

plummet. Only three Virginia locations could muster triple-digit numbers during the reporting period: several dates at Great Dismal Swamp, Suffolk (RLA); Huntley Meadows on a few occasions (m.ob.); and Bull Run Regional Park, Fairfax 6 Apr (FA). The balance of reports consisted typically of a dozen or fewer, with few reports of as many as 60 birds. A male Brewer's Blackbird was at Middletown, Frederick, MD 1 Mar (Rack Wickline). Two Boat-tailed Grackles were at Poplar I., Talbot 12 & 14 May, good for the mid-Chesapeake Bay (EJS et al.). Red Crossbills were seen from four locations in Virginia, all near potential breeding sites: 2 at Poverty Hollow, Montgomery 1 Apr (MH); a high of 7 at feeders on Bear Mt., Highland 21 Apr (PR); one near

Reddish Knob 28 Apr (William Leigh); and 2 at Shenandoah Mt. 17 May (Ken Hinkle), the latter two locations Rockingham.

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Southern Atlantic



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This spring's weather was generally drier than normal, continuing the dry or drought conditions in many areas of the Region. Some coastal sites were less dry this spring, due to several coastal lows bringing rain for several days. Prevailing winds in late April and early May were from the north and east (as in 1992 and 2003, but not as pronounced), which resulted in good diversity of pelagic terns, tubenoses, and tropicbirds. This pattern probably also resulted in a westward shift of passerine migration and in late departure dates for early migrants such as Merlin, Sora, and American Bittern. According to many observers, the passerine migration was a week or more behind schedule (a "late spring"), and while coastal birders commented on the paucity of migrants this season, many observers in the Piedmont and Mountain regions mentioned that numbers of many passerine migrants were up. Temperatures were average for the most part, with some areas experiencing periods of cooler weather

than normal. The avian highlight of the season was the Snail Kite found at a crayfish farm in Clarendon County, South Carolina—a most unexpected bird for the Region.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, Dare, NC); E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, Clayton, GA); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach S.P., Georgetown, SC); Hoop. (Hooper Lane, Henderson, NC); Kennesaw Mt. (Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, Cobb, GA); Pea I. (Pea Island N.W.R., Dare, NC); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC).

WATERFOWL THROUGH STORKS

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continued to increase, with the best counts being 40+ at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA 21 May (*vide* TM) and 20 in Beaufort, NC 13 May (*vide* AM). The latter birds were in the same area where a group was observed last spring. Unusual goose sightings included 12 Greater White-fronteds in Bartow, GA 3 Mar (BL et al.), 29 Snows at Santee Coastal Reserve, SC 1 Mar (JM), and a Ross's in the Macon, GA area 26 Apr (*vide* TM). Mute Swans continued at Pea I., where 6 were noted 22 Apr (RD), with 2 tending a nest. One must wonder why refuge personnel have not taken measures to prevent this troubling feral species from getting a foothold in the area. Easily more intriguing was the imm. swan photographed at L. Mattamuskeet, NC 20-21 Mar (DC, CC, BF et al.) that appeared to be a Bewick's Swan, the Eurasian subspecies of Tundra Swan. This taxon has not previously been documented in the state; as with most waterfowl, its provenance is open to question.

Several ducks lingered into the spring season, with the most unusual being a pair of Redheads and a Lesser Scaup at North Pond, Pea I. through the end May (ESB, m.ob.); an imm. male Common Eider in Pender, NC 19-28 May (RW et al.); a White-winged Scoter at the E.L.H. 5-12 May (DHa et al., CL, m.ob.); a female Common Goldeneye on a pond near the Beaverdam area of Falls L., NC 1-2 May (BB, J&SSo); and a female Red-breasted Merganser at Cochran Shoals, GA 28 May (JFI). Hooded Mergansers, local nesters in the Region, were detected in all three states, with at least six different sightings of ads. with young. Inland loons of note included a Red-throated Loon at Piedmont N.W.R., GA 3-25 Mar (TMc, SB), another Red-throated at Falls L., NC 18 Mar (RD), and an alternate-plumaged ad. Pacific Loon photographed at L. Tahoma, McDowell, NC 6 May (DHo, RD; DM), the latter providing the first record for the mts. of that state. The usual handful of Red-necked Grebes was reported during Mar across the Region, but Western Grebe reports were above normal: 2 previously found in the winter season (at L. Norman, NC and L. Walter F. George, GA) were seen until at least mid-Mar (*vide* TP, *vide* TM), one was at Cumberland I., GA 20 Mar (*vide* JFI), and another was at the n. end of Pawleys I., SC 11 May (*vide* PTu).

Pelagic birding from Hatteras, NC was considerably more productive this spring, due to an increased number of trips and more prevalent easterly winds. Gadfly petrel reports were highlighted by an impressive 6 Herald Petrels 23 May, six different trips with single Pea's Pe-



Spring 2007 was the third spring in a row for European Storm-Petrel off Cape Hatteras; this bird was nicely documented 28 May. Photograph by Susan Hengeveld.

trials 22 May–1 Jun, and a Bermuda Petrel 29 May (BPI). The Sooty Shearwater migration was more in evidence this spring, as was the Manx Shearwater passage. Manxes were reported on 11 trips from 12 May–2 Jun, with a peak of 11-12 noted 26 May (BPI). Storm-petrel numbers were up slightly compared to the last two springs, and European Storm-Petrels were noted for the 3rd consecutive year, with one 28 May and one or 2 the next day off Hatteras (BPI). Tropicbirds were observed in about average numbers, with an ad. White-tailed 26 May and imm. or subad. Red-billed 19, 22, & 28 May (BPI). And very rare in spring was the subad. Masked Booby off Hatteras 19 May (BPI). American White Pelicans were again noted frequently in the Region this season. The farthest inland were the 10 at High Rock L., Davidson, NC 8-9 Apr (*vide* DD) and the 11 at L. Julian, Buncombe, NC 19-20 Apr (WF et al.). A Brown Pelican was at Lake Park, GA 3 Mar (*vide* TM), also an unusual inland occurrence. Very rare offshore was the Magnificent Frigatebird off Hatteras, NC 28 May (BPI). This species is usually found within sight of the beaches or right along the coast.

American Bitterns were reported more often than usual this spring. The most interesting report involved 2 in extreme se. Halifax, NC 14 Apr (DHo, RD) that flushed out of a wet briar thicket in a riverine swamp forest. Great Blue Herons continue to nest farther and farther westward. This spring, a colony containing at least four nests was found near the Tuckaseegee R. near Dillsboro, Jackson, NC in late Mar (TL), eclipsing the Ecusta Pond, Brevard, NC site started last year. Always noteworthy, especially in spring, Reddish Egret sightings

involved one at Little St. Simons I., GA 8 Mar (NVL, PH), 2 in Beaufort, SC 27 Mar (DF et al.), and one at H.B.S.P. 4 Apr (S&PTu). The most unusual Black-crowned Night-Heron reports were of one in the mts. in the French Broad R. valley, Henderson, NC 24 Apr (WF, RS) and a flock of 20 flying by a marsh along Twelve Bridges Rd., Sumter, SC 24 Mar (RC, CE). North Carolina's only known Wood Stork nesting site in extreme se. Columbus had increased from last year with 192 nests on 1 May (DA); one was locally unusual over Howell Woods, Johnston, NC 15 May (JSa).

RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

Swallow-tailed Kites were once again reported frequently. The earliest returning Swallow-tailed was at Bettie, e. of the North R., Carteret, NC 4 Mar (JF et al.). The most interesting inland reports involved one near Oxford, Granville, NC 1 May (*vide* TP), 2-3 along Richardson Bridge Rd., Johnston, NC 6-16 May (ED, m.ob.), and one at Dawson Forest W.M.A., GA 1 Apr (GS). Five along North Carolina's Outer Banks between Avon and Salvo 28 Apr (HG) constituted a high count for that region. Easily the season's most unexpected bird was the ad. male Snail Kite found at a crayfish farm along Elliott's Landing Rd. near Rimini, Clarendon, SC 14 May (LM). The bird was present into Jun until the ponds were drained and provided the first documented report for the Region. There is one previous unconfirmed sight report from Long, GA in Apr 1971, which incidentally was also during a period of severe drought in Florida. The wintering Swainson's Hawk at Alligator River N.W.R., NC was last noted 5 Mar (JSa). Only one Golden Eagle was reported this spring, that being an imm. over Sprewell Bluff, Flint R., Meriwether, GA 16 Apr (TK et al.). A Merlin w. of Williamson, Martin, NC 11 May (FE) was quite late for that inland locality.

Soras apparently migrated over the w. portions of the Region in good numbers, as evidenced by the 14 at the E.L.H. 11 Apr (CL), 3 at Fletcher Park, Fletcher, NC 4 May (ST et al.), and 6 at a n. Greene, GA marsh 13 May (PS); a late coastal migrant was at Cedar Island N.W.R. 18 May (ESB). Purple Gallinules out-

side of their normal range included one at Oxbow Meadows, GA 20 Apr (WCh) and one at Duck, Dare, NC during the first week of May (MB et al.). Limpkins were once again found in the Region, with one still present at Reed Bingham S.P., GA in late May (*vide* TM) and one at Magnolia Gardens, Charleston, SC 25-27 Apr (*vide* RC). Crane reports this spring included a Sandhill Crane at Hutchinson I., Savannah, GA 24 Apr (*vide* LR) and 3 Whooping Cranes of the experimental Wisconsin/Florida flock near Perry, GA 28 Mar (*vide* JO).

An American Golden-Plover in basic plumage in mid-coastal South Carolina 20 May (ND et al.) was a very good find; this species is extremely rare along the coast in spring. North Carolina got its 3rd Snowy Plover when one was at Mason Inlet, Wrightsville B. 6-11 Apr (RW, m.ob.). Only 2 Long-billed Curlews were mentioned this spring: one at Little St. Simons I., GA 8 Mar (NVL, PH) and one at Pinckney Island N.W.R., SC 22 Apr (DB). Willet is a rare inland spring migrant in the Region; thus of note was the excellent count of 11 on rocks in the Chattahoochee R., Cobb, GA 29 Apr (B&TDr). Upland Sandpiper migration through the Region this spring was little noted, with only two reports received: one at the



An extraordinary rarity in the United States away from Florida, this male Snail Kite appeared at a crayfish farm near Rimini, Clarendon County, South Carolina in mid-May 2007 (here 25 May) and remained until the pond was drained in the summer. The bird's appearance outside of Florida was most likely due to the drought conditions in that state. Photograph by Michael McCloy.

Bostwick Sod Farm, GA 29 Mar (CS) and 5-6 at Hoop. 19 Apr (WF, RS, ST). Very rare in the Region as a spring migrant, a Baird's Sandpiper was studied closely at North Pond, Pea I. 22 May (MT, SM). This species normally migrates northward through the interior of the continent. Another extremely rare spring shorebird, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, was photographed at Jackson's Pasture, Laurens, GA 14 Apr (TPa et al.). There are only a half-



North Carolina's third Snowy Plover was present at Mason Inlet 6-11 (here 8) April 2007. Photograph by Ricky Davis.

dozen spring reports for that state. Continuing a recent trend, South Carolina had another spring Ruff, a young male found on South I. 12 May (ND). Phalaropes were not mentioned too often this spring. The only reports involved a Wilson's at the Santee Coastal Reserve, SC in mid-Apr (ND), a Red-necked at Brandon Farms Rd., Bartow, GA 29 May (B&DV), and 4 slightly late Reds off of Hatteras, NC 12 May (BPI).

Noteworthy inland Laughing Gulls included one at Thundering Springs L., Laurens, GA 14 Apr (TPa et al.) and 2 at Falls L., NC 15 Apr (BB). The imm. Black-headed Gull found at the L. Mattamuskeet, NC causeway in the winter was last seen 6 Mar (CSO). White-winged gulls were very scarce this spring, with the only one reported being a Glaucous at Wrightsville Beach, NC 10 Apr (RW). Sooty Tern reports involved one returning to a lower Cape Fear R., NC tern colony in early May (WG) and one off of Hatteras, NC 22 May (BPI). Unusual inland was the Least Tern at the E.L.H. 25 May (CL). Onshore Roseate Terns have been very hard to find in the Region for a few years now. Thus of note were one inshore off Hatteras, NC 19 May (BPI) and 3 at Cape Point, Buxton, NC 26 May (SM, MT, ph.). Arctic Terns made a better showing this spring also, with single birds being found off Hatteras on five trips 23-30 May (BPI), up to 4 off Hatteras 31 May (BPI), and 2 about 64 km s. of Beaufort Inlet, NC 31 May (NB et al.). More South Polar Skuas were found this spring off Hatteras than in the past several years, with one on 25 May, 2-3 on 28 May, one on 29 May, and 2 on 30 May (BPI). Jaeger numbers were also up considerably, with the peak counts off Hatteras being 13 Pomarines 22 May, 5 Parasitics 25 May, and 7 Long-taileds 29 May (BPI). Also 2 Long-taileds 80 km s. of Beaufort Inlet, NC 29 May (JFe) were good finds.

Of interest was the ad. jaeger seen sitting on the water far from shore at Pea I. 6 Apr (JB, TPu et al.). The observers felt that the bird was a Long-tailed, which would be very early for a spring migrant. Two Razorbills were reported: one in the surf at Ft. Macon, NC 20 Mar (*fide* JF) and one on the beach at Emerald Isle, NC in mid-Apr (*fide* CC), which later died.

DOVES THROUGH PIPITS

A White-winged Dove at feeders in Savannah, GA 21-22 Apr (SW) was the only one reported

this spring, while a Common Ground-Dove calling repeatedly in n. Greene, GA 31 Mar (PS) provided a very rare sighting for that part of that state's Piedmont region. Black-billed Cuckoos were found in all three states, and as usual most reports came from the mts. or the immediate coast. Northern Saw-whet Owls normally are found at the higher elevations during spring and summer, thus one found in a laurel thicket at 810 m elevation near Cherryfield, Transylvania, NC 22 May (AK) was quite a surprise. Georgia had some interesting hummingbirds this spring: its 2nd Broad-billed Hummingbird, a male, was photographed during a visit to a feeder on Sheffield I., Camden 3 Mar (*fide* GK); a few



Roseate Terns have been scarce onshore in North Carolina for the past several years, so this trio found at Cape Hatteras 26 May was a welcome sight. Photograph by Mike Todd.

winter Calliope Hummingbirds lingered into Mar; and the Broad-tailed Hummingbird from the winter at Mableton stayed until late Mar (*fide* LS). Olive-sided Flycatchers were at Kennesaw Mt. 30 Apr (*fide* BZ), near Stephens, Oglethorpe, GA 7 May (MF), and at Reynolda Gardens, Winston-Salem, NC 15 May (JH). Locally unusual *Empidonax* flycatchers included a heard-only Yellow-bellied at Warrior Mt., Polk, NC 4 May (GM et al.), an Alder at Paulk's Pasture, GA 21-23 Apr (GK et al., BL et al.), an Alder at Ivey Manor,

Forsyth, GA 8-10 May (GMc, B&DZ), a Willow in Biedler Forest, Harleyville, SC 12 May (AS), and a Least near Halifax, NC 20 May (FE). The Say's Phoebe that wintered near Goldsboro, NC was last seen 18 Mar (MBr). A male Vermilion Flycatcher, seen briefly at a bird bath in Davisboro, Washington, GA 26 Apr (*fide* LSc), was an obvious migrant. Gray Kingbirds were seen at the n. end of Folly Beach, SC 2 May (2 birds; BD, ND) and in Ocracoke village, NC 16 May (KH, SK). Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were once again reported from all three states. In addition to the returning McDonough, GA and Monroe, NC nesting birds, other Scissor-taileds were at Jekyll I., GA 28-30 Apr (RT, MC), in Spartanburg, SC 12-13 May (LC, JBH), at the n. end of Folly Beach, SC 15 May (JB), and at North Pond, Pea I. 31 May (*fide* JL).

Migrant Warbling Vireos of note were at Kennesaw Mt. 17 Apr (GB et al.), at Mid-Pines Rd., Raleigh, NC 28 Apr (RD, DHO), at Kennesaw Mt. 30 Apr (BZ et al.), and at the Buford Fish Hatchery, Forsyth, GA 6-7 May (KT, JFI, EH). Common Ravens continued to be seen at several e. North Carolina locations such as Butner Game Lands, Durham 28 Apr (2 birds; RP), a Raleigh quarry 2 May (*fide* BB), and in the L. Glenwood area of Pitt near Greenville 11 May on into Jun (VP). A pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches feeding young in a nest cavity at Rabun Gap, GA 13-15 May (FR) provided a high-elevation record for nesting by that species. Interesting migrant wrens included a late Sedge Wren at Carolina Sandhills N.W.R., SC 12 May (RC, CE) and a good count of 6 Marsh Wrens at a n. Greene, GA marsh 6 May (PS). Reports of extremely early thrushes, heard only, involved a Veery at Falls L., NC 2 Apr (BB), a Gray-cheeked at Durham, NC 31 Mar (LSz), and a Swainson's at Falls L., NC 1 Apr (BB). Four Swainson's heard singing along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Mt. Mitchell, NC 26 May (MW et al.) were rather late if migrants; breeding by this species in that state has not been confirmed. Of interest was an American Pipit in Watauga, NC in late May (DP, CSM, JG et al.) that was not only late but was unusually heavily streaked.

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

The warbler migration, as with that of flycatchers and thrushes, was more prevalent in the w. portions of the Region. Coastal observers mentioned a lack of migrants this spring, but several locally noteworthy warblers were found. A Blue-winged Warbler was in Conway, SC 19 Apr (JPe), a singing Chestnut-sided Warbler was a good find at Mt.



This male Yellow-headed Blackbird was a good find for the spring at the E. L. Huie Water Treatment Facility in Clayton County, Georgia 28-30 (here 30) April 2007. Photograph by Dan Vickers.

Pleasant, SC 17 May (DAb), a Magnolia Warbler was at Sanderling, Dare, NC 22 May (JL), a Pine Warbler was at C. Lookout, NC 22 Apr (JF et al.), and 2 Cerulean Warblers were very rare at Hilton Head I., SC 24 Apr (DB). Another Audubon's Warbler was found in the Region, this time a female on St. Catherine's I., GA 28 Apr (BZ, JFI). Blackpoll Warblers usually migrate northward e. of the mts. This spring, however, the mts. had one of the best Blackpoll migrations in recent memory, with higher-than-normal numbers at most places through the month of May, including 25+ at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 5 May (WF et al.). Several early warblers included a Prothonotary at the Ocmulgee N.M., GA 11 Mar (TMc), a Northern Waterthrush at the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, GA 23 Mar (TM), and a Yellow-breasted Chat in the Augusta, GA area 17 Mar (LS). Connecticut Warblers staged one of the best spring migrations ever in Georgia. There were 2-3 at Cochran Shoals, Cobb 5-10 May (MD, KB, BL et al., B&DZ), one at the Buford Fish Hatchery, Forsyth in mid-May (JFI, EH), one at Chickasawhatchee W.M.A., Calhoun 8-9 May (AA et al.), one in Fulton 9 May (TK), one in Catoosa 17 May (DH), up to 2 at Clyde Shepard Nature Preserve, Decatur 18-19 May (HG, JS et al.), one in another area of Decatur 19 May (JBr), and one at Jones Bridge, GA 20 May (KB). North Carolina reports involved one at Jackson Park, Hendersonville 4 May (WF et al.) and another in Hendersonville 12 May (ST). Only one Mourning Warbler was mentioned, a male at Dawson Forest, Dawson, GA 7 May (JFI, EH). Tanagers of note included a very early male Scarlet Tanager at Jekyll I., GA 23 Mar (fide MC), a Western Tanager at

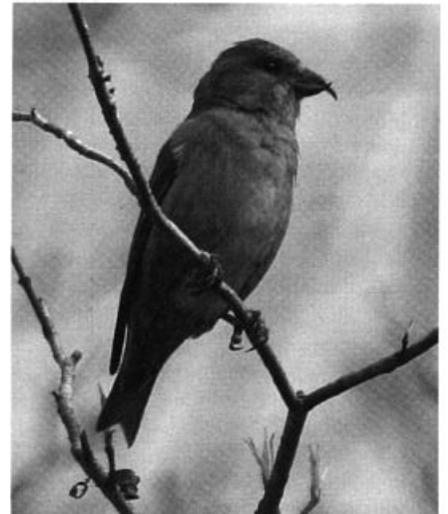
a feeder in Washington, NC 5-19 Mar (fide CSm), and wintering Westerns in Conway, SC until at least 18 Apr (GP) and at Dublin, GA until at least mid-Mar (SS).

Several late sparrows were reported across the Region this spring: a Clay-colored singing at North River Farms, Carteret, NC 6 May (JF et al.); a Henslow's in marginal habitat at North River Farms, NC 28 Apr (JF et al.) and another even later at Clyde Shepard Nature Preserve, Decatur, GA 5 May (JS); and a White-crowned in n. Greene, GA 13 May (PS), plus one at Beaufort, NC 20 May (R&SBo). Of particular interest were the 4 singing Grasshopper Sparrows at North River Farms, NC 6-20 May (JF et al.), which suggests breeding in Carteret, previously undocumented. Lincoln's Sparrows were reported in above-average numbers this spring, with sightings coming from all three states. The latest individuals, most indicative of pure transients, were found in the French Broad R. valley, Henderson, NC 12 May (MW et al.) and at Ivey Manor, Forsyth, GA 12 May (SB). Dickcissel reports were somewhat down from previous spring seasons. The best count again came from North River Farms, Carteret, NC with 9 on 20 May (JF et al.).

This season's Yellow-headed Blackbird reports included 2 near Mocksville, Davie, NC in early Mar (fide TP), a female in Manteo, NC 13 Apr (LMg), a male at Harbison, Richland, SC 16-18 Apr (GR, JGi), a male at the E.L.H. 28-30 Apr (TMc et al., BZ et al.), and one at Cochran Shoals, GA 6 May (fide TMu). Other interesting blackbird reports involved 3 Brewer's Blackbirds somewhat late in Bartow, GA 6 Apr (B&DZ, PH), a Boat-tailed Grackle at the Tidewater Research Farm, Roper, NC 4 Apr (AM), and a male Shiny Cowbird near Darien, McIntosh, GA 27 May (BC). The wintering Bullock's Oriole in Dublin, GA was present until at least late Mar (fide LS). Baltimore Orioles also came through the mts. in good numbers, as evidenced by the 40+ at Jackson Park, Hendersonville, NC 5 May (WF et al.), a very high number for the spring season. Always worth mentioning, Red Crossbill reports included 3 at a feeder in Epworth, Fannin, GA 29-30 Mar (NS), up to 3 at Asheville, NC 18-21 Mar and 14-28 Apr (ST), and 2 along Duncan Ridge Rd., Union, GA 28 May (HG et al.).

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This female Red Crossbill (accompanied by another female and a male) was present at a feeder in Epworth, Fannin County, Georgia 29 and 30 (here 30) March 2007. Photograph by Dan Vickers.

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