

Mid-Atlantic Region

MARSHALL ILIFF

This summer was the fifth coldest for the Middle Atlantic Region since regular record keeping at Baltimore-Washington International airport began in 1950. The mercury never climbed above 92° F. in June and July, almost unheard of to those of us who sweated through the previous summer. Rainfall was slightly above average in June, and almost four inches above average in July.

The eye of hurricane *Bertha*, which had already been downgraded to tropical storm status, entered the Region in the early morning July 13, passing straight through central *Suffolk* and northward roughly along the Western Shore. The historically productive east edge of the storm passed right over the mouth of the Bay before dawn and hit Ocean City at about 7 a.m.

Several parties of birders dispersed to widely scattered parts of the Region in search of storm-blown birds. Ned Brinkley, Robert Anderson, Michael Stinson, David Hughes, Joyce Livermore, Tom Gwynn, and George Harris had the best results by far, hitting the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel shortly after dawn, and maintaining constant vigil there until dusk, with Brinkley and Anderson return-

ing the next day to be joined by Day, Williams, and Taber. The eight species of tubenose (including two Herald Petrels), two tropical terns, and Com. Ground-Dove (as well as exceptional counts of numbers more common species) were the product of exceptional effort at a prime location.

Other parties put forth similar efforts at other locations with disappointing results. Storm-blown birds probably did not penetrate far into the Bay, and the majority of birds must have remained close to the Bay's mouth. Craig and Cribb checked Point Lookout July 13, with only a Gull-billed Tern to show for their effort. Bazuin arrived in *Mathews* at dawn but found no storm-driven birds, despite a solid weekend of birding. Griffith, Scarpulla, and Blom birded the northern Bay to no avail, and Jett spent the day afield in *Charles* but found nothing unusual. Iliff and Stasz began at North Beach at dawn, and surveyed Sandy Point and the flooded fields, sewage ponds, and rivers of the Eastern Shore before arriving at Ocean City at 11 a.m., when the wind was already westerly. Ocean City produced nothing more unusual than four *Oceanodroma* in Assawoman Bay, and the lower Nanticoke held nothing unusual at dusk.

Why did the storm create such a fallout at the Bay's mouth and produce so little elsewhere? Did Sooty Terns depart early in the morning before most observers made it afield? Did the tubenoses really avoid the upper Bay, even though it is still more than 10 miles wide at the Maryland line? Or were the birds just too far out over the Bay to be seen? Compared to previous



In the wake of hurricane *Bertha*, this Greater Shearwater was far up Chesapeake Bay in Accomack County, Virginia, July 16, 1996. Photograph/Bill Portlock.

storms to hit the Region, *Bertha's* track and strength were similar in some respects to *David* (September 1979). *David*, however, was not birded as well as *Bertha*, and yet still produced numerous records of tropical birds (especially Sooty Terns) across the Region. Was it a product of *David's* later passage? Perhaps analysis of the very birdy hurricane *Fran* next season will shed some more light on the subject.

Again, nearly all reports were from Maryland, so all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland, except that each Virginia location is annotated the *first time* it is mentioned.

Abbreviations: Bay (*Chesapeake Bay*); Black. (*Blackwater N.W.R.*); C.B.B.T. (*Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel*); Craney (*Craney I. Disposal Area*); D.C. (*District of Columbia*); Deal (*Deal Island W.M.A.*); D.N.R. (*Department of Natural Resources*); Hart (*Hart-Miller I. Dredge Spoil Impoundment*); p.a. (*pending acceptance by respective rarities committee*); Vaughn (*E. A. Vaughn Wildlife Management Area*).

Loons to Waterfowl

Seven reports of Com. Loons represented a not surprising number of summer lingerers (v.o.). A Pied-billed Grebe pair at the new fresh marsh at Vaughn fledged four young in early June (SHD, SJ), was seen incubating July 4 (SHD), and had five downy young July 28 (SHD), for a rare *Worcester* nesting. Another adult with three chicks near Harrington July 3 (FF) provided a first *Kent* nesting and an adult at an undisclosed n. *Anne Arundel* site may have nested as well. Finding only one Pied-billed Grebe at Deal, *Somerset*, June 29 (HTA) was disappointing considering its once rich freshwater marshes.



SA Hurricane *Bertha* pushed every tubenose that one could reasonably expect off the Region in July into the mouth of the Bay, and a hit team of active Virginia birders camped out at the C.B.B.T. Island #1 to watch seabirds flow by. Their July 13 survey included nine Black-capped Petrels, two (one light- and one dark-morph) *Trinidade* (Herald) Petrels (p.a.), one unidentified *Pterodroma*, five Greater Shearwaters, three Cory's Shearwaters, seven Band-rumped Storm-Petrels (p.a.), 11 Leach's Storm-Petrels, four unidentified *Oceanodroma*, and 71 Wilson's Storm-Petrels (†NB *et al.*). The next day, 26 Black-capped Petrels were found (including a string of eight birds), along with 14 Leach's Storm-Petrels, more than 20 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, and single Greater, Cory's, and Audubon's shearwaters (NB *et al.*). The day before the storm produced one Band-rumped Storm-Petrel winging N in the early morning at Virginia Beach, VA (p.a. NB). Brinkley compiled a voluminous report on his observations in Tidewater Virginia, distributed over e-mail, which not only included careful records of the birds seen, but also extensive notes on their behavior and speculation as to how the storm affected all species (not just the rarities). Most birds were seen moving out of the Bay July 13, but the Black-capped Petrels were returning to the Bay on the 14th, interestingly enough. Other Tidewater observers had some luck as well. Willis found a dead Greater Shearwater on the Goodwin Bridge over the Nansemond R., Suffolk, VA, before dawn July 13, Williams and Taber saw eight Wilson's Storm-Petrels from the Jamestown Ferry on the James R., VA July 13, and Pearce saw a Black-capped Petrel and another gadfly petrel, probably a Black-capped, from Ft. Story, VA, that evening. The only tubenoses in Maryland were the two Leach's Storm-Petrels and two unidentified *Oceanodroma* in Assawoman Bay, Worcester, on the afternoon of July 13 (†ph. MJI, ph. JLS). Among *Bertha*'s numerous potential amendments to Virginia's avifaunal list are the state's 2nd and 3rd reports for *Trinidade* (Herald) Petrel, record-high Black-capped Petrel counts (among 11 previous records), 4th and 5th reports for Band-rumped Storm-Petrels—including a new high, a new Bay high for Wilson's Storm-Petrels and all the shearwaters except Audubon's (all except Cory's had previously been seen from the C.B.B.T.).

Certainly related to Hurricane *Bertha* was the Greater Shearwater well described from Bay waters just s. of the Maryland line, *Accomack*, July 16 (p.a. ph. †BPO). Another (the same?) Greater Shearwater was reported from the c. Bay just n. of the Maryland line in *Somerset* the next day (p.a. †MC, TB, JK), but was not convincingly described. While probably correctly identified, the observers did not consider Black-capped Petrel and are not familiar with either species. Only thrice have any Procellariidae appeared so far north in the Bay, and none have been identified to species. Lone Am. White Pelicans were found at Hog I., *Surry*, July 13 (BT), S. Metomkin I., *Accomack*, July 25 (JSW), and at the Fisherman's I. Brown Pelican colony June 16 (BW *et al.*), where a pair attended an empty nest last year. No Brown Pelicans nested in Maryland for the first time since 1987 (MD D.N.R., *fide* GDT), but 1370 were at Fisherman's I., June 16 (BW *et al.*) and some intruded into the n. Bay again, with numbers reported from *Saint Mary's* (PC *et al.*) and *Dorchester* (HTA *et al.*). Two Great Cormorants at the C.B.B.T., July 14 (NB *et al.*) were unusual, though the species has been found increasingly in summer months in the Region, and all along the East Coast. A single Anhinga was at Stumpy L., June 13 (NB) & 25 (KC).

Remarkable records of potentially nesting Am. Bitterns included singles at Vaughn June 5 & 16 (SJ), and July 28 (SHD), and one near Harrington, *Kent*, June 11, while one adult at Huntley Meadows, *Fairfax*, VA, was accompanied by a downy chick July 8 (JA, *fide* AH) for the first nesting there since 1992. Least Bitterns locations were Vaughn (SJ, SHD), where a juvenile was seen July 4 (SHD), two adults and four young at an undisclosed location in n. *Anne Arundel* July 12 (SR), and in a newly created marsh at Back Bay N.W.R. (v.o.). Inland, Tricolored Herons at Lilypons, *Frederick* (JG), and Owings Mills, *Baltimore* (EBo), were rare and unseasonal June 19 & 23, respectively; most dispersing herons occur at least a month later. The fast-eroding Holland I., *Dorchester*, held 123 nests of all species of colonial-nesting herons for the 4th straight year June 7 (HTA). A survey of a small heronry at Little Bodkin I. in June found small numbers of Cattle and Snowy egrets and Tricolored Herons, which furnished the first *Queen Anne's* nest records in several decades (LB, JWT, *fide* HTA). Eleven White Ibis at Fisherman's I. provided a good count June 16 (BW *et al.*). The 5 reports of dispersing imm. White Ibis began with a *Charles* first at

Waldorf July 13 (ph. GMJ) followed by another not far away at Popes Cr., July 28–30 (ph. GMJ, m.ob.). Of landmark occurrence were two *Roseate Spoonbill* reports, the only previous Regional report being in 1978 at Smith I., MD. One at Back Bay N.W.R., Virginia Beach, VA, was photographed by refuge personnel June 23 (p.a. DH, TG *et al.*) but did not stay long. Possibly the same bird was reported from Martin N.W.R., Smith I (again!), *Somerset*, July 11 (p.a. †MH, DJ), it was well-described by observers, and relocated and photographed in August.

Resident Canada Geese are thriving throughout the Region, especially in *Dorchester*. A count of 780 was made at Black., June 16 (HTA, JWT). A N. Shoveler at the Chestertown Sewage Ponds, *Kent*, July 1 & 7 (J&TG) was an unusual lingerer, though the four Tundra Swans, five Lesser Scaup, one Ring-necked Duck, four Canvasbacks, and four Ruddy Duck reports were much more regular in the annual show of summering waterfowl. Other unusual lingerers included an Am. Wigeon at L. Accotink, *Fairfax*, VA July 24 (DL), a Surf Scoter at Cambridge, *Dorchester*, June 16–17 (ES), and a Com. Merganser in Crab Cr., *Anne Arundel*, July 23 (MJI).

Raptors to Shorebirds

Mississippi Kites returned to Woodbridge, *Prince William*, VA, where a pair was seen through the summer (v.o.) and three were seen July 28 (J&CM), and ≤three were in *Greensville*, VA June 26–July 6. Another at Point Lookout S.P. July 14 (p.a. MJI, JLS) was from the lower Western Shore, where summer kite sightings appear to be most common; perhaps some evidence of nesting will crop up from that area. The Breeding Bird Foray June 4–9 in Virginia's Piedmont produced several unusual raptor records. An Osprey stooping on a Bald Eagle over the Rapidan R. was surprising, since neither species is known to nest nearby. Up to five Bald Eagles were seen on other dates during the 6-day Foray. The record 201 Bald Eagle nests in Maryland fledged approximately 265 young, another record since the beginning of the aerial surveys by Maryland D.N.R. (*fide* GDT). A N. Harrier over hayfields June 7 (JBB), and other sightings nearby that same week, suggested the possibility of Virginia's first Piedmont breeding. Single N. Harriers were seen at 5 locations in *Carroll* during June (RFR), also suggesting breeding, which has yet to be confirmed in the county. Broad-winged Hawks are extremely local on the Eastern Shore, but this year Dyke found singles at Nassawango and Snow Hill, *Worcester*, June 8 and

July 3, respectively. Eight pairs of Peregrine Falcon nested in Maryland, with six on hack towers on the lower Eastern Shore and pairs at traditional sites on the Bay Bridge, *Anne Arundel*, and USF&G building in Baltimore City (MD D.N.R., *fide* GDT). Another pair nested again at the Shrine of Immaculate Conception in D.C.

A Sora heard at Vaughn June 4 (SJ) may have indicated a first *Worcester* nesting, while a pair with one chick at a 10-acre wetland near Harrington June 11–July 3 was the first confirmed nesting for *Kent* (FF). Newly created fresh marsh habitat at Vaughn and Back Bay N.W.R. held Com. Moorhen pairs, and >ten—with several chicks—were at a marsh in n. *Anne Arundel* July 12 (SR). Despite this good news, trips to Deal by several observers produced only a single Com. Moorhen June 9 (EL). The habitat there seems to be going rapidly downhill for the species. Up to four Am. Coots lingered at Back Bay N.W.R. through July 26 (MJI, NB), though there was no evidence of breeding.

The **Snowy Plover** reported last year from an undisclosed Virginia barrier island was found again at the same location this year. A territorial male, this bird was photographed and tape-recorded on the Virginia Barrier Island Survey June 18 (p.a. BW, ph. BA *et al.*). Modest numbers of Wilson's Plovers were found on the survey as well, with a total of 51 at all islands surveyed and 21 being the best count from any one barrier island. Piping Plovers were more numerous, with 148 found and counts of 52 and 58 at selected colonies (BW *et al.*). A pair of Am. Oystercatchers fledged one young at Bethel Beach Preserve, *Mathews*, and pairs dispersed up the Bay to Hart June 29 (EJS, EB) and Pt. Lookout July 5 (MC). Only three Black-necked Stilts were at Deal, both June 29 (HTA) and July 3 (MJI), where more than ten have been found in the past. A pair with two chicks at Craney July 14 (NB) & 26 (BTe) furnished a nice report. Single Am. Avocets were at Craney July 3 (LW) and Hart July 20 (EJS, EB).

New pumping at Hart vastly improved conditions for shorebirding and, in addition to several rarities, some exceptional numbers were counted on weekly surveys through the summer. Exemplary were 335 Lesser Yellowlegs July 20 (EJS, EB) and 1964 Lesser Yellowlegs July 27 (EJS *et al.*), 3500 Semipalmated Sandpipers July 20 (EJS, EB) and 5930 July 27 (EJS *et al.*), and 316 W. Sandpipers July 14 (EJS, EB) and 388 July 27 (EJS *et al.*). Other good numbers were 100 Semipalmated Sandpipers July 14 (EJS, EB), 552 Least Sandpipers July 14 (EJS, EB), 60 Pectoral

Sandpipers July 20 (EJS, EB), and 118 Stilt Sandpipers July 27 (EJS *et al.*). White-rumped Sandpipers remained until June 16 with two at Black. (HTA), and returned July 27 with four at Hart (EJS *et al.*). *Mathews'* first fall migrant Red Knot may have "fallen out" of *Bertha* to be seen by Bazuin at Bethel Beach Preserve, VA July 13. Up to three Upland Sandpipers were at the same turf farm near Remington, *Fauquier*, where the first Virginia nesting in the Piedmont was confirmed in 1988. The site has apparently not been checked since, and the birds' presence between June 6 (JBB) and July 8 (VK *fide* JBB) indicates that this may be the last extant colony of the species in the Virginia Piedmont, since the report from the old *Loudoun* colony is grim (*fide* JBB). Eastern Willet reports were almost entirely from the nesting grounds, but two juveniles at N. Beach, *Calvert*, July 25 (JLS, MJI) were definite migrants. Western Willets included single birds on 5 Hart trips between June 15–July 20 (EJS *et al.*) and about ten on the beach at Back Bay N.W.R., including at least one juvenile, July 26 (MJI, NB). First county records for Marbled Godwit were furnished as single (probable) juveniles appeared at N. Beach, *Calvert*, July 25 (ph. JLS, ph. MJI) & 26 (MAT), and Lilypons, *Frederick*, July 28 (†ph. WLH, †IRC *et al.*). Another Marbled Godwit was at Craney July 14 (NB). A Ruff at Hart July 20 (EJS, EB) was joined by a 2nd bird July 27 (EJS *et al.*). Exceptionally-early Long-billed Dowitchers were at Ft. Story during *Bertha* July 13 (NB), and a record-early Maryland arrival was at Jackson Pond, *Caroline*, July 20 (JLS). A basic-plumaged Red-necked Phalarope was at Hart July 20 (EJS, EB), while a northbound individual at Cape Henry July 12 (NB) made a surprising appearance prior to *Bertha's* passage.

Gulls to Cuckoos

The C.B.B.T. grand slam during *Bertha* included an ad. light-morph Pomarine Jaeger July 13 (NB *et al.*) A Herring Gull nest on a small sandy island at Bethel Beach Preserve contained 2 eggs from June 17–23 and was the first reported nesting of the species on Virginia's Western Shore (p.a. ph. †JBB, JM *et al.*). Laughing Gulls are returning as breeders in the Bay. Six nests were among the *Sterna* colony at Barren I., *Dorchester*, and 7 pairs at Spring I., *Dorchester*, June 16 (HTA, JWT) were likely breeding as well. A Herring Gull colony at Tar Bay, *Dorchester*, had 104 nests June 16 (HTA, JWT), and Spring I. had 209 nests June 7 (HTA, PRS). Numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls sum-



Herring Gull nest at Bethel Beach Preserve, Mathews County, Virginia, June 23, 1996. First report of nesting on the Western Shore of Virginia. Photograph/John B. Bazuin, Jr.



Gull-billed Tern, one of the few birds brought to Maryland by hurricane *Bertha*, at Point Lookout State Park July 13, 1996. Photograph/Patty Craig.

mered at Hart as usual, with \geq two seen every weekend through the summer, and ten (nine first-summers) June 29 being the best count. A Gull-billed Tern at Pt. Lookout July 13 (MC, ph. PC) was one of the few treasures brought to Maryland by *Bertha*, while one nearby at Scotland July 29 (MC) may have been the same bird or a late-summer wanderer. The 226 Sandwich Terns recorded at the C.B.B.T., July 13 (NB *et al.*) was a record count for Virginia and the Region, and indicated significant displacement of the species from points south. Sandwich Terns wandered up the Bay in late July, with one adult off Rose Haven, *Anne Arundel*, providing a 2nd county record July 29 (JLS) and one adult and one juvenile off Ridge, *Saint Mary's*, July 31 (PC) being the only other sighting away from the coast. Four adults on Skimmer I. at Ocean City June 18 (SHD) apparently did not nest among the 363 Royal Tern pairs reported there by Maryland D.N.R. (*fide* GDT). Intensive surveying of Virginia barrier island colonies by Williams *et al.* found 356 Gull-billed Tern nests, but only 2 each of Sandwich and Caspian terns. A June visit to Little Bodkin I., *Queen Anne's*, found >100 nesting Com. Terns (LB, JWT, *fide* HTA). Two Roseate

Terns at Sandbridge, Virginia Beach, July 13 (NB, BL) were probably not related to *Bertha*, but one at the C.B.B.T., July 14 (NB *et al.*) may have been. Individuals have been appearing on the Middle Atlantic Coast during recent summers and may be breeding again at an as yet undiscovered locale. Nine Least Tern colonies surveyed by Maryland D.N.R. included an encouraging 569 pairs. Several of the largest colonies were on flat roofs, including 211 pairs atop Thompson Cr. Mall, *Queen Anne's* (*fide* GDT). A large *Sterna* colony on a small marshy island, just s. of Barren I., which held 226 nests (90% Forster's) June 16 was good news, but even better news was the report that a colony of 700 *Sterna* pairs at South Marsh I., *Somerset*, also included 10 Black Skimmer pairs (LB, *fide* HTA) for their first Maryland Bay nesting in several years. Surprisingly few Sooty Terns were pushed into the Region by *Bertha*. Though they are usually one of the most affected species of such storms, they also tend to clear out very quickly after the storm's passage. The late start by several parties July 13 may have meant that some were missed, and only one adult was seen at the C.B.B.T., July 13 (NB *et al.*). Three were found at first light flying down the James R. at Hog I. (TA), and a dead Sooty was seen on the shoulder of the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel on several occasions during the several weeks after the storm (BPa, NB). A surprising holdover from *Bertha* was a first-summer Sooty Tern detected from the Pt. Lookout-Smith I. Ferry July 21 (p.a. †JLS) for a first *Somerset* and 7th Maryland report. Two Bridled Terns at the C.B.B.T. rounded out the list of pelagic species recorded at that location July 13 (NB *et al.*). Black Terns occasionally summer in the Region, and 2 sightings were reported in June. A first-summer bird was at Hart June 1 (EJS *et al.*) and three were at Craney June 19 (LW). The first fall arrivals appeared July 13 with *Bertha*, with one adult at Haven Beach (JBB), *Mathews*, VA, and two over the James R. at Hog I. (BT). Black Skimmers appeared at Pt. Lookout, with one—two seen sporadically from June 24–July 22 (MC, PC, SS), and \leq seven (June 20) were at Winter Harbor, *Mathews*, through the summer (JBB).

Bertha's best landbird deposit was a Common Ground-Dove at the C.B.B.T. South Toll Plaza July 13 that Brinkley saw at 6:30 a.m. before venturing out into the central Bay. Cuckoos were locally abundant this summer; in *Dorchester* on the Eastern Shore of Maryland they were remarkably common (MJI), while on the Western Shore they were generally noted

as below average in the Piedmont and fairly common to abundant on the Coastal Plain (MJI, DB).

Flycatchers to Finches

A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Maryland's 9th, appeared at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel*, June 20 (p.a. DB) and another flew by at Back Bay N.W.R. the next day (DC); Maryland still has few records of the species, though they have appeared fairly regularly in Virginia and surrounding states in recent years. The first migrant Least Flycatcher appeared at Rigby's Folly, *Talbot*, July 28 (HTA) and the first "Traill's" Flycatcher was identified at Smith I., *Somerset*, July 21 (JLS *et al.*). The only Loggerhead Shrike was located for the Breeding Bird Foray in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mts. of *Greene*, VA June 6 (FD). Many observers mentioned the scarcity of Carolina Wrens; hopefully this nesting season was kind to these engaging birds. A pair of Com. Ravens at a rock quarry in s. *Culpeper*, VA, lowlands June 8 (DO) was interesting since the species has been expanding in the east recently, and the pair may have been prospecting new nest sites.

A Blue-winged Warbler at Chingville, *Saint Mary's*, June 4 (JR) was most surprising. Though it is a fairly common nester in the Piedmont, none has ever been suspected of nesting outside of the Pocomoke drainage on the Coastal Plain, and this sighting may pertain to a record-late migrant. A N. Waterthrush at Jug Bay June 3 (DB) was another remarkably late departure, and a Canada Warbler remained at L. Elkhorn, *Howard*, June 6 (DE).

A singing ♂ Summer Tanager at Soldier's Delight, *Baltimore*, June 25 (RFR) was never relocated and was most likely an unmated summer wanderer. Dickcissels invaded the Region in droves, staging the biggest movement into the Region since 1988. Both 1996 and 1988 were drought years in the Midwest, and the correlation with Dickcissel numbers is obvious. Some 42 (!) different locations were reported for the species in 12 Maryland and 10 Virginia counties. Most were concentrated in the Piedmont, though 9 reports were from the Upper Eastern Shore, where farming practices leave some fallow fields, which this species favors. In some areas it seemed that every suitable field had at least one singing male. Dickcissels are probably more regular breeders in our Region than the records indicate: Recently the species has been found annually on the upper Eastern Shore in small numbers. Nonetheless, this year was exceptional.

Reese noted a complete absence of Field



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Sparrows from *Talbot*, speculating that they were demolished by the hard winter, along with Carolina Wrens, bluebirds, and several other species. The first Savannah Sparrow breeding in Virginia's Piedmont was confirmed June 19 (p.a.), when Brinkley observed two adults feeding young near Standardville, *Greene*. Breeding season records were reported in *Frederick* (IRC, BC) and *Carroll* (RFR) as well, and another was reported singing just to the south in *Loudoun*, VA June 15 (SE). The species has increasingly been found e. of the mountains in the Region. Swamp Sparrows, another rare breeders in the Piedmont, included singing birds at two *Carroll* locations in June (RFR). A late lingerer was a White-throated Sparrow at Lilypons July 28 (WLH). Three Bobolinks at Long Mill Rd., *Frederick*, June 30 (IRC, SEC), and others in *Cecil* (GG) and *Carroll* (RFR) during June probably bred, though the species is a very scarce and local breeder in the Maryland Piedmont.

Exotics

Three Monk Parakeets with 2 new nests were in Norfolk June 29, though it does not appear that this species will flourish in the Region as some had feared. A Rose-ringed Parakeet with a starling flock in White Hall, *Albemarle*, during the summer (SH, *fide* CES) was noteworthy

Observers (area compilers in boldface): Jane Agee, Bill Akers, Henry T. Armistead, Tom Armour, John B. Bazuin Jr., Tyler Bell, Eirik Blom, Ed Boyd (EBo), Ned Brinkley, Lori Byrne, Danny Bystrak, Kevin Calhoun, David Clark, Barry Cooper, **Ian R. Cornelius** (*Frederick*, 7321 Old Middletown Rd., Middletown, MD 21769), Stephen E. Cornelius, **Patty Craig** (*Saint Mary's*, P.O. Box 84, Lexington Park, MD 20653), Marty Cribb, John Dalmas (Breeding Bird Foray), Fenton Day, Samuel H. Dyke, Stephen Eccles, Darius Ecker, **Ethel Engle** (*Caroline*, MD, 20789 Dover Bridge Rd., Preston, MD 21655), Fred Fallon, Jim Green, **Gary Griffith** (*Cecil*, 55 Sarah Drive, Elkton, MD 21921), Jim Freen, Jim & Trish Gruber, Tom Gwynn, Mike Haramis, Wilbur L. Hershberger, Andy Higgs, Sandy Hodge, David Hughes, Simone Jenion, **George M. Jett** (*Charles*, 9505 Bland Street, Waldorf MD 20603), Dennis Jorde, **Teta Kain** (*Gloucester*, 7083 Caffee Cr. Lane, Gloucester, VA 23061), Val Kitchens, Jane Kostenko, Ellen Lawler, D. Lebbin, Bev Leeuwenberg, Joyce McKelvey, John & Catherine Messina, Don Ober, Brian Patteson (BPa), Butch Pearce, **Elizabeth Pitney** (*Wicomico*, 7218 Walston Switch Rd., Parsonsburg, MD 21849), Bill Portlock (BPo), Jan Reese, Sue Ricciardi, Robert F. Ringler, Eugene J. Scarpulla, Susan Schneider, Erick Smith, **Jo Solem** (*Howard* 10617 Graeoch Rd., Columbia, MD 20723), Paul R. Spitzer, Charles E. Stevens, Brian Taber, John W. Taylor, Brenda Tekin (BTc), Glenn D. Therres, (MD D.N.R.), Mary Ann Todd, **Dave Webb** (*Harford*, 107 Royal Oak Drive, Bel Air, MD 21015), John S. Weske, Bill Williams, **Les Willis** (Virginia Birdline), **Erika M. Wilson** (Voice of the Naturalist).

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Southern Atlantic Coast Region

RICKY DAVIS

The weather this summer was definitely cooler and wetter than normal for most areas of the Region. The spells of normal hot weather never lasted more than a couple of days, and some areas were almost pleasant all summer! Tropical storm *Arthur* in mid-June was a non-factor, but hurricane *Bertha* in mid-July caused considerable damage in eastern North Carolina. The timing and track of *Bertha* meant that storm-associated birds were disappointingly few and far between in the state (not the case in Virginia to our north!). Some avian highlights this season included nesting Gray Kingbirds in North Carolina, numerous warblers in the Coastal Plain of both Carolinas, and a mild invasion of Dickcissels in all three states.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (*Cape Hatteras, NC*); E.L.H. (*E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton Co., GA*); K. Mt. (*Kennesaw Mt. Park, GA*).

Petrels to Waterfowl

Off North Carolina, Black-capped Petrel counts averaged in the hundreds this sum-

mer, with the peak being an impressive 363 out of Hatteras July 28 (BP *et al.*). Pelagic birders off North Carolina really work hard for the Pterodromas, and the almost expected Cape Verde (Feae's) Petrel was found again, with one off Hatteras July 20 (BP *et al.*). This species complex is being found in our waters every year and hopefully the added documentation can settle the confusion over the exact forms found here. Shearwater numbers continued the spring pattern of being somewhat reduced. Of interest were three Sooties found dead on N. Topsail Beach, NC, in mid-June (GG), a late migrant Manx from C. Hatt., June 8 (AB, *vide* JF), and an unexplainable Manx off Hatteras June 19 (BP *et al.*). Storm-petrel numbers offshore were about average, with the best counts being 770 Wilson's off Hatteras July 22 (BP *et al.*) and 12 Leach's and 30 Band-rumped off Hatteras July 28 (BP *et al.*). Onshore Wilson's reports included one from Ft. Macon, NC June 4 (BM *et al.*); one flying upriver at the Ogeechee R. mouth, *Chatham-Bryan*, GA July 7 (BW); and four at Goldsboro, NC (ED), and one at L. Pinehurst, NC (DB) July 13 after hurricane *Bertha*. The only White-tailed Tropicbirds reported were singles off Oregon Inlet, NC June 1 (AH *et al.*) and off Hatteras June 5 (BP). The only Masked Booby was off Hatteras June 5 (BP). Providing a rare mid-summer report, a N. Gannet was off Hatteras July 27 (BP *et al.*). Anhingas continue to increase in some areas of the Region. An excellent count of 110 were at the Savannah Spoil Site, *Jasper*, SC July 17 (SC). Also, a first

