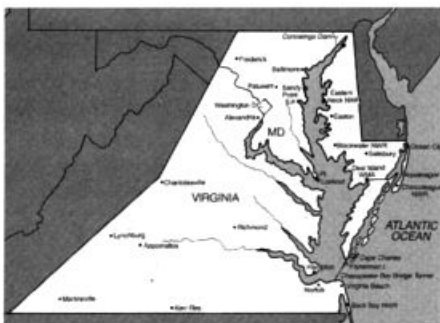


# middle atlantic coast



## Marshall J. Iliff

Report to **James L. Stasz**

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**O**f tremendous assistance in preparing this report was online access to Regional Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data (<http://birdsource.cornell.edu/cbc/index.html>). In previous seasons it has been a struggle to have even half of the Regional CBC results in hand by the end of the season. Whereas those data lack the specifics of location and observer that we prefer, they still add tremendously to the body of reports for the season, to our ability to assess average trends, and to make general statements about relative abundances. We still implore CBC compilers to send us specific data for the more unusual species. Below I cite numerous CBC reports without credit to observers or compilers: most of these were taken directly from the above web site, where at least the compiler can be referenced. Where I had specific information on observers and locations, they are listed in addition. As always, due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland; however, each Virginia locale is annotated the *first time* it appears.

**Abbreviations:** Assat. (Assateague Island National Seashore, Worcester, MD); Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Northampton, VA); CBC (Christmas Bird Count); Conow. (Conowingo Dam, Harford/Cecil, MD); D.C. (District of Columbia); Deal (Deal Island W.M.A., Somerset, MD); E.S.V.N.W.R. (Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R., Northampton, VA); Kipt. (Kiptopeke S.P., Northampton, VA); P.R.N.A.S. (Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Saint Mary's, MD); P.L.S.P. (Point Lookout State Park, Saint Mary's, MD).

## LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A count of 1362 Red-throated Loons 31 Dec at Bethel Beach Preserve, *Mathews*, VA, was excellent for the Bay (JBB). A report of **Pacific Loon**, still with only a few confirmed Regional records, was presumably well-documented from the Little Creek, VA, CBC 31 Dec. An impressive flight of Horned Grebes arrived at P.L.S.P. 15 Feb, when over 2000 were counted (PC), but apparently the bulk was gone the next day. Red-necked Grebes were reported from three VA CBCs, and singles were seen 13 Feb at Ocean City Inlet, *Worcester* (JLS), and the C.B.B.T. (KG). Eared Grebes appeared at Little Creek for the CBC 31 Dec, Ocean City Inlet 29 Jan (GM, P&ED, C.&G. Vaughn), and Kipt. 31 Jan (D. Clark).

The Virginia Beach pelagic trip 12 Feb (BPa et al.) found 35 N. Fulmars. Northern Gannets remained in numbers in the middle Bay at P.L.S.P. through 6 Jan, when 50 were estimated (MJI). Late lingering Brown Pelicans provided a 2nd *Charles* record at Rock Pt. 10 Dec (D. Perry), while two at P.L.S.P. 26 Dec and five at P.R.N.A.S. 3 Jan provided long-awaited firsts for any Maryland CBC. Great Cormorants were well-represented on middle Bay CBCs, but one at Conow. 16 Jan (EB, EJS) was an outlier. Two Anhingas at Sawpen Pt., Virginia Beach, VA, 24 Dec (TB) were at the same location where one has been found in the past two winters. Deal produced rare January herons, including one Snowy Egret and 33 Tricolored Herons 1 Jan (RFR), two Snowy Egrets (GMJ) and an ad. Little Blue Heron 8 Jan (GLA et al.). The extremely rare Green Heron was found on the Bowie, *Prince George's*, CBC 26 Dec and the Chincoteague, VA, CBC 29 Dec. The only Yellow-crowned Night-Heron was on the Wachapreague, VA, CBC 18 Dec, while the Cape Charles CBC continued to record a wintering White Ibis flock on Fisherman I., with 73 counted 30 Dec.

Greater White-fronted Geese were not much in evidence until late winter, when one appeared at Chino Farms, *Queen Anne's*, 28 Jan (H. Sears), two adults were found at Park Hall, *Saint Mary's*, 29 Jan+ (KR, m.ob.), and one adult was at Choptank, *Caroline*, 20 Feb (ph. GMJ). An adult that dropped in for a stopover 25–26

Feb (A. Ripley, TH, JLS) at a small pond in Victoria Station was a *Calvert* first and the only bird specifically noted as orange-billed. Some 13 individual Ross's Geese were reported; the species is remarkably easy to find in either state anywhere that Snow Geese concentrate. An ad. blue-morph Ross's at Sparks Rd., *Caroline*, 18 Dec (JLS) was only the third to be reported in Maryland. An unbanded ad. Barnacle Goose at Jesterville Rd., *Wicomico*, 6–12 Feb (†D&CB, ph. JLS, v.o.) constituted the 19th report for Maryland. The species is not yet accepted on the state list, though the preponderance of records in November and early winter support natural origin (see discussion by Ringler in *Maryland Birdlife* 44:35). Only seven Richardson's (Canada) Geese (*Branta canadensis hutchinsii*) were reported. Wood Ducks remained in better-than-average numbers, with a high count of 134 on the Wachapreague CBC 18 Dec. Returnees were evident as early as mid-Feb. A male Eur. Green-winged Teal at n. E. A. Vaughn W.M.A., *Worcester*, 12–13 Feb (SHD) may have been the same bird seen there in the spring of 1998 and 1999. Ruddy Shelducks were reported from three locations. Of six reports of Eur. Wigeon, the most notable were the four on the Ocean City CBC 28 Dec, which included two males and one female on Assateague I. (MJI, JLS, MHa, KF) and another male at Ocean Pines. The highlight of the season for many was the ad. male **Tufted Duck** (p.a., ph., vt., m.ob.) found in D.C. near National Airport on the Potomac River. First spotted by Halpin on 29 Jan, the bird was later seen in D.C. waters through 31 Jan, before relocating downriver to *Prince George's*, MD, 6–9 Feb, and finally reappearing at Haines Pt., D.C., 13–22 Feb. In its travels this bird provided firsts for D.C. and *Prince George's* and only the 3rd ever for Maryland. Other Tufteds found in NJ and DE suggest a natural influx. King Eiders were essentially not present this year, with reports on three single dates from widely scattered locations, while Com. Eiders were limited to one on the C.B.B.T. and a single ad. male at Ocean City 29 Dec (v.o.). Harlequin Ducks were found at their usual haunts at Ocean City and the C.B.B.T.

**SA** What must have been an unusual concentration of bait fish close to shore resulted in an extraordinary concentration of fish-eating birds along the Virginia shore in mid-February. Looking between Back Bay and Sandbridge, VA, Pearce estimated some 12,000 Northern Gannets and 4000 Red-breasted Mergansers on 13 Feb. Those bird concentrations in turn attracted the jaegers: he saw two Parasitics there 12 Feb and one Pomarine 13 Feb.

### HAWKS THROUGH ALCIDS

Some 20 Ospreys were reported on 11 dates this season, exclusively from Virginia. Presumably the mild weather spurred some to attempt wintering in the more temperate Virginia estuaries. The first returnee was on schedule 29 Feb (DB). Six N. Goshawks were below expectations after a good fall flight. The ad. dark *calurus* **Red-tailed Hawk** reported last year returned to spend a second winter at the I-66/Rte. 236 interchange, *Prince William*, VA, with reports through at least 22 Feb (C. French). This year was superb for Rough-legged Hawks, with reports from traditional locations as well from many atypical locations. There were at least 20 VA reports, mostly from the Piedmont, with another three on the Wachapreague CBC 18 Dec and two on the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec. Sixty Merlin reports for the season may have been a new Regional high, but was due in part to easy online access to CBC data. Among a swarm of Peregrine Falcon reports, one inland at Wakefield, *Carroll*, 22 Jan (RFR) was the most unusual. The only Sora reports hailed from s. VA, while single Com. Moorhens were noted on the Back Bay CBC 29 Dec and Huntley Meadows, *Fairfax*, VA, with an imm. 12–17 Jan (E. Hynes, AR, JBB). The Sandhill Crane from the fall at Tarbutton Mill Rd., *Talbot*, stayed through 17 Jan (D. Powell).

Three Semipalmated Plovers at the Eagle's Nest campground mudflats, *Worcester*, 28 Dec (MJI, JLS, HLW), and two there 8 Jan (GLA et al.) provided among few winter records for MD. The 58 Semipalmated Plovers on the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec (*fide* HTA) was an excellent count. Numbers of Am. Oystercatchers remained in *Mathews*, VA, with 12 recorded on that CBC. The Am. Avocet at Fisherman I. for the Cape Charles CBC, 30 Dec (†MJI), was the only one this season. Continuing a recent trend, Lesser Yellowlegs were widely reported from locations in coastal Virginia and Maryland,

though generally in small numbers, while Willets wintered again in the Ocean City area, with a high of nine on the CBC 28 Dec and two at the Eagle's Nest mudflats 8 Jan (MHa et al.). Other rare winter shorebirds were Spotted Sandpipers on two coastal VA CBCs, three Whimbrels on the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec, a Spotted on the Newport News, VA, CBC 18 Dec, and a Spotted Sandpiper and a single Piping Plover on the Chincoteague CBC 29 Dec; the plover furnished one of few recent winter reports in the Region. Red Knots were found only at Cedar I. 18 Dec (HTA et al.), Assateague I. 28 Dec (HLW et al.), and Ocean City 29 Jan (GM). Least Sandpipers were comparatively scarce on CBCs this season. Long-billed Dowitchers were found wintering in Maryland for the second straight year, though there are only a couple of previous winter records. Six were on the S. *Dorchester* CBC 27 Dec, a stellar 41 were counted at South Pt., *Worcester*, 28 Dec (D. Mozurkewich) for the Ocean City CBC, and three were at Elliott I., *Dorchester*, 24 Feb (W. Bell *fide* HTA). Either dowitcher is extremely rare in Maryland in winter, but the Short-billed Dowitcher is expected as a winterer on Virginia's Eastern Shore, where 105 were counted on the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec.

A Great Skua was an extraordinary from-shore sighting from Back Bay N.W.R. on the CBC 29 Dec (ESB), while an intermediate imm. Parasitic Jaeger was at the C.B.B.T. 19 Dec (ESB, BLS). Laughing Gulls showed a taper similar to past years, with concentrations lingering through Christmas at a few specific estuarine locales (e.g. 2260 on the Hopewell, VA, CBC and hundreds on the D.C. CBC 19 Dec), followed by a rapid and immediate disappearance. No cold snap or front appeared to prompt their withdrawal. The 17 reports after 25 Dec were mostly of single birds or small groups at the coast, Tidewater Virginia, or in the D.C. basin area, except for high counts of 48 at the C.B.B.T. 26 Dec, 85 on the Little Creek CBC, 28 on the Nansemond R. CBC 2 Jan, and 150 on the Dismal Swamp CBC 3 Jan. The latest were one at Schoolhouse Pond 12 Jan (TH) and four at Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA, 23 Jan (S. Suter). A late second-winter Franklin's Gull was reported near Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester*, 4–5 Dec (SHD, B. Odear). A first-winter Little Gull joined the large seabird concentration at Virginia Beach 13 Jan (BP), while others were at Ocean City 29 Dec (MJI, HLW et al.), on the Little Creek, VA, CBC 31 Dec, at Ft. Story 23 Feb (D. Worley et al.), and an ad. at the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, *Calvert*, 25 Feb (DB) through the end

of the season. There were six reports of Black-headed Gull. The **Black-tailed Gull** returned to the C.B.B.T. 26 Dec (BLS et al.) and remained through the season, though no second bird was seen this winter. An ad. **California Gull** was a great find for inland Virginia at the *Fauquier* Landfill 19 Dec (B. Abrams, B. Tarter, J. Bourdreau). Maryland's reliable **Kelp Gull** persisted through the season and was recorded on the Patuxent River CBC 3 Jan. Probable hybrid Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gulls were seen at Salisbury Landfill, *Wicomico*, 15 Jan (ph. MJI) and Jug Bay 22 Jan (DC), while an apparent Great Black-backed x Herring Gull was at Ocean City Inlet 19 Feb (vt. DC). Reports of Thayer's Gulls came mostly from Conowingo Dam where 1–2 ad. were seen from 26 Dec (EB) on and where a first-winter was recorded 21 Feb (JLS, MHa), but also from Salisbury Landfill 18 Jan (SHD), Jug Bay 19 Dec (MJI), and Schoolhouse Pond 24 Jan (JLS), all first-winters. Reports of 12 Iceland and 4 Glaucous Gulls were indicative of a sub-par winter for gulling in the Region. A first-winter **Yellow-legged Gull** found at the C.B.B.T. 16 Dec was well-described by Brinkley. A number of subsequent reports over the next month were difficult to evaluate due to lack of details, especially dangerous with so tricky an identification. Apparently no photos were taken. In addition to a county-first ad. Black-legged Kittiwake at P.L.S.P. 26 Dec (KR, GM), a fair number of kittiwakes were seen from shore along the coast 17 Dec–9 Jan (seven reports), when three ad. were seen from Assat. (MJI et al.). Forster's Terns lingered through the CBC season but were scarcely reported thereafter, with the latest being one at Ocean City Inlet 15 Jan (MJI, MHa), followed by the three (presumed) early returnees at Leonardtown 25 Feb (PC). One on Kent I., *Queen Anne's*, 5 Jan (H. A. Patten) and two at Leonardtown 7 Jan (PC) were unusually late in the Bay. A Black Skimmer at Cedar I. 18 Dec (HTA et al.) and three on the Little Creek CBC 31 Dec were unusually late. The 140+ Razorbills on the 12 Feb pelagic trip from Virginia Beach (BP et al.) were the only alcids recorded.

### OWLS THROUGH THRUSHES

Short-eared Owls were in excellent numbers this year, evidenced by widespread reports from old and new locations and by a high count of 21 on the S. *Dorchester* CBC 29 Dec. One to three were much enjoyed all winter long at Bull Run Post Office Rd. for a rare *Fairfax*, VA, sighting (m.ob.).

A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was reported on the Newport News CBC 18

Dec. Single Rufous Hummingbirds stayed at Brandywine, *Prince George's*, through 1 Jan (†P. Dowell, GM, ph., vt., v.o.), while the ad. female in *Carroll* remained through 6 Jan (*vide* MG). Both departed on warm days and presumably moved south. Such an event certainly occurred in Virginia. Mary Martin's feeder in Vienna, *Fairfax*, VA, hosted the ad. female banded in November, dubbed "Spot," as well as a second ad. female ("Reds") which was first noted 7 Dec and was banded 17 Dec (MG). Both remained through 20 Feb, with one present the next day, and not seen thereafter. Amazingly though, "Spot" appeared 29 Feb at Stacy Gombar's Lorton, *Fairfax*, VA, feeder 15 miles to the south!

The excellent N. Shrike year continued, with one at Bull Run Post Office Rd. 5 Dec–6 Jan (KG, m.ob.), one ad. at Orndorff Rd., *Frederick*, 11–19 Dec (ph. MJI, JLS, WLH, v.o.), one ad. at U.S. Naval Academy Dairy Farm, *Anne Arundel*, 13–19 Jan (ph. †MJI, T. Wright), one at Cap Stine Rd. *Frederick*, 30 Dec–2 Jan (C. Barnard, v.o.), one at Lilypons, *Frederick*, 2 Jan (BC, P. O'Brien), and one at Black Hills Res., *Montgomery*, 2 Jan (AR), the latter three for the Sugarloaf CBC and a record high one-day CBC total for Maryland. This invasion was the best ever for Maryland. More exciting given their recent population crash were a couple of Loggerhead Shrikes, including one at Sky Meadows S.P., *Fauquier*, VA, 12 Feb (S. Baron) and one at Burke's Garden, *Tazewell*, VA 13 Feb (D.&L. Martin) and 26 Feb (H.&B. Blevins). Another shrike species was seen just s. of *Frederick*, *Frederick*, 16 Jan (S. J. Huy). Three White-eyed Vireos on the Dismal Swamp CBC 3 Jan came from the one area in the Region where they winter regularly. Blue-headed Vireos are more regular in winter, especially in Tidewater, VA, where they were recorded on three counts, including ten on the Dismal Swamp CBC 3 Jan. In Maryland, where much rarer, one on Rumbley Pt. Rd., *Somerset*, 30 Dec (C&DB) continued a recent string of winter reports from the Lower Eastern Shore.

Unusual so late away from the coast were four Tree Swallows on the 2 Jan Ft. Belvoir CBC and one at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, D.C., 8 Jan (PP). Three **Cave Swallows** at Grandview Beach, Hampton, VA, 18 Dec (†BT) followed closely on the heels of November reports from Virginia's Eastern Shore and across the Northeast. Three Black-capped Chickadee at Conow. 30 Dec (EB) and one at Dameron, *Saint*

*Mary's*, from 28 Jan (ph. PC) well into Feb were the only out-of-range birds noted. Red-breasted Nuthatches continued in fair numbers through the winter. Brown-headed Nuthatches in *Calvert* included three at Calvert Cliffs S.P. 9 Jan (CMM) and one at Lloyd Bowen Rd. 12–27 Feb (T. Bell, v.o.) were surprising, as there are only two Western Shore reports away from known nesting areas in *Saint Mary's* and the Solomon's area of *Calvert*, 10 mi south. The Cape Charles CBC again led the Region in House Wren numbers 30 Dec, with 30 again this year, mostly from E.S.V.N.W.R.. Golden-crowned Kinglet numbers were incredibly depressed, especially obvious from CBC totals where Golden-crowned was outnumbered by Ruby-crowned. Almost no counts hit triple digits. Some exceptional Am. Robin counts came from Eastern Shore CBCs, such as 3282 from *Crisfield* 27 Dec, 7957 from *Chincoteague* 29 Dec, and 30,000 from *Ocean City* 28 Dec. Amazingly, Cape Charles, at the tip of the Delmarva peninsula, counted only 57 Am. Robins!

#### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Orange-crowned Warblers were obviously more common than usual this CBC season, with widespread reports and record-high counts of five on the *Crisfield*, *Somerset*, CBC 27 Dec and six on the *Ocean City* CBC 28 Dec. A Yellow Warbler on the *Little Creek* CBC 31 Dec provided one of few winter records for the Region. Good numbers of Palm Warblers were reported widely from the Coastal Plain CBCs. Other rare but regular warblers included single Black-and-white Warblers at *Easton W.T.P.*, *Talbot*, 10 Dec (D. Kleen), on the *Newport News* CBC 18 Dec, and at an *Annandale*, VA, hummingbird feeder 23 Dec (N. Love); one Ovenbird on the *Newport News* CBC 30 Dec and two on the *Dismal Swamp* CBC 2 Jan; and single Yellow-breasted Chats at *Bywater Rd.*, *Annapolis*, *Anne Arundel*, 16 Dec (BC), and at an *Oxford*, *Talbot*, feeder 31 Dec and in the two weeks prior (R. Stone). A female **Audubon's Warbler** at s. E. A. Vaughn W.M.A. 29 Dec (†M. O'Brien, L. Zemaitis) provided Maryland's 2nd well-documented record.

A male **Western Tanager** at a *Fairhaven*, *Anne Arundel*, feeder for "a couple days" around 9 Feb (v.t. S. Dobert) provided Maryland's 3rd well-documented record. A Clay-colored Sparrow near *Berlin* 28 Dec (GM) for the *Ocean City* CBC was in a productive field that was later found to host a second Clay-colored Sparrow from 1 Jan on

**SA** The rarity of the season was the ad. female **Townsend's Warbler** discovered by George Armistead (†) at Devil's Ditch, just one mile n. of Kiptopeke S.P., *Northampton*, VA, on the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec. Relocated and photographed the next day (m.ob., †GLA, ph. †MJI), it remained to be seen by a number of people through at least 12 Jan. The bird was found in diverse forest along a field edge where a holly swamp met Loblolly Pine woods, with scattered Red Cedar along the edges which the bird appeared to favor. A large insect hatch was noted the day of its discovery and the location was obviously a hotspot for lingering birds, evidenced both by the expected two Blue-headed Vireos wintering in the same area and the shocking presence of different individual N. Parulas 30 Dec (BLS) and 31 Dec (ESB)!

(RFR, v.o.) and, perhaps more surprisingly and extremely rare on the coast in the Region, an Am. Tree Sparrow 9–16 Jan (JLS et al., v.o.). Generally speaking this year did not seem to be a good for Am. Tree Sparrows, though the winter storms in late Jan–Feb resulted in a spate of reports as birds were driven to backyard feeders and roadsides. Chipping Sparrows at three n. VA feeders 26 Feb (v.o.) were apparently the vanguard of a spring arrival. Fascinating were the four Lark Sparrow reports this winter. Maryland has three prior winter records, but this year one was at *Bywater Rd.*, *Annapolis*, *Anne Arundel*, 15 Dec+ (ph. †MJI, m.ob.), one at *Jug Bay Farm*, *Anne Arundel*, 25 Dec–21 Jan (DBY, m.ob., ph. MJI), another off *Beachville Rd.*, *Saint Mary's*, 23–24 Jan (†PC, AB), and one off *Bristerburg Rd.*, *Fauquier*, 29 Jan (TMD, KG). The latter two birds were found when large numbers of sparrows were pushed to roadsides by heavy snows. The 58 Ipswich Sparrows on the *Ocean City* CBC 28 Dec were mostly on the n. end of *Assat*, where thorough coverage in recent years has been producing record counts. A Seaside Sparrow on the *Pt. Lookout* CBC 26 Dec was a great rarity for the Western Shore in winter. Eight Lincoln's Sparrow reports hailed from the CBC season and were split between the Piedmont and Tidewater VA. This was the winter of the **Harris's Sparrow** in the Region. The ad. at the *Sykesville*, *Carroll*, feeder remained through the season, while an imm. found by *Stasz* 30 Dec (p.a., ph., †m.ob.) at cen. E. A.

**SA** The number of Le Conte's Sparrow reports this year provides an inkling that the species may winter regularly even farther north in the Region than previously thought. Maryland has only eight prior records, three that wintered, five that may have wintered, but only one obvious migrant. This year one was in a hammock in a *Spartina patens* saltmarsh at Irish Grove, *Somerset*, 4 Dec (†MJI, ph. GMJ, GM) and 27 Dec (†P. Bystrak et al.), one was near Cornfield Harbor, *Saint Mary's*, 26 Dec–6 Jan (p.a., †MJI, JLS, m.ob.), one was at central E.A. Vaughn 29 Dec (†MJI, †MH), and one was at north E. A. Vaughn W.M.A. 8 Jan (†GLA, MHa, †MJI, JLS) and again in the spring season. The last three birds were the result of focused searches for the species and all were found in similar habitat, short grass on pond or marsh edges with a substantial broomsedge (*Andropogon*) and *Panicum*

*virgatum* component. Observers who key in on this habitat may help confirm that the species winters regularly on the Coastal Plain in Maryland (and Delaware?), especially in coastal *Worcester*. Also interestingly, the birds at Irish Grove and north E. A. Vaughn were at the exact sites of previous records, while the *Saint Mary's* bird was two miles away from that county's only prior record. The extent to which the species may use saltmarsh habitat (as at Irish Grove) is unclear. In Virginia the species was believed similarly rare until found regularly on the Back Bay CBC almost 10 years ago. This year six were found at Back Bay N.W.R. for the CBC 29 Dec (GLA et al.), while another at nearby Princess Anne W.M.A. that day (DLH) was seen through at least 17 Feb (v.o.). The individual at E.S.V.N.W.R. reported in the fall season provided a Cape Charles CBC first 30 Dec (BLS, BT).

Vaughn W.M.A. provided a first confirmed *Worcester* record; it lingered through at least 16 Jan (GMJ). Virginia had its share, too, when Gaskill discovered an ad. (†m.ob.) on Bull Run Post Office Rd. 10 Dec. and Bev Leeuwenberg et al. discovered an imm. at the same location the next day. The ad. was last reported 16 Jan (DLH), while the imm. was last found 23 Jan (K. Hollinga). The **Pink-sided Junco** reported in the Fall Season was seen to at least 29 Jan (BT, B. Williams), though it was hardly looked for after the CBC season. Lapland Longspurs were well-reported from typical areas, but a flock of 100 consorting with 50 Snow Buntings in early January at P.R.N.A.S.(KR, v.o.) was a remarkable concentration. Winter Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are unusual, but one male was at Deal 15 Dec (D&CB) and another ad. male frequented a Friendship, *Howard*, feeder from mid-Nov–16 Jan (J. McKegg). A female Painted Bunting was at Pembroke Elementary School, Virginia Beach, 27 Dec (TB). A Dickcissel in a House Sparrow flock was much-enjoyed at L. Elkhorn, Columbia, *Howard*, 9 Dec–19 Jan (SA, ph., m.ob.). Dickcissels at Kipt. (1) and E.S.V.N.W.R. (4) for the 30 Dec Cape Charles CBC made a remarkable total for this species, which is usually missed on Regional CBCs.

The single flock of 300 E. Meadowlarks in saltmarsh habitat at E. A. Vaughn W.M.A. 8 Jan (MJI et al.) was a concentration not matched in recent years. Yellow-headed Blackbirds this year included single ad. males flying by with blackbird flocks at Conow. 26

Dec and 16 Jan (EB) and ad. males at feeders in Laurel, *Howard*, 12 Dec (C.&D. Morvath) and Upper Marlboro, *Prince George's*, 30 Jan (*vide* CMM). Brewer's Blackbirds were found at Powell Rd., *Somerset*, 7 Dec (C&DB), on the Dismal Swamp CBC 3 Jan, Mulberry I., Richmond, VA, with a female 8 Jan (†F. Atwood), Pemberton Park, Salisbury, *Wicomico*, 23 Jan (SHD), and Munden Rd., Virginia Beach, where two were seen 29 Jan (AW, TG). Fifteen reports of Baltimore Oriole, 10 from CBCs, was well above average and included the high count of five on the Hopewell, VA, CBC 19 Dec.

Purple Finches were common only at the w. edges of the Region, while Pine Siskins were relatively hard to come by after the excellent fall flight. Red Crossbill reports came from seven locations and none lingered. The high was 17 at Assat. 28 Dec (MJI et al.). A flyover White-winged Crossbill was at Glen Echo, *Montgomery*, 7 Dec (DC), three flew over Bywater Rd. 17 Dec (MJI, GMJ, GM), and a male visited Baker Park, *Frederick*, 27 Dec (*vide* WLH). Others visiting feeders included a female 9 Jan (K. Darcy) in Ellicott City, *Howard*, and a male 16 Jan in Salisbury (P&ED). In Virginia, where there are far fewer records, two visited a Portsmouth feeder, where they were enjoyed 18 Dec+ (m.ob.). Of the 12 Com. Redpoll reports, the 37 that flew by Sunset Beach for the Cape Charles CBC 30 Dec (ESB, BPa) and the seven on the Lower Kent CBC 19 Dec were the only reports of multiples. Evening Grosbeaks were reported only five times over the winter.

#### Observers (area compilers in boldface):

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Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. In most regions, place names given in italic type are counties. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *North American Birds* are keyed on page 149.

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