Editors’ Notes

The summer produced some interesting breeding records for the Commonwealth, which are well described in the reports from our Regional Editors. For the first time in more than a decade, Virginia had four breeding pairs of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers at Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex County. Mississippi Kites were finally confirmed to be breeding in Southampton County, an area where the species had been observed for years but breeding had never been documented. Mississippi Kites also nested in the North Region, at last year’s Waynewood site and at a second location in the Burke/Annandale area. A pair of Mockingbirds successfully nested in Buchanan County, where prior to 2000 the species was never even observed in summer. In Augusta County, Elliott Knob had a new high summer count of 10 Yellow-rumped Warblers and 12 Dickcissels near New Hope provided a new high count for the county. A pair of Peregrines successfully nested in the mountains of Virginia at Stony Man Mountain furnishing one of the few Mountain and Valley breeding records. The annual aerial survey of breeding Bald Eagles in the East Region found 233 resident pairs which produced 313 chicks in 221 nests. A survey of the Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow population at Mulberry documented 41 singing birds and five nests.

Other interesting observations included a large number of weakened or dead seabirds reported from the coast, an immature White Ibis at Kerr Reservoir far from the coast, and a “disturbing decrease” of Bobwhites in central Virginia.

In our featured article, Aimée Weldon, Virginia Important Bird Area Coordinator, describes the Golden-winged Warbler survey conducted in Highland County, and how the survey results may help make the case for habitat conservation there.

In the last issue of Virginia Birds – Spring 2005, we inadvertently left out the Southwest Region Report. We apologize to our readers and to Southwest Region Editors, Roger and Lynda Mayhorn for this oversight. Their spring report is included in this issue.

Good birding,

Alan and Linda

Cover Photo: July 23rd was a great birding day for Bob Augustine. After finding a Mississippi Kite nest in the Waynewood area, near where kites nested last year, he found another 12 miles away in the Burke/Annandale area. This Mississippi Kite, from the Burke/Annandale area, was digiscoped by Paula Sullivan using a Kowa TSN 823 scope and a Nikon Coolpix 4500.
The 2005 Bath-Highland Golden-winged Warbler Survey

The Golden-winged Warbler has been declining precipitously throughout its northeastern and Appalachian range. This decline is partly due to a reduction in the availability of shrubland, or early-successional, habitat that has occurred over the last century as once cleared lands have been allowed to succeed naturally to forest habitats or have been altered in some way. Additionally, declines have been attributed to hybridization and competition with the closely related Blue-winged Warbler, which has slowly been expanding its range northward into the Golden-winged’s range. The status of Golden-winged Warbler population in Virginia is largely unknown, but breeding bird survey (BBS) data shows a steeply declining trend in its Appalachian range, threatening to fragment the smaller eastern portion of the population from the larger northern population. Recent assessments by Partners in Flight, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Audubon Society have indicated that Golden-winged Warbler conservation should be an immediate priority. Despite these trends, little has been done to actively manage for Golden-winged Warblers across their range.

To begin to address this issue, the Audubon Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program, in conjunction with the US Forest Service, organized a large volunteer effort to try to determine the core breeding distribution of the Golden-winged Warbler in Virginia. The Virginia IBA Program is part of a global program to identify a network of sites in a given region that are critically important for sustaining bird populations. Once identified, these areas will be targeted for conservation or increased protection and management in order to maintain the health of bird populations that occur there. Highland and Bath counties have long been known as reliable places to find breeding Golden-winged Warblers and the large extent of high-elevation rural habitat suggested that this may be a center of abundance for Golden-winged, which are typically found in scrub-successional habitats above 2000 feet in elevation.

By the end of the weekend, the group had found a total of 26 male Golden-winged Warblers, two Blue-winged Warblers, and two hybrids. Twenty-four of these birds were discovered in Highland County alone – a total 4 times the number counted in the 2003 Highland Foray. The fact that the occurrence of Blue-winged Warblers and hybrids was so low compared to Golden-winged is encouraging as it suggests that this region may be a refuge from hybridization and competition and therefore a good target for Golden-winged Warbler conservation. The relatively high occurrence of Golden-winged also qualifies the area as a potential IBA; a nomination is currently being assembled. If the IBA Technical Committee (the group of experts that review each nomination) votes to recognize this site as an IBA, the Virginia IBA Program will work with the US Forest Service, private landowners, and other partners to generate a long-term conservation plan for the area. The Virginia IBA Program also hopes to further aid in the conservation effort by organizing additional volunteer surveys of areas in the Allegheny Highlands that are likely to support Golden-winged to provide a more solid understanding of current and potential distribution of this vulnerable species.

Aimee Weldon
Virginia IBA Coordinator

The author would like to thank all of the volunteers who assisted in gathering the initial round of valuable information and invite anyone interested in participating in future Golden-winged Warbler survey efforts or conservation to contact her at aweldon@audubon.org.
Season | Reports Due to Regional Editors
--- | ---
Summer (Jun–Jul) | 15 Aug
Fall (Aug–Nov) | 15 Dec
Winter (Dec–Feb) | 15 Mar
Spring (Mar–May) | 15 Jun

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

**Spring Reporting Period Mar – May 2005**

Editor's note: The following Spring 2005 Southwest Report was erroneously omitted from the last issue. We regret the error and apologize for any inconvenience to our readers. Summer reports begin on Page 7.

**SOUTHWEST**

EDITORS – Roger and Lynda Mayhew, 1C 67 Box 44A, Pilgrims Knob, VA 24634 mayhorn@netscape.net

Cool would be the word to describe the spring of 2005 in Southwest Virginia with an average temperature of 41° F. in March, 55° F. in April and 60° F. in May. The overall cool temperatures may have been responsible for the slower than normal movement of warblers into the area. A sudden drop in temperature on April 23 to 29° F. accompanied by 3 inches of snow probably caused eggs not to hatch and the deaths of many young birds still in the nest. In Buchanan County 29.6% of eggs laid in nest boxes prior to the freeze, did not hatch. Since no data were gathered on non-cavity nesters, it is not known how the weather affected those species.

As spring migration got underway in early March, the first reported Tree Swallows were observed at Rural Retreat Lake. In mid-March, a Snow Goose was found among domestic geese on a farm pond in Wythe. Also in March, Horned Grebes were still being observed on their wintering grounds at Musick’s Campground on South Holston Lake, Washington. Purple Martins and Northern Rough-winged Swallows returned to the area in March.

In April small Great Blue Heron rookery was discovered in the town of Damascus, Washington; the first Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Grasshopper Sparrow arrivals in the state were reported in Buchanan; a new Cliff Swallow nest site was found in Wythe; and a Cattle Egret was an unusual find in Smyth. In May, a Peregrine Falcon was seen on Clinch Mountain in Washington. Also in May, a Chuck-will’s-widow was seen and heard at a home in Grayson. Blue Grosbeak, an unusual species for the area, was found in the eastern section of Wythe in May. A Brewster’s Warbler was observed in Carroll in May.

**Abbreviations:** B.P. (Breaks Interstate Park, Dickenson); Musick’s (Musick’s Campground on S. Holston L., Washington); RRL (Rural Retreat L., Wythe).

**Waterfowl – Egrets**

A blue morph Snow Goose was found on a farm pond between RRL and Wytheville, Wythe 22 Mar. (AB). Five Northern Shovelers, a species not common to the area, were found at RRL 15 Mar (GE). Northern Bobwhites were observed at two
feeders along the Levisa R. west of Grundy, Buchanan during late May (ETIII, E&MT). This species has become scarce in the area within the past decade. A Common Loon was observed 23 May on Hidden Valley L., Washington (RH, WC). Nine Horned Grebes were among other waterfowl observed at Musick’s 20 Mar (WC). Eight Eared Grebes were seen at Musick’s with 13 Red-breasted Mergansers and 31 Double-crested Cormorants 25 Mar (R&CC). A small Great Blue Heron rookery was discovered on the southern edge of Damascus near Beaverdam Stream, Washington 4 Apr (TH). The rookery, with approximately twelve nests, is on the South Fork drainage of the Holston R. The first Great Blue Heron rookery found in sw VA was discovered on the other side of Damascus 20 Jun 1998 (RC, RB). A Great Egret was observed near Elk Garden, Russell 3 May (J&J T), and at Falls Mill, Tazewell 16 May (JP). The second spring sighting of a Cattle Egret in sw VA was in a pasture near Chillhowie on Riverside Rd., Smyth 25 Apr (LT). The first spring sighting of this species in sw VA was in the Breaks community, Buchanan 20 Apr 2004 (DR, EB).

Raptors – Terns
A possible Black Vulture nest was found in mid-Apr on Big Ridge Rd., Grayson approximately two miles from the Wythe line (W&J R); two eggs were found lying on a few branches inside a crevice in a rock wall. The first reported Osprey of the season was observed on RRL 23 Mar (AB), followed by sightings at Musick’s 25 Mar (RC), on the Levisa R., Buchanan 29 Mar (ETIII), on Big Cedar Cr., Russell 9 Apr (J&J T), and in Meadows of Dan, Floyd 15 Apr (LC). A second year Bald Eagle made an appearance at Musick’s 19 May (RC). Another second year Bald Eagle was observed for 30 minutes on the New R., Grayson 10 May (GE). A large Red-tailed Hawk nest with two large nestlings was found on an electrical transmission tower in Washington 24 May (RH, RS, WC). It is unusual for Red-taileds to nest on towers here. A Merlin did a flyby on 3 May near Galax, Grayson (B&MD). A Peregrine Falcon, very unusual here, was seen flying over Clinch Mt. at Hayter’s Gap, Washington 27 May (CK). The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is making plans to release Peregrines in the spring of 2006 in the B.P., where they once nested. Two early Greater Yellowlegs were reported at a small pond near Seowanda Springs, Wythe 15 Mar (GE). A Greater Yellowlegs was also reported at Elk Garden, Russell 6 Apr (J&J T, DW). The first reported American Woodcock of the season was observed in Buchanan 4 Mar, when 3 were found in the Breaks community (DR). The next reported sightings were in Cox’s Chapel, Grayson (KH) and in Crooked Cr. Wildlife Area, Carroll 19 Mar (GE). Bonaparte’s Gulls were observed at Musick’s 19 Mar (RC) and 23 Mar (RK). The species was observed at the same location 11 Apr along with a Herring Gull, 2 Common Terns and a Forster’s Tern (RB, JH, DH, WC). A Forster’s Tern was found there again 15 May (WC).

Nightjars – Swallows
A Chuck-will’s-widow was observed and heard at a private home in Cox’s Chapel 15 May, Grayson (KH). In the previous 12 years of residence there, the owner had never heard or observed that species. The first reported Ruby-throated Hummingbird was at Raven Ridge Bed and Breakfast near Hayter’s Gap, Washington at an elevation of 3700 ft. 26 Mar (CK). The first Ruby-throated of the season in Buchanan was seen 5 Apr at Little Prater near Grundy (JR); the first in

SPRING REPORTING PERIOD MAR – MAY 2005
Grayson 12 Apr (D&W L); and the first in Russell 26 Apr (JT). An ad. Red-headed Woodpecker was at a feeder in the Breaks community, Buchanan 10 May (E&SR). The species is unusual in the area, and this is only the third record of one visiting a feeder in Buchanan. Two Willow Flycatchers were found 16 May in Bluefield, Tazewell (JP), and an Olive-sided Flycatcher was identified 29 May on the Blue Ridge Parkway near the Carroll/Grayson line (Will Cook). The first Eastern Kingbird of the season was found on the Southwest Community College campus in Tazewell 18 Apr (ETIII). Blue-headed Vireo arrived in Dickenson, when the species was found 25 Mar at the entrance of the BP. (DR). The first spring neotropical migrants in Buchanan/Dickenson are usually observed in the BP area each year. There is speculation that the birds may follow the northern edge of the Breaks, or that the birds follow the Russell Fork branch of the Big Sandy R., which cuts the deep gorge of the BP. The first report of a Blue-headed Vireo in Buchanan was on Deskins Branch near Vansant 26 Mar (TP) and the first White-eyed Vireo report came from Compton Mt., Buchanan 14 Mar (RM). Red-eyed Vireo was heard at Weller Yard, Buchanan 22 Apr (ETIII). The first Yellow-throated Vireo reported was near Galax, Grayson 19 Apr (MD); the second report came from Compton Mt., Buchanan 26 Apr (R&LM). A nest of Common Ravens has been observed in the month of July. The second report came from Compton Mt., Buchanan 26 Apr (R&LM). A nest of Purple Martin observed in Washington 16 Mar between Glade Springs and Damascus was the first report of the

period (CC); five birds had returned to one active Purple Martin colony and four were at another in Grayson 25 Mar (GE). Seventy-five to one hundred Tree Swallows became the first report of the season 10 Mar, when they were observed over the New R. near Galax, Grayson (GE). Six more Tree Swallows were found in Washington 20 Mar (WC). The first of this species for Buchanan were seen near Grundy 21 Mar (JR). Also near Grundy, the first Northern Rough-winged Swallows of the season arrived 26 Mar (JR). An active Cliff Swallow colony with 12 to 15 nests was found on a bridge in Austinville, Wylie 23 Apr (B&MD). This is a good find since the species is rarely found in the area and almost never nests there. Another good find was a large Cliff Swallow colony under Avens Bridge on S. Holston L., on 15 May (WC). The colony contained 201 nests, and is the largest reported colony in sw Virginia. The first Barn Swallow of the season was observed at Mussels’s 19 Mar (RC). The first of this species in Buchanan was observed in the BP 2 Apr (DR).

Wrens – Warblers
The first House Wren of the year was found in Bristol, Washington 31 Mar (RH). On 24 Mar a half completed Eastern Bluebird nest was found in the Breaks community in Buchanan. (R&LM, MM), establishing a new county early nesting date for the species. A sudden freeze and three inches of snow 23 Apr destroyed many eggs of cavity nesters being monitored in Buchanan, with 29.6% of the eggs being checked in nest boxes not hatching. This percentage is much higher than the norm. Wood Thrush was first heard 20 Apr on Crow Mt., Buchanan (R&LM), followed by one in Grayson near Galax on 29 Apr (B&MD). The first Gray Catbird was on Compton Mt., Buchanan 29 Apr (R&LM). A Golden-winged Warbler at Guesses Fork of Hurley, Buchanan 17 Apr provided the first Virginia report for the season (MT). The arrival dates of other warblers were: Yellow Warbler Compton Mt., Buchanan 11 Apr (RM); Chestnut-sided Warbler Compton Mt., Buchanan 26 Apr (R&LM); Black-throated Green Warbler heard behind Grundy High School, Buchanan 11 Apr (TP); Black-and-White Warbler in the BP 3 Apr (ETIII); American Redstart Horn Mt., Buchanan 19 Apr (R&LM); Yellow-throated Warbler on the campus of Southwest Community College, Tazewell 1 Apr (ETIII); Pine Warbler in Carroll 24 Mar (GE); Cerulean Warbler Guesses Fork of Hurley, Buchanan 17 Apr, the first reported in the state (MT); Swainson’s Warbler observed and photographed at the head of Slate Cr. near Compton Mt., Buchanan 7 May, and heard in the BP 8 May (both R&LM); Kentucky Warbler near Galax, Grayson 3 May (B&MD); Hooded Warbler at The Mountain Top Golf Course on Compton Mt., Buchanan 12 Apr (RM); Yellow-breasted Chat heard on Compton Mt., Buchanan 1 May (RM), with another found near Galax, Grayson 3 May (B&MD).

Tanagers - Siskins
The first Scarlet Tanager was found on Crow Mt., Buchanan 20 Apr (R&LM). Savannah Sparrows numbered 35–40 on a road near RRL 3 Mar (AB). The Grasshopper Sparrow at Poplar Gap Park, Buchanan 14 Apr was the arrival first reported in the state (MT). The last Fox and White-throated Sparrows were reported from Compton Mt., Buchanan 17 May and 5 May respectively (RM). The last Dark-eyed Junco was also at Compton Mt. 18 Apr (RM). Rose-breasted Grosbeak arrived at Guesses Fork of Hurley, Buchanan 10 Apr (MT). The first Bobolinks were 5 found near Galax,
Grayson 30 Apr (B&MD). Orchard Oriole showed up on Little Prater near Grundy, Buchanan 25 Apr (JR). The first Baltimore Oriole was found on Compton Mt., Buchanan 1 May (R&LM); the last Purple Finch was also observed there 8 May (RM). On 24 Apr a flock of 40 Pine Siskins was at a feeder at Rosedale, Russell (DW) and the last siskin report was from Compton Mt., Buchanan 18 May. (RM).


**Summer Reporting Period June – July 2005**

**North**

Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Frederick, Loudoun, Madison, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Stafford and Warren Counties; and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Winchester.

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Weather conditions were mostly typical through the first half of June after which a drier trend with normal temperatures was noted to the end of the period. Top highlights for the season were confirmed breeding for Mississippi Kite, Peregrine Falcon, King Rail, and Henslow’s Sparrow ‡. Some other interesting sightings were Canvasback, Common Merganser, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Upland Sandpiper, Chuck-will’s widow, Winter Wren, Sedge Wren, Veery in the Piedmont, Black-throated Green Warbler in the Mountai & Valley Zone, Savannah Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and Dickcissel.

**Abbreviations:** Battlefield (Manassas National Battlefield Park, Prince William); BRCES (Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Science, Loudoun); Dyke (Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Fairfax); HCM (Hunting Creek Mudflats, Fairfax); Huntley (Huntley Meadows, Fairfax); SNP (Shenandoah National Park, mainly Page and Rappahannock).

**WATERFOWL — RAILS**

American Black Ducks were noted at Huntley 6 Jun (fide FOHM) and at Dyke 1 and 25 Jul (fide DKG). A female Canvasback was found in Pohick Bay, Fairfax 2 Jul (DKG). The last Hooded Merganser of the season was noted at Huntley 20 Jun (fide FOHM). Three Common Mergansers (both sexes) were noted on Belmont Bay, Fairfax 1 Jun (SB) and a male and female or immature were there 2 Jul (DKG). Ruffed Grouse was reported at BRCES 11 Jun (DKG) and on the Front Royal BBS 12 Jun (MAK, GK). A Common Loon was present on Holiday L., Frederick 4 Jul through 31 Jul (JL). The Great Egret high count was 15 at Accotink Wildlife Refuge 31 Jul (DKG). Least Bitterns were reported at Dyke and Neabsco Creek, Prince William mainly in Jun (LC, MR, m.ob.) and presence was noted at Dyke to 24 Jul (JK) with breeding confirmed (PS). Little Blue Heron was observed at Huntley 4 Jul (fide FOHM) and 29 Jul (LM). A juvenile Black-crowned Night-Heron at Lake Royal, Fairfax 15 Jul (CB) is strongly suggestive of breeding in this Piedmont location. An excellent count of 8 Broad-winged Hawks was observed near Tibbet’s Knob, Shenandoah 26 Jun (BJL, JI); other reports of this species were Sky Meadows, Fauquier 11 Jun (SB), Big Meadows BBS, SNP 15 Jun (MAK, GK), and SNP 3 Jul (DKG, LM). Two Mississippi Kite nests were found in Fairfax (BA). The first was near last year’s Waynewood site where adults were carrying food to the nest 23 Jul; observational evidence indicates that this nest probably fledged one bird between 24 and 31 Jul. The second nest, located in the Burke/Annandale area, about 12 miles from the Waynewood site, was also found 23 Jul (BA). Unlike the sightings last year, both locations are outside the capital beltway. Away from the two nest sites, Mississippi Kite was reported in Reston, Fairfax 8 Jul (JK) near the intersection of Hunter Mill and Dulles Toll Rds. Peregrine Falcons were noted throughout the season near Stony Man Mountain, SNP (RG). According to Rolf Gutber, Biologist at SNP, a pair of Peregrine Falcons nested successfully and produced one young at the Stony Man Mountain lower cliffs. Staff from the Center for Conservation Biology at William and Mary checked the well-hidden cliff nest on 1 Jul. There were no chicks in the nest, but the nest site
Peregrine Falcon at Stony Man Mountain, by Shenandoah National Park

contained evidence of thick white-wash, prey & Peregrine feathers, trampling, nest odor, and Peregrine down; indicators of successful reproduction. Soon after they took a photo of the juvenile falcon when it perched nearby on the cliff face and were able to see the blue bill, which helped differentiate this juvenile bird from the one-year old mother. Based on observations of size and flight characteristics, they believe the juvenile to be a female. The male parent appears to be a two year old bird. This pair represents only the second documented successful nesting of Peregrines in the mountains of Virginia since their demise from DDT (and other factors) in the 1950s and 1960s (the first pair nested on Stony Man Mt. from 1994-1998 and fledged eight young). A Peregrine, possibly associated with the breeding pair in Washington, DC, was at Dyke 2 Jul, (DKG). King Rails were heard and/or observed at four well-separated locations in Occoquan Bay NWR Prince William, all in marshes close to emergent forest with a variety of shrubs and forbs (J. Witt). A King Rail chick was noted here 8 Jun confirming breeding (BM). Virginia Rail was reported at Dulles Greenway Mitigation Bank, Loudoun 9 Jul (fide JC).

PLOVERS — BLACKBIRDS
A Semipalmated Plover was at HCM 12 Jun (DKG). A returning Solitary Sandpiper was first reported 11 Jul at Huntley (FOHM). Spotted Sandpiper was found at Dyke 19 Jun (RR) and 2 Jul (DKG), possibly indicating breeding. A high count of 13 Semipalmated Sandpipers at HCM

was noted 31 Jul (DKG). Four Upland Sandpipers were found on a turf farm near Remington, Fauquier 31 Jul (DKG, JG). Short-billed Dowitcher along Hunting Creek (Eisenhower Ave, City of Alexandria) was reported 31 Jul (PK). A high count of 300 Laughing Gulls was noted on sod farms along Bristow Rd, Prince William 31 Jul (DKG, JK). An excellent count of 6 Black-billed Cuckoos was recorded on the Front Royal BBS 12 Jun (MAK, GK); one was found on the Big Meadows BBS 18 Jun (MAK, GK). Chuck-will’s-widow was singing near Liming Rd, Prince William FP, Prince William 2 & 4 Jun (FJ & SH). A fine concentration of Whip-poor-wills were noted along Forest Road 92, Shenandoah, 24 Jun (DKG, RR) with a total of 10 counted at about half mile intervals along the road. Whip-poor-wills were also reported in the Gore area, Frederick in Jun & Jul (PK). The MAPS station at Mason Neck NWR, Fairfax captured a Hairy Woodpecker, previously captured in 1995 when it was at least a year old (JT). Least Flycatcher was noted at Rapidan Camp, SNP 15 and 29 Jun (fide AW). Warbling Vireo breeding was again confirmed at Dyke, one of the few Coastal Zone breeding locations of this species (DKG, PK); at least four breeding territories were identified. The Cliff Swallow colony under the Rt. 7 bridge over the N. Fork of the Shenandoah R. in Clarke was at typical numbers (fide DKG). In Jun, Black-capped Chickadees were noted along Devil’s Hole Rd, Shenandoah, beginning at an altitude of about 2400 feet (BIL, JL, DKG, RR) Two Winter Wrens were in SNP at Parkway turnouts south of Rt. 211 on 3 Jul (DKG, LM). Singing Sedge Wren was at North Fork, Prince William 31 Jul (DKG, JK). Marsh Wren was noted only at Dyke, confirmed during the Dyke Marsh BBS (BH). Two late migrating Veerys were noted at Long Branch Park, Arlington 1 Jun (VK) and a high count of 24

was noted on the Big Meadows BBS 13 Jun (MAK, GK). Blue-winged Warblers were present at BCRS throughout the period (JT, JC, JD, DKG, m.ob.). A singing Black-throated Green Warbler was at Limberlost SNP 15 Jun (AW) and along Forest Road 92, Shenandoah 25 Jun (DKG, RR); the latter was at about 1600 feet with a singing Blue-headed Vireo also present. Eight Chestnut-sided Warblers were found along the SNP Parkway south of Rt 211 on 3 Jul (DKG, LM). Yellow-rumped Warbler was noted on Tibbitt’s Knob Rd, Shenandoah 19 Jun (JB, BJL). Cerulean Warblers were noted at BCRS throughout the period (JT, JC, JD, DKG, m.ob.). A total of 26 Ovenbirds were found in Shenandoah 25 Jun (DKG, RR). A male Canada Warbler appeared to do a distraction display along the Lower Hawksbill Mountain trail SNP (along the Paint/Madison line) near 3800 feet 3 Jul (DKG, LM). Yellow-breasted Chat breeding was confirmed at Huntley 10 Jul for the first time in over 10 years (LC). Unusual for Huntley, a Summer Tanager was spotted there 20 Jun (fide FOHM). Savannah Sparrows were noted near Remington, Fauquier, three on 4 Jun (JK) and 31 Jul (DKGJK); outside of Basey, Shenandoah 25 Jun (DKG, RR); and on Harrison Rd Fauquier (juvenile plumage) 31 Jul (DKG, JK).

A pair of Henslow’s Sparrows were observed carrying food at Battlefield 5 Jul (BP); the observer first noted the birds on 31 May during a survey. Natural Resource Program Manager, Bryan Gorsira, reports that the habitat of the breeding site was dominated by warm season grasses planted by Battlefield as a food source for wildlife. The breeding area, about 200 acres, discounting narrow tree/hedgerow bisects, was mostly dry and per land management practice there was only a single harvesting of the grass between 1 Aug and 15 Sep. White-throated Sparrow was noted at White Oaks Park, Fairfax on 2 Jun
(BJ). Up to 4 Dieckcissels were present outside of Remington 4 Jun (JK) through 31 Jul (DKG, JK); also reported at Huntley 6 Jun (fide FOHM) and Nokesville, Prince William 28 Jul (KB fide VK). Up to 5 Bobolinks (4m & 1f) were present in a grassy field along Ebenezer Church Rd., Loudoun through at least 9 Jul (JC); the field was cut soon after and breeding was not confirmed.

Addendum
The following late spring dates were reported after publication of the spring Region Report: Common Nighthawk Banshee-Reeks Park, Loudoun 29 May (JD); Blackpoll Warbler Dyke and along the Potomac R., Fairfax 31 May (RR & BJ); American Redstart Dyke 31 May (RR); and Northern Waterthrush Dyke 29 May (LC).


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

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June and July yielded average temperatures and rainfall. Unusual sightings were few with no surprising trends. However, there were many new summer high counts of species in Augusta, where a meticulous record keeping system is in place; the noteworthy ones are included in this report. One of the more interesting sightings was that of a Barnacle Goose. Although this goose had no obvious signs of being an escaped captive or collection bird, its origin remains unknown. This is one of several recent records of this attractive goose in Virginia.

WATERFOWL — FALCONS
The single Barnacle Goose in a campground near Waynesboro, Augusta, stayed from 23 Jun through Jul and into Aug. Its identity was well documented (ph. BT) and a detailed annotated summary of its stay and molt has been submitted to VARCOM (BT). The bird had an injured left leg, but was not pinioned or banded; nor did it have a clipped toe, required of exotic waterfowl in private collections. This tundra breeder species winters mostly in the British Isles and costally along the North Sea, with known vagrancy to the east coast of North America. Although its province will remain in question, BT speculates that this may have been a wild bird whose injury could have prevented it from migrating with the main flock to European wintering grounds, remaining behind to recuperate, and joining Canada Geese on their southerly migration. This is the second report in Augusta and the first summer report. A White Pelican was observed on the campus of Virginia Tech University, Montgomery 4 Jul furnishing one of less than 10 reports of the species in the Mountains and Valleys Physiographic

This Barnacle Goose in Augusta County, photographed by Brenda Tekin, was the first summer observation and second observed in any season for the county.
Providence of Virginia (ph., SD).

HAWKS — SANDPIPPERS
There were two sightings of Golden Eagles in Highland, 3 Jun (CH) and 4 Jun (PR), both along the western-most ridge. While wintering eagles are annually present in this county, there has been only one previous summer record (11–16 Jun, 1985). An immature Peregrine Falcon within the city limits of Staunton, Augusta, 23 Jul (AL) represented the first recent summer county record for this falcon. This summer appearance relates temporally to the recent hatching of Peregrine chicks in nearby Shenandoah NP (visit http://www.nps.gov/shen/ppt/html/2highlights381.html for more information). By late Jul the young falcons take extended practice flights before eventually migrating in August. A Common Moorhen was reported 14 Jun (AWh) and again 6 Jul (AL) on a large farm pond in Augusta. This is only the second summer record. The extended presence of this species in ideal habitat may indicate the possibility of breeding. Nine Dunlin 2 Jun, almost certainly late migrants, represented the second summer record and a new high summer count for Augusta (AL).

KINGLETS — GROSBEAKS
The third summer sighting of Golden-crowned Kinglet 1 Jul on Elliot Knob in Augusta (AL) also included a fledged young begging for food, documenting the first breeding evidence for this species in the county. A Golden-winged Warbler breeding bird survey was conducted in Highland and Bath 3–5 Jun, sponsored by the Virginia Important Bird Area project and the USFS (See related article in this issue). A total of 26 singing males, plus two Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler hybrids singing “Golden-winged” songs, were reported (AWh). This total represents four times the number documented in 2003 during a VSO breeding bird survey and suggests an ongoing breeding population in this western county. Elliot Knob, Augusta, the site of last year’s first documented county breeding record for Yellow-rumped Warbler, was the site where 10 birds were seen 1 Jul (AL), a new high summer count of this species. This supports the presence of a small but stable breeding population at the high elevation site. One Northern Waterthrush 23 Jul provided the first summer record in Augusta. Given the low elevation location of the sighting it most likely that the bird was an early fall migrant. The species has been recorded as a rare breeder in the higher elevation forests of neighboring Highland (3 July 1989). A total of 12 Dickcissels were recorded 5 Jun near New Hope, Augusta (AL) providing a new high count for the county and most likely for the entire region. At least two of the birds were present 17 Jul and one 28 Jul, suggesting that some may have bred in these fields.

Contributors: Scott DeBruyne, Carol Hardy, Allen Larner, Patti Reum, Brenda Teken, Aimee Weldon, Ariel White (AWh).

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

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The Central Region saw slightly above average temperatures and lower than normal precipitation for the period. Highlights included Common Tern and Semipalmated Sandpiper, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet near Lynchburg, and an unconfirmed sighting of a Lazuli Bunting near Charlottesville.

Abbreviations:
LBBC (Lynchburg Breeding Bird Count).

CORMORANTS — DUCKS
The LBBC again produced observations of Double-crested Cormorant with two different individuals being recorded (GS, et al.). Mark Johnson found an obviously post-breeding dispersed Great Egret in Madison Heights, Amherst 22 July.

HAWKS — TERN
For the second consecutive summer, 2 adult Ospreys were seen off and on throughout the season, at L. Anna, Louisa (MB). This species is surely nesting somewhere near the lake but no nest has yet been located. An incredible 6 Bald Eagles were found during the LBBC 3–6 June (GS, et al.). An active nest was located here for the fourth year in a row and fledged two young shortly after the count (fide GS). Sattler observed a Ruffed Grouse crossing the trail in front of him while walking on Candler Mountain, Campbell, just to the southeast of Lynchburg, 30 Jul. This species is rare anywhere in the vicinity of Lynchburg off the Blue Ridge, with only one Breeding Bird Atlas Project record in Campbell further to the south and east of this location. Northern Bobwhite continued its disturbing decrease with a total of only nine (lowest total on record) found by five parties during the LBBC. On the LBBC, Spotted Sandpiper vied for notability with Bald Eagle. The seven Spotted Sandpipers (found by four parties) were unusually high for the count, as were the 6 Bald Eagles, though the species is now a regular breeder in the area. (GS, et al.). This count also produced 5 Semipalmated Sandpipers, providing only the second record for the 15-year count (J&TD) and 2 COMMON TERNs, unprecedented
in summer representing only the second record for the Lynchburg area (JW). A Killdeer nest containing four eggs was a nice find 7 & 11 Jun, Campbell (GS). An adult Mourning Dove was observed dropping half an eggshell from a power line in Lynchburg 23 Jul. The date is a little late for breeding of this species, although Roger Clapp’s egg dates book has some September records for the Piedmont (GS).

HUMMINGBIRDS – FINCHES

Thelma Dalmas once again coordinated the Ruby-throated Hummingbird count 31 July. Two hundred and two reports were received with a total of 1558 hummingbirds visiting 444 feeders. Two people reported a high count of 60 birds (one from Amherst and the other from Appomattox). Fifteen participants reported more than 20 birds in their yard. Thelma visited the home of a participant who reported 50 birds at his seven large feeders and remarked “The air was alive” with hummingbirds where the resident has been feeding hummingbirds for more than 20 years”. This is the fourth year of the Central Virginia Hummingbird Count. The highest number (birds per feeder) was in 2002, the year of the major drought across the state. Numbers were down in 2003 (the year of the “monsoons”) and remained about the same for 2004 and 2005 (Jide TD). The LBBC produced a late lingering Ruby-crowned Kinglet 4 Jun, extending the late date here by 19 days (C&MH, R&RM).

UNCONFIRMED RARITIES

A beginning birder told Karen Heathwole that she thought she saw a Lazuli Bunting on the evening of 6 July, at the Ivy Creek Natural Area, Albemarle, near Charlottesville. The observer was sure it had a thick short dark beak, not long like a bluebird’s, and it definitely had a rusty orange breast. She said she watched it for a time, and had really good looks. Unfortunately, this bird could not be relocated for verification.

Contributors: Mike Boatwright, John & Thelma Dalmas, Charles and Melva Hansrote, Karen Heatwole, Ruthanne and Richard Miller, Gene Sattler, Jo Woods.

East

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

The Northern Neck, composed of King George, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, and Lancaster Counties, is bordered by the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. The Middle Peninsula includes King William, King and Queen, Essex, Middlesex, Gloucester, and Mathews Counties and is bordered by the Rappahannock and Pamunkey/York Rivers. The Mattaponi River is the boundary between King William and King and Queen and it joins with the Pamunkey River to form the York River in West Point.

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During the period 117 species were recorded by 16 birders who provided 28 location reports. This Region Report includes information from USGS breeding bird surveys conducted in June in King and Queen (Truhat, FA), Gloucester (SS), and Northumberland (White Stone, BA) and other surveys in Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge (SS, JD, MW). USGS surveys record all birds noted in 50 stops, at 1/2 mile intervals, with three minutes spent at each stop. The Truhat BBS is in a rural area that has been largely unchanged for decades. This route passes almost entirely through farmland, fallow fields, and logging tracts in various stages of regrowth, so it hosts large numbers of early successional species which are declining in many other parts of their range. Perhaps the most interesting finds this season were a Wilson’s Storm-Petrel, nesting Seaside Sparrows, Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrows, and an increase in nesting Bald Eagles.

Abbreviations: Beaverdam (Beaverdam Park, Gloucester), Dameron (Dameron Marsh Northumberland); EG (Elsing Green, King William); GWB (George Washington’s Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland); Hughlett (Hughlett Point NAP, Northumberland); Hutchinson (Hutchinson tract of Rapp. R. NWR, Essex); Island Farm (Island Farm tract of Rapp. R. NWR Richmond); K. G. Ponds (Route 3 ponds in King George); Mothershead (Mothershead tract of Rapp. R. NWR Westmoreland); Mulberry (Mulberry Hunting Preserve, near Newland, Richmond); The Pocket (in Pamunkey Indian Reservation along Pamunkey River, King William); Rapp. R. NWR (Rappahannock R. Valley National Wildlife Refuge); Taylor (Taylor tract of Rapp. R. NWR Richmond); USGS (United States Geological Survey); Wilna (Wilna tract of Rapp. R. NWR, Richmond); Wright (Wright tract of Rapp. R. NWR, Richmond); WSP (Westmoreland State Park, Westmoreland).

WATERFOWL — GREDGES

No swans and very few ducks were reported this season. The high count of Canadian Geese was 90 at K.G. Ponds, 22 Jul as post-breeding birds began to come together to form larger flocks (FA). The largest flock of Wood Ducks (12) was reported at K.G. Ponds, 22 Jul (FA), and three were reported on two stops on the Truhat BBS (FA). A total of 21 Mallards were reported from three locations.
The only reported American Black Duck of the season was at Tayloe (SS) during a marsh bird survey along Cat Point Creek. Three Ring-necked Ducks were at K. G. Ponds, 22 Jul (FA). Nine adult Wild Turkeys foraged with their 26 youngsters of all sizes, from week-old chicks to nearly full-grown juveniles, in a farm field in Gloucester 14 Jul (TK). Five turkeys were at four stops of the White Stone BBS, 5 Jun (RA), and one was on the Truhart BBS, 23 Jun (FA). Northern Bobwhite continues to be a very noticeable presence here with 45 birds noted singing in nine reports. Rural King and Queen has a particularly strong population with 21 birds heard at 13 stops on the Truhart BBS (FA). Bobwhite coeys were also noted at Wilna, Tayloe, Mothershead, and Hutchinson tracts of Rapp. NWR. No loons or grebes were reported this season. Two Brown Pelicans were noted at Hughlett, 9 Jul (JC). Only twelve Double-crested Cormorants were reported from two sites in July (JC, FA).

HERONS — SANDPIPERS
Three Great Egrets were seen at The Pocket, 19 Jun (AB), three were at Wilna, 31 Jul (SS), and 2–10 were seen feeding along Caffe Creek, Gloucester where up to 15 roosted nearby at night (TK). A Great Blue Heron rookery near Dragonville, King and Queen, had four nests with eight full-grown youngsters, 23 Jun (FA). Six Least Bitterns were noted in three locations, with four birds found at three survey points along Cat Point Creek at Tayloe (SS). A probable Glossy Ibis was seen flying over Mulberry, 13 Jun but lighting was not sufficient to rule out a less likely White-faced Ibis (BW). In the breeding bird surveys, only 30 Black Vultures were reported from nine stops, and 24 Turkey Vultures were noted from 16 stops. On a survey along the Rappahannock River from Drake’s Marsh to Mountain Creek, 90 Osprey were found, 11 Jul (BP). This same survey found 65 adult and 50 immature Bald Eagles. The Center for Conservation Biology conducted their annual aerial surveys of breeding Bald Eagles. In this region they found 233 resident pairs which produced 313 chicks in 221 nests. The table below summarizes the findings in each county, Westmoreland and King George had the most nests, more than any other counties in the state, and Middlesex and Lancaster produced the greatest number of chicks per nest in this region (BWa, MW, FS, BW, BPa). The only other raptors reported were 4 Red-tailed and 7 Red-shouldered Hawks. King Rails were heard at Mulberry and Tayloe. Also at Tayloe, 4 Virginia Rails were heard in three out of nine survey sites along Cat Point Creek. The shorebird reports were of an American Woodcock at Mulberry 22 Jun (FA); a Greater Yellowlegs at Tayloe 5 Jun (SS); 22 Killdeer in seven locations; 14 Spotted Sandpipers near Fones Cliffs, Richmond 11 Jun (BW); 2 more (with 3 Least Sandpipers) at nearby Singerly Pond 22 Jul (FA); and one at Caffe Creek, Gloucester, 12 Jul (TK).

GULLS — VIREOS
There were scattered reports of Herring Gulls and Laughing Gulls along the bay shore and near landfill sites, and of Royal Terns along the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers. A high of 27 Forster’s Terns were on the poles of the pound nets in the Rappahannock River near Fones Cliffs, Richmond 22 Jul (FA). A flock of about 35 Mourning Doves was seeking shade under a dense stand of cedars in mid-day heat exceeding 100 degrees, 22 Jul at Mulberry (FA), and a total of 54 Mourning Doves were seen in 40 of the 150 stops on the three BBSs. Fourteen Yellow-billed Cuckoos were noted on 12 of these stops. A Barn Owl was seen at Wilna 5 Jun (SS). Chuck-will’s-widows were heard at Wright (SS) and Whip-poor-wills were heard at Wilna and Heritage Park along Cat Point Creek, Richmond (SS). No Chimney Swifts were found on the Truhart BBS and a total of only 13 were seen in eight of the stops in the other two BBS routes. Ten Ruby-throated Hummingbird were at Wilna 31 Jul (SS) and up to 12 were at Caffe Creek, Gloucester (TK). Red-headed Woodpeckers.

### Summary of Bald Eagle Nesting Surveys by the Center for Conservation Biology

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were seen at Wilna (SS) and Hughlett (JC). Single birds were also found near Lanesville, King William, and on the Truhart BBS near Dragonville, 23 Jun (FA). The 150 BBS stops yielded 19 Red-bellied Woodpeckers at 17 stops; 4 Downy Woodpeckers at four stops; 6 Hairy Woodpeckers at six stops; 4 Northern Flickers at four stops in Truhart and Gloucester; and 6 Pileated Woodpeckers at six stops in White Stone. The most common flycatcher on the BBS routes was Acadian Flycatcher; 42 were found in 35 stops. Other flycatchers in order of abundance were 23 Eastern Wood-Pewees at 22 stops; 16 Great-crested Flycatchers at 15 stops; 8 Eastern Phoebes at seven stops (Truhart and Gloucester); and 3 Eastern Kingbirds on two stops (Truhart). Single Willow Flycatchers were heard singing at Wilna (SS) and at the adjacent property in Mulberry 22 Jun (FA). Four Horned Larks were noted near Lanesville, King William 19 Jun (AB), and another was on the White Stone BBS 5 Jun. The highest report this season for Purple Martin was 30 at two stops on the Gloucester BBS. Four Tree Swallows were found at two stops on the Truhart and Gloucester BBS routes, and 120, including 20 juveniles, were found along the roads in King William, 23 Jun (FA). Four Northern Rough-winged Swallows were found at two stops on the White Stone and Gloucester BBS routes. On 22 Jul, 140 Bank Swallows were perched on wires at Cottage Farm near Leedstown. Many were seen flying in an out of holes in the sand banks at two sand and gravel mines: one off La Grange Road in King George had 15 birds; the other off Trigger Lane just over the King George border in Westmoreland, had 15–20 birds (FA). Another 250 were seen feeding and resting at Wilna 30 Jul (SS). The small Cliff Swallow population, first noted a couple years ago under the Mattapoisit R. Bridge in Walkerton (TD), has increased in size; birds were flying in and out of 19 nests on 23 Jun (FA). Twenty-five Barn Swallows were noted on 13 stops of the BBS routes. Ten Cedar Waxwings were found in seven stops along the Truhart and Gloucester BBS routes. Carolina Wrens are one of the most commonly heard species with 65 being noted on 53 stops of the BBS routes. House Wren, however, was found only on one site on the White Stone BBS. Marsh Wrens were again in large numbers (40-50) in the Mulberry marshes 13 Jun (BWm, m.ob.) and about 10 pairs were in a nearby marsh along Cat Point Creek at Tayloe (SS). Only seven Gray Catbirds were found in five stops on the BBS routes, but Northern Mockingbirds (39 birds at 33 stops) and Brown Thrashers (16 birds at 15 stops) were more common. Twenty Eastern Bluebirds were noted at 13 stops on the White Stone and Gloucester BBS routes. The three BBSs also noted 25 American Robins at 20 stops; 27 Wood Thrushes in 20 stops; 30 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers at 24 stops; 30 Carolina Chickadees at 20 stops; and 58 Tufted Titmice at 49 stops. Only nine White-breasted Nuthatches were found at six stops on the Truhart and Gloucester BBS routes. Red-eyed Vireos seem to be the most common woodland bird in the region with 145 reported from 88 BBS stops. White-eyed Vireo (27 birds at 23 stops) and Yellow-throated Vireo (12 birds at 12 stops) were also common.

WARBLERS — FINCHES

Listed in order of abundance, based on the BBS data, the following warblers were breeding in the region, which has a good habitat mix with a large amount of early successional habitat: Ovenbird (77 at 52 stops); Pine Warbler (73 at 58 stops); Common Yellowthroat (66 at 38 stops); Yellow-breasted Chat (44 at 33 stops); Prairie Warbler (38 at 24 stops); Hooded Warbler (29 at 23 stops); Northern Parula (12 at nine stops); Black-and-White Warbler (11 at 10 stops); Prothonotary Warbler (6 at five stops); Worm-eating Warbler (2 at two Truhart stops); Louisiana Waterthrush (2 at two stops); Yellow-throated Warbler (1 at Truhart); and Kentucky Warbler (1 at Gloucester). Other warblers found during the season included 6 Yellow Warblers singing in Mulberry 22 Jun, and three singing at K.G. Ponds 22 Jul (FA); and 2 American Redstarts at the Pamunkey Reservation, King William 23 Jun (FA). Scarlet and Summer Tanagers were equally common on the BBS routes with 17 found at 15 stops. The three USGS BBSs also noted 43 Eastern Towhees at 28 stops; 68 Chipping Sparrows at 47 stops; 19 Field Sparrows at 13 stops; only 2 Song Sparrows at two stops (White Stone); 92 Northern Cardinals at 65 stops; 32 Blue Grosbeaks at 26 stops (19 of them at White Stone); and 145 Indigo Buntings in 84 stops (the most common bird in open areas). One of the most exciting finds of the season was 7 singing Seaside Sparrows at Island Farm, 14 Jul (SS, MW), the first “probable” breeding record known to the editor. Though no Grasshopper Sparrows were found on the BBS routes, it is a common breeder in the region, with 33 reported on both peninsulas, especially on the Northern Neck. The Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow population at Mulberry was surveyed by William and Mary’s Center for Conservation Biology ornithologists in May and Jun (see side bar article, next page). They found 41 singing birds and five nests. In the interest of minimizing disturbance, they did not attempt to find more nests. They also found one bird upriver at Otterburn Marsh. (BWm, MW, FS, BW, BPa). Another small population of 5 singing Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrows was found a short way downriver from Mulberry at Island Farm (SS, MW). Territorial Dickcissels were found at two locations: three on private property near Occupacia Creek, Essex 8 Jun (AM),
Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow

In a message posted on the VA Bird list-serve June 14, 2005, Dr. Bryan Watts, Director Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and Mary provided more information about the Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow. This subspecies was first described from a specimen taken along the Nanticoke River on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1947. The center of abundance for the population has been southern New Jersey and Delaware along Delaware Bay. Atlas work in Maryland in the 1980s indicated a population on both the eastern and western shores of the upper Chesapeake Bay. Recent surveys have shown dramatic declines, particularly in coastal Maryland. Other than a small number of observations in the Dyke Marsh area of the Potomac, there are no modern breeding records for Virginia. Due to the small population size, declining trend, habitat specialization, and apparent vulnerability, it has been recommended that the population be given federal and state conservation status throughout its range. The Mulberry Point population extends the range for this form a considerable distance to the south and represents the largest concentration of breeding currently known throughout the Chesapeake Bay area. This race appears to occur in marshes within a narrow salinity band from oligohaline to tidal fresh. All of the territories in the Mulberry Point marsh were positioned in portions that contained lush meadow vegetation including rushes, three square, saltmeadow hay, and scattered saltbush. These marsh types occur on the Potomac between Caledon and Washington DC, on the Rappahannock between Tappahannock and Port Royal, and at the point of transition between tidal and non-tidal portions of many bay tributaries. Every effort should be made to survey these areas next year to determine the range of this sparrow in the region.

What's the Difference?

As with other species adapted to marsh life, the Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow blends in by being more grayish overall than its inland cousins. If you get a close look at the wings, you will notice that the expected rusty color is almost entirely absent. The bird's grayish appearance is due to much of the normally rusty coloring on the back being replaced with gray and black, and to there being little or no buff color in the feather edges you would see in other subspecies. Inland birds have a rusty tail and brownish rump and back; on the Coastal Plain birds this is an olive gray with more black in the upper tail coverts and back. The crown of the Coastal Plain bird has less rust color and more black and the nape is gray rather than rusty brown. The bill is also noticeably larger: it is longer overall and wider at the base than in inland birds.

This Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow was photographed by Fred Atwood at Mulberry Point marsh on 22 June 2004 in the middle of a VERY hot afternoon. He used a Nikon D70 and a Nikon 300 f2.8 lens with a 2X teleconverter.
First Confirmation
Northern Mockingbirds
Nesting in Buchanan

In the 1970's and 80's Northern Mockingbirds were almost never found in Buchanan. In the mid-1990's a few were observed overwintering there, but they always departed in the spring. By 2000 the species was occasionally observed in the county during the breeding season. In 2004 near Grundy, Johnnie Ratliff, a member of the Buchanan County Bird Club, observed a pair carrying food, but the nest was not found. Roger Mayhorn noted a Northern Mockingbird had overwintered on Compton Mountain in the northeast section of the county during the winter of 2004-2005. In the spring, Lynda Mayhorn discovered that a second bird had joined it and they were observed chasing a third mockingbird from the area. The pair seemed to disappear for a few weeks; then on 29 June an adult feeding two fledglings was observed and photographed by Roger in the same area. On 5 July, Johnnie & Betty Ratliff observed three fledglings and two adults near Grundy. At the same location on 24 July, they found a Northern Mockingbird nest with one nestling remaining in it. That bird fledged on 25 July. Northern Mockingbirds have been common in Tazewell to the east and Russell to the south of Buchanan for decades, probably because those counties have more open pastureland and are less forested than Buchanan. Morris Wallace, a resident of Pike, Kentucky (the county contiguous to Buchanan to the west), reports that Pike, has had nesting mockingbirds for 10-12 years. Jim Phillips, a naturalist in Summers, WV, and co-author of A Guide to the Birds of the New River Gorge Area, notes that this species has nested in some of the West Virginia counties to the north of Buchanan for as many as 30 years.

On 5 July 2005 at his home on Compton Mountain in Buchanan County, Roger Mayhorn observed an adult male Blue-winged Warbler feeding 2 juvenile “Brewster’s” Warblers, 1 male, and 1 female. The three birds were feeding near the ground among the thick vines of Virgin’s Bower (Clematis virginiana). Roger stood in one spot for 45 minutes, attempting to get good photos, while the birds were sometimes as close as four feet in the thick vegetation. He finally captured this image with a Canon D60 digital camera with a 200-400 mm Tamron telephoto lens at 1/250 second at f/5.6

SOUTHWEST
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The weather for the period started out with cool temperatures. Sixty degrees F was the average for June and 70.7° F for July. There were seven days of rain in June and eight rainy days in July. The breeding season was relatively normal for the area with a few exceptions. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were plentiful at area feeders until mid to late July, when they suddenly seemed to disappear, remaining scarce for about two weeks, then returning to feeders. A couple of late Pine Siskins were found in Grayson in early June. A Little Blue Heron was observed at Rural Retreat Lake in Wythe. The first confirmation of Northern Mockingbirds nesting in Buchanan occurred in the northern part of the county on Compton Mountain in June. Also on Compton Mountain two fledgling Brewster’s Warblers were found and photographed. A female Blackburnian Warbler observed on July 20 in Buchanan provided a new early date for post breeding dispersal date there.

In July, Grasshopper Sparrows were found in a northern area in Buchanan, where they had not been previously observed. The first reported Blue Grosbeak in Grayson was observed in June. An unusual find was a Yellow-headed Blackbird in Floyd. Ten birds from different parts of the state
conducted a VSO Breeding Bird Foray in Russell and Wise in June.

**Abbreviations:** Rural Retreat Lake (RRL)

**WATERFOWL – SHRIKES**

Two Blue-winged Teal, found on a farm pond west of Galax in Grayson on 5 Jun, were late for that species. (GE). A Northern Bobwhite in Russell on 28 Jun was the first found in the area for several years but it is not known whether the bird was wild or an escapee. Two other bobwhites were seen in Grayson on 5 Jun (B&MD). A white phase Little Blue Heron was a good discovery at RRL, Wythe 23 Jul (GE). An early immature Black-crowned Night Heron was seen on the New R. just east of Galax, Grayson on 9 Jun (GE). Three Loggerhead Shrikes were observed on 28 Jun in Russell (JT). Though the species is not common within the county, it is known to nest there.

**WARBLERS – BLACKBIRDS**

An adult male Blue-winged Warbler was observed feeding two juvenile Brewer’s Warblers, one male and one female, Compton Mt., Buchanan 5 Jul (RM). The birds were observed for about 45 minutes and photographed. A male Yellow-rumped Warbler in breeding plumage was seen on Haw Orchard Mt. (5,089 ft; the third highest peak in VA) in Grayson Highlands State Park, Grayson 26 Jun (E&MT). An early date for fall Blackburnian Warblers was set in Buchanan, when a first year female was found on Compton Mt. 20 Jul (RM). Two more adult Blackburnians were observed in the same location on 24 Jul (RM). The previous early post breeding dispersal date in the county had been 31 Jul. A new area hosting breeding Grasshopper Sparrows was located on Lynne Camp in Buchanan on 3 Jul (E&MT). Only a few areas within the county are known to harbor this sparrow species. Possibly the first recorded sighting of a Blue Grosbeak in Grayson took place on 3 Jun, when a male was observed on a local farm (B&MD). The first reported sighting of a Yellow-headed Blackbird in Floyd occurred 13 Jun near Rt. 730 near the county line. The bird was being chased by a Northern Mockingbird.

**Contributors:** Bill & Margaret Dunson, Glen Eller, Roger & Lynda Mayhorn, Jim Phillips, Johnnie & Betty Ratliff, Ed & Michelle Talbott, Jerry Thornhill, Morris Wallace, Dave Worley.

**South Central**


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Most of the reports received for the summer season concerned breeding birds, but there were a few late spring and early fall migrants mentioned. The overall volume of reports was low, perhaps due to traveling birders. Most reports of common breeding species have not been included in this summary but such data is still valuable and can be submitted by observers to eBird at www.ebird.org. The highlight of the season was an immature White Ibis at Kerr Reservoir.

**Abbreviation:** Syon (Syon Abbey, along the Blue Ridge Parkway, Franklin).

**EGRETS — WOODCOCK**

Birds found 24 Jul below the dam at Kerr Res., Mecklenburg, included 6 Great Egrets and, more surprisingly, an immature White Ibis, unexpected this far from the coast (ph., AD, SD). A vulture nest found in the spring in a rocky area near Syon proved to be that of a Turkey Vulture, with an adult and one chick seen at the nest on 4 Jun (JS). The few shorebird reports included one Greater Yellowlegs and one Spotted Sandpiper on 24 Jul at Dick Cross WMA, Mecklenburg (AD, SD), and an American Woodcock 19 Jun at Hells Island Rd., just west of Emporia, in Greensville (KK).

**VIREOS — BOBOLINK**

In our area, Blue-headed Vireos are expected nesters only at higher elevations in the Blue Ridge. Only one report of breeding was received this year; near Syon, where adults were carrying food on 4 Jun (JS). Tree Swallows nested at Syon, with noisy young in a nest box on 19 Jun (JS). Cedar Waxwings also appear to have nested at Syon, where adults were carrying food into a pine tree in which nestling birds could be heard 3 Jul (JS). Welcome reports of Cerulean Warbler continue to come from the Blue Ridge on the western edge of our area, but virtually none from elsewhere. JS had at least 12 Ceruleans at Syon on 4 June and adults carrying food there on 3 Jul. A Black-and-white Warbler nest was found at Syon on 4 Jun (JS) and a fledged Worm-eating Warbler begging for food was there 3 Jul (JS). One Swainson’s Warbler was reported 30 Jun along Lowground Rd. at the Meherrin R., Greenville/Southampton border (JF). A Louisiana Waterthrush at Syon on 4 Jun was recently fledged (JS), and one at a birdbath in a South Boston, Halifax yard 10 Jul was likely a post-breeding wanderer (JB). Adult Kentucky
Warblers were seen carrying food to young near Syon on 4 and 19 Jun and 3 Jul (JS). The last Canada Warbler report was 4 Jun at Syon (JS); it is unclear whether this species nests in the region, though it nests in the Blue Ridge not far to the north. A pair of Bobolinks lingered until 11 Jun in possible nesting habitat at Syon, but breeding was not confirmed (JS).

Contributors: Jeff Blalock (JB), Adam D’Onofrio (AD), Sue D’Onofrio (SD), John Fox (JF), Karen Kearney (KK), John Sebastian (JS)

Southeast

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

EDITOR — Adam D’Onofrio, 25118 Smith Grove Road, Petersburg, VA 23803 bigadfromlb@vcu.org

Temperatures were above average for both months; June’s average temperature of 76.2°, was 2.7° above normal. July was even hotter with an average temperature of 81.7°, 3.8° above normal. Precipitation varied by location. While some areas had a marked increase in precipitation due to heavy thunderstorms, others had little or no rain. Bird activity appeared normal with no reports of any unusual trends. Some good news came from the Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex. This was the first year in more than a decade that Virginia had four breeding
pairs of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. On June 2, biologists banded a single chick, which was produced by a new breeding pair adding to the eight new chicks, produced by three other pairs that were banded previously. The continued work of the Nature Conservancy is paying off as the area begins to take on the structure and vegetation of a pine savanna. In time the site may also support a population of Bachman’s Sparrows. Although Mississippi Kites were assumed to be nesting in Southampton County over the years, it was not documented until this year when, on July 16, a nest that contained one juvenile was discovered and photographed in Branchville. Congratulations to Brenda Tekin for her hard work in obtaining this record.

**Abbreviations:** Dutch Gap (Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield); Henricus (Henricus Park, Chesterfield).

**LOONS — WOODPECKERS**

A late Common Loon in breeding plumage was seen along the shore in Yorktown, York 14 Jun (DH). One hundred sixty-five Double-crested Cormorant nests were counted in the James River west of the Benjamin Harrison Memorial Bridge near Hopewell 17 Jun (MB, BW, BWi). Least Bitterns were reported frequently during the first half of June from the marsh at Henricus (m.o.b.). Seven Osprey, including at least two young, were counted at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun. The observer noted three nests in the park (AB). The fledgling from the first documented nesting of Mississippi Kites in Southampton was observed being fed by adults 30 Jul (JB, BK, ph. by BT). An adult Bald Eagle was seen at Crewes Channel, Henrico 11 Jun (AD). Another eagle, possibly the same one, was seen there 21 Jul (AB). The Peregrine Falcon pair that nested in Richmond for a third consecutive year fledged four young. Two of the young were taken and released in Shenandoah National Park. The other two stayed in Richmond where, reportedly, they were doing well. A Peregrine Falcon was seen at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun (AB). Other falcon sightings in the city included one of the juveniles 7 Jun (JJ, IR) and two birds flying over the James R. near the Manchester bridge 17 Jun (MD). Two Northern
Bobwhites were reported from Turkey Island Rd., Henrico 31 Jul (AB). A Red-headed Woodpecker frequented a residence on Saltwood Ct., Henrico throughout the period (TT). Another Red-headed Woodpecker was noted on route 249, New Kent 31 Jul (AB).

**VIREOS — SPARROWS**

A Warbling Vireo was observed singing at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun (AB). Horned Larks were heard singing on Turkey Island Rd., Henrico 11 Jun (AD). Three Horned Larks were seen at the Shirley Plantation, Charles City 21 Jul (AB). A total of 899 Cliff Swallow nests were counted under the Benjamin Harrison Memorial Bridge 17 Jun (MB, BW, BWi). Cliff Swallow nests were also noted under the bridge over Felgates Creek along the Colonial National Historical Parkway, James City 1 Jul (DH). Twelve to fifteen Bank Swallow nests were found at Presquille Isle, Henrico 17 Jun (MB, BW, BWi). Three Bank Swallows were seen at the Shirley Plantation, Charles City 21 Jul (AB). Seven Tree Swallows were counted at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun (AB). A good city record for Richmond was furnished by a Brown-headed Nuthatch seen on the corner of Sylvan Ave. and Cedar Ave. 4 Jul (AB). A Gray Catbird was at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun (AB).

Another Gray Catbird was noted along the Green Springs Trail, James City 10 Jul (BW). An ad. male Black-and-white Warbler was seen on the Green Springs Trail, James City 3 Jul and two male Scarlet Tanagers were encountered there 10 Jul. The observer notes that none of these three species is know to nest on the Green Springs Trail (BW).

Several first winter f. Dickcissels were reported from Dutch Gap 27 Jul (A&LW). A pair of Blue Grosbeaks was seen at James River Park in Richmond 26 Jun (AB). A high count of five Grasshopper Sparrows was tallied on Turkey Island Rd., Henrico 5 Jun (AB).

**Contributors:** Arun Bose, Jane Beavers, Mitchell Byrd, Mary Davis, Adam D’Onofrio, Dave Hewitt, Jan Johnson, Brian Keith, Irene Ries, Brenda Tekin, Tina Trice, Al & Linda Warfield, Bryan Watts, Bill Williams (BW).

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**Coastal**

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

This image of a Grasshopper Sparrow was digitized by Adam D’Onofrio in Henrico County.

**EDITOR — Bill Williams, 154 Lakewood Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23185**

June was unseasonably cool, though dry through the middle of the month, with a strong cold front on 21 June which was particularly damaging to coastal marsh nesting species. July was the eighteenth warmest on record at Norfolk. The average minimum temperature of 74.1°F ranks as fifth warmest on record, while the average high of 88.1°F was only slightly above normal. A high of 101°F occurred on 27 July, the first time 100°F or more had been recorded at Norfolk since 1995. Norfolk was drier than normal for July receiving a total of 3.67 inches, 1.5 inches less than the normal 5.17 inches.

June and July 2005 will be chronicled as the summer of seabirds. Significant numbers of weakened and dead birds, mostly Greater Shearwaters were reported from coastal New Jersey to Florida. Though the actual cause for the calamity has not been fully determined, what was uniformly evident was that the birds were emaciated and starving. Reports from offshore sport fishermen of “sailor gulls” that came to their trolled baits and into their boats in search of food were telling. At least one Greater Shearwater was seen well into the Bay, five miles northwest of the CBBT 10 July.

As of 1 July birder access to the three northermost CBBT islands was severely restricted by new regulations ostensibly designed to strengthen the facility’s security. This almost certainly curtailed reports from those locations.

**Abbreviations:** Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); CCB (Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and Mary); Dismal (Great Dismal Swamp NWR, Suffolk); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, s. of Northampton); Clubhouse (Clubhouse Point, Northampton); Craney (Craney Island,
Portsmouth); Grandview (Grandview Beach, Hampton); HRBT (Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel, Hampton/Norfolk); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, Accomack); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, Northampton); FINWR (Fisherman’s Island NWR, Northampton); Parker’s (Parker’s Marsh, Northampton); Saxis (Saxis WMA, Accomack); SPM (South Point Marsh, Smith Island, Accomack).

Waterfowl — Herons
A Tundra Swan persisted at Back Bay through 25 Jul (DS). Thirty Mute Swans were at SPM 23 Jun (HA). The Mallard high count was 66 on 6 Jul at Back Bay (DS). A peak for American Black Ducks was 19 on 25 Jul at Back Bay (DS). Lingering duck species included a Northern Pintail 6 Jun and an American Wigeon 4 Jun, both at Chinc. (GK, MAK). A Blue-winged Teal was seen at Back Bay 6 and 25 Jul (DS). Also at Back Bay, the Wood Duck census peaked at 41 on 25 Jul (DS). The only loon reports were from Chinc, with one Red-throated and 2 Common 5-6 Jun (GK, MAK), and one Red-throated 11 June (AL, PL), likely the same bird previously reported. Up to 8 Pied-billed Grebes were present at Back Bay 25 Jul (DS). Greater Shearwaters were widely reported with “pairs” noted 23 Jun in Washington Canyon (WB): groups of 30-40 off shore on 2 Jul (CD); one weakened bird at Virginia Beach 4 Jul (BA); 2-3 in the Anglo-African Wreck southeast of FINWR, 10 Jul (ph); and a single bird 5 miles north-west of CBBT at 37 0526 N 076 0812.8 W (BP, BW). Two Sooty Shearwaters were observed; one on 18 Jun southeast of FINWR (JN, MR, CM), and one beneath the CBBT high-rise 2 Jul (ph) BP, FS, MR). Also widely documented were Wilson’s Storm-Petrels. One was seen 3 Jun off Chin. (KG); 2-3 off Myrtle Island, Northampton 21 Jun (MB, RB, BT); one off Hog Island, Northampton 22 Jun (BW). The peak count was 51 on 10 Jul from Grandview Beach, Hampton to FINWR, including a group of 15 on Poquoson Flats (BP, BW). Fifteen were reported off Chin. 17 Jul (LM, JK). Northern Gannets are infrequent but regular each summer along Virginia’s Atlantic coast. There was one imm. off Hog Island, Northampton 22 Jun (BW, BA, RB, JV). A dead immature was found 7 Jul on Metompkin Island, Accomack (WB), and one of unspecified age was noted at Chin. 16-17 Jul (JK, LM). Brown Pelicans nested at three Virginia locations, SPM, FINWR, and Sandy Island, Northampton, the latter a new barrier islands colony site for this species. Thirteen nests were found there 23 Jun (BA, JV). The FINWR colony, visited 19 Jun, had increased from the two previous years to 1080 (BW, BA, MB, RB, JV). At SPM, where there were an estimated 700 nests, 543 young were banded 23 Jun (HA, DB, JWk et al.). SPM also had several Double-crested Cormorant nests 23 Jun (HA, DB, JWk, et al.). On the barrier islands, 15 nests were located 23 Jun on Chimney Pole Marsh, Northampton (BW, RB, MB), and another eight nests were found 20 Jun at Clubhouse, a new barrier islands colony site for this species (RB, MB). The thirty-first annual Virginia barrier islands colonial waterbird survey visited the 4 remaining seaside heronries south of Wallops Island, Accomack 20-23 June. Total ad. heron/egret/ibis counts included 409 Great Egrets. 151 Snowy Egrets. 57 Little Blue Herons. 286 Tricolored Herons, 33 Cattle Egrets, 488 Black-crowned Night-Herons, 4 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, 141 White Ibis and 247 Glossy Ibis. For the fifth consecutive year White-faced Ibis was reported for the state. One was observed 11 Jun in Snow Goose Pool, Chinc. (AL, PL).

Raptors — Shorebirds
A male Northern Harrier carrying prey was at Parker’s 4 Jun (KG). A pair on Cobb Island, Northampton produced four young in Jun (BAR). Other sightings were one at Saxis 6 Jun (GK, MAK), and a female 20 Jun near Parramore Island, Northampton (BA, JV). The only reported Mississippi Kite was a juv. 18 Jul on ESVNWR (AD). CCB monitors the state’s 21 active Peregrine Falcon nest sites, 16 of which are within this reporting region. This summer those nests produced 37 young (BaW, MAB, SP, EL). Five Clapper Rail nests were found on the barrier islands 20-22 Jun; three on Cedar Island and one on Metompkin Island, Accomack 20 Jun (AA, BA, JF, BW); and one on Wreck Island, Northampton 21 Jun (BA, BW, BV). All nests were well up on sandy beaches in beach grass clumps, likely a response to the intermittent marsh flooding May through the third week of Jun. Single King Rails were noted at Back Bay 14 and 24 Jun (DS). A dozen Virginia Rails and 3 Black Rails were heard the night of 3 Jun at Saxis (KG). The Purple Gallinule was found in May at Fort Monroe, Hampton (BAn) was seen there 6 Jun (PS frye) NB). Black-bellied Plovers were noted from several locations; 13 at Back Bay 7 Jun (DS); 47 on Cedar Island, Accomack 20 Jun (MB, RB); 4 on Sandy Island, Northampton 22 Jun (BA, JV); 34 on Hog Island, Northampton 23 Jun (MB); 4 on Ship Shoal Island, Northampton 21 Jun (BW, BA, JV); 2 on Myrtle Island, Northampton 21 Jun (RB).

Sempipalmed Plover reports included three birds 14 Jun at Back Bay (DS) and one 20 Jun on Metompkin Island, Accomack (BA, JV). The comprehensive summer survey of beach-nesting plovers found 48 Wilson’s Plovers and 320 Piping Plovers (RBT). Of great interest were five nesting pairs of American Oystercatcher discovered in Jun at Grandview, Hampton (RB). A total of
504 ads. were found during the 19–22 June barrier islands survey (BW et al.). Two Black-necked Stilt nests were monitored at Cranye. One failed. The second produced two young between 10–15 Jul (RB). Two ads. were at Chinc. and four were along the Chincoteague causeway 5–6 Jun (MK). Three were seen along the causeway 16–17 Jul (LM). Thirteen Willet nests were discovered 20 Jun during the barrier islands survey: 10 on Cedar Island, and three on Metompkin Island. A Spotted Sandpiper was present 16–17 Jun at Chinc. (MK). Single Whimbrels were seen 5 Jun at Tom’s Cove, Chinc. (MK), and 20 Jun on Hog Island Bay, Northampton (BW, et al.). Two Marbled Godwits were at Hog Island, Northampton 22 Jun (BW, et al.). Sandy Island, Northampton had 7 Ruddy Turnstones 22 Jun (BA, JV). Sixteen flyby Red Knots were near Hog Island, Northampton 22 Jun (MB). The highest reported Sanderling count was 261 at Back Bay 7 Jun (DS). Two Semipalmated Sandpipers were encountered 22 Jun on Hog Island, Northampton (MB). A Least Sandpiper 7 Jun at Cape Charles, Northampton was considered late (MB). White-rumped Sandpipers reports included single birds 3 Jun at Chinc. (MG), 4 Jun at Parker’s (MG), and 14 Jun at Back Bay (DS). A Pectoral Sandpiper was at Chinc. 16 Jul (ML). Seventy-eight Short-billed Dowitchers were accompanied by one Long-billed Dowitcher 16–17 Jul at Chinc. (ML).

Gulls — Blackbirds

The number of Laughing Gull pairs at HRBT increased from 4100 in Jun to 5000 + by the end of Jul (RB) The barrier colony on Wreck Island, Northampton had 2270 adults 21 Jun (BW, BA, JV). Ring-billed Gulls at Back Bay peaked at 308 27 Jul (DS). The number of nesting Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls recorded during the 19–22 Jun barrier islands survey were 3315 and 506, respectively (BW et al.). Seventy pairs of the former and 11 pairs of the latter nested on HRBT in Jun (RB). Back Bay’s peak Lesser Black-backed Gull count was 36 on 16 Jun (DS). The barrier islands survey Gull-billed Tern count was 228 ads. (BW, et al.). Twenty-two pairs nested on HRBT (RB). Two colony sites on Wreck Island, Northampton supported a combined 3300 nesting Royal Terns and 134 Sandwich Terns 21 Jun (BW et al.). The 755 breeding Common Terns found on the barrier islands 19–22 Jun was complemented by 736 pairs on HRBT and 312 pairs on Grandview, Hampton (RB). A Forster’s Tern colony of 14 ads. was documented 20 Jun on Metompkin Island, Accomack (BA, JV). There were 571 Least Terns tallied during the 19-22 Jun barrier islands survey (BW et al.) On Cape 26 nests produced 22 young in Jun, and after three nesting attempts, 110 pairs bred at Grandview, Hampton (RB). The season’s first Black Tern report was a single bird 12 Jul near Oyster, Northampton (BW, BA). Elsewhere 75 pairs were found at Grandview, and 22 pairs were at Back Bay (RB). A pair of Eurasian Collared-Doves with two jays was seen 7 Jun off Magotha Road, Northampton (NB). A Great Horned Owl was flushed from a Phragmites thicket on Metompkin Island, Accomack 20 June (BA). Another was perched near Saxis, 16 Jun (JK, LM). The Common Nighthawk may be disappearing as a breeder in this region with little notice. One was seen 4 Jun at Chinc. (MK) and one was on Cedar Island, Accomack 20 Jun (RB). A “first in several years” was a Chuck-will’s-widows heard 7-8 June from the sw corner of Cape Charles, Northampton (NB). Two sang nightly 20–22 June from the upland forests of Hog Island, Northampton (BW, et al.). An entertaining Belted Kingfisher pair with 3 jays was noted 18 Jun at the Sustainable Technology Park, Cape Charles, Northampton (NB). An exciting find was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher reported 7 Jun off White Marsh Road, SR 642, near Dismal (PH). Brown-headed Nuthatch has become a rarity in southern Northampton County. Therefore, one observed 9 Jun in Cape Charles, Northampton was most intriguing (MB). Six Marsh Wrens were heard 3 Jun at Saxis (KG). There were 2 flyover Cedar Waxwings 19 Jun near Nassawadox, Northampton (BA, BW). A late Blackpoll Warbler was noted 5 Jun in Cape Charles, Northampton (NB). Three Dickcissels were found 7 Jun on the Eastern Shore, two at Waverly, Northampton, and one near ESVNWR (NB). The report of a Salt Marsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow at Saxis 6 Jun (KG) was noteworthy. Seaside Sparrow reports included observations from Saxis 3 Jun, and begging jays, 4 Jun at Parker’s (MG). A nest with three eggs was found on Metompkin Island, Accomack 20 Jun (BA). A Boat-tailed Grackle nest with young was observed at Parker’s 4 Jun (KG).

VARCOM Review List  Special thanks to VARCOM for providing this information

Because we make many references to VARCOM Review List birds, we decided to include the list with this issue. More information including maps and categories can be found on the VARCOM web site at: www.virginiabirds.org.

Statewide
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
Fulvous Whistling-Duck
Brant (forms other than hrota)
Barnacle Goose [Category 3]
Ross's Goose (blue morph)
Eurasian Green-winged Teal
[Common Teal] Anas c. crecca
White-cheeked Pintail
Cinnamon Teal
Tufted Duck
Barrow's Goldeneye
Pacific Loon
Western Grebe
Clark's Grebe
Yellow-nosed Albatross
Black-browed Albatross
Black-capped Petrel
Herald (Trinidad) Petrel
Fea's Petrel
Short-tailed Shearwater
White-faced Storm-Petrel
Band-rumped Storm-Petrel
White-tailed Tropicbird
Brown Booby
Magnificent Frigatebird
Little Egret
Reddish Egret
White-faced Ibis
Wood Stork
Greater flamingo
White-tailed Kite
Marsh Harrier
Broad-winged Hawk (dark morph)
Red-tailed Hawk (taxa other than borealis)
Ferruginous Hawk
Gyrfalcon
Yellow Rail
Paint-billed Crake
Purple Gallinule
Limpkin
Snowy Plover
Mountain Plover
Whimbrel (taxa other than hudsoni-}

Eskimo Curlew
Long-billed Curlew
Bar-tailed Godwit
Red-necked Stint
Ruff
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper
Eurasian Woodcock
South Polar Skua
Black-tailed Gull
Mew Gull
California Gull
Thayer's Gull
Yellow-legged Gull
Sabine's Gull
Elegant Tern
Arctic Tern
Roseate Tern
Sooty Tern
White-winged Tern
Thick-billed Murre
Common Murre
Black Guillemot
White-winged Dove
Common Ground-Dove
Groove-billed Ani
Snowy Owl
Brewer's Owl
Allen's Hummingbird
Black-chinned Hummingbird
Magnificent Hummingbird
Lewis's Woodpecker
Red-cockaded Woodpecker
Say's Phoebe
Vermilion Flycatcher
Ash-throated Flycatcher
Gray Kingbird
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Fork-tailed Flycatcher
Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatcher
Cave Swallow
Black-billed Magpie
Boreal Chickadee
Rock Wren
Bewick's Wren
Northern Wheatear
Varied Thrush
Sage Thrasher
Sprague's Pipit
Bohemian Waxwing
Northern Shrike
Black-whiskered Vireo
Bell's Vireo
Bachman's Warbler
Audubon's Warbler (Dendroica coro-

nata auduboni)
Black-throated Gray Warbler
Townsend's Warbler
Kirtland's Warbler
Western Tanager
Black-headed Grosbeak
Lazuli Bunting
Green-tailed Towhee
Spotted Towhee
Black-throated Sparrow
Lark Bunting
Harris's Sparrow
Bachman's Sparrow
Henslow's Sparrow
Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow
(Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii)
Dark-eyed Junco (any taxa other than
Slate-colored)
Chesapeake-collared Longspur
Shiny Cowbird
Bullock's Oriole
Hoary Redpoll
European Goldfinch (3a)
Pine Grosbeak
White-winged Crossbill

Coastal Plain Only
Ruffed Grouse
Common Raven
Loggerhead Shrike

Piedmont Only
Ruddy Turnstone
Sanderling
White-rumped Sandpiper
Baird's Sandpiper
Stilt Sandpiper

Mountains & Valleys Only
Mississippi Kite

Piedmont and Mountains & Valleys.
Greater White-fronted Goose
Surf Scoter
White-winged Scoter
Red-throated Loon
Tricolored Heron
Snowy Egret
White Ibis
Willet
Long-billed Dowitcher
Iceland Gull (except Prince William)
Glaucous Gull(except Prince William)

(Continued next page)
Coastal Plain and Piedmont south of Interstate 64
Black-capped Chickadee

Mountains & Valleys and Piedmont s. of Interstate 64
Glossy Ibis
American Golden-Plover
Laughing Gull
Great Black-backed Gull
Lesser Black-backed Gull
All of the state except Northampton County
Swainson’s Hawk
Sandhill Crane
Eurasian Collared-Dove

All of the state west of Chesapeake Bay and north of the James River (to Lynchesburg) and west of Campbell and Pittsylvania Counties
Anhinga
Swallow-tailed Kite
Painted Bunting

All of the state except offshore of the 30-fathom isobath*
Northern Fulmar
cory’s Shearwater
Greater Shearwater
Manx Shearwater
Audubon’s Shearwater
Leach’s Storm-Petrel
Great Skua
Long-tailed Jaeger
Bridled Tern
Dovekie
Atlantic Puffin

The 30-fathom isobath is defined as the place where the ocean depth drops to about 180 feet; this appears on bathymetric-topographic ocean charts as a contour, just like the lines on terrestrial topographic charts.

All of the state west of the Chesapeake Bay area
The “Bay area” here including the lower portions of the larger tidal rivers
Cackling Goose
Ross's Goose
King Eider
Common Eider
Harlequin Duck
Eared Grebe (except at South Holston Reservoir)
Sooty Shearwater
Wilson’s Storm-Petrel
Black Rail
Wilson’s Plover
Piping Plover
American Avocet
Black-necked Stilt
American Oystercatcher
Whimbrel
Hudsonian Godwit
Marbled Godwit
Red Knot
Purple Sandpiper
Curlew Sandpiper
Red Phalarope
Red-necked Phalarope
Parasitic Jaeger
Pomarine Jaeger
Little Gull
Black-headed Gull
Franklin’s Gull
Black-legged Kittiwake
Sandwich Tern
Gull-billed Tern
Black Skimmer
Razorbill
Bicknell’s Thrush
Seaside Sparrow
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Clay-colored Sparrow
Lark Sparrow
Ipswich Sparrow
Le Conte’s Sparrow

Wilson’s Phalarope
Boat-tailed Grackle
Yellow-headed Blackbird

** for instance, upstream from the Chickahominy River mouth along the James River, from West Point along the York River, from Tappahannock along the Rappahannock River, and from the Route 301 bridge along the Potomac River.

Any species or form that does not appear on the lists above or on the Official State List is by default a Review Species (unless, of course, it’s a zoo bird or pet that has escaped!). The Committee is also interested in documentation of subspecies, to the extent this is possible, and even on “types” of birds, such as the various types of Red Crossbill, currently diagnosable only by spectrographic analysis of calls. The Committee will gladly archive and acknowledge such material, even if it is not reviewable at this time.

In the interest of completeness, the Committee also accepts and archives documentation of birds believed to be escapes from captivity (or intentional introductions). In particular, the Committee requests documentation of occurrences of Monk Parakeet (particularly breeding evidence) in the state in order to determine the extent to which this species has become established in Virginia.

Birds driven shoreward or ashore by hurricanes present a particular problem for review. The Committee realizes the special burden that hurricanes pose for observers wishing to submit documentation on such birds in accord with this Review List. Nevertheless, the Committee would very much appreciate any and all documentation of such birds as per the categories established herein. Species or forms seen outside normal periods of occurrence are also candidates for review by the Committee. Please inquire about such cases with the Secretary.