



Virginia Birds

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Volume 5, Number 1
Summer Records June 2008 – July 2008
Volume 5, Number 2
Fall Records August 2008 – November 2008

Editors' Notes

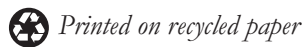
We are working to catch up on some backlogged issues of *Virginia Birds* while also getting the more current issues out. This double volume covers the summer and fall of 2008. In this mailing you will also have received the double volume covering the summer and fall of 2007. For those trying to keep track, the only remaining delinquent issue is Volume 4, Number 3, Winter 2007-2008. We are working to have it out soon in a mailing along with Winter 2008–2009, and to publish the spring 2009 issue of *Virginia Birds* on time.

During 2008 we were still without editors for the North and Central Regions so there are, unfortunately, no reports for these areas. Happily we have been able to entice some talented birders to join us and expect to cover the state fully starting with the report for spring 2009.

Not to be missed in this issue are reports of Sandhill Cranes and an American Avocet in the west, another avocet and a White Ibis in the east, a Northern Waterthrush and possibly breeding Green Herons in the southwest, an incredible display of Purple Martins in the southeast that inspired a “Gone to the Birds” festival and from the coast - Sabine’s Gull, Anhinga, Reddish Egret Roseate Tern and the intriguing journey of a transmitter –tagged Whimbrel.

Good birding,

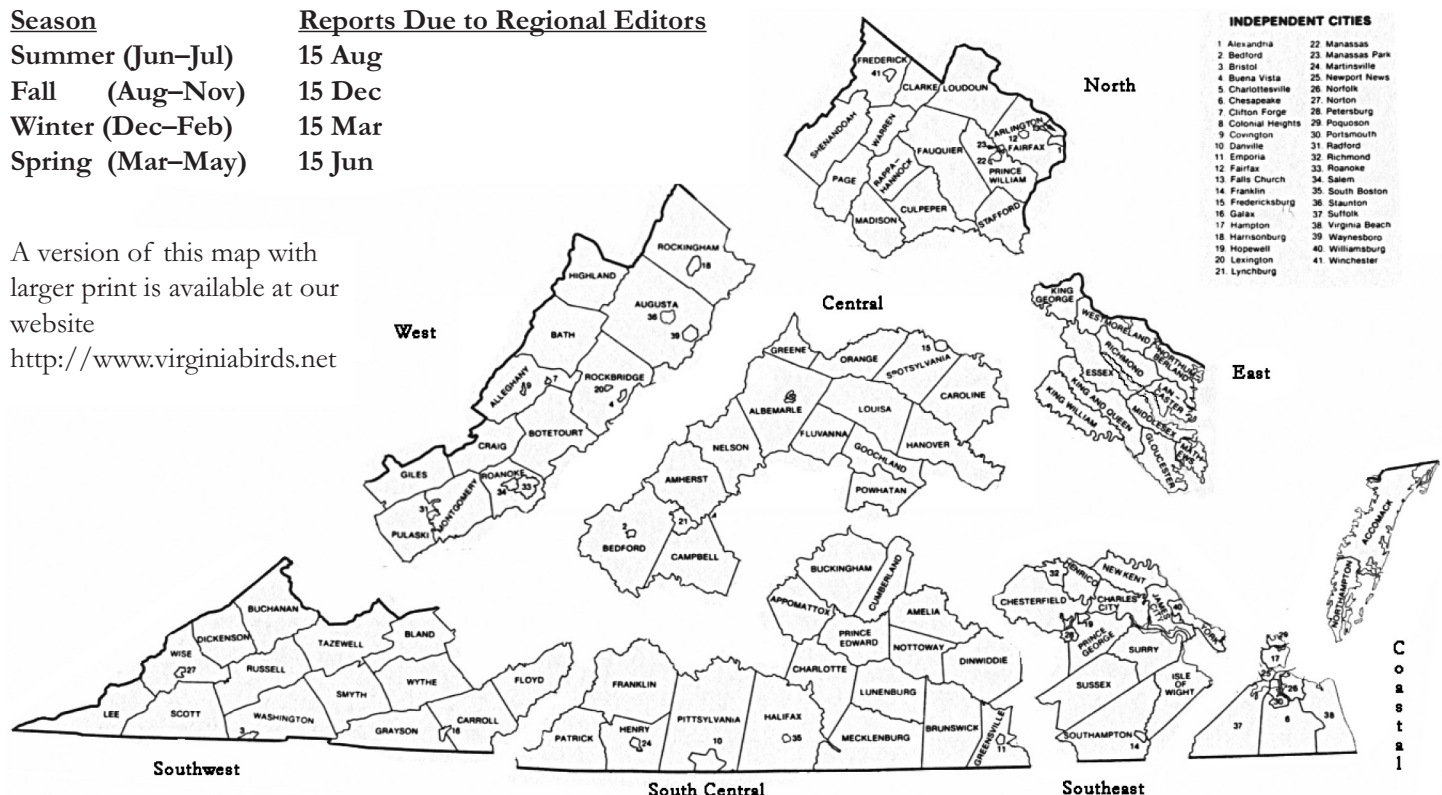
Linda and Alan
June 2009
Good birding



Cover Photo: Bill Dunson captured this image of the Brown Booby at Claytor Lake, Pulaski County on 20 October 2008.

Season	Reports Due to Regional Editors
Summer (Jun–Jul)	15 Aug
Fall (Aug–Nov)	15 Dec
Winter (Dec–Feb)	15 Mar
Spring (Mar–May)	15 Jun

A version of this map with larger print is available at our website
<http://www.virginiabirds.net>



Summer Reporting Period Jun – Jul 2008

North

No report this period.

West

This Region includes the southern part of the Shenandoah Valley south to the New River Valley. The Blue Ridge Mountain range forms much of the eastern boundary with West Virginia defining the western boundary, also the counties of (from north to south) Rockingham, Augusta, Highland, Bath, Rockbridge, Botetourt, Alleghany, Craig, Giles, Roanoke, Montgomery, and Pulaski.

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Abbreviations: Mountains and Valley physiographic region (M&V).

WATERFOWL—EAGLES

Two female **RING-NECKED DUCKS** were spotted and photographed on the New R. near Parrott, *Pulaski*, 29 Jul (BA, CR). This is the second Jul M & V record of this duck. An imm. **White Ibis**, a rare post-breeding visitor, was reported from Radford, 9 Jul (BS). The *Highland* eagle watch, a coordinated effort by local residents to record the presence and whereabouts of all eagles in the county throughout the year, has again compiled summer sightings of **Golden Eagles**; three in Jun and one in Jul. While these reports are all credible, none was documented in detail or with photos (SH).

CRANES—FLYCATCHERS

Two **Sandhill Cranes** ♀ were reported from Pittsburg, *Montgomery*, 1 Jun (AH). This rare spring and fall transient has had very few summer records in the M&V Region. A single **American Avocet** was first reported 19 Jul (LM), and later photographed (GM), in a small pond in *Rockingham*. This is a rare transient with most records coming from the fall months. This mid-Jul arrival apparently signaled

the onset of the shorebird migration; a few days later at the same pond there were single counts of **Least and Pectoral Sandpipers**, 25 Jul (WL). A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** in Montgomery, 6 Jun (FD, MD, MP) is of significance as there have been less than a dozen records of this flycatcher in this Region, with one occurrence of nesting in Jul 2004. A singing male **Alder Flycatcher** in appropriate high elevation wetland habitat, *Highland*, 6–7, Jun (JS, AL), offers additional evidence of probable breeding for this species in select habitats. Another uncommon high elevation *Empidonax* is the **Least Flycatcher** of which there were multiple records including a nest with young near Bluegrass, *Highland*, 13 Jun (VK).

WARBLERS—FINCHES

As for other passerines, the usual suspects were reported at the expected times and locations with only a few special findings. One was of 2 singing male **Yellow-rumped Warblers** 17 Jun, atop Duncan Knob (elevation 3819 feet), *Bath*. This provided the first summer record at this site for this warbler, which has been recorded as a possible breeder at a number of summits above 4000 feet in neighboring counties. A single **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** ♀ reported in Highland 1 Jun (EH) is the first summer report for that county and only the third for the M&V Region. Singing male **Henslow's Sparrows** 7 Jul, were again noted at the Radford Army Arsenal near Dublin, *Pulaski*, the only known M&V breeding site for this species (PO, et al.). **Dickcissals** are rare and irregular summer residents and probable breeders in the mid and northern part of the M&V Region. Several were reported this year – a singing male at Hightown, *Highland*, 10 Jun (DH) was later seen with a female, 13 Jun (VK) and up to five were observed near New Hope, *Augusta*, between 15 Jun and 7 Jul (AL, WL). Once again Bear Mountain Farm (elev. 4400 ft), on the western-most ridge of *Highland* had likely breeding **Purple Finches** with two pairs

Terms and Abbreviations

Species name in bold first time mentioned (**RARITIES** bold and all caps)
County names are in *italics*

Abbreviations:

ad. (ads.) – adult(s)
BBS – breeding bird survey
CBC – Christmas Bird Count
Cr. – Creek
et al. – and others
fide – vouched by
Ft. – Fort
FOS – First of Season
Hwy. – Highway
I. – Island(s), Isle(s)
imm. (imms.) – immature(s)
Jct. – Junction
juv. (juvs.) – juvenile(s)
L. – Lake
MAPS – Monitoring Avian
Productivity and Survivorship
m.ob. – many/multiple observers
Mt. – Mountain, Mount
NWR – National Wildlife Refuge
ph. – photographed (by + initials)
Pt. – Point
R. – River
Res. – Reservoir
Rte. – Route
SF – State Forest
SP – State Park
VARCOM – Virginia Avian Records
Committee
VDGIF – Virginia Department of
Game and Inland Fisheries
v.r. – voice recording (by + initials)
VSO – Virginia Society of
Ornithology
v.t. – video taped (by + initials)
WMA – Wildlife Management Area
♣ – VARCOM Review List Bird
† – written details submitted
* – specimen collected

Submissions

Send reports and photographs to the Regional Editors. Photographs should be the highest electronic quality possible. Send with release form, which can be found on the VSO web site: www.virginiabirds.net
Articles for consideration can be sent to vsoeditors@comcast.net

of adult birds frequenting feeders throughout much of Jun (PR). A single **Pine Siskin** was observed at the same feeders, 6 Jun (PR, JS).

Contributors: Bob Abraham, Carol Croy, Fenton Day, Mike Donahue, Amy Hahn, Eric Harrold, Sandy Hevener, Diane Holsinger, Clyde Kessler, Val Kitchens, Allen Larner, William Leigh, Linda Matkins, Greg Moyers, Mike Purdy, Peggy Opengari, Patti Reum, Curt Roane, Bob Sheehy, John Spahr.

General Reference – Rottenborn, S.C. and Brinkley, E.S. (ed). 2007. *Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist*, 4th edition.

Central

No report this period.

East

The Northern Neck, composed of King George, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, and Lancaster Counties, is bordered by the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. The Middle Peninsula includes King William, King and Queen, Essex, Middlesex, Gloucester, and Mathews Counties and is bordered by the Rappahannock and Pamunkey/York Rivers. The Mattaponi R. is the boundary between King William and King and Queen and it joins with the Pamunkey R. to form the York R. in West Point. Birds sighted in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay from Smith Point northwest through *King George* along the northeastern shoreline of the region are actually in Maryland waters but they are still noted here.

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During the breeding season in the Northern Neck and the Middle Peninsula 135 species were recorded. The Sharps BBS (BP), White Stone BBS (TS), and Port Royal BBS

(FA) were conducted 8 Jun. The Gloucester BBS was 1 Jun (KS) and the Truhart BBS was 21 Jun (FA). Most other records were gleaned from eBird, VA-Bird, and Northern Neck Audubon Society emails. The most interesting finds this season were a wonderfully photographed Avocet, a White Ibis, a large number of nesting Least Terns, and several Wilson's Storm-Petrels. Chimney Swifts continued to occur in lower-than-usual numbers.

Abbreviations: BBS (Breeding Bird Survey); Beaverdam (Beaverdam Park, *Gloucester*); Bethel (Bethel Beach, *Mathews*); CCB (William and Mary's Center for Conservation Biology); Gwynn's (Gwynn's I, *Mathews*); Hughlett (Hughlett Point NAP, *Northumberland*); Hutchinson (tract of Rapp. R. NWR, *Essex*); K. G. Ponds (ponds along Rte. 3 between Sealston and King George, *King George*); Laurel Grove (tract of Rapp. R. NWR, *Richmond*); Leedstown (*Westmoreland*); Mulberry (Mulberry Private Hunting Reserve, Mulberry Pt, *Richmond*); NNAS (Northern Neck Audubon Society); Rapp. R. NWR. (Rappahannock R. Valley National Wildlife Refuge); USFWS (United States Fish and Wildlife Service); USGS (United States Geological Survey); Tayloe (tract of Rapp. R. NWR. *Richmond*); Wilna (tract of Rapp. R. NWR. *Richmond*); Wright (tract of Rapp. R. NWR. *Richmond*).

STORM-PETRELS—RAILS

At least 25, and possibly as many as 37, **Wilson's Storm-Petrels** were seen in the Bay between Smith Pt. and Smith I. in Maryland waters off *Northumberland* from aboard The Spirit of the Chesapeake 12 Jul (DB). The highest concentration of **Mute Swans** seemed to be in Beaverdam where 26 were seen 29 Jun (MB). A molting female **Red-breasted Merganser** was found at Gwynn's 20 Jun (BW, et al.). Interesting wading birds included a **Tricolored Heron** 8 Jul (FD), an immature **Little Blue Heron** 13 Jul (TS) and a **Glossy Ibis** 18 Jul (FD), all at Hughlett; a juvenile **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** at Ball's Neck, *Northumberland* 4 Jul (TS); a **Least Bittern** at Drakes

Marsh, Leedstown 8 Jun (FA); and a **Cattle Egret** in *Mathews* 1 Jun (MS). A shallow farm pond in Leedstown was packed with long-legged waders 30 Jul, including 38 **Great Egrets**, 6 **Snowy Egrets**, one **Glossy Ibis**, and a surprising immature **White Ibis** (ph. FA). The farm owner saw at least 4 imm. White Ibis there the week before (CT). Only 4 **Turkey Vultures** were seen on the Sharps BBS, far lower than previous averages (17.1 in 1990's and 15.2 in 2000's). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** found on a NNAS field trip to Tayloe 9 Jun (SS, MG, et al.) was an unusual find in the breeding season. A **Bald Eagle** survey conducted by VDGIF/USFWS personnel by boat along the Rappahannock R. recorded a high of 171 eagles including 85 ads, 87 immes, and five unks, 15 Jul (*vide* SH). A total of only 31 **Northern Bobwhites** were heard on 25 of the 250 BBS stops in the Region. Point-counts at Rapp. R. NWR found 14 Bobwhites at eight points at Hutchinson, three at three points at Laurel Grove, one at Tayloe, and 2 at two points at Wilna (SS, MM). A **Clapper Rail** on the Gloucester BBS was only the second noted in the 15 years of that BBS. Two **Virginia Rails** were calling in the evening at Mulberry 20 Jun (FA).

SHOREBIRDS—WOODPECKERS

Single **American Oystercatchers** were noted at Hughlett 15 Jun and 13 Jul (TS), Bethel 27 Jul (G&RH), and at Gwynn's 20 Jun (BW, et al), and 10 were at Haven Beach *Mathews* 10 Jul (CS). A beautiful female **American Avocet** was photographed at Hughlett 6 Jul (TS). Quite a few migrating shorebirds were present at



Immature White Ibis found and photographed by Fred Atwood 30 July in Leedstown.

Bethel 27 Jul including 1 **Spotted Sandpiper**, 8 **Short-billed Dowitchers**, 8 **Semipalmated Plovers**, 7 **Lesser Yellowlegs**, 4 **Willetts**, and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** (G&RH).

Least Terns had a strong breeding population at Sandy Point off of Gwynn's where CCB surveys found 336 birds nesting in three colonies (BW, et al). They did not do as well at Hughlett where 11–12 adults and three nests 3 Jun dwindled to one nesting pair 22 Jun (TS). A **Caspian Tern** was another unusual find for the breeding season at Gwynn's 20 Jun (BW, et al). A **Sandwich Tern** was at Windmill Pt., *Lancaster* 18 Jul (FD) and 2 **Black Terns** and several **Common Terns** were at Hughlett 7 Jul (FD).

A nightjar survey along the first 10 stops (4.5 miles) of the Truhart BBS route near Ino yielded 7 **Chuck-will's-widows** at five stops and 17 **Whip-poor-wills** at nine stops, 21 Jun (FA). Another nightjar survey 15 Jun in upper *King and Queen* found 15 Whip-poor-wills in eight stops but no Chuck-will's-Widows for the second year in a row (FA). Two Chuck-will's-Widows were also found at Wright in mid June (SS). **Chimney Swift** numbers were low again this breeding season. None were noted on the Truhart and Port Royal BBSs. Whitestone BBS recorded only six in two stops, its lowest since 1978 and far below its average of 13.5. Three were at three stops of Gloucester BBS (average 10.5), and only one was at Sharps BBS, the lowest count in its forty-year history (average 11.4). One **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** is the average for Sharps BBS where it is not seen every year, but this year seven were found in three stops. The first Ruby-throated Hummingbird fledglings for the year were noted on 12 Jun while males were still doing their pendulum flight displays for the females in *Westmoreland* (FP). Seven **Pileated Woodpeckers** furnished a new high count for the Whitestone BBS where the previous average was 1.3.

FLYCATCHERS—ORIOLES

Ten **Eastern Wood-Pewee** is a new high for the Gloucester BBS, (previous high

nine in 2007, average 3.6). The new bridge over the Mattaponi R. in Walkerton *King and Queen* continues to host a growing colony of **Cliff Swallows**; 54 complete or under-construction nests were noted 15 Jun (FA). Two more colonies of Cliff Swallows were also discovered this year, one group of at least 11 nests in Aylett *King William* on the Rte. 360 bridge over the Mattaponi R. 15 Jun, and another group of 49 nests on the Port Royal *Caroline* side of the Rte. 301 bridge over the Rappahannock R. 8 Jun (FA). No nests could be seen in Tappahannock *Essex* on the bridges over Hoskins Cr. or the Rappahannock R. 20 Jun (FA). By 30 Jul, the Cliff Swallows had departed from their Mattaponi R. nesting colonies, and most of the **Bank Swallows** that nested at K. G. Ponds had left, but at Cottage Farm between Leedstown and Oak Grove, *Westmoreland*, a huge flock of 1550 Bank Swallows congregated on the power lines and corn plants (FA).

Red-eyed Vireos seem to continue their population decline at Whitestone BBS where an all-time low of 12 were found in 12 stops (average 30.3). On the other hand, 17 **White-eyed Vireos** on the Gloucester BBS was a new high (previous high 11, average 5.3) and the first two **Yellow-throated Vireos** since 1996 were found on the Sharps BBS. Port Royal BBS had new high counts of **Tufted Titmouse** (32 in 22 stops, previous average 17.9), **White-breasted Nuthatch** (11 in six stops, previous average 1.5), and **Carolina Wren** (55 in 35 stops, previous high 29, average 9.8). Sixty **Marsh Wrens** were singing in the marshes around Mulberry 20 Jun (FA). Only one **Wood Thrush** was found on Whitestone BBS, an all time low, (average 9.2, previous low 2). Gloucester BBS had a new high of 19 **Brown Thrasher** in 14 stops (previous high 14, average 6.5, second highest BBS count for the Region on record). Twelve **Cedar Waxwing** in eight stops was a new high for the Port Royal BBS, (previous high 6, average 1).

Sixteen species of warblers were found in the Region during the breeding season including a straggling migrant **Black-**

throated Blue Warbler on the Sharps BBS, a late **Magnolia Warbler** 1 Jun *Mathews* (MS), and an early Magnolia Warbler 30 Jul at Mulberry (FA). Three **Black-and-white Warblers** was a high count for Port Royal BBS where the species has only been noted on about half the routes. Wright seems to be a hot spot for **Worm-eating Warbler**; 19 were found at 15 survey points (SS, MM). Port Royal BBS had highs of 23 **Common Yellowthroats** in 13 stops (previous high 10, average 6.6) and 11 **Hooded Warblers** in nine stops (previous high 8, average 2.9). Truhart BBS had a new high of 41 **Yellow-breasted Chats** in 31 stops (previous high 38, average 29.8). There were 104 reports of tanagers in the region this season: **Scarlet Tanagers** (54%) slightly outnumbered **Summer Tanagers**. Two late **Savannah Sparrows** were in Ball's Neck, *Northumberland* 1 Jun (TS). A small population of **Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrows** continues at Mulberry where 19 were heard singing in a casual survey the evening of 20 Jun (FA). As usual, **Grasshopper Sparrows** were common on point counts at Wilna, which is managed for grassland species where a maximum of 34 were noted at 17 points (SS). The next highest number for the region was 21 at eight stops of Sharps BBS where the all-time high was 30. A single Grasshopper Sparrow found at Truhart was the first one noted there since the route was started in 1996. Another Grasshopper Sparrow was at King Carter golf course *Lancaster* 18 Jul (FD). Truhart BBS found new highs for **Eastern Towhee** (43 in 27 stops, previous high 41, average 29.2) and **Blue Grosbeak** (17 in 13 stops, previous high 15, average 8.5). Two **Dickcissels** were singing in Leedstown 1 Jun (DS) and seven more were found during breeding point-count surveys at Wilna. **Baltimore Oriole** is not common here during the breeding season, but one was found at Tayloe on a NNAS field trip 9 Jun (SS, MG et al.).

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Portlock, Tom Saunders, Kimberly Smith, Mark Sopko, Sandy Spencer, Don Sweig, Charles Swift, Clark Trader, Bill Williams.

Southwest

Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe Counties.

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June and July were unusually cool and wet with June having an average temperature of 71 degrees and eight days of rain. July averaged only 72 degrees with thirteen days of precipitation. This was a welcome contrast to the dry, hot drought period of last year during the same months, which had such a negative impact on the food supply of the Region's birds.

Orchard Orioles were singing on territory in May on Compton Mountain, *Buchanan* for the first time. June produced several species of warblers including Cerulean and Swainson's in *Buchanan*, a possible nesting Northern Waterthrush in *Smyth*, as well as Great Horned Owls in *Grayson*. In July, two fledgling Green Herons were found for the first time in one section of *Wythe*; singing Vesper Sparrows were sighted at Elk Garden, *Grayson*; Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found in *Russell* and *Buchanan*; and a Pine Siskin was observed at a feeder on Compton Mountain.

Abbreviations: BP (Breaks Interstate Park); CMWA (Clinch Mountain Wildlife Area); FOS (First of the season); RRL (Rural Retreat Lake); SHL (South Holston Lake).

EGRETS—SISKINS

A **Great Egret** was observed at RRL, *Wythe* 10 Jul (AB). First ever evidence of **Green Heron** nesting was observed 2 Jul at Jackson's Ferry, *Wythe* when two recent

fledglings were observed with an adult (AB). On 2 Jun at a farm near Galax, *Grayson* there were 2 **Great Horned Owls** and 2 **Whip-poor-wills** (BD). Five Whip-poor-wills were found along Rt 639 on Compton Mt in *Buchanan* 18 May (RM, DR). Also in *Buchanan* 5 Whip-poor-wills were heard in the Breaks community 9 Jun (RM, DR). Several **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were observed near Galax, *Grayson* in Jul, probably due to the large numbers of webworms that were found in the area (BD).

A **Cerulean Warbler** and six **Kentucky Warblers** were observed on Caney Island Branch near Grundy, *Buchanan* 7 Jun (E & M T). A **Northern Waterthrush** found at the Hurricane Campground in *Smyth* 17 Jun (RH, RS) was the first found in Southwest VA during the breeding season since the early 1970's. A **Swainson's Warbler** was heard on Caney Island Branch, *Buchanan* 8 Jun (MT). Swainson's are regular nesters in other parts of *Buchanan*, but this is the first in that area. A male **Vesper Sparrow** was singing along Rte. 600 at Elk Garden, *Grayson* 12 Jul (BD). At least 15 **Bobolinks** were found in their regular nesting area of Elk Garden, *Russell* 1 Jul (TH). A sub-adult male **Orchard Oriole** began singing on Compton Mt in *Buchanan* 1 May. (RM) The male was observed throughout the breeding season with a female. This is the first known record of possible nesting on Compton Mt. The species is usually not observed on the 2400 ft mountain during breeding season (RM). A pair of **Baltimore Orioles** nested in Jun on a farm near Galax. The species does not usually nest in that area. (B & M D). A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** appeared in a yard in Lebanon, *Russell* 11 Jul (JT). On 26 Jul a male and a female **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** came to a yard stream on Compton Mt (RM). A **Pine Siskin** came to a feeder on Compton Mt, *Buchanan* 16 Jul (RM).

Contributors: Allen Boynton, Bill Dunson, Bill & Margaret Dunson, Ron Harrington, Tom Hunter, Roger Mayhorn, David Raines, Randy Smith, Ed & Michelle Talbott, Michelle Talbott, Jerry

Thornhill

South Central

Patrick, Henry, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax, Charlotte, Appomattox, Buckingham, Cumberland, Amelia, Prince Edward, Nottoway, Dinwiddie, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, and Greensville Counties, and the cities of Danville, Emporia, and Martinsville.

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No report this period.

Southeast

Henrico, Charles City, Chesterfield, James City, New Kent, Prince George, Sussex, Surrey, Southampton, Isle of Wight, and York Counties; and the cities of Richmond, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg.

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In a continuing trend, temperatures averaged 3.2 degrees above normal for the period. Precipitation was near normal in June but dropped considerably in July. Reports were few during the normally slow summer season for birders. An interesting breeding record came from Henricus Park in *Chesterfield* where a pair of Common Moorhens successfully produced two young. There were also reports of a summering Tundra Swan, a number of wandering White Ibis and an American Avocet.

For at least the second year in a row, the Shockoe Bottom area in downtown Richmond was the scene of a spectacular and daily display of thousands of Purple Martins. A pre-migratory roost was discovered last year and the spectacle repeated itself this year. Thousands of martins swirled in near dark and used a row of Bradford Pear trees to roost dur-

ing July and August in preparation for the journey to their wintering grounds in South America. The number of birds using the roost increased daily and gave many people, birders and nonbirders alike, the opportunity to see the rare sight. Adding to the excitement was the daily presence of a Red-tailed Hawk and the occasional Peregrine Falcon taking the opportunity to score an easy meal. Last year, there was a proposal to cut the trees down but, due to the popularity of the martins, this proposal was rescinded for the time being. Instead, a "Gone to the Birds" festival was held this year on July 26 celebrating the martins return. The festival was deemed a success by local business owners. It's not known how long the martins will use this location in the future.

There was mixed news about the 2008 Red-cockaded Woodpecker nesting season. Currently, there are seven breeding clusters. The number of potential breeding clusters increased by one each year over the last four years and this year had the most breeding clusters known since the 1980s when the population was in drastic decline. However, of the seven breeding clusters, only four clusters successfully fledged young for a total of eight birds. Biologists at the Center for Conservation Biology felt that although there was a setback in the number of successful breeding clusters, the continual growth of the population holds promise for future years.

Abbreviations: Henricus (Henricus Park, *Chesterfield*).

SWANS—ORIOLES

A **Tundra Swan**, very rare in summer, was discovered in a neighborhood swamp in Chester, *Chesterfield* 27 Jun (ph. RE). Previously, only three summer records of this species have been recorded in the Piedmont. Two **Ruddy Ducks**, possibly a pair, were seen in *Charles City* 8 Jul (AB). Two **Least Bitterns** were noted at Henricus 21 Jun (JK). Another Least Bittern was observed at Henricus 23 Jul (FD). Two imm. **White Ibis**, rare postbreeding wanderers

inland, were an unexpected find in a wetland area behind a Chester residence, *Chesterfield* 19 Jul (ph. JK). Twenty two **White Ibis**, all imms., were counted at Hog Island, *Surry* 23 Jul (FD). A **Mississippi Kite** was seen soaring at treetop level above the Blackwater R. that divides *Isle of Wight* and *Southampton* 15 Jun (NF). Four **Cooper's Hawks** were soaring together over the Green Springs Trail, *James City* 27 Jul (BW). **American Kestrels** were recorded in *James City* on two occasions with a male over Warhill High School 13 Jul (BW, AM) and another of unknown age/sex at Mainland Farm 21 Jul (BW). Other American Kestrel reports included one at the corner of Franklin and Monroe Streets in downtown Richmond 2 Jun (AB) and one at Forest Hill, Richmond 18 Jun (AB). After multiple spring sightings of a single **Common Moorhen** at Henricus, a pair was finally observed in early Jun. The pair bred successfully and was seen with 1–2 young throughout the period (m.obs.). An ad. **Black-bellied Plover** was observed in *Charles City* 15 Jun (AB). Other shorebirds noted in *Charles City* included a **dowitcher** sp. 4 Jul (AB) and an **American Avocet** at Shirley Plantation 23 Jul (FD), the latter quite rare inland. Six **Horned Larks** were observed in *Charles City* 4 Jul (AB). Sightings near the Flood Wall in downtown Richmond included 3 **Cliff Swallows** 6 Jul (AB) and 6 **Baltimore Orioles**, possibly a family group, 7 Jul (AB).

Contributors: Arun Bose, Fenton Day, Rachel Echols, Nick Flanders, Julie Kacmarcik, Alex Minarik, Bill Williams.

Coastal

Accomack and Northampton Counties; Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel; Pelagic area; and the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.

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Compilation of this season's report was greatly influenced by the nexus of anecdotal birding and the results of systematic field ornithology. Among the most labor-intensive of the latter was a multi-agency assessment of Chesapeake Bay colonial nesting waterbird populations, the fourth effort of its kind since the first was completed in 1993. Some of the more noteworthy findings are described below, including a dramatic increase in the number of Royal Terns nesting in Hampton Roads. Equally exciting were the findings of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' 23rd consecutive Virginia Plover Survey and the Center for Conservation Biology's annual monitoring of breeding Peregrine Falcons. The regular beach, marsh, and impoundment surveys at Back Bay continued to demonstrate that the Region has a substantial localized summering Lesser Black-backed Gull population. Most fascinating to track were the summer peregrinations of a female Whimbrel transmitter-tagged in lower Northampton County in May. Species that set off fireworks of excitement this season included Anhinga, Reddish Egret, Sabine's Gull, and Roseate Tern.

Abbreviations: Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, s. of *Northampton*); CCB (Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and Mary); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, *Accomack*); Craney (Craney Island, Portsmouth); Grandview (Grandview Beach Park, Hampton); HRBT (Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel, Hampton/Norfolk).

WATERFOWL—AMERICAN COOT

Eleven **Mute Swans** on South Point Marsh, *Accomack* 28 Jul furnished noteworthy evidence of the species continued presence in the upper Chesapeake Bay (HA). A **Black Scoter** was at Chinc. 15 Jun (RBr). **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** reports included one off Grandview 8 Jun (BP, FS), and 12 (four off Grandview and

eight at York Spit, *Northampton*) “mid/late Jun” (BP). The epicenter of **Brown Pelican** breeding continued to be islands in the upper Chesapeake Bay where 1270 young were banded on South Point Marsh, *Accomack* 28 Jul (HA). A female **Anhinga** was at Lake Murray, Mariner’s Museum Park, Newport News 4–25 July (AF, NF, LM, VK), the same location where a female Anhinga was seen during the summer of 2007. Another Anhinga was at Stumpy L., Virginia Beach 30 Jul (DC). A **Least Bittern** was noted at Back Bay 3 Jul (BA, DH, BS). An assessment of nesting herons, egrets, and ibis on Wreck I., *Northampton* produced the following total adult counts 3 Jun: 137 **Great Egrets**; 20 **Snowy Egrets**; 9 **Little Blue Herons**; 31 **Tricolored Herons**; 175 **Black-crowned Night-Herons**; 79 **White Ibis**; 25 **Glossy Ibis** (DF, RA, et al.). The state’s fourth **RED-DISH EGRET** ♀, this one a juv., was at Craney 22–24 Jul (BW, ph. SD, m.ob.). The CCB **Peregrine Falcon** monitoring project documented 17 breeding pairs occupying 18 active nest sites within the Region. Unprecedented, was one pair producing single broods at two different nest site locations. An **American Coot** was at Back Bay 4 & 16 Jun (JG).

SHOREBIRDS—SPARROWS

The VDGIF 2008 Virginia Plover Survey documented 208 **Piping Plover** breeding pairs, a 4.5% increase over the 2007 end-of season total of 199 pairs, and 31 **Wilson’s Plover** breeding pairs, the highest total for that species since 2003. Seventy-seven percent of Piping Plover ads. and 100% of Wilson’s Plover ads. were observed on the northern barrier islands—Assateague, Wallops, Assawoman, Metompkin, Cedar, all in *Accomack* (RB, CS). Six **American Avocets** were at Craney by 22 Jul (BW, SD). The CCB transmitter-tagged female **Whimbrel** chronicled in the Spring 2008 report stayed in the MacKenzie River, Northwest Territories, Canada area from 29 May–5 Jun before continuing north to the coast of the Beaufort Sea, then northwest through the Yukon Territory before stopping 7 Jun in the Colville R. watershed of Alaska. It stayed there, pre-

sumably to breed, until 12 Jul. The bird moved west on 13 Jul to Norrvik, Alaska, where it remained four days, before moving southwest to the marshy delta of the Kuskokwim R., about 15 km from Bethel, Alaska where it apparently remained from 19 Jul though the end of the report period. Unusual for the season were 7 **Wilson’s Phalarope’s** at Chinc. 17–18 Jun (ML) with four remaining there through 29 Jun (ML). An ad. female was at Craney 18 Jun (SD, AM) and 7 Jul (BW, SD, AM) and two were there 22 Jul (BW). Quite surprising was an adult **Pomarine Jaeger** seen from the CBBT 5 June (RK *vide* SB). Peak HRBT gull species nest counts, all recorded 3 Jun by students from the College of William and Mary Department of Biology, were: **Laughing Gull**, 3782; **Herring Gull**, 114; and **Great Black-backed Gull**, 4 (MB, et al.). An additional 1250 Laughing Gull pairs were located on Grandview 24 Jun (BP, et al.). The number of **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at Back Bay was lower this season than in recent summers. The peak count of 45 on 14 Jul (BA, JG, DH) pales in comparison to the 150 reported there in June 2007. A first summer **SABINE’S GULL** ♀ was at Grandview Beach, Hampton 24 June (BW, MAB, ph. AD, EM, BP), the eleventh for the Coastal Plain and the second for Hampton Roads. VDGIF nest monitoring recorded 16 **Gull-billed Tern** nests on HRBT 12 June (RB). A beach-nesting birds survey of Wreck Island, *Northampton* found 2088 **Royal Tern** nests and 84 **Sandwich Tern** nests 3 Jun (DF, RA, et al.) Royal Terns first nested on HRBT in 2006 (two nests) and had not successfully nested at Grandview until this 2008 season. Thus it was significant that 633 nests were on HRBT 12 Jun and 208 pairs were on Grandview 24 Jun (BP, et al.). An ad. **Roseate Tern** was a great find at Chinc. 19 Jun (ph. ML). HRBT also had 773 **Common Tern** nests 12 Jun (RB) and 131 **Black Skimmer** pairs were at Grandview 24 Jun (BP, et al.). There were 121 pairs of roof-top nesting **Least Terns** reported 17 Jun, 80 pairs at Patrick Henry Mall, Newport News and 41 pairs at Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach (RB).



This Reddish Egret, the state’s fourth, was at Craney Island July 22–24, 2008. Photographed by Shirley Devan.

Well ahead of the species more normal mid-Jul arrival was 2 **Black Terns** at Chinc. 29 Jun (ML). Up to 6 **Monk Parakeets** were observed at the Stonybrook, Newport News site 24 Jun (BW). From one to 4 **Common Nighthawks** were observed at Craney 12 Jun–22 July (BW, SD, A&SK, AM). A **Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow** was at South Point Marsh, *Accomack* 28 Jul (HA).

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Fall Reporting Period Aug – Nov 2008

North

No report this period.

West

This Region includes the southern part of the Shenandoah Valley south to the New River Valley. The Blue Ridge Mountain range forms much of the eastern boundary with West Virginia defining the western boundary. The Region includes the counties of (from north to south) Rockingham, Augusta, Highland, Bath, Rockbridge, Botetourt, Alleghany, Craig, Giles, Roanoke, Montgomery, and Pulaski.

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Abbreviations: Mountains and Valley physiographic region (M&V).

The fall waterfowl migration yielded a few rare visitors, including two species of scoter. All three regional hawk watches recorded Golden Eagles and a higher than average counts of most other hawks. Although the fall hurricanes had little adverse impact, one or more of this season's tropical storms diverted a few oceanic and coastal birds to the Region, including the bird of the season, a Brown Booby at Claytor Lake. Other wayward, though not necessarily hurricane assisted, travelers included Great White Heron and Wood Stork.

Abbreviations: M&V (Mountains and Valleys physiographic Region); RGHP (Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch); HKHW (Harvey's Knob Hawk Watch); BMHW (Bear Mountain Hawk Watch).

WATERFOWL—WADERS

Again, **Cackling Geese** put in a perennial appearance, with one to three birds reported from several locations – *Augusta* 17 Oct and 30 Nov (AL) and *Radford* 22 Nov (CK). The Region's third record of **BRANT** came from *Parrott, Pulaski* along the New R. on 2 Nov (CK). The first fall **Gadwall** in the area was recorded in *Staunton* 28 Aug, an ex-

tremely early date (AL). The *Pulaski* portion of the New R. hosted additional unexpected waterfowl — a single immature **Surf Scoter** and an immature **BLACK SCOTER**, both on 15 Oct (CK, BA). This represents the third fall M&V record for the latter species. Another rare fall visitor, a female **Common Merganser**, was reported on *Willow L., Rockingham* 26 Nov (DR). A new peak count of 114 **Horned Grebes** was harvested from various locations in *Augusta* 30 Nov (AL). An **Anhinga** was seen flying over the *RGHW, Augusta* 28 Oct (VL). The regional phenomenon of the season was a **BROWN BOOBY** ♀ first seen 4 Oct on *Claytor L., Pulaski* (BS) where it remained most of the month to the delight of many birders and photographers. There are only a few Virginia records of this pan-tropical Sulid, and this is the first for the M&V. The most proximate tropical cyclones that could have blown this bird ashore were *Hanna*, which made landfall in the Carolinas on 6 Sep and tracked across coastal Virginia on its way to New England, or Hurricane *Ike*, which, after walloping Cuba, made landfall in Galveston, TX on 13 Sep and tracked up the center of the US in a wide swath of heavy rain. A **Great White Heron**, the *occidentalis* subspecies of Great Blue Heron was identified on this same lake 11 Oct (MM), and again 29 Oct & 1 Nov (ph. SB). Curiously, of the few state records of this bird, most have been in the M&V region. *Claytor L.* also hosted a **Wood Stork** 16 Sep (ph SB). Of the dozen or so records of this stork in the M&V most have occurred in the summer months.

HAWKS & EAGLES

A **Mississippi Kite**, was viewed at *RGHW*, 19 Sep (VL). Single counts of **Northern Goshawk** were reported from *RGHW*, 29 Sep (VL) and 18 Oct (BT, VL), and from *HKHW (Botetourt)*, 18 Nov (BG). The **Broad-winged Hawk** migration at *RGHW* included a high daily count of 5015 birds, 19 Sep (VL). The season totals for broadwings of 14,439 (*RGHW*) and 6255 (*HKHW*) were well

above average but less than the counts from 2007, a record season. **Golden Eagle** counts for the season included six at *HKHW*, four at *RGHW*, and four at *BMHW (Highland)*, the region's newest hawk watch. A follow up report (PR) of the 3rd year female Golden Eagle that was fitted with a radio telemetry collar in *Highland* this past March (see Spring report), indicated that the monitored bird departed the area in April and summered in the Gaspé of the Canadian Maritimes and Maine. It returned to the western Virginia mountains in early October. Further tracking showed the bird stayed briefly in *Highland* until 9 Oct, then departed southward to *Grayson* for several weeks. It again returned to *Highland* 31 Oct with brief strays into *Augusta*, and on 9 Nov it wandered into neighboring West Virginia. This eagle will continue to be monitored in order to study its wandering and migration patterns.

SANDPIPERS—HUMMINGBIRDS

Unusual shorebirds included single observations of **White-rumped Sandpiper** at *Leonard's Pond, Rockingham* 11 Oct (WL) and **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** in *Stuart's Draft, Augusta* 27 Sep (BT). Both are rare fall transients in the M&V. The latter sandpiper had only been recorded from the Roanoke area until 2006 when one was seen in *Rockingham*; two were found in that county the following fall. The present bird, indicating three successive years in this part of the Region, is also the first record for *Augusta*. Seven **Common Terns** in *Carvin's Cove, Botetourt* 6 Sep (MP) were probably displaced by tropical storm *Hanna*. A single **Laughing Gull** at *Claytor L.e, Pulaski*, 19 Oct represents a rare but increasingly regular transient (KD, MS). A new fall peak count of 67 **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** came from *RGHW*, 7 Sep (VL). Fall hummingbirds other than Ruby-throats are becoming increasingly regular in this area, as in much of the east. Members of the genus *Selasphorus* predominate, with most eventually identified as **Rufous Hummingbirds**. This fall, photo-documented records of

Rufous Hummingbirds have come from Claytor L., *Pulaski* 23 Oct (MM); Newport, *Giles* 9 Nov (TB & DB, *fide* PO); Churchville, *Augusta* 14–24 Nov (FS *fide* YL); and Waynesboro 21–22 Nov, (DW *fide* YL). CM reported a total of 71 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** that were banded this fall at the Highland Retreat banding station, *Rockingham*. This is far below the record 220 owls that were banded in 2007 and slightly below the 82 bird average over the last eight years. Other banding stations in eastern North America reported similar patterns, which suggest a lower rate of reproduction during the spring and summer. Such a “low year” immediately following a “high year” is a typical cyclical pattern for these owls.

DOVES—FINCHES

Eurasian Collared Doves, regularly recorded in *Montgomery* since 2003, were again reported – nine birds, 31 Aug near McCoy (MH). Eighteen doves were later reported near the New River Valley Airport in adjacent *Pulaski* 17 Nov (SB). Several warbler species persisted later than usual, including a **Yellow Warbler** in Raphine, *Augusta* 15 Oct (JK) and a **Blackpoll Warbler** in Staunton 2 Nov (AL). A “fall out” of sparrows was reported from various locations in *Augusta* 18 Oct (AL) with new peak counts for **Chipping Sparrow** (311), **Field Sparrow** (85), **Song Sparrow** (1005), **Lincoln’s Sparrow** (67) and **White-throated Sparrow** (791). A single **Snow Bunting** on Reddish Knob, *Augusta* (elev. 4,397 ft) was observed 31 Oct (JB). This winter visitor is being seen less frequently than in the past. A flock of 25 **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** at McCormick’s Mill, *Augusta* 12 Nov (JK) is noteworthy because this species has usually vacated the Region by mid-Oct. A single **Rusty Blackbird** 18 Oct in Stuart’s Draft, *Augusta* established a new early fall date for the county (AL). Other reports of this rapidly declining species, all of single birds, came from Roanok, 29 Oct (KD, JD) and near Blue Grass, *Highland* 24 Nov (JS); a flock of 40 was observed flying over the RGHW 9 Nov (VL, BT, MJ). An active **Baltimore Oriole** nest with young (WL) 1 Sep on the Blue Ridge

Parkway, *Rockingham* was highly unusual and established an extremely late breeding report. This oriole breeds in spring, with only a few records of fledged young in the summer months. The only fall report of **Evening Grosbeaks** came from HKHW where 30 were seen flying on 5 Nov (BG *fide* MP).

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Central

No report this period.

East

The Northern Neck, composed of King George, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, and Lancaster Counties, is bordered by the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. The Middle Peninsula includes King William, King and Queen, Essex, Middlesex, Gloucester, and Mathews Counties and is bordered by the Rappahannock and Pamunkey/York Rivers. The Mattaponi R. is the boundary between King William and King and Queen and it joins with the Pamunkey R. to form the York R. in West Point. Birds sighted in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay from Smith Point northwest through *King George* along the northeastern shoreline of the region are actually in Maryland waters but they are still noted here.

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During the autumn season in the Northern Neck and the Middle Peninsula 220 species were recorded by about 40 bird-

ers. Perhaps the most interesting finds this season were Rough-legged Hawk, Common Moorhen, Stilt Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Dowitcher, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Sandwich Tern, Western Kingbird, Sedge Wren, Philadelphia Vireo, 28 species of warblers (including Golden-winged and Orange-crowned), Clay-colored Sparrow, Snow Bunting and Pine Siskin. Dry weather made it difficult to find shorebirds in most inland locations this fall and many species of waterfowl were found in fewer numbers than the dramatic highs of 2006.

Abbreviations: ASNV (Audubon Society of Northern Virginia); Beaverdam (Beaverdam Reservoir, *Gloucester*); Bethel (Bethel Beach area, *Mathews*); Dameron (Dameron Marsh, *Northumberland*); Elsing Green (private farm near Lanesville, *King William*); Birthplace (George Washington’s Birthplace National Monument, *Westmoreland*); Hughlett (Hughlett Point NAP, *Northumberland*); K. G. Ponds (Route 3 ponds near Sealston, *King George*); Leedstown (*Westmoreland*); Mothershead (tract of Rapp. R. NWR. near Leedstown, *Westmoreland*); Muse (end of Muse Rd near Pope’s Creek, *Westmoreland*, overlooking the Potomac River); NNAS (Northern Neck Audubon Society); The Pocket (a bend in the Pamunkey River in the Pamunkey Reservation, *King William*); Rapp. R. NWR. (Rappahannock R. Valley National Wildlife Refuge); Riverwood, (private reserve near Beulahville, *King William*); Toby’s (Wilmont Rd. and Toby’s Pt. tract of Rapp. R. NWR. *King George*); Wilna (tract of Rapp. R. NWR. *Richmond*); WSP (Westmoreland State Park, *Westmoreland*).

WATERFOWL—GREBES

The **Mute Swan** survey conducted by VDGIF (TB) and USFWS (DF) 11–19 Sep found a total of 97 birds including 11 cygnets. The densest population of 46 birds was at Beaverdam; most of the other reports ranged from two to six

adults. The first report for **Tundra Swans** this fall was four at The Pocket 2 Nov (FA). Numbers remained low through Nov, with a maximum of 40 flying south in a V over Urbanna, *Middlesex* 18 Nov (MG). More **Snow Geese** were reported this year than usual; 36 birds were seen in five trips to four locations (FA, MG, LM, NNAS) in addition to a remarkable high of 66 at Wilna 23 Oct (MM). Two **Cackling Geese** were found at a farm near the Pamunkey reservation *King William* 31 Oct (ABr). The largest flock of **Canada Geese** this season was 4500 flying into the Pocket at dusk 2 Nov (FA). A high of 83 **Wood Ducks** was in Leedstown 5 Oct (FA). Species with high counts at only about half of recent years were **American Wigeons** with a total of 78 in four locations and a high of 60 at K. G. Ponds 9 Nov (FA), **Gadwall** with 82 at K. G. Ponds 9 Nov (FA), and **Green-winged Teal** with 1150 observed in the marshes between Elsing Green and The Pocket 2 Nov (FA). **Northern Pintails**, however, doubled the normal high with 2400 in the Pocket 2 Nov. (FA). Only 3 **Blue-winged Teal** were reported, two in Leedstown 6 Sep and one at Elsing Green 2 Nov (FA). **Canvasbacks** are usually much more common here in the winter than in the fall, so the 30 seen 23 Nov at K.G. Ponds was unusually high. The high count for **Ring-necked Ducks** was 2781 at K. G. Ponds 23 Nov (FA). The maximum for **Lesser Scaup** was only 40 at the WSP 23 Nov where 180 **Surf Scoters** were also seen (FA). An earlier-than-usual **Common Goldeneye** female appeared at Muse 9 Nov (FA). **Bufflehead** numbers were down this year with highs of only 70 at Muse 9 Nov (FA) and 56 at Hughlett 17 Nov (G&RH). The four **Hooded Mergansers** found at Beaverdam 2 Nov were earlier than usual (G&RH) and the count of 72 at K. G. Ponds 23 Nov was higher than recent autumns (FA). The **Red-breasted Merganser** found in *Mathews* 16 Nov (AB) furnished the only fall re-

port for this common winter species. An early arrival of 4 **Common Mergansers** at Elsing Green was noted on 2 Nov (FA). **Ruddy Ducks** were not as common this fall as usual. The first didn't arrive until 14 Oct at Beaverdam (G&RH) and the maximum was only 250 at WSP 18 Nov (CK). Thirty-five **Wild Turkeys** were seen in six locations (m. ob.) with a maximum of 12 at Riverwood, 28 Nov (FA). Thirty-one **Northern Bobwhites** were reported from four locations including 10 at King Carter Golf Course, *Lancaster* 10 Nov (PB), and a covey of eighteen with a dozen half-grown youngsters which flushed from a fencerow in Leedstown 6 Sep (FA). The **Red-throated Loon** at Muse 9 Nov (FA) was earlier than usual, and the 23 at WSP 23 Nov was a new season high (FA). Two **Common Loons** fishing in the mouth of the Corrotoman R., *Lancaster* 23 Oct (JB) arrived earlier than usual. The impressive flotilla of 49 at Hughlett, *Lancaster* 17 Nov (FD), furnished the season high count but was only a fifth of the previous high. **Pied-billed Grebes** are generally rare here in Aug but one was in Lottsburg, *Northumberland*, 6 Aug (M&PK). The season high for the species was only seven at the Pocket 23 Nov (FA), about half of normal. Over 125 **Brown Pelicans** were reported from seven locations this season. The latest was one at Hughlett 22 Nov (AB). The high of 60 at Heathsville 4 Sep declined to two by 3 Nov (LA). The first-of-season **Northern Gannets** were at Bethel 2 Nov (G&RH) and the season high was 60 in *Mathews* 16 Nov (AB). **Double-crested Cormorants** were present in higher than usual numbers in the upper Northern Neck with a new high of 875 seen in the Potomac R. from the cliffs at WSP 23 Nov (FA).

HERONS—SANDPIPERS

It was a good season for herons. **Great Egrets** were widespread with 73 noted in 15 reports from seven places. The high

of 21 at The Pocket 2 Nov was lower than in previous years and the latest report was 9 Nov Hughlett (TS). Most years no **Little Blue Herons** or **Tricolored Herons** are reported, but this year, both occurred in good numbers. Tricolored Herons were noted at Dameron 5 Aug (FD), at Bethel 3 and 22 Aug (FD, G&RH) and for the first time at Beaverdam 22 Aug (G&RH). Eighteen Little Blue Herons, mostly white immature birds, were reported from 11 trips in four locations 5 Aug–12 Sep (FA, FD, G&RH, TS). The high was five at Hughlett 7 Sep (TS). A **Cattle Egret** was in Heathsville *Northumberland* 10 Aug (LA). From 22 Aug–9 Sep, 9 **Green Herons** were reported on seven trips to five places. A **Yellow-crowned Night Heron** was found at Aberdeen Cr., *Gloucester* Aug 30 (BH).

The last report of **Ospreys** was of two at Bethel 4 Nov, two to three weeks earlier than usual (G&RH). The first **Northern Harriers** of the season were single birds noted at three locations in *King William* 21 Sep (FA). There were 19 reports of harriers from eight locations (FA, AB, LM) with a maximum of four in Leedstown 23 Nov. Eleven **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and 17 **Cooper's Hawks** were reported. The leucistic **Red-tailed Hawk** at King Carter near Kilmarnock, *Lancaster* has not been seen since the winter of 2007 (TT). A light phase **Rough-legged Hawk** was enjoyed at K. G. Ponds 23 Nov (FA). A high of 5 **American Kestrels** were at Toby's 8 Oct (FA) and 23 were reported in 13 lists throughout the season. Three **Merlins** reports were: 5 Oct Toby's, 11 Oct Elsing Green, 9 Nov K. G. Ponds (FA). Single **Virginia Rails** were at Diggs, *Mathews* 2 Nov (FD) and Leedstown 9 Nov (FA). A **Common Moorhen** was seen by several observers at Beaverdam 31 Oct to 27 Nov (G&RH). **American Coots** were more scarce throughout the Region than in recent years peaking at only 275 at Beaverdam (G&RH). The weather dried up

many of the places where shorebirds have gathered in farm fields in previous years so fewer shorebirds were seen in the upper portions of the peninsulas. **Killdeer** peaked at a low 77 at Woodbury turf farm *King William* 30 Aug where “grasspipers” were very scarce this year (FA). A **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was in Leedstown at Parker Farm 22 Aug (FA) and a **Baird’s Sandpiper** was at another farm in Leedstown 1 Sep (FA). Eight **Pectoral Sandpipers** were seen on seven trips to four locations 15 Aug to 8 Sep (FA, AB, G&RH, TS). A **Stilt Sandpiper** was at Beaverdam 27 Aug, and two more were at Bethel 9 Sep (G&RH). On 24 Aug at Hughlett there were high counts of 20 **Black-bellied Plover** (AB), 60 **Semipalmated Plover** (AB), and 40 **Short-billed Dowitchers** (TS). A calling **Long-billed Dowitcher** was seen with several Short-billed Dowitchers 2 Nov at Bethel (FD). Two **Marbled Godwits** at Hughlett 16 Aug (TS) were exciting. A whopping 600 **Dunlins** were observed at Bethel 11 Nov (G&RH). Bethel also had 21 **Semipalmated Sandpipers** and 11 **Western Sandpipers** 7 Sep (G&RH) and 1–2 **Ruddy Turnstones** were seen here several times 8 Sep to 11 Nov (m. ob.).

TERNS—VIREOS

Single **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were observed at Bethel 2 Nov (FD) and K. G. Ponds 9 Nov where **Laughing Gulls** also reached their season-high of 3250 (FA). After Tropical Storm *Hannah* passed 6 Sep, a flock of 47 **Black Terns** was seen flying up the Rappahannock R. in Leedstown (FA) and 30 **Sandwich Terns** were at Bethel 8 Sep (FD). Other sightings of Black Terns included three at The Pocket 30 Aug (FA), one at K. G. Ponds 22 Aug (FA) and two at Beaverdam 30 Aug and 9 Sep (G&RH). Other interesting tern sightings were 4 Sandwich Terns 5 Aug Bethel (FD); 4 Sandwich Terns North Haven Beach, *Mathews* 31 Aug (G&RH); one **Caspian Tern** Beaverdam 9 Sep (G&RH), and four

sightings of Caspians at Bethel 16 Aug to 4 Nov (G&RH); 140 **Royal Terns** at Bethel 31 Aug (G&RH) and 77 at West Point *King William* 2 Nov (FA); 400 **Forster’s Terns** in *Mathews* 16 Nov (AB); 6 **Common Terns** at Bethel 31 Aug (G&RH); and 85 **Least Terns** at Bethel 3 Aug along with 2 **Black Skimmers** (G&RH). Leedstown hosted a high of 640 **Mourning Doves** 22 Aug, mostly around fields of sunflowers planted for wildlife (FA). The last report of **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** this year was 11 Oct at Riverwood (FA). Four **Short-eared Owls** were at Mothershead 23 Nov (FA). About 380 **Chimney Swifts** spiraled into the chimney of the old school along route 3 in Oak Grove, *Westmoreland* at dusk 6 Sep (FA). **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** made its first seasonal appearance this year at Toby’s 5 Oct (FA). A late **Eastern Kingbird** was reported in the Northern Neck 21 Oct (J&BG) and a **Western Kingbird** was photographed during the Bioblitz at Birthplace 14 Sep (FA, FP, SSt). A total of 19 **Eastern Phoebes** were found in eight of the 16 survey sites at Wilna 14–29 Oct (MM, SS). Over 10,000 **Purple Martins** staged on the utility lines over the Pamunkey R near Sweet Hall *King William* before going to roost in one of the nearby marshes 6 Aug (JF, SH). Over 7500 **Tree Swallows** streamed through The Pocket before dusk 11 Oct (FA). No **American Pipits** were reported in Oct, but 70 were noted on Ball’s Neck *Northumberland* 9 Nov (TS). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** seemed to be everywhere at Beaverdam when 31 were seen 10 Nov (G&RH). During surveys at Wilna 14–29 Oct, 19 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were seen on 44% of the 16 survey sites (MM, SS). The first report of **Winter Wren** was 2 Oct at White Marsh, *Gloucester* (H&JW). Two late **House Wrens** were noted 16 Nov *Northumberland* (AB) and 19 Nov K. G. Ponds (FA). **Sedge Wren** observations were of two–three at Diggs, *Mathews* 2 Nov (FD) and two at Hughlett 16–17

Nov (AB, G&RH, TS). Two late **Marsh Wrens** were seen 17 Nov Hughlett (FD) and one was at Mulberry 28 Nov (FA). **Eastern Bluebirds** had a very successful breeding season at King Carter Golf Course near Kilmarnock, *Lancaster*, From 33 nest boxes 207 bluebirds were fledged (up from 121 in 2007), as well as a family of Tree Swallows and another of chickadees. A Nor’easter in May killed three broods and House Sparrows killed three adult bluebirds and injured one, but very conscientious trail maintenance prevented house sparrows from raising any young (T&ET). The first **Hermit Thrush** of the season was at Beaverdam 14 Oct (G&RH). Beaverdam was also a good spot for other thrushes this year: six **Swainson’s Thrushes** were seen there in four visits 22 Sep to 31 Oct, and a late **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was present 31 Oct (G&RH). Another gray-cheeked was at White Marsh, *Gloucester* 5 Oct (H&JW). **American Robins** flocked to Riverwood along the upper Mattaponi R 28 Nov where 740 of them gobbled up the abundant holly berries (FA). One can always expect **Brown-headed Nuthatches** at Bethel, but the 21 seen there 29 Sep was the highest the editor has on record (G&RH). **White-breasted Nuthatch** is uncommon in the eastern extremities of these peninsulas but two were at Bethel 29 Sep (G&RH) and one was in



Western Kingbird photographed by Fred Atwood at Washington’s Birthplace 14 September

Heathsville, *Northumberland* 4 Sep (LA). **American Crow** populations continue to struggle; this season's high was 34 in Bethel 4 Nov (G&RH). In the rural portions of the Region, **Fish Crows** generally are found in ones and twos—13 were seen on nine trips throughout the region—so a flock of 30 in Leedstown 6 Sep was surprising (FA). The late dates for vireos this year were **White-eyed Vireo** at Beaverdam 30 Sep (G&RH), **Red-eyed Vireo** 11 Oct Riverwood (FA)—where they were still feeding fledglings on 30 Aug—and **Yellow-throated Vireos** 21 Sep when the season high of three birds was seen at Riverwood (FA). **Blue-headed Vireos** are only rarely found in the Region—the editor only has two previous fall records—but this year two were seen, one at Riverwood 11 Sep (FA) and one at Hughlett, 19 Sep, the observer's first on the Northern Neck (TS). Even rarer a **Philadelphia Vireo** provided the editor's first record at The Pocket 21 Sep (FA).

WARBLERS—FINCHES

Twenty-eight species of warblers were observed this fall, the highlights being a **Golden-winged** at White Marsh 3 Oct (H&JW) and an **Orange-crowned** at Mulberry 28 Nov (FA). **Blue-winged Warblers** were at Hughlett 31 Aug (JC), Dameron 8 Sep (FD), and Riverwood 21 Sep (FA). **Nashville Warblers** reports were of one at Birthplace 5 Oct (FA) and one at Wilna 15 Oct (SS). Only 3 **Chestnut-sided Warblers** were reported, all from Beaverdam: two on 19 Aug, one on 27 Aug (G&RH). Seventeen **Magnolia Warblers** were seen on 11 trips, 9–23 Oct (m.ob.) the latest being at Beaverdam (G&RH). Single **Cape May Warblers** were reported at Beaverdam 30 Sep (G&RH), and Leedstown and Birthplace 5 Oct (FA). The first **Yellow-rumped Warblers** appeared on schedule in numerous locations 5 Oct (FA) and 113 were noted at Beaverdam 31 Oct (G&RH). During surveys at Wilna 14–29

Oct, 197 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were seen on 88% of the 16 survey sites (MM, SS). Surprisingly, only one **Black-throated Green Warbler** was reported this year near Dameron 8 Sep (FD). Generally, a few **Pine Warblers** winter in the Region; one was seen at a White Marsh, *Gloucester* suet feeder 19 Nov (H&JW). The high for this species was 16 at Bethel 29 Sep (G&RH). Twelve **Palm Warblers** were seen in five Northern Neck locations from 21 Sep to 23 Nov (FA, LM). Eight **Blackpoll Warblers** were reported on four lists including a late male at White Marsh 2 Nov (H&JW). Only 12 **Black-and-White Warblers** were noted in ten sightings between 29 Aug and 5 Oct (m.ob.). Twenty-seven **American Redstarts** were noted in 12 reports from 29 Aug to 11 Oct (m. ob.) with a high of 8 at Riverwood 21 Sep (FA). There were five reports of single **Northern Waterthrush** from 8 Sep at Dameron (FD) to 8 Oct in *Gloucester* (G&RH). The last sightings of other warblers included **Yellow Warbler** near The Pocket 31 Oct (ABr), **Northern Parula** Beaverdam 11 Oct (G&RH), **Worm-eating Warbler** and **Louisiana Waterthrush** Beaverdam 9 Sep (G&RH), **Ovenbird** Riverwood 11 Oct (FA), **Prairie Warbler** White Marsh, *Gloucester* 5 Oct (H&JW), **Hooded Warbler** and **Yellow-throated Warbler** Riverwood 21 Sep (FA), **Common Yellowthroat** Hughlett 17 Nov (FD), **Canada** Beaverdam 11 Oct (G&RH), and **Yellow-breasted Chat** Leedstown 6 Sep (FA). The last sightings of **Scarlet** and **Summer Tanagers** were 21 Sep at Riverwood (FA). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was observed by an ASNV field trip at Wilna 22 Nov (RS, GH, m. ob.). The first **Savannah Sparrows** of the season were a couple of weeks earlier than normal; one at K. G. Ponds 6 Sep (FA) and two at Bethel 8 Sep (FD). The only **Salt-Marsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow** report was of one seen at Bethel 4 Nov (G&RH). **Song** and **Swamp Sparrows** were at their all-time season-highs of 288

Songs and 150 **Swamps** at a newly-constructed wetland area on a private farm at K. G. Ponds (FA). **Grasshopper Sparrows** lingered later than usual with one in Leedstown and 3 at Toby's 5 Oct (FA). Four **Fox Sparrows** were at K. G. Ponds 23 Nov and one was at Riverwood 30 Nov (FA). Five single **Lincoln's Sparrows** were seen between 11 Oct and 9 Nov at Beaverdam (G&RH), Elsing Green, Leedstown and K. G. Ponds (FA). Usually appearing in mid-October, the first **White-crowned Sparrows** were not observed until 9 Nov when 48 were found at K. G. ponds and 15 were in Leedstown (FA). **White-throated Sparrows** arrived on schedule on 11 Oct at Beaverdam (G&RH) and Riverwood (FA). During surveys at Wilna 14–29 Oct, 147 **White-throats** were seen on 94% of the 16 survey sites (MM, SS). One of the most exciting birds of the season was **Snow Bunting**. Four were found and photographed at Hughlett 16 Nov (AB, TS) and five were there the next day (G&RH). Three **Rose-breasted Grosbeaks** were at Riverwood 21 Sep (FA). Some last-of-season sightings include: **Blue Grosbeak** 5 Oct Leedstown (FA), **Indigo Bunting** 11 Oct Elsing Green (FA), and **Orchard Oriole** 27 Aug Beaverdam (G&RH). Ninety-six **Bobolinks** were seen at four locations from 26 Aug to 21 Sep (FA, AB) with a high of 85 feeding in a marsh in Leedstown 6 Sep (FA). Only 105 **Rusty Blackbirds** were reported 9–23 Nov; sixty were eating Virginia Creeper berries in a floodplain forest at K. G. Ponds 9 Nov (FA). Five **Baltimore Orioles** were reported from 30 Aug to 31 Oct, the last near The Pocket (ABr). As a precursor to this year's massive influx of **Pine Siskins**, eight were seen in three sightings from 16 Oct to 16 Nov (FA). Seven **Purple Finches** were also noted on three lists from 9–23 Nov (FA). The high count for **American Goldfinches** was 55 in sunflower field 5 Oct in Leedstown (FA).



This Snow Bunting was photographed by Arun Bose at Hugleett 16 November.

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Southwest

Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe Counties.

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The report period for the area was wet with 38 days of precipitation – 12 in August, six in September, five in October and 15 in November. The average temperature for the period was 59° F. November was unseasonably wet and cold with nine days of rain, six days of snow, two days of frost and six days below freezing.

There were several sightings of Bald Eagles, both adults and immatures, in *Grayson*, *Russell*, and *Tazewell*. The first wintering Golden Eagles returned to

Grayson and *Russell* in November. Other interesting observations were of Peregrine Falcon in *Dickenson*, Sora in *Grayson*, Short-billed Dowitchers in *Washington*, a late Red-eyed Vireo and a late Hooded Warbler in *Buchanan*, which also had its first Yellow-bellied Flycatcher for the season.

Abbreviations: BP (Breaks Interstate Park), CMWA (Clinch Mountain Wildlife Area), NR (New River), RRL (Rural Retreat Lake), SHL (South Holston Lake).

WATERFOWL—SHOREBIRDS

Four **Ruddy Ducks**, 86 **Red-breasted Mergansers** and one **Horned Grebe** were found at Musick's Campground on SHL, *Washington* 30 Nov and nearby at Washington County Park an **Eared Grebe** was discovered also on that day (RB). A **Great Egret**, an unusual area species, appeared at Stuart's Pond at Rosedale, *Russell* 26 Nov (E&HM). Two **Bald Eagles**, one ad. and one imm., were observed over the NR, *Grayson* 6 Oct (HB), where an ad. was seen 2 Nov (HB) and 8 Nov (VB). Another ad. Bald Eagle was discovered at Blackford, *Russell* 7 Oct (JT). Falls Mills L. in *Tazewell* was the location for an imm. Bald Eagle sighting 11 Nov (J&JP) and five more were counted at the Mendota Hawk Watch on Clinch Mt., *Russell* 17 Sep (TH, RR, KT). Two Bald Eagles flew over Sugar Hollow Park, *Washington* 29 Nov (RC). During the fall raptor migration the Mendota Hawk Watch counted 4,558 **Broad-wings**, 13 **Bald Eagles**, 14 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, 9 **Cooper's Hawks**, 14 **Ospreys**, 5 **Am. Kestrels**, 5 **Northern Harriers**, 2 **Merlins**, 1 **Peregrine Falcon**, and 2 **Red-shouldered Hawks** (RH). A FOS **Northern Harrier** was discovered 13 Oct west of Galax in *Grayson* (B&MD). Two FOS **Golden Eagles** were observed from Corn Valley Rd, *Russell*, an area where Golden Eagles winter, 7 Nov (TH). At Point Lookout Mt., *Grayson* an ad. Golden Eagle was observed 26 Nov being harassed by crows and ravens (JeP). An ad. Peregrine Falcon was observed flying over the gorge of the BP, *Dickenson* 14 Oct (DR, ER). A **Sora** was found near the edge of a pond near Galax, *Grayson* 12 Oct (MD). Two **Semi-**

palmated Plovers were discovered at RRL, *Wythe* 10 Sep (RP), and two more were with a **White-rumped Sandpiper** at SHL, *Washington* 1 Sep (RR). Four **Western Sandpipers** appeared at RRL 10 Oct (RP). A single **Dunlin** was observed at a wetland in *Grayson* 18 Oct (BD). On the same date two Dunlins flew to the shore of SHL from *Washington* (RB). Three **Short-billed Dowitchers** were observed at SHL 1 Sep (RR).

WOODPECKERS—WARBLERS

A species not usually found in *Buchanan*, **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were observed on two separate occasions – one report (a juvenile) was from Compton Mt. 13 Oct (RM), the other from Caney Island Branch, west of Grundy 19 Oct (MT). A FOS **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was heard and observed on Compton Mt. 25 Nov (RM). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was discovered on Caney Island Branch of *Buchanan* 14 Sep (MT), the first of that species to be reported in the county. A **Loggerhead Shrike** made an appearance on a farm at Baywood west of Galax 28 Sep (B&MD). Another, possibly a different bird, was found in the same location 12 Oct (B&MD). Two **Philadelphia Vireos** came to a yard stream on Compton Mt., *Buchanan* 18 Sep (RM). Others were at the same location 21 Sep (DC, RM), 26 Sep (RM) and 3 Oct (RM). A late **Red-eyed Vireo** was on Compton Mt. 13 Oct (RM). The previous late date for that species in *Buchanan* was 2 Oct, in 2004. A FOS **Hermit Thrush** was seen in *Buchanan* on Compton Mt. 19 Oct (RM). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** appeared in Woodlawn, *Carroll* 27 Aug (RP). A **Wood Thrush** continued to sing as late as Aug 3 on Compton Mt. (RM). A late **Magnolia Warbler** was found feeding in a weedy field on Compton Mt. 17 Oct (RM). FOS warblers were **Yellow-rumped** Compton Mt. 3 Oct (RM) and **Palm Baywood**, *Grayson* 10 Sep (BD). A **Hooded Warbler** at Breaks 14 Oct established a new late date for *Buchanan* (DR).

TANAGERS—FINCHES

Summer Tanagers, which have been scarce in *Buchanan* in recent years, were seen on Compton Mt. 4 Sep, 8 Sep, 19



*Adam D'Onofrio photographed this *Selasphorus hummingbird* in Dinwiddie.*

Sep, and 1 Oct (RM). A Baywood farm in *Grayson* furnished the FOS **Lincoln's Sparrow** 6 Oct (MD), and the FOS **Fox Sparrow** and **White-throated Sparrow** for *Russell* came to a feeder near Lebanon 29 Oct (JT). *Washington's* FOS Fox Sparrow was observed in Bristol 23 Nov (RH). A feeder at Independence in *Grayson* had an unprecedented 6 Fox Sparrows 30 Nov (SJR). The FOS White-throated Sparrow for *Buchanan* was found on Compton Mt 30 Sep (RM). The FOS White-throated and **White-crowned Sparrows** for *Grayson* appeared near Galax 14 Oct (B&MD). The FOS White-crowned Sparrow in *Buchanan* was discovered 11 Oct near Weller Yard west of Grundy (ETIII). A female **Blue Grosbeak** was found in a garden at Baywood 31 Aug (MD). More than a dozen **Rusty Blackbirds** were observed in Independence, *Grayson* 23 Nov (SJR). Two **Purple Finches** came to a feeder in Abingdon, *Washington* 29 Nov (EM) and two **Pine Siskins** were at the same location 30 Nov (EM). The FOS **Pine Siskins** reported in *Grayson* were observed at Independence 27 Nov (SJR). The FOS **Pine Siskins** in *Buchanan* came to a feeder on Compton Mt. 19 Oct (RM).

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South Central

Patrick, Henry, Franklin, Pittsylvania, Halifax, Charlotte, Appomattox, Buckingham, Cumberland, Amelia, Prince Edward, Nottoway, Dinwiddie, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Brunswick, and Greensville Counties, and the cities of Danville, Emporia, and Martinsville.

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Reports of rarities were sparse this period, with notable events being the continuation of a dispersal of ibis across the region and some early arrivals of fall migrants. Two immature **White Ibis** that appeared on a private pond in *Buckingham* late in the summer reporting period continued into this period and were joined by a third bird by 6 Aug; they were still present at this location through 10 Aug (DS). Three juv. White Ibis were also reported from Smith Grove Road, *Dinwiddie* 8 Aug (AD). As many as twenty-five juv. White Ibis were present at Staunton River SP 12 Aug with a single adult **Glossy Ibis** (JB). Ibis species are rarely reported from the Piedmont and these reports represent an unusual post-breeding dispersal.

A banded *Selasphorus* hummingbird that appeared at a feeder in *Dinwiddie* 14 Oct was present through at least 23 Nov (AD). It was thought to be an adult female **Rufous Hummingbird**. Reports of **Red-Breasted Nuthatch** were widespread and early this year, with the first report for the Region coming from Lunenburg, a single bird at a feeder 24 Sep (AD, SD).

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Southeast

Henrico, Charles City, Chesterfield, James City, New Kent, Prince George, Sussex, Surrey, Southampton, Isle of Wight, and York Counties; and the cities of Richmond, Hopewell, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg.

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A colder than normal November brought the overall average temperature for the period to near normal, halting a recent trend of above average temperatures. Precipitation was also near normal.

Fall migration was characterized by a number of sightings of late migrants. Several local late dates for migrating birds were eclipsed in *James City* and there was evidence of late migration elsewhere in the Region. Birders who remembered the exciting sea birds brought in by Tropical Depression *Ernesto* in September 2006 waited in anticipation for the passage of Tropical Storm *Hannah* in early September but the storm proved to be too weak and there wasn't much in the way of sea bird displacement. Rarities this season included Ross's Goose, Cackling Goose, Iceland Gull and Cave Swallow.

Abbreviations: Crewes (Crewes Channel, Henrico); Dutch Gap (Dutch Gap Conservation Area, *Chesterfield*); Green Springs (Green Springs Trail, *James City*); Henricus (Henricus Park, *Chesterfield*); Hog (Hog Island W.M.A., *Surry*); JRP (James River Park, Richmond); Shirley (Shirley Plantation, *Charles City County*).

GEESE—IBIS

In recent years, rare geese have appeared annually among the more common geese in eastern *Henrico* during late autumn/early winter and this year was no different. Two **ROSS' GEESE** ♀ were observed in a Snow Goose flock 8 Nov (ph. ABr) and approximately eight **CACKLING GEESE** ♀ of the *hutchinsii* race were found among a large flock of

Canada Geese 19 Oct (ph. ABr). **Mute Swan** reports included two in the James R., Richmond 12 Nov (JF) and an imm. bird at Robious Landing Park, *Chesterfield* 20 Nov (WE). A **Tundra Swan** apparently summered at a swamp in Chester, *Chesterfield*. Originally reported in Jun, the bird was seen again 24 Aug (ph. RE). Only three previous summer records of Tundra Swan in the Virginia Piedmont are known. A male **Northern Pintail** was noted at Dutch Gap 28 Nov (AD, TT). A female **White-winged Scoter**, rare inland, was found in the impoundment at Shirley 31 Oct (ph. AB) and seen again 8 Nov (ph. ABr). A distant and unidentified small **shearwater** or **gadfly petrel** zoomed by the College Creek Hawkwatch, *James City* following the passage of Tropical Storm *Hannah* 6 Sep (BT). Approximately 55 **Great Egrets** were counted at Crewes on the morning of 24 Aug (LBa). Four **Snowy Egrets**, uncommon transients inland, were recorded at Shirley 13 Sep (ph. AD). **Little Blue Heron** reports included single imms. at the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery, *Charles City* 25 & 29 Aug (AB, ph. RE) and at Crewes 13 Sep (ph. AD). **Tricolored Herons** made a push inland this season. All birds seen were imms. with up to four at Crewes 15–24 Aug (RE, m.ob.). Eight more were counted at Hog 2 Aug (AD, TT). A very late **Green Heron** was at Green Springs 17 Nov (BW). This sighting eclipsed the previous local late date by 15 days. A juv. **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was spotted in Hopewell 23 Nov (ABr). Wandering juv. **White Ibis** were found at Hog with up to 16 present 2 Aug (AD, TT) and a single bird still lingering 3 Oct (ph. RE). Two **Glossy Ibis** were at Hog 2 Aug (AD, TT).

OSPREY—HUMMINGBIRDS

A lingering **Osprey** was observed at Dutch Gap 28 Nov (AD, TT). **Red-tailed Hawk** sightings don't usually make it into this report but a darker bird photographed in *Charles City* may have been a light morph western taxa bird (*calurus* race) 2 Nov (ph. ABr). However, some populations in Florida and eastern Canada can also show characteristics of

western birds, further confusing matters of identification. Reports of single **Merlins** came from Crewes 13 Sep (AD) and along the Colonial National Parkway, *James City* 30 Nov (M&LB). A pair of **Common Moorhens** successfully bred at Henricus this year and there were several sightings of both an ad. and imm. bird 4–17 Sep (ph. by BH & JK). A single **Black-bellied Plover** was noted in *Charles City* 19 Oct (ABr). Two **Semi-palmated Plovers** at Sandy Point, Felgates Creek, *York* on 22 Nov represented only the second local Nov record and the first since Nov 1949 (BW). A lone **Up-land Sandpiper**, a fairly rare and declining transient in the Region, was in *Charles City* 7 Sep (ph. ABr). Three **Dunlin** were noted at Sandy Point, Felgates Creek, *York* 26 Nov (BW). A **Wilson's Phalarope**, rare inland, was seen "swimming" amongst Lesser Yellowlegs at the Shirley impoundment 26 Aug (ph. AD). A first cycle **Iceland (Kumlien's) Gull** was first observed along the Appomattox R. in Hopewell 15 Nov (ph. AB & ABr) and then subsequently seen on 16 & 27 Nov (ABr). Five or more **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** of various ages were seen along the Appomattox R. in Hopewell 27 Nov (ABr). Two **Caspian Terns** and 53 **Forster's Terns** were tallied near Jordan Point, *Charles City* 7 Sep (ABr). At the College Creek Hawkwatch, *James City*, over 300 **Royal Terns** and approximately 23 **Black Terns** were counted after the passage of Tropical Storm *Hannah* 6 Sep (BT, m.ob.). Opening night of a new **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banding station at Dutch Gap captured an adult female, adding a new species to the local bird inventory 1 Nov (JK). It seemed some **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds** hung around longer than normal this year with a number of sightings into Oct. The latest sighting came from a residence in *New Kent*, surprisingly an ad. male, 6 Nov (LB).

VIREOS—FINCHES

A **Blue-headed Vireo** was at Green Springs 9 Nov, establishing a new local late date (BW). **Common Ravens** seem to be expanding their range eastward. One was seen and heard calling at Poca-

hantas State Park, *Chesterfield* 7 Nov (RE). **CAVE SWALLOWS** are very rare away from the Eastern Shore in fall. This season there were two reports, one from Shirley of a group of six in a flock of Tree Swallows 30 Oct (ph. ABr), the other from *James City* of three seen feeding over a soybean field at Mainland Farm 17 Nov (BW), the latter report marking the first local record for this species. In an "off-year" for **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, there were two sightings reported, one at JRP 7 Oct (AB) and the other at the College of William and Mary campus, *James City* 20 Oct (AM). A **Bicknell's Thrush** was a predawn flyover at Green Springs 28 Sep (BW). There was a noteworthy predawn thrush movement at Green Springs on 5 Oct, which included one **Veery**, 15 **Gray-cheeked Thrushes**, 31 **Swainson's Thrushes** (a new local high count) and 7 **Wood Thrushes** (BW). Seventy-eight **American Pipits** were at Shirley 6 Nov (BW, FB). Up to three **Orange-crowned Warblers** were noted in the Hopewell area on various days 16 Nov–29 Nov (ph. ABr, AB). A **Nashville Warbler** was reported from JRP 20 Oct (AB). Another Nashville Warbler at Green Springs 9 Nov provided a new local late date (BW). A rare **Audubon's Warbler** was observed twice in western *Henrico* during the last week of Nov (ABr). There are only five previously documented records of this western version of Yellow-rumped Warbler in both the Coastal Plain and Piedmont combined. Four **Palm Warblers** were seen near the marsh at Henricus 28 Nov (AD, TT). A late **Blackpoll Warbler** was observed in Hopewell 2 Nov (ph. ABr). Another Blackpoll Warbler or the same one was located in Hopewell 1.5 miles from the first sighting 8 Nov (ABr). Two **Black-and-White Warblers**, one male and one female, were found in the Hopewell area 22–29 Nov (ph. ABr, AB). A late **Ovenbird** was seen at Rockwood Park, *Chesterfield* 30 Oct (DB). A very late m. **Common Yellowthroat** was found in the marsh at Henricus 28 Nov (AD, TT). The same bird was relocated 29 Nov (ph. ABr, AB). A male **Wilson's Warbler**, a fairly rare

transient and rare winter visitor to the region, was observed in *Charles City* 11 Oct (ph. ABr). Possibly the same bird was seen several times through 29 Nov. **Vesper Sparrows** were recorded in *Charles City* 9 & 15 Nov (ph. ABr, AB, J&K M) and at Mainland Farm, *James City* 17 Nov (BW). Somewhat late **Grasshopper Sparrows** were noted at Shirley 1&9 Nov (ph. by ABr). **Lincoln's Sparrow** reports included one in *Charles City* 21 Sep (ABr, AB), one at Shirley 26 & 30 Oct (ABr) and one at Green Springs 19 Oct setting a new local late date (BW). A late **Blue Grosbeak** was at JRP 18 Oct (AB). A male **Dickcissel**, a rare and irregular transient, was seen with Bobolinks along the James R., *Charles City* 11 Oct (ph. ABr). Lingered **Baltimore Orioles** were found at the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery, *Charles City* 1 Nov (ABr), at another location in *Charles City* 23 Nov (ph. ABr) and finally, an imm. male frequented a feeder at the Settler's Mill Community, *James City* 18–30 Nov (BW). There were several reports of **Purple Finches** and **Pine Siskins**, especially in the latter half of the period.

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Coastal

Accomack and Northampton Counties; Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel; Pelagic area; and the cities of Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.

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Arguably few seasons accelerate lister's blisters more than fall. Encapsulating a quarter of the calendar year, the season
Fall Reporting Period August 2008–November 2008

embraces the best of avian biology—breeding, post-breeding dispersal, migrations to and migrations from, and oh, those incredible molts! Within these dynamics of populations are the nuances that twitch the twitcher as we scan list-serves and eBird as often as possible to find what the latest day or hour may have delivered. Fall 2008 was exceptional. The Region's annual rainfall total was seven inches below normal by the end of August. Tropical Storm *Hanna*, locally the only disturbance of its kind this year, delivered up to four inches of rain over the Region's core 6 Sep, while producing scant tropical pelagic vagrants. Another two to four inches came during a 24–27 September northeaster. By the end of November, the annual rainfall deficit was 1.8 inches and it was unseasonably cold. The venerable Kiptopeke Songbird Banding Station operated for its 46th consecutive fall, banding 6726 birds of 90 species during 11353 net-hours from 15 Aug–23 Nov. Now under the auspices of the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (CVWO), this exceptional project combines with CVWO's Kiptopeke Hawk Watch, and Kiptopeke Raptor Banding Station to make the public aware of the season's constantly changing birdlife. These efforts along with the Center for Conservation Biology's Whimbrel transmitter tagging, its over-wintering marsh bird and Northern Saw-whet Owl studies, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's regular Back Bay/False Cape and Fishermans Island NWR surveys, and “the generous support of viewers like you” very little escapes documentation. This season seemed to be packed with birds whose timing was noticeably pushing the norm. It is within these nuances that biological potentials lurk. Species that arrived early included Great Cormorant, Northern Goshawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Bonaparte's Gull, White-crowned Sparrow, and Snow Bunting. On the other end of the spectrum, late arrivals included Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Franklin's Gull, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Chuck-will's-widow, Whip-poor-will, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Barn Swallow, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole. Unfortunately,

birders often don't get as excited by these outside-the-routine subtleties as by the rarer species, some of which for this 2008 season proved to be one-stop wonders. Those eliciting surprise were Ross's Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Magnificent Frigatebird, Swainson's Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Gyrfalcon, Terek Sandpiper, Franklin's Gull, California Gull, Snowy Owl, House Crow, Cave Swallow, and LeConte's Sparrow.

Abbreviations: Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); Cape Charles (the town of Cape Charles, *Northampton*); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, s. of *Northampton*); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, *Accomack*); Craney (Craney Island, Portsmouth); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, *Northampton*); False Cape (False Cape State Park, Virginia Beach); FINWR (Fishermans Island National Wildlife Refuge, *Northampton*); KSP (Kiptopeke State Park, *Northampton*).

WATERFOWL—RAPTORS

Five to 6 **Snow Geese** noted at Chinc. 7 Sep (JV) apparently summered there. The regularity of late fall Eastern Shore **Ross's Goose** occurrences in recent years was continued with 3 at Chinc. 22 Nov (AL). A **Cackling Goose** was in Snow Goose Pool, Chinc. 7 (C&MJS *vide* SB) & 8 Nov (SB). The peak reported **Wood Duck** count was 66 at Back Bay 5 Sep (JG). **Eurasian Wigeon** reports included a male at the end of Kuralt Trail, Back Bay 16 Nov (EE) and an imm. male at Chinc. 28 Nov (MAK, GK). Increased water levels at Back Bay after Tropical Storm *Hanna* was believed to have contributed to 188 **Blue-winged Teal** there 15 Sep (JG). The highest reported **Green-winged Teal** count was 1467 at Back Bay 4 Nov (JG). Tropical Storm *Hanna* brought a **Northern Gannet** to the CBBT 6 Sep (NB). A flock of 24 **American White Pelicans** at Fort Story, Virginia Beach 17 Nov (KB) established a new state high count exceeding the 20 seen near Hopewell, *Prince George* during Jan 2008. An imm. **Great Cormorant** on FINWR 8 Oct (BW) was a week ahead of the average 15 Oct arrival date. The Lake Murray, Mariners Museum Park, Newport News **Anhinga** was present 9

& 30 Aug (NF). Another at Stumpy L. Virginia Beach 9 Aug (EE) was likely the same individual reported there in late Jul. A **MAGNIFICENT FRIGATE-BIRD** ♀ over ESVNWR 7 Sep (BL, GW, *fide* BA) was probably delivered north by Tropical Storm *Hanna*. A **Great White Egret**, a Eurasian/African dark-billed form of **Great Egret**, was at False Cape 4–24 Aug (JG, DH *fide* NB). This may have been the same individual that frequented Chinc. in late May and early Jun 2008 (SB, ph. LM, m. ob). A previously published report of this form in Virginia was of one photographed in a heronry at Chimney Pole Marsh, *Northampton* 18 June 2003 (Raven 75(1): 62). The annual fall dispersal of ardeids brought 107 **Little Blue Herons** to Back Bay 3 Oct (JG, BA, SD) and 148 **Cattle Egrets** to Back Bay (100)/False Cape (48) 15 Sep (JG). An imm. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** at KSP 26 Oct (JR) was 16 days beyond the species' normal 10 Oct late date. Peak **White Ibis** counts included 139 at Back Bay (135)/False Cape (4) 5 Sep (JG) and 175 at Bull's Landing, *Northampton* 1 Oct (HA). It will be worth following future Back Bay counts to determine whether the volume of White Ibis there this season was an artifact of Tropical Storm *Hanna* or a phenomenon portending future expansion. The 32nd annual Kiptopeke Hawk Watch (KHW) logged 716 hours from 31 Aug–30 Nov. The 17,387 count total, 11% below the 32-year mean of 19,594 (vultures species excluded), included 1895 **Ospreys**, 263 **Bald Eagles**, 517 **Northern Harriers**, 6577 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, 2173 **Cooper's Hawks**, one **Northern Goshawk** (RK), 33 **Red-shouldered Hawks**, 439 **Broad-winged Hawks**, one **Swainson's Hawk** (BT, ph. ST), 446 **Red-tailed Hawks**, 3 **Rough-legged Hawks**, 5 **Golden Eagles**, 3069 **American Kestrels**, 931 **Merlins**, one **GYR-FALCON** ♀, 879 **Peregrine Falcons**, and 50 unidentified raptors. The peak flight day, 6 Oct, totaled 1882 raptors with season single-day high counts of 377 **Ospreys**, 371 **Cooper's Hawks**, 107 **Merlins**, and 199 **Peregrine Falcons** (AB, HA). Additional **Northern Goshawk**

sightings included a hatch-year female at Bull's Landing, *Northampton* 1 Oct (HA), one day ahead of the species' 2 Oct extreme early date, and one at Chinc. 10 Nov (SB). Among the KHW Broad-winged Hawk totals were eight there 10 Nov (HA). A dark-morph Swainson's Hawk was at Bull's Landing, *Northampton* 7 Oct (HA, SR) and likely the same individual was on FINWR 8 Oct (BW). The KHW Swainson's Hawk recorded 18 Oct (BT), brought the watch's cumulative total to 33 since the first was reported there in 1995. The 3 KHW Rough-legged Hawks increased the cumulative total to 28, 50% of which were recorded in 1999. In addition to the 5 KHW Golden Eagles was one at Chinc. 26 Nov (ph. LB). A very large light morph falcon recorded as a Gryfalcon, potentially the state's fourth and a second for the KHW, passed the watch site 27 Nov (KG). During the 3-day period 4–6 Oct, 467 **Peregrine Falcons**, 53% of the season total, were recorded with 134 on both 4 & 5 Oct and 199 on 6 Oct.

RAILS—WOODPECKERS

A **Common Moorhen** was at Back Bay 4 Nov (JG), and a **Piping Plover** was at Grandview Beach Park, Hampton 7 Sep (MN). There were only 4 **American Golden Plover** reports, all from Chinc. These included one on 25 Aug (VK), 10 on 12 Sep (MAK, GK), 3 on 20 Sep (NB, et al.), and one on 8 Nov (SB). The 24 **American Avocets** at Craney 20 Aug (AD, et al.) increased to 31 by 4 Sep (NF) & 12 Sep (BW, MB). One was at Chinc. through the end of the report period (m. ob.). Lingering **Spotted Sandpipers** were significantly beyond their normal 15 Oct late date including one at Magotha Road, *Northampton* 2 Nov (ABO) and 9 Nov (SB) and one at Riverside Beach, Newport News 28 Nov (NF). The peak reported **Willet** count was 350 at Willis Wharf, *Northampton* 10 Oct (FD, MP). The only report of **Upland Sandpiper** was of one at Craney 13 Sep (DC, RyB, AM). The Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) transmitter-tagged female **Whimbrel** continued to reveal fascinating information about the species' seasonal movements. The bird exited south

from Bethel, Alaska 3 Aug stopping 6 Aug in Grays Harbor, Washington, then in Willapa Bay, Washington 7 Aug where she remained near the mouth of the Palix River until 23 Aug. On 24 Aug she moved eastward over extreme southeastern Montana covering 78 miles in 107 minutes into South Dakota. On 26 Aug she was over the Minnesota/South Dakota border, reaching the Apostle Islands of Wisconsin 27 Aug. The position of the **Whimbrel** 28 Aug indicated she made a 180° turn before landing 30 Aug on the southwestern shore of Lake Superior in extreme northwestern Wisconsin. Here the transmitter's activity sensor indicated movement ceased. Another **Whimbrel** transmitter-tagged near Brownsville, *Northampton* 14 Aug flew from the Eastern Shore into two hurricanes in the Bahamas before stopping in Guyana where it remained at the end of the report period (FS). Birders are asked be aware that any **Whimbrel** may have an alpha numeric color band and if resighted should be reported to CCB. A single **Hudsonian Godwit** was at Craney 31 Aug (MA, et al.) through at least 12 Sep (BW, MB). The enormous rarity of a **TEREK SANDPIPER** ♀ photographed at Craney 8 Aug (BC, ph. ML) cannot be overstated. The first and only previous record for this Eurasian vagrant in eastern North America was 23 Jun 1990 on Plum Island, MA. "Grasspipers" were apparently remarkably scarce this fall. The only report was a **Baird's Sandpiper** and 3 **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** at Chinc. 20 Sep (NB, et al.) The 9 **American Woodcocks** banded at KSP this season (JR), foreshadowed a possible strong flight-year for the species. Craney hosted 8 **Wilson's Phalaropes** 31 Aug (MA, et al.). There were 5 **Red-necked Phalaropes** at Craney 16 Aug (DC, SD), and 13 there 12 Sep (BW, MB). Jaeger reports included a **Parasitic** off the CBBT 6 Sep post tropical Storm *Hanna* (Dave Schoch, et al. *fide* NB), one off Chinc. 9 Nov (LM, WM), and a **Long-tailed Jaeger** off the CBBT 6 Sep after *Hanna* (NB). **Franklin's Gull** reports anywhere in Virginia are always noteworthy, especially on the Eastern Shore where the species has only been

recorded once (one on Assateague Island, *Accomack* 14 Mar 1995). Thus, a basic plumage ad. at Cape Charles 28 Nov (ph. NB) was significant as the Eastern Shore's second and a *Northampton* first. The season's initial **Bonaparte's Gull** report was from FINWR 8 Oct (BA), two days prior to the species' 10 Oct average arrival. A first-cycle **California Gull** at Cape Charles 1 Oct (NB) marked the 10th Regional sighting since the first in 1989. An assessment of the uniqueness of this California Gull age class in Virginia was best expressed by Brinkley as follows: "Other than a candidate at Kiptopeke several years ago [30 Dec 2002], I have not seen a first-cycle California Gull at all in the East..... I know of only a few Virginia records/reports of younger California Gulls, and rather few for the Atlantic Coast generally". This observation was an October first, and only the second for the Eastern Shore, both from the Bay side of *Northampton*. An astounding 248 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at Back Bay (165)/False Cape(83) 15 Oct (DH, JG) crushed the previous state high count of 184 reported there 6 Sep 2006. Such a total clearly begs the question of where the volume of this species is originating. Peak **Sandwich Tern** reports were 100 at Chinc. 12 Sep (MAK, GK) and 140 at Back Bay 15 Sep (JG). The most notable terns post Tropical Storm *Hanna* were 2 **Sooty Terns** (one ad., 1 imm.) on the Nansemond River, Suffolk 6 Sep (LW). At least 15 **Black Terns** were at Craney 31 Aug (MA, et al.). The highest reported number of **Black Skimmers** was 450 on FINWR 16 Oct (BA). The Magotha Road, *Northampton* **Eurasian Collared-Doves** seemed to have flourished this year evidenced by counts of 17 there 10 Oct (FD, MP) and 13 on 8 Nov (LM, WM). A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was at Chinc. 7 Sep (BAk). The season produced an interesting array of owl species including a **Barn Owl** at KSP 9 Nov (JR). Among 9 **Eastern Screech Owls** captured in lower *Northampton* by CCB staff was one that had been originally banded in Oct 2000 (SE). An emaciated **Snowy Owl** was admitted to Wildlife Response, Inc., in Chesapeake 28 Nov (CS, LB). It had been hit by a car that morn-



Les Brooks found and photographed this Golden Eagle at Chincoteague. Used with permission of Les Brooks, www.natures-finest-photography.com.

ing on Berkley Avenue Extension, Norfolk and recovered by Norfolk Animal Rescue who responded to the driver's call. A **Short-eared Owl** was at Bull's Landing, *Northampton* 7 Nov (BA *vide* HA). The 15th annual CCB lower *Northampton* **Northern Saw-whet Owl** migration study commenced 25 Oct. Through 30 Nov total captures included 55 new individuals plus 8 banded elsewhere, one of which was from Prince Edward Island, Canada (SE). A Northern Saw-whet Owl banded in lower *Northampton* in 2007 was caught on Prince Edward Island in 2008. **Common Nighthawk** reports included five in Norfolk 12 Sep (NF), and two at KSP 27 Sep (HA). A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was present in the Lake Smith area of Virginia Beach 8 Nov-30 Nov (DS). A **Chuck-will's Widow** was banded at KSP 16 Sep (JR) and a **Whip-poor-will** was singing there 28 & 29 Sep (JR). A high volume **Northern Flicker** movement brought 1512 past the KHW 30 Sep (HA).

FLYCATCHERS—FINCHES

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was at Sunset Beach Resort, *Northampton* 3 Sep

(HA). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** banded at KSP 17 Oct was barely outside of the species' 15 Oct average late date. The season's lone **Western Kingbird** report was one at the KHW 1 Oct (BA). Unusual for fall was a **Warbling Vireo** at Mariner's Museum Park, Newport News 18 Sep (NF). A 15-year high 5 **Philadelphia Vireos** were banded at KSP 17 Sep-1 Oct (JR). A **HOUSE CROW** ♀ being mobbed by **American Crows** off Terminal Boulevard, Norfolk 13 Aug was considered to be of possible ship-assisted origin (NB). A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** at KSP 13 Oct was slightly beyond the species normal 10 Oct late date (AB, HA). **Cave Swallows** once again penetrated the lower Eastern Shore. Time and place suggest there may have been 16-17 different individuals with eight at Bull's Landing, *Northampton* 11 Nov (HA), and eight at KSP (HA) and one at Bull's Landing 12 Nov (BA). A **Barn Swallow** at KSP 12 Nov (HA) was 33 days beyond the species normal 10 Oct late date. Three **Bicknell's Thrushes** were banded at KSP, one 29 Sep and 2 on 6 Oct (JR). For the season 313 **Hermit Thrushes** were banded at KSP exceeding the previous high of 257 set in

2005. The 136 **Gray Catbirds** banded at KSP 2 Oct (JR), although noteworthy, pales in comparison to the 333 banded there 4 Oct 1977. **Nashville Warblers** extending their 15 Oct average departure date included one at KSP 3 Nov (JR) and one in Virginia Beach 26 Nov (DS). A **Blackpoll Warbler** was banded at KSP 3 Nov (JR). The 138 **Black-and-white Warblers** banded over the season at KSP set a new 15-year high (JR). A **Kentucky Warbler**, banded at KSP 28 Aug, was the 37th there since banding was initiated in 1963 (JR). Single **Connecticut Warblers** were banded at KSP 16 Sep and 1 & 11 Oct (JR). A **Wilson's Warbler** was on the Old Dominion University campus, Norfolk 29 Sep (NF). A **Vesper Sparrow** was at Cape Charles 8 Nov (NB). Single **Lark Sparrows** were at Sunset Beach Resort, *Northampton* 3 Sep (HA), and at Chinc. 6 Sep (DS, AG) and 7 Sep (P & BO). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** on #1 CBBT 2 Nov (ABO) was stretching its average 30 Oct late date. Continued CCB coastal marsh sparrow studies in lower *Northampton* produced a **LeConte's Sparrow** 29 Nov (FS), as well as both *alterus* and *subvirgatus* **Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow** subspecies. Of the 23 **Fox Sparrows** banded at KSP eight were captured 21 Nov (JR). Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** were banded at KSP 1, 9, 14, 17 Oct & 17

Nov, respectively (JR), and a **White-crowned Sparrow** banded there 30 Sep (JR) was well ahead of the species' average 10 Oct arrival. Close to but not quite at the species' 24 Oct extreme early date were 2 **Snow Buntings** at KSP 26 Oct (JFr, m. obs.), one of which remained 28 & 29 Oct (BA, JR). Another was at Cape Charles 3 Nov (ST *fide* JR). An impressive 323 **Eastern Meadowlarks**, part of a large frontal movement of bird species, were counted from Townsend Road, *Northampton* 8 Nov (NB), the same day a female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was at KSP (AL, PN *fide* JFr). A **Baltimore Oriole** at KSP 12 Nov (HA) was 43 days beyond the species' average 30 Sep late date. An initial burst of northern finches into the Region mid-Oct failed to develop into a sustained movement. Peak reported counts were 16 **Purple Finches** at ESVNWR 2 Nov (ABO) and 30+ **Pine Siskins** at Newport News Park, Newport News 18 Oct (NF, JF, JB). However, there were an estimated 2000 **American Goldfinches** in lower *Northampton* after a 21 Nov snow event (NB, JR).

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