



VIRGINIA BIRDS

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



Volume 15 • Number 2 **Fall Records • August–November 2018**

Virginia Birds Regions

Cities/towns numbered on map

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



Virginia Birds

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

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

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

Articles for consideration can be sent to billwilliams154@gmail.com.

Season

Fall (Aug–Nov)

Winter (Dec–Feb)

Spring (Mar–May)

Summer (Jun–Jul)

Reports due to Regional Editors

15 Dec

15 Mar

15 Jun

15 Aug

Terms and Abbreviations

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

Abbreviations

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

On the cover: Betty Sue Cohen captured the grace and elegance of this Marbled Godwit at Virginia Beach 25 Aug.

Fall 2018 Virginia Hawkwatch Effort Data*

Hawkwatch	# Count Days	Date Range	# Count Hours	VA Birds Region	Fall Season Years
Mendota Fire Tower, <i>Washington</i>	10 of 13	14–26 Sep	77.5	Southwest	1958–2018
Snickers Gap, <i>Clarke/Loudoun</i>	25 of 95	26 Aug–25 Nov	130.75	West/North	1990; 1992–94; 1996–98; 2002–18
Harvey's Knob, <i>Botetourt</i>	81 of 108	15 Aug–1 Dec	445.25	West	1979–2018
Rockfish Gap, <i>Augusta/Nelson</i>	79 of 112	15 Aug–4 Dec	488.25	West	1977; 1981–2018
Rugby, Charlottesville	3 of 41	21 Aug–30 Sep	4.0	Central	2017–2018
Candler Mt., Lynchburg	15 of 21	13 Sep–3 Oct	90	Central	2002–2018
Kiptopeke, <i>Northampton</i>	91 of 92	31 Aug–30 Nov	764.3	Coastal	1977–2018

Fall 2018 Virginia Hawkwatch Totals*

Hawkwatch	OS	SK	MK	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PF	UN	Total
Mendota	16	0	0	7	2	16	12	1	0	4603	0	13	0	1	8	0	1	10	4690
Snickers Gap	58	0	0	150	30	470	51	2	41	1074	0	450	0	6	63	7	11	20	2433
Harvey's	142	0	2	134	25	368	116	3	13	9275	0	266	0	5	117	22	27	31	10,546
Rockfish	224	0	10	368	68	2188	455	18	105	23,589	1	1431	0	27	289	85	55	90	29,003
Rugby	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	8
Candler Mt.	66	0	1	32	6	47	10	0	4	10,371	0	3	0	0	40	2	3	1	10,586
Kiptopeke	3538	0	1	617	555	2708	2331	0	99	1357	1	665	0	5	3582	1535	1375	32	18,401
	4044	0	14	1309	686	5797	2975	24	263	50,273	2	2829	0	44	4099	1651	1473	184	62,433

*Retrieved from HawkCount 11 Jan 2019

Compiled by Bill Williams

A Message from Dr. Ashley Peele, VABBA2 State Coordinator

The Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas (VABBA2) has now entered the fourth of five years dedicated to documenting the breeding distribution and status of all Virginia birds. Over the first three breeding seasons, project volunteers added a new skill to their birding, recording breeding behaviors. In fact, Virginia experienced a 3000% increase in breeding observation reports, a staggering 341,000 reported to the VABBA2 eBird portal (ebird.org/atlasva), since 2016. This volume of data represents nearly 50,000 field hours logged by over 1000(!) contributors thus far.



As this mountain of data grows, it has not only illustrated where birds are breeding, but also where birders are not birding. This presents an interesting challenge for the VABBA2's final two field seasons (2019–2020). Habitats of the southern Piedmont, particularly open agricultural or grassland habitats, are underrepresented in the current Atlas dataset (ebird.org/atlasva/explore). As a result, many species of birds that breed in these open habitats appear to have disappeared from large patches of the southern Piedmont. For ubiquitous species like the Barn Swallow, these gaps may seem less significant. From current data, we can infer that Barn Swallows are likely breeding in most of Virginia. But what about the less common species, those that are declining throughout their range—the Eastern Meadowlark, the Grasshopper Sparrow, the Dickcissel? To understand their status in Virginia, we need to start filling in breeding bird data.

Evan Spears, an Atlas Regional Coordinator from the heart of the southern Piedmont, Southside Virginia, immersed himself into the story of a very important species of grassland-breeding bird this past year. In 2017, he shadowed VDGIF biologist Sergio Harding to learn more about the Loggerhead Shrike, why it is declining, and what we can do to help better understand it and other grassland birds through the VA Breeding Bird Atlas project...

More to Discover: Lost Loggerheads

“Can you see the white tape?” The radio crackled to life as we stared down the hill into a cow pasture in northwest Lunenburg County. We looked through our scopes and binoculars at a small wire cage trap, just placed in a wet gully by Sergio Harding, Nongame Bird Conservation Biologist with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). The trap had a small piece of white tape on the door, easily seen from a distance. If the tape is visible above the trap, then we know the door is still open. Ty Smith responded to Sergio over the radio, “We can see it.” Sergio retreated up the hill away from the trap, and just a minute later the door slid shut. The tape was down, and a Loggerhead Shrike had been caught.

Ty’s family owns the farm and he has been birding for a few years now; it was the shrikes that initially got him interested in atlasing. “I didn’t know the shrikes were rare until I started using eBird,” Ty said as he reflected back to his first encounters with the species. “They would impale snakes and lizards on our barbed wire fences. I knew they were amazing birds, but had no idea I had a backyard gem.” Ty watched the pair raise four young in two broods in 2017. The adult male was banded earlier that year, and it looked like we had just secured the female.

Sergio carefully removed the bird from the trap to begin the banding process assisted by Susan Watson, Fish and Wildlife Information Services Biologist with VDGIF. One numbered and three colored bands were placed on the bird’s legs, measurements were taken, and several feathers collected. The shrike was then released back into the field, the whole process only taking a few minutes. We watched the newly released bird preening in a nearby tree. Another shrike had been successfully banded. I later posed some questions to him about this declining species...

Q: What do you look for when checking up on shrikes again after they have been banded?

A: Generally speaking, when heading back to a site where I’ve banded, I’m looking to see whether those same birds are still there and to band any unbanded birds. We try to check our banded sites across seasons (winter and breeding) to see whether there is seasonal turnover in individuals or pairs, and to try to determine breeding status and nesting success.

Our efforts in Virginia are part of a growing multi-state project taking place across the southeast US, portions of the Midwest, and Ontario. The main goal is to use our collective data to build a full annual life-cycle model which can be used to estimate mortality and survivorship by age and sex in order to understand whether there are particular segments of the shrike population that are specifically vulnerable, and therefore driving the broader shrike population decline. By working with other states, we are also trying to determine how the Virginia shrike population is connected to other shrike populations. For example, we know that breeding Ontario shrikes pass through and even winter in Virginia.

Q: How many breeding pairs of shrikes are in Virginia?

A: I would guesstimate 100–200. Shrikes tend to be under-detected because they can be inconspicuous, especially since they do not vocalize as frequently or consistently as other songbirds, so detections tend to be visual. This is problematic from a survey perspective. It can take some time to detect shrike at a site, even when we know the site is occupied. In addition, we have not conducted systematic surveys for shrikes across broad landscapes, so there is much habitat that remains un-surveyed. This makes it difficult to come up with a population estimate. My sense is shrikes are more abundant on the Virginia landscape than birder records (eBird/listserv) would seem to indicate.

Q: What was the historic high and low for numbers of breeding pairs?

A: Unfortunately, we do not have quantitative data for this. Qualitatively, shrikes were considered uncommon to rare in Virginia by Rives (1890) and Bailey (1913), but are thought to have expanded during a period of intensified land clearing, as agricultural production ramped up in Virginia and across the broader region. Although there is no doubt that we have far fewer shrikes now than several decades ago, I can’t say whether we’ve hit a low point or are in a recovery phase. Even though we have no current means of monitoring the broader shrike population in Virginia, I can say that shrikes seem to be persisting on the Virginia landscape.

Q: Why are Loggerhead Shrikes declining in the state?

A: Generally speaking, many avian grassland species are thought to be impacted by habitat loss. We are not certain if this is the case for shrikes, as there appears to be much suitable habitat on the landscape that shrikes are not using. Our multi-state project is trying to get at this through the banding and monitoring project.

Q: How can atlas volunteers and the general public help in documenting and protecting these rare birds?

A: eBird has been invaluable in getting our shrike banding project started, as we have visited sites where shrikes have been reported by birders and then fanned out from there to find many more shrikes. So, birders have and continue to make a great contribution by reporting their shrike observations. In addition to these serving as jumping off points for our particular project, they also give us a better sense of the overall distribution of shrikes in the state. For those folks concerned about making public the location of shrikes or other rare birds, we welcome your reporting of those observations directly to us via dgifweb@dgif.virginia.gov.

I left the Smith Farm that day with hope. Hope that there are still many shrikes across the state waiting to be discovered. Hope that our VABBA efforts will help this species in need. Hope that this once common bird could potentially make a comeback. In mid-January, I assisted Sergio in banding another shrike, this time in eastern Mecklenburg County. This one was a female who had been born just last year. They are still more shrikes out there...

Stay tuned for “More to Discover: Part 2—Know Before You Go,” where we will discuss some tips and tricks for planning an effective atlasing trip to an under-surveyed priority block. This will be published via the Atlas eBird portal (ebird.org/atlasva). Contact me at e3spears@gmail.com for more information about atlasing in Southside Virginia. For a more in-depth look into the current state of Loggerhead Shrikes, check out the links below:

<https://www.loggerheadshrike.org/>—The LOSH working group that is coordinating the banding project.

<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/blog/whats-going-on-with-the-butcher-bird/>

<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/blog/virginia-ontario-and-the-loggerhead-shrike-connection/>

<https://www.dgif.virginia.gov/blog/progress-continues-on-loggerhead-shrike-project/>

<https://blog.wildlife.virginia.gov/2016/02/why-is-the-loggerhead-shrike-disappearing/>

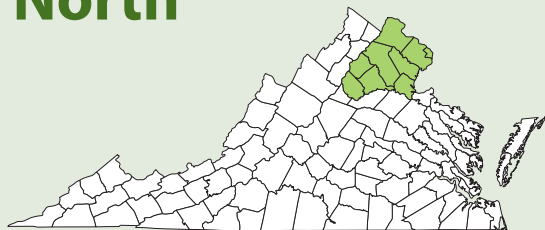
Evan Spears, Region 10 (SW) Coordinator
Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2
Farmville, VA



**Ty Smith and Susan Watson
scanning for Loggerhead Shrikes**

Regional Reports

North



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

Rainfall continued to be much above normal through the period, breaking annual records in many locations. Highlights this season included a 10-day stay of a Swallow-tailed Kite in the Loudoun Piedmont; the continued presence for more than a year of a Brown-headed Nuthatch, the first reported in Culpeper; and the Northern Shrike's return for a third year, observed throughout November in Fairfax. Black-headed Gull in Arlington and Say's Phoebe in Fairfax were other birds rarely encountered in the Region. There was a rare irruption of Evening Grosbeaks into the Region, as well as less-expected irruptions of Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, and Purple Finch. Hurricane Florence, which swept through South and western North Carolina in mid-September, undoubtedly brought in its wake many of the season's unusual birds.

Abbreviations: Algonkian RP (Algonkian RP, *Loudoun*); Clifton Institute (Clifton Institute, *Fauquier*); C.M. Crockett Pk. (C.M. Crockett Pk., *Fauquier*); Dyke Marsh (Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, *Fairfax*); Fairfax County Landfill (Fairfax County Landfill, *Fairfax*); Ft. C.F. Smith Pk. (Ft. C.F. Smith Pk., *Arlington*); GMU (George Mason University, *Fairfax*); Hunting Cr. Bridge (Hunting Cr. Bridge, *Fairfax*); Huntley Meadows (Huntley Meadows Pk., *Fairfax*); Int'l Conservation House (International Conservation House, *Fauquier*); L. Fairfax (L. Fairfax, *Fairfax*); Laurel Hill Equestrian Area (Laurel Hill Equestrian Area, *Fairfax*); Leesylvania (Leesylvania SP, *Prince William*); Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk. (Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk., *Prince William*); Occoquan Bay (Occoquan Bay NWR, *Prince William*); Sky Meadows (Sky Meadows SP, *Fauquier*); Trump Nat. Golf Club (Trump Nat. Golf Club, *Loudoun*); Waples Mill Meadow Pk. (Waples Mill Meadow Pk., *Fairfax*); Woodward Turf Farm (Woodward Turf Farm, *Culpeper & Fauquier*)

WATERFOWL—SHOREBIRDS

Two **Blue-winged Teal** at Huntley Meadows 17 Nov (BJe) were considerably later than the 20 Oct Coastal Plain late date; conversely, 8 **Green-winged Teal** observed at Dyke Marsh 26 Aug (MR, DLed, PSi) were well before the 15 Sep Coastal Plain early date. **Canvasbacks** showing up early in the Region included 18 at GMU's Point of View Conference Center on Mason Neck, *Fairfax* 28 Oct (KG) and 4 at Occoquan Bay 28 Oct (PSi) (Coastal Plain early date 10 Nov). A **Greater Scaup**, a rare transient and winter visitor in the Piedmont, was seen at Blackwell Farm Pond, *Fauquier* 26 Nov (GS). Rare visitors in the Region included 3 **Surf Scoters** at Belvoir Pond, *Fauquier* 9 Nov (GS, ph. JF); a **Black Scoter** at Belle Haven Pk., *Fairfax* 6 Nov (RR); and 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** at Int'l Conservation House 18 Nov (ph. PSa). Reports of **Buffleheads** ahead of the Piedmont 24 Oct extreme early date included 3 at Alder L., *Loudoun* 18 Oct (BHi); 3 flying over L. Mooney Pk., *Stafford* 20 Oct (DLed); and 3 at Curtis Pk., *Stafford* (7 m. away) 20 Oct (ph. DLed). A **Common Goldeneye** showed up early at Occoquan Bay 26 Oct (MR); the Coastal Plain early date is 10 Nov. Four extremely early **Ruddy Ducks** showed up at Hunting Cr. Bridge 19 Aug (DLed), 3 still sporting beautiful blue beaks; the Coastal Plain early date is 30 Sep! A **Black-billed Cuckoo**, rare in the Coastal Plain, was reported at Leesylvania 28 Sep (Voice). A **Chimney Swift** lingered at the Jackson Abbott Wetlands Refuge, *Fairfax*, seen 30 Oct (CK), past the Piedmont extreme late date of 23 Oct. Six **Sandhill Cranes** landed briefly in a field along Green Corners Rd., *Culpeper* 23 Nov (BC). Two **American Golden-Plovers**, a rare transient inland, were seen at Woodward Turf Farm 26 Aug (PK, RT, ph. PSa), with up to 8 seen on and off as late as 23 Sep. Singles were observed at Kelly's Ford Battlefield, *Culpeper* 1 Sep (FA), with up to 4 seen through

8 Sep; at the Bristow Rd. sod farm, *Prince William* 1 Sep (KG); and at Mt. Pony Farm, *Culpeper* 15 Sep (ARap, CLa). Two **Upland Sandpipers**, once more widespread in the Piedmont but increasingly rare, were observed at Woodward Turf Farm 29 Aug (GHa), with up to 6 observed through 3 Sep. Additional rare transients seen at this inland shorebird magnet included a **Ruddy Turnstone** 15 Sep (ARap, CLa), 6 **Stilt Sandpipers** 10 Sep (TDa), a **Sanderling** 9 Sep (ph. PSa), and a **Baird's Sandpiper** 30 Aug (ph. GHa) (with up to 3 observed through 16 Sep). Another Ruddy Turnstone was seen on the Potomac shoreline at Nat. Airport, Alexandria 4–5 Aug (ph. TK). Three **Dunlin**, a rare transient in the Piedmont, showed up at Mountain Run L. Pk., *Culpeper* 27 Oct (ph. JF). A single **Least Sandpiper** was reported from Aquatic Center Pond, *Prince William* 21 Nov (JF), considerably past the 15 Oct late date for the Piedmont, where the species is a rare early winter visitor. There were numerous reports of **White-rumped Sandpipers**, even rarer in the fall than in the spring in the Piedmont and a probable fallout from North Carolina's Hurricane Florence; they included 60–70 at Woodward Turf Farm 9–10 Sep (ph. PSa), with fewer numbers seen there through 16 Sep; up to 15 along Cemetery Rd., *Fauquier* 10–11 Sep (ph. GS, TDa, JF, BHa, PSa); 5 at the Clifton Institute 11 Sep (ph. BHa); and a single at the wetland on Hibler Rd., *Loudoun* 15–16 Sep (EM, GHo). Reports of **Buff-breasted Sandpipers**, another rare fall transient in the Piedmont, included a single at the Bristow Rd. sod farm, *Prince William* 3 Sep (ph. NN, MA, JF); 3 at Mt. Pony Farm, *Culpeper* 15 Sep (ph. ARap, CLa); and 2 flyovers at Woodward Turf Farm 15 Sep (ph. ARap, CLa). Eight **Short-billed Dowitchers**, a rare fall transient in the Piedmont, were observed at Woodward Turf Farm 11 Aug (ph. TDa), with 1–3 present 27 Aug–10 Sep. Also at Woodward Turf Farm 11 Aug was an early **Wilson's Snipe** (ph. TDa), slightly before the Piedmont extreme early date of 13 Aug. Late-lingering **Spotted Sandpipers** included singles at Huntley Meadows 23–31 Oct (PWB) and L. Ashby, *Fauquier* 11 Nov (GS, SS), considerably past the Regional 15 Oct late date. A **Willet**, rare this far inland, was reported from the stone bridge at Hunting Cr. (RR, ph. EW) and nearby Jones Pt. Pk., Alexandria (Voice) 2–3 Sep.

GULLS–FALCONS

A fairly rare fall transient in the Piedmont and preceding the early date of 25 Oct, a **Bonaparte's Gull** was reported at Belvoir Pond, *Fauquier* 15 Oct (GS). A **BLACK-HEADED GULL**, a very rare visitor in the Region, was observed at Gravelly Pt. Pk., *Arlington* 23–24 Sep (ph. JSh, m. obs.).



This Black-headed Gull was photographed by Elton Morel at Gravelly Pt. Pk., Arlington 23 Sep.

Also rare in the Region were single **FRANKLIN'S GULLS** observed near Belle Haven Pk. and Hunting Cr. Bridge 4–5 Aug (ph. HY) and at Trump Nat. Golf Club 3 Nov (DC); and an **Iceland Gull** at the Fairfax County Landfill 25 Nov (ph. PK, ph. RT).



Phil Kenny's 25 Nov photo of an Iceland Gull at the Fairfax Landfill

Twenty-two **Common Terns**, a rare transient in the Piedmont, were observed near the ponds at Trump Nat. Golf Club 17 Sep (DC); a single was seen and ph. at Silver

L. RP 28 Sep (Voice). Also fairly rare in the Piedmont, 2 **Forster's Terns** were reported at C.M. Crockett Pk. 28 Sep (GS). Seven **SANDWICH TERNS** appeared following North Carolina's Hurricane Florence at the Upper Occoquan Service (Sewage) Authority, *Fairfax* 15 Sep (ph. DM); the Gold Book (2007) says, interestingly, "8 fall records [in the Piedmont], all following hurricanes."



A Sandwich Tern documented by Deapesh Misra at UOSA, *Fairfax* 15 Sep

Two **AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS**, with few records away from the coast, were observed at Mason Neck NWR, *Fairfax* 20–22 Oct (KG, ph. DLed). Single **American Bitterns**, a relatively rare transient in the Piedmont, were reported from a private property, *Rappahannock* 26 Sep (TDa) and at the Int'l Conservation House 30 Sep (PSa). A **SNOWY EGRET**, a rare transient in the Piedmont, was seen at the Swallow-tailed Kite stakeout at Daley Pond on Legard Farm Rd., *Loudoun* 12 Aug (KG). Also observed there was a **Little Blue Heron**, a fairly rare post-breeding visitor to the Piedmont, 12–18 Aug (ph. AV); another was at the ponds at Trump Nat. Golf Club 20 Sep (DSI). A **Tricolored Heron**, fairly rare this far inland, was observed flying over Gravelly Pt. Pk., *Arlington* 11 Aug (EW). A **Cattle Egret**, a rare fall transient inland, was seen at Dyke Marsh 26 Aug (ph. TK); another confused individual flew from place to place in downtown Culpeper, *Culpeper* 23 Oct (vid. r. KK); a third was following cattle on a farm near Delaplane, *Fauquier* 9 Nov (ph. AY). A HY **Green Heron** found at Ashby Pond Conservancy, Fairfax City 22 Oct (ph. P&JW) continued through the period (the late date is 10 Oct for the Piedmont, where the species is a rare early winter visitor). Reports of **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons**, rare inland any time, included 2 imm. at the retention pond at Potomac Yard Center, Alexandria 19 Aug (DLed) and singles at Occoquan Bay 29 Aug (ph. PSi) and Mason Pond at GMU, *Fairfax* 6 Oct (ph.

P&JW). A very rare but apparently increasing visitor in the Region, mostly in spring and early summer, a **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** spent time near the junc. of Legard Farm and Purcellville Rds., *Loudoun* 9–19 Aug (ph. BM, m. obs.). Reports of **Golden Eagles** included a juv. overhead near Loudoun Heights, *Loudoun* 29 Oct (ph. BHa) and a juv. observed at Short Hill, *Loudoun* 16 Nov (ph. SJ, LR). An apparent **Northern Goshawk** was seen perched on a wire near Weston WMA, *Fauquier* 28 Oct (KK). Single **Broad-winged Hawks** were observed 17 Nov at two locations well past the species' usual Piedmont exit in late Oct: at L. Fairfax (MV) and Woodward Turf Farm (CHe). Belying the species' increasingly uncommon status in the Region, a birder, while looking for the reported **SAY'S PHOEBE** at the Fairfax County Landfill, saw 23 **American Kestrels** at once at the landfill cap, with another handful nearby, on 1 Oct (QE); there was also a **Peregrine Falcon** there. A spate of **Merlin** sightings in the Piedmont, where the species is rare, included individuals along the Horsepen Run Trail, *Loudoun* 23 Aug (ph. BHe, AG); along the Appalachian Trail near Snicker's Gap, *Loudoun* 15 Sep (NT, ST); Woodward Turf Farm 15 Sep (ph. ARap, CLa); Waples Mill Meadow Pk. (SJ); Great Falls NP, *Fairfax* 7 Oct (KL); Rust Nature Sanctuary, *Loudoun*, where 2 were seen 8 Oct (BHe); Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve, *Loudoun* 13 Oct (BHe); Laurel Hill Equestrian Center 20 Oct (SP); and Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk. 12 Nov (HW) (he has found one in the Chinn Ridge area of the park reliably around this time for the last few years). Sightings of Peregrine Falcons, also rare but increasing in the Piedmont, were too numerous to list; they included the one perennially seen at Skyline Towers, Falls Church, *Fairfax* dueling with an ad. Bald Eagle 16 Nov (JA). A summary of the fall count at Snicker's Gap Hawkwatch, *Loudoun* included: 58 **Ospreys**, 6 Golden Eagles (including 3 on 4 Nov!), 30 **Northern Harriers**, 470 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, 51 **Cooper's Hawks**, 2 Northern Goshawks (both also on 4 Nov, rewarding the large crowd of spectators), 150 **Bald Eagles**, only 41 **Red-shouldered Hawks**, 1,074 Broad-winged Hawks, 450 Red-tailed Hawks, 63 American Kestrels, 7 Merlins, and 11 Peregrine Falcons.

FLYCATCHERS–GNATCATCHERS

A **Great Crested Flycatcher** seen at Sky Meadows 8 Oct (LM) was nearly 2 weeks past the Piedmont late date of 25 Sep. Reports of **WESTERN KINGBIRDS**, a rare fall transient in the Region, included individuals at Dyke Marsh 15 Sep (ph. SE) and Woodward Turf Farm (both *Culpeper* and

Fauquier portions) 16 Sep (RT, PSa). There were several reports of **Olive-sided Flycatchers**, a fairly rare fall transient in the Region, including singles at Huntley Meadows 24–25 Aug (ph. RR); Kephart Bridge Landing, *Loudoun* 27 Aug (BHe); along O'Bannon Rd., *Fauquier* 29 Aug (GS); Algonkian RP 31 Aug (ARab); C.M. Crockett Pk. 14 Sep (GS); Great Falls Forest, *Loudoun* 3 Oct (PL); and Occoquan Bay 5 Oct (PWB). Reports of **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**, a rare transient in the Region, included singles at Leesylvania 3 & 16 Sep (MR) and Occoquan Bay 7 Sep (MR). Single **Least Flycatchers**, fairly rare in the Region east of the Blue Ridge, were reported at both Waples Mill Meadow Pk. and Flint Hill School, *Fairfax* 24 Aug (FA); Bles Pk., *Loudoun* 31 Aug (BW); L. Fairfax 19 Sep (DY); and Leesylvania 21 Sep (MR). A **SAY'S PHOEBE**, with only a handful of records in the Region, was seen at the Fairfax County Landfill 29 Sep (ph. KG, DLed). A **NORTHERN SHRIKE**, a very rare winter visitor in the Region, returned to Sully Woodlands, *Fairfax* for the third straight year, within a week's window, 3 Nov (JSa) and was seen and ph. by many through the end of the period. A **Warbling Vireo** was seen on private property in *Rappahannock* 13 Oct (JF, BJo, PSi, IT), well after the Piedmont extreme late date of 1 Oct. **Common Ravens** continued the species incursion into the Coastal Plain, with one seen at Huntley Meadows 22 Oct (HG). Four **Tree Swallows** (Piedmont late date 30 Oct) were observed at C.M. Crockett Pk. 12 Nov (GS), where one was seen again 26 & 30 Nov. Two **Bank Swallows** were seen at Burke L. Pk., *Fairfax* 21 Oct (KG), well after the Piedmont late date of 25 Sep. A **Black-capped Chickadee** was reported at Great Falls Forest, *Loudoun* 27 Sep–17 Oct (PL), based on v.r. and field marks. This season saw a moderate irruption of **Red-breasted Nuthatches**. The **Brown-headed Nuthatch** first reported 19 Sep 2017 continued at Mountain Run L. Pk., *Culpeper* where it was observed periodically throughout the period (KK). An early **Brown Creeper** (Piedmont early date 25 Sep) was seen at Curling Cr. Farm, *Culpeper* 12 Sep (CHe). Lingering well past the species' Piedmont late date of 30 Oct was a **House Wren** observed at the Fairfax County Landfill 18 Nov (KG). Appearing before the Piedmont and Coastal Plain extreme early dates of 14 Sep and 19 Sep, respectively, were **Winter Wrens** at Wolftrap Stream Valley Pk., *Fairfax* 9 Sep (PK) and Huntley Meadows 16 Sep (AP). Reports of **Sedge Wrens**, a rare transient inland, included singles at Waples Mill Meadow Pk. 5 Oct (FA); Occoquan Bay 7 Oct (ph. MR); and Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk. 9 Oct (TH). Sightings of **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** well past their

20 Sep late date for the Region (where the species can be rare winter visitors) included a single at Sky Meadows 20 Oct (NVBC) and 2 at Occoquan Bay 23 Oct (MR, KG, ph. WH).

FINCHES–DICKCISSEL

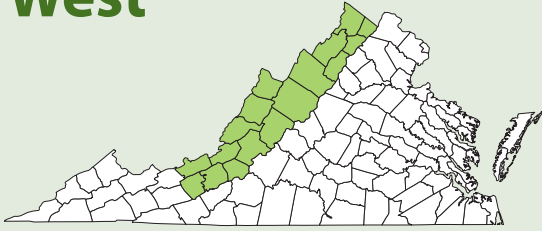
There were several reports of **Evening Grosbeaks** this fall, a rare irruptive species in the Region, including a pair in Hampton Oaks, *Stafford* (MB); one at Occoquan Bay 3 Nov (NVBC); one at a private feeder in Annandale, *Fairfax* 10 Nov (LC); 12 at an office park along Legato Rd., *Fairfax* 26 Nov (AW); and one at Int'l Conservation House 26 Nov (PSa). An apparent very early f. **Common Redpoll**, also a rare transient in the Region, was observed at L. Brittle, *Fauquier* 29 Oct (GS), predating the Piedmont extreme early date of 18 Nov. This season saw irruptions of **Pine Siskins** and **Purple Finches** into the Region, with reports beginning on or about 18 Oct. An early **American Tree Sparrow** was seen at Sky Meadows 14 Oct (PK, RT); the Piedmont early date is 10 Oct. A **Clay-colored Sparrow**, a rare transient in the Region, especially in the Piedmont, was observed at Laurel Hill Equestrian Center 9 Nov (KG), in the same location where one spent most of the previous winter and was first reported 5 Dec. A **Lark Sparrow**, a rare transient in the Region, was observed at Leesylvania 2 Sep (ph. CLo, ph. SK). An observation of a **Grasshopper Sparrow** at Algonkian RP 12 Nov (BHe, AG) was well past the Piedmont extreme late date of 5 Nov. Single **Lincoln's Sparrows**, a fairly rare transient in the Piedmont, were observed at Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk. 30 Sep (PK) and again 10 Oct (MR); Waples Mill Meadow Pk. 17 Oct (FA); Sky Meadows 20 Oct (MR); the Blue Ridge Center, *Loudoun* 27 Oct (BHe); and Elklick Woodlands, *Fairfax* 1 Nov (SJ). Two were also seen at Huntley Meadows 18 Nov (JW); in the Coastal Plain this species is rare in late fall and into early winter. An apparently wandering **Dark-eyed Junco** showed up in Brookfield Pk., *Fairfax* 2 Aug (P&JW); while the Piedmont extreme early date is 14 Sep, this species is a rare summer visitor on the w. edge. A late **Yellow-breasted Chat** was reported at Occoquan Bay 22 Oct (RV), well past the Regional 20 Sep late date. Reports of **Baltimore Orioles** well outside the Regional late date of 30 Sep included singles at Dyke Marsh 28 Oct (RB, LC, EE, PG); Occoquan Bay 18 Nov (ph. ABC); and Laurel Hill Equestrian Center 25 Nov (ph. SP). A late **Ovenbird** was seen at Monticello Pk., Alexandria 1 Nov (TA), past the Coastal Plain 15 Oct late date. Single **Golden-winged Warblers**, a rare transient in the Region, were reported

along O'Bannon Rd., *Fauquier* 29 Aug (GS) and at the Clifton Institute 16 Sep (PSa). Reports of **Blue-winged Warblers**, a fairly rare transient east of the Blue Ridge, included singles at Leesylvania 24 Aug (MR); Waples Mill Meadow Pk. 24 Aug (FA); the Clifton Institute 25 Aug (BHa); and Manassas Nat. Battlefield Pk. 25 Aug (MR). A **Prothonotary Warbler** seen at Curling Cr. Farm, *Culpeper* 26 Sep and 3 Oct (CHe) was considerably later than the species' 10 Sep Piedmont late date. An **Orange-crowned Warbler**, a rare transient in the Piedmont, was reported at Ft. C.F. Smith Pk. 28 Oct (DLeb). Individual **Nashville Warblers** seen at Cavalier Trail Pk., *Fairfax* 3 Nov (ph. JSt) and Leopold's Preserve, *Prince William* 4 Nov (SJ) were just outside the species' extreme Piedmont late date of 2 Nov. Always eagerly sought, **Connecticut Warblers** showed up in good numbers: at Occoquan Bay 7 Sep (RV); in a wooded development in Herndon, *Fairfax* 16 Sep (RC); near Mountainview Elementary School, Purcellville, *Loudoun* 6 Oct (JY); Waples Mill Meadow Pk. 6 Oct (ph. NN); Ft. C.F. Smith Pk. 19 Oct (JB); and Riverbend RP, *Fairfax* 20–22 Oct (DSw). The latter two individuals were present past the species' Piedmont extreme late date of 18 Oct. Reports of **Common Yellowthroats** past the species' late October Regional late date included singles at Four Mile Run Pk., Alexandria 12 Nov (DLed); Aquia Landing Pk., *Stafford* 17 Nov (NVBC); Algonkian RP 18 Nov (ARab); Occoquan Bay 18 Nov (ph. ABC); Huntley Meadows 25 Nov (BJe); and Arrowbrook Pk., *Fairfax* 30 Nov (HW). Lingering more than two weeks past the Piedmont extreme late date of 20 Sep was a **Hooded Warbler** seen at Ellanor C. Lawrence Pk., *Fairfax* 5 Oct (RH). Similarly, a **Bay-breasted Warbler** seen at Ft. C.F. Smith Pk., *Arlington* 23 Oct (BS) was past the species' 18 Oct Piedmont extreme late date. A **Yellow Warbler**, well outside the species' Coastal Plain extreme late date of 31 Oct, was seen at Occoquan Bay 17 Nov (ph. MP). An early **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was seen at the Clifton Institute 8 Aug (SJ, DLa, CLo) (Piedmont extreme early date mid-Aug). Early and late **Palm Warblers** (Piedmont fall dates 15 Sep–30 Oct) included singles observed at a residence in Taylorstown, *Loudoun* 25 Aug (GHo); L. Fairfax 16 Nov (ph. TDo, MD); and Laurel Hill Equestrian Center 16 Nov (MR). Three August reports of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** in the Big Meadows section of Shenandoah NP, *Madison*, following the summer report on 14 Jul, are increasing evidence of possible breeding in the Region. They included a single on 11 Aug (CLa), 7 on 25 Aug (CHa, JM), and a single on 27 Aug (LP). A Yellow-rumped Warbler seen

near Flint Hill School in Oakton, *Fairfax* 19 Sep (FA) was significantly ahead of the Piedmont extreme early date of 28 Sep. There were two late reports of **Yellow-throated Warblers** in the Coastal Plain, usually an early migrant that occasionally lingers into late fall or rarely early winter: at Aquia Landing Pk., *Stafford* 3 Oct (MR) and Huntley Meadows 25 Nov (Voice). Reports of **Wilson's Warblers**, a fairly rare transient in the Region, included singles at a residence in Springfield, *Fairfax* 28 Sep (SP); Algonkian RP 16 Oct (ARab); and Waples Mill Meadow Pk. 17 Oct (FA). A **Summer Tanager**, a fairly rare transient in the northern Piedmont, was seen at a residence in Taylorstown, *Loudoun* 26 Sep (GHo). Four **Dickcissels**, rare but increasing in the Piedmont, were observed at Bristoe Station Battlefield Pk., *Prince William* 4 Aug (ph. TH), where they had been observed frequently the past summer; 2 others were seen at Silver L. RP, *Prince William* 29 Sep (ph. NVBC).

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West



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

Abbreviations: Blandy (Blandy Experimental Farm and State Arboretum of Virginia, *Clarke*); Broadway (Broadway Wastewater Treatment Facility, *Rockingham*); RGHW (Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch, *Augusta/Nelson*); Roanoke STP (Roanoke Sewage Treatment Plant, Roanoke).

WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS

Nineteen **Snow Geese** were observed 20 Sep at the RGHW (VL), one in Swoope, *Augusta* 13 Nov (ph. AL); 2 near Mt. Solon, *Augusta* 23 Nov (DL, GMo); and 3 at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 24 (DP, SP) to 26 Nov (BE). A **Greater White-fronted Goose** flew past the RGHW 16 Oct (GM). Seventy-five **Tundra Swans** were observed flying e. at Redbud Run WMA, *Frederick* 10 Nov (GB); 38 at RGHW 13 Nov (GM), 2 at Silver L., *Rockingham* 14 Nov (DH); 5 on Claytor L., *Pulaski* 15 Nov (MM); 5 near Lynnwood, *Rockingham* 26 Nov (CT); and 19 at RGHW 27 Nov (GM). **Blue-winged Teal** observations included 33 at Pandapas Pond, *Montgomery* 3 Sep (PL); 22 near Pleasant Valley, *Rockingham* 7 Sep (EL, IL); 20 at Broadway 11 Sep (MG); and 23 at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 25 Sep (KD, BW). Some **Gadwall** high counts were 46 in Staunton 19 Oct (AL); 34 at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 9 Nov (BE, MJ); 87 at Murray's Pond, *Roanoke* 13 Nov (AD); 22 at Gala Wetlands, *Botetourt* 17 Nov (LA, BE, MJ); 39 in *Pulaski* 27 Nov (DHd); and 47 in *Rockingham* 30 Nov (MG). **American Wigeon** observations included 12 at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 14 Nov (GR), 15 in Staunton (AL), and 23 at Smith L., *Augusta* (AL) 20 Nov, respectively. **Northern Shoveler** observations included 7 at Broadway 25 Aug with 11 there 3 Sep (MG); 4 at Silver L., *Rockingham* 10 Sep (DH); 51 at 16 Sep (MG); 5 near Pleasant Valley, *Rockingham* 16 Sep (PW et al); and 3 at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 25 Sep (KD, BW). Thirteen **Canvasbacks** were seen on L. Frederick, *Frederick* 15 Nov (DB, WP). Seven **Redheads** were at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 15 Nov (AB) and 12 at L. Shenandoah, *Rockingham* 16 Nov (CT). One

to 2 **Surf Scoters** were found at L. Frederick, *Frederick* 9–30 Nov (m. obs.), and one at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 16 Nov (GR). A m. **White-winged Scoter** was seen and photographed at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 14–17 Nov (m. obs.) and a f. was photographed at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 23 Nov (GR, DY). A **Long-tailed Duck** was at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 18 (ph. GR) & 30 Nov (DB, DC, WP). **Common Merganser** reports included 33 on the Jackson R., *Bath* 7 Nov (PR); 17 at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 14 Nov (GR); and 23 in *Rockbridge* 28 Nov (AD). Even more notable were the records from L. Merriweather, *Rockbridge*: 160 on 11 Nov (BK, JP); 180 on 15 Nov (JP); 130 on 19 Nov (JP); and 150 on 20 Nov (m. obs.). Higher **Ruddy Duck** counts were 29 at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 24 Oct (GR); 24 at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 6 Nov (JP); 174 at Broadway 12 Nov (MG); 25 at L. Merriweather, *Rockbridge* 15 Nov (JP); 50 at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 16 Nov (WF); 30 at L. Arrowhead, *Page* 16 Nov (JF); and 20 at L. Shenandoah, *Rockingham* 16 Nov (CT). There were very few **Northern Bobwhite** reports except for small coveys at Third Winchester Battlefield, *Frederick*, with high counts of 20 on 28 Oct (MA, JF, NN) and 16 there 30 Oct (DG). The only other reports were one at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 15 Sep (DH); one in Pleasant Valley, *Rockingham* 5 Oct (DWN); one at Blandy 9 Oct (DCs); and 2 near New Market, *Rockingham* 29 Oct (DH). Circa 320 **Common Nighthawks** moved s. past Bent Mt., *Roanoke* 27 Aug (J&EK). An ad. m. **RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 3–30 Nov (BH) was banded 18 Nov. Seven **Virginia Rails** including 2 juv. were found at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 19 Aug (AL); one there 25 Aug (JP); and one at Gala Wetlands, *Botetourt* 28 Oct (BE, MJ). **Soras** were reported as follows: one in Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 3 Aug (DH); one near Christiansburg, *Montgomery* 12 Sep (CM); one at Nazarene Church Rd. Wetlands, *Rockingham* 22 Sep (TM); 2 in Blacksburg 23 Sep (RM); one at the Roanoke STP 26 Sep (KD); one at Bent Mt., *Roanoke* 29 Sep (AD);

2 in Blacksburg 20 Oct (RM); 2 at Gala Wetlands, *Botetourt* 28 Oct (BE, MJ) then 4 there 31 Oct (BE, BK); and one at Edgebrier Pk., *Rockingham* 4 Nov (WL). A **Common Gallinule** was found at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 25 Sep (KD, BW) to 13 Oct (LL). Two **Sandhill Cranes** were observed in *Rockingham* 23 Aug, then 3 (GMO) & 28 Sep (DY). Elsewhere, 3 passed the RGHW 28 Sep (VL), one was at Walrond Pk., Roanoke 4 Oct (MBa, KD, BW) and 4 were photographed in a Middletown, *Frederick* cornfield 23 Nov (JB, KB). Three **Black-bellied Plovers** were seen near Dayton, *Rockingham* 10 Sep (CT); 10 at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 16–17 Sep (m.obs.); and one near Dayton 25 Sep (MG). A **RUDDY TURNSTONE** was found at Stuarts Draft 13 Sep for a second fall record in *Augusta* (AL). There were also several sightings in *Rockingham*; one near Dayton 2, 7, & 9 Aug (GMO) and one 10 (DH) to 24 Sep (CT). **Stilt Sandpiper** reports included one near Dayton, *Rockingham* 2 & 13 Sep (GMO); one at Leonard's Pond, *Rockingham* 8, 13, & 14 Sep (m. obs.); 2 in *Rockingham* 11 Sep (HH); and one near Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 16 Sep (BE, MJ). *Rockingham* **Baird's Sandpiper** reports were one along the Shenandoah R. 9 Sep (JF) then 3 there 14 Sep (EC); one near Dayton 13 Sep (DL); and one near Clover Hill 25 Sep (ph. MG). One was also at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 14 Sep (HH). Eleven **White-rumped Sandpipers** were found near Dayton, *Rockingham* 10 Sep (GMO). Twenty-three were seen at Stuarts Draft 17 Sep (m. obs.) for a new peak fall count in *Augusta*, and there were several records along the South Fork of the Shenandoah R., *Rockingham* with a high tally of 20 on 12 Sep (DL). Fourteen were in *Frederick* 15 Sep (JF). One to 2 **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 13 (AL)–18 Sep (JP). Observations from *Rockingham* were 3 near Dayton 3 Sep (m. obs.) and one by the Shenandoah R. 9 (WL) & 14 Sep (EC). Two **Western Sandpipers** were photographed at the Roanoke STP 3 Aug (PL, GRh), then one was near Timberville, *Rockingham* 21 Aug (CT) and one was at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 17 Sep (JP). Single **Short-billed Dowitchers** were near Dayton, *Rockingham* 16–21 Aug (GMO); New Market, *Rockingham* 21 Aug (MG); and Grottoes, *Augusta* 9 Sep (HH). A **LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** was seen at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 18–19 Sep (HH, AL). A **WILSON'S PHALAROPE** was photographed in *Rockingham* 11–12 Sep (m. obs.). Single **RED-NECKED PHALAROPES** were near Lexington (KK, ph. DR) and in *Rockingham* 9 Sep (ph. GMO, DL et al.). Subsequently, one was at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 17 Sep (KD et al.) and 2 were at Broadway 17 Sep (ph. MG).

TERNS–DICKCISSEL

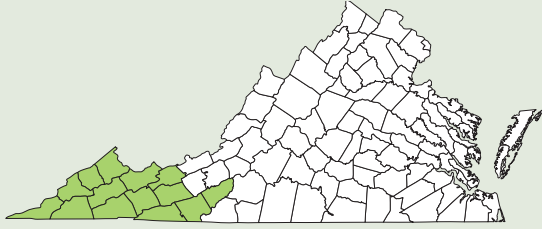
Two **Caspian Terns** were at L. Merriweather, *Rockbridge* 14 Sep (JP) with one there 16 Sep (SH). Other reports were one at L. Shenandoah, *Rockingham* (HH); one at Claytor L., *Pulaski* 16 Sep (MM) then 2 there 17 Sep (JG, SK, GRh); and 2 photographed near Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 17 Sep (AL, VL, GM). A **Black Tern** was found at Lyndhurst, *Augusta* 8 Sep (AL) and 2 were at Claytor L., *Pulaski* 17 Sep (SB, MM). Notable **Common Terns** totals at Claytor L., *Pulaski* were 54 on 15 Sep, 35 on 16 Sep (MM) and 128 on 17 Sep (SB, MM). Elsewhere, 52 were on L. Merriweather, *Rockbridge* 15 Sep (JP) and 45 were at Carvins Cove, *Botetourt* 17 Sep (KD, BK). Five **Forster's Terns** were at Claytor L., *Pulaski* 9 Sep (GH) followed by 4 there 17 Sep (JG, SK, GRh); one at Murray's Pond, *Roanoke* 25 Sep (KD, BW); and one at Smith L., *Augusta* 20 Nov (AL). A **Least Bittern** was found at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 19 Aug (AL). A **TRICOLORED HERON** was observed and photographed at Blandy Experimental Farm, *Clarke* 2–5 Aug and 12–19 Aug (m. obs.). A **Cattle Egret** was in *Rockingham* 31 Oct (ph. MG); 2 in Staunton 1–5 Nov, with 3 there 4 Nov (m. obs.); and one at Stuarts Draft, *Augusta* 10 Nov (AL). A **GLOSSY IBIS** was seen near Dublin, *Pulaski* 29 Oct (MB, SB). An imm. **SWAINSON'S HAWK** was seen at the RGHW 14 Nov (GM). A total of 431 **Northern Flickers** passed the RGHW 13 Oct (VL). **Olive-sided Flycatcher** finds included singles at Switzer L., *Rockingham* 19 Aug (DL; GMO), Blandy 31 Aug (BWk); in *Shenandoah* 31 Aug (JF); at Harvey's Knob, *Botetourt* 5 Sep (BE, BK); Glen Alton, *Giles* 8 Sep (m. obs.); Hillandale Pk., Harrisonburg 28 Sep (CT); and Pandapas Pond, *Montgomery* 29 (PL, DW) & 30 Sep (CO). Single **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were at Switzer L., *Rockingham* 15 Sep (WL) and Hillandale Pk., Harrisonburg 27 Sep–1 Oct (m. obs.). A **SAY'S PHOEBE** was photographed near Dublin, *Pulaski* 29 Sep (m. obs.) and seen again 30 Sep (KD, DZ), a first record for the county. **Loggerhead Shrike** reports were of one each at Bent Mt., *Roanoke* 29 Sep (AD); Third Winchester Battlefield, *Frederick* 28 (MA, JF, NN) to 30 Oct (DG); *Pulaski* 16 Nov (SK, GRh); and 2 in *Clarke* 21 Nov (BL, JL). A **Sedge Wren** was in Blacksburg 25 Oct (RM). **Marsh Wren** observations included one in *Pulaski* 30 Sep (KD, DZ), one in *Roanoke* 3 Oct (KD, BW), 2 in Blacksburg 6 Oct (RM) then 3 there 20 Oct. One was photographed at Blandy from 16 Aug (m. obs.) to 20 Nov (DC) and 2 were present there 19 (DC) & 22 Sep (DCs, JF). Noteworthy **American Pipit** counts included

80 at Whitethorne, *Montgomery* 27 Oct (RM); 185 at two locations in *Rockingham* 10 Nov (MG); 40 at Blandy 10 Nov (DC) then 50 there 17 Nov (TH); and 24 in *Craig* 25 Nov (BE, BK). **Evening Grosbeaks** were reported in the Region for the first time in many years. Among the reports were one m. at feeders in Warm Springs, *Bath* 4 Nov (PR); one at feeders in Staunton 6 Nov (PH); one near Lexington 24 Nov (ph. KK); and 16 in Christiansburg, *Montgomery* 26 Nov (RC). **Purple Finches** were found throughout the Region; some of the higher counts included 12 at Hillandale Pk., Harrisonburg 20 Oct (JF); 25 in *Montgomery* 22 Oct (SK); 18 in *Warren* 25 Oct (JF); 43 in *Shenandoah* 29 Oct (DD); 18 near Broadway, *Rockingham* 2 Nov (DH); 29 at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 5 Nov (GR); and 12 in *Craig* 12 Nov (CB). **Red Crossbill** observations in the Briery Branch/Reddish Knob area of *Rockingham* were six 19 Aug (WL), one 12 Oct (CH), 2 on 23 Nov (GMO), and one 25 Nov (WL). There were two reports from other locations: 2 at Mountain L. Biological Station, *Giles* 9 Aug (GRh) and 2 flying over the banding site at Highland Retreat, *Rockingham* 25 Oct (MG). **Pine Siskins** were found throughout the Region; higher counts were 45 in *Shenandoah* 27 Oct (DD); 14 in *Page* 3 Nov (MG); 60 at L. Holiday, *Frederick* 5 Nov (GR); 46 at RGHW *Augusta* 8 Nov (DHu, ES), 30 in *Craig* 12 Nov (CB); 22 at Blandy 14 Nov (DC); and 30 in Blacksburg 24 Nov (SS). There was one report of **American Tree Sparrow**, one in *Shenandoah* 25 Nov (DH). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was in *Pulaski* 22 Sep (ph. MM); 2 were at Rockfish Gap, *Augusta* 6 Oct (JP); one at Silver L., *Rockingham* 18 Oct (WL, CT); and one at Singers Glen, *Rockingham* 2 Nov (CT). **Vesper Sparrow** detections included one at Swoope, *Augusta* 1 Sep (PW); 3 in Blacksburg (RM) and 2 in *Roanoke* 25 Oct (KD, BW); 9 at Whitethorne, *Montgomery* 27 Oct (RM); 4 at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* (BE, MJ); one at Blandy (JF) and one at Third Winchester Battlefield, *Frederick* 28 Oct (MA, JF, NN); one in Staunton 29 Oct (SC, PW); one at Singers Glen, *Rockingham* 2 Nov (CT); one near Radford 3 Nov (m. obs.); and 2 at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 6 Nov (JP). A **Lark Sparrow** found near Dublin, *Pulaski* 29 Sep (AK, CK) was a second county record. **Bobolink** sightings included 26 in Staunton 20 Aug (AL), 20 on 22 Aug and 25 on 3 Sep at Blandy (DC), 250 in *Warren* 24 Aug (CL, DL), and 16 in Blacksburg 15 Sep (RM). Higher counts of **Rusty Blackbirds** were 25 on 31 Oct and fifty 1 Nov at Blandy (DC), then 19 near White Post, *Clarke* 9 Nov (DB, WP). A late **Ovenbird** was found in *Rockbridge* 23 Nov then photographed 28 Nov (SR, WR). A **Summer**

Tanager was at Mill Mt. Pk., Roanoke 28 Aug (KD); 2 at Natural Chimneys Regional Pk., *Augusta* 20 Sep (JL); one in Dry Valley, *Montgomery* 24 Sep (AK, CK); and a rather late migrant in Harrisonburg 10 Nov (ph. KF). Lone **Dickcissels** were seen Aug to late Oct: at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 3 Aug (AD, BK); in *Pulaski* 13 Aug (MB, SB); in *Rockingham* 10 Sep (DH); at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 29 Sep (DR, LR); in Blacksburg 23 Sep then 6 & 13 Oct (RM); near Singers Glen, *Rockingham* 13 Oct (MG); and one at Blandy 25 Oct (ph. WP).

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

Exceptional amounts of rain defined the fall migration this year. Every month had above average rainfall, and September through November had at least an inch above average. This resulted in limited shorebird habitat, but also was probably a factor in the appearance of several species of waterfowl infrequently recorded in the Region. Several sightings can be attributed to the aftermath of Hurricane Florence in particular. The terns at South Holston L. were clearly caused by this storm and it seems likely that the storm also played a role in the appearances of Tricolored Heron and Common Gallinule. Temperatures were about average in August, several degrees above normal in September and October, and 2°F below normal in November.

WATERFOWL-FALCONS

The **Mute Swan** reported this summer at Nicewonder's Pond, *Washington* continued until at least 3 Aug (KD). Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* produced many interesting records this season. A nice variety of ducks was reported there on 16 Oct, including 6 **Blue-winged Teal**, 6 **Northern Pintails**, and 13 **Ruddy Ducks** (CD). Up to 3 **Northern Shovelers** were seen at the same location 21 Oct–14 Nov (CD). **Redheads** arrived on 14 Nov, with 9 at Falls Mills L. and one at Lincolnshire Pk., *Tazewell* (CD). Scoters are not often reported in this Region, so two reports this fall were particularly notable. A f. **Surf Scoter** at Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* 21 Oct–1 Nov (ph. CD, DS) was the second county record. An ad. m. **White-winged Scoter** (ph. GR) on the New R. at Shot Tower SP provided the first record of that species for *Wythe*. Three imm./f. **Common Mergansers** were seen along Dismal River Rd., *Buchanan* 22 Aug (DO), indicating possible breeding in the area. A **Common Gallinule** at Falls Mills L. 17–21 Sep (ph. CD, DS) was the first record for *Tazewell* since the 1970s and one of just a handful of records of this species in the Region in recent years. Four **Eurasian Collared-Doves** at Thomas Walker High School between Ewing and Rose Hill, *Lee* 8



Clancy Deel's 21 Sep photo of an imm. Common Gallinule at Falls Mills L., *Tazewell*

& 21 Aug (ph. D&JK) were yet another new location in the county for that species. A **Semipalmated Plover** was at Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* 1 Aug (ph. CD), the first record for this species in the county since the 1970s.



The Semipalmated Plover Clancy Deel documented at Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* 1 Aug

All **Greater Yellowlegs** reports came from *Tazewell* with one at Falls Mills L. 15–16 Sep (CD, JP) and 2 at Burke's Garden 24 Oct & 5 Nov (DS). A single **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 16 Sep & 24 Oct (DS). Most notable birds due to Hurricane Florence were further

east in the state, but South Holston L. on the VA/TN border hosted impressive numbers of terns after the storm passed. About 550 **Common Terns** and 5 **Caspian Terns** were reported from Musick's Campground in TN on 16 Sep with 200 and 4, respectively, crossing into the *Washington*, VA portion of the lake (RK). Of all the great sightings at Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* this fall an **AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** on 29 Sep (ph. CD) was the most unusual. This was a first county record for *Tazewell*.



An American White Pelican soaring over Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* photographed by Clancy Deel 29 Sep

Sparrow Day on 20 Oct at the home of David and Susan Rains near Breaks in *Buchanan* proved to be an immense success this year. In addition to a wide variety of sparrows, the first record of **American Bittern** (ph. DO) for *Buchanan* was a welcome surprise. The most unusual find of the season was an imm. **TRICOLORED HERON** found along the Grundy Riverwalk, *Buchanan* 21 Sep (SR, ph. EO). This was the first record for *Buchanan* and may represent the first record for the Region. There were several reports of **Great Egrets** this fall. One was along Blacklick Rd. near U.S. 52, *Wythe* 6 Aug (KS); another was at Rural Retreat L., *Wythe* 25 Sep (PE). There were a number of reports of up to 2 birds from Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* throughout Aug and Sep (DS, JP) with one surprisingly late report there 5 Nov (ph. DS). Several reports also came from Falls Mills L., *Tazewell* in Aug and Sep (CD, JP). The only other report in the Region came from Mouth of Wilson, *Grayson* 4 & 7 Aug (CS). Single **Golden Eagles** were reported from Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 16 Nov (DS) and Zion Church Rd. near Rural Retreat, *Wythe* 17 Nov (ph. EC). **Broad-winged Hawk** migration was poorer than normal

this fall, likely at least partly due to the exceptional amount of rain. The only good counts reported from Mendota Fire Tower, *Russell* were 452 on 21 Sep (DS) and 1416 on 22 Sep (RB, AN, LM, MS). The only other good count in the Region came from the East River Mt. Overlook, on the WV/Bland, VA line, where there were 374 reported 19 Sep (JP). A surprisingly early **Merlin** was spotted at High Knob Recreation Area, *Wise* 11 Aug (AD). More expected sightings were 2 at the East River Mt. Overlook on the WV/Bland, VA line 19 Sep and a single bird at the same location 22 Sep (JP), plus single birds at Big Survey WMA, *Wythe* 22 Sep (PE), and Wilderness Road SP, *Lee* 29 Oct (NM). **Peregrine Falcon** reports came from Big Walker Lookout, *Bland* (PE), 2 off US 58 n. of Clinchport, *Scott* 20 Oct (TS), Baptist Valley Rd., *Tazewell* 30 Sep (ph. Anon. eBirder), the I-77 bridge over the New R., *Wythe* 25 Nov (GR), and Rocky Hollow Rd., *Grayson* 26 Nov (ph. AB).

SHRIKES-TANAGERS

Loggerhead Shrike reports came from three counties: one on Flatwoods Rd, *Lee* 6 Aug (ph. D&JK) was probably the same bird reported there this summer. The other reports of singles were Old Jonesboro Rd., *Washington* 2 Aug (S&DP) and Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 25 Nov (ph. DS). **Red-breasted Nuthatches** moved south in good numbers this fall. A surprisingly early migrant was found near Fries, *Carroll* 17 Aug (JS). By September the species was being reported throughout the Region. **Sedge Wrens** are scarce migrants in the Region so one near Breaks, *Buchanan* 20 Oct (DO) was a nice find. A **Red Crossbill** was reported from near Blue Spring Gap, *Grayson* 8 Nov (RMa). **Purple Finches** staged a large push into the Region as well. The first reports came from Compton Mt., *Buchanan* 30 Sep and 13 Oct (ph. RM). By the end of October this species was being widely reported in good numbers. **Pine Siskins** appeared starting in late October, and there were scattered reports from *Buchanan*, *Grayson*, *Tazewell*, and *Wythe* over the next month. The only report of **Lincoln's Sparrow** this fall was 2 near Breaks, *Buchanan* 20 Oct (DO). A **Northern Waterthrush** on Rocky Hollow Rd., *Grayson* 2 Oct (ph. AB) was a bit late. The only migrant **Golden-winged Warbler** was one in the Powell Valley, *Wise* 26 Sep (ES). Several species of warblers lingered later than normal in the Region; the extensive rain this fall was thought to contribute to this. Some of the notably late sightings were single **Tennessee** and **Magnolia Warblers** 25 Oct at Compton Mt., *Buchanan* (v.t. RM), 2 **Blackpoll Warblers** at Wilderness Road SP, *Lee* 19 Oct (NM), and

a **Cape May Warbler** at Burke's Garden, *Tazewell* 24 Oct (DS). An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was at Raven Cliff Campground, *Wythe* Sep 27 (PE). Reports of **Summer Tanagers** came from Compton Mt., *Buchanan* 25 Aug and 15 Sep (RM, DO, MS, RL) and Breaks Interstate Pk., *Dickenson* 18 & 21 Sep (EO).

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South Central



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

Like the summer, the fall was unusually wet in the Region, even before two tropical storm systems made their influence felt. Hurricane Florence battered the area south of the Region 14–16 September, adding to our rainfall totals and perhaps leading to the appearance of the season's most notable bird, the Sabine's Gull that appeared at Kerr on 15 September. Then on 11–12 October, the remnants of Hurricane Michael passed to the south and east, producing even more rain. Evaluating correlations between storms and bird records is a tricky business, but Florence appears to have brought several birds of note into the Region while Michael had less of an impact. For the season as a whole, relatively few significant reports of ducks, thrushes, or wood warblers were received.

Abbreviations: Kerr (John H. Kerr Res., *Charlotte* [upper lake only], *Halifax* [upper lake only], and *Mecklenburg* [lower lake/above the dam]); Staunton View (Staunton View Public Use Area, *Mecklenburg*, overlooking upper Kerr); SRR (Sandy R. Res., *Prince Edward*)

GEESE–GREBES

A **Ross's Goose** at Piedmont Geriatric Hospital, *Nottoway*, 27 Nov (ph. TS) was a county first and the only report. Single **Tundra Swans** at SRR 7 & 17 Nov (ES) were the only swans reported. The 4 **American Wigeons** at Holliday

L. SP, *Appomattox/Buckingham* 21 Oct (ES) and 3 near Dillwyn, *Buckingham* 13 Nov (ES) were the only ones reported, and several duck species were not reported at all. The only **Redhead** reported was a single (injured?) bird continuing from the summer below Kerr dam (m. obs.) and seen there as late as 18 Nov (PG), and the only **Greater Scaup** reported was a single above the dam at Kerr 25 Nov (AD, PG). Two **Surf Scoters** at SRR 26 Oct (ph. ES, WR) were the only scoters reported. A single **Horned Grebe** above the dam at Kerr 13 Sep (ph. AD, PG) was early; 32 there 25 Nov (AD, PG) was the season's high count.

COOTS–PHALAROPES

The only **American Coots** reported were 8 on lower Kerr 4 Nov (AD, PG). **Black-bellied Plovers** were reported only from upper Kerr, with 2 first seen 19 Aug from Staunton View (m. obs.) and one last noted from Staunton R. SP 8 Sep (AD). A single **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was seen from Staunton View 2 Sep (ph. AD, PG) through 4 Sep (TS). The only **Semipalmated Sandpiper** reports were from upper Kerr, with one at Staunton View 19 Aug (JB, AD, PG), a high of 20 at Staunton R. SP 8 Sep (AD), and the last report of 3 at Staunton View 13 Sep (JB, AD, PG). Similarly, **Short-billed Dowitchers** were reported only from upper Kerr, with the earliest and highest count the 2 seen from Staunton View 19 Aug (JB, AD, PG). **Lesser**

Yellowlegs were only reported from Staunton View, with 2 there 19 Aug (JB, AD, PG) and one 13 Sep (JB, AD, PG), and the 2 "**WESTERN WILLETS**" at Staunton View 19 Aug (ph. AD, JB, PG) were likewise the only reports.



Adam D'Onofrio's 19 Aug photo of "Western" Willets at Staunton View Pk.

An imm. **Red-necked Phalarope** was seen briefly but at close range 17 Sep (AD) over lower Kerr, a possible refuge from Florence.

GULLS-LOONS

The ad. **SABINE'S GULL** found above the dam at Kerr 15 Sep (ph. JB, m. obs.) was the star attraction in the Region this season. It was the second Regional record, after one seen at the same site 6 Sep 1996 during Hurricane Fran, and unlike that bird, this one lingered a few days, being reported until 17 Sep (m. obs.).



This 15 Sep photo of the Sabine's Gull at Kerr was taken by Paul Glass.

Single **LAUGHING GULLS** were at both large *Prince Edward* lakes, at Briery Cr. WMA 1–3 Aug (ph. ES, m. obs.), continuing from late Jul, and at SRR 17 Sep (ph. WR); 6 were also found above the dam at Kerr 17 Sep (ph. BE, m. obs.). This species appears to be becoming more common in the Region, though the 17 Sep reports might also be a result of the passage of Florence to the south. The season's high of 12 **Black Terns** was at Staunton View 8 Sep (AD, PG). Possibly also due to Florence, a Regionally significant total of 45+ **Common Terns** was reported over lower Kerr 15–16 Sep (m. obs.), with a high count of 78 on 15 Sep (PG), and 3 **SANDWICH TERNS** were above the dam at Kerr on 17 Sep (ph. AD, m. obs.), the first seen Regionally since Hurricane Isabel in 2003.



A Sandwich Tern photographed above Kerr Dam by Adam D'Onofrio 18 Sept

A **BLACK SKIMMER** found just above the dam at Kerr the morning of 14 Sep (JB) did not linger. This is the third report from this location and might also be credited to the approach of Florence, since the previous sightings came during Fran (6 Sep 1996) and Isabel (19 Sep 2003). A **Red-throated Loon** seen from Palmer Pt., Kerr, 13 Sep (ph. TS, ES) was the only report of that species.

PELICANS-FALCONS

AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were reported on both lower and upper Kerr: one found 26 Aug, Staunton View (m. obs.) remained until 13 Sep (ph. PG, m. obs.), being seen in both *Halifax* and *Mecklenburg*, while one was found above the dam 15 Sep (ph. LB, AB) and remained in the immediate area (*Mecklenburg* only) until 17 Sep (m. obs.), sometimes appearing below the dam at Tailrace Pk.. A **BROWN PELICAN** that appeared at SRR 20 Sep (ph. WR) was a first for *Prince Edward*; it was seen daily (m. obs.) through 23 Sep (ph. TS). Five **Black-crowned Night-**

Hérons including one imm. were flushed from trees along the upper reaches of Kerr (*Charlotte*) by an observer in a kayak 8 Sep (AD); the breeding status of this species in the Region remains uncertain. A **Peregrine Falcon** was seen by several observers looking for the Sabine's Gull at lower Kerr 16 Sep (ph. RB).

VIREOS-DICKCISSEL

A single **Philadelphia Vireo** 27 Sep at SRR (ES) was the only vireo report of note. **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were found at several locations around the Region (m. obs.) as the season progressed, a contrast with their near absence in 2017. **Gray-cheeked Thrush** remains an enigmatic migrant in the Region, with this season's only documented report a bird that lingered in a residential area in South Boston, *Halifax* 6–9 Oct (ph. JB). The first **Purple Finch** was reported 12 Oct near Dillwyn, *Buckingham* (DS), and by the end of the period the species had appeared at numerous sites across the Region (m. obs.). **Pine Siskins** also appeared at scattered locations beginning in late Oct (m. obs.), with a max of at least 25 noted 15 Nov in Farmville, *Prince Edward* (AmD, JD). Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** found 13 Oct at Dick Cross WMA, *Mecklenburg* (AD, PG,

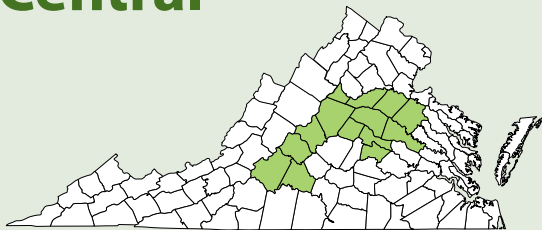
TS), and 21 Oct at Amelia WMA, *Amelia* (TB) were the only ones reported. The only **Dickcissel** report was a single individual 5 Aug (ES) lingering in a field in *e. Appomattox* where breeding had been attempted during the summer.

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Adam D'Onofrio got this Vesper Sparrow shot in *Dinwiddie* 1 Nov; the species is rare but regular in the Region in fall.

Central



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

Fall of 2018 in the Central Region was punctuated by wide species diversity and a high number of rarities throughout the season. Early in the period, post breeding dispersal yielded several waders. Remarkable September rainfall delayed favorable migration significantly, but a massive shorebird fallout and other weather-driven birds provided ample compensation for local birders. As the season progressed,

Red-breasted Nuthatch and Purple Finch irruptions reached the Region and were widely observed. Two tropical storms (Florence and Michael) passed through, yielding coastal species to those who braved the unpleasant conditions. As the rain cleared in October, many migrants pushed through late and provided records of some neotropical migrants well into November. Highlights included Rufous Hummingbird,

Common Gallinule, Sandhill Cranes, Sanderlings, White-rumped Sandpipers, Laughing Gulls, Common Tern, Brown Pelican, Tricolored Herons, Swallow-tailed Kite, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Alder Flycatcher, Black-capped Chickadee, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Connecticut Warbler and Mourning Warbler.

Abbreviations: MCLP(Mill Creek Lake Park, *Amherst*); KJV(King Family Vineyard, *Albemarle*); RVT: (Rockfish Valley Trail, *Nelson*)

WATERFOWL-TERNS

Two **Cackling Geese** flew over Riverview Pk., Charlottesville 22 Nov (ph. TB, CF), and another was at James R. Rd., *Albemarle* 25 Nov (ph. BBe, TB, CF, MN). As is the seemingly unwavering norm for this species in the state, both observations were associated with flocks of **Canada Geese**. Two **Surf Scoters** were present at MCLP 22 Nov (ph. MJ). Unusual for the Region, this observation of this species did not appear to correlate with a weather system. A juv. m. **Rufous Hummingbird** visited a feeder in Ashland, *Hanover* 17 thru 21 Oct (JB). Another, a juv. f., was first noted 3 Nov (CC) at a feeder on Fosters Branch Rd, *Albemarle*, and continued through the end of the period. Species, age, and sex were confirmed for each by banding. The lone **Sora** sighting came from a regular spot at Hidden Swamp, *Albemarle* 20 Oct (DSh, PM, m. obs.) A **Common Gallinule** discovered at Harmony L., *Nelson* 17 (ph. ES, TSt, ST) & 19 Nov (TSm) made for a rare fall occurrence of this species in the Region. A group of 3 **Sandhill Cranes** circled over Hydraulic Rd., Charlottesville 17 Nov (ph. TB). The lone **Semipalmated Plover** reported was on the shore of L. Hollymead, *Albemarle* 3 Sep (ph. RW). The beginning of an event that spanned the state, a spectacular shorebird fallout at the KJV polo field 9 Sep (ph. DSh, m. obs.) delighted local birders. This fallout was associated with favorable wind systems combined with heavy rainfall over a period of several days. Quite rare away from the immediate coast, a **Sanderling** was artificially at home on the beach at Chris Greene L., *Albemarle* 12 Sep (ph. DSh). There were two reports of **Dunlin**, high for this scarce late fall transient. One was present at Reusen's Dam, Lynchburg 19 Oct (ph. LA), and 2 utilized a temporarily flooded field at Wingina Boat Ramp, *Nelson* 17 Nov (ph. ES, TSt, ST). KJV also hosted another rare shorebird right at the beginning of the period, a "**WESTERN**" **WILLET** 1 Aug (ph. DSh, m. obs.). Single storm-blown **Laughing Gulls** were found at Walnut Cr. Pk., *Albemarle* 13 Oct (JC) and Cabell Rd. Pond, *Nelson* 15 Oct (ph. ES, TSt). Notable anywhere away from L. Anna



Janet Paisley's "Western" Willet photo taken at the KJV 1 Aug

in the Region, 9 **Herring Gulls** was a good count flying over Ivy Rd., Charlottesville 4 Nov (ph. TB). The inland passage of Hurricane Florence brought another Regionally rare tern to L. Nelson, *Nelson*, this time a **Common Tern** 16 Sep (ph. DB). Typically spring visitors, a **Forster's Tern** paid a brief visit to L. Nelson, *Nelson* 21 Aug (ph. ES, TSt).

LOONS-SPARROWS

Two over-summering **Common Loons** continued at Smith Mt. L. SP, *Bedford* into the early part of the period 13 & 14 Aug (BBI), providing an unseasonal occurrence for the Region. Always a rarity away from the coast, a **BROWN PELICAN** at Snowden Dam, *Amherst* 28 Oct was a fantastic fall record. A rare visitor during post-breeding dispersal, 2 **TRICOLORED HERONS** were found at MCLP 4 (MJ) & 5 Aug (ph. LA). Another was at Ivy Cr. Natural Area, *Albemarle* 20 Aug (ph. CF), even more notable farther north. The lone **White Ibis** report came from Bear Pond, *Albemarle* 18 Aug (ph. AR, WC, m. obs.) Very rare for the Region, a crowd-pleasing **SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** at Far Hills, *Albemarle* put on quite a show for birders between 2 & 17 Sep (ph. BD, m. obs.). A scarce migrant in the extreme w., an imm. **Golden Eagle** was at Bland Wade Ln., *Nelson* 28 Sep (ph. ES, TSt). One **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was banded at Powhatan WMA 20 Nov (JG), a very slow season for the species. Remarkably, there were 5 **Olive-sided Flycatchers** found. The first was at Wolfpit Mt., *Albemarle* 7 Aug (ph. BBe, TB, MNor, MNoo), furnishing the Regional early date. Another was at Union Hill, *Amherst* 28 Aug (MJ), at Mt. Run Farm, *Bedford* 29 Aug (BE), and a high count of 2 at Onion Mt. Overlook, *Bedford* 5 Sep (ph. SK). Although not truly rare migrants in the Region, **Alder**

Flycatcher is a species seldom detected due to confusion with similar species. Therefore, a singing individual offering a conclusive identification at Lickinghole Cr., *Albemarle* 11 Sep (ph. a.r. MF) was very notable. Seven **Philadelphia Vireos** were detected, notably high for this generally scarce species. Usually limited to very high elevations in Virginia and Regionally rare, a **Black-capped Chickadee** descended to the feeders at Wilson Ct., Charlottesville 18 Oct (ph. DC) and lingered there through the end of the period. An invasion year for the species, **Red-breasted Nuthatches** were widespread and common throughout the Region this fall, arriving 19 Sep in *Albemarle*. A continuing **Brown-headed Nuthatch** was seen at Willow Ridge, *Louisa* 4 Oct (TC), notable away from the species' stronghold in the sw. Five **Marsh Wrens** were detected, good but not unusual for this scarce migrant. A **Purple Finch** arrived as early as 13 Sep in Barbourville, *Orange* (DSt). The species continued to increase at feeders across the Region, with a peak count of 55 at the same location 29 Oct (ph. DSt). **Pine Siskins** were present in above average numbers, but not notable compared to previous irruption years. A rare but now annual visitor to the Region, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was a good find at Albemarle Community Pk., *Albemarle* 27 Oct (JS, ph. m. obs.) and continued there until 1 Nov (CJ).

BOBOLINK-WARBLERS

Usually a relatively uncommon and low-density migrant, a large flock of up to 100 **Bobolinks** was encountered 25 Aug

at Strawberry Hill Farm, *Albemarle* (DSh) and continued there thru 31 Aug (PM). A late individual was present there 4 Oct (DSh). Of 4 **Blue-winged Warblers** detected this fall, one at Mollifield Ln., *Albemarle* 22 Sep (RW) and another at RVT 24 Sep were fairly late. Six **Orange-crowned Warblers** were found, 4 in Charlottesville and 2 in *Powhatan*, a high count for this scarce migrant. There were two late reports of **Nashville Warblers**, both from Charlottesville: one at Riverview Pk. 2 Nov (ph. TB) and another at Azalea Pk. 6 Nov (TB). A **Connecticut Warbler** at RVT 24 Sep (ES, TSt) was unsurprisingly the only one detected due to the scarcity and extreme secrecy of this species. **Mourning Warblers** were detected twice, both at RVT: an ad. male was seen 24 Sep (ph. ES, TSt), one ad. f. and one juv. were present 14 Oct, late for this species. A **Blackpoll Warbler** was also at Riverview Pk., Charlottesville 2 Nov (TB), one of the later dates for the species in the Region.

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A summary of the 9 September sandpiper species fallout at King Family Vineyard, *Albemarle*

Species	Peak Count	Comments
Sanderling	6	Very rare fall transient, not recorded annually in the Region; Regional high count.
WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER	79	Very rare transient. A VARCOM reviewable species in the Piedmont, this unprecedented Regional count marks the 5th highest ever in the state, exceeded only by sites on the immediate coast pre-1990.
Pectoral Sandpiper	36	Uncommon transient; Regional high count.
Semipalmated Sandpiper	25	Uncommon to rare transient, 2nd highest Regional count.

Southeast



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Average temperatures in the Region were above normal for the first three months but dipped below average in November. Wet conditions continued, especially in October and November. The Region experienced 19.5 inches of rain during the period, 4.5 inches above the historical average for the four months. September was especially mild, lacking the cold fronts necessary to spur on fall migration. Consequently, passerine migration was lackluster throughout the entire month. On the night of October 12, the first “real” cold front finally moved through, breaking the pattern of warm, humid and stagnant air. Migration finally picked up and continued from that point on. Many late records are noted in the text, undoubtedly due to the delayed start of the fall season. Among the many noteworthy species recorded this season, Gull-billed Tern, Brown Booby and Roseate Spoonbill stand out.

Abbreviations: Ancarrow’s (Ancarrow’s Landing, Richmond); City Point (Petersburg National Battlefield–City Point Unit, Hopewell); Dutch Gap (Dutch Gap Conservation Area/Henricus Historical Park, *Chesterfield*); Hog (Hog Island WMA, *Surry*); JRP (James River Park System, Richmond).

WATERFOWL–TERNS

Three **Ross’s Geese** were at Turkey Island Rd., *Henrico* 16 Nov (ph. ABr). A single Ross’s Goose was photographed in flight with Snow Geese in the Brandon area of *Prince George* 21 Nov (ABr). A **BRANT**, rare inland, was discovered among a flock of Canada Geese in downtown Richmond at Second and Spring St. 19 Oct (EO) and remained in the same general area until at least 9 Nov (m.obs.). Single **Cackling Geese** were noted on Turkey Island Rd., *Henrico* 12 & 16 Nov (ph. ABr), at Curles Neck Farm, *Henrico* 16 Nov (EO, m.obs.) and in the Brandon area, *Prince George* 21 Nov (ph. ABr). The latest reports of **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** all occurred on 3 Nov, one at the Powhatan Cr. Trail, *James City* (BT), one on the Greensprings

Interpretive Trail, *James City* (ph. EG), and a third at Felgate’s Cr., *York* (ph. AR, NN). The only report of **Black-billed Cuckoo** came from John J. Radcliffe Conservation Area, *Chesterfield* 24 Sep (AD). **Common Nighthawks** in Settler’s Mill, *James City* numbered one on 1 Sep, 2 on 2 Sep, 21 on 3 Sep (BW, AA), 20-plus 4 Sep (AA), 8 on 5 Sep and one on 6 Sep (BW, AA). Late reports included one in Dare, *York* 25 Sep (DY), one at Richmond National Battlefield–Fort Harrison Unit, *Henrico* 7 Oct (AS), and 2 at Maynard Dr. power line cut, Williamsburg 10 Oct (ph. NN). A late **Chimney Swift** was spotted at the Main Section of JRP 28 Oct (ph. AB). Another Chimney Swift was photographed in Hopewell on the same day (ABr). The latest **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** reported in the Region was one at Kingsmill, *James City* 16 Nov (SM). Five **American Avocets** were at Jamestown Is., *James City* 22 Aug (ph. BW, ph. NB, JLow). Two American Avocets were found at Riverside Turf Farm, *Charles City* 30 Sep (MB). A **Marbled Godwit** was at Hog 5 Oct (TC) representing a first October local record. Presumably the same bird was seen again 18 (TC), 21 (ph. by NB) and finally 28 Oct (ph. AD), a new local late date. Two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were at Riverside Turf Farm, *Charles City* 2 Sep (ph. JS, AR). The 2 were seen again 3 Sep (CJ). Four birds were there 12 Sep (ph. BW), one 14 Sep (JS), and one 30 Sep (MB). A **Long-billed Dowitcher** was carefully scrutinized at Hog 8 Sep (NN, AR, CJ). A very late **Spotted Sandpiper** was photographed at Indian Field Cr., *York* 25 Nov (NN). A **“Western” WILLET** was at Hog 8 Sep (NN, AR), furnishing a new local late date. One **Wilson’s Phalarope** was at Hog 2 Sep (ph. JM, CH). Two were recorded at Hog 7 Sep (ph. JM, CH), and one was there 21 Sep (ph. CH). A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Hog 21 Oct (ph. NB), establishing the eighth local record and a new local late date. An early **Bonaparte’s Gull** was spotted from the Jamestown/Scotland Ferry 24 Sep (BT). Possibly the same bird that was seen at Hog in late July, a **GULL-BILLED TERN**

was again seen there 22 Sep, providing a fourth local record (ABO, AH). A late **Caspian Tern** was off Felgate's Cr., *York* 3 Nov (NN, AR). A **Black Tern** was noted at Sandybottom Turf Farm, *Charles City* 14 Sep (JS). A **Common Tern** at Indian Field Cr., *York* 7 Nov provided a new local late date (NN). Three **Royal Terns** lingered at Felgate's Cr., *York* 16 Nov (BW). Five **Sandwich Terns** were noted off York Pt., Seaford, *York* 21 Sep (JS).

SULIDS–EVENING GROSBEEK

A **BROWN BOOBY** off Yorktown, *York* 29 Jul provided a first county record and only the second local record (ph. RA). Sightings of this rare sulid seem to be increasing overall in the state in recent years. An **Anhinga** was found at Hog 10 Aug (JF) and seen again 13 Aug (ph. by NB, JLow). Another Anhinga was seen at the Greensprings Interpretive Trail, *James City* 4 Oct (CJ, LL). **American White Pelicans** have become expected at Hog outside of the breeding season. Fifty-one were counted there 26 Sep (TC), 54 on 28 Sep (TC), 45 on 30 Sep (TC), 8 on 5 Oct (TC), 16 on 7 Oct (ph. CH, JM) and 8 on 11 Nov (ph. JM). A **Least Bittern** continued in the marsh near the observation tower at the north end of Hog 1 Aug (MN). It was seen again 13 (ph. NB, JLow) & 16 Aug (CL, AR). An imm. **ROSEATE SPOONBILL**, first discovered in late July at Hog, continued on 1 Aug (ph. BSC, ph. MN). On 4 Aug, a second bird briefly joined the first one (DP). Neither bird was seen again after that. A “northern” **Red-tailed Hawk** was photographed in *Charles City* 24 Oct (ABr). This same individual has returned to the same spot for at least the last seven years. An **Eastern Kingbird** at New Kent Wetlands Bank, *New Kent* 6 Oct was late (DH). Even later was one at New Quarter Pk., *York* 9 Oct, a new local late date (PBel, JL). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** lingered in Hopewell 21 Oct (ABr). A **Willow Flycatcher** at Hog 15 Aug established a new local early date (ph. AR). A **Least Flycatcher** at College Landing Pk., Williamsburg 6 Sep provided the sixth local record for this species (ph. NN). Late **White-eyed Vireos** included one at Westover Plantation, *Charles City* 12 Nov (ph. ABr) and another along SR 608, *Charles City* 23 Nov (ph. ABr). Late **Blue-headed Vireo** reports included one at York River SP, *James City* 19 Nov (KH), one at Ancarrow's 24 Nov (ph. AB), one in Hopewell 25 Nov (ph. ABr), one at Piney Grove Preserve, *Sussex* 28 Nov (WB, JMo), and 2 at Ancarrow's 30 Nov (ph. ABr). A **Red-eyed Vireo** spotted at the Maynard Dr. power line cut, Williamsburg 24 Oct tied the local late date (NN). A **Purple Martin** seen at Jamestown

Is., *James City* 27 Sep provided a new local late date (CR). A **Red-breasted Nuthatch** photographed at Piney Grove Preserve, *Sussex* 19 Aug (BRYBC) was the first of many reports throughout the fall in the Region in what became a very large irruption year for the species. A **Sedge Wren** was spied and expertly photographed at Hog 14 Oct (JM). A **Marsh Wren** was at the Reedy Creek section of JRP 23 Sep (PB). Several late **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were noted in the Region. One was at Jamestown Beach Pk., *James City* 11 Nov (ph. BW), another was at City Point 23–29 Nov (LB, ph by AB, JD, ph. ABr), and up to 3 were at Ancarrow's 3–30 Nov (ph. AB, m.obs.). An extremely tardy **Veery** was confidently described at New Quarter Pk., *York* 3 Nov (MD). Not only was this record a new local late date but it appears to be a new late date for the entire state. Other thrushes setting new local late dates included both a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** and a **Swainson's Thrush** at the Greensprings Interpretive Trail, *James City* 25 Oct (CJ, LL, RR). Another late Swainson's Thrush was noted at Huguenot Pk., *Chesterfield* 23 Oct (WE). **Evening Grosbeaks** irrupted south this fall with some making it into Virginia. Reports from the Region included one calling flyover in Hopewell 12 Nov (ABr) and 2 f. at a feeder at Gayton Forest, *Henrico* 15 & 16 Nov (LS).

LONGSPURS–DICKCISSEL

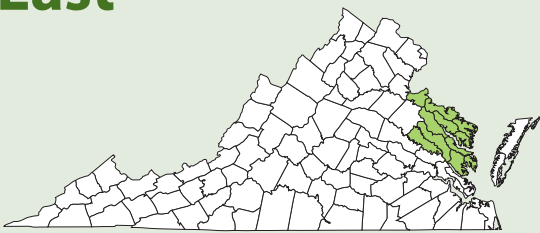
Three **Lapland Longspurs** were gleaned from a flock of **Horned Larks** and **American Pipits** in open fields along SR 611, *Prince George* 27 Nov (ph. ABr). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was at Bay Tree Beach Rd., Seaford, *York* 1 Oct (DY). This sighting established a fifth local record but was a first local fall record. Two **Vesper Sparrows** were noted at Dutch Gap 1 Nov (ph. MK). Even better was a **Lark Sparrow** found there 22 Sep (ph. MK). A **Nelson's Sparrow** was spotted at Bay Tree Beach Rd., Seaford, *York* 1 Nov (JS). A late **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen in Hopewell 25 Nov (ABr). An imm. **White-crowned Sparrow** was at Jamestown Beach Pk., *James City* 26 Oct & 6 Nov (ph. BW). Late **Yellow-breasted Chats** included one at Bassett Hall Woods, Williamsburg 13 Oct (ph. JS, LR), one in *Charles City* 28 Oct (ph. ABr), and one at Ancarrow's 8 Nov (ph. PB). Many late and lingering warblers of various species were noted throughout the Region this season. A very late **Ovenbird** was discovered foraging in a small wooded section along east Broad St., Richmond 26–29 Nov (ph. MEH). Up to two **Black-and-white Warblers** were at Ancarrow's 4–30 Nov (ph. AB, m.obs.). Three Black-and-white Warblers were recorded in Hopewell 18 Nov (ph. ABr). A **Prothonotary**

Warbler lingered at L. Matoaka, Williamsburg 28 Sep (CC et al.). A **Tennessee Warbler** was at Fenwick Hills, *James City* 18 Oct, a new local late date (ph. RR). Other late Tennessee Warblers included one at Bandy Field, Richmond 27 Oct (AB) and up to 2 at Ancarrow's 27 Oct–11 Nov (ph. AB, m.obs.). Many **Orange-crowned Warblers** were noted in the Region this fall, including one at Jamestown Beach Pk., *James City* 29 Oct (BW). A **Nashville Warbler** lingered at Ancarrow's 27 Oct–24 Nov (AB, WF). Very difficult to find in the Region, a **Connecticut Warbler** was spotted at the main section of JRP 30 Sep (AB). An **American Redstart** at Felgate's Cr., *York* 1 Aug was an early migrant (LA, AR, GR). Late **Cape May Warblers** included 4 at different spots along the Colonial Parkway, *York* 3 Nov (ph. AR, NN), one at City Point 4 Nov (ph. by AB), and up to 9 individuals at Ancarrow's 3–4 Nov (WF, m.obs.). A **Magnolia Warbler** seen at Bassett Hall Woods, Williamsburg 28 Oct established a new local late date (ph. AR). Other new local late dates were set for **Bay-breasted Warbler** in Kingswood, *James City* 26 Oct (BT), **Yellow Warbler** at Felgate's Cr., *York* 3 Nov (NN, AR), and 2 **Blackpoll Warblers** at New Quarter Pk., *York* 6 Nov (NB, JL, SM). The latest report of Blackpoll Warbler in the Region was one at Ancarrow's 18 Nov (ph. PB). Late **Palm Warblers** included one at Ancarrow's 27 Nov (PB) and 3 in *Charles City* 18 Nov (ABr). A molting m. **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was at Hog 5 Aug, establishing a new local early date (NF, ph. DA, m.obs.). The same bird

continued to be spotted in the same area through 25 Aug. A late **Yellow-throated Warbler** was at Shady Bluff, *York* 6 Oct (LL). Another was seen at City Point 7 Oct (ph. AB). A banded ad. m. **Prairie Warbler** at Mid-Lothian Mines Pk., *Chesterfield* 12 Oct was late (ph. PB). A **Summer Tanager** was at Queens L., *York* 14 Oct (JL), establishing a new local late date. Likewise for a **Scarlet Tanager** seen at York River SP, *James City* 16 & 18 Oct (ph. NB). A late **Indigo Bunting** was photographed in *Charles City* 20 Nov (ABr). A **Dickcissel** was observed in *Charles City* 12 Oct (ph. ABr).

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East



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Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, and Westmoreland counties

A total of 230 species was recorded this fall, slightly higher than average and up by two from last year. It was yet another banner year for shorebirds, with many noteworthy species such as American Golden-Plover, Piping Plover, Whimbrel, White-rumped Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper and Wilson's Phalarope all making appearances. One possible explanation for this is that the fall of 2018 was the rainiest on record; this may have led to a spike in food and habitat

availability. There was also a large shorebird movement in Virginia's Piedmont this fall, which may have spilled over into the Region. Twenty-six warbler species were recorded, including Orange-crowned, Wilson's and Nashville, slightly higher than average. Known as an irruption year, due to the poor cone crop up north, many species were forced to stray from typical winter ranges and moved south in search of food. This phenomenon was evident when looking at numbers of

Red-breasted Nuthatches, Pine Siskins and Purple Finches in the Region this year. Unfortunately, unlike many other Regions no Evening Grosbeaks were found. Fall held many notable rarities, such as Eared Grebe, Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Raven, and Lark Sparrow. However, perhaps the highlight of this fall was an adult male Cinnamon Teal. Data was sourced from the Virginia Birds listserv, eBird, NNASnet (Northern Neck Audubon Society listserv) and the Gold Book.

Abbreviations: Bethel (Bethel Beach NAP, *Mathews*); Cole's Pt. (Cole's Point, *Westmoreland*); Colonial Beach (Colonial Beach, *Westmoreland*); Dameron (Dameron Marsh NAP, *Northumberland*); Guinea (Guinea Marsh, *Gloucester*); Hughlett Pt. (Hughlett Point NAP, *Northumberland*); Leedstown (Leedstown area, *Westmoreland*); LaGrange La. (LaGrange Lane near Sealston, *King George*); New Pt. (New Point Comfort NAP, *Mathews*); The Pocket (in Pamunkey Indian Reservation along Pamunkey R., *King William*); Toby's Pt. (Wilmont Landing/Toby's Point, *Westmoreland*); Wilna (Wilna unit of Rappahannock R. NWR, *Richmond*); Washington's Birthplace (George Washington Birthplace National Monument, *Westmoreland*); Woodbury (Woodbury Turf Farm, *King William*)

WATERFOWL-RAILS

A single **Snow Goose** was sighted along Bushfield Rd., *Westmoreland*, three times in Nov (MG). A low-density visitor, 2 **Cackling Geese** were observed at Old Town Farm (private), *King William* 23 Oct (JFr). An ad.m. **CINNAMON TEAL** seen and well-described 18 Nov at Drake's Marsh, Leedstown, along the Rappahannock R., *Westmoreland* (FA), marked the first eBird record for the Region, and the fourth eBird record for the state. This represented the first sighting of the species in Virginia in seven years, with the two other birds both in 1998. The high count of 450 **Gadwalls** in Sealston, *King George* 27 Oct (FA, NN) was 10 short of the seasonal high count for the Region in eBird. Once again, Cole's Pt. harbored vast, but not unusual for this location, numbers of waterfowl including 370 **Greater Scaup**, 830 **Black Scoters** and 25 **Long-tailed Ducks** 18 Nov (FA). Also of note were the low counts of mergansers. No **Common Mergansers** were sighted this fall and **Red-breasted Mergansers** were unusually scarce with only 11 observed at two locations. Across the nation, **Northern Bobwhite** numbers have been on a steep decline over the last century. The East Region was historically, and continues to be, a stronghold for the species in Virginia. Although

there were no particularly high counts this year, the species was widespread in the Region with 26 individuals across 20 locations in ten counties, all except *Mathews*. Three birds, including a fledgling, was the high count of the season in *King William* 12 Aug (BW). The first **Horned Grebe** arrived on schedule at Hughlett Pt. 28 Oct (HP). Only 14 were reported from eight locations. The third Regional eBird record of an **Eared Grebe** was a terrific find in the channel at Bethel on 12 Nov (ph.JF). A late **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was seen at Bushfield Rd., *Westmoreland* 2 Nov (MG). Marking the long overdue first seasonal record for the Region in eBird, a **Black-billed Cuckoo** was seen in *King George* 15 Sep (BH). Fifty **Common Nighthawks** matched the previous all-time eBird high for the Region as they passed by Toby's Pt. on 31 Aug (KH, TN). Two tardy **Chimney Swifts** were spotted at a private location near Warsaw, *Richmond* 27 Oct (FA, GR). It was a poor year for **Sora**. This year's high for the species was a mere 4, with 7 individuals found at two locations. These numbers are dwarfed by past highs ranging up to 35. **Virginia Rails** were also sparse, just 4 birds at two locations.

SHOREBIRDS-FALCONS

A scarce transient, single **American Golden-Plovers** were observed at both Woodbury 15 & 17 Sep (m. obs.) and a flooded field on Strangeway Rd., *Richmond* 2 Sep (ph. KK). **Piping Plovers**, not recorded annually, were seen on two occasions this fall, Hughlett Pt. 29 Sep (SG) and Bethel 1 Aug (CF). Over the last decade, sightings of this plover have been on the rise at Bethel. Two southbound **Whimbrels**, the third Regional eBird record and first outside Bethel, were seen nearby in flight at New Pt. 1 Aug (AR, GRh, LA). A good count for the species, 4 **Stilt Sandpipers** were seen at both Bethel 1 Aug (AR, GRh, LA) and Sealston, *King George* 23 Sep (FA). Two **Baird's Sandpipers**, a rare but regular migrant, were found at Woodbury 25 Aug (FA). The season's lone **White-rumped Sandpiper**, a scarce migrant, was seen and photographed at a flooded field on Tick Neck Rd., *Mathews* 15 Sep (m. obs.). This fall's only **Western Sandpiper** was observed at Bethel, a reliable location for this migrant, 1 Aug (AR, GRh, LA). Two late **Short-billed Dowitchers** were seen at Bavon Beach, *Mathews* 23 Nov (KC). The only **American Woodcock** of the fall was observed at Woodville Pk., *Gloucester* 26 Nov (HC). The Region's first eBird record of a **Wilson's Phalarope**, a HY bird, was photographed foraging and in flight in Leedstown 1 Sep (FA). The first eBird Regional record between Apr and Sep of a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed

at North Pt., *Lancaster* 11 Aug (JS, JF). A large gathering of 130 **Common Terns** was photographed at Bethel 1 Sep (AB, MS), surpassing the previous Regional all-time eBird high count by 40. It was a great year for **Sandwich Terns**, with the previous all-time eBird Regional high count broken twice. This season's high of 180 at Bethel 25 Aug (FA) nearly tripled the past high of 64. Only two **Red-throated Loons** were seen this fall, both at Bethel 24 Nov (MS), eclipsed by past highs of up to 550. It was a poor fall for **Northern Gannets** as well: yet another species hitting a low count. Only 2 were observed at two locations, overshadowed by past counts exceeding 300. Imm. **Little Blue Herons** were observed on two occasions this fall: Sealston, *King George* 1 Sep (FA) and at Woodbury 16 Aug (MN). A notable find in the western part of the county, an imm. **Tricolored Heron** in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 1 Sep was only the second eBird record in the Northern Neck other than Hughlett and Dameron on the far eastern end, the first being at the same Leedstown location (FA). Tripling the previous all-time eBird Regional high of 2, six **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were found roosting in a marsh along the Pamunkey R. in *King William* Sep 23 (ph. NN). An imm. **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** seen and photographed at Mill Cr. Beach 15 Sep represented the first *Middlesex* record in eBird (m. obs.). Two more were found at a neighborhood in *Gloucester* 30 Sep and 9 Oct (HC). Not an annual occurrence, a juv. **White Ibis** was a great find at New Pt. 27 Aug (ph. JS). Despite the species' steep decline over the past century due to loss of prey, grassland habitat and nesting sites, a new all-time eBird Regional high count of 10 **American Kestrels** was recorded in a single scan of power lines in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 24 Oct (FA). A total of 34 were seen at 20 locations in ten counties, all except *Essex*.

FLYCATCHERS-FINCHES

A very scarce transient, an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** patrolling snags in a clearcut, the fifth all-time eBird record for the Region, was a great spot at Burgh Westra Ln., *Gloucester* 25 Aug (ph. FA). *Empidonax* flycatchers were scarce as well this fall. Excluding **Acadian Flycatcher**, just one individual of the four expected species was seen. The sole **Willow Flycatcher** was heard in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 1 Sep (FA), and a **Least Flycatcher** was observed at a neighborhood in Colonial Beach 8 Oct (BH). A low-density migrant and difficult to detect, the season's only **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was seen and well-described near Beulahville, *King William* 8 Sep (FA), marking a new eBird Regional late date by

over a week. An **Eastern Kingbird** was seen at Hickory Hollow NAP, *Lancaster* 4 Oct (JCo). The first fall eBird records of **Warbling Vireo** in the Northern Neck were at Caledon SP, *King George* 4 Aug (EG) and Colonial Beach 24 Aug (BH). The first *Westmoreland* eBird record of **COMMON RAVEN** was observed and photographed with American Crows in a soybean field near Hague 27 Nov (ph. KB). This was the easternmost and first fall sighting in the Region. The second latest Regional eBird record, a **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was seen in flight at LaGrange Ln. 27 Oct (FA, GR). There were a couple of impressive **Tree Swallow** spectacles this season, including 1600 in Leedstown 23 Sep (FA) and a remarkable 2400 in various locations in *Gloucester* 19 Oct (HC, RC). A species which sometimes continues to pass through until mid-Sep, this year **Bank Swallows** were sparse. Only 2 were seen in the Region, both in *King and Queen* 1 Aug (AR, GRh, LA). The irruption has brought a spectacular season for **Red-breasted Nuthatches** to the Region, with 67 birds at 26 locations. The earliest bird of the season was found at Barefords Mill Rd., *Essex* 19 Sep (MC, JC). The species was seen in every county in the Region, with an average of 2 birds at each location and a maximum of 5 at Heritage Pk. Resort, *Richmond* 29 Sep (MC, JC) and Cedar Pt., *Middlesex* 30 Oct (JB). A lingering **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** at Cedar Pt., *Middlesex* set a new eBird Regional late date 28 Oct (MC, JC). A **Wood Thrush** heard and recorded in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 14 Oct (FA) became the new eBird Regional late date by one day. Like Red-breasted Nuthatches, our two regular winter finches, both absent last fall, also experienced an irruption. **Pine Siskins**, some years completely absent in the Region, were seen in seven counties, the earliest sighting being on 27 Oct in *King George* (SB). Eighteen individuals were seen at ten locations, an average of 2.6 birds at each spot. Twelve **Purple Finches**, another species that is sometimes missed altogether, were observed at seven locations in three counties with a maximum of 4. The earliest this fall was one in *King George* 14 Oct (FA).

SPARROWS-DICKCISSEL

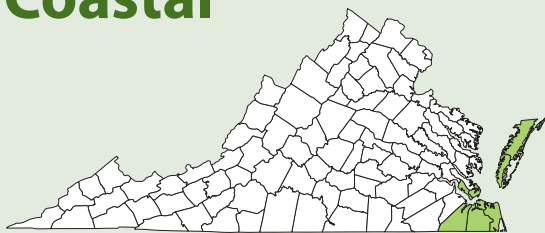
More than double the previous seasonal eBird high of 8, an astonishing 17 **Grasshopper Sparrows** were counted at Wilna 2 Sep (BT), most likely post-breeding dispersals and HY birds. The location is known for its very healthy Grasshopper Sparrow population, and has previously held counts up to 48 (21 Jun 2011-NF). The star songbird of this season, a well-documented **Lark Sparrow** that visited

a private residence in *King George* 15 Aug (HT, LT) was the third Regional record of the species in eBird. A **Nelson's Sparrow** was a nice spot at Guinea on 10 Oct (NB). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** set a new eBird Regional late date at Lily Pond Rd. Bridge, *King and Queen* 1 Oct (MC, JC). **Eastern Meadowlark** is yet another grassland species experiencing a population plummet. This year, 72 individuals were observed at 13 locations in ten counties, all except *Northumberland*. There was an average of 5.5 birds at each location, and a high count of 23 individuals in *King William* 11 Nov (FA). This was 3 down from last fall's high count of 26. Just two **Orchard Orioles** were found this season, at Mt. Zion Rd, *Middlesex* 1 Aug (AR, GRh, LA) and a neighborhood in Colonial Beach 3 Aug (BH). The only report of **Rusty Blackbirds** this fall were 35 seen and photographed at Pepper Mill Cr., *King George* 10 Nov (TM). A total of 26 warbler species was recorded this season, slightly higher than the expected count of about 25. Seven **Prothonotary Warblers** were observed near Beulahville, *King William* 8 Sep (FA), an unseasonably high count. These birds were likely HY and post-breeding ads. because the property is a known breeding location. The season's sole **Orange-crowned Warbler**, rare but annual in the Region, was observed and well-described at a neighborhood in Colonial Beach 27 Oct (BH). Lingered **Nashville Warblers** were seen on two occasions this fall, near The Pocket 11 Nov (FA), a first eBird county record, and Leedstown 18 Nov (FA). These Nashvilles were the

first Nov eBird records in the Region. A new all-time eBird Regional high of 21 **Cape May Warblers** at Washington's Birthplace 14 Oct (FA) eclipsed the past high of 12. Four more Cape May Warblers at LaGrange Ln. 27 Oct matched the previous eBird late date (FA, GR). The Region's second latest and second Nov **Yellow Warbler** was found in Leedstown 18 Nov (FA). The latest eBird record was in *Lancaster* Nov 25, 2011 (DH). A **Wilson's Warbler** observed and photographed on 20 Oct at a private residence in *Lancaster* was a second Regional fall record and new late date in eBird (JCo). A tardy **Blue Grosbeak** in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 14 Oct matched the previous eBird late date for the Region (FA). Finally, **Dickcissels** were observed twice this fall, in Leedstown, *Westmoreland* 1 Sep (FA) at the same private location where the species possibly bred (singing male), and Miller's Road, *Middlesex* 4 Sep (HH).

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Coastal



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Accomack and Northampton counties; Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel; Pelagic area; the cities/towns of Cape Charles, Chesapeake, Chincoteague, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach

A deep drop in the jet stream created a pipeline for moisture to stream northward along the east coast. By the end of August the Region's year-to-date rainfall total was 10.5 inches above normal, setting the stage for the 9th wettest summer on record. September 2018 concluded as the warmest ever recorded with an average daily temperature of 79.1°F, 6.8° above the mean. The passage of remnants

of Hurricane Florence 13–15 September then Hurricane / Tropical Storm Michael 11–12 October rendered little in the way of extralimital bird species to the Region. Nevertheless, many neotropical migrants lingered past expected departures, the result of persistent easterly winds combined with few passing cold fronts throughout the season. The forecasted Red-breasted Nuthatch/northern finch flight proved modest

at best. Birders' initiated enthusiastic grandstand waves to celebrate the first confirmed Mississippi Kite nest on the Peninsula, the Region's first Trumpeter Swans, a Sooty Tern, a Pacific Loon, an Ash-throated Flycatcher, and the state's most and longest-staying Roseate Spoonbills ever recorded.

Abbreviations: Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel s. of *Northampton*); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, *Accomack*); Craney (Craney Island Dredged Materials Management Area, Portsmouth); CVWO (Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, *Northampton*); First Landing (First Landing SP, Virginia Beach); GATR Tract (GATR Tract of the Mockhorn WMA, *Northampton*); KHW (Kiptopeke Hawk Watch at KSP); KSP (Kiptopeke SP, *Northampton*); Little Is. (Little Island Pk., Virginia Beach); Magothy Bay (Magothy Bay NAP, *Northampton*); NNP (Newport News Pk., Newport News); PHP (Pleasure House Pt. Natural Area, Virginia Beach); Rudee (Rudee Inlet, Virginia Beach); Sunset (Sunset Beach Resort, *Northampton*); Whitehurst (Whitehurst Tract, Princess Anne WMA, Virginia Beach)

WATERFOWL-HERONS

A **Snow Goose** was at Signature Gold Course, Virginia Beach 15 Oct (ph. PM) well ahead of the species' 30 Oct average arrival. Single **Ross's Geese** were near Accomack, *Accomack* 9 Nov (EC, JF, ph. AT) and at Chinc. 20 Nov (ph. LG). Five **Brant** at Chinc. 26 Sep (ph. JMr) were nine days ahead of the species' more expected 5 Oct first detection. A **Cackling Goose** was at Chinc. 3 (m. obs.) through 12 Nov (ph. FM); another was at Sherwood Lks., Virginia Beach 5 (BS, GG) to 10 Nov (m. obs.). A **Mute Swan** was at NNP 18 Sep through 25 Nov (m. obs) and one was noted in the Oyster/Cheriton Landfill pond, *Northampton* 10 (ph. LB, m. obs.) & 17 Nov (RBi). Two **TRUMPETER SWANS** documented at Chinc. 30 Oct (ph. SD) were a first for the Region; one to 3 were reported there 11 (ph. SD) to 30 Nov (EN, CR). One to 2 m. **Eurasian Wigeons** frequented Chinc. 10 Oct (ESB, EG, ph. EO) to 25 Nov (ESB). Relative proximity and timing suggested sightings of a m. at the Cedar Ln./ Rte. 164 junc., Portsmouth 14 Oct (E&NF), in Talbot Park, Norfolk 21 Oct (BA), and at Craney 8 Nov (LS, BT, ph. BW, DY) involved the same bird. One was also at L. Joyce, Virginia Beach 24 Oct (ph. LSi). Craney's 2458 **Northern Shovelers** on 25 Oct (LS, BT, BW, DY) was the highest total recorded in the Commonwealth. An early **Northern Pintail** was at Chinc. 25 Aug (ML, RS); 10 Sep is this species' average appearance

date. Craney also had the state's highest **Green-winged Teal** count with 265 on 14 Nov (AH, AM, LS, BW). A f. **Greater Scaup** at the Cheriton/Oyster Landfill, *Northampton* 13 Oct (m. obs.) was two days ahead of the species' typical 15 Oct Coastal Plain arrival. Numerous **Common Eider** reports documented 4 at Rudee 26 Oct (AB); one at Chinc. (EC, JF, AT) and 2 at Little Is. 9 Nov (AB, TT); one at Oyster, *Northampton* 11 Nov (ph, JFo, ph. TS, m. obs.); one at 85th St., Virginia Beach 12 Nov (AB, LC); 4 at Rudee 14 Nov (ph. K&TB); 5 & 7 off Little Is., 16 (TT) & 17 Nov (ph. RBi, JS), respectively; one at Oceanview, Norfolk 21 Nov (ph. EA, TC); 2 at Rudee 22 Nov (TH); 3 off Little Is., 23 Nov (AB, TT, RW); and 6 at Chinc. 24 Nov (NM). Single **Harlequin Ducks** were at Little Is. 9 Nov (TT) and Rudee 10 (ph. MS, SS, ph. EW) through 13 Nov (JD, KD). Nine **Surf Scoters** were off 85th St., Virginia Beach 27 Sep (TT) and a **Black Scoter** was at Oceanview, Norfolk 6 Oct (ph. EA, TCo); 10 Oct is the Gold Book average early date for both species. Also early were 2 **Buffleheads** at KSP 18 Oct (MB) and a hatch-year f. **Hooded Merganser** at Chinc. 5 Aug (ESB, CG, ph. JL). Three **Red-necked Grebe** reports chronicled singles at Queen Sound Landing, *Accomack* 13 Nov (BO) and at Chinc. 22 Nov (CW), then 2 at Chic's Beach, Virginia Beach 30 Nov (ph. MH). A **White-winged Dove** was found on Magotha Rd., *Northampton* 17 Nov (ph. KR). The last **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** reported was at Chinc. 11 Nov (ph. MB). **Common Nighthawks** passed over KSP 1 Sep (HA, AS) through 12 Oct (AS et al.); counts did not exceed 2 for any date. Others noted were one each at Sandy Bottom Pk., Hampton (MN) and Air Power Pk., Hampton (EM) 25 Sep, and a rather tardy individual at NNP 28 Oct (JS). A **Chimney Swift** at KSP 12 Nov (AS) tied the species' Gold Book Coastal Plain extreme late date. Single **Common Gallinules** were encountered at Back Bay 5 Oct (ph. BA) and Little Is. 30 Oct (AB, TT). A **Sandhill Crane** in lower *Northampton* delighted "Rarities Roundup" participants 10 & 11 Nov (AS, BA et al.). Craney's **Black-necked Stilt** high count was 60 on 2 Aug. A trio at Queen Sound Landing, *Accomack* 21 Sep (MAK) were the last reported in the Region. The highest **American Avocet** count was 587 at Craney 23 Aug (AM, LS, BT, BW). Elsewhere, there was one off Shore Dr., Virginia Beach 20 & 23 Aug (AB), 8 fly-bys at KSP 18 Sep (BT), 2 at Saxis WMA, *Accomack* 26 Sep (ph. VK), and one at Willis Wharf, *Northampton* 10 Nov (PK, SP, ph. RT). An **American Golden-Plover** at Sherwood Gate field, *Northampton* was seen by m. obs. 21 (ESB) through 31 Aug (CJ). Subsequently, one was at Muddy Creek Rd./Shipp's Cabin Rd., Virginia Beach 13 Sep (ph. RBi, RuBi), then one

flew over the ESVNWR 10 Nov (ESB). A **Wilson's Plover** at Chinc. 26 Sep (BC) tied the species' Gold Book extreme late date. The Region's only reported **Upland Sandpiper** was at Craney 23 Aug (AM, LS, BT, ph. BW). A **Marbled Godwit** at Poquoson 13 Oct (ph. EM) was a bit unusual for that location. Two to 3 **Hudsonian Godwits** were at Chinc. 19 (3) (ESB, JL) through 31 Aug (2) (JL). Thereafter, singles were found at Langley Air Force Base, Hampton (MS, DY) and Magothy Bay 10 Sep (AS, ph. BT), near Wachapreague, *Accomack* 22 Sep (BA, ph. DC), and at Chinc. 28 Sep (ph. VK, MY) then 10 Oct (ESB, EG, ph. EO). A **Ruff** was at Chinc. 19 Aug (ESB). Single **Baird's Sandpipers** were at Chinc. 26 Aug (ESB, JL) and Back Bay 1 (DC, JS) & 2 Sep (AB, ph. RBi, KHo, TN). Three **White-rumped Sandpipers** lingered at Craney to 14 Nov (AH, AM, LS, ph. BW), seven days beyond the species' average departure. The Region's lone reported **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** was at Sherwood Gate field, *Northampton* 28 Aug (BA, ph. ESB, JP) through 2 Sep (LGo, MeP, ST). A **Spotted Sandpiper** was near Huntington Pk., Newport News 11 Nov (ph. AJ) and a **Solitary Sandpiper** was at Stuart Rd., Virginia Beach 6 Nov (ph. K&TB); the Gold Book's average late date for these species is 15 Oct. Up to 3 **Wilson's Phalaropes** were at Craney 2 (DY, BT) through 30 Aug (BA, LS, BW, DY). The species' peak count was 11 at Chinc. 19 Aug (ESB, JL); 5 remained to 31 Aug (JL). Three **Red-necked Phalaropes** at Craney 9 Aug (BW, DY) was the Region's highest reported total. Later 2 were on hand there 31 Aug (m. obs.), then one 6 & 22 Sep (LS et al.); 2 were off Little Is. 9 Nov (AB, TT). A **Red Phalarope** was a great find at First Landing 12 Oct (ph. KS). One each **Pomarine Jaeger** and **Parasitic Jaeger** were off *Accomack* at (37.669, -75.423) 2 Nov (ph. JoL). Additional Parasitic Jaeger reports included one from Rudee 8 Oct (EO); one off Little Is., 30 Oct (AB, TT); 4 off Little Is. 8 Nov (TBa, JMo, TT); 2 off Little Is. 9 Nov (m. obs.); one off Little Is. 17 Nov (RBi); and one off Little Is. 26 Nov (AB, TT). Lone **Razorbills** buzzed by Little Is. 9 Nov (AB, TT) and Camp Pendleton (restricted access), Virginia Beach 18 Nov (K&TB). A **Black-legged Kittiwake** was spotted off Little Is. 9 Nov (AB, TT). Single first-cycle **Iceland Gulls** were at Back Bay 26 Nov (ph. MC) and Ft. Story, Virginia Beach 27 Nov (K&TB). A southbound **SOOTY TERN** passed Little Is. 14 Sep (AB, TT). **Black Terns** were spotted 2 Aug through 28 Sep with high counts of 8 at Chinc. 19 Aug (ESB, JL) and 7 off Ocean View, Norfolk 2 Sep (JRB). A total of 277 **Sandwich Terns**, 80 at the CBBT fourth island plus 197 at Aqua, *Northampton*, was recorded 12 Oct after the passage of a tropical storm system.

A **PACIFIC LOON** was at Sherwood Lks., Virginia Beach 30 Oct (ph. K&TB, AB, TT) to 28 Nov (ph. m. obs.).



The Sherwood Lakes Pacific Loon photographed by Pam Monahan 31 Oct

A **Wilson's Storm-Petrel** was off Chinc. 13 Aug (DI, JL, SM). A circling **Wood Stork** was a star performer over KSP 4 Sep (AS, RC, ph. STh). An imm. **Great Cormorant** in Chincoteague, *Accomack* 1 Oct (ph. DW, SPG) was two weeks ahead of the species' 15 Oct average arrival. The increased presence of **Anhingas** in the Region was evidenced by one to 2 at Stumpy L., Virginia Beach 1 (ph. CB) to at least 17 Aug (ph. RR); one at KSP 5 Sep (AS, RM, MSt), then 2 there 6 Sep (AS); one at NNP 16 (SS) & 20 Sep (CJ); and one over KSP 1 Oct (ph. JMa, AS et al.). **American White Pelicans** were observed throughout the Region from the third week of Oct through 29 Nov (2 at KSP-AS) with high counts of 34 (separate groups of 16 & 18, respectively) at KSP 22 Oct (JMa, AS et al.) and 28 flying n. past Back Bay 31 Oct (DY). An **American Bittern** at Back Bay 15 Aug (BA) and one at Lynnhaven, Virginia Beach 16 Aug (ph. AB) were both exceptionally early. The number of **ROSEATE SPOONBILLS** at Craney increased from 2 on 2 Aug (LS, BT, BW, DY) to four 9 (LS, BT, ph. BW, DY) & 16 Aug (AM, BT, BW, DY). Thereafter, 5 were present 23 (AM, LS, BT, ph. BW) & 31 Aug (ph. m. obs.) then a state record count of 6 from 6 (DA, CH, JSN, JSN) through 28 Sep (m. obs.). Five there 4 (BA, DY) & 10 Oct (BT, ph. BW, DY) set then reset new Virginia late dates for the species, previously 21 Sep (2009) also at Craney.

RAPTORS-DICKCISSEL

Strong northeasterly winds the morning of 8 Nov was just the right circumstance for 652 **Turkey Vultures** to pass the KHW (AS). **Mississippi Kites** continued at the Virginia Beach sites mentioned in the summer report with as many as 5 at White House Ln. 19 & 25 Aug (TT) and a subad.



Laura Mae's 6 Aug pictures of an ad. (above) and an imm. (below) Mississippi Kite near a nest-site in Hampton



present near Burrough's Rd. to at least 18 Sep (TT). More significantly, however, a nest located 5 Aug (ph. BB, SB) at Artillery Rd., Hampton confirmed the first known breeding for this species on the Peninsula. The peak count at the site was 4 on 4 Aug (BW) with 2 last noted there 15 Aug (ph. LR). Single Mississippi Kites were at Stumpy L., Virginia Beach 5 Aug (ph. SMY), 39th St./Chestnut Ave., Newport News 10 Aug (BW, DY), KSP 11 (ABu, PBu) & 18 Aug (AH, GH), off the CBBT 19 Aug (KDe), and 2 were off Arlington Rd., Northampton 3 Sep (DC). One at the KHW 10 Oct (AS et al.) marked the Region's latest date for the species. The 42nd annual KHW, a CVWO project since 1995, was conducted 31 Aug–30 Nov. The total of 18,401 diurnal raptors

recorded during 764.3 observation hours over 91 of 92 possible count days included 3538 **Ospreys**; 5 **Golden Eagles**; 555 **Northern Harriers**; 2708 **Sharp-shinned Hawks**; 2331 **Cooper's Hawks**; 617 **Bald Eagles**; one **Mississippi Kite**; 99 **Red-**



An albino American Kestrel photographed by Julia Magill at KSP 31 Oct

shouldered Hawks; 1357 **Broad-winged Hawks**; one light-morph **Swainson's Hawk** (18 Oct); 665 **Red-tailed Hawks**; 3582 **American Kestrels**; 1535 **Merlins**; 1375 **Peregrine Falcons**; and 32 unidentified. In addition to the KHW's 5 Golden Eagles one was at Chinc. 10 (PK, RT, H&GS) & 11 (MB) Nov. A **Barn Owl** was near Wattsville, Accomack 28 Nov (EN, CR) and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was at KSP 10 Nov (m. obs., v. r. NN). A noteworthy 2687 **Northern Flickers** passed KSP 29 (1284) & 30 Sep (1403) (AS et al.). An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** at Chinc. 3 Nov (ph. JH, m. obs.) was eight days shy of the species' 11 Nov extreme late date. The only reported **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was at Sunset 23 Aug (ESB). A "**Trail's**" **Flycatcher** (*Empidonax alnorum/traili*) at KSP 16 Oct (AS) was well past the 25 Sep late date. Single **Least Flycatchers** were at Sunset 23 Aug (ESB) and KSP 23 Sep (MP). An **ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER** at the ESVNWR 10 Nov (ph. AR, m. obs.) was just as ephemeral as the **Western Kingbird** at Back Bay 7 Nov (ph. PM) was.



The Western Kingbird Pam Monahan photographed at Back Bay 7 Nov

A **White-eyed Vireo** was at the ESVNWR 10 Nov (AR, ESt, GSt, TSt); 20 Oct is the species' average tardy date. Six **Philadelphia Vireo** reports placed singles at Chinc. 21 Sep (MBr, DH); KSP 23 Sep (DH, MP, MeP); the ESVNWR 29 Sep (KM); Captain's Cove, Accomack 1 Oct (SD); Camp

Pendleton, Virginia Beach 7 Oct (K&TB); and Back Bay 14 Oct (ph. MM). A **Red-eyed Vireo** at Gildersleeve Middle School, Newport News 23 Oct (AC) had tarried 8 days beyond the species' 15 Oct average late date. A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was at KSP 31 Oct (AS) three weeks past the species' 10 Oct Gold Book average. Of only 2 **CAVE SWALLOWS** reported, one was at Riverview Farm Pk., Newport News 22 Oct (JS) and one was on the ESVNWR 11 Nov (m. obs.). A late **Barn Swallow** passed KSP 18 Nov (AS). **Red-breasted Nuthatch** encounters began with one in Chincoteague, *Accomack* 9 Sep (JMr). Subsequent listings were routinely in the single digits with the notable exceptions of 40 at Sunset 29 Sep (ESB) and 19 at KSP 18 Oct (AS, JMa). The last **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** reports revealed one each at First Landing (J. A.) and Back Bay (ph. CB) 21 Nov. The Gold Book's **Swainson's Thrush** extreme late date is 22 Oct. Thus proof of one at the GATR Tract 10 Nov (AR, ph. ESt) was highly significant. Two **Evening Grosbeaks** were at the ESVNWR 11 Nov (ph. m. obs.), one of which was identified by voice as Type 3 (v.r. NB). The first reported **Purple Finch** was at Back Bay 9 Sep (ph. MC); the highest total posted thereafter was 40 at the ESVNWR 9 Nov (EC, JF, AT). A lone **Red Crossbill** was detected at KSP 12 Nov (AS). The Region's initial **Pine Siskins** (2) were at Sunset 30 Sep (ESB). Subsequent reports were typically in single digits, with notable high counts of 54 at KSP 1 Nov (AS) and 65 near Woodhouse Corner, Virginia Beach 15 Nov (K&TB). One to 2 **Lapland Longspurs** were at Chinc. 25 (one-ph. DB) & 27 Oct (2-ph. B&DF). Two **Snow Buntings** were at KSP 17 Nov (AS), then 2 were at Back Bay 25 Nov (ARo, K&TB, ph. SK). An **American Tree Sparrow** was an excellent find at First Landing 21 Nov (ph. RW). A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was listed by m. obs. at Back Bay 19 Sep (AB, ph. MC) through 20 Oct (ph. RBi) then 17 Nov (ph. RW). Overlapping these observations were singles at Bayville Farms Pk., Virginia Beach 22 (ph. EA, TCo) & 23 Sep (EA, ph. TCo); KSP (NB, JLo, SMu) 22 Sep; Craney (BA, DY) Chinc. (ph. DW) 4 Oct; Sandalwood Rd. Beach Access, Virginia Beach (AB, ph. RBi, TT); Shipps Cabin Rd., Virginia Beach 6 Oct (AB); and Chinc. 3 Nov (ph. JH, m. obs.). Single **Vesper Sparrows** were at Magotha Rd., *Northampton* 4 Nov (ph. DC), Stony Run Athletic Complex, Newport News 8 Nov (ph. ABo, ph. JS), Simpkins Railroad, *Northampton* 9 Nov (MP, MeP), Seaview Farm, *Northampton* 10 Nov (m. obs.), and Magothy Bay 18 Nov (MP, MeP). Sightings of 8 different **Lark Sparrows** included singles at Long Creek/Great Neck, Virginia Beach 10 (ph. JM, AB, ph. RBi) & 15 Aug (ph. JM, AB); Craney

23 Aug (ph. BT, LS); KSP 4 Sep (AS, RC, ph. STh); near Woodhouse Corner, Virginia Beach 14 Sep (K&TB); 2 at Back Bay 21 Sep (ph. CB, ph. CH, JM); one at NNP 13 Oct (LR, ph. JS); and one off Willow Oak Rd., *Northampton* 10 Nov (ph. LA, ph. JW, m. obs.). A **Savannah Sparrow** was at Muddy Creek Rd./Shipps Cabin Rd., Virginia Beach 21 Aug (AB); 15 Sep is this species' normal first date. A **LeConte's Sparrow** was at KSP 17 Nov (ph. KH) and a **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at Burton Station Rd., Virginia Beach 3 Nov (ph. AB, TT). Single **Lincoln's Sparrows** were found at the ESVNWR 14 (ESB) & 29 Oct (JFl), KSP 26 Oct (AS), and on the GATR Tract (RBi, m. obs.) and at Chinc. (m. obs.) 3 Nov. The last reported **Yellow-breasted Chat** was at Back Bay 23 Oct (EA, K&TB, TCo, JSn); 20 Sep is this species' average late date. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was at Craney 27 Sep (LS, ph. BW, ph. DY). The Coastal Plain's **Northern Waterthrush** 21 Oct extreme late date was broken by 2 at Little Is. 23 Oct (ph. EA, TCo), only to be reestablished by one at Concord's Wharf, *Northampton* 10 Nov (MP, MeP). *Parulidae* exceeding respective Gold Book (late-date) benchmarks included a **Black-and-white Warbler** at Laurel Cove Dr., Virginia Beach 22 Nov (15 Oct) (LSi); a **Prothonotary Warbler** at Stuart Rd., Virginia Beach 22 Sep (15 Sep) (AB, TT); a **Tennessee Warbler** at the ESVNWR 30 Oct (15 Oct) (ESB); and, a **Nashville Warbler** at Whitehouse Ln., Virginia Beach 9 Nov (TT). Three **Connecticut Warblers** at Sunset 29 Sep (ESB) were followed by a **Mourning Warbler** there 5 Oct (ESB). Other warbler species that surpassed Gold Book (late-date) norms/ extremes were: an **American Redstart** at Whitehouse Ln., Virginia Beach 9 Nov (10 Oct) (TT); a **Cape May Warbler** at Stony Run Athletic Complex, Newport News 10 Nov (25 Oct) (ph. AC); a **Magnolia Warbler** at Chinc. 8 Nov (15 Oct) (SP); a **Bay-breasted Warbler** at Little Is. 24 Oct (10 Oct) (AB, TT); a **Northern Parula** at KSP 10 Nov (31 Oct extreme) (AD, TTr, PG); a **Blackpoll Warbler** at L. Biggins, Newport News 18 Nov (20 Oct) (ph. TV); a f. **Black-throated Blue Warbler** at Back Bay 30 Oct (20 Oct) (K&TB, JMar); a **Yellow Warbler** at Back Bay 20 Oct (20 Sep) (DC); a **Yellow-throated Warbler** off Burroughs Rd., Virginia Beach 28 Nov (27 Nov extreme) (TT); and a **Black-throated Green Warbler** at First Landing 28 Oct (25 Oct) (TC, ph. JaFl, JFl). A m. **Summer Tanager** was in Foxbridge, Hampton 14 Oct (BB) and a **Scarlet Tanager** was in the Talbot Hall neighborhood, Norfolk 26 Oct (ph. BA). An **Indigo Bunting** at Back Bay 27 Nov (WB, JM) exceeded the Gold Book's 9 Nov Coastal Plain extreme late date by eighteen days. A f. **Painted Bunting** returned for a

3rd consecutive year to a private residence off Guthrie St., Virginia Beach 7 Nov (ph. TC). **Dickcissel** reports showed 2 at Poinciana Dr., Virginia Beach 13 Aug (ph. KS), one at Back Bay 29 Sep (m. obs.), and singles at KSP 30 Sep, 8, 14 & 17 Oct then 2 there 7 Nov (AS).

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