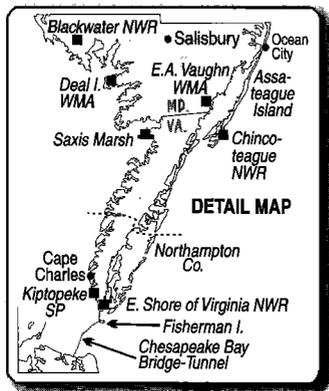


Middle Atlantic



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The Region's weather was rather a roller-coaster between December and February, but it ended up averaging warmer and drier than average in both states. The first real storm of the season arrived 19 December, with brutal cold and high winds. A week later, 26 December, southeastern Virginia was hit by heavy snow squalls that spared much of the rest of the state (<http://www4.ncsu.edu/~nwsfo/storage/cases/20041226>). January, as usual, was generally quite cold over most of the Region, while February had several breaks (up to 70° F days in some spots) that broke local records. The National Weather Service has recently (December 2004) posted a summary of Virginia winters on the web (<http://www.vaemergency.com/library/vawinter/va-win.htm>) that may be of interest.

Birding was brisk in both states, with a potential first state record in both (Northern Lapwing). The tail end of the Cave Swallow invasion came to a close, and the southernmost Northern Shrikes in that species' strong flight were found. But finches and owls belonged to other regions this winter,

and state birders barely detected the great invasion of murres that observers noted in New Jersey, Delaware, and the Carolinas, possibly for lack of seawatching activity.

Thanks to past editor Marshall J. Iliff for composing the S.A. box on the lapwing.

Abbreviations: Assat. (Assateague I., Worcester, MD); Bay (Chesapeake Bay); Black. (Blackwater N.W.R., Dorchester, MD); Black Hills (Black Hills Regional Park/Little Seneca Res., Montgomery, MD); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, s. of Northampton, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); O.C. Inlet (Ocean City Inlet, Worcester, MD).

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A Pacific Loon was seen at Dameron Marsh, Northumberland, VA 27 Jan (p.a., †FA). Inland Red-throated Loons included 2 on the Potomac R. near Lowes I., Montgomery, MD 5 Dec (KG, Linda Millington, Kim Peacock) and singles at Beaverdam Res., Loudoun, VA 20 Jan (John Drummond), Black Hills 28 Jan (DCz), and Kerr Res., Mecklenburg, VA 12 Feb (AD). The Cape Charles C.B.C. on 30 Dec tallied 4231 Red-throated Loons, the 2nd highest in count history (HTA et al.). A Clark's Grebe was again found off Virginia Beach at Fort Story, with the only sighting this year 1 Jan (vt. RLAn, Thuy Tran et al.); it or another has appeared in this area in four previous winters: Feb 2000, Dec 2001, Dec 2002–Jan 2003, and Dec 2003–Jan 2004. Another *Aechmophorus* grebe, thought to be a Western Grebe, was seen 15–16 Jan at L.

Anna, Louisa, VA (Chris Elliot, *vide* MRB, BTe). An Eared Grebe was discovered at Black Hills 26 Nov, where it was later joined by another 1 Jan; the 2 were last reported 28 Jan (DCz, HH, m.ob.). Nine reports of Red-necked Grebes spanned 1 Jan–28 Feb, five of these from more expected coastal locations, with the C.B.B.T. hosting 3 birds. Less routine sightings were singles at L. Anna, Louisa 16 Jan (G. & R. Harris, BTe); Little Hunting Creek, Fairfax, VA 21 Jan (Stephen Williams); Fort McHenry, Baltimore ca. 27 Jan (JP); and Germantown Res., Fauquier, VA 16 Feb (TMD).

A pelagic trip out of Lewes, Delaware into Worcester waters 26 Feb produced 30 Northern Fulmars (PG et al.). An American White Pelican was at Jug Bay, Anne Arundel/Prince George's, MD 17–18 Dec (p.a., Jeff Shenot, MH); another was in s. Northampton 30 Dec (GLA, ph. BTA, SWS, Will Russell). Twelve Brown Pelicans were out of place 2 Jan sitting on pound nets off South Point Cove, Calvert, MD; rarely are they that far n. in the Bay in such numbers in winter (Arlene Ripley). A Tricolored Heron at Deal I., Somerset, MD 6 Feb was a good find (JB); 2 were seen there 13 Feb and one 16 Feb (D&CB). The Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec had 66 White Ibis, a high winter count (HTA et al.) typical of recent years.

There were four reports of Ross's Geese totaling 7 individuals 30 Dec–21 Jan, all e. of the Bay and all but one in Maryland. Greater White-fronted Geese (subspecies unknown) were widely reported, all singletons at 10 locations 6 Dec–23 Feb, many of them holdovers from fall. A Barnacle Goose wearing a metal band on its left leg was at Pickering Creek Audubon Center, Talbot, MD 12 Jan; the band was never read, thus provenance remains uncertain. Another wintered at Layman's Pond, Botetourt, VA, originally found 19 Dec (Barry Kinzie, Katrina Knight). Since the recent split, Cackling Geese reports have poured in, overwhelmingly from Maryland. There were no fewer than 26 reports from 21 locations in 13 counties 21 Nov–28 Feb in Maryland, all apparently of the expected nominate form. Virginia reports numbered four, from 15 Dec–3 Feb in four counties, also of Richardson's. The largest count was of 9 birds in flight at dusk among thousands of Canada Geese at Black Hills 10 Dec (DCz). While many of the reports are certainly credible, it does provoke wonder as to whether the identification of this subspecies is considered carefully enough; note that a flock of 8 *minima* was documented just s. of Virginia in North Carolina.

It was a good winter for Eurasian Wigeon, with eight total reports. Five in Virginia were initially spotted 23 Dec–11 Jan, with at least 3 staying through and past the end of the reporting period; only one was found away

SA Well documented has been the recovery of Bald Eagle through much of its former range. A count conducted along the Rappahannock R. between Virginia's Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula in Feb 2005 (Sandy Specner, Bill Portlock, Jeff Cooper) found **395** (219 ads., 168 imm, and 8 not aged). The previous high count for this survey was 278 in 2001, with 257 in 2002. The ten-year average is 178, though this was the first year the count was conducted in Feb. A run of fish into the river could be responsible for the increased count. Another impressive count was 131 found at Black, coming to three evening roosts 11 Jan (Levin Wiley). Surprisingly, the Fort Belvoir C.B.C. has reported triple digits of the species since 1995, and this year noted only 79 during the count, held 2 Jan (KG).

from the Coastal Plain, the bird at Airlie, Fauquier returning for its 11th winter 23 Dec (TMD, ICT). In Maryland, 3 were reported beginning 11 Dec, with the last discovered 21 Feb, all on the Coastal Plain, and 2 staying through the end of winter. A Blue-winged Teal was at Greenspring Mill Pond, Frederick, VA 1 Jan (Jon & B. J. Little). The Route 3 ponds in King George, VA produced a count of 3560 Ring-necked Ducks 2 Dec, with 12% noted as females (FA). One King and 6 Common Eiders were reported on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec. Both O.C. Inlet and the C.B.B.T. had eiders and Harlequin Ducks this winter, though no Kings were reported at the C.B.B.T. The high count of Common Eiders was 15 on 20 Feb at O.C. Inlet (RFR). The Harlequin Duck from fall at Wades Point Inn, Talbot, MD was last seen 6 Dec (LR, vt. RFR, m.ob.). Inland Long-tailed Duck reports in Virginia were 21 Dec at L. Braddock, Fairfax (Stephen Eccles); 9 Jan at Claytor L., Pulaski (Mark Prosser, *vide* CK); and 16 Feb at Saltville, Smyth (*vide* Allen Boynton). Maryland had three such reports: 2 on the Potomac R. at Fort Washington, Prince George's 2 Dec (DM); 2 on Triadelphia Res., Montgomery 12–13 Dec (with an ad. White-winged Scoter) (KS, BO); and one at Little Seneca L., Montgomery 30 Dec (Dave Powell et al.). Two Black Scoters were with several Surf Scoters at Cobb I., Charles, MD 16 Dec (GMJ, MH). A good count of 1000+ Common Mergansers was at Centennial L., Howard, MD 29 Dec (KS); 1200–1300 were there 23 Feb (JS).

RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

An imm. male Northern Goshawk was seen

1 Jan at Kiptopeke, Northampton (ESB, HFD, SAH et al.), the only one reported in the state after Dec. Single Rough-legged Hawks were reported from seven Maryland locations 13 Dec–13 Feb, all on the Eastern Shore except one at Patuxent R. Naval Air Station 13 Dec and one 27 Dec along Camp Brown Rd., Scotland, both Saint Mary's (both KR). The only report of multiple birds was 5 hunting the edge of a marsh fire 11 Feb at the Lower Nanticoke R. at Sandy Hill and Savannah L., Wicomico (SHD). Virginia had eight reports from 19 Dec–26 Feb, with only two Piedmont reports, the balance coming from the Mountains and Valleys. There seemed to be more Golden Eagles wintering in the Region than in recent years; the species was reported from seven Virginia and five Maryland locations. The Virginia reports were all in the Mountains and Valleys, aside from one at Dick Cross W.M.A., Mecklenburg 4 Jan (Will Cook, *vide* Gene Sattler); the Maryland reports were all from the Eastern Shore, except an ad. over a yard in Davidsonville, Anne Arundel 2 Jan (PD et al.).

King Rails have at least two reliable locations where reported year-round in Virginia: Back Bay N.W.R./False Cape S.P. in Virginia Beach and Occoquan Bay N.W.R., Prince William, VA; 3 were found at the latter 3 Jan, along with one Virginia Rail (JK, KG, BL). Elsewhere, the Brooke C.B.C., Stafford, VA noted its first since 1973 on 14 Dec (*vide* TK), and 5 were heard calling at dusk 26 Feb at Drake's Marsh, Westmoreland, VA (FA). We should continue to track this scarce nester and migrant in our Region. A Virginia Rail was heard at Lilypons, Frederick, MD 1 Jan (GM, BC). A Black Rail was seen in flight

16 Jan along Elliott I. Rd., Dorchester, MD (Bob Abrams, Joan Boudreau). A Common Moorhen was found on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec at the Riverview Farm, Northampton, a traditional spot for the species and one that has been newly acquired by The Nature Conservancy (ESB). The Sandhill Crane found in fall near Poolesville, Montgomery, MD was seen regularly through 26 Dec (m.ob.); however, a report of one at a farm in the general area 11 & 13 Feb suggests the bird never strayed far (Sheila Cochran).

An American Avocet was at Craney 11 Dec (EE), and 2 were at Black. 21 Feb, rare there in winter and the first report for Feb (Paul Noell, RFR). A Spotted Sandpiper was found on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec (*vide* HTA). A Willet was at Eagle's Nest Campground, Worcester 16 Jan (SA, BH). Fourteen Red Knots were noted on the Cape Charles C.B.C. (HTA); one was reported 1 Jan from O.C. Inlet (DCz, MAT); 21 were at the Thoms Cr. Flats at the se. end of Mockhorn I., Northampton 20 Feb (HTA). A Pectoral Sandpiper was late at Huntley Meadows, Fairfax 5 Dec (Andy Rabin, Phil Kenny). A Dunlin was unexpected in Rockingham, VA 16 Dec at the Rte. 768 pond (AL, PL). Good counts of Purple Sandpipers were at Poplar I., Talbot, MD: 23 and 64 on 8 & 30 Dec, respectively (JR, *vide* LR). Six Red Phalaropes were seen on a pelagic trip into Maryland waters off Worcester 26 Feb (PG et al.).

A Pomarine Jaeger was seen from the C.B.B.T. during the Chesapeake Bay C.B.C. 26 Dec (ESB et al.); an unidentified jaeger was on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec (Jim Beard, David O. Matson, *vide* HTA). A Laughing Gull was late at Little Seneca L., Montgomery 10 Dec (DCz). An ad. Black-headed Gull was at Schoolhouse Pond, Prince George's, MD 12–18 Dec (HH, ph. BH, JLS, m.ob.); another was at Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach, VA 25 Feb (Robert Ferrell et al.). A Little Gull was at O.C. Inlet 12 & 14 Dec (HH, ZB). A Mew Gull of the North American race, *brachyrhynchus*, was found at Schoolhouse Pond 24 Dec (p.a., †SS);

SA An ad. Northern Lapwing at Creagerstown, Frederick, MD 12–16 Feb and again 2–6 Mar (Lyn & Skip Nelson, ph. GMJ, ph. DCz, m.ob.) was widely enjoyed for a state and Regional first. Potentially Virginia's first, one sketched and described by two observers along the entrance to Dameron Marsh Rd., near Kilmarnock, Northumberland 24 Dec (the day after North Carolina's second at Mackay Island, appeared, then vanished) has been submitted to the state committee for review (†Richard R. Hinch, †Phillip H. H. Hinch). It was observed at a distance of 6 m or so for 10 minutes. Like the Mackay Island bird, it was in a recently harvested soybean field with 5–6 Killdeer.



The eventual appearance of this species in the Region was anticipated, given 18 records from other eastern states, including Florida, Ohio, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Maine (as well as records from Atlantic Canada). Though primarily a winter visitor, a lapwing was seen in Delaware 6–7 Jul 1996. A landmark invasion to the New World occurred in Dec 1927, which Bagg (1967). Factors affecting the occurrence of the Northern Lapwing in eastern North America. *Living Bird* 6: 87–122) argued was due to a low-pressure system in the North Atlantic that displaced migrant flocks westward as they departed Scandinavia (much as European Golden-Plovers have been displaced to Newfoundland in Apr); apparently, no such event on this scale has occurred since that time.

A first for the Middle Atlantic region, this Northern Lapwing at Creagerstown, Frederick County, Maryland (here 14 February 2005) may have been the same individual seen in North Carolina 23 December and in Virginia 24 December. Photograph by Mark L. Hoffman.

Maryland's one accepted record is of a first-winter *canus* at Conowingo Dam in Jan 1994, but Virginia has photographed records of both taxa from C.B.B.T.

An ad. California Gull and an ad. Thayer's Gull were found at the landfill in Fauquier, VA 26 Feb (TMD, ph. EMH, BF, ph. SAH). A first-winter Thayer's was seen 2 Jan from the Occoquan R. bridge at Rte. 123, the line between Fairfax and Prince William, during the Ft. Belvoir C.B.C. (JK, George Ledec). Maryland had first-winter birds 16–17 Dec at Benedict, Charles (MH, GMJ), 15 Jan at the Cecil landfill (ph. JBC), 22 Jan+ at North East Town Park, Cecil (SM), and 2 & 5 Feb at the Frederick landfill (HH, JLS). Two others described as Thayer's/Iceland Gulls were seen 27 Dec at Schoolhouse Pond (GM, BC) and 15 Jan at the Beulah landfill, Dorchester, MD (Clive Harris). Virginia had four coastal reports of Iceland Gulls 4 Dec–20 Feb from the C.B.B.T., Suffolk, Virginia Beach, and Northampton. Maryland birders reported Icelanders from seven locations 14 Dec–18 Feb, the two most notable report here being 3 at Little Seneca L., Montgomery (DCz): singles on 29 Dec (described as a dark Kumlien's/pale Thayer's type), 1 Feb, and 12 Feb. Some 65 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were counted 7 Dec during a survey of Back Bay N.W.R., Virginia Beach (DS et al.). Three

Glaucous Gulls were reported from Virginia 2–29 Jan, while reports from 11 Maryland locations represented at least 15 birds, 11 Dec+. The Sandgates, MD Kelp Gull was reported throughout winter (Jane Kostenko).

A Common Murre was reported twice from the C.B.B.T. 15–16 Jan (Charles Ziegenfus) and 2 Feb (DCI). Neither report was accompanied by details; Virginia has only one photographic record of the species. Razorbills were seen several times this winter from the C.B.B.T. 29 Dec–21 Jan (SAH, BL, DCI, RLAK, m.ob.); one to 2 were seen 1 Jan–20 Feb from O.C. Inlet (DCz, MAT, RFR, Danny Poet, m.ob.); another was seen 17 Feb off Back Bay N.W.R., Virginia Beach (RLAK, DS); and one was seen 20 Feb from Kiptopeke S.P., Northampton (fide RLAK). Two Atlantic Puffins, 576 Dovekies, and 82 Razorbills were seen 26 Feb on a Maryland pelagic trip (PG et al.).

DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

A White-winged Dove, only Maryland's 4th, was seen along Golf Course Rd. at Ocean City, Worcester 4 Dec (†Shelly & Glen Lovelace). Eurasian Collared-Doves are still rare throughout most of the Region. Six were along Longview and Woodland Dr., Isle of Wight 7 Feb, first discovered here in Aug (AD); more surprising was a popu-

lation discovered in Pulaski, VA. Birds were found at three locations 6 Feb: one at Fairlawn, 4 at Belspring, and 6 about 2 km from Belspring (CK, AK); Pulaski has one previous record, and there are two records in nearby Montgomery.

Barn Owls are known to nest at virtually any time of year; however, 2 ads. with 3 small young found 2 Jan in a feed storage hopper at DeBusk Mill during the Glade Spring C.B.C., Washington (Chris O'Bryan, Andy Jones, J. Wallace Coffey) was anything but expected, shattering the earliest nesting record for Virginia. Two Snowy Owls were reported in Virginia during winter: 29–30 Dec at Chinc. (TK et al.) and 30–31 Dec at Ship Shoal I., Northampton (fide HTA). There was a spectacular concentration of Short-eared Owls wintering in n. Fauquier near Rectortown, a recently discovered wintering area. The first bird was reported 15 Jan (RW); T. Day made frequent visits over the following two months, regularly seeing 12–18 birds interacting with up to 10 Northern Harriers, topping off with 30 seen 25 Feb (TMD, KBW, MD). Other sites with decent numbers included Zion Crossroads, Louisa 10 Feb+, with 3–6 seen regularly, and Dulles Airport, Loudoun, VA, where 7 were noted 21 Feb (fide TMD).

Maryland's first Calliope Hummingbird reported in fall was seen at Bowie, Prince George's through 18 Dec (Mary Gustafson); another bird thought to be a Calliope was seen in a yard along the Nansemond R. at Suffolk, though photographs were perhaps inconclusive (CLW). Virginia's 2nd Black-chinned Hummingbird, found 28 Nov at Cape Charles, Northampton, was seen through 19 Dec, when a strong storm hit the area (ESB, m.ob.). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird was found at the same Cape Charles feeder 30 Dec–19 Jan (Henry Floyd, ESB); 2 others were at a feeder in Virginia Beach 21 Jan (Claude Bell). A Rufous Hummingbird was at the Mary Ripley Garden, D.C. 18 Dec–7 Feb (Steve Prell, m.ob.); this urban location hosted vagrant hummingbirds the previous winter. Again this year, multiple unidentified hummingbirds haunted Virginia Beach feeders.

A Western Kingbird was found 19 Dec on the Saint Michael's C.B.C. at Smith Point Farm, Talbot (fide LR); details have not yet been seen. Common Ravens are increasingly reported from the e. Piedmont in Virginia; 2 were heard at Great Falls, Fairfax 2 Jan (RW), 2 were at Meadowood West, Fairfax 2 Jan (Ron Staley, Chris Kessler, Lucy Uncu), and one was seen on I-95 in Caroline 12 Feb (SAH). Three Brown-headed Nuthatches were found 8 Jan in Pulaski; these birds are part of a disjunct population, the westernmost of its kind in Virginia, present since 1994 (CK, Ryan Mays, AK, Len DiIoia).

SA The unprecedented influx of Cave Swallows into the Middle Atlantic in Nov continued well into Dec, with Maryland observers finding birds in locations across the state, while Virginia's were confined to the coast. Thought to arrive on the winds of fast-moving storms from Texas and vicinity, this year's event had birds lingering in the area longer than previously experienced here. The bulk of these birds continued in s. Northampton, with several reports of 25 or more from fields along Rte. 600 at Latimer's Siding Road. Following a late Nov sighting, inland Frederick, MD had another bird at Lilypons along the Monocacy R. 1 Dec, lingering through 2 Dec (PEL). This species has so quickly gone from being unknown in the Region to being a "regular" in Nov on the coast (lately outnumbering Tree Swallow in some areas!) that few details were provided for these sightings, despite careful study by dozens of observers. The species is on the Review List in both states, and observers are urged to send photographs and field notes to the respective state committees.

Table 1. Cave Swallows observed in Virginia and Maryland, December 2004.

Date	Number	Location	Observer(s)
1–2 Dec	1	Lilypons, Frederick, MD	PEL
2–4 Dec	1	Wades Point Inn, Talbot, MD	ZB, LR
2–5 Dec	25+	Capeville, Northampton, VA	KK, RLAN, BTe
3 Dec	6	Winslow Bunker, Northampton, VA	RLAn
3 Dec	1	Potomac R., Loudoun, VA	DCz
3 Dec	3	Tilghman I., Talbot, MD	HH
3 Dec	2	Assateague I., Worcester, MD	D&CB
3–5 Dec	1*	Chincoteague, Accomack, VA	GK, Mike Braun et al.
5 Dec	1	Piscataway Park, Prince George's	DM et al.
11 Dec	2**	Craney Is., Portsmouth, VA	EE
11 Dec	1	Hart–Miller I., Baltimore, MD	EJS
11–12 Dec	7***	Coastal Worcester, MD	MH, JLS, GS et al.
12 Dec	12	Capeville, Northampton, VA	DCr et al.
17 Dec	2	Eagles Landing G.C., Worcester	SHD

*One bird found roosting 5 Dec (GK); it was the only bird observed roosting.

**Of 7 *Petrochelidon* swallows observed, only 2 were positively identified as Cave.

***Several Worcester locations, including the Eagle's Nest Campground, the Verrazano Bridge, S. Point boat ramp, Assat., and O.C. Inlet. Great care was taken to determine the precise number of birds present by time, location, and flight direction.

It was a good winter for shrikes. A Northern Shrike was found 30 Dec at Fisherman I., Northampton on the Cape Charles C.B.C. (Matt Sharp); it was relocated 5 Mar–2 Apr (ESB, RLak, J. Getgood, F. Smith, m.ob.).



Northern Shrike made a good showing in the Middle Atlantic region this season. In addition to a long-staying subadult on Fisherman Island N.W.R., Northampton County, Virginia, this bird was found at the end of February 2005 (here 7 March) at Pickering Creek, Talbot County, Maryland. Photograph by George M. Jett.

Another Northern was found at Pickering Cr. Audubon Center, Talbot 17 Feb, perhaps also seen two weeks prior; it stayed well into Mar (Terry Allen, *vide* LR, HH, m.ob.). A Loggerhead Shrike was found 27 Dec near Downsville, Washington, MD (p.a., Hugh Mahanes, Barbara Gearheart, m.ob.) and was seen throughout winter (with a 2nd bird discovered there in Mar). Virginia Loggerhead reports came from Foxbridge, Montgomery 11 Dec (John Kell), Burke's Garden, Tazewell 26 Dec (Jim and Judy Phillips), along Montessor Rd., Loudoun 15 Jan–6 Feb (Glenn Koppel, Mary Alice Koenek, m.ob.), Blandly Experimental Farm, Clarke 29 Jan (SAH), and s. of Rural Retreat L., Smyth 15 Feb (Glen Eller). Two were seen about a km apart at Swoope, Augusta 3 Feb (AL, PL).

A Nashville Warbler was in a Norfolk, VA yard 25 Dec–9 Jan (DCI). A Black-throated Green Warbler was found 18 Dec rooting through gutters on a building at Sugarloaf Mt., Frederick, MD (ph. DCz); another was on the Nansemond River C.B.C., Suffolk 2 Jan (RLak). A Prairie Warbler was at Fort McHenry, Baltimore 3 Dec–18 Jan, along with 2 Palm Warblers (Jim Peters, *vide* Keith Eric Costley). A Black-and-white Warbler was discovered on the Newport News C.B.C. 18 Dec (*vide* Joyce Williams); another (a female) was in a Norfolk yard 15 Jan (RLak). Two Wilson's Warblers were present, one at Patuxent R. Naval Air Station 27–31 Dec (Sigrid Stiles) and one at a Cape Charles, Northampton garden 31 Dec–21 Feb (ESB, m.ob.). Bolton Hill

in Baltimore hosted a Yellow-breasted Chat 13 Dec–5 Apr (Bryce Butler).

A female Western Tanager at Castleton, Virginia Beach throughout the reporting period was enjoyed by many (ph. Nylia &

Steve Proescher) and may have been one of 3 in that city, but we do not have details on the others (*vide* Karen Beatty, Mary Reid Barrow). An ad. male Painted Bunting at a feeder in the Deep Creek area of Chesapeake, VA 5 Feb+ (Susan Hubbard, m.ob.) was banded by Paul W. Sykes. A Dickcissel was found 18 Dec at Jones Point, Alexandria (KG, Marc Ribaud, ph. Larry Meade). A Le Conte's Sparrow was at the Wilna Tract of the Rappahannock River N.W.R., Richmond, VA 18 Dec–12 Jan (Sandy Spencer, ph. JF), for one of few Jan state records away from Virginia Beach; a Clay-colored Sparrow was found at the same refuge 9–12 Jan (Allen Bryan, ph. JF). Other Clay-colored included one n. of Tyaskin, Wicomico, MD 8 Jan (JLS) and one 26 Feb at Jones Cr. Rd., near Newland, Richmond (FA). A Lark Sparrow appeared at a Chesapeake, VA feeder during the storm 26 Dec and was seen through 29 Dec and again 29 Jan (KK). Good counts of Snow Buntings were found at Poplar I., Talbot, with 110 there 8 Dec and 135 on 30 Dec (JR, *vide* LR).

The Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec boasted an amazing 1.5 million Common Grackles and 800,000 Red-winged Blackbirds, crushing the previous highs for both species (HTA et al.). There were four reports of Yellow-headed Blackbird, all singles: 1 Jan near Kiptopeke Elementary School, Northampton, picked out of the same flock of ca. 2 million blackbirds (ESB); 23 Jan near Sandy Point, Anne Arundel (*vide* Al Haury); 20 Feb along Rte. 20, Orange, VA with a flock of 5000

icterids that also included an unspecified number of Brewer's Blackbirds (G&RH); and 25 Feb at a feeder during snow at Tunis Mills, Talbot (LR). An imm. male Brewer's Blackbird was at Dry Valley, Montgomery, VA 4 Dec (CK, RC); one was with a flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds along Rte. 16, Caroline, MD (John Hubbell); the regular flock in Nokesville, Prince William was first noted 17 Jan with 17 birds present, and was seen regularly during winter (SAH, m.ob.); and one was in a flock of European Starlings at Creaerstown, Frederick, MD 19 Feb (SS). At least 8 Baltimore Orioles were detected at seven locations 3 Dec–20 Jan, all but one in Virginia.

Reports of wintering finches were scant. Six Red Crossbills were found on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec (GLA); 6 were seen 31 Dec at Shenandoah Mt., Augusta (Mark & Betty Gatewood); and 12 were at Gatewood Park, Pulaski 2 Jan (Rachel Muheim). Five reports of Common Redpolls were noted, all singles: 7 Dec at C.B.B.T. (DCR et al.); 18 Dec along Horseshoe Rd., Caroline (JLS, HH, JB); at a feeder in Elkton, Cecil 20 Dec (ph. SM); and during the count week of the Rockingham C.B.C. (*vide* TK). The only report of Evening Grosbeaks was 19 Dec on the Lower Kent C.B.C., Kent, MD, a flock of 24 birds (*vide* WGE).

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