

The Raven

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Editor
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Lucy's Warbler (*Oreothlypis luciae*) at Cheriton: First Virginia Record

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OBSERVATIONS

At 10:34 a.m. on 31 December 2016, I noted a Lucy's Warbler (*Oreothlypis luciae*) at the Northampton County Landfill, east of Cheriton, Virginia. The bird was foraging low (2 m height) in Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*) and Eastern Redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) on the northern side of the landfill lake, near a group of Field Sparrows (*Spizella pusilla*). Within a few seconds, it flew up into a Common Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), where it perched for about five seconds, about 6 m distant. At first, I thought it might be a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (*Poliophtila caerulea*), as it was so tiny and slender, but the plumage was uniformly grayish above, the tail shorter, and the face also plain gray, with essentially no pattern—lores very slightly paler, but there was no appreciable eyering or eyeline or supercilium. I was not able to see the rump before the bird flew toward the southeast. I immediately texted three colleagues that I believed I'd seen a Lucy's but that it had flown.

I located the bird again at 10:45 a.m., less than 25 m away near a large brushpile at the lake's eastern edge, where it was in company with a Nashville Warbler (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*), an Orange-crowned Warbler (*O. celata*), and a House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*); Carolina Chickadees (*Poecile carolinensis*), Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*), and Golden-crowned Kinglets (*R. satrapa*) were foraging together about 4 m away in taller vegetation.

The Lucy's Warbler was in optimal light, now at 4 m distance, and stayed in view longer, about 10 seconds, allowing confirmation of the bird's tiny size (compared to the Nashville, which was just 6-7 cm from it at one point), lovely gray plumage above (remiges and rectrices a bit darker gray than pure pale/pearly gray mantle and coverts), dirty whitish underparts showing an area of buff tone in the center of the breast, extending slightly toward the bend of the wing, faintest hint of eyering, slim/tiny/compact proportions, small, very sharp-looking grayish bill, blackish or dark gray legs and feet, and importantly the cinnamon tones of the rump/upptail coverts, just visible below the folded wing when the bird shifted slightly. No color other than pale gray was detected in the crown feathers.

I immediately notified other birders, who came to the landfill and searched for the bird, to no avail, through

closing time at noon (the facility closed early for staff to prepare for New Year's Eve celebrations). The landfill was closed the next day, New Year's Day.

On 2 January 2017, a rainy day, the bird was located in the morning by Abby Walter and Wes Teets, who photographed it well. I returned with many observers 12:30-1:30 p.m., and we observed and photographed for over 20 minutes. The bird was in view for most of that period. Perhaps because the bird was wet, we were able to see the brick-red crown feathers easily. We noted faintly olive-buff tones in flank feathers at this time as well. On this day, the bird tended to glean and hover-glean in the tips of the redcedars, working very actively, rather like a kinglet, about 1-4 m high in the trees and shrubs. It also foraged 0-1 m high in the brush pile and in rank weeds, including a stand of American Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) along the edge of the lake. In all cases, the bird was very active, taking flight several times to move to different locations. During one memorable 1-minute period, the bird bathed and preened as it rained. The reddish rump and crown feathers were easily photographed when the bird was bathing.

The bird was observed daily through 6 January. It was sought but not seen thereafter, and it seems likely to have perished during winter storm *Helena*, which brought prolonged cold weather and deep snow (33 cm) to Northampton County.

DISCUSSION

No other bird species has a similar appearance to Lucy's Warbler. Its congener Virginia's Warbler (*O. virginiae*), recorded as near as Maryland (Adams et al. 2012), has yellow undertail and uppertail coverts.

Lucy's Warbler is primarily a bird of the southwestern United States and adjacent northwestern Mexico, with four strays recorded in southern Louisiana (Conover and Nichols 2015). Compared to other western warbler species, however, extralimital records in the East are few. The only previous record for the eastern United State comes from Ipswich, Massachusetts 1 December 1979 (Heil 1981). Nearer to the species' range, but still well extralimital, are single records from Whitefish Point, Michigan 12 November 2011 (Byrne 2012) and Fort McMurray, Alberta 8-10 November 2008 (Koes and Taylor 2009).

In the East, many extralimital western passerines are discovered in early to middle November, for reasons still undetermined. Given the strength of this pattern for western "vagrants" as a whole, it seems likely that the Lucy's Warbler at Cheriton had arrived in the area earlier, perhaps in November, and was only discovered in late December.

This record was reviewed by the Virginia Avian Records Committee and accepted as the first Virginia record, in Category 1.

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Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia Beach, with a Review of Extralimital Records of the Species

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OBSERVATIONS

At 10:00 a.m., 6 February 2017, Robert L. Ake and I stopped as part of a timed beach/ocean bird survey 1.6 km north of the boundary between False Cape State Park and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia Beach, Virginia. The weather was clear, the temperature about 10 degrees Celsius, the wind about 2.5 m/s (5 kts) from the southwest.

Within a minute of scanning the ocean, I noted a tiny alcid swimming very close to, indeed apparently following, a Razorbill (*Alca torda*, of which we would record 1642 for the morning). I estimated then that the two birds were about 250 m from the survey vehicle.

As the smaller bird was perhaps half the length and a third the size of the Razorbill, I assumed it would be a Dovekie (*Alle alle*), and I moved so that Ake could study the bird, which he did quickly, through the window-mounted spotting scope. On returning to view the bird through the scope, I looked again and noted that it looked unusual. Instead of black upperparts, the upperparts were a medium gray, very different from the distinctly black crown and adjacent black upper face. The bird continued to follow one of the Razorbills in a manner that recalled a chick alcid following a parent, and it was never more than a half-meter or so from the Razorbill during the first 10 minutes of the observation.

As I watched the bird, I noted the plumage and the behavioral oddities to Ake and at last said, "So this is not a Dovekie at all." I commented further on its unusual structure, appearing more elongate in the water perhaps because of its posture—slung forward and sunk somewhat low in the water. The bird's crown/head looked rather elongate, flat, even narrow, but I could not yet make out details of the bill, so I suggested that we suspend the formal survey and get out of the vehicle to study the bird with scopes mounted on tripods. Ake used a Leica AP77 Televid spotting scope fitted with 32x eyepiece; I used the same scope but with 30x wide eyepiece, the latter affording less magnification but superb light-gathering qualities.

We discussed what we were seeing as the smaller alcid followed the Razorbill: a medium gray back, no matter what the orientation of the sun to the bird, contrasting with markedly black crown and face ("mask"); entirely white

underparts when the underparts were not submerged or fluffed beneath wings; dark wings above; and, during one brief stretch/flap, blackish remiges contrasting with whitish underwing coverts. On two occasions, when the bird had swum to the side of the Razorbill so that its head was against the black of the Razorbill's upperparts, I could see that at least part of the bill was pale and notably thinner than a Dovekie's bill. Rather little of the white of the breast was visible on the side of the lower neck; and only once, when the bird flapped, did I note a bit of blackish feathering at the side of the breast. The overall impression was of a bird gray above, white below, with a black crown and very small pale or pale-tipped bill. Although we both had cameras with us, we were unable to obtain images of the bird at this distance.

After 22 minutes, we left the bird much in the same place we'd seen it when we arrived and continued the survey. By the end of the observation, we concluded that the bird was an Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*), a species that was familiar to us from the eastern North Pacific but that we had not seen often. Twenty minutes later, also in the vicinity of Razorbills, I spotted a Dovekie, noting its very different appearance: a chunky small alcid with comparatively large round head and rather deep, short black bill; inky black upperparts matching the Razorbills'; natty white-edged secondaries; a tiny white mark above the dark eye, imparting a wild-eyed or frightened look; much more white wrapping around the black auriculars than in the murrelet and sharper, thicker distinct black mark on the side of the breast near the bend of the wing. In short, the bird looked like a miniature auk, not a murrelet. This bird did not flap, and it was apparently foraging, as it was not relocated subsequently. About 35 Dovekies had been reported among 12,000+ Razorbills in the area over the previous three or four days, but we found no more Dovekies on the survey that morning.

On 12 February 2017, Rob Bielawski was searching for the murrelet with others at the beach at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge; his position was about 400 m south of the northern beach access (Seaside Trail) and about 275 m north of the southern access (Dune Trail). He photographed Razorbills that morning at a distance of about 150 m, and when editing his images several days later, he discovered

that a much smaller alcid with black crown, gray back, white underparts, and tiny, pale-tipped bill was visible very near a Razorbill in one image (photograph taken 10:51 a.m.). The bird is mostly hidden by waves in subsequent images but remains close to the Razorbill in all images. The location of the bird was 4 km north of the location where Ake and I had studied the Ancient Murrelet six days earlier.

DISCUSSION

Two weeks after the first observation, I was able to study Ancient Murrelets at leisure at Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor County, Washington on 23 February. All studies there, at varying distances, confirmed the identification of the 6 February bird and certainly matched well the image fortuitously taken by Bielawski.

Ancient Murrelet in all plumages is a distinctive species, unlike any other seabird with the exception of Japanese Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus wumisuzume*). Publications that treat identification of Japanese Murrelet contain conflicting information on non-breeding plumage. Some texts indicate that the species has whitish marks in the black crown at all seasons and in all plumages, and many published photographs from January and February indeed show large amounts of white in the sides of the crown, though these birds appear to be largely in or attaining breeding plumage. Notable in close photographs is the sizable bill of Japanese Murrelet, appearing much larger than that of Ancient Murrelet. A recent field guide that includes both species (Brazil 2009) shows winter adult Japanese Murrelets to be wholly gray above, with a whitish face, very unlike other depictions and published photographs, and indeed an authoritative guide to the seabirds of the world (Howell and Zufelt, in press) notes that Japanese Murrelets have large areas of white in the lores, contiguous with the white of the throat, very unlike Ancient Murrelet (excellent photographs support this contention). No illustrations or published photographs of Japanese Murrelet accord with the plumage of the Virginia Beach murrelet, which also had a very small bill.

Although chiefly a bird of the Pacific Ocean, Ancient Murrelet has a strong pattern of occurrence in interior and eastern North America, with more than 100 records, about 70 of those east of the Rockies, including a small number from the Atlantic Ocean proper (Table 1, compiled from state records committees via email correspondence). Almost all of the midwestern and eastern records are from the late autumn through early winter period, which is also true of eastern North American records of Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*), likewise of the North Pacific (Sealy and Carter 2012). What drives such late-autumn eastward dispersal in these North Pacific murrelets is unknown, as is true of bird "vagrancy" in general. Japanese Murrelet is

virtually unrecorded in extralimital contexts, though it has been recorded short distances from typical range, south to Taiwan and north to eastern Russia (Brazil 2009).

An Ancient Murrelet that summered in Maine in 2016 and again in 2017 (Wells and Wells 2017) associated closely with locally breeding Razorbills and Atlantic Puffins (*Fratercula arctica*). An Ancient Murrelet that summered at Lundy, Great Britain in 1990, 1991, and 1992 fraternized closely with Common Murres (*Uria aalge*; Walden 1994).

The Virginia Beach record was reviewed by the Virginia Avian Records Committee and accepted as the first record of Ancient Murrelet for Virginia, in Category 2.

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Table 1: Extralimital records of Ancient Murrelet in the United States. Page 1 of 2

State/Province	Location	Date	
Wisconsin	Barron Co.	12-Nov-1975	
Wisconsin	Lake Koshkonong, Jefferson Co.	2-Oct-1882	
Wisconsin	Tony, Rusk Co.	10-Nov-1964	
Wisconsin	Kaukana, Outagamie Co.	2-Nov-2007	
Wisconsin	Spring Creek, Columbia Co.	9-Dec-1941	1940?
Wisconsin	Lake Monona, Dane Co.	2-Apr-1967	
Wisconsin	Lake Koshkonong, Jefferson Co.	2-Oct-1882	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	14-Nov-2016	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	8-Nov-2010	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	31-Oct-2008	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	3-Nov-2006	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	14-Oct-2005	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	1-Nov-1993	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	25-Nov-1989	
Michigan	Whitefish Pt., Chippewa Co.	26-Oct-1989	
Michigan	Paradise, Chippewa Co.	14-Nov-2001	
Michigan	Tahquamenon R., Chippewa Co.	29-Oct-2006	
Michigan	Pentwater breakwall, Oceana Co.	16-Nov-2013	
Michigan	Tiscornia Park, Berrien Co.	20-Nov-2018	
Michigan	Tiscornia Park, Berrien Co.	14-Nov-2009+	
Michigan	Lake Erie Metropark, Wayne Co.	15-Nov-1998	
Michigan	Berrien Co.	20-Nov-2012	
Illinois	Gillson Park, Cook Co.	20-Nov-1982+	
Illinois	Carlyle Lake, Clinton Co.	6-Nov-2004	
Illinois	ne. of Macomb, McDonnough Co.	16-Nov-1962	
Indiana	Marquette Lake, Lake Co.	20-Nov-2018	
Indiana	Marquette Park, Lake Co.	27-Oct-2001	
Indiana	Port of Indiana, Porter Co.	23-Dec-2009+	
Ontario	Sarnia, Lambton	7-Nov-2004	
Ontario	Point Pelee N.P., Essex	14-Nov-1998	
Ontario	Burlington, Halton	14-Dec-1999	
Ontario	Toronto Islands, Toronto	18-Nov-1901	
Ontario	St. Catharines, Niagara	13-Nov-1994	
Ontario	Crystal Beach, Niagara	15-Nov-1908	
New York	Ontario Beach, Monroe Co.	4-Nov-1994	
Vermont	Shelburne, Chittenden Co.	17-Apr-2014	
Massachusetts	Andrew's Pt., Essex Co.	5-Feb-1999	
Massachusetts	Andrew's Pt., Essex Co.	8-Nov-1992	
Massachusetts	Halibut Pt., Essex Co.	29-Nov-1992	possibly same bird as above
Massachusetts	Race Pt., Barnstable Co.	4-Jan-1998	
Massachusetts	Boston harbor, Suffolk Co.	date unknown (specimen)	
Pennsylvania	Lake Ontelaunee, Berks. Co.	8-Nov-1992	
South Dakota	Ipswich, Edmunds Co.	13-Nov-1993	
Colorado	Union Res., Weld Co.	14-Oct-1965	
Colorado	Louisville, Boulder Co.	4-Nov-1995	
Colorado	Bear Creek Lake, Jefferson Co.	8-Nov-2004	
Colorado	Chatfield S.P., Jefferson Co.	5-Dec-1995	
Colorado	Lafayette, Boulder Co.	28-Nov-1957	
Colorado	Fort Collins, Larimer Co.	13-Nov-2004	
Colorado	Pueblo Res., Pueblo Co.	16-Nov-2008	
Quebec	Bassin de Chambly	25-Oct-1998	
Quebec	Montréal	13-Apr-1913	
Maine	Seal Island N.W.R., Knox Co.	13-May-2016	
Maine	Petit Manan N.W.R., Washington Co.	1-Jun-2016	likely same bird
Montana	Gallatin Valley, Gallatin Co.	8-Dec-2012	

Table 1: Extralimital records of Ancient Murrelet in the United States. Page 2 of 2

State/Province	Location	Date	
British Columbia	n. of Elkford, East Kootenay	16-Oct-1984	well inland
Alberta	Glenmore Res., Calgary	18-Oct-1982	
Saskatchewan	Little Arm Bay, Regina	27-Sep-2003+	
Minnesota	Lake Hook, MacLeod Co.	5-Nov-1905	
Minnesota	Little Cut Foot Sioux Lake, Itasca Co.	22-Nov-1950	
Minnesota	Pelican Lake, Crow Wing Co.	14-Nov-1961	
Minnesota	Fort Ripley, Crow Wing Co.	28-Feb-1969	
Minnesota	Lake Kabetogama, St. Louis Co.	Oct-1970	
Minnesota	Lake Winnibigoshish, Cass Co.	29-Oct-1979	
Minnesota	Grand Marais, Cook Co.	20-Nov-1999	
Florida	Ponce Inlet	15-Dec-2009	
Nebraska	e. of Tekamah, Burt Co.	27-Oct-1929	
Ohio	Sandusky Bay, Erie Co.	28-Mar-1951	
Louisiana	Lake Pontchartrain, Orleans Co.	6-May-1954	
Manitoba	Winnepeg	8-Oct-1953	
Manitoba	Pine Dock	x-Aug-1975	
New Mexico	Santa Fe, Santa Fe Co.	6-Nov-1985	
Iowa	Crystal Lake, Hancock Co.	28-Oct-1987	
Wyoming	Westvaco Evaporation Ponds, Sweetwater Co.	15-Oct-2002	
Wyoming	Afton, Lincoln Co.	30-Oct-2003	
Wyoming	near Lander, Fremont Co.	Nov-1972	
Wyoming	Moran, Teton Co.	Unknown-1981	
Washington	Yakima, Yakima Co.	15-Nov-1950	
Washington	Mabton, Yakima Co.	19-Nov-1951	
Washington	Spokane Co.	late Oct-1963	
Washington	Long Lake Dam	11-Nov-1965	
Washington	Marblemount, Skagit Co.	11-Nov-1988	
Washington	GrandeRonde River	2-Nov-1989	
Washington	John Day Dam, Lake Umatilla, Sherman Co., OR	23-Nov-1989+	
Washington	Vantage	23-Sep-1994	
Washington	Chief Joseph Dam	10-Aug-2001+	
Washington	Lyle Point, Klickitat	20-Aug-2002	
Washington	Wanapum Pool, Grant Co.	14-Sep-2003	2 birds
Washington	Bonneville Dam, Skamania Co.	7-Nov-2004+	
Washington	Little Pend Oreille N.W.R., Stevens Co.	20-Nov-2004	
Washington	Yakima, Yakima Co.	28-Nov-2006	
Washington	Cascade Locks, WA/OR	23-Oct-2011+	
Washington	Milepost 210 Hwy. 97a, s. of Orondo, Chelan Co.	25-Aug-2012	
Washington	Everett Sewage Treatment, Snohomish Co.	29-Nov-2014	
Utah	Logan Sewage, Cache Co.	24-Nov-1962	
Utah	Jordan River, near Lehi, Utah Co.	21-Dec-1925	
Utah	Roosevelt, Duchesne Co.	12-Nov-1955	
Utah	Gunnison Island, Great Salt Lake, Box Elder Co.	6-May-1974	
Oregon	Cascade Locks, WA/OR	25-Oct-2011	
Oregon	John Day Dam, Lake Umatilla, Sherman Co., OR	23-Nov-1989+	
Oregon	Haystack Reservoir, Jefferson Co.	4-Nov-2007	
Oregon	Haystack Reservoir, Jefferson Co.	5-Nov-2011	
Oregon	Indian Ford Meadow, Deschutes Co.	9-Oct-1995	
Idaho	Shields Gulch, near Osburn, Shoshone Co.	29-Jan-1990	
Idaho	Orofino, Clearwater Co.	30-Jan-2013	
Idaho	Middle Fork, Salmon River, Lemhi Co.	26-Jul-2001	
Nevada	Pyramid Lake, Washoe Co.	19-Sep-1996+	
Nevada	4 miles w. of Fallon, Churchill Co.	5-Apr-1970	
California	Whitewater River delta, Salton Sea, Riverside Co.	16-Jun-1984	
California	Clifton Court Forebay, Contra Costa Co.	24-Aug-1994	
California	San Pablo Reservoir, Contra Costa Co.	21-Nov-1993	

The Vagaries of Mountain Birding in Winter: An Analysis of 50 Years of the Big Flat Mountain Christmas Bird Count and a Tribute to Charles E. Stevens

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ABSTRACT

Fifty Big Flat Mountain Christmas Bird Counts spanning the years 1955-2007 are compiled and summarized, the count area described, and observations on selected species and groups of birds presented. The nature of the Count and its results reflect the style of birding of its long-time compiler, Charles E. Stevens.

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNT AREA

The Big Flat Mountain Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was started in 1955 by Charles E. (MO) Stevens with the purpose, in part, of collecting records of mountain birds for his home county, Albemarle. The count is named for Big Flat Mountain, a broadly rounded summit of the Blue Ridge in the southern section of Shenandoah National Park where Loft Mountain campground is now found. The count circle is centered on the crest of Pasture Fence Mountain at approximately N 38.17778, W 78.72361, at 880 m (2887 ft) elevation, and so extends well into the Piedmont foothills of Albemarle County to the east and a shorter distance west into the Shenandoah Valley in Augusta and Rockingham counties. By intention, however, counting for this CBC was restricted to the mountains proper in order to draw a contrast between birdlife in the mountains and the surrounding areas. Along the southeastern flank of the Blue Ridge, the break from gentle piedmont terrain to mountain slope follows approximately the 305 m (1000 ft.) contour. Elevations as low as 244 m (800 ft.), however, extend into the mountain valleys. Along the northwestern flank, the break follows approximately the 488 m (1600 ft) contour. From this elevation, an outwash plain of sand and gravel slopes gradually to the valley limestones at about 366 m (1200 ft.). Consequently, portions of the count circle on its eastern and the western flanks were excluded, rendering the count area much closer to a long rectangle than a circle. The highest point in the count circle is Cedar Mountain at an elevation of 1006 m (3330 ft.). The only significant body of water in the count circle that was consistently covered is Sugar Hollow Reservoir at the confluence of North and South Forks of Moorman's River in Albemarle County, with a pool elevation of 974 ft. (297 m). The much smaller Crimora Lake on the west side of the Blue Ridge

was visited only once in the history of the count. Most of the mountain region lies within the Shenandoah National Park, but significant areas of private land occupy the park's periphery, especially on Pasture Fence and Buck's Elbow mountains.

The dominant vegetation in the count area covered is hardwood forest. Historically, many areas of mountaintop lands were cleared and have been gradually succeeding to hardwood forest. Pine stands occur in patches, mostly on the western slopes where the Irwin quartzite produces very acidic soils and conditions favorable for pine-oak-heath communities that often have a fire history.

This summary is a tribute to one man's persistence. The December 2007 count marked the 50th Big Flat Mountain CBC and only the second that Mo Stevens missed. Only 18 different individuals participated in the count during the period reported here, most having participated only a few times, a couple as many as ten or more. Mo continued to participate in the count through 2006. He submitted results to The Raven annually and usually to the Audubon Society, as well. It is the dedication of one man, its compiler, that has carried the count through the decades. The count also reflected Mo's philosophy and style of birding which was preserved in part by the nature of the area. On this count, as well as other Albemarle counts he compiled, Mo suggested walking routes rather than assigning a sector of the count area to be covered however one chose to do it. This was the way he always birded, encountering each species on foot in forest and field. For the Big Flat Mountain Count, there was never any difficulty assigning a route if they were on foot, whereas by car there was really only one road available, Skyline Drive, and it wasn't always open due to icy or snowy road conditions. This limited participation gave the count a unique character. The predominance of coverage on foot is reflected in the fact that walking mileage nearly always exceeded that by automobile, and on many occasions, no miles by car were recorded. For all 50 counts, total miles on foot equaled 1471.8, by car only 295.5! Though sparse, coverage was very consistent over the count's 50-year history with the very same walking routes being covered on multiple occasions, often by the same individuals.

It's no wonder that this mountain-only count has attracted few enthusiasts as it typically involves long, cold walks and few birds. The average species total for the count during its first 50 years was a mere 36 species! As anyone who birds mountain areas in winter knows, finding birds of any species is serendipitous. Even relatively common species can be missed on any given day. Furthermore, weather, especially wind, can be a major factor. While this is true for any count, it is more consistently a factor in the mountains where differential cooling of mountain slopes and elevation differences regularly generate moderate to strong winds. The first weekend of the count period is a favorite in many places due in large part to the increased chance of finding late-lingering species, but the Big Flat Mountain Count is usually conducted the second week of the count period. Forty-one of the 50 counts were conducted between December 22 and December 31. Weather data was not available for all 50 counts, however 12 or more were known to have had below freezing temperatures all day. Windy days (15 mph or more) were recorded on 17 occasions.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SPECIES

The species recorded during the count's 50 year history are listed in Table 1 and full results are shown in Appendix 1. According to records from The Raven, the count was not conducted in 1962-63, 1966-67 and 1969-70, in all likelihood due to freezing rain, sleet, snow and icy roads all of which are mentioned for other Albemarle counts conducted those winters (Scott, 1963, 1967, 1970). A total of 92 species was recorded with only 7 species being observed on every count: American Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Dark-eyed Junco, and Northern Cardinal. By contrast, 22 species were recorded only once, waterbirds and raptors accounting for a large percentage (82%) of those. An additional 15 species were recorded only 2 to 5 times. When this larger group is considered, icterids form a third group of infrequently encountered species. One might argue that this is merely an artifact of the small number of observers, but this overlooks the fact that many of the same areas were consistently covered, often by the same observer, and that the sporadic nature of certain species is accentuated when the region is overwhelmingly covered by forest. The few water features and open fields were preferentially covered, so the occurrence of species that might be encountered in those habitats may be over-represented, if anything.

The mountain flavor of the count is reflected in the frequency and numbers of certain species. This includes such montane species as Ruffed Grouse and Common Raven (see Appendix 1), which were encountered more frequently and in larger numbers than in adjoining lowland areas. Ruffed Grouse, for example, were found on 48 of 50 counts

Table 1. Frequency of occurrence for species recorded on the Big Flat Mountain CBC, 1955-2007

Common Name	Scientific Name	No. Years Recorded
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	5
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	6
American Black Duck	<i>Anas rubripes</i>	6
Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	1
Bufflehead	<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	2
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	1
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>	12
Northern Bobwhite	<i>Colinus virginianus</i>	13
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	48
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	28
Pied-billed Grebe	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	5
Horned Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	1
Rock Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	1
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaidura macroura</i>	7
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	1
American Woodcock	<i>Scolopax minor</i>	3
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	9
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	1
Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>	16
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	41
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	8
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	4
Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	1
Accipiter sp.	<i>Accipiter sp.</i>	2
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	1
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	47
Rough-legged Hawk	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	<i>Megascops asio</i>	22
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	15
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>	17
Owl sp.		1
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	21
Red-headed Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes carolinus</i>	47
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>	46
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	49
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>	48
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	43
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>	49
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>	3
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1
Eastern Phoebe	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>	18
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>	2
Blue Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	46
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	50
Fish Crow	<i>Corvus ossifragus</i>	1
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	49
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	2
Carolina Chickadee	<i>Poecile carolinensis</i>	50

Common Name	Scientific Name	No. Years Recorded
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>	2
Tufted Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus bicolor</i>	50
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	30
White-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	46
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>	46
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>	44
Carolina Wren	<i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i>	48
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	50
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>	31
Eastern Bluebird	<i>Sialia sialis</i>	35
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	36
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	37
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>	4
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>	32
European Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	19
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	24
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	1
Evening Grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>	20
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>	1
Purple Finch	<i>Haemorhous purpureus</i>	32
Common Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	1
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	8
White-winged Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	1
Pine Siskin	<i>Spinus pinus</i>	14
American Goldfinch	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	47
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	1
Eastern Towhee	<i>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</i>	20
American Tree Sparrow	<i>Spizelloides arborea</i>	9
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>	1
Field Sparrow	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>	22
Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>	15
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	47
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	2
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	50
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	50
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	2
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	2
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>	1
Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	1
Common Grackle	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	2
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>	15
Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>	50

with a high count of 27 and an average of 8 individuals. By comparison, the Charlottesville CBC recorded Ruffed Grouse only 14 times during the same period with an average of 2.3 individuals (Audubon CBC, 2017). The Waynesboro CBC compared more favorably over a 36 year period with 22 counts and 3.2 individuals, respectively (ibid.). This is to be expected since the Waynesboro CBC includes a portion of the Blue Ridge. Similarly, Common Ravens were recorded on 40 of 50 counts, 15 count-years in

double digits. While this frequency wasn't appreciatively greater than the aforementioned adjoining counts (38 for Charlottesville, 34 for Waynesboro), ravens were often within earshot as they coursed back and forth along the ridges. Although woodpeckers are regular and frequent on any count in our region, their predominance on the Big Flat Mountain CBC is notable. Numbers were large relative to the number of party hours, as exemplified by the Pileated Woodpecker with the average -being 12 individuals. Direct comparison of numbers can be misleading, but can to some extent be corrected for by calculating the number of birds per party hour. Pileated Woodpeckers on the Big Flat Mountain CBC averaged 1.1 individuals per party hour, whereas on the Charlottesville CBC, the average was only 0.37 for the same period (ibid.). Of the 14 species found on all but five or fewer counts, five were woodpecker species.

Also reflecting the mountain flavor of the Big Flat Mountain CBC were the species that occur less frequently and in smaller numbers. Turkey Vultures are good examples. Not only is this a common species, but their soaring habit makes them particularly observable even at moderately great distances. Yet Turkey Vultures were not recorded on nine counts and fewer than 10 individuals were found on 29 others for an average of only 0.63 individuals per party hour. On the Charlottesville CBC, the species was missed only once in the same period for an average of 2.62 individuals per party hour (ibid.). Blue Jays are another example, being recorded on almost every count but always in low numbers, the peak being only 18. A similar comparison with the Charlottesville CBC yields 2.65 individuals per party hour versus 0.56 for Big Flat Mountain (ibid.). The more-or-less unbroken forest is a major factor in the low number of icterids found. The five species were accounted for by only 8 observations over the entire 50 year period. A frequent associate, the European Starling, was not seen on 31 counts, considered a positive result by some! Other introduced species (Rock Pigeon, House Finch, and House Sparrow) were each recorded only once. The overwhelming extent of forest habitats in the count area was perhaps best characterized by the Brown Creeper, an infrequently encountered woodland species. Big Flat Mountain counters recorded this species at four times the rate recorded on the Charlottesville CBC (0.43 vs. 0.10 individuals per party hour) (ibid.). Although averaging only five individuals per count, Brown Creepers were among the most consistently recorded species, found on 46 of the 50 counts, comparable to the woodpecker species, but with fewer individuals in most cases.

Mo Stevens had an unusual appreciation for the fidelity which certain species show to certain habitats at certain times. It is for this reason that, when asked about memorable highlights of the Counts, he responded that one

was the surprise of finding a Green Heron at Sugar Hollow Reservoir (Dec. 30, 30 Dec 1982). In this respect, erratic winter visitors are perhaps more predictable, though no less exciting, so the White-winged Crossbills and Common Redpolls which were recorded many years earlier did not elicit the same response. When the December 1977 count produced three Golden Eagles (the first for the count), Mo enthusiastically described the scene of three Common Ravens joining the eagles in a series of aerial maneuvers high overhead. Occasionally, a species recorded only once may bear witness to a seldom-observed phenomenon. The only time Red-headed Woodpeckers have been seen on the Count was December 30, 1983, when three were found, each seen individually several miles apart foraging and flying southwestward along the crest of the Blue Ridge. By all appearances, this seemed to be a case of directional season movement; at such a date, can we call these birds extremely late Fall migrants?

The rationale of contrasting mountain birding with birding in surrounding areas has gone unrecognized and underappreciated in the realm of CBCs in which maximizing the diversity of species is often an unspoken goal. The assumption is that a lot of species are being missed on counts with few observers. The absence in any given year of certain common species such as European Starling, Song Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and House Sparrow might be regarded as making comparison with other counts invalid. This 50-year Big Flat Mountain CBC review shows that the absence of these species is the rule rather than the exception. The cumulative total of 92 species (see Table 1) is 2.56 times the average of 36 species per count. The longer perspective suggests that the species diversity shown over the count's history is more a feature of population trends and differences over the years than a deficiency of coverage on any given year, although this factor certainly contributes somewhat. A case in point is the 50th count in 2007 when three species of raptors were recorded for the first time: Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Northern Goshawk. That year three Bald Eagles were observed, probably reflecting the remarkable recovery of that species from drastically low numbers several decades ago, to being regular winter visitors in the mountain region. Red-shouldered Hawks have long been known in low numbers on counts in the adjoining Piedmont, but have become increasingly frequent and numerous in recent years. The narrow mountain valley of Moorman's River is certainly not optimal habitat for Red-shoulders. Serendipity might best describe the Northern Goshawk sighting since only 13 accipiter sightings occurred over the entire period and Northern Goshawk is the least frequent of the accipiters in the region.

In summary, intricacies in regional bird life may be

overlooked due to the design of a study. We see here that by omitting physiographically different parts of a 15-mile diameter CBC circle smaller scale differences are revealed. Despite its low level of participation over five decades, there does appear to be value in the data provided by the Big Flat Mountain CBC, a value anticipated many years ago by the count's compiler.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MO STEVENS

Charles E. (Mo) Stevens grew up in Charlottesville, Albemarle County, Virginia. He began birding at an early age and was encouraged in this pursuit by Rev. John Gray. He established the habit of long walks almost from the beginning when he'd ask to be driven 10-15 miles into the surrounding countryside from which he would walk home. He was often joined in birding forays by Bill Minor, Ken Lawless, Fred Scott, Jim Watson, and Boo and Bill Lewis. Mo's quick wit and humor coupled with an insatiable curiosity about all things natural, made him a wonderful field companion. He birded everywhere he went in the true spirit of a naturalist. He once recounted that he had a field guide to birds in his hip pocket when his unit was captured by German soldiers in the closing days of World War II (TFW, pers.comm. in the 1970's)! Mo's interest in and dedication to learning minute details of plant and animal geography are well known to all who knew him. He first joined the Virginia Society of Ornithology in 1944 and was a life member when he died 7 Oct 2015. It is hoped that this summary of a little-known CBC will broaden an appreciation for his style of inquiry into Virginia's birdlife. A tribute article about Mo and his contributions to ornithology and botany in Virginia was published in *Banisteria* (Wieboldt, T.F., 2016).

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Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 1 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	55-56	56-57	57-58	58-59	59-60	60-61	61-62	63-64	64-65	65-66	67-68	68-69	70-71
1. Canada Goose													
2. Mallard	2	95			1						61	9	
3. American Black Duck	2		1			3							
4. Long-tailed Duck													
5. Bufflehead												4	
6. Common Goldeneye												2	
7. Hooded Merganser													
8. Northern Bobwhite		15			7			22		1		28	
9. Ruffed Grouse	4	2	3	7	9	17	25	3	9	15	2	27	25
10. Wild Turkey		1		12	1		2				3	5	
11. Pied-billed Grebe											1		1
12. Horned Grebe													
13. Rock Pigeon													
14. Mourning Dove									2	1			
15. Killdeer													
16. American Woodcock													
17. Great Blue Heron													
18. Green Heron													
19. Black Vulture										1			3
20. Turkey Vulture	1	49	9	7		3		7	1	5			13
21. Golden Eagle													
22. Sharp-shinned Hawk													
23. Cooper's Hawk		1											
24. Northern Goshawk													
25. Accipiter sp.													
26. Bald Eagle													
27. Red-shouldered Hawk													
28. Red-tailed Hawk	1		2	2	4	1		1	1	5	2	4	1
29. Rough-legged Hawk				2									
30. Eastern Screech-Owl								1		3	1	3	1
31. Great Horned Owl											1	2	
32. Barred Owl											2		
33. Owl sp.													
34. Belted Kingfisher	1					1				2	1		
35. Red-headed Woodpecker													
36. Red-bellied Woodpecker	1			1	1	6	2	14	9	4	3	18	9
37. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3			4	5	1	1	5	4	6	3	11	2
38. Downy Woodpecker	6	8	12	2	11	13	4	24	16	13	17	32	17
39. Hairy Woodpecker	1	1		1	5	5	1	3	3	5	2	2	7
40. Northern Flicker	3			1	2	2		3	1	1	2	7	1
41. Pileated Woodpecker	10	5	2	5	8	8		10	2	14	2	7	4
42. American Kestrel												1	
43. Peregrine Falcon				1									
44. Eastern Phoebe	4	5	1										
45. Loggerhead Shrike							1	1					
46. Blue Jay		3	3	1	8	4	3	10	17	12	2	11	6
47. American Crow	32	131	157	54	114	7	129	10	120	20	5	8	4
48. Fish Crow		1											
49. Common Raven	2	2	4	2	3	1	2	4	5	6	4	12	3
50. Horned Lark			8										
51. Carolina Chickadee	30	18	37	40	48	32	16	77	79	113	64	67	70
52. Black-capped Chickadee													
53. Tufted Titmouse	6	4	18	16	9	9	8	24	30	17	9	29	29
54. Red-breasted Nuthatch			5		7			9		9		28	

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 2 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84
1. Canada Goose													
2. Mallard									1				
3. American Black Duck			1			11	2						
4. Long-tailed Duck						1							
5. Bufflehead			3										
6. Common Goldeneye													
7. Hooded Merganser				1		5	14	6	10	6		13	9
8. Northern Bobwhite	8	8	38		10	1							6
9. Ruffed Grouse	14	20	7	3	10	10	4	14	11	4	11	4	3
10. Wild Turkey			3	2	5	17		1	4	4	9	12	12
11. Pied-billed Grebe	2					1							
12. Horned Grebe						1							
13. Rock Pigeon													
14. Mourning Dove										1			
15. Killdeer	1												
16. American Woodcock													
17. Great Blue Heron		1											
18. Green Heron												1	
19. Black Vulture	109	1						1					
20. Turkey Vulture	20	6	10	5	25	3	7	4	4		7		
21. Golden Eagle							3						
22. Sharp-shinned Hawk											1		
23. Cooper's Hawk							1	1					
24. Northern Goshawk													
25. Accipiter sp.	1												
26. Bald Eagle													
27. Red-shouldered Hawk													
28. Red-tailed Hawk	5	3	2	3	2	3	1	7	2	2	4	1	3
29. Rough-legged Hawk													
30. Eastern Screech-Owl						2		3		3			
31. Great Horned Owl								2		1			
32. Barred Owl	2							5	1		2	1	
33. Owl sp.													
34. Belted Kingfisher					2	2		3	1	1	1	1	
35. Red-headed Woodpecker													3
36. Red-bellied Woodpecker	4		10	3	4	15	3	6	3	19	16	11	20
37. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4		2	3		8	3	6	2	4	6	7	5
38. Downy Woodpecker	27	15	23	13	12		18	26	14	24	35	25	33
39. Hairy Woodpecker	4	3	3	1	1	8	2	9	5	6	5	8	6
40. Northern Flicker	1		3	5		25		6	1	1	6	10	5
41. Pileated Woodpecker	8	11	10	5	6	15	6	15	5	11	8	9	13
42. American Kestrel	1						1						
43. Peregrine Falcon													
44. Eastern Phoebe				1	1	1						1	1
45. Loggerhead Shrike													
46. Blue Jay	16	3	9	2	6	12	9	5	1	11	5	7	12
47. American Crow	21	9	19	19	13	42	14	22	10	5	5	16	10
48. Fish Crow													
49. Common Raven	18	19	13	6	6	21	16	18	5	8	36	22	14
50. Horned Lark													1
51. Carolina Chickadee	82	60	74	118	51	130	65	55	70	57	67	85	118
52. Black-capped Chickadee					1					3			
53. Tufted Titmouse	29	23	45	28	20	48	22	14	10	20	14	20	31
54. Red-breasted Nuthatch	12			7	3	3	2	1		6	15	20	12

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 3 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	84-85	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97
1. Canada Goose									10		22		4
2. Mallard													
3. American Black Duck													
4. Long-tailed Duck													
5. Bufflehead													
6. Common Goldeneye													
7. Hooded Merganser	4	2	4		1								
8. Northern Bobwhite		6							7				
9. Ruffed Grouse	9	6	9	4	7	1	6	5	7	2	1	3	6
10. Wild Turkey	13		2	1	6	17		8	2				3
11. Pied-billed Grebe											1		
12. Horned Grebe													
13. Rock Pigeon													
14. Mourning Dove						3		12		6			6
15. Killdeer													
16. American Woodcock							1						
17. Great Blue Heron					1				1			1	
18. Green Heron													
19. Black Vulture	4	3						3				5	7
20. Turkey Vulture	14	10	9	6	1	1	4	15	3	2	3	14	9
21. Golden Eagle				1								1	
22. Sharp-shinned Hawk								1		1	1		1
23. Cooper's Hawk													
24. Northern Goshawk													
25. Accipiter sp.													
26. Bald Eagle													
27. Red-shouldered Hawk													
28. Red-tailed Hawk	3	3	3	3	1	5	3	3	2	1	2	1	2
29. Rough-legged Hawk													
30. Eastern Screech-Owl				1				4				1	3
31. Great Horned Owl	1				2		1	1			1		1
32. Barred Owl	1							2		1	1	1	
33. Owl sp.													
34. Belted Kingfisher	1		1	1	2	1					1	1	
35. Red-headed Woodpecker													
36. Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	9	15	11	10	9	9	17	9	16	10	14	14
37. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	10	6	2	11	8	4	5	2	12	8	14	5
38. Downy Woodpecker	13	14	31	28	24	20	21	28	15	18	8	15	24
39. Hairy Woodpecker	4	7	14	9	4	6	4	5	4	2	8	4	6
40. Northern Flicker	5	4	18	12	10	9	16	18	4	9	12	3	4
41. Pileated Woodpecker	10	15	31	21	12	17	22	21	17	12	18	16	11
42. American Kestrel													
43. Peregrine Falcon													
44. Eastern Phoebe								1	1	3	1	2	1
45. Loggerhead Shrike													
46. Blue Jay	6	14	10	3	5	6	2	3	1	1		10	7
47. American Crow	27	13	48	17	18	17	21	23	22	19	47	38	31
48. Fish Crow													
49. Common Raven	7	4	14	10	5	7	9	7	7	5	6	8	6
50. Horned Lark													
51. Carolina Chickadee	80	30	64	74	53	21	59	30	68	22	26	28	83
52. Black-capped Chickadee													
53. Tufted Titmouse	38	26	40	29	24	14	7	29	24	17	16	23	28
54. Red-breasted Nuthatch		11	16	3		6	2	1		1			1

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 4 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08		
1. Canada Goose		33							1				
2. Mallard													
3. American Black Duck													
4. Long-tailed Duck													
5. Bufflehead													
6. Common Goldeneye													
7. Hooded Merganser													
8. Northern Bobwhite													
9. Ruffed Grouse	5	8	4	9	10	5	3	1			3		
10. Wild Turkey		15			8	4					3		
11. Pied-billed Grebe													
12. Horned Grebe													
13. Rock Pigeon	8												
14. Mourning Dove													
15. Killdeer													
16. American Woodcock					2					1			
17. Great Blue Heron			2			1	1		1		1		
18. Green Heron													
19. Black Vulture			3			4	6	2	3		3		
20. Turkey Vulture	7		3		3	14	17	8	6	2	10		
21. Golden Eagle													
22. Sharp-shinned Hawk					1	1				1			
23. Cooper's Hawk					1								
24. Northern Goshawk											1		
25. Accipiter sp.													
26. Bald Eagle											3		
27. Red-shouldered Hawk											2		
28. Red-tailed Hawk	1		3	6	3	4	2	1	3	1	5		
29. Rough-legged Hawk													
30. Eastern Screech-Owl		6	3	3	9	3	1	1	1	1	1		
31. Great Horned Owl	1	1					1	1			3		
32. Barred Owl		1	1	1	1	1					1		
33. Owl sp.									1				
34. Belted Kingfisher			1						1		1		
35. Red-headed Woodpecker													
36. Red-bellied Woodpecker	6	21	23	24	18	12	11	2	10	2	15		
37. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	6	19	35	33	13	7	5	5	9	1	6		
38. Downy Woodpecker	6	34	33	32	21	30	10	8	22	2	5		
39. Hairy Woodpecker	1	6	9	5	5	5	6	4	6		8		
40. Northern Flicker	7	34	10	13	4	4	1	1	5		7		
41. Pileated Woodpecker	7	27	22	30	22	20	9	9	7	1	24		
42. American Kestrel													
43. Peregrine Falcon													
44. Eastern Phoebe		1	1	1		2				2			
45. Loggerhead Shrike													
46. Blue Jay	2	13	8	18	1	3			8	2	3		
47. American Crow	14	20	21	36	27	14	17	15	14	12	104		
48. Fish Crow													
49. Common Raven	4	6	3	9	6	6	12	11	11		9		
50. Horned Lark													
51. Carolina Chickadee	25	44	79	76	47	55	33	17	40	27	41		
52. Black-capped Chickadee													
53. Tufted Titmouse	8	22	28	33	35	43	11	18	39	8	21		
54. Red-breasted Nuthatch	2		21		1	1		2	11		12		

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 5 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	55-56	56-57	57-58	58-59	59-60	60-61	61-62	63-64	64-65	65-66	67-68	68-69	70-71
55. White-breasted Nuthatch			2		1	6		16	5	15	15	12	11
56. Brown Creeper	5			4	3	6	1	2	4	11		17	11
57. Winter Wren	4	4		1	2	3				6	6	3	8
58. Carolina Wren	9	24	14	6	9	1	2			5	1	4	2
59. Bewick's Wren													
60. Golden-crowned Kinglet	14	6	8	18	2	19	7	10	5	26	7	21	35
61. Ruby-crowned Kinglet				2	1			1		1			
62. Eastern Bluebird			1	1					3		1		8
63. Hermit Thrush	4				2						5	7	1
64. American Robin	136	8	85	12	9			13	9	21	23	14	
65. Brown Thrasher								1					
66. Northern Mockingbird	3	1	2	3	6	5	8	4	7	5		8	3
67. European Starling	325	134	4			453	13	6586	2	107	8	5	
68. Cedar Waxwing	5	2		29			1	12	23		12	1	
69. House Sparrow							9						
70. Evening Grosbeak			7				2	1		1		8	
71. House Finch													
72. Purple Finch	8		6	3	27	14	4	14	20	5	36	9	1
73. Common Redpoll										2			
74. Red Crossbill						9		23				1	
75. White-winged Crossbill										11			
76. Pine Siskin			81			2		2		6			
77. American Goldfinch	21	2	39	2	6	10		30	17	50	125	1	5
78. Snow Bunting													
79. Eastern Towhee											1		2
80. American Tree Sparrow	9	1	9		2	1			3		6	9	
81. Chipping Sparrow													
82. Field Sparrow	45	11		2	19	28		4	27		4	11	1
83. Fox Sparrow		5		2									
84. Song Sparrow	2	4	2	9	15	17	5	1	6	3	3	4	
85. Swamp Sparrow								1					
86. White-throated Sparrow	46	26	16	61	53	25	8	9	11	9	7	32	40
87. Dark-eyed Junco	90	84	94	21	134	110	33	36	73	37	192	114	72
88. Eastern Meadowlark									17			1	
89. Red-winged Blackbird													
90. Brown-headed Cowbird								1					
91. Rusty Blackbird					2								
92. Common Grackle													
93. Yellow-rumped Warbler	1		1			1							
94. Northern Cardinal	27	12	13	21	25	4	29	19	35	7	12	35	30
TOTALS	35	31	31	34	35	34	25	39	32	39	38	42	32

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 6 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78	78-79	79-80	80-81	81-82	82-83	83-84
55. White-breasted Nuthatch	13	13	17	14	9	14	5	25	14	24	24	31	23
56. Brown Creeper	12	1	14	4	4	6	5	1	5	11	7	6	4
57. Winter Wren	2	3	12	1	1	10	1	3	4	7	5	6	3
58. Carolina Wren	12	3	18	15	21	18	4	2	1	10	12	11	9
59. Bewick's Wren			1										
60. Golden-crowned Kinglet	26	3	76	9	14	42	10	16	22	30	8	26	8
61. Ruby-crowned Kinglet					7	3		4	2	4	1	3	2
62. Eastern Bluebird	16		2		8	3		6	4	12	25	16	5
63. Hermit Thrush				1	1	8	3	5		4	15	5	12
64. American Robin	21	18	1	16		138	6	17	5	4			19
65. Brown Thrasher								2					1
66. Northern Mockingbird	8			3	2	3	1		1	3	2	1	1
67. European Starling	92		10			17							
68. Cedar Waxwing			7			8		34					
69. House Sparrow													
70. Evening Grosbeak	42	3	4		4	1	5	10	1	2	17	1	14
71. House Finch													
72. Purple Finch	8	45				22	23	37	3	62	4	290	12
73. Common Redpoll													
74. Red Crossbill	3		14									7	
75. White-winged Crossbill													
76. Pine Siskin	2	2	9								18		
77. American Goldfinch	4	2	1	23	1	7	11	18	6		28	14	5
78. Snow Bunting													
79. Eastern Towhee		2					1	1	1	5	2		1
80. American Tree Sparrow	2												
81. Chipping Sparrow													
82. Field Sparrow				1	1	1	1	1					
83. Fox Sparrow								2	1		1	1	
84. Song Sparrow	3	4	1	2	4	6	5	4	2	6	1	2	6
85. Swamp Sparrow													
86. White-throated Sparrow	41	17	11	21	39	109	51	77	79	86	142	97	112
87. Dark-eyed Junco	66	85	77	30	77	171	94	167	192	42	121	91	202
88. Eastern Meadowlark													
89. Red-winged Blackbird						7				2			
90. Brown-headed Cowbird													
91. Rusty Blackbird													
92. Common Grackle										250			
93. Yellow-rumped Warbler									1	1		25	1
94. Northern Cardinal	25	26	19	11	19	36	15	17	12	22	32	16	40
TOTALS	41	29	36	32	34	45	36	44	38	41	38	39	40

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 7 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	84-85	85-86	86-87	87-88	88-89	89-90	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97
55. White-breasted Nuthatch	13	14	12	14	14	8	11	13	13	12	13	25	35
56. Brown Creeper	4	5	5	3	1	3	3	7	3	4	4	6	3
57. Winter Wren	8	4	7	3	7	4	8	4	6	9	3	5	
58. Carolina Wren	39	19	19	17	13	10	24	32	10	13	7	9	6
59. Bewick's Wren													
60. Golden-crowned Kinglet	84	35	26	37	10	11	57	16	31	25	12	9	10
61. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	11	4	3	2	1		1	4	1	2		2	3
62. Eastern Bluebird	2	20		26	4		7	16	10	6	21	33	11
63. Hermit Thrush	7	10	13	8	6	18		5		8	6	8	4
64. American Robin	28	525	14	3	2	29		1234		1	222	1	
65. Brown Thrasher				1									
66. Northern Mockingbird		1			1	2	1				1	1	1
67. European Starling	280		11	7	2		6		2				
68. Cedar Waxwing	17	151			192	15		11		12	26		
69. House Sparrow													
70. Evening Grosbeak				1		7				2			
71. House Finch				3									
72. Purple Finch		8	1	26	1	8	14	7					4
73. Common Redpoll													
74. Red Crossbill		6				1							
75. White-winged Crossbill													
76. Pine Siskin		1	1	152		8		2					
77. American Goldfinch	23	13	12	20	8	11	8	9	22	2	32	2	4
78. Snow Bunting			2										
79. Eastern Towhee	1		1	2		1		1				1	4
80. American Tree Sparrow													
81. Chipping Sparrow													
82. Field Sparrow			1	1	5					2			3
83. Fox Sparrow	1	11					1	2					
84. Song Sparrow	4	1	2		4	1	3	6	3	12	2	2	1
85. Swamp Sparrow													
86. White-throated Sparrow	208	170	121	69	130	114	61	155	17	180	55	107	50
87. Dark-eyed Junco	148	108	156	235	144	49	172	96	103	172	68	109	53
88. Eastern Meadowlark													
89. Red-winged Blackbird													
90. Brown-headed Cowbird													
91. Rusty Blackbird													
92. Common Grackle	15												
93. Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	1				1			1			1	
94. Northern Cardinal	26	32	52	50	23	20	36	16	14	4	10	9	30
TOTALS	40	39	37	40	38	38	33	42	33	36	35	38	39

Appendix 1: Species totals by year for each of the first 50 Big Flat Mountain CBCs, 1955-2007. Page 8 of 8.

Christmas Count Season	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08		
55. White-breasted Nuthatch	4	18	29	33	21	23	11	7	29	7	13		
56. Brown Creeper		2	6	1	3	7	1	3	8	5	5		
57. Winter Wren		13	5	14	7	4	3	7	4	1	9		
58. Carolina Wren	2	21	15	19	16	18	6	14	25	11	15		
59. Bewick's Wren													
60. Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	28	2	35	13	8	6	2	5	3	92		
61. Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	6	4	7			7	2	1		1		
62. Eastern Bluebird		9	24	23	23	3	16		7	12	20		
63. Hermit Thrush	2	12	20	24	10	5	2	2	11	2	2		
64. American Robin		3	72	100	1	25	1		14				
65. Brown Thrasher													
66. Northern Mockingbird			1	1		4							
67. European Starling													
68. Cedar Waxwing	33	10	76	53					10		48		
69. House Sparrow													
70. Evening Grosbeak													
71. House Finch													
72. Purple Finch			1		6								
73. Common Redpoll													
74. Red Crossbill													
75. White-winged Crossbill													
76. Pine Siskin			2										
77. American Goldfinch		19	25	43	10	3	24	2	9	4	15		
78. Snow Bunting													
79. Eastern Towhee	2	7		1				7					
80. American Tree Sparrow													
81. Chipping Sparrow								1					
82. Field Sparrow						3			6				
83. Fox Sparrow	1	3			1			1			1		
84. Song Sparrow	2	7	4	7	44	3	3	4	9		6		
85. Swamp Sparrow								1					
86. White-throated Sparrow	47	155	102	177	7	44	39	205	122	13	29		
87. Dark-eyed Junco	32	201	142	142	96	63	114	140	51	18	125		
88. Eastern Meadowlark													
89. Red-winged Blackbird													
90. Brown-headed Cowbird													
91. Rusty Blackbird													
92. Common Grackle													
93. Yellow-rumped Warbler		1				3			2				
94. Northern Cardinal	13	39	42	49	19	16	21	37	17	7	20		
TOTALS	29	36	39	33	36	38	31	33	37	25	40		

2017 Annual Report of the Virginia Avian Records Committee

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The members of the 2017 Virginia Avian Records Committee (VARCOM) were Mike Stinson (Chair), Wendy Ealding (Secretary), Lee Adams, Kieran Kilday, Ellison Orcutt, Todd Day, Gerry Hawkins, Dave Youker and Gerco Hoogeweg.

The Committee held its annual meeting in Richmond on March 18, 2017. Among the items addressed were the following:

- Ellison Orcutt agreed to serve as Vice Chair
- Gerry Hawkins agreed to serve as the Voting Member for the expedited review procedure.
- In 2016, the archive of past accepted records with associated images was uploaded into the Database for Ornithological Verification and Submission (DOVES). This effort required obtaining permission from the observers/photographers to display their images in the public archive, with appropriate credit given as part of the acceptance statement. Images are not shown unless permission has been granted. For many older records, it was difficult to obtain permission as the submitters may have died or moved. Most submitters who had been approached were receptive, and have also gone out of their way to indicate if the images were provided by someone else.
- In order to provide consistency, starting with the 2016 annual report, which was published in 2017 (Williams and Ealding, 2017) credit will be given to the photographers in future annual reports to *The Raven* as has been the practice in *North American Birds*.
- The state Review List was updated as detailed below.

In July 2017, the American Ornithological Society (AOS) published the 58th update to *The Checklist of North and Middle American Birds* (Chesser et al, 2017), which is the basis for the state's Official List. Thayer's Gull was removed from the List as the AOS now considers it a subspecies of Iceland Gull. In addition, Magnificent Hummingbird was split into Rivoli's and Talamanca Hummingbird. The Virginia record of Magnificent Hummingbird from 2003 (Heath, 2006) was re-reviewed in order to establish the species involved. There was also a major revision of the sequence of the species and a corresponding number of changes to the Review List. The updated versions of the Official List and Review List can be seen at <http://www.virginiabirds.org/varcom/official-state-list/> and <http://www.virginiabirds.org/varcom/review-list/>.

Among the changes to the Review List, the review area for Wilson's Plover was changed to require review statewide except for the barrier islands of Accomack County (previously it did not require review anywhere in the Eastern Coastal

Plain), and that for Curlew Sandpiper was changed to require review statewide – previously it did not require review in the Eastern Coastal Plain. This has led to review of a number of earlier records.

The following decisions were made by VARCOM during calendar year 2017. Accepted records fall into one of the following Categories, as specified in VSO bylaws:

Category 1. Any bird that has occurred in Virginia and has been accepted by VARCOM as a wild bird on the basis of an observation accompanied by a photograph, specimen, audio or video recording, or band (for bands, only in cases where proof of identification is extant and compelling).

Category 2. Sight records without physical evidence, but for which there is written documentation from one or more observers accepted by VARCOM. This Category currently includes the following species: Garganey, Barrow's Goldeneye, American Flamingo, Ancient Murrelet, Yellow-nosed Albatross, Fea's Petrel, Bulwer's Petrel, Red-billed Tropicbird, Neotropic Cormorant, Western Marsh-Harrier, Red-necked Stint, Eurasian Woodcock, Black Guillemot, Brown Noddy, Black-billed Magpie, Brown-chested Martin, Boreal Chickadee, Sage Thrasher, Sprague's Pipit, Bohemian Waxwing, Spotted Towhee, Black-throated Sparrow, and Shiny Cowbird. Several of these species have reportedly been photographed in Virginia; VARCOM would very much appreciate help in locating photographs or specimens of Category 2 species.

Category 3. Identity accepted by VARCOM but provenance of the individual bird is uncertain. Category 3a shall be comprised of such species with physical evidence in Virginia. Category 3b shall be comprised of such species lacking physical evidence. Category 3 shall not include individuals or species deemed by VARCOM to be most likely escaped/released former captives, whether from inside Virginia or otherwise. Species for which there are no Virginia records *except* Category 3 are West Indian Whistling-Duck, Barnacle Goose, and European Goldfinch.

Category 4. Records that are judged to be acceptable by historical standards but that may not meet current standards of acceptance, including extinct species that once occurred in Virginia, for which there is no clear written or physical evidence. In this Category, VARCOM currently includes

Eskimo Curlew and Carolina Parakeet. No status or Category is given to Labrador Duck, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Whooping Crane, Great Auk, or Ivory-billed Woodpecker, which may have occurred in Virginia in centuries past but for which no extant conclusive documentation is known.

Category 5. Species introduced into the Commonwealth of Virginia or into other parts of North America that are currently maintaining self-sustaining wild populations within Virginia or other parts of North America. These currently include Trumpeter Swan, Mute Swan, Monk Parakeet, Rock Pigeon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, House Sparrow, House Finch, and European Starling.

Category 6. Species that were introduced into Virginia and that appeared for a time to be sustaining wild populations within the state but that have since been extirpated. This Category currently includes Ring-necked Pheasant.

Review of 98 records was completed in 2017; of these 92 were accepted and six were not accepted. 60 (65%) of the accepted records were conducted by expedited review.

Highlights included first state records for Ancient Murrelet, Tropical/Couch's Kingbird, Brown-chested Martin, Lesser Goldfinch and Lucy's Warbler. The first state record of Magnificent Hummingbird from 2003 was re-reviewed and redesignated as Rivoli's Hummingbird. A first state record of Mountain Plover from 1976 was re-reviewed and upgraded from Category 2 to Category 1 when archival photos were made available. The official list now stands at 477 species.

Abbreviations: ph. – photographed; † - written documentation submitted; vr. – video recording; * - specimen collected; CBC – Christmas Bird Count; eBird – accepted by expedited review; ML XXXXXXXX – Macaulay Library identification number

RECORDS ACCEPTED

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*): Five records as follows:

One juvenile, Lickinghole Creek, Albemarle County [ph. Pete Myers, originally found by David Shoch] December 18, 2016 – January 8, 2017, accepted Category 5 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33101815>; ML43017871 ML43018001. This was the second Piedmont record since the species status was redefined as Category 5 in 2014.

One adult, Green Springs NHD--West Jack Jouett Road, Louisa County [ph. Andrew Rapp] December 21, 2016, accepted Category 5 (eBird); <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33131467> This was the third Piedmont record since the species status was redefined as Category 5 in 2014, and a first County record.

Four immatures, Gold Mine Road, Louisa County [ph. Carson Lambert] February 5, 2017; <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34184629>; [ph. Shane Runyon] February 8, 2017; <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34237556>;

ML47805271 ML47805281 ML47805291; accepted Category 5 (eBird). Four birds were present through February 20, 2017, one individual remained through March 10, 2017 when it was found dead by Andrew Rapp. This was the fourth Piedmont record since the species status was redefined as Category 5 in 2014.

Four adults, Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax County [ph. Kiel Okal, Meg Shuler] May 6, 2017, accepted Category 5 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S36585360>, ML57068911 ML57069121 ML57069611 ML57071481 ML57071551 ML57076871 This was the third Coastal Plain record since 1990 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007)

Two adults, Nelson County, [ph. † Amanda Dymacek] July 21, 2017, accepted Category 5. This was the fifth Piedmont record since the species status was redefined as Category 5 in 2014.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Mareca penelope*): One adult male, Environmental Studies on the Piedmont, Clifton Farm field station--No Access without advance permission, Fauquier County [ph. Todd Day] March 7, 2017; accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S35025195>; ML50329321. This was the third Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*): Two records as follows:

One individual, Virginia Beach [† Edward S. Brinkley, Paul W. Sykes, Jr., ph. Rob Bielawski, ph. Bob Anderson, m.obs.] December 29, 2016 – April 3, 2017, accepted Category 1. This was the second record for the Back Bay CBC (Kain, 2017) and the fourth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, First Landing State Park/Campground-beach side, Virginia Beach [ph. † Lisa Rose] February 12, 2017, accepted Category 1. This was the fifth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*): One adult, Hightown, Highland County [† John Spahr] May 30, 2016, accepted Category 2. This was the fourth Mountains and Valleys record and the first Highland County record.

Rivoli's Hummingbird (*Eugenes fulgens*): One individual, Radford [ph. John Pierce] October 22-25, 2003. This record was originally accepted as Category 1 as the first state record of Magnificent Hummingbird (Heath, 2006). With the AOS split of Magnificent Hummingbird into Rivoli's and Talamanca Hummingbird, the record was re-reviewed and accepted as Category 1 as Rivoli's Hummingbird.

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*): One second year male, James City County [† ph. Bill Williams, Barbara Neary, Bruce Peterjohn, Mitchell Byrd, Matt Anthony, Brian Taber] mid-September 2016-January 17, 2017; accepted Category

1. This bird was banded by Bruce Peterjohn on January 14, 2017. This was the fourth state and third Coastal Plain record

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*): Two records as follows:

One individual, Kiptopeke State Park, Northampton County [ph. Chance Hines] September 25, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32797388>; ML41397791 ML41397831. This bird, which was unfortunately found dead, was the first Coastal Plain record since 2004 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007)

One individual, Great Bridge Middle School, Chesapeake [+ *fide* Connie Sale, ph. Sherry Walters] March 21, 2017, accepted Category 1. The bird was found on the ground in a corner of the school building by Sherry Walters, who photographed it. She contacted rehabber Connie Sale to rescue the bird but by the time Connie arrived, the bird had gone. This was the second record since 2004.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*): One individual, James City County [ph. + Adam D'Onofrio, m.obs.] June 3, 2017; accepted Category 1. This bird, first found by Dan Cristol, was the second state and first Coastal Plain record and the first since 1971 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007).

American Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*): Two records as follows:

One individual, Silver Lake--Prince William County Park, Prince William County [ph. Dave Larsen] October 22-25, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32154855>; ML37969261 ML37969271 ML37988031 ML37988041. This was the seventh Piedmont record.

Two individuals, Lake Frederick, Frederick [ph. James Fox] September 29, 2017, accepted Category 1 <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S39460857>, ML70298621 ML70298631 ML70298641 ML70298651 ML70298661 ML70298671. This was the seventh Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List, and the first County record.

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*): Two records as follows:

One individual, Grandview Nature Preserve, Hampton [ph. Mark Smithson] June 9, 2014, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S18761414> This record was reviewed based on the redefinition of the review area in 2017, and is the first record accepted under this new definition.

One individual, Grandview Nature Preserve, Hampton [ph. Ernie Miller] August 1, 2015, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S24463714>. This is the second record accepted from the redefined review area.

Mountain Plover (*Charadrius montanus*): One individual, Chincoteague NWR, Accomack County [ph. + Claudia Wilds] October 16, 1976, accepted Category 1. This first state record was originally published as a sight record (Wilds, 1978) and was re-reviewed and upgraded to Category 1 when archival photos were made available in 2015.

Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*): 10 individuals, private location, Rockingham County [ph. Ezra and Theo Staengl] August 29, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38894671>, **ML67405111 ML67405121 ML67405131**. This was the third Mountains and Valleys record.

Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*): One individual, Staunton River State Park, Halifax [Adam D'Onofrio] August 24-28, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38837034>, **ML67080871 ML67080991**. This was the fourth Piedmont record.

Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*): One individual, Staunton River State Park, Halifax [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] August 24 – September 2, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38837034>, **ML67081071**. This was the seventh Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*): Two adults, Hog Island WMA, Surry, July 25 – August 8, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38347871>, **ML64463521 ML64463561**. These were two of four birds originally found by Andrew Baldelli on July 25, 2017.

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*): One adult male, Craney Island Disposal Area, Portsmouth [ph. Bill Williams] July 20, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38249259>, **ML63909331 ML63909361**. This was the fourth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*): Two individuals, Staunton River State Park, Halifax [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] September 2 – 6, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38962715>, **ML67766691 ML67766791 ML67766821**. This was the second Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Calidris subruficollis*): Two individuals, Lumber Mill Road, Rockingham, [Diane Holsinger, ph. vr. Diane Lepkowski] September 6, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S39041951>, **ML68185881** <https://youtu.be/p6un5ZOnVDo> [ph. Ezra and Theo Staengl] <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S39037429>, **ML68201081 ML68201091**. Originally found by Diane Holsinger, this was the third Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*): One individual, Nazerene Wetlands, Rockingham County [ph. + William Leigh] April 14-21, 2017; accepted Category 1. This was the ninth Mountains and Valleys record and the first since 1992 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007).

Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*): Three records as follows:

One adult, Oronoco Bay Park, Alexandria, [found by Josh Berman and Sharon Forsyth, photographed by Gerry Hawkins] September 30, 2016; accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31823680> ML36354801 ML36356241 ML36358371. This was the seventh fall record for Alexandria/Fairfax (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007).

One individual, Friedens Church Road, Rockingham County, [ph. William Leigh] May 7, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S36616787>, ML57196441 ML57196451 ML57196531. This was the first Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Staunton River State Park, Halifax [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] August 26 – September 5, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38837023>, ML67080341 ML67080401 ML67080481. This was the sixth fall Piedmont record (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007) and the first since the 2004 Review List.

Red-necked Phalarope (*Phalaropus lobatus*): Two records as follows:

Four individuals, Chris Greene Lake, Albemarle County [ph. David Shoch] May 5, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S36561098>, This was the fifth Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Two individuals, Target Distribution Center Pond, Augusta [ph. Ezra Staengl] September 14, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S39181718>, ML68890791 ML68890801. This was the eighth Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

Parasitic Jaeger (*Stercorarius parasiticus*): One immature, John H. Kerr Reservoir, Mecklenburg County, [ph. + Adam D'Onofrio et al.] September 20, 2017, accepted Category 1. This bird, found by Brian Bockhahn during the Kerr Lake Fall Bird County, was the third Piedmont record.

Razorbill (*Alca torda*): Three individuals, Fort Monroe, Hampton [ph. Jason Strickland] February 19 – March 26, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34549362>, ML48860311 ML48860381 ML48860451 ML48860611 and ph. Mark Sopko <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S35225289>, ML51383421 ML51383511 ML51383611 These birds were seen by many

observers and may reflect the reported increased abundance of the species in the mid-Atlantic region (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007).

Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*): One individual, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach [+ Ned Brinkley, Bob Ake], February 6, 2017; accepted Category 2. A photograph taken subsequently on February 12, 2017 from a location about 2.5 miles north of the original observation was considered to be inadequate for acceptance as Category 1. See article by Brinkley in this issue for details. This was the first state record.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*): One juvenile, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Island #1, Virginia Beach [+ Paul Glass] November 12, 2016, accepted Category 2. This was the fourth onshore Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*): One adult, Walmart Ponds, Colonial Heights [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] March 23-26, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S35378838>, ML52087661 ML52087721. This was the third inland Coastal Plain record and the first since 1974 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007)

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*): Three records as follows:

One adult, Claytor Lake State Park, Pulaski County [ph. Phil Lehman] April 25, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36265000>, ML56071731 ML55788181 ML56071681. Note although three birds were reported, only one was accepted as only one individual was shown clearly in the photographs. This was the first Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, Claytor Lake State Park, Pulaski County [ph. Phil Lehman] May 7, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36617907>, ML57131731 ML57160621. This was the second Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One immature and one adult, Appalachian Trail--James River Foot Bridge, Amherst County [ph. Logan Anderson] June 8, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S37467416>, ML60557521 (immature) ML60557541 (adult). This was the third Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*): One individual, Silver Lake, Rockingham County [ph. + Marshall Faintich, Walt Childs] May 27, 2016, accepted Category 1. This was the second Mountains and Valleys record and the first since 1898 (Rottenborn and Brinkley, 2007).

Iceland Gull (Thayer's) (*Larus glaucooides thayeri*): One adult, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Island #3, Northampton

County [† ph. Ned Brinkley, ph. Yann Kolbeinson, ph. Bob Anderson, Bob Ake] December 26, 2014 – January 9, 2015. This record was originally reviewed and accepted as Category 1 as Thayer's Gull in February 2017 when Thayer's Gull was considered to be a full species. In July 2017, the AOU lumped Thayer's Gull into a subspecies of Iceland Gull (Chesser et al, 2017). This is the second Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*): Two adults, John H. Kerr Reservoir [† Adam D'Onofrio, ph. Jeff Blalock, Paul Glass] September 13, 2017, accepted Category 2. Although the submission included photographs, they were too distant to warrant Category 1 acceptance. These birds, which were seen after Hurricane Irma passed to the west, were the eighth Piedmont record.

Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*): Two records as follows:

One adult, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Island #1, Virginia Beach [† Ned Brinkley] May 14, 2015; accepted Category 2. This was the first Coastal Plain chronological record accepted since the 2004 Review List. The second Coastal Plain chronological record since the 2004 Review List, from Chincoteague on June 25, 2015, was accepted in 2015 (Williams and Ealding, 2016).

One adult, Camp Pendleton State Military Reservation (restricted access), Virginia Beach [ph. Karen and Tom Beatty] July 9, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S38046605>, ML62982391 ML62982401 ML62982411 ML62982431 ML62982461 ML62982471 ML62982501 ML62982511 ML62982521. This was the third Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*): One individual, Little Island Park, Virginia Beach, [Andrew Baldelli] February 9, 2016; accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S27402604>; ML24201551 ML24201561 ML24201571 ML24201581 ML24201661. This was the seventh Coastal Plain record.

Great Shearwater (*Ardenna gravis*): One individual, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach, [ph. Arun Bose] June 24, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S37780577>, ML61886141

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*): Three records as follows:

One adult, Fishersville [Allen Lerner, ph. Diane Lepkowski] May 27, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S37177123>, ML59499761 ML59499771 ML59499781. This bird, which appeared to have an injured foot, was the third Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Pleasant Ridge Road, Virginia Beach, [Karen and Tom Beatty, ph. Mary Catherine Miguez] August 8 – 26, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38543144>, ML65528441 ML65528451 ML65528461 ML65528471 ML65528481 ML65528491. This was the fifth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Kiptopeke State Park, Northampton County [ph. † Bob Ake, Anna Stunkel et al.] September 17, 2017, accepted Category 1. This was the sixth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*): One immature, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach [ph. Abby Walter, Wes Teets] February 8, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34250194> ML47840001 ML47840011. This was the third Coastal Plain record since 2004 Review List.

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*): One juvenile, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Island #1, Virginia Beach [ph. † Kim Harrell] October 9, 2016, accepted Category 1. This bird, seen during the passage of Hurricane Matthew offshore, was the fourth state and second Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*): Three records as follows:

One pair, Carson Wetland, Prince George County, April 8 – July 19, 2017 [ph. Adam D'Onofrio] <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S35875585>, ML54162651

ML54162691 ML54162771 [ph. Jeff Blalock] <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36522228>, ML56758361; accepted Category 1 (eBird). These birds, which were seen by many observers, represent the third Western Coastal Plain record since the 2012 Review List revision, and the second year that they occurred at this location (Williams and Ealding, 2017).

Five adult males, Observatory Mountain, Charlottesville [† Vic Laubach] April 21, 2017; accepted Category 2. This was the second Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Chamberlayne Swamp, Hanover County, August 13 – 20, 2017 [ph. Carlton Noll] <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S38662174>, ML66163351; accepted Category 1 (eBird). This was the fourth Western Coastal Plain record since the 2012 Review List revision and the third record from this location (Ealding, 2012; Ealding, 2013)

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*): Three records as follows:

15-16 individuals, Farley Vale, King George County [ph. Scott Byrd, m.obs.] September 28 – October 1, 2016; <http://>

ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S31801706; ML36219321 ML36219331 ML36219361 ML36219391 ML36219421 ML36219431; accepted Category 1 (eBird). This was the third record west of the Bay since the 2004 Review List.

Four adults, Mill Creek Lake Park, Amherst County [† Mark Johnson, ph. Bob Epperson, Betty Epperson, ph. Mike Boatwright] April 6, 2017; accepted Category 1. This was the sixth Piedmont record.

One adult, Lake Frederick, Frederick County [ph. David Boltz] April 10-11, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S35868430>, ML54179441. This was the tenth Mountains and Valleys record, and the second from this location in two consecutive years (Williams and Ealding, 2017).

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*): One individual, Pohick Bay Regional Park, Fairfax County [ph. Sarah Gustafson] January 13-15, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33645255>; ML45318851. This was probably a first County record.

Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*): Four records as follows:

One adult, Fishersville, Augusta County [† Allen Lerner] July 29, 2016, accepted Category 2. This was the second Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, Fairy Stone State Park, Patrick County [ph. Matt Anthony, Erin Chapman] April 16, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36020441>, ML54806551. This was the third Mountains and Valleys record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, Briery Creek WMA [ph. Mike Stinson, ph. Warren Rofe] April 20 – May 2, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S36116568>, ML55166561 ML55166591 and <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S36510128>, ML56644401 ML56644581. This was the sixth Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, Philips Farm, Loudoun County [ph. Justin Dinen] May 4, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36543784>, ML56792731 ML56792901 ML56792911 ML56792921. This was the seventh Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*): One individual, Briery Creek WMA, Prince Edward County, [ph. † Amanda and Julian Dymacek] June 29, 2017, accepted Category 1. This was the sixth Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List and the second County record (Dalmas et al, 2010).

Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*): One adult, Roanoke STP, Roanoke City, [ph. Phil Lehman] April 14, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S35949866>, ML54519141. This was the first Mountains and

Valleys record since the species was added to the Review List for the region in 2015.

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*): One adult, Chincoteague Island-Wildlife Loop, Accomack County [ph. Luis Ramos] April 12, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S35911756>, ML54312221. This species appears to be regular each year at Chincoteague, having been seen every year for the past five years.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*): Two records as follows:

One adult, College Creek, James City County [ph. Brian Taber, † Bill Williams] May 10, 2017, accepted Category 1. This was the third record for the Colonial Historic Triangle (Williams, 2012).

One adult, Bull Run PO Rd, Loudoun, [ph. Stephen Johnson] August 17, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S38686381>, ML66301491 ML66301501 ML66301511 ML66301521 ML66301531. This was the seventh Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*): One juvenile light morph, Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch, Waynesboro [† Vic Laubach, William Leigh] October 9, 2016; accepted Category 2. This was the fourth Mountains and Valleys record.

Tropical/Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii*): One individual, Blackwater Road, Virginia Beach [† ph. Keith Roberts, Karen Roberts] November 16, 2014, accepted Category 1 as Tropical/Couch's Kingbird. The bird was silent and positive identification to species level was not made. This was a first state record.

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*): Three records as follows:

One individual, Magotha Road, Northampton County [ph. Ellison Orcutt] November 21, 2015 <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S25937959>; ML21226761 ML21226771 ML21226811 ML21226971; accepted Category 1 (eBird). This was the first Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Arlington Road, Northampton County – first reported December 3, 2015 [per Rexanne Bruno “has been seen in area for past week or so”, no photos]; [ph. Todd Deininger, m.obs.] <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S26214745>; ML22593181; last date December 5, 2015; accepted Category 1 (eBird). This bird, which was seen by many observers attending the VSO Back Bay field trip weekend event, was likely the same bird reported a few days earlier from Magotha Road by Ellison Orcutt (q.v.).

One individual, Virginia Beach [†, ph. Timothy Barry] October 18, 2016; accepted Category 1. This was the second Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*): One individual, private location, Virginia Beach [ph. Andrew Baldelli, ph. Mary Catherine Miguez] December 7, 2016, accepted Category 1. <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32911788>; ML42001201 ML42001221 ML42001271 ML42001371 ML42001991 ML42002061 ML42002071 ML42002091 ML42002181. This was the eighth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*): Four records as follows:

One individual, private location, King William County [ph. Fred Atwood] November 6, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32415776>; ML39269761 ML39272001 ML39272021 ML39272071. This was the seventh Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One individual, Wellington Neck Road, Northampton County [Roberta Kellam, ph. Matt Anthony, m.obs.] November 9-11, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32448304>;

ML39470281 ML39470581 ML39470601 ML39470611 ML39470621. This bird, seen by many observers during the Rarities Roundup, was the eighth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult male, Muddy Creek Road, Virginia Beach, [ph. Tracy Tate, Andrew Baldelli] May 7, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S36631384>, ML57166651 ML57257371. This was the ninth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach [ph. Russell Taylor, ph. Phil Kenney] July 1, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S37911215>, ML62380561 ML62410371. This was the tenth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savanna*): One adult, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach, June 15 – July 8, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) [ph. Karen and Tom Beatty] <http://ebird.org/ebird/atlasva/view/checklist/S37605448>, ML61141471 ML61141491. This was the eighth state and sixth Coastal Plain record.

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*): One individual, Burwells Bay Rd.at Purvis Lane, Isle of Wight County [ph. Ernie Miller, m.obs.] May 19 – June 5, 2015, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S23541734>; This was the fifth Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

Northern Shrike (*Lanius borealis*): One adult, Sully Woodlands, Fairfax County [ph. Stephen Johnson, m.obs.] October 27, 2016 – April 29, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://>

ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32253871, ML38408721 ML38408731 ML38408741 This was the second Piedmont record since the 2004 Review List.

Brown-chested Martin (*Progne tapera*): One individual, Sunset Beach, Northampton County [† Ned Brinkley] August 28, 2011, accepted Category 2. This bird, found after the passage of Hurricane Irene, was the first state record.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*): Four records as follows:

One individual, College Creek, James City County [† Brain Taber] October 23, 2016; accepted Category 2. This was the second accepted record for Colonial Historic Triangle.

Two individuals, Sandy River Reservoir, Prince Edward County [ph. Warren Rofe] November 22-24, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S32665857>; ML40630371 ML40630381. This was the first Piedmont record and the first County record (Dalmás et al, 2010).

One individual, First Landing State Park, Virginia Beach [ph. Lewis Barnett] November 25, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/va/view/checklist/S32709559>; ML40929281. Note although two birds were reported, only one was accepted based on first photo only.

One individual, 85th Street Beach, Virginia Beach [† Adam D'Onofrio, Paul Glass] January 28, 2017; accepted Category 2.

Lesser Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*): One adult male, Virginia Beach [† ph. Mary Catherine Miguez, † ph. James Fox, m.obs.] November 26-29, 2016, accepted Category 1. This was the first state record.

Clay-colored Sparrow (*Spizella pallida*): Two records as follows:

One individual, Curles Neck Farm (restricted access), Henrico County [Ellison Orcutt, ph. Ryan Graves] December 18, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/va/view/checklist/S33088838>; ML42912211 ML42912221 ML42912241. Found during the Hopewell CBC (Kain, 2017), this was the fifth inland Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

One adult, private location, James City County [ph. Brian Taber, m.obs.] January 16 – May 3, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird) <http://ebird.org/ebird/va/view/checklist/S33744085>, ML45758231. This was the sixth inland Coastal Plain record since the 2004 Review List.

LeConte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*): One individual, private location, Loudoun County [ph. Bryan Henson] December 18, 2016, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S33082229>; ML42835231 ML42835241 ML42835251 ML42835261 ML42835271 ML42835291 ML42835301 ML42835311 ML42835321 ML42835331. This was the eighth Piedmont record.

Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon ssp.) (*Junco hyemalis montanus*): One individual, private location, Virginia Beach [ph. Mary Catherine Miguez] January 29, 2017, accepted Category 1 (eBird). <http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist/S34009808;ML46854941 ML46854951 ML46854961 ML46854971 ML46855001>. This was the second accepted Coastal Plain record for the subspecies.

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*): Two records as follows:

One immature male, Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach [† ph. Mike Collins, Eric Alton and two other observers] January 17, 2017; accepted Category 1. This was the second state and first Coastal Plain record.

One first winter male, Church Neck, Northampton County [† ph. Bill Williams, Bob Ake, Matt Anthony, Brian Taber] January 24-29, 2017; accepted Category 1. This bird, which was on private property, was first observed by the homeowners on January 19, 2017. This was the third state and second Coastal Plain record.

Lucy's Warbler (*Oreothlypis luciae*): One individual, Northampton County Landfill, Northampton County [† Ned Brinkley, ph. Keith Roberts, m.obs.] December 31, 2016 – January 6, 2017, accepted Category 1. See article by Brinkley in this issue for additional details. This was the first state record.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's ssp.) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*): One individual, Mockhorn Island Wildlife Management Area, GATR Tract, Northampton County [† Ned Brinkley] January 15, 2016, accepted Category 2. This was the third Coastal Plain record for the subspecies.

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*): One individual, Yorktown, York County, December 17, 2016. This was a very distant view that made documentation of the bill color difficult under the prevailing lighting conditions, and the report did not rule out Red-throated Loon as a possibility.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*): One individual, Accomack County, September 23, 2013. This report was originally submitted in 2013. It was not reviewed at the time as it was not on the Review List for the Eastern Coastal Plain. As part of the 2017 Review List revision, the species was made reviewable statewide and the submission was revisited. The Committee concluded that the very limited viewing time did not allow adequate observation for written documentation, and the photo did not completely rule out Dunlin.

Laughing Gull (*Leucophaeus atricilla*): One adult, Blandy Experimental Farm, Clarke County, December 3, 2016. The written documentation did not adequately rule out Franklin's Gull.

White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*): One adult, Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel Island #1, Virginia Beach, September 3, 2016. The consensus was that this sighting at very long distance was too brief to provide adequate identification.

European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*): One adult, Leesylvania State Park, Prince William County, March 11-16, 2017. Although the identity of the bird was not in question, the Committee concluded that this was likely an escaped or released bird.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's ssp.) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*): One individual, College Creek, James City County, January 5, 2014. The written documentation was not sufficiently detailed to warrant acceptance.

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INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

The Raven, the official journal of the Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO), functions to publish original contributions and original review articles in ornithology relating to Virginia Birdlife. Electronic files are the required form for manuscript submission. Text files, prepared using a Mac OS-compatible word processing program or Microsoft® Word, should contain minimal formatting. Graphics (photos, maps, graphs, charts) should be sent as high quality EPS or JPEG files. An accompanying “cover letter” file should be emailed to the editor stating (1) article title, (2) author(s) full name(s) and email and home or institutional address(es) and, for multi-authored manuscripts, (3) the name of one author designated to carry out correspondence with the editor. If the manuscript or report is technical, a list of persons who would be appropriate reviewers should also be included in the “cover letter” file. Authors are encouraged to consult with the editor on additional matters of content, format, or style.

Most Manuscripts published in *The Raven* concern the distribution, abundance and migration of birds in Virginia. However, if there is evidence of summer residency in Virginia provided, manuscripts describing the distribution, abundance, life history, ecology and behavior of Virginia’s migrant birds on their wintering grounds are also welcome. Manuscripts on other ornithological topics, including Virginia-based historical reviews, bibliographical reviews, life histories, and behavioral observations, are also welcomed. In addition, the journal serves to publish the official proceedings of the VSO and other formal items pertaining to all aspects of the Society’s activities. *The Raven* may also publish articles pertaining to the activities of various public and private organizations engaged in biological and conservation work in Virginia. *The Raven* is a peer-reviewed journal; all feature articles and short communications are reviewed before a decision about acceptance for publication is made.

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