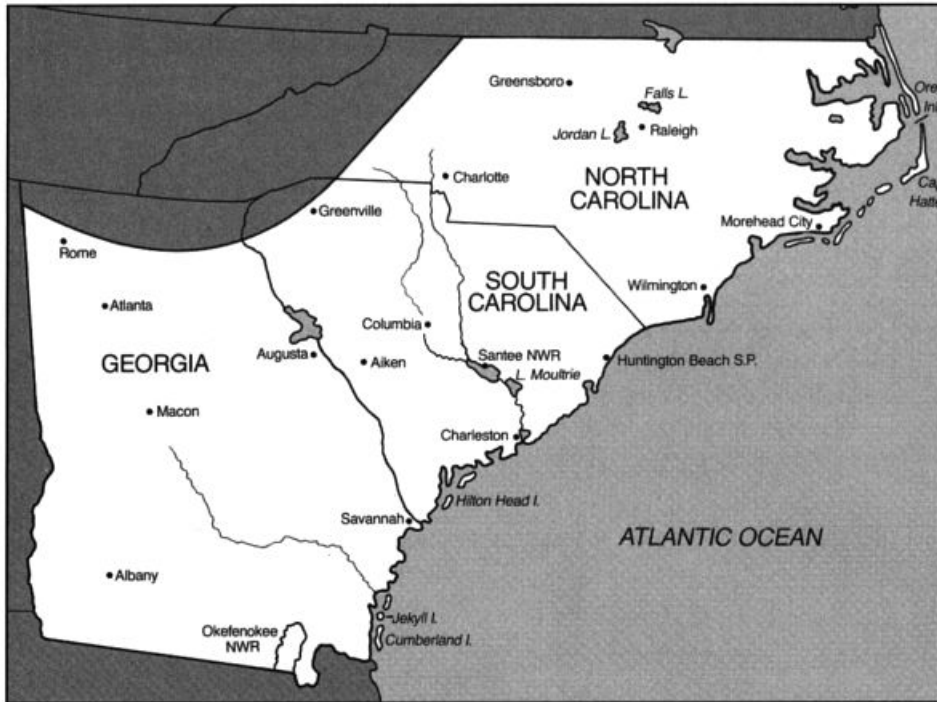


Southern Atlantic Coast



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This summer's weather continued the drought, mostly in the central and western parts of the Region. Some rains in July slowed it down somewhat but did little to start reversing the trend of below-normal rainfall that is in its fourth year. Temperatures for the most part were about average, but some areas experienced several periods of hotter-than-normal weather. The birds, thanks to the dry, warm weather, experienced a relatively successful breeding season. There were no reports of any nesting failures, and several species seemed to be present in good numbers with many young. In the rare bird department, North Carolina got its first documented White-faced Ibis, on the heels of last season's bird in Georgia.

Starting with the next issue of *North American Birds* (fall migration 2002), this Region will be known as the Southern Atlantic region and will encompass all of the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Abbreviations: B.R.C. (Bird Records Committee); C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, NC); E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton, GA); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach State Park, SC); K. Mt. (Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, GA); P.I. (Pea I. N.W.R., Dare, NC); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC).

GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL

Nesting Pied-billed Grebes are quite local in the Region; thus of note was a pair with 2 young at Phinizy Swamp, Augusta, GA 4 Jul (AW). Only one Herald Petrel was found this period, that being off Hatteras, NC 2 Jun (BP et al.); there were no public pelagic trips scheduled in Jul this year. The only shearwaters of note were 2 Manx off Hatteras, NC 1 & 9 Jun (BP et al.). Tropicbirds made news, however, with both species being found. White-tailed reports included one off St. Catherines I., GA 24 Jun (JFI et al.), and singles on six different trips off Hatteras, NC during Jun and Jul (BP). Patten also found the rare **Red-billed Tropicbird** twice off Hatteras, with an imm. 29 Jun and an ad. 13 Jul. The rare Masked Booby was found off Hatteras 9 Jun (BP et al.), providing the first summer report in a while for that state. An

imm. **Brown Booby** was picked up on the beach at Emerald Isle, NC 30 Jul (*vide* JF). The bird, apparently sick, was taken to a local wildlife shelter, where it died the next day. The bird, to be deposited in the N. C. Museum of Natural History, constitutes the first specimen record for the state. The Bear I., Colleton, SC area continued to host a substantial flock of American White Pelicans, with 60+ there 29 Jun (RC, CE); and the imm. Brown Pelican continued to be present at the W. F. George L., GA dam area throughout the summer (WC). This summer's Magnificent Frigatebirds included one at Winyah Bay, Georgetown, SC 27 Jun (*vide* JP), one at Litchfield Beach, SC 3 Jul (BM), and one at P.I. 3 Jul (R&SB et al.).

Reddish Egrets were found in all three states, with the highest counts being 8 on Bulls I., SC 22 Jul (PN) and 6 on the Portsmouth I., NC flats 21 Jul (WI et al.), a state high count for a single site. Some of the more interesting inland long-legged wader reports included a locally rare imm. Black-crowned Night-Heron in n. Greene, GA 4 Jul (PS), a Glossy Ibis at Phinizy Swamp, GA 10 & 27 Jul (JK, PC), a Roseate Spoonbill along the Altamaha R., Long, GA for most of the summer (*vide* GB), a Wood Stork at Norfleet, Halifax, NC 14 Jul (RD), and 2 Wood Storks at the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan L., NC 21 (RD) to 28 Jul (RP et al.). North Carolina got its first documented **White-faced Ibis** when one was found in a roadside ditch in s Nags Head 28 Jun (MJ, *vide* PM; m. ob.). The bird remained there until at least 13 Jul (JR) and was last seen at nearby P.I. 20 Jul (*vide* PM). The bird, an alternate-plumaged adult, was seen by many; and photographs should place it on the official state list.

There have been an increasing number of Black-bellied Whistling-Duck reports from Georgia and South Carolina in recent seasons. Are these naturally wandering birds from Florida? This summer a flock 22 was present at a pond near McClellanville, SC 5 Jun (*vide* DF) for only one day! It is certainly possible that a flock of this size was naturally occurring, and a flock was seen to our north in Virginia later in summer. Other waterfowl news included lingering or summering birds, with the most unusual being a Tundra Swan again all summer at P.I. (m. ob.), a Lesser Scaup near Augusta, GA 13-15 Jun (*vide* JS), and a Red-breasted Merganser at Oregon Inlet, NC 4 Jul (R&PT). Also a count of 58+ Ruddy Ducks at the Jacksonville W.T.P. near Richlands, NC 1 Jul (NM, J&LO) was an excellent total for that location in summer.

KITES THROUGH TERNS

The biggest Swallow-tailed Kite flock reported was of 80 near Jessup, GA 22 Jul (EW) and the farthest out-of-range birds included 2 near Anderson, SC 27 Jul (SP) and 2 near Winder, GA 30 Jul (*vide* EW). Nesting Mississippi Kites were once again found at several established North Carolina locations, but no new areas were reported. Rare summer hawk reports included a lingering Northern Harrier near Farmington, *Oconee*, GA 11 Jun (EW), a Sharp-shinned Hawk near Chapel Hill, NC 23 Jun (HM), a Broad-winged Hawk near Pearson, *Atkinson*, GA 30 Jun (JFI, EH), and a pair of American Kestrels at Oxbow Meadows, Columbus, GA 25 Jun (WC). Rails are notoriously hard to see, Black Rail especially so. Thus of note, a very rare sighting of 4 ads. and 3 young was had at North River, *Carteret*, NC 29 Jun (BC). Also 2 Soras at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 19 Jul (BD) makes one wonder if they were something other than extraordinarily early migrants!

Some encouraging plover counts involved 50 Wilson's on Shackleford Banks, *Carteret*, NC 27 Jul (JF et al.) and 38 Pippings at Ocracoke, NC 22 Jul (WI, JL). With the drought conditions inland, several areas produced good shorebirds. All very rare inland, 2 American Avocets were at Jordan L., NC 22 Jul (MS), 6 Willets were at Legacy Sod, *Bartow*, GA 13 Jul (BZ et al.), and a Whimbrel was at the Orangeburg, SC sod farm 27 Jul (SCo). Extremely early was an Upland Sandpiper near Mayesville, SC 23 Jun (ED), as was a Marbled Godwit at H.B.S.P. 26 Jun (JP). Long-billed Curlews were at usual areas, with one on Ossabaw I., GA 23 Jul (BW) and 2 on Shackleford Banks, NC 4 & 27 Jul (NM et al., JF et al.). Other out-of-season shorebirds included 4 White-rumped Sandpipers at the S.S.S. 18 Jun (SC) and a record-late Purple Sandpiper at Tybee I., GA 1 Jun (*vide* DC). Only two reports of Curlew Sandpiper were received, with singles at P.I. 3 (RD) & 20 Jul (JL, R&PT). A rare summer report for the Coastal Plain of American Woodcock was had near Honey Hill, *Berkeley*, SC 15 Jul (PN et al.) Only one Wilson's Phalarope was found, that being at the S.S.S. 10 Jul (SC).

Two South Polar Skuas off Hatteras, NC 2 Jun (BP et al.) were the only ones reported. Some interesting inland gull reports included up to 10 Laughings at West Point L., GA 15 Jun and 8 at L. Walter F. George, GA 8 Jun (WC), and an imm. Herring at L. Walter F. George, GA 13-14 Jul (WC, JFI, EH). Noteworthy summer Lesser Black-backed Gulls included 2 at Tybee I., GA 24 Jun (JFI et

al.) and 3 at C. Hatt. 31 Aug (J&PW). A count of 110 Gull-billed Terns at Davis Impoundment, *Carteret*, NC 28 Jul (JF et al.) was encouraging, as this species is currently declining over most of the area. Inland tern reports of note involved 11 Commons at L. Walter F. George, GA 7 Jul (WC), 8 Forster's at L. Walter F. George, GA 20 Jul (WC), and a Least at the Goldsboro, NC W.T.P. 3 Jul (HB). Rooftop nesting by Least Terns was observed again, with 90-110 birds on a building in Myrtle Beach, SC in mid-Jun (*vide* WCo) and 75+ on a building near New Bern, NC in Jun (WF); scores were nesting on strip-mall rooftops on Emerald I., *Carteret* and at Whalebone Jct., *Dare* in late May (ESB). Rare onshore Sooty Terns included 2 on the beach at C. Fear, Bald Head I., NC 25 Jul (GM) and one on the Ocracoke, NC flats 26 Jul (WI). Offshore, one was off Hatteras, NC 9 Jun (BP et al.), and one was a good find off Mt. Pleasant, SC 26 Jul (MH et al.). Black Terns reported included excellent early migrant counts of 56 at Harris Neck N.W.R., GA 23 Jun (JS) and 30 at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 25 Jun (JFI, EH).

DOVES THROUGH WAXWINGS

White-winged Doves found included one at a feeder in Douglas, *Coffee*, GA 15-16 Jun (AB) and one at Harbor I., SC 29-30 Jun (JH). A Common Ground-Dove was flushed from a nest at Ochopee Dunes Natural Area, *Emanuel*, GA 20 Jun (TS). The finding of a nest of this species in the Region is a very rare event indeed! Continuing a trend from the spring, a Black-billed Cuckoo was seen in s. *Craven*, NC 6 Jul (R&SB). Black-billed have been found in pocosin habitats during summer in this area before. Noteworthy nesting flycatcher news involved one ad. Willow Flycatcher with 2 young at L. Don T. Howell, *Cabarrus*, NC in late Jun (*vide* TP), providing the first local breeding record. The Scissor-tailed Flycatchers near Monroe, NC raised at least 3 young, for the 3rd year in a row (AO); Georgia singles were near Watkinsville 22 Jul (*vide* MF) and Lawrenceville 27 Jul (*vide* GS).

Horned Larks continued to make news along their e. breeding range in North Carolina. At a site in *Carteret*, where first found only a couple of years ago, an amazing count of 150, including many juv. birds, was had 21 Jul (JF). Swallows also extended their e. limit in that state, with several pairs of Tree Swallow being noted at Mackay I. N.W.R. 23 Jun (JL) and several Cliff Swallows nesting at Brice's Creek, New Bern 11 Jun (JF). In Georgia, the s. limit was extended by nesting Cliffs at Pataula Creek, L. Walter F. George,

noted 12 Jun (GB). Other locally rare summer birds included a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches near Watkinsville, GA all summer (PS) and a House Wren at Mayhaw W.M.A., *Miller*, GA 14 Jul (JFI, EH). The latter bird was very much out-of-range for the summer season in that state. Cedar Waxwings often remain in areas outside of their normal breeding range during the summer season. This year, they were widespread, with the most interesting reports being 2 unsuccessfully attempting to nest in Americus, *Sumter*, GA 10 Jun (*vide* CR), two pairs noted at Mackay I. N.W.R., NC 23 Jun (JL), and 2 courting in the Croatan N. F., NC 11 Jun (JF)

WARBLERS THROUGH CROSSBILLS

Several warblers were found as early or late migrants. Two Golden-winged at K. Mt 29 Jul (TE) bested the early arrival date by 12 days! A Black-throated Blue at Tybee I., GA 5 Jun (DC) was quite late for that s. coastal locality. A Worm-eating netted at York, SC 9 Jul (BH) was considered an early migrant. And a Northern Waterthrush was early at Eufaula N.W.R., GA 13 Jul (WC). Two breeding-season reports of note included an Ovenbird at Ochopee Dunes Natural Area, *Emanuel*, GA 18 Jun (TS) and two pairs of American Redstarts along Pataula Creek, L. Walter F. George, GA 12 Jun (GB). Both of these are considered rare in these areas in summer.

Very rare as a breeder and at the extreme edge of the normal breeding range, a singing Field Sparrow was a good find in *Lowndes*, GA 2 Jun (BB). A Savannah Sparrow at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 12 Jun (EB) was extremely late for the species to be in the s. coastal area of the Region. Another locally unusual breeding season report was of the juv. Grasshopper Sparrow found near Otway, *Carteret*, NC 21 Jul (JF, JFe). Breeding in the county had not been previously detected. The sod farm in *Bartow*, GA had one singing male Dickcissel 20 Jul (MD), and 5 were there 28 Jul (BZ). Bobolinks seemed to be on the move a little early this season: there was one near Scotland Neck, NC 14 Jul (RD), a flock in *Jones*, NC 15 Jul (CB), 200 near Townville, SC 25 Jul (BM), and 2 at Shackleford Bank, *Carteret*, NC 27 Jul (JF et al.). The Gulf Coast race of Boat-tailed Grackle was found farther n. than usual when 6 (including 2 fledglings) were observed near Tifton, *Tift*, GA 30 Jun (JFI, EH). Another species that seemed to start its southward migration early was the Orchard Oriole. An impressive count of 30 was had on s. Jekyll I., GA 28 Jun (LT et al.) This species normally starts moving in mid-

Jul. A complete surprise was provided by the subad. male **White-winged Crossbill** present at a feeder in Tega Cay, L. Wylie, York, SC 6-8 Jun (LC; TP, v. o.). Interestingly, this bird was apparently present there for four days in late May as well.

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Florida



audiotape, videotape, or specimen evidence), R.A. (Restoration Area); S.R.A. (state recreation area).

LOONS THROUGH SPOONBILL

Single Common Loons were found at Honeymoon I. S.R.A. 21 Jun (KA et al.) and off Alligator Pt., *Franklin* 29 Jun (JM). Fifty-four Cory's Shearwaters and 18 Wilson's Storm-Petrels were found 40 km se. of Port Canaveral, *Brevard* 3 Jul (DG, WB et al). A Greater Shearwater was retrieved from an air-conditioning duct at Jacksonville International Airport 22 Jun (PL). A Red-footed Booby was at Dry Tortugas N.P. 21 Jun–20 Jul (EH, JD, TD et al.). Single Northern Gannets were found off Alligator Pt., *Franklin* 16 Jun (JM) and at Ft. Myers Beach, *Lee* 24 Jul (WW, CE, WD), and likely the same individual was found incapacitated 26 Jul nearby at Sanibel I. Summering American White Pelicans were found at eight locations, with 770 at L. Apopka R.A., *Orange* 23 Jun (HR), particularly impressive. Brown Pelicans were found well inland at Mulberry, *Polk* 11 Jun (TP), L. Istokpoga, *Highlands* 14 Jun (MM), and *Polk* phosphate mines (PF) Unusual in summer was an American Bittern at Orlando Wetlands Park, *Orange* 7 Jun (TR). A good count of 20 Least Bitterns was made at L. Monroe Conservation Area, *Volusia* 8 Jun (LM). A "Great White Heron" was well n. of its typical range at Newnans L., *Alachua* 13 Jul (JH, MMA, HA). Also well n. of normal was a "Wurdeemann's Heron" 20 Jun at L. Alfred, *Polk* (AP) and 7 Reddish Egrets at Huguenot Memorial Park, *Duval* 3 Jul (RC) A second-summer **White-faced Ibis** was at L. Apopka R.A. 12 Jun (HR). With all the addi-

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Rainfall in June and July was heavy, replenishing drought-diminished wetlands and possibly signaling an end to the persistent drought. The problem this summer was finding appropriate shorebird habitat due to too

much rain, a welcome change. In the Jacksonville area, beach nesters suffered from high tides aggravated by several northeasters. Of special note, Harry Robinson conducted his 400th survey at L. Apopka Restoration Area.

Abbreviations/definitions: C.P. (county park); report (any observation); record (only those reports verifiable from photograph,