, 11 May (Clyde Kessler); over James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 May (Jennifer Koches, Dennis Forsythe); and over the Broad River in Beaufort Co, SC, 19 May (Buddy Campbell).

**Masked Booby:** One was seen and photographed on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). It had been four years since the last time this species was found during a spring pelagic trip.

**Brown Booby:** An adult female seen and photographed at Lookout Shoals Lake, border of Catawba Co and Iredell Co, NC, 28 May (Nicholas Ottone) remained at that site into summer, where it was seen by many birders. Already accepted by the NC BRC, this sighting provided NC with its first inland record of this oceanic species.

**Great Cormorant:** Five lingered at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, until the late date of 29 May (Sam Cooper). Individuals were also noted off Federal Point at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Mar (Andrew Thornton); on the remnant pilings of the Ocean City Pier in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 20 Apr (Gilbert Grant); and in Alligator Bay, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Apr (Grant).

**Anhinga:** 250 around active nests at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, 23 May (Mac Williams) was an impressive concentration.

**American White Pelican:** One seen and photographed on Lake James in McDowell Co, NC, 8 May (Ryan McLaughlin) through 28 May (Gordon Warburton) was a good find for a site in the NC foothills. 110 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 26 May (Cherrie Sneed) was an impressive count.

**American Bittern:** 11 in the PotashCorp Wetland Mitigation Site in southern Beaufort Co, NC, 6 Apr (Sam Cooper) was a nice concentration.

**Least Bittern:** Four heard calling in the marsh at the northeast end of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Ed Corey, Sam Jolly) were great finds for a site outside of the coastal plain. Six were also heard calling in the same area the following day, 24 Apr (Corey, Neil Skoog).

**Little Egret:** Already accepted by the NC BRC was the state’s first record of Little Egret. This vagrant from Eurasia was seen and photographed in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) through 9 May (Brad Wood).

**Little Blue Heron:** Nesting was confirmed at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, when multiple nests with eggs were seen, 23 May (Mac Williams).

**Cattle Egret:** 600 around 100 active nests at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, 23 May (Mac Williams) was an incredible count.

**Reddish Egret:** Individuals were found on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Mar (Jack Colcolough); on Capers Island, Charleston Co, SC, 7 May (Elizabeth Anderegg); on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston



Little Egret, 06 May 2016, Lake Mattamuskeet, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

Co, SC, 10 May (David Gardner, et al.); and on a spoil island off Ocracoke, Hyde Co, NC, where photographed, 27 May (Matt Spangler).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** A pair of adults seen tending to a nest near Cramerton, Gaston Co, NC, 2 May (Steve Tracy) were a first for that county.

**Glossy Ibis:** Thirty photographed in flight over Mountain Island Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 2 Apr (Barry Rowan) were noteworthy for a site so far from the coast. 385 at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis) was a fantastic count for any site. 70 at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 1 May (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count for that site.

**White-faced Ibis:** After two were found amongst Glossy Ibises in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis), one continued at that site from 30 Apr (Jim Gould, Jeff Lewis, m. obs.) through 14 May (Audrey Whitlock). This species has become almost annual at Mattamuskeet NWR during the spring in the past five years.

**Roseate Spoonbill:** A few of the higher counts along the SC coast were seven at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, 8 May (Carroll Richard); 12 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 14 May (Nicole Cerullo, Nashville Farrell) and 28 May (David Youngblood); and nine at Pleasant Point Plantation, Beaufort Co, 23 May (Buddy Campbell).

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** Two seen along the Supply BBS route in the Green Swamp near Makatoka, Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) were



Clapper Rail, 21 Apr 2016, Wake Co, NC. Photo by David Howell.

suggestive of breeding in that area. Davis notes that this sighting was his first in almost 40 years of running a BBS route in the Green Swamp area! Over-shooting the species' breeding range were individual migrants over Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, 10 Apr (Katie Walker) and 19 May (Larry Mays); just west of Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Apr (Ed Dombrowski); over Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Apr (Josh Summers); along US-264 just east of Lake Landing, Hyde Co, NC, 11 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie); and in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 11 May (Michael Gosselin).

**Mississippi Kite:** Individuals over Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 20 Apr (Mike Judd, et al.) and near Weaverville, Buncombe Co, NC, 8 May, a juvenile, photographed (Steve Semanchuk) were unusual for the mountain region in spring. 20+ along Blue Banks Rd in Brunswick Co, NC, 28 May (David Weesner) was a noteworthy concentration.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** One seen in Pisgah NF in Henderson Co, NC, 24 Mar (Marilyn Westphal) was somewhat early.

**Swainson's Hawk:** The immature individual seen at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, in late December and early January was seen again at that site 12 Mar (Jeff Lewis) through 17 Mar (Brad Wood).

**Black Rail:** Individuals were heard calling at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 16 Apr (Pam Ford, et al.) through 17 May (Irvin Pitts); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 23 Apr (Bruce Young) and 9 May (Sherry Lane, Greg Massey, et al.); along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 15 May



(John Fussell, Steve Howell); and at Pains Creek in Dare Co, NC, 17 May (Lucas Bobay).

**Clapper Rail:** One that survived a window collision in downtown Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 21 Apr (David Howell) was unusual for a site so far from the coast.

**King Rail:** Individuals in the northeastern arm of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) and in the Cub Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7 May (Ginger Travis, et al.) were good finds for sites in the Piedmont region.

**Virginia Rail:** After one was found in the marsh at The Park at Flat Rock, Henderson Co, NC, 24 Mar (Steve Semanchuk), two were seen or heard there 31 Mar (Bill Rhodes) through 16 Apr (Jay Wherley), with at least one remaining through 10 May (m. obs.). Considering how long these birds lingered at this site, is it possible they were attempting to breed there? One at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 16 Apr (Tom Austin, et al.) through 23 Apr (Kevin Kubach) was a good find.

**Sora:** Nine in the northeastern arm of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) was an impressive count for the Piedmont region, while 45 at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.) was an impressive count for any site.

**Common Gallinule:** Individuals at a small pond in southern Durham Co, NC, 7 May (Bob Chase); at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 21-23 May (David Disher, m. obs.); and Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 23 May (Michael Robertson) were great finds for the Piedmont region. Nesting was confirmed at the "Old Gravel Quarry" (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, when seven juveniles were seen with adults, 23 May (Mac Williams).

**Sandhill Crane:** 13 continued from February in a field along NC-481 west of Enfield, Halifax Co, 6 Mar (Ricky Davis). Other spring sightings included one at Beaverdam Creek WMA, Anderson Co, SC, 3 Apr (Gerald Vander Mey); two in flight over Fripp Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Apr (Jessica Miller, et al.); three on Rat Island, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Apr (Chris Snook); one in Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 Apr (Michael Gosselin) and in nearby Nags Head later that day (Fred Rimmel); one in northeastern New Hanover Co, NC, 5 May (Bruce Jones); two in flight over Wilson Co, NC, 9 May (Steve Howell); and two flying north over multiple sites along the Outer Banks, Dare Co, NC, 24 May (William Benish, Linda Ward, Ed Corey, m. obs.).

**Black-necked Stilt:** One at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 14 Mar (Mark Vukovich) was a little early.

**American Avocet:** 508 counted during a shorebird survey on South Island at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was a remarkable count.

**American Golden-Plover:** Individuals were seen at the Super Sod farm



Common Gallinule, 21 May 2016, Forsyth Co, NC. Photo by David Disher.

along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 13-15 (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.); at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 10 Apr (Matt Johnson); at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 19 Mar (Jamie Dozier) and 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.); at Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Mar (Susan Campbell, Jeff Phippen); at Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 7 May (Sam Cooper); on Morris Island, Charleston Co, SC, 8 May (Rogers); at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell) and 12 May (Steve Howell); on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 May (Chris Snook); at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 15 May (Phippen); and at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 May (Cooper).

**Semipalmated Plover:** 21 at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, after the passage of heavy storms the previous night, 21 May (David Disher, et al.) was a noteworthy count for the Piedmont region.

**Solitary Sandpiper:** 52 at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 7 May (Nathan Gatto) was a remarkable concentration of migrants.

**Willet:** One on Roanoke Rapids Lake, border of Halifax Co and Northampton Co, NC, 24 Apr (Ricky Davis) was a good find for that inland site. 15 video-recorded on the French Broad River in Hot Springs, Madison Co, NC, at approximately 1400 feet above sea level, 28 Apr (Peter Dixon) were extremely unusual for that high elevation. A tight flock of 102 eastern-race Willets on the beach at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Apr (John Fussell) was considered an unusual concentration.

**Lesser Yellowlegs:** 850 seen during a shorebird survey at Yawkey Wildlife



American Golden Plover, 07 May 2016, Brunswick Co, NC. Photo by Sam Cooper.

Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was a noteworthy count.

**Upland Sandpiper:** This species is much rarer during the spring migration than fall in the Carolinas. Thus of note were individuals at Oakland Plantation Turf Farm, Bladen Co, NC, 11 Apr (Jamie Adams); along Sidbury Rd in New Hanover Co, NC, 13 Apr (Adams); at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 23 Apr (Tom Austin); at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.); and at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 24 Apr (John Fussell, et al.).

**Whimbrel:** One photographed at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, after the passage of heavy storms the previous night, 21 May (David Disher, et al.) was a fantastic find for the Piedmont and a first for that county. Some noteworthy counts from sites along the coast were 1680, a truly remarkable count, at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 19 Apr (Gerard Cyr); 285 at Edisto Beach SP, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Apr (Cyr); 120 on Rat Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 May (Chris Snook); 134 at Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 7 May (Sam Cooper); 140 on Sullivans Island, Charleston Co, SC, 9 May (Craig Watson); and 123 at Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell).

**Long-billed Curlew:** In Charleston Co, SC, four were seen around Capers Island, 21 Apr (Elizabeth Anderegg, et al.) and two were seen on Bulls Island,



Whimbrel, 21 May 2016, Forsyth Co, NC. Photo by David Disher.

26 Apr (David McLean, et al.).

**Bar-tailed Godwit:** Already accepted by the NC BRC, NC's fourth Bar-tailed Godwit was photographed on the beach in Frisco, Dare Co, NC, 8 Apr (Chelsea Weithman).

**Red Knot:** 3500 on the beach of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 28 Apr (Aaron Given) was an amazing count.

**Ruff:** Always notable at any site or time of year, a female Ruff, or "Reeve", was seen and photographed in an impoundment in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 7-9 May (Mike McCloy, m. obs.).

**Sanderling:** Four on a mudflat in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 1 May (Nate Swick, Matt Wangerin) were good finds for that inland site.

**Dunlin:** Inland, individuals were seen at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 3 Apr (Royce Hough); at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 17 Apr (Thierry Besançon); at Bells Grove Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 21 Apr (Taylor Piephoff); and at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 6 May (Scott Davis, Matt Johnson).

**Least Sandpiper:** 1821 counted during a shorebird survey at Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, 16 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was an impressive count.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Inland sightings included two at Archie





Bar-tailed Godwit, 8 Apr 2016, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Chelsea Weithman.

Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 9 May (John Haire, m. obs.); one at the WTP in Goldsboro, Wayne Co, NC, 12 May (Sam Cooper); and seven near the dam on the Oconaluftee River in Ela, Swain Co, NC, at about 1800 feet above sea level, 20 May (Kirk Gardner). NC's and SC's respective high counts were 19 in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, 7 May (Mike McCloy) and 14 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 17 May (Irvin Pitts).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** Very high lunar tides around 9-10 May concentrated this species and other shorebirds on exposed areas along the coast—3000 at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 9 May (Sherry Lane); 1250 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell); and 1694 on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 10 May (David Gardner, et al.).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** 2967 on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, during a shorebird survey, 11 Apr (David Gardner, et al.) was an impressive count.

**Wilson's Phalarope:** Two were found this spring—individual adult females at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.) and in an impoundment in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 4 May (John Fussell, et al.) through 7 May (Ashley Merritt).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** An adult female in an impoundment in the Lake Landing portion of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 1 May (Ricky Davis,



Black Tern, 21 May 2016, Cabarrus Co, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

m. obs.) was a one-day wonder and a great find for that inland site.

**South Polar Skua:** Skuas were seen on four of 18 spring pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June, with one seen 29 May; one seen 30 May; two seen 31 May; and one seen 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**Pomarine Jaeger:** A dark-morph individual off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie) was a noteworthy from-shore sighting.

**Parasitic Jaeger:** From-shore sightings included one off Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Mar and 17 Apr (John Fussell, et al.); one off Jeannette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 3 Apr (Ricky Davis); one at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 Apr (Sam Cooper); two off Seaview Pier, Onslow Co, NC, 30 Apr (Fussell); one off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 May (Lucas Bobay); seven off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 29 May (Fussell, et al.); and two off Cape Point, 29-30 May (Bobay). The latter two sightings occurred during the passage of TS Bonnie.

**Dovekie:** One seen in flight off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Mar (Andrew Thornton, Marty Wall) was a great find, as there had been very few sightings of this small alcid this winter.

**Bonaparte's Gull:** One, still in first-winter plumage, seen at Oyster Bay Golf Links in Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 21 May (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late to depart.

**Black-headed Gull:** One photographed at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 1 Mar (Greg Perry) was the spring's only sighting.

**Laughing Gull:** Father inland than typical for the species were individuals

at Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 29 Mar (John Haire) and 17 May (Nathan & Sarah Gatto); and over Lake Jocassee, Oconee Co, SC, 15 May (Caroline Eastman, Irvin Pitts, et al.).

**Gull-billed Tern:** 21 in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 14 May (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock) was a good count away from the ocean.

**Caspian Tern:** 32 at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 17 Apr (Matt Spangler) was a noteworthy count for that inland site.

**Black Tern:** Two photographed at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 28 Apr (Michael Gosselin) were slightly early. One was seen in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, for an unusually extensive period, 1 May (Ricky Davis) through 24 May (m. obs.). One photographed in the wetland at Concord Mills, Cabarrus Co, NC, 21 May (Jan & Phil Fowler, et al.) was a good find for a site in the Piedmont during the spring.

**Arctic Tern:** Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 20 May, 22 May, and 23 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

**White-winged Dove:** Spring sightings included one on Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Mar (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); two in Hampstead, Pender Co, NC, 30 Mar (Paulette Biles); one in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 5 Apr (Jeff Lewis); one at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Apr (Tom Austin); two at a feeder in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 13-15 May (Karen Lebing); one at a feeder in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 16 May (Deb Winter); and one at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 30 May (Valerie Hollinger).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** One at Palmetto Fort Park, Charleston Co, SC, 28 Mar (Craig Watson) was slightly early. 24 on the Montague BBS route in Pender Co, NC, 28 May (Sam Cooper) was a high count for that route.

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** One seen at a farm in Moore Co, NC, 8 May (Ian Ruppenthal) was a possible first for that county.

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** Five heard along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Devil's Courthouse in southern Haywood Co, NC, 11 May (Marilyn Westphal) was a nice count.

**Common Nighthawk:** One seen over a marsh on Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 2 Apr (Mayn Hipp, et al.) was somewhat early to arrive.

**Buff-bellied Hummingbird:** The individual that wintered in a neighborhood in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, was last seen 6 Mar (Cheri Seli).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** Individuals were seen at Yates Mill County Park, Wake Co, NC, 15 May (Phil Doerr); in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, 18 May (David Anderson, et al.) through 20 May (m. obs.); and near the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 22 May (Alan MacEachren) through 23 May (m. obs.).

**Gray Kingbird:** One was seen near Hatteras Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 1 May



Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, 17 Jun 2016, Greenville Co, SC. Photo by Yves Limpalair.

(Michael Gosselin).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** A female returned to the traditional nesting site along Gunter Rd in Greenville Co, SC, by 23 May (*vide* Paul Serridge).

**Warbling Vireo:** One seen and heard singing along the Tar River in Nash Co, NC, 9 May (Ricky Davis) was unusual for the coastal plain.

**Sedge Wren:** Six singing wrens in former agricultural fields at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 24 Apr (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** 19 in the western Croatan NF, near the border of Carteret Co and Jones Co, NC, 13 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) was a high count for that early date.

**Cedar Waxwing:** A total of 64 at four different sites in Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) was an amazing tally for late May.

**Snow Bunting:** An adult male photographed on the beach just west of Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 1 May (Michael Gosselin) was quite late. Of interest, the bird was in alternate (breeding) plumage, a plumage rarely seen in the Carolinas.

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** Singing individuals along the Northwest Prong of the Newport River in the Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 19 Apr (John Fussell) and in the Green Swamp in Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) were unusual so near the coast.

**Golden-winged Warbler:** Eight along Max Patch Rd in northeastern





Cerulean Warbler, 4 May 2016, Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Jim Gould.

Haywood Co, NC, 11 May (Paul Carroll, Kirk Gardner) was a good count.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** One on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 1 May (Jeff Lewis) was unusual for a site so near the coast.

**“Lawrence’s Warbler”:** A rare backcross hybrid of a Golden-winged Warbler and a Blue-winged Warbler was seen and video-recorded at Bass Lake, Wake Co, NC, 29 Apr (Josh Southern).

**Swainson’s Warbler:** A few of the higher counts were seven at Congaree National Park, Richland Co, SC, 24 Apr (John Grego); eight singing birds around Little Deep Creek Rd in the Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Apr (John Fussell); and 13 singing birds along 11 miles of biking trails at Howell Woods, Johnston Co, NC, 30 Apr (Eddie Owens). One seen along Indian Creek Trail at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 11 May (Ron Morris, Laura Phail) was unusual for that area of the state.

**Connecticut Warbler:** Three were reported this spring, all in the NC mountains—one heard singing in the Hospital Fields in Brevard, Transylvania Co, 26 Apr (Clifton Avery, Chris Kelly, et al.); a female seen near the French Broad River in Mills River, Henderson Co, 14 May (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); and one seen and heard at Tessentee Bottomland Preserve, Macon Co, 17 May (Samuel Merker, et al.)

**Cerulean Warbler:** One heard singing along Skyuka Mountain Rd in Polk Co, NC, 23 Apr (Simon Harvey) was suggestive of attempted breeding in that area. One photographed in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 4 May (Michael



Swainson's Warbler, 29 June 2016, Lexington Co, SC. Photo by Irvin Pitts.

Gosselin, Jim Gould) was a great find for a site on the Outer Banks.

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** One on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Apr (David Gardner) was early to arrive.

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** 83 singing birds in western Croatan NF, near the border of Carteret Co and Jones Co, 19 Mar (John Fussell) was a large number for mid-March.

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** Two at Santee Delta WMA, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Mar (Dennis Forsythe) were early.

**Wilson's Warbler:** Individuals at Price Park, Guilford Co, NC, 4 May (Lou Skrabec, Andrew Thornton); along the Neuse River Greenway, Wake Co, NC, 15 May (Ricky Davis); and at Sandy Creek Park, Durham Co, NC, 22 May (Marty McClelland) were good finds for sites away from the mountains.

**Bachman's Sparrow:** 17 in the Sandhills Game Land in Richmond Co, NC, 26 May (Susan Campbell) was a noteworthy count.

**Lark Sparrow:** The individual seen around the NC Coastal Federation building in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, during the winter, continued until 2 Apr (Sam Cooper). One photographed in Hendersonville, Henderson Co, NC, 12 Apr (Luke Cannon, Tina Collins) was very unusual for the mountain region. In the Sandhills region, an area where breeding has been documented, sightings included three on Fort Bragg (restricted access) in Hoke Co, NC, 24 Apr (Rex Badgett, et al.); two singing on territory on Fort Bragg in Cumberland Co, NC, 24 Apr (Badgett); a singing male photographed



Henslow's Sparrow, 28 March 2016, Pickens Co, SC. Photo by Tom Austin.

at Carolina Sandhills NWR, Chesterfield Co, SC, 5 May (Irvin Pitts); and one photographed at Camp Mackall, Scotland Co, NC, 10 May (Alicia Jackson).

**Savannah Sparrow:** One photographed at Stecoah Gap, Graham Co, NC, at about 3200 feet above sea level, 10 May (Chris Kelly) was a possible first for that county.

**Henslow's Sparrow:** One photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Center, Pickens Co, SC, 28 Mar (Tom Austin) was a great find for the western part of the state.

**Nelson's Sparrow:** Two in the marsh next to Federal Point at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 27 May (Dave Weesner) were somewhat late to depart.

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** Individuals were seen and photographed at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 12-16 Mar (Mike Stewart); around Creech Pond in York Co, SC, 24 Apr (Kevin Metcalf, et al.); and eating millet in a yard in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Apr (Molly Redmond, Barry Rowan).

**Western Tanager:** A male was photographed at a feeder in Anderson Co, SC, 2 May (Greg Padget), later in the season than typical for sightings of this species in our region.

**Painted Bunting:** A female at a millet feeder in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 11-14 Mar (Jim Gould) was unusual for a site so far north.

**Dickcissel:** Spring sightings included two, a female and a male, along

Brent Haigler Rd in Union Co, NC, 10 May (Steven Fasciana) into late May (m. obs.); an adult male singing along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 21-25 May (Marty Wall, m. obs.); two, a female and a male, along Robbs School Rd in Cherokee Co, SC, 22 May (J.B. Hines); and a singing male along Mayo Farm Rd in Martin Co, NC, 30 May (Merrill Lynch).

**Bobolink:** As many as 20 Bobolinks were seen at a known breeding site along Bamboo Rd in Watauga Co, NC, in late April and May (m. obs.).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** An adult male photographed along Scuffletown Rd in Greenville Co, SC, 7 Apr (Jennifer Kindel) was the only one reported this spring.

**Rusty Blackbird:** Two at Cape Lookout, Carteret Co, NC, 10 Apr (Jack Fennell, John Fussell, Steve Howell) were unusual for a barrier island in spring.

**Brewer's Blackbird:** 17 at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 14 Mar (Craig Watson) was a good count.

**Pine Siskin:** 500 around the feeders at Snowbird Mountain Lodge in Graham Co, NC, 24 Apr (Simon Thompson) was a noteworthy concentration. Siskins lingered at feeders at multiple sites in the Piedmont region until about mid-May (m. obs.).