



# VIRGINIA BIRDS

A quarterly journal of ornithological sightings in the Commonwealth  
published by the Virginia Society of Ornithology



Volume 16 • Number 1

Summer Records • June–July 2019

## Virginia Birds Regions

### Cities/towns numbered on map

- |                      |                    |                  |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Abingdon          | 18. Franklin       | 31. Norton       | 42. Tazewell       |
| 2. Alexandria        | 19. Fredericksburg | 32. Petersburg   | 43. Virginia Beach |
| 3. Bedford           | 20. Galax          | 33. Poquoson     | 44. Waynesboro     |
| 4. Blacksburg        | 21. Hampton        | 34. Portsmouth   | 45. Williamsburg   |
| 5. Bristol           | 22. Harrisonburg   | 35. Radford      | 46. Winchester     |
| 6. Buena Vista       | 23. Hopewell       | 36. Richmond     |                    |
| 7. Cape Charles      | 24. Lexington      | 37. Roanoke      |                    |
| 8. Charlottesville   | 25. Lynchburg      | 38. Salem        |                    |
| 9. Chesapeake        | 26. Manassas       | 39. South Boston |                    |
| 10. Chincoteague     | 27. Manassas Park  | 40. Staunton     |                    |
| 11. Clifton Forge    | 28. Martinsville   | 41. Suffolk      |                    |
| 12. Colonial Heights | 29. Newport News   |                  |                    |
| 13. Covington        | 30. Norfolk        |                  |                    |
| 14. Danville         |                    |                  |                    |
| 15. Emporia          |                    |                  |                    |
| 16. Fairfax          |                    |                  |                    |
| 17. Falls Church     |                    |                  |                    |



## Virginia Birds

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Send reports and photographs to the Regional Editors. Photographs should be the highest electronic quality possible.

Send with release form, which can be found on the VSO web site:

<http://www.virginiabirds.org/publications/photography-release-forms/>

Articles for consideration can be sent to [billwilliams154@gmail.com](mailto:billwilliams154@gmail.com).

### Season

Fall (Aug–Nov)

Winter (Dec–Feb)

Spring (Mar–May)

Summer (Jun–Jul)

### Reports due to Regional Editors

15 Dec

15 Mar

15 Jun

15 Aug

## Terms and Abbreviations

Species name in **bold** first time mentioned (VARCOM Review Birds **BOLD CAPS**); county names are in *italics*.

### Abbreviations

ad. (ads.)	adult(s)
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
CBC	Christmas Bird Count
Cr.	Creek
et al.	and others
f.	female
<i>fide</i>	vouched by
FOS	First of Season
Ft.	Fort
Gold Book	<i>Virginia's Birdlife, An Annotated Checklist</i> . Virginia Avifauna No. 7, Fourth Edition, 2007.
Hwy.	Highway
Is.	Island(s), Isle(s)
imm. (imms.)	immature(s)
junc.	junction
juv. (juvs.)	juvenile(s)
L.	Lake
Ln.	Lane
MAPS	Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship
m.	male
m. obs.	many/multiple observers
Mt.	Mountain, Mount
NAP	Natural Area Preserve
NP	National Park
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
ph.	photographed by (initials)
Pk.	Park
Pt.	Point
R.	River
Rd.	Road
Res.	Reservoir
RP	Regional Park
Rte.	Route
SF	State Forest
SP	State Park
VARCOM	Virginia Avian Records Committee
VDGIF	Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
v. r.	voice recording
vid. r.	video recording
VSO	Virginia Society of Ornithology
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
*	specimen collected

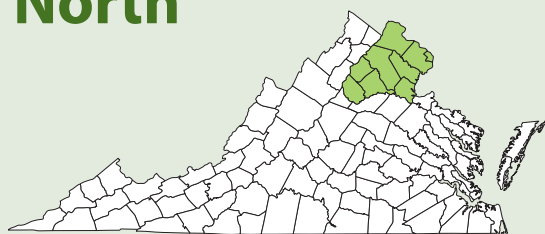
*On the cover:* Max Nootbar documented this nesting Black-billed Cuckoo at Martin Kings Rd., *Albemarle* 21 June.



Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2

# Regional Reports

## North



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Arlington, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Madison, Prince William, Rappahannock, and Stafford counties; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park

Temperatures averaged slightly above normal through the period, particularly in July. Rainfall varied across the Region with amounts generally higher in the Coastal Plain. The highlight of the season was 8 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks photographed in *Prince William's* Piedmont.

**Abbreviation:** USOA (Upper Occoquan Service Authority, *Fairfax*)

### WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS

Eight **Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks**, a species with only a handful of records in Virginia, were well-ph. at Tackett's Mill Pond, *Prince William* 15 Jun (JA).



These Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were at Tackett's Mill Pond, *Prince William* 15 June. Photo by John Aleknavage

A **Hooded Merganser**, a rare but increasing summer visitor/resident in the Piedmont, was observed at L. Ashby, *Fauquier* 3 Jul (GS). A f. **Common Merganser** was seen near Sperryville, *Rappahannock* 5 Jun (PL) where 2 f. had been observed 24–26 May, well beyond the species' mid-May extreme late date; the species is a rare summer visitor in the Mountains and Valleys sector. A m. **Redhead** spent

the entire period at a golf pond off Palmers Ridge Ct., *Prince William* (DLA, ph. HW), most likely the same bird reported at this location 23 May. There are apparently only 2 prior summer records of this species in the Piedmont; it is even more unlikely here some 40 mi. inland from the Potomac R. A **Ring-necked Duck** was seen off Battle Mountain Rd., *Rappahannock* 7 Jul (SK, DLa, ph. CL); there are only a handful of mid-summer records in the Piedmont. Two **Chuck-will's-widows**, rare n. of the James R., were heard calling vigorously along Sputtering Ln., *Culpeper* 24 Jun (CH). Two **American Avocets**, with only a handful of records in the Piedmont, were seen along the shoreline of Beaverdam Res., *Loudoun* 25 Jul (ph. PN).

### TERNS–SWALLOWS

Also with only a handful of records in the Piedmont, 2 **Least Terns** were seen at Mason Pond at George Mason University, *Fairfax* 2 Jun (ph. P&JW). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** made a rare summer appearance at Great Falls NP, *Fairfax* 7 Jul (KL). Sightings of **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons**, also a rare summer resident in the Piedmont, included an ad. at the UOSA 16 Jun (ph. AH, *fide* FA) and a juv. and ad. at a pond near the Vienna Metro station, *Fairfax* 23 Jun (ph. DLe). An imm. **White Ibis**, rare inland, was observed at Huntley Meadows Pk., *Fairfax* 18 Jul (AE), where it was seen and ph. by m. obs. through 23 Jul. Single **Ospreys**, a rare and local summer resident in the Piedmont, were reported at Asterhill Farm near Marshall, *Fauquier* 5 Jul (AE) and at widely separated locations in *Culpeper*: Ely's Ford boat ramp 14 Jul (GJ); Kelly's Ford boat ramp 18 Jul (AR, WC, RW); and L. Pelham boat ramp 18 Jul (AR, WC, RW). Continuing to establish the species as breeders in the Region, breeding pairs of **Mississippi Kites** were recorded at Forest Manor,



This imm. White Ibis was photographed by Evan Pannuck at Huntley Meadows Pk., *Fairfax* 20 Jul.

*Loudoun* (ph. BH) and for the second year slightly n. near the Golden Meadows Recreation Center, *Loudoun* (DN). One to 2 pairs of **Peregrine Falcons** were seen at or near Big Meadows, Shenandoah NP, *Madison* 22 Jun–1 Jul (ph. GG, KR); one reporter said these are Foster Program birds. An **Alder Flycatcher** was seen and heard s. of Brambleton, *Loudoun* 1 Jun (EK) in the same location where one was reported 25 May; this species is a rare late spring transient in the Piedmont. A **Cliff Swallow** was observed leaving a nest under the bridge at Bull Run Marina RP, *Fairfax* 3 Jun (RR) where a nesting colony was discovered in 2017. There were multiple sightings of up to 8 individuals again this year beginning 4 Jun (JB) along the Potomac Heritage Tr., *Arlington*, where this species is nesting under the bridge in the commuter parking lot. Singles were also observed flying over Woodglen L., *Fairfax* 17 & 21 Jun (P&JW). Cliff Swallows are a rare transient and summer resident outside of the n. Piedmont and a fairly rare and local summer resident in the Coastal Plain.

## FINCHES–DICKCISSEL

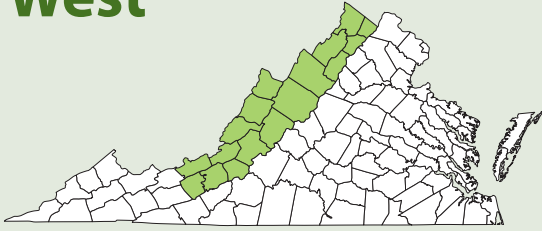
A f. **Purple Finch**, a species with only 2 apparent summer records in the Piedmont, was seen at a private residence in far-w. *Loudoun* 17–18 Jun (ph. JC). A **Dark-eyed Junco**, whose usual Coastal Plain late date is 15 Apr (extreme late date 27 May), was seen numerous times between late April and 17 Jun in the area of 22nd St. S. and Grant St., *Arlington* (ph. DB). A **White-throated Sparrow** was seen at the junc. of Rippon Rd. and Paul Spring Rd., *Fairfax* 22 Jun

(ph. CK). The species' usual Piedmont late date is 20 May; there are very few records past mid-June. Two **Savannah Sparrows**, a rare summer resident in the Piedmont, mainly in the extreme n., and with few breeding records, were observed and confirmed breeding at the private Oak Spring Airstrip, *Fauquier* 20 Jun–2 Jul (DC). **Bobolinks** also were confirmed breeding at the Oak Spring Airstrip, *Fauquier*, where 10–20 continued 20 Jun–2 Jul (DC). This is one of the few areas in the state where Bobolinks are known to breed, albeit increasingly rarely. Individual **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, a rare but increasing summer resident in the Mountains and Valleys sector, were seen in Shenandoah NP at the Pinnacles Picnic Area, *Madison* 15 Jun (ph., m. obs.) and Story of the Forest Trail, *Madison* 16 Jul (PL). A **Black-throated Green Warbler** was seen at Merrimac Farm WMA, *Prince William* 31 Jul (ph. BS). The Piedmont early date for this species is 30 Aug; most of the rare summer sightings are in the n. and near the Blue Ridge. **Dickcissels**, historically a rare summer resident in the Piedmont, continued their spring presence at Bristow Station Battlefield Pk., *Prince William* (ph., m. obs.), with up to 4 lingering through 9 Jul.

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**Corrigendum:** The following sentence in the Spring 2019 North Region report was in error. “Two **NORTHERN GANNETS**, very rare this far inland, were well ph. flying over Long Bridge Pk., *Arlington* 19 Apr (THa).” The sentence will be deleted from the on-line Spring 2019 Virginia Birds issue (Volume 15, Number 4) that will be archived under the Publications tab of the VSO website.

## West



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Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Botetourt, Clarke, Craig, Frederick, Giles, Highland, Montgomery, Page, Pulaski, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren counties; the cities/towns of Blacksburg, Buena Vista, Clifton Forge, Covington, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Radford, Roanoke, Salem, Staunton, Waynesboro, and Winchester

**Abbreviations:** Blandy (Blandy Experimental Farm, *Clarke*); Broadway (Broadway Wastewater Treatment Plant, *Rockingham*)

### WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS

A **Gadwall** was photographed at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 5 Jul (AD, PD), then seen again 7 Jul (SF, WF). A **Green-winged Teal** was observed in Blue Grass Valley, *Highland* 7 Jun (WFO). A continuing m. **Canvasback** was observed at L. Frederick, *Frederick* 13 & 22 Jun (DB) and 4 Jul (WP). A **Redhead** was found at Broadway 1–5 and 19 Jun (DH, GM). An ad. f. **Hooded Merganser** was observed in Blacksburg 8 Jun (DM), one in *Rockingham* 16 Jun (WL), one at the Goshen WMA, *Rockbridge* 18 Jun (KDu), and one recently fledged young at Jordan's Point Pk., *Rockbridge* 21 Jun (KD, DGb). **Common Merganser** reports included an ad. f. with 6 young on the Shenandoah R., *Clarke* 8 Jun (JF); 2 ad. fs. with 12 young on the Calf R., *Augusta* 15 Jun (AL); one ad. f. with 6 juvs. on the South Fork of the Shenandoah R., *Warren* 29 Jun (JF); 6 juvs. near Columbia Furnace, *Shenandoah* 4 Jul (NH); and 9 juvs. at New Market, *Shenandoah* 6 Jul (DH). An ad. f. **Red-breasted Merganser** was seen on the Little R., *Montgomery* 15 Jun (CK). Six to 7 **Ruddy Ducks** were seen at Broadway 1 (GM) to 6 Jun (DH); one was last found there 23 Jun (GM, CT). Thirteen **Ruffed Grouse** were tallied at Palo Alto, *Augusta* 25 Jun (EO). Three **Virginia Rails**, including one young, were found at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 22 Jun (AL, IL); one was observed there 30 Jun (m. obs.). A **Common Gallinule** was photographed at Blandy 18 (DB, DC, JF) & 19 Jun (LF, DG). A **Semipalmated Plover** was seen in *Clarke* 1 Jun and 2 on 4 Jun (DC); one was at Blandy 30 Jul (DB).

### HERONS–DICKCISSEL

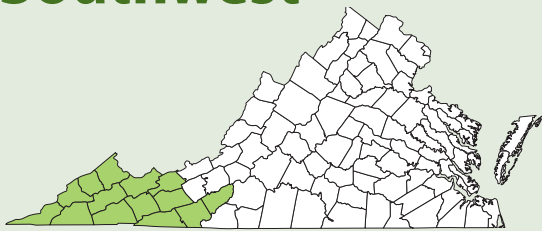
Twenty-one **Great Egrets** were at Blandy 12 Jul (DC). One to 3 juv. **Little Blue Herons** were at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 4–8 Jul and 11–16 Jul (m. obs.). Six **Black-crowned**

**Night-Herons** were found in *Rockingham* 27 Jul (DL, GM). Four **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were seen at Smith Pk., Roanoke City 13 Jun (AR); 2 were in Swoope, *Augusta* 15 Jun (AL). A **Northern Harrier** was observed near Elkton, *Rockingham* 2 Jun (ACK, WE) and one was at Swoope, *Augusta* 14 Jun (WC, MF). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** observations included one at Briery Branch Gap, *Rockingham* 7 (m. obs.) and 29 Jun (MG), then 2 there 17 Jul (GM); one in *Warren* 15 Jun (CC); 2 at Bother Knob, *Rockingham* 20 Jun (EO); 3 at Upper Sapling Ridge, *Highland* 28 Jun (AC, LH, JS); 2 at Douthat SP, *Bath* 5 Jul (OS); 3 in *Highland* 13 Jul (NH); and 3 at Elliott Knob, *Augusta* 15 Jul (EO), a fifth summer county record. A **Pine Siskin** was observed at Mountain L., *Giles* 30 Jun (BK et al.). Forty-one **Bobolinks**, including recently fledged young, were observed in *Augusta* 12 Jul (AL); 2 recently fledged young were seen in *Page* 13 Jul (DH). Two **Golden-winged Warblers** were found in Blue Grass Valley, *Highland* 6 & 15 Jun (ACm), and one near Mountain L., *Giles* 14 Jun (CF). A **Blue-winged Warbler** pair was seen in *Botetourt* 9 Jul (BE, JP), with f. carrying food. A pair was also observed at Palo Alto, *Augusta* 27 Jul (MB). A f. **Prothonotary Warbler** was on a nest in a bluebird box in *Giles* 10 Jul (BO). She was incubating 4 eggs. Other reports involved 2 along the Shenandoah R., *Clarke* (JF), and one near Front Royal, *Warren* 25 Jun (JF). **Mourning Warbler** observations were from two counties, *Bath* and *Highland*. Those from *Bath* had one on Paddy Knob 6 (BE, BK, JM) & 14 Jun (CF), then 5 Jul (JG, HW). Those from *Highland* chronicled 3 at Paddy Knob 17 Jun (GM), then 2 there 4 Jul (JG, HW), and one on Upper Sapling Ridge 28 Jun (AC, LH, JS). **Magnolia Warbler** detections included one in Shenandoah NP, *Page* 20 (CB) & 23 Jun (CKu et al.); one at Paddy Knob, *Highland* 21 Jun (EK); 6 on Upper Sapling Ridge, *Highland* 28 Jun (AC, LH, JS); one on the Blue Ridge Parkway, *Augusta* 9 Jul (HL) for a fourth county summer record; and 2 in *Highland* 23 Jul (ES, TS). **Yellow-rumped Warblers**

reported at several higher elevation locations, and not just in *Highland*, included one at Capon Springs Glade, *Frederick* 4 Jun (BL, JL); 3 in *Shenandoah* 6 Jun (NH); 2 on Poor Mt., *Roanoke* 30 Jun (GW); one at Tinker Cliffs, *Botetourt* 6 Jul (SK); 5 on Elliott Knob, *Augusta* 15 Jul (EO); and 3 in *Bath* 15 Jul (PK). There were several reports from *Highland*, with one report of recently fledged young 18 Jun (EO). Likewise, there were several reports in the Briery Branch Gap area, *Rockingham* with peak count of 6 on 29 Jun (MG). Eight were also observed on Radar Mt., *Rockingham*, including young being fed 2 Jul (EO). A m. **Dickcissel** was photographed near Broadway 2 Jun and seen again 5 Jun (GM); one m. photographed at Greenfield, *Botetourt* 24 Jun (BE, BK); a pair at Swoope, *Augusta* 22 Jun and the m. found there 5 Jul (VL); one in *Rockingham* 30 Jun (VB); one singing near Grottoes, *Augusta* 5 Jul (VL); and one f. seen in Blacksburg 4 (RM) & 20 Jul (CK).

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## Southwest



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Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe counties; the cities/towns of Abingdon, Bristol, Galax, Norton, and Tazewell

**Abbreviations:** AT (Appalachian Trail)

### WATERFOWL—CUCKOOS

A lingering m. **Gadwall** was at the Saltville Well Fields, *Smyth* 5–11 Jun (ph. AR, LA, CF). For the second straight summer a m. **Ring-necked Duck** was found in the Region. This year one was at Lincolnshire Pk., *Tazewell* 4–24 Jun (ph. LA, AR). A recently fledged **Hooded Merganser** was found at the Saltville Well Fields, *Smyth* 5–7 Jul (LA, ph. AR); another young bird was at the Buller Fish Hatchery, *Smyth* 15 Jun (DL, DB). This was a seemingly good summer for **Northern Bobwhites**, with reports coming from more locations than normal. Up to 2 were at Southern Gap, *Buchanan* 13 Jun–7 Jul (CF, DO), and singles were at Choctaw Rd., *Wise* 11 Jun (LA), Valley Rd., *Wise* 15 Jun (JA), and near Sugar Grove, *Smyth* 5 Jul (EH). Up to 2 **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were recorded from a yard near Rose Hill, *Lee* 29 Jun–12 Jul (D&JK); 2 were also in

Jonesville, *Lee* 29 Jun (AR). The Meadowview, *Washington* birds were reported as well, with up to ten 20 Jun–27 Jul (AR, ph. LA, CD). Five birds along Piney Mt. Rd., *Wythe* 22 Jun (MS, DP, SP) represented a potentially new population. Single **Black-billed Cuckoos** were reported at Point Lookout Ln., *Grayson* 7 Jun (EH), Rte. 722, *Russell* 11 Jun (AR), and Rte. 739, *Russell* 27 Jul (AB).

### CRANES—HERONS

A **Sandhill Crane** near Wheeler, *Lee* 4 Jul (NM) was a very unexpected find for the time of year. A **Forster's Tern** was at Clear Creek Lk., Bristol 23 Jul (JD, ph. KD). An ad. **Common Loon** at the Saltville Well Fields, *Smyth* 2 Jul (ph. CC) was another odd record for the middle of the summer. At least 2 **Virginia Rails** were confirmed breeding at the Saltville Well Fields, *Smyth* 5 Jun–31 Jul (AR, LA, m. obs., ph. CD); 3 were along North Fork River Rd., *Lee* 30 Jun (LA, CCo), and a single bird was also reported at



Gose Mill Pond in Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 28 Jun (a.r. DS). The **Soras** from the spring season were confirmed breeding at Gose Mill Pond in Burkes Garden, *Tazewell*, with up to five 10–27 Jun (DS, LA, ph. AR).



Clancy Deel's 15 July photo of a young Virginia Rail at the Saltville Well Fields, *Smyth*



This Sora chick was documented by David Schlabach at Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 10 June.

The only **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** reports came from downtown Bristol, with single birds on 11 Jun and 4 Jul (CF, CC).

### FLYCATCHERS-DICKCISSEL

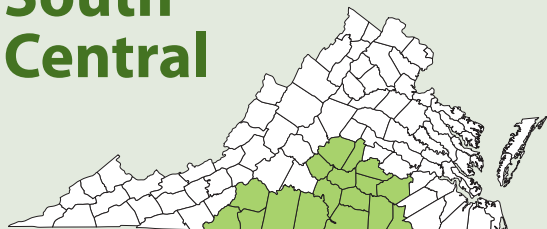
The only reports of **Alder Flycatchers** were 2 along the AT between Elk Garden and Mt. Rogers, *Grayson* 21 Jun (AR, LA) and 3 along the Virginia Creeper Trail near Whitetop

Station, *Grayson* 1 Jul (GM). **Loggerhead Shrikes** were confirmed breeding at Elk Garden, *Russell*, with up to 5 there 10–14 Jun (CF, ph. AR, LA). Other reports were one in Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 3–13 Jun (AR, CF); one at Comers Rock, *Grayson* 12 Jun (J&BL); and one along Rte. 690, *Lee* 27 Jul (PG, LG). **Brown-headed Nuthatches** were confirmed breeding at Washington County Pk., *Washington*, where up to 8 were recorded 25 Jun–7 Jul (RH, SH, DS). This was a good summer for **Brown Creepers** in the Mt. Rogers area with several different reports including a breeding confirmation. Breeding was confirmed at Blue Ridge Discovery Center, *Smyth* with up to 3 birds reported there 4–18 Jun (ph. CC). Two were reported at Mud Creek Ln., *Grayson* 19 Jul (CC, SH) and single birds were reported at Whitetop Mt., *Grayson* 21 Jun (AR), on the AT between Elk Garden and Mt. Rogers, *Grayson* 21 Jun (AR, LA), and on Rte. 828, *Smyth* 21 Jun (AR). Single **Swainson's Thrushes** were found at Grayson Highlands SP, *Grayson* 11 Jun (CF) and at Mt. Rogers, *Smyth* 21 Jun (AR); 6 were along the AT between Elk Garden and Mt. Rogers, *Grayson* 21 Jun (AR, LA). It was a good summer for **Red Crossbills** around Whitetop Mt., *Grayson* where up to 8 were reported from 21 Jun–24 Jul (AR, CC, m. obs.). A few birds were recorded in nearby *Washington* and *Smyth* on occasion as well. There were only a handful of **Golden-winged Warblers** seen this summer; single birds were seen at Dale Ridge Rd., *Wise* 8 Jun (AR, LA), near Mt. Rogers, *Grayson* 14 Jun (ARi), and Saddle Creek Rd., *Grayson* 20 Jun (EH). **Swainson's Warblers** were widely reported in the Region this summer, mainly thanks to point counts for the Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2 Project. Most reports came from *Buchanan*, *Dickenson*, *Wise*, and *Russell* with records at the edges of the species' expected range including one near Pocahontas, *Tazewell* 1 Jun (LA), 3 along Rte. 612, *Smyth* 16 Jun (AP) and one along Fowlers Ferry Rd., *Carroll* 11 Jun (JS). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** continued to increase as a breeder in the Region. Up to 3 were reported at Whitetop Mt., *Grayson* 21 Jun–20 Jul (AR, CC, m. obs.), 3 were at Mt. Rogers, *Grayson* 21 Jun and 13 Jul (AR, LA, ML), and up to 4 at Grayson Highlands SP 11 Jun–26 Jul (CF, GM). One **Dickcissel** was at Elk Garden, *Russell* 10–13 Jun (CF, LA, ph. AR). Up to 3 were along Curt Russell Rd., *Lee* 12–29 Jun (CF, AR); 2 were at Southern Gap, *Buchanan* 26 Jun (AR); and 2 were at the Virginia Highlands Airport, *Washington* 20–26 Jun (AR, LA).

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## South Central



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Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Franklin, Greensville, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and Prince Edward counties; the cities/towns of Colonial Heights, Danville, Emporia, Martinsville, Petersburg, and South Boston

This summer's Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2 work, which included a concentrated blockbusting effort based at Twin Lakes State Park in *Prince Edward* 31 May–2 June, resulted in more than the normal number of reports of many Regionally expected species, including some such as Northern Bobwhite, Cliff Swallow, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Hooded Warbler which are not discussed below. A few surprises were also found during atlasing and are detailed in the text that follows. Aside from atlas work, this season's reports were highlighted by several interesting wader and shorebird reports.

**Abbreviations:** Kerr (John H. Kerr Reservoir, *Mecklenburg* [lower lake], *Charlotte*, and *Halifax* [upper lake]); Staunton View (Staunton View Public Use Area, land area in *Mecklenburg*, but with views of upper Kerr in *Halifax* and extreme s. *Charlotte*)

### WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS

Single **Hooded Mergansers** were reported at Tailrace Pk., Kerr, *Mecklenburg* 11 Jun (MA, EC) and Staunton View 29 Jul (ph. AdD). A single **Pied-billed Grebe** on lower Kerr, *Mecklenburg* 29 Jul (ph. AdD) was the only report, but was perhaps less surprising than the **Horned Grebe** photographed at the same site and date (ph. AD). Far more **Chuck-wills-widows** and **Whip-poor-wills** were reported than in a typical summer as a result of atlas efforts (m.obs.), but no **Common Nighthawks** were reported at all. An **American Avocet**, never expected in the Region, appeared 28 Jul at Staunton View (ph. PG), perhaps the shorebird

highlight of the season. A **Least Sandpiper** at a private lake near Dillwyn, *Buckingham* 1 Jun (DS) was presumably a tardy migrant. **Spotted Sandpiper** reports from June and July are not unknown Regionally thanks to late spring and early fall migrants; perhaps the oddest sightings of the species this season were single birds seen 5 Jul at Wilcks Lk., *Prince Edward* (WR), and 7 Jul at Holliday Lk. SP, *Appomattox/Buckingham* (ES): were they late or early?



Adam D'Onofrio's 29 July photo of a Horned Grebe at Kerr Reservoir, *Mecklenburg*

## TERNS–KITES

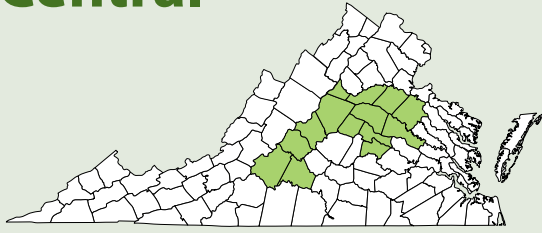
A **Forster's Tern** at Staunton View 29 Jul was presumably an early migrant (AmD, JD). A **Common Loon** on Sandy R. Res., *Prince Edward* 27 Jun (ph. ES) was certainly unseasonal, apparently a first summer record for *Prince Edward*. A **Wood Stork** captured near the shore of the Blackwater R. arm of Smith Mt. Lk., *Franklin* 20 Jul (HO-H), was taken to the Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center of Roanoke, where it was found to be “emaciated, critically dehydrated, and covered in ectoparasites.” The bird unfortunately died within a day of its capture. Away from Kerr, where the species is more likely, single **Little Blue Herons** were noted at Grand View Lk, *Prince Edward*, 8 Jul (ES), and flying over the *Appomattox* portion of Holliday Lk. SP, 13 Jul (ES). A **Cattle Egret** photographed on private property just s. of South Boston in *Halifax* 3 Jun (ph. PG) was the only report; this species is scarce and its appearances not predictable anywhere in the Region. An active **Mississippi Kite** nest was found during atlas work on Aberdour Rd., *Greensville* 9 Jun (KG), and several other kites were reported in that county on various dates (m.obs.); this was another species with a higher-than-normal number of reports this season.

## VIREOS–LARKS

A **Blue-headed Vireo** found 1 Jun during an atlas blockbusting effort on Goodwin Lake Rd., *Prince Edward* (AP) was surprising; this is well east of the normal breeding range of the species and the bird was not found at the site again on subsequent dates, so this was perhaps a late migrant. A few other reports of this species were received during summer atlas efforts but not well documented; it is hard to know whether these represent misidentifications, evidence of a range expansion, or some other phenomenon. “Plenty of” **Horned Larks** reported 8 Jun in Barley block, near Skippers in *Greensville*, included one recently fledged bird (KG, MR); the species was also reported at several other locations scattered around the Region (m.obs.).

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# Central



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Albemarle, Amherst, Bedford, Campbell, Caroline, Fluvanna, Goochland, Greene, Hanover, Louisa, Nelson, Orange, Powhatan, and Spotsylvania counties; the cities of Bedford, Charlottesville, Fredericksburg, and Lynchburg

**Abbreviations:** Sportsplex (Spotsylvania Sportsplex and vicinity, *Spotsylvania*); SNP (Shenandoah NP)

## WATERFOWL-HERONS

A m. **Ring-necked Duck** was notably unseasonable at Vulcan Materials Pond, *Spotsylvania* 27 Jul (JF). Possibly undergoing molt migration, a m. **Hooded Merganser** was noted at Riverview Pk., Charlottesville 18 Jun (ph. TB, CF) and again at Rivanna Trail Belvedere, *Albemarle* 1 Jul (TB, IL, EL, ph. TS). There was one report of **Common Mergansers** away from the species' usual breeding site in *Amherst*; 2 f. on the Moorman's R., *Albemarle* 16 Jun (RK) suggested a local breeding presence. A m. **Ruddy Duck** entertained observers at Old Trail, *Albemarle* 9 Jul (ph. MF, PM). The **Black-billed Cuckoo** found during the spring period at Martin Kings Rd., *Albemarle* (MN, TB) was joined by a mate and successfully nested. At least 2 nestlings were successfully fledged (ph. MN, m. obs.). In addition to the fantastic documentation of the nest, this was a very notable breeding record for the Region away from the Blue Ridge.



Two downy Black-billed Cuckoo chicks in the nest at Martin Kings Rd., *Albemarle* 28 June. Photo taken by Max Nootbar

Early reports of single **Semipalmated Plovers** came from W. Jack Jouett Rd., *Louisa* 23 & 27 Jul (AR, CF) and from Groome's Pt., *Orange* 23 Jul (AR). A remarkable post-breeding wader dispersal into the Region included 2 **SNOWY EGRETS** at Reusen's Dam, Lynchburg 23 Jun (ph. LA, m. obs.), and one continued there through the end of the period. Another was at Chamberlayne Swamp, *Hanover* 25 & 27 Jul (CV, ph. EO). **Little Blue Herons** were found scattered throughout the Region; one was at Sportsplex 20 Jul (ph. JF) and 2 were seen in that vicinity thru the end of the period (ph. m. obs.). Another was at Groome's Pt., *Orange* 23 Jul (AR), 3 flew over Reusen's Dam, Lynchburg 25 Aug (ph. LA, GB), and one was at Chamberlayne Swamp, *Hanover* 31 Jul (ph. JE). There were two **Tricolored Heron** reports, one at Mattaponi WMA, *Caroline* 10 Jul (ph. AR) and another at Chamberlayne Swamp, *Hanover* 25 Aug (CV).

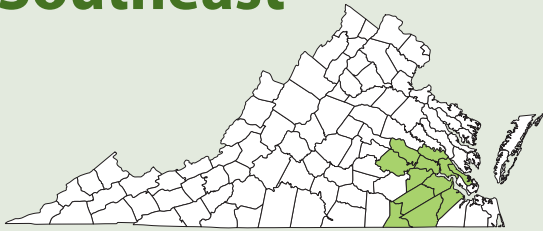
## IBIS-DICKCISSEL

Two **White Ibis** were present at Sportsplex 23 Jul (ph. AR, CF) and 3 were there on 29 Jul (ph. BB, TB, DC, CF). A **Mississippi Kite** flew over Fry's Spring, Charlottesville 9 Jul (BB, TB, MNr, MNd, m. obs.); 2 more were at Leeds Ln., *Albemarle* 12 Jul (ph. MR). As of yet this species still has not been confirmed as a breeder in the Region, but summer records such as these strongly suggest breeding. Thirty-five **Bank Swallows** was the high count on 29 Jul (ph. BB, TB, DC, CF) of what is assumed to be a breeding colony at Sportsplex, probably the only known breeding site for the species in the Region. Four **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were a surprise at low elevation on Wilderness Cr. Rd., *Amherst* 20 Jul (DM), especially given the dearth of other reports around the Region and the state at large. No new **Brown-headed Nuthatch** locations were discovered this summer, but birds continuing in *Albemarle*, *Fluvanna*, and *Louisa* represented the current northern edge of the species' range in the Region. A **Winter Wren** continued from the

spring period on territory at South R. Falls in SNP (ph. RM, MM). A remarkably late **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Pen Pk., Charlottesville 10 Jun represented the latest record of the species in spring migration for the state (ph. TB). Although not as prevalent in the Region as in previous summers, **Dickcissels** were found at several locations; single males were present at Rivanna Trail Belvedere, *Albemarle* 23 Jun thru 9 Jul (ph. TB, IL, EL, TS, m. obs.); Weyburn Rd., *Orange* 24 & 27 Jun (AR, CF, DC); near Nasons, *Orange* 3 Jul (SF); at The Byrd, *Goochland* 12 Jul (LA); Goodview Town Rd., *Bedford* 22 Jul (BE, MH) and at Mountain Run Farm, *Bedford* 22 & 29 Jul (LA).

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## Southeast



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Temperatures were slightly above average for the two month period. Precipitation averaged about 1.5 inches above normal. Anhingas continued to invade the Region in force and one pair even gave us a new breeding record. There were a good number of interesting sightings at Hog Island and a really intriguing one at Chub Sandhill NAP as birds went about their business raising young.

**Abbreviations:** Hog (Hog Island WMA, *Surry*); Newville BBS (Newville Breeding Bird Survey, *Sussex*); VABBA2 (Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2).

### WATERFOWL-WARBLERS

Two **Lesser Scaup**, a rare summer visitor, were at Cheatham Annex (restricted access), *York* 1 Jun and then were seen there again 14 Jul (ph. R&HC). A **Ruddy Duck**, also an uncommon to rare summer visitor, was at Cheatham Annex (restricted access), *York* 24 Jun (RS). Another Ruddy Duck, a m., was down Queens Cr. at New Quarter Pk., *York* 27 Jul (ph. JC, NB, JL, SM). A nightjar survey run in *Southampton* 18 Jun yielded 12 **Chuck-will's-widows** and 2 **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** (NF). A **King Rail** was noted at Hog 10 Jul (NN). One **Black-necked**

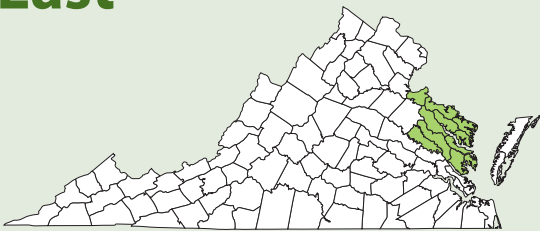
**Stilt** and one **American Avocet** were at Hog 18 Jul (ph. NB). A "Western" **Willet** was photographed at Jamestown, *James City* 10 Jul (BW). A **Marbled Godwit**, seen at Jamestown Is., *James City* 15 Jun, established a first local June record (NN). Two **Stilt Sandpipers** at Hog 18 Jul represented a new local early date (ph. NB). An excellent count of 61 Stilt Sandpipers was made at Hog 23 Jul (AB). A carefully studied **Long-billed Dowitcher** was gleaned from a group of **Short-billed Dowitchers** at Hog 19 Jul (NN). One **Black Tern** at Hog 19 Jul was noteworthy (NN). There were numerous **Anhinga** sightings in the Region this summer. Aside from Carson Wetland, *Prince George*, where multiple birds were counted throughout the season, birds were also spotted in *Sussex*, *Southampton*, and *York*. The most significant sighting was a confirmed breeding observation made at Harrell Rd., *Sussex* where a m. was building a nest while the f. supervised (DY). This season's Regional high count of 11 was seen soaring over the Sebrell SE block of the VABBA2, *Southampton* (ph. BW). Two **Least Bitterns** were at Hog 27 Jun (NN). One was photographed there 29 Jun (JS). Although not confirmed, it is likely that Least Bittern breeds at Hog. Eight **Tricolored Herons** were counted at Hog 8 Jul

(NN). An ad. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was a flyover at Hidden Hills Ln., Lanexa, *New Kent* 4 Jun (TC). Two imm. **White Ibis** were at Hog 23 Jul (AB). A **Glossy Ibis** at Hog 29 Jun provided a first local June record (JS). Another Glossy Ibis, likely a wandering juv., was spotted during a bird survey at Richmond International Airport, *Henrico* 10 Jul (ph. CS). A **Mississippi Kite** was near Mainland Farm, *James City* 5 Jun (NB). Four **Broad-winged Hawks**, uncommon in summer, were noted in the Region. One was in the Bacon's Castle SW Block of the VABBA2, *Isle of Wight* 11 Jun (TC), another was seen on the Newville BBS 20 Jun (NF), the third was at Freedom Pk., *James City* 22 Jun (BT), and a fourth was seen from the New Kent Safety Rest Area, *New Kent* 2 Jul (MA). A very intriguing report of a possible **BACHMAN'S SPARROW** occurred at Chub Sandhill NAP, *Sussex* 11 Jun (PB). Although the observer was never able to obtain visual confirmation, he was confident in what he heard. A subsequent search three days later did not turn up any additional evidence. The habitat where the bird was encountered was pine savanna, a habitat preferred by this species where it occurs in states to our south. It would be wise to visit this area again in upcoming

springs. The last confirmed sighting of Bachman's Sparrow in Virginia occurred in 2002. A **Seaside Sparrow** was at Bay Tree Beach Rd., *York* 22 Jul (AR). A lingering **Nelson's Sparrow** was singing at Ragged Is. WMA, *Isle of Wight* 4 Jun (N&EF). A pair of **Boblinks** seen at Hog 29 Jul may have been early migrants (AR). Bobolinks have been recorded in the Region in the past on much earlier dates in summer, making it difficult to speculate on the species' status. For a third consecutive year a Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory **Prothonotary Warbler** nest box monitoring study was conducted at Chickahominy Riverfront Pk., *James City*. Eight of the 12 boxes had fledged young of which 37 were banded (compared to 13 in 2018) and an estimated 6 fledged without banding (SD et al.).

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## East



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Data was sourced from the Virginia Birds listserv, eBird, NNASnet (Northern Neck Audubon Society listserv), and the Gold Book.

**Abbreviations:** Bethel (Bethel Beach NAP, *Mathews*); Dameron (Dameron Marsh Natural Area Preserve, *Northumberland*)

## WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS

The private ponds at LaGrange Ln., *King George* hosted 2 **Ring-necked Ducks** 27 Jun (FA). A m. **Hooded Merganser** was discovered in Harper's Cr., *Gloucester* 23 Jun (MS); this very low density summering bird is not

recorded in the Region every breeding season. The only record of **Red-breasted Merganser** was a lone bird off Bethel 1 Jun (JF, JS). There was a **Pied-billed Grebe** at a private pond in *King George* 15 Jul (FA). A very rare summer **Black-billed Cuckoo** was well-described at Holly Pt. Nature Pk., *Middlesex* 29 Jun (HH); this species is known as a nomadic breeder so there was a possibility it bred in the area. The seasonal high count of **Clapper Rails** was at Dameron where a mix of ads. and young totaled 18 individuals 6 Jul (EO). Two groups totaling 5 **American Oystercatchers** contained one juv. at Mosquito Pt., *Middlesex* 3 Jul, hinting at possible nearby breeding (JC). **Whimbrels** put on a good showing along the western Bay

this season with a total of 4 seen on a kayaking trip between Bethel and Winter Haven Harbor, *Mathews* 20 Jul (ph. NN, JF) and one at Dameron 6 Jul (EO). At Bethel, a lone **Marbled Godwit** was photographed 31 Jul (ph. NB) and continued through 6 Aug; this is only the second summer eBird record for the Region and the first for the county. A kayaking trip around the barrier islands south of Bethel produced 7 **Red Knots** 1 Jun (ph. JF, JS), which is a new eBird high count for the Region in the eBird database, although these islands are surveyed so rarely that this may well be a typical count for the time of year. A new eBird high count 35 **Short-billed Dowitchers** in *Mathews* came from a kayak trip around the barrier islands south of Bethel 20 Jul (ph. NN, JF).

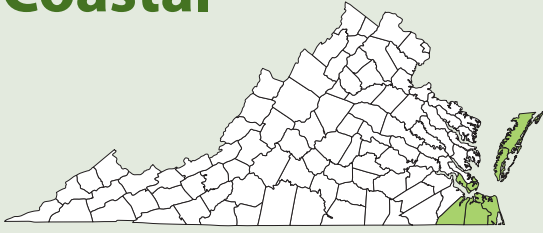
### STORM-PETRELS-DICKCISSEL

Although known to occur regularly in the Chesapeake Bay in summer, **Wilson's Storm-Petrels** are still not often encountered in this Region, so a count of 5 several miles into the Bay off *Lancaster* was notable (BH<sub>a</sub>). An excellent total of 14 **American White Pelicans** was recorded 13 Jul at Shark Tooth Is., *Westmoreland* (ph. BH<sub>i</sub>); this was the first June or July record for the entire state listed in eBird. A **Least Bittern** was reported from a private location near Warsaw, *Richmond* 20 Jun then again 27 Jun (FA et al.). Another individual was heard calling from a marsh in Lewisetta, *Northumberland* 5 Jul (EO), a first for eBird along the Potomac R. A third location in Leedstown also produced a singing individual 15 Jul (FA). A new eBird high count for *Mathews* of 9 **Tricolored Herons** was had from a kayak trip near Winter Haven Harbor 20 Jul (ph. NN, JF). There were two reports of what was possibly a single individual **Cattle Egret** from *Gloucester* 11 & 13 Jun in Naxera (JS). **Mississippi Kites** were discovered 31 Jul in the Founder's Mill neighborhood in *Gloucester* where they continued to be seen over subsequent weeks, suggesting possible nearby breeding, which is so far unrecorded in the Middle Peninsula (JS). A lone **American Kestrel** seen 13 Jul at Woodbury Rd. Sod Farm, *King William* (FA) was the only representative of this former breeder in the Region. A **Common Raven** was recorded in Sealston, *King George* 15 Jun where this species is becoming almost expected (SK, CL). A high count of 76 **Cliff Swallows** was recorded from Walkerton Landing, *King and Queen* 28 Jun (FA); this is half the number counted there on nearly the same date last year, although it is worth noting that viewing conditions at this site have changed and may be responsible for the lower count. Only one Coastal Plain **Swamp Sparrow** was found at the known breeding location

near Warsaw, *Richmond*, despite thorough surveying 27 Jun (FA). A well-described singing ad. m. **Nashville Warbler** was found in the Monroe Pt. neighborhood, *Westmoreland*, 13 Jul (BH); this is the only summer record for the state in eBird outside of a single record from *Highland* 20 Jun 1975 (BK). A **Cerulean Warbler** was reported from Wilna, *Essex* 30 Jun (BD). (Unfortunately no subsequent visits were made to photograph the individual, which would possibly be a first breeding record for the Coastal Plain.) A very late ad. m. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen at a feeder in King William, *King William* 15 Jun (ph. DC). A high count of 4 **Dickcissels** was recorded from the Yeocomico View neighborhood in *Northumberland* 11 Jul (ph. KG).

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## Coastal



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An otherwise lackluster summer season was enlivened by multiple Anhinga observations, among which was conclusive evidence of breeding at a site the species has frequented for decades. June/July Mississippi Kites seem to have become routine in lower *Northampton*, certainly in a few Virginia Beach neighborhoods, and now possibly, Hampton. The Virginia Tech Shorebird Program was active on the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel for a second consecutive breeding season. In view of the impending tunnel complex redesign and development, this research may prove vital to the seabird populations that have bred there, many since the mid-1980s. Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Roseate Terns, and a Crested Caracara were this report period's star attractions.

**Abbreviations:** Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, *Accomack*); Craney (Craney Island Dredged Materials Management Area, Portsmouth—restricted access); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, *Northampton*); FINWR (Fisherman Island NWR, *Northampton*); First Landing (First Landing SP, Virginia Beach); HRBT (Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, Hampton/Norfolk); KSP (Kiptopeke SP, *Northampton*); Magothy Bay (Magothy Bay NAP, *Northampton*); Rudee (Rudee Inlet, Virginia Beach); VA&MSC (Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center); VDGIF (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries)

### WATERFOWL—TERNs

Ten **BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCKS** made a brief stop at Old Donation Apartments in Northwest Virginia Beach 6 Jun (*fide* JF). Craney hosted a **Blue-winged Teal** pair 20 Jun (AM, LS, ph. BW), a continuing ad. m. **Redhead** through 11 Jul (BA, AM, LS, ph. BW), and an ad. m. **Lesser Scaup** to at least 13 Jun (LS, ph. BT). A f. **Common Eider** lingered at Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach to 5 Jun (ph. AB). This or another f. frequented Rudee from 16 Jun (AB) into August; a second-year m. was in Cape Charles

Harbor, *Northampton* 10 Jun (ESB) then 26 Jul (ph. WR). Consistent with previous summers, **Surf Scoters** and **Black Scoters** were recorded at various sites along the immediate coast. The highest total for the former was 5 at Rudee 23 Jun (CB) and for the latter, 125 off Cedar Is., *Accomack* 13 Jun (JG). A f. **Bufflehead** was at First Landing 24 Jun (ph. AB). Four **Hooded Mergansers** were at the Cheriton/Oyster Landfill, *Northampton* 1 Jun (WT) and one was at Chinc. 30 Jun and 2 Jul (MP). Two **Common Nighthawks** were spotted over Briarwood, Portsmouth 31 Jul (EF, FF, MF, NF); a f. at Craney successfully fledged 2 young (LS et al.). **Sandhill Crane** reports involved single birds in lower *Northampton* 19 Jun (ph. MA, v. r. MeP, MiP), one near Parksley, *Accomack* 21 Jun (DM), and one in the Alanton neighborhood, Virginia Beach 23 Jun (ph. WA). Many obs. listed **Black-necked Stilts** at Chinc. and at/near Queen Sound Channel, *Accomack* throughout the season. Among the Queen Sound listings were an ad. with 2 recently fledged young 24 Jun (WL) and a peak count of 22 on 17 Jul (AL, JG). At least 11 nesting pairs were found at Craney (LS et al.); the species' high count there was 115 on 15 Jun (AM, LS, BW). Craney's **American Avocet** peak count was 41 on 11 Jul (BA, AM, LS, BW). Elsewhere, 2 were near Queen Sound Channel, *Accomack* 5 (ph. DH) to at least 27 Jul (m. obs.) and singles were at Back Bay (ph. CB) and the ESVNWR (WR) 25 & 26 Jul, respectively. Preliminary estimates for the VDGIF's annual Virginia Plover Survey were 233 **Piping Plover** pairs and 33 **Wilson's Plover** (RBt et al.). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Chinc. 11 Jun (VK, MY) was noteworthy because this species is rarely reported in the Region after 30 May. Also of special note for the season was an **American Woodcock** observed at the ESVNWR 27 Jul (HA). A **Parasitic Jaeger** was on Smith Is., *Northampton* 20 Jul (ph. KS). There were no roof-top **Least Tern** colonies reported this summer, as substrate at traditional colony sites Patrick Henry Mall, Newport News and Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach had been resurfaced with white polyvinyl



material (*vide* RBt). **Gull-billed Terns**, **Common Terns**, **Royal Terns**, **Sandwich Terns**, and **Black Skimmers** bred on the HRBT again this summer; final breeding population counts for each will become available at a later date. Single **ROSEATE TERNS** were documented at Back Bay 1 Jun (ph. RBi, LR) and at Chinc. 2 Jun (MA, WT).



Laura Mae found this quartet of near-fledgling Green Herons at Lakeside Pk. in the VBBA2 Norfolk South CE block, Chesapeake 8 June.

### **SHEARWATERS-DICKCISSEL**

Six **Cory's Shearwaters** were off *Accomack* 7 Jun (JA), 3 at (37.4684,-74.3075) and 3 at (37.5132,-74.5121). Two **Sooty Shearwaters** were off Chinc. 2 Jun (MA, EC, WT). A **Great Shearwater** was at (37.4684,-74.3075), *Accomack* 7 Jun (JA); another was off Wreck Is., *Northampton* 10 Jun (ph. AL). There were 4 **Wilson's Storm-Petrels** in the Chesapeake Bay s. of Tangier Is., *Accomack* 2 Jun (HL) and 3 were noted from 85th St., Virginia Beach 6 Jun (AB). Additional reports had a total of 61 off *Accomack* 7 Jun (JA): 18 at (37.4684,-74.3075); 32 at (37.5132,-74.5121); 8 at (37.6496,-74.9623); and 3 at (37.7548,-75.2323). Two were off Camp Pendleton (restricted access), Virginia Beach 11 Jun (K&TB). Highly unexpected was a **Leach's Storm-Petrel** adroitly documented as it sat on then flew from a Back Bay impoundment 9 Jun (ph. RBi). Single imm. **Northern Gannets** were off Virginia Beach to Back Bay 1 (ph. VA&MSC), 4 (ph. SM) & 14 Jun (BA). **Anhinga** postings from Stumpy L., Virginia Beach were reminiscent of the excitement generated by Virginia's first successful breeding effort at Fentris Airfield Rd./Blackwater Rd.,

Chesapeake in 2014. The long-held suspicion that this species probably bred at Stumpy was confirmed this year with apparent nest building 4 Jun (K&TB) then 2 ads. that "appeared to be feeding 2 juvs./fledglings" 23 Jul (ph. SK, PM). The highest one day count there was 6 on 29 Jul (ph. JS). Additional **Anhinga** sightings were one at Sandy Bottom Nature Pk., Hampton 13 Jun (MN); one off North Landing R. Rd., Virginia Beach 19 Jun (ph. AB); one-2 at Rock Creek Recreation Area (Private), Virginia Beach 1, 4 (2) & 25 Jul (ph. PM); one at 3000 Mount Pleasant Rd., Chesapeake 4 Jul (SSh); and one in flight near KSP 29 Jul (NF). Although no population count was made this season, **Brown Pelicans** nested once again on Wreck I., *Northampton* (*vide* RBt). Nine hundred and sixty-three **Brown Pelican** young were banded in July at S. Pt. Marsh/Shanks I., *Accomack* (JW). Single **American Bitterns** were reported at Back Bay 5 Jun (BA) and 14 Jul (AB). The Regional distribution of **Mississippi Kite** observations closely mirrored those of summer 2018. The species was listed by m. obs. in *Northampton* from Eastville s. to the ESVNWR throughout the report period. High counts included 8-9 in the vicinity of Bull's Farm/Magothy Bay 2 (ESB, ph. DC) & 29 Jun (ph. CH, JM). In Virginia Beach, as many as 3 were in the Whitehouse Ln./Five Forks Rd. area (TT m. obs.) where the species has bred the previous four summers. Singles were spotted in Pembroke 7 Jun (BH) and over Baillio Dr. 29 Jul (BBr); 4 were over Laurel Manor 31 Jul (ph. TM). In Hampton, where this species successfully nested in 2018, an ad. was at Artillery Rd. 12 Jul (ph. CS, DS) then a juv. was detected nearby in Foxbridge 21 Jul (BB, SB). A **Broad-winged Hawk** was at Bull's Farm (private), *Northampton* 2 Jun (ESB). A **CRESTED CARACARA** was near the Cheriton/Oyster landfill, *Northampton* long enough to be photographed 18 Jun (ph. JC *vide* ESB). Should this record be accepted by VARCOM it would be Virginia's third and the second for the Coastal Plain. A **Barn Owl** nest with 2 large young was on Mockhorn Marsh, *Northampton* 12 Jul (ph. AL). A singing **Willow Flycatcher** was at Craney 11 Jul (BA, BW). A **Philadelphia Vireo** was at First Landing 2 Jun (ph. JM). For a second consecutive breeding season a **Warbling Vireo** pair was at Ashville Pk. Blvd., Virginia Beach. Careful monitoring this year from 19 Jun (v.r. K&TB) through 6 Jul (ph. RBi) led to the discovery of a nest with at least one young 1 Jul (AB, ph. K&TB), providing a significant data point for the VBBA2 Region 12's Pleasant Ridge, NE block. A bit of an anomaly for the species by location was a **Cliff Swallow** at Deep Cr.,

*Accomack* 1 Jun (SS, VS). A tardy **Swainson's Thrush** was at Windsor Pt., Norfolk 2 Jun (DC); 10 Jun is this species' Gold Book extreme late date. That same location hosted a **Louisiana Waterthrush** 4 Jul (DC). The Northwest River Pk., Chesapeake **Prothonotary Warbler** nest box monitoring study, a cooperative project of the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory and the City of Chesapeake Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, was conducted for a 9th consecutive year. Eighty-three of the study site's 84 boxes (99%) had Prothonotary Warbler nesting activity. Sixty-five boxes (77%) successfully fledged at least one nestling. A total of 278 nestlings were banded and an estimated 105 nestlings fledged without banding (SD et al.) An ad. **Swainson's Warbler** with 2 short-tailed juvs. was recorded at L. Drummond NW, SE VBBA2 Priority Block 26 Jul (NF). An **American Redstart** was at Back Bay 2 Jun (MC). The Region's lone **Dickcissel** report revealed a single bird along Joshua Ln., Suffolk 27 Jun (ph. MA, ESB).

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### **A belated Pacific Loon report from Messick, Poquoson**

Within eBird's report filtering layers hovers a cadre of media reviewers who carefully scrutinize the myriad images and sounds posted to the database, most notably, of course, the photos. A **Common Loon** in the Region in mid-May would hardly merit eBird review as rare or unusual, and therefore would readily pass unquestioned through the system's routine species status filters. Fortunately, however, a "Common Loon" reported at Messick, Poquoson 14 May 2016 was accompanied by photos that caught the attention of one of the media reviewers. The pictures showed a loon that seemed proportionately smaller bodied and smaller billed than a Common Loon, with a white throat and upper breast. Its upper parts were dark to the waterline with some small white flecking on the wing coverts. Its forehead was gently sloping and, most importantly, it sported a thin, readily apparent chin-strap. This combination of field marks determined the loon was in fact a **PACIFIC LOON**. By current eBird and Gold Book accounting this was this species' second May record for the state, and the second for the Chesapeake Bay western shore.



Two images of a Pacific Loon at Messick, Poquoson 14 May 2016. Photos taken by Bruce Davis