

numbers in the L. Oneida Basin. The southernmost explorers reached only the Finger Lakes and the mid-Hudson valley, however. Having nested abundantly in the Adirondacks for two years, White-winged Crossbills were ready to spill into the lowlands when the cone crop failed. They are the likely origin of small flocks that hurried down the outer beaches and along interior ridges in late Oct and then disappeared, probably finding little food. The best places for them were Long I. barrier beaches (24 at Jones Beach 31 Oct; JF), Hawk Mt. (41 total, maximum 10 on 3 & 16 Nov), and Cape May (about 40 total for the season, *vide* PL). Only a handful reached interior lowlands, and the s limits were *Bucks*, PA and S. Bethany Beach, DE 13 Nov (Lorraine Logan). Red Crossbills followed a different nomadic pattern. Totally absent from the Adirondacks, they were limited elsewhere in New York to a sprinkling in the Oneida L. basin and on Long I. Only s. New Jersey had numbers—e.g., 60 around Cape May 11 Nov, with many more over the remainder of the month and later there. The only inland report was one at L. Nockamixon S. P., *Bucks*, PA 6 Nov (AM). At Cape May, several forms seemed to be involved, suggesting w. origins. Common Redpolls, numerous on L. Ontario, ranged to Hawk Mt. (12; maximum 5 on 6 Nov) and down the coast as far as cen. Delaware. Pine Siskins, American Goldfinches, and Purple Finches mounted real invasions, though the latter were still below historic levels. Evening Grosbeaks, despite having bred in the Adirondacks last summer, remained a faint echo of the past. The largest of a dozen lowland reports were 24 at Hummelstown, *Dauphin*, PA 12 Nov (Jan Getgood) and 10 at Villas, *Cape May*, NJ 30 Oct (D. Dowdell).

EXOTICS

Up to 6 Eurasian Collared-Doves hung around Selby, DE (Irene Goverts, m. ob., ph. Chip Krilowicz), near the Maryland border, where the first state record was established in 1998. Ringed Turtle-Doves, a feral form sold by pet dealers, have also been reported in Delaware, so *Streptopelia* doves need careful scrutiny. A Serin was photographed 29 Sep at Fort Tilden, Brooklyn, NY (Steve Nanz). As a popular cage bird, it is presumed an escapee. Even so, having spread massively westward across Europe this century (like Eurasian Collared-Doves), Serins are a potential candidate for natural vagrancy.

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Middle Atlantic Coast



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This fall, there were only a few excellent migration days noted, and the very low number of classic cold fronts through much of the season made for a comparatively slow sea-

son at the Region's major hawk watch at Kiptopeke. Persistent dry conditions after early August reduced shorebird habitat at Chincoteague and elsewhere, and the drought might also have reduced mast production (spoty over the Region) and insects available for migrants and early wintering birds, which were markedly low in number in the southern parts of the Region in Nov and later. Several good landbird flights were noted on Virginia's Eastern Shore, but otherwise the season's emphasis was on the excellent cadre of rarities. A few other events of note were the above-average numbers of Mississippi Kites and American Avocets, a stellar number of *Selasphorus* in Virginia (and I'll bet next year beats this one...), a good Northern Saw-whet Owl year, and a bit of a winter finch flight. Many have remarked on the cruel irony that the birds seemed to know nothing of the human events of 11 Sep, a day of marvelous landbird migration on the outer coast; I found it impossible to list bird sightings from that day without somber reflection. My heart goes out to all those whose lives were changed by that day's events.

Abbreviations: Assat. (Assateague I., Worcester, MD), Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, s. of Northampton, VA); Chinc. (Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA); C.R.W.B. (Cedar Run Wetlands Bank, Prince William, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); Hart (Hart-Miller Dredge Spoil Containment Facility, Baltimore, MD); Kipt. (Kiptopeke State Park, Northampton, VA); Middle Bay (Chesapeake Bay, MD, from Virginia line to Bay Bridge); N.F.W.B. (North Fork Wetlands Bank, Prince William, VA); p. a. (pending acceptance by state records committee); Upper Bay (Chesapeake Bay, MD, n. of Bay Bridge); U.M.C.F. (Univ of Maryland Central Farm, Howard, MD); Vaughn (E.A. Vaughn W.M.A., Worcester, MD). Note that due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland except that each Virginia location is so noted the *first time* it is mentioned.

LOONS THROUGH RAPTORS

A Red-throated Loon at Terrapin Pt., *Queen Anne's* 29 Sep (JLS, MH, ZB) tied the record-early fall arrival date. Eared Grebes were at Hurlock WTP, *Dorchester* for the 2nd straight year on 8 Sep (MH, ZB, vt. JLS) and 27 Oct (SA, JD). An unidentified procellariid, thought to be a dark-morph Northern Fulmar, was noted briefly from the C.B.B.T. 22 Oct (RLA). Finding a White-faced Storm-Petrel is now believed to be only a matter of effort—lay enough chum off the mid-Atlantic between mid-Aug and mid-Sep, and you'll get one eventually. After several specific searches in Aug (ESB, MJI et al.), a juv. **White-faced Storm-**

Petrel was finally recorded off Virginia Beach 23 Sep (p. a. ESB, ph. BP, vt. RLA, m. ob.) among some 1500 Wilson's Storm-Petrels that day. There are five previous records for Virginia and two for Maryland.

An American White Pelican at the e. end of the Bay Bridge, *Queen Anne's* 12 Nov (p. a. B. Peterjohn) may have been the same bird that has been wandering around Bodkin and Poplar Is. for the past two summers. Eight passing Kipt. 8 Nov (CB et al.) and 4 there 17 Nov (CB) were more typical, as they are seen nearly annually at this location, though 8 was the highest count for this site; the only higher count on the Eastern Shore was of 15 seen just n. of Kiptopeke 25 Mar 1989 (A. B. 43: 459). Three Northern Gannets at Assat. 24 Aug (MLH) add to a growing body of summer reports of the species. Upper Bay Great Cormorants were early 2 (E. Blom) & 15 (MH, JLS) Sep at Havre de Grace, *Harford*, and Hart 8 Sep (EJS et al.). At least one Anhinga was noted at Stumpy L., VA through 11 Aug (Lauren Scott).

A singing Least Bittern at N.F.W.B. 15 Aug (SR) was unusual in the Virginia Piedmont; it did not breed here and probably represented a dispersing bird, as must have been the case with the one along Rte. 309, *Queen Anne's* 19 Aug (MJI, TMD, HM). The premier Maryland rarity this season was the **Great White Heron** (p. a.) astutely identified by Peters 26 Sep at Ft. McHenry, near downtown Baltimore. It was relocated and photographed the next day (ph. MJI), seen, photographed, and videotaped (JLS) by many observers through 30 Sep, and constituted a first Maryland record. Given that other individuals appeared in New Jersey (Jun), New York (2, Sep-Nov), and Delaware (Nov-Jan), something unusual was clearly afoot. A Tricolored Heron continued at Hart 1 Aug (EJS et al.), while one imm. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Ft. McHenry was fairly late 28 Sep (MH, JLS).

Maryland's 4th **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** record came 14 Aug (p. a. †DBY) when one ad. was seen flying in to roost at dusk on Jug Bay, *Anne Arundel*. The excellent description included details of the vocalization as well as plumage. Apparently the bird was seen nearby earlier in the day from a canoe (G. Kearns, *vide* JLS). Virginia has one specimen record but just a few unconfirmed sight reports otherwise. A Greater White-fronted Goose returned to *Fauquier*, VA 1 Oct (S. Heath), with another nearby 22 Oct (TMD). Ross's Geese have become so routine that I no longer list sightings, but a family group of 4 at Chinc. at least 17-25 Nov (E. G. & C. F. Poole, Gary Graves) was noted to contain 2 blue morphs, an ad. and an imm.; this morph is still quite rare in the Region, with no reports substantiated with photographs yet. A Brant noted

at Assat. 8 Sep (MH, ZB) probably summered, while singles at Chesapeake Beach, *Calvert* 1 Oct (DBY) and Crofton, *Anne Arundel* 22 Oct (D Perry) were at unusual locations. A flock of **16** small Canada Geese, presumed to be *hutchinsii*, was seen at Chino Farms 4 Nov (MH, JG) This is the largest group yet noted in the Region A male Eurasian Wigeon was at West Ocean City Pond, *Worcester* 20-27 Oct (MH et al., vt. JLS), where it has been almost annual. Eiders continue to show poorly in the Region, with one Common at the C.B.B.T. 29 Oct (KK), 2 at Ocean City Inlet 10 Nov (J.B. Churchill), and an imm. male at Chinc. 24 Nov+ (A. Merritt, v o)

A Ruddy Shelduck of uncertain provenance was at Jug Bay 21 Aug (FF); although it is common in captivity, this highly dispersive species has reached Greenland and Nunavut as a vagrant—as well as Iceland, the Faeroes, Madeira, and other Atlantic islands (see Allard, K., K. McKay, and L. McKinnonby. 2001 Sighting of Ruddy Shelducks at East Bay, Southampton Island, Nunavut. *Birder's Journal* 10: 86-89). Its nearest nesting areas are in nw Africa. Records of wary, unbanded individuals from this Region come from Chinc. 9-31 Jul 1979 (A. B. 33: 851; VARCOM Archive) and 4-13 Jul 1980 (A. B. 34: 882). Observers should keep track of all waterfowl species, even those suspected of being former captives.

There was some kind of mini-invasion of Mississippi Kites in the Region in Aug-Sep, an unusual time for this species to appear in the Region; it has historically appeared mostly in May-Jun. The first kite was a single in Doswell, *Hanover*, VA 3 Aug (PP); others were one at Ellicott City 29 Aug, for a *Howard* 2nd (†BO, †EH); 2 ads. in Chesapeake, VA 15 Aug (D Clark); one imm. at Bowie 21 Aug (FF); one at Schoolhouse Pond 21 Aug (JLS) and 2 imms there 10 Sep (JLS); a juv. at Kipt. 25 Aug (CB), and one at the intersection of I-495 and I-66, Arlington, VA 8 Sep (Lawry Sager). Most unusual was the sighting of 2 ads. perching together near Passapae Landing, *Caroline* 19 Aug (ph. MJI, ph. TMD, HM) just a few km from where one was reported in Jul. Though not seen on subsequent days, it is tempting to speculate that this was in fact a pair and that there may have been a nesting attempt in the area. The species is not known to have bred n. of n. Virginia.

Brennan returned for his 2nd fall season as hawk counter at Kipt. and logged 803.6 hours 25 Aug-30 Nov. The season total 31,401 raptors of 17 species (including vultures) was similar to last year's total but well below the seven-year average which is still influenced by the exceptionally high counts of 1995-1997. A highlight of this fall's hawkwatch at Kipt. was a single juv. light-morph **Swainson's Hawk** 28 Sep (CB), the first at this

location since 1998, when there was a record-high count of 8. Selected season totals were: 8998 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 7307 American Kestrels (both near the four-year average), 147 Red-shouldered Hawks (3rd highest), 10 Golden Eagles (2nd lowest), 3 Northern Goshawks (ties low), 627 Broad-winged and 752 Red-tailed Hawks, 950 Merlins, and 439 Peregrine Falcons (all seven-year lows). There were no significant one-day counts, with the season peak coming 26 Sep with 1233 raptors counted and the Sharp-shinned peak a mere 487 on 4 Oct. A full report of the 2001 raptor season is available from Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory, P. O. Box 111, Franktown, VA 23354 <www.cvwo.org>.

RAILS THROUGH TERNS

One of the more regular vagrants along the East Coast—and the most regular North American vagrant to South Africa—an imm. **Purple Gallinule** at L. Artemesia 22 Sep (p. a. W. Stephens, †DM, †RH, †PP) was nonetheless the first for Maryland since 1988 and only the 16th reported for the state. The Dulles Greenways Black Rail continued at least through 5 Aug (au. TMD, BL). Two Sandhill Cranes were seen migrating past Kipt. 29 Oct (CB).

This was a banner year for American Avocets, with record Maryland numbers at Hart and scattered birds turning up at other locations throughout the state. The flock at Hart built from 28 on 4 Aug (EJS et al.), to 34 on 11 Aug (JLS et al.), 46 on 19 Aug (S. Ricciardi et al.), and a peak of 51 on 25 Aug (EJS et al.), before dropping off again to 23 on 1 Sep (EJS et al.). Others included a *Prince George's* first with 2 on 5 Aug (vt. RFR, DM), singles at Jug Bay, *Anne Arundell/Prince George's* 11 Aug and 30 Sep (DBY), a *Carroll* first at Westminster 3 Sep (RFR, v. o.), 9 at Herrington Harbor, *Anne Arundel* (JLS), and one at Solomons, *Calvert* 5 Sep (J. Horton). Fancy Piedmont shorebirds noted by Rottenborn included a juv. Baird's at N.F.W.B. 19 Sep, 2 American Golden-Plovers at C.R.W.B. 25 Aug (seen again 30 Aug by LC) and one on 4 Oct, an Upland Sandpiper at C.R.W.B. 23 Aug, and several Stilt Sandpipers including one ad. at C.R.W.B. 31 Jul (LC), 2 juvs. at N.F.W.B. 15 Aug, and single juv. there 5 Sep and at C.R.W.B. 23-25 Aug. Another 2 Upland Sandpipers were at the sod farm near Mannassas Regional Airport, *Prince William*, VA 3 Sep (SR), and another Baird's was at Smith Switch Rd., *Loudoun*, VA 1 Sep (BA et al.). Highlights at Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA included a Wilson's Phalarope 22-23 Sep (SS, v. o.), a Baird's Sandpiper 22 Sep (SS), and up to 2 Long-billed Dowitchers 11 Aug-23 Sep (SS, KG et al.), which may have involved numerous different individuals or just 2.

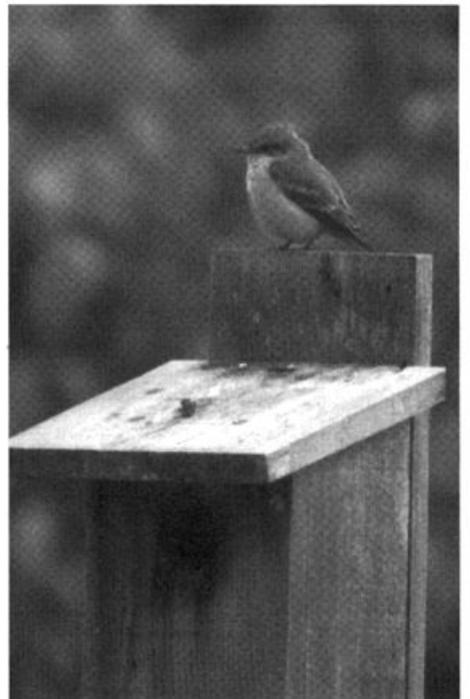
Good *Howard* and *Montgomery* shorebirds

were seen at Triadelphia Res. on a small spit off Greenbridge Rd., nearly all of which crossed into both counties. Highlights included Ruddy Turnstone, a juv. present 4-5 Sep (SA, m. ob.), a female American Avocet 7 Oct (B. & J. Metter, m. ob., ph. RC), up to 3 White-rumped Sandpipers 26 Sep-7 Oct (NM, m. ob.), 3 Stilt Sandpipers 21 Sep (JS et al.) and 2 there 25 Sep (JS, BO), and Sanderlings 20-23 Sep (SA et al.) and 20 Oct (NM). The turnstone provided a *Howard* first and the avocet a *Howard* 3rd, while the Stilt and White-rumped Sandpipers only had two and five prior records, respectively. A water-filled borrow pit near Salisbury supplied some good *Wicomico* shorebirds, including Buff-breasted Sandpiper 29-30 Aug (MJI, SHD), Baird's Sandpipers there 10 & 15 Sep (SHD), and several sightings of American Golden-Plovers, Stilt Sandpipers, and numerous White-rumped Sandpipers. Another Buff-breasted was at the Hampshire Rd. sod farm, *Wicomico* 1-2 Sep (SHD, v. o.), and a Baird's was there 26 Aug (SHD). Thirty Upland Sandpipers at the Salisbury Airport, *Wicomico* 27 Aug (SHD) was a good count. A Baird's Sandpiper at Ft. McHenry was at an unusual location and quite late 31 Oct-12 Nov (JP, EK, SS). A count of 18 Baird's Sandpipers at Hart 8 Sep (EJS et al.) was excellent, even for this most consistent Regional location. At Hart a lone Marbled Godwit was noted 25 Aug-1 Sep, and a juv. Hudsonian Godwit was present 29 Sep-6 Oct (EJS et al.). A state high count were the 4 Ruffs (all cinnamon males) at John Brown Rd., *Queen Anne's* 12 Aug (FF et al.), 2 of which may have moved several km toward Rte. 309 on 14 Aug (PW et al.). An ad. Curlew Sandpiper at Chinc. 16-21 Aug (Ron & Liz Darnell, ph. MJI, TMD et al.) was well documented; this species is less than annual in the Region. A total of 31 Purple Sandpipers at Poplar I., *Talbot* 26 Nov (MJI) was a high count for the Middle Bay, which has had comparable numbers only at Smith I., *Somerset* but was not surprising given the extensive stone rip-rap being used to build the new dikes there. One at the C.B.B.T. 20 Aug-7 Sep (BL, TMD, C. & D. Broderick) was unprecedentedly out-of-season and may have summered. A Wilson's Phalarope at Westinghouse Pond 23-24 Aug (vt. B. Schreitz, MJI) was rare for *Anne Arundel*.

An ad. Black-headed Gull at Hurlock W.T.P. with Laughing Gulls 15 Oct (ph. MJI) was a *Dorchester* 2nd and the earliest fall record for Maryland by almost a month, though neighboring Delaware has much earlier records. An ad. **California Gull** joined a first-winter Glaucous Gull at Poplar I., *Talbot* 26 Nov (p. a. †MJI) to provide a first county record and about the 18th for Maryland, with the 17th found at Hart (the 5th record there) 6 Oct (p. a. EJS et al.). One other Glaucous was noted at Sandy Pt. S.P., *Anne*

Arundel 24 Nov (HLW et al.). Although the Tullytown/Florence area continues to report three-digit Lesser Black-backed Gull numbers, our Region has not seen a similar increase, with few double-digit counts (except from the best gull areas), despite the fact that the species can be found easily in most decent gull concentrations Regionwide. Thus, a count of 15+ at *Prince William* Landfill 6 Oct (SR) was a noteworthy Regional count and was probably evidence of a migratory push. Interestingly, there was just one juv. among them, with ads. (10) predominant.

One of the more surprising Regional repeat performances occurred when Brinkley (†) and Patteson picked an **Elegant Tern** out of 130 massing Sandwich Terns at Chinc. 5 Sep, which was seen again 7 Sep by V.S.O. members arriving early for the annual field trip here (JV, BA, m. ob.). It was noted as being in second-autumn plumage by virtue of its calico leg pattern, faint secondary bar, and dusky outer rectrices. A previous record 10 Jun 1985 at the same location was found and photographed by Claudia Wilds (A. B. 39: 897) and provided a shocking first record for the East, one that had not been matched until this year. Elegant Tern has a history of long-distance vagrancy, with records over the past year in



This immature male Vermilion Flycatcher, Maryland's second, Dorchester County's first, and the Region's fourth, was found at Hurlock 1 October 2001. Most East Coast records of this species fall into the same late September to October period, most exceptions being southerly records. *Photograph by Charlotte Diedrich.*

Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida (where it nested), and previous records from as far away as France, Spain, and Ireland! The spate of records in Florida, Texas (Dec 2001), and the interior Southwest over the past year could indicate a broader movement. The Sandwich Tern flock at Chinc. peaked at 155 on 8 Sep, a rather high number here (ESB et al.). One Roseate Tern at Ocean City Inlet 3 Aug (p. a. M. A. Todd) provided a somewhat late record.

OWLS THROUGH WARBLERS

This year's Snowy Owl invasion brought one to Chinc 7 Nov (*fide* ESB), one to Assat. 10-11 Nov (PO, v. o.), and at least 2 to Poplar I., both of which died (*fide* EJS). This fall was termed the best "non-invasion year" for Northern Saw-whet Owls by owl banders; because many stations continue into Dec, details will follow in the winter season's report. A Common Nighthawk at Ellicott City 23 Oct (D. Farner) was late.

At least 5 late *Archilochus* identified as Ruby-throateds were noted in mid-Oct, with the latest lasting until 29 Nov at Chesterfield, VA (WE). Hughes's productive feeder in Portsmouth, VA hosted an apparent **Black-chinned Hummingbird** 27-29 Oct (p. a.); coincidentally, a Black-chinned was at Cape May on the same dates, arriving with a cold front and departing on the first warm day. Although Maryland almost missed out, Virginia hit it big with *Selasphorus* this year: I count some 19 reports Aug-Jan. This fall's birds included one imm./female *Selasphorus* at Cape Charles, Northampton, VA 31 Aug (ESB), an ad. female Rufous banded in Hamilton (a Loudoun, VA first) 10 Oct+ (v. o., MG, ph. MJI, ph. TMD), a hatch-year female 12-29 Nov (WE, MG, v. o.), and hatch-year male 21-29 Nov (B. Siegfried, MG), both banded around Chesterfield, Chesterfield, VA, and an imm./female *Selasphorus* in Virginia Beach 12 Nov (Karen Beatty). As a hummingbird review for readers, recall that Virginia's past record for *Selasphorus* includes (approximately): one in 1952, one in 1979, 6 in the 1980s, one in 1991, 18 from 1995-1999, and 10 in 2000 (B. Taber, pers. comm.). Maryland's only one arrived 30 Oct in Sam Pancake's yard—the 3rd *Selasphorus* to occur there since 1989—only to meet an untimely end in the talons (?) of a praying mantis. A **White-winged Dove** was seen at Kipt. 2 Nov (CB), and another was nearly caught in the nets at Little Island City Park, just n. of Back Bay N.W.R. (RS). Up to 3 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** set up shop along Magotha Rd., Northampton, VA from 17 Aug into at least early Oct (p. a. CB, m. ob., ph.). Another was reported from the I-895 mitigation site in eastern Henrico, VA 10 Aug (CT). There are still no Maryland reports, and Virginia has

only three documented records to date. Brennan counted 625 Northern Flickers at Kipt. 29 Sep, and a suspected intergrade Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted was banded 12 Oct (ph. Jethro Runco), while another was found dead and given to the E.S.V.N.W.R. staff in mid-Oct (*fide* ESB).

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Bayside Campground, Assat. 29 Sep (SHD) was on the late side, and another was at Kipt. 11 Sep (CB); the species is a rare migrant on the Coastal Plain. The award for the most frustrating one-day wonder must go to the imm. male **Vermilion Flycatcher** that spent a few hours flycatching in a Hurlock, *Dorchester* backyard 1 Oct (p. a., ph. C. & B. Diedrich) where it was stunningly photographed for a 2nd Maryland record. In addition to the Assateague, *Worcester* record from 29 Sep 1991, there are two well-documented winter records from Virginia, but only about nine others for the East Coast n. of South Carolina, most of which have occurred in a narrow period from late Sep to mid-Oct.

Three **Ash-throated Flycatchers** were found this year: one paused briefly in the dawn flight at Bayside Campground, Assat. for a *Worcester* 2nd record on 29 Sep (p. a. †SHD), one visited Kenilworth Park 11-12 Nov, for a D.C. first (p. a. RH et al., m. ob., vt. DC), and another was banded at Little Island City Park 4 Nov (RS), aged as a hatch-year bird, not surprisingly. As Regional birders get better and better at intentionally searching for w. vagrants in warm microclimate habitats during "vagrant season" (Nov), we can expect Ash-throated Flycatchers to continue at a regular clip. What we probably cannot expect, though, are many additional records from Sep or from D.C.

A late-ish Least Flycatcher was at Assat. 15 Oct (ph. MJI). Western Kingbirds were seen in Virginia at Kipt. 11 Sep (CB) and 12 Oct (CB), Fisherman I. N. W. R. on 12 Oct (PH et al.), at the VA 623/802 junction in *Fauquier* 10 Oct (†TMD), and Little Island City Park (RS); in Maryland, singles were at Assat. 9 Oct (GM et al.) and Layhill Park, *Montgomery* 5 Nov (MB). The 1500 migrating Eastern Kingbirds at Kipt. 30 Aug (CB) made for a good count; hundreds roosted in trees surrounded by *Phragmites* at nearby Oyster, VA in late Aug and early Sep (m. ob.).

A conservative 50,000 Tree Swallows were estimated in the Kipt. area 24 Sep (CB, RLA et al.). A Barn Swallow was noted at the Chestertown W.T.P., *Kent* 4 Nov (MH). A Sedge Wren at Cromwell Valley Park for several days around 23 Sep (EK) was unusual for *Baltimore*. A good dawn flight at Sunset Beach Inn, *Northampton* 12 Sep had 380 Red-eyed Vireos (ESB). Northern Mockingbirds are indeed migratory and are sometimes noted on the C.B.B.T. and other migration hotspots. Brinkley noted 37 perching

in just three trees at Sunset Beach 12 Sep during the excellent landbird flight there.

Just missing the 16 Aug early date, a Cape May Warbler was banded at Chino Farms 17 Aug (JG) A Yellow Warbler at Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA 15 Nov (KG) was exceptionally late for this species, which usually departs by Sep. A hatch-year male Mourning Warbler along Sterling Parkway, *Loudoun*, VA 23 Oct (SR) was quite late, while one banded at Chino Farms 7 Aug (JG, MH) tied Maryland's early date. A Blackpoll Warbler was late on Assat. 10 Nov (HLW, LMD).

The Labor Day period is often productive for numbers of early migrants in lower *Northampton*, VA, and this year 4 Sep was fair at Sunset Beach (perhaps the equivalent of Higbee's Beach, Cape May, NJ). Following a mild frontal passage, 225 American Redstarts and 50 Black-and-white Warblers were counted, among other species (ESB); 11 & 12 Sep were much better days, with 350 redstarts, 100+ Black-throated Blues, 90+ Palms, 100+ Northern Parulas, and 90+ Magnolias 11 Sep (ESB, RV) and 485 redstarts, 265 Black-throated Blues, 125 Palms, 110+ Magnolias, and 65 parulas 12 Sep (ESB). Similar flights were seen to the n. at Kipt. on these days (CB, BT, m. ob.).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A female **Western Tanager** visiting the water drip in Bob Ake's Norfolk, VA yard off the Lafayette R. 22 Oct comes on the heels of at least 2 in Virginia last winter. A Summer Tanager at Ellicott City was late and rare for *Howard* 3 Oct (BO) A Dickcissel at Julie Metz Wetlands, *Prince William*, VA 22 Sep (SR), was an unusual Piedmont location, and one flyover at Assat. 15 Aug (MH, MLH et al.) bested the *Worcester* arrival by one day A highlight for already vagrant-rich *Saint Mary's* was the imm. **Harris's Sparrow** at the very tip of P.L.S.P. 20 Nov+ (p. a. †PC, m. ob., ph. AR), a first county record and about the 18th for Maryland A Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow at Black Hills Res., *Montgomery* 12 Nov (p. a. vt. DC) was almost as rare (actually there are still fewer Maryland records for Gambel's.) Diligent Oct searches of sparrow-rich Piedmont wetlands are providing more data about the inland passage of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. At N.F.W.B., there were 3 on 12 Oct (SR, CT), 2 on 14 Oct (KG, SS), and one 20 Oct (SR, TMD, BA). At U.M.C.F., there was a bright bird (presumably *nelsoni*) 27 Sep-2 Oct (BO et al.) and a duller bird (possibly *alterus*) 2-16 Oct (BO et al., ph. RC); both were seen in direct comparison 2 Oct. The barrier islands in the Region are the Lark Sparrow hotspots, and this year there was one at Chinc 21 Aug (MJI, TMD), one Assat. 24-31 Aug (ph. MLH, m. ob.), and another at Assat. 29 Aug (ph. MLH et al.). One juv. at Hart 1 Sep (vt. JLS, EJS et

al) was more unusual—it was species #276 for the Hart-Miller list—and another was at John Brown Rd., *Queen Anne's* 25 Sep (D. Poet). Away from the coast, where regular in small numbers, Clay-colored Sparrow was found in at Oxon Hill Farm, *Prince George's* 7 Oct (DM), in *Howard* 14-15 Oct (†BO et al.), at Mt. Pleasant 27 Oct (HH), at Meadowbrook, and at Western Regional Park 4 Nov (BO, NM, RC). One on the C.B.B.T. 4 Sep (CB et al.) and 2 there 6 Sep (KK) provide evidence that this species is arriving slightly earlier in the Region as its regularity increases as a migrant. Lincoln's Sparrow arrived early too, with one at Western Regional Park 1 Sep (BO) providing Maryland's 2nd earliest; several 9-11 Sep (v. o.) in Maryland's Piedmont and D.C. were likewise quite early. A **Slate-colored Fox Sparrow** (p. a.) at Rachel Carson Conservation Park, *Montgomery* 23 Nov (PO, M. O'Brien, L. Zemaitis, G. H. Rosenberg) provided the first Maryland record for a non-*iliaca* subspecies; Virginia has one report of this form, which is recognized as a species by some authorities but not yet by the American Ornithologists' Union. Maryland's 2nd Oct record (first was 23 Oct 1977) for Le Conte's Sparrow was garnered 20 Oct (p. a. MH et al.), when one was flushed from the same n. Vaughn strip of grass that has held at least one wintering bird since 1998; it was seen again 11 Nov (p. a. KF, MH et al.). A search of the same area 15 Oct (MJI) did not find the bird. Is this the same long-lived bird, or is this tiny section of habitat so good that it hasn't gone vacant in four years? A **Le Conte's Sparrow** at Sky Meadows S.P. 20-21 Oct (p. a. S. Eccles, †TMD) provided a *Fauquier*, VA first and one of the only seven Piedmont records for the state.

An imm. male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Oyster, *Northampton*, VA 3 Sep was seen amidst the spectacle of 34,000 Bobolinks going to roost here; a Dickcissel was also in the mix (ESB, SWH). Brewer's Blackbirds included 2 at Hart 27 Oct (EJS et al.) and one male on Rte. 309, *Queen Anne's* 9 & 11 Nov (MH, KF, JLS). A good count of 210 Baltimore Orioles was noted at Sunset Beach 12 Sep (ESB). There was some evidence of winter finches on the move again this year, including a Common Redpoll at a Middleton, *Frederick* feeder (ph. J. Alexander), and single Red Crossbills at Kipt. on several dates 30 Oct-23 Nov (CB). Even rarer were White-winged Crossbills: one at a Columbia, *Howard* feeder 1 Nov (J. & T. D Coskren, ph. R.Solem, v. o.), 3 flybys at Kipt. 23 Nov (CB), and 12 at Chinc. feeding in scrub pines along the dunes 25 Nov (Rosemary Jagus *vide* GM). Pine Siskins and Purple Finches staged respectable invasions this year, and there was the usual smattering of Evening Grosbeak reports in Nov, including Kipt. sightings by Brennan on 2 Nov (2) and 13 Nov (3).

Corrigenda

Patty Craig pointed out that I miscounted the fly-catcher species known from *Saint Mary's* (N. A. B. 55: 287); the real total is 15. In the same issue, note also that the date for the Ruff at Deal (N. A. B. 55: 286) should be 14 Apr 2001.

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Southern Atlantic Coast



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The fall season was one of contrasts. Weather patterns were relatively average in August, but in October and November, temperatures were mild and precipitation was way below normal. Some areas received practically no measurable rain for over a month! With this

warm, dry period, major frontal passages were not very prevalent. This meant that much of the migration was unspectacular and went unnoticed by many observers, especially in the first half of the period. Things changed in October and November. Many observers commented on more migrants, probably a result of the delayed early migration. Also quite a few rarities were found, making for a very exciting last half of the season.