Virginia Birds Regions

Cities/towns numbered on map

1. Alexandria 19. Hampton 34. Richmond
5. Cape Charles 23. Lynchburg 38. Staunton
7. Chesapeake 25. Manassas Park 40. Virginia Beach
8. Chincoteague 26. Martinsville 41. Waynesboro
9. Clifton Forge 27. Newport News 42. Williamsburg
12. Danville 30. Petersburg
13. Emporia 31. Poquoson
14. Fairfax 32. Portsmouth
15. Falls Church 33. Radford
16. Franklin
17. Fredericksburg
18. Galax

Virginia Birds

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On the cover: Karen Kearney photographed this Purple Gallinule 13 Jun 2014 in Waynesboro.
Editor’s Notes

Todd Day was the *North American Birds* Middle Atlantic Coast Regional Editor in 2004 when the first *Virginia Birds* issue was published, so he knew the rigors and value of documenting seasonal avian diversity across a complex array of habitats and geography. His “Bigger Picture” article in that inaugural Summer 2004 issue posited, “*Virginia Birds* has arrived as a tool to paint the avian landscape of our state in a way the broad brush strokes of *North American Birds* and the range maps in various field guides cannot….”; for records within the state’s eight respective regions “this journal will become the vault.” And indeed *Virginia Birds* has accomplished just that, fulfilling the role of responsibility for Virginia’s ever evolving ornithological record. By capturing data generated from resources such as eBird, the state’s many and varied list-serves, bird club newsletters, ongoing field studies, and local networking, *Virginia Birds* has worked diligently to render that content into context. Within three years of *Virginia Birds*’ debut, the VSO’s 2007 publication of the “Gold Book,” *Virginia’s Birdlife: an Annotated Checklist* by Steve Rottenborn and Ned Brinkley, redefined the depth and quality necessary to fully document the state’s highly diverse, never static, avifauna. *Virginia Birds* took up where Steve and Ned’s meticulously researched annotations left off in 2006 to enrich and carry forward their messages to the present, always giving us perspective for what had happened, what may come next, and why. As this issue goes to press, the Fall 2014 Regional reports are being received and edited and data for the Winter 2014–2015 publication is being sought and organized. In addition, we are also working to put *Virginia Birds* Volumes 1–10 on line.

Flanked by the rush to renewal of spring and the post-renewal rush of fall, June–July seemed at once anticlimactic and mundane. With the prospect of diminished chances for rarities to chase in combination with the heat, the humidity, and the potential of chiggers and ticks, the temptation for those two months is to “cool it.” However, as short as this season is, it is the time period in which some of the state’s most meaningful trends come to light. Carefully peruse the Southeast Region report for preliminary highlights of the very productive early June 2014 Breeding Bird Foray—so many nightjars and quail. And what about those breeding warbler species folks found? Better still, see if you can discern the areas in the Commonwealth where Anhingas, Mississippi Kites, Eurasian Collared-Doves, and Common Ravens are expanding or where, if at all, potentially breeding Loggerhead Shrikes should to be searched for. Which species remained FROM LAST WINTER and where and when did species stretch our conventional “fall migrant” chronologies?

So here it is, the first issue of *Virginia Birds*’ second decade, painted, if you will, in color for VSO members online and in hard copy in black and white. The journal’s refined brush strokes will eventually make those “broad brush strokes of *North American Birds* and the range maps in various field guides” look so much better!

We need, welcome, and encourage your input. After all, these are your Virginia Birds.

Editors, *Virginia Birds*

Submissions

Send reports and photographs to the Regional Editors. Photographs should be the highest electronic quality possible. Send with release form, which can be found on the VSO web site: www.virginiabirds.net. Articles for consideration can be sent to billwilliams154@gmail.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Reports due to Regional Editors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer (Jun–Jul)</td>
<td>15 Aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall (Aug–Nov)</td>
<td>15 Dec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter (Dec–Feb)</td>
<td>15 Mar</td>
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<td>Spring (Mar–May)</td>
<td>15 Jun</td>
</tr>
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Terms and Abbreviations

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

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>ad. (ads.)</td>
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<td>WMA</td>
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Weather conditions were relatively mild through July 2014. Only eight days with temperatures above 90°F were recorded at Dulles International Airport in June and July. Typical of the summer, rainfall varied geographically across the region, but was generally near or slightly below normal. Some of the information below was drawn from a breeding bird survey (BBS) started in 2014 at Crow’s Nest, Stafford.

**Abbreviations:** Crow’s Nest (Crow’s Nest NAP, Stafford); Dulles Wetlands (Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project, Loudoun); Dyke Marsh (Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Fairfax); G.R. Thompson (G.R. Thompson WMA, Fauquier); Huntley Meadows (Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax); Meadowood (Meadowood Recreation Area, Fairfax); Occoquan Bay (Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William); Sky Meadows (Sky Meadows SP, Fauquier); SNP (Shenandoah National Park)

**WATERFOWL–SANDPIPERS**

Sixteen **Hooded Mergansers** were seen at Huntley Meadows 23 Jun (HG). A single drake **American Wigeon** at Dyke Marsh 15 Jun (RR) was more than a month beyond the species’ typical 10 May late date. A **Bufflehead** at the Verizon ponds, **Loudoun** through 3 Jun (BHil) was significantly past that species’ 27 Apr Piedmont late date. **Northern Bobwhites** were reported from several locations, including seven from Occoquan Bay 7 Jun (BH). Additional rarities for the season included a **Common Loon** at Occoquan Bay 19 Jul (PS), considerably beyond the species’ typical late date of 25 May. A Common Loon was noted intermittently at Verizon ponds, **Loudoun** 27 May through 3 Jun (BHil); the Piedmont late date for this species is 15 May. A **Red-necked Grebe** was at the Verizon ponds, **Loudoun** through 3 Jun (BHil). Another at Occoquan Bay 18 Jul (PS) was apparently just the second mid-summer record for the Region. Two **Horned Grebes** at Dyke Marsh 15 Jun (RR) were also well outside this species’ typical late date of 23 May. Five **Least Bitterns** were reported from Dyke Marsh 7 Jun (LC). Three were also reported from Neabisco Cr. Inlet, **Prince William** 12 Jun (MR). A season high 12 **Great Egrets** were observed at Dulles Wetlands 25 Jul (JY). **Black-crowned Night-Herons** were observed at a number of locations. Ten were observed flying over L. Barcroft, **Fairfax** 4 Jul (JG). Four were seen at Ashby Pond, Fairfax 3 Jul (P&JW). Singles were seen at Dyke Marsh 7 Jun and 27 Jul (RR). Rarer for the Region, a **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was reported from Luria Park, Falls Church 8 Jun (D&BF). Two **Mississippi Kites** were observed off Dumfries Rd., **Fauquier** 20 Jun (DC). Additional observations in **Prince William** included a pair in Warrenton, **Fauquier** 14 Jul (GD). Two **King Rails** were heard at Crow’s Nest 6 Jun (ML) and three 8 Jun (EM). This represents a potential newly discovered breeding population of a species tracked by the Virginia Natural Heritage Program. Single **King Rails** were also found at Pohick Bay Regional Park, **Fairfax** 7 Jun (KG) and at Occoquan Bay 20 Jul (MR).
Two **Virginia Rails** were heard at Occoquan Bay 4 Jun (PB). Four **American Avocets**, a bird found only rarely in the Region, were seen at Hunting Cr. Bridge, *Fairfax* 25 Jul (DL, DB). Two **Short-billed/Long-billed Dowitchers** were seen at Hunting Cr. Bridge, *Fairfax* 19 Jul (EM).

**DOVES–WRENS**

A **WHITE-WINGED DOVE**, a rare but increasing visitor in Virginia, was reported from Occoquan Bay 23 Jun (DB). A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was observed at Dyke Marsh 1 Jun (BHig) and at Sky Meadows 21 Jun (LW). **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard at several locations, including four at Prince William Forest Park, *Prince William* 19 Jul (BF) and another four from Pinnacles Overlook, *Rappahannock* 26 Jun (JM). Three **Red-headed Woodpeckers** were observed during a BBS at Crow’s Nest 30 Jun (ML). This was the first breeding population found in the preserve. Single **Least Flycatchers** were reported from Freezeland Rd., *Fauquier* 24 Jul (DH) and Fork Mountain Rd., *Madison* 4 Jun (AD). A **Loggerhead Shrike** was observed off Loyalty Rd., *Loudoun* 30 Jul (GH). Eight **Common Ravens** were seen at Ayrshire Farm, *Fauquier* 11 Jun (DH). Two **Bank Swallows** were reported from Woodward Turf Farm, *Fauquier* 27 Jul (EM). Six **Marsh Wrens** were at Dyke Marsh 22 Jun (SS), the only location they were reported from this season; four nests were found in the Dyke Marsh BBS in early June (LC).

**THRUSHES–CARDINALS**

A season high 12 **Wood Thrushes** were observed during a BBS at Crow’s Nest 6 Jun (ML). Twelve Wood Thrushes were also reported from Seneca Park, *Fairfax* 24 Jun (CR). A season high 18 **Ovenbirds** were heard during a BBS at Crow’s Nest 6 June (ML). **Worm-eating Warblers** were reported from several locations including five from Crow’s Nest 6 Jun (ML) and four from Seneca Park, *Fairfax* 24 Jun (CR). **Louisiana Waterthrushes** were seen at a number of locations, including four during a BBS at Crow’s Nest 6 Jun (ML). In addition, four were also seen at L. Accotink Park, *Fairfax* 1 Jun (RR) and Dark Hollow Falls Trail SNP, *Madison* 4 Jun (HT). Six **Kentucky Warblers** were reported from G.R. Thompson 8 Jun (TB). Several season high counts for warblers occurred at Limberlost Trail SNP, *Madison*, including five **Canada Warblers** 12 Jul (EM) and eight **Chestnut-sided Warblers** 3 Jun (GR). A season high 15 **Yellow-breasted Chats** were observed at Occoquan Bay 25 Jun (RM). Twenty-five **Grasshopper Sparrows**, representing a season high, were reported at Manassas Battlefield Park, *Prince William* 15 Jun (IG). Four **Summer Tanagers** were reported from Huntley Meadows 2 Jun (JW). A season high six **Blue Grosbeaks** were observed at Meadowood 24 Jul (JH). Finally, five **Dickcissels** were observed on Grassdale Rd., *Fauquier* 28 Jul (KG).

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Two **Mute Swans** were in Burketon, *Augusta* 11 Jul (DH) and two were on the New R. near Pembroke, *Giles* 26 Jul (JSt). This species is regarded as accidental in the Region in summer. A f. **Wood Duck** with seven recently hatched ducklings was on the New R. in Radford 1 Jun (CK); 22 were at Shenandoah River SP, *Warren* 10 Jun (EF). A Wood Duck pair with six grown imms. and a f. with eight recently hatched young were in Swoope, *Augusta* 18 Jun (MF). A f. with seven young was at Mount Solon, *Augusta* 28 Jun (AL), and 21 were at Gala 15 Jul (BK). Two **Hooded Mergansers** were seen at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 12 Jun (BK). One in Staunton 28 Jun (AL) and one in Swoope, *Augusta* 24 Jul (AC, PW) were the county’s sixth and seventh summer records, respectively. One f. **Common Merganser** with six or seven young on Big Walker Cr. near Farley Wayside, *Giles* 21 Jun (BO) was a first breeding record for the county. Thirty-six **Double-crested Cormorants**, mostly imms., at Riverview Park in Radford 24 Jun set a new local summer peak count for that city (CK). Eight **Great Egrets** were in Swoope, *Augusta* 20 Jul (DH); one was at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 24 Jul (RR) and two were at New River Junction Campground, *Montgomery* 25 Jul (JSt). A **Snowy Egret** was at Greenfield L., *Botetourt* 1 Jun (MS). Two **Tricolored Herons** photographed at Nazarene Wetlands near Dayton, *Rockingham* 27 Jul (WL) made a new county high count. Six **Green Herons** were at Quillen’s Pond, *Augusta* 28 Jun (AL), the same day a juv. was observed in Lexington along the Chessie Trail (RT, WT). One was on a nest in Waynesboro 12 Jul (AL) and eight were at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 30 Jul (PW). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was found at Cook’s Cr. Arboretum, *Rockingham* 2 Jun (JS). Those encountered at other sites included eight at Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, *Page* 11 Jun (GK) and two at this same location 14 Jun (KA). An ad. and two juvs. were at Bisset Park, Radford 1 Jul (WR). An imm. was at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 24 Jul (RR) and an imm. was at Nazarene Wetlands, *Rockingham* 29 Jul (DH). Ten **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were in Smith Park, Roanoke 14 Jun (BK). The **Purple Gallinule** discovered in Waynesboro 25 May continued through 13 Jun (TH, AL, BT, AW). Two **Semipalmated Plovers** in Swoope, *Augusta* 5 Jun (AL) were followed by five **Spotted Sandpipers** and seven **Solitary Sandpipers** there 24 Jul (AC, AL, PW). Fifteen Solitary Sandpipers were at Leonard’s Pond, *Rockingham* 27 Jul (WL). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at Nazarene Wetlands, *Rockingham* 27 Jul (WL) and one was at the RCSTF 31 Jul (KD). Others found included seven at Swoope and Lyndhurst, *Augusta* 12 Jul (AL), six at Gala 15 Jul (BK), two at Swoope 24 Jul (AC, AL, PW), and four at Leonard’s Pond and Nazarene Wetlands, *Rockingham* 27 Jul (WL). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was at Leonard’s Pond, *Rockingham* 21 Jul (HH) and seven **Western Sandpipers** were at RCSTF 31 Jul (KD). A **Marbled Godwit** was found at Willow L., *Rockbridge* 29 Jul (JP).

**DOVES–THRUSHES**

Two **Eurasian Collared-Doves** were in Mount Solon, *Augusta* 28 Jun (AL), and one was in Bridgewater, *Rockingham* 26–27 Jul (BB & RP). Seven **Eastern Screech-Owls** were tallied in *Highland* 12 Jun (JSp). A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** carrying nesting material was observed in Staunton, 15 Jul (HH). Two **Barn Owls** were reported near Daleville, *Botetourt* 13 Jun (BK). Eighteen **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were counted along
the Cowpasture R., Highland 12 Jun (JSp). Nine Red-headed Woodpeckers were found in Augusta 28 Jun (VL, GM). Four ads. near Cowan, Pulaski 7 Jul (LD) was highest number there in more than twenty years. Six were in Shenandoah R. SP, Warren 24 Jul (JB). Four Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were found on Laurel Fork Rd., Highland during the ACBC’s 1 Jun a field trip and six were noted in Highland 29 Jun (JSp). Two Least Flycatchers in Swoope, Augusta 15 Jul (DH) set a sixth summer county record. A singing Alder Flycatcher was recorded by the ACBC at Straight Fork Beaver Pond, Highland 1 Jun. One was also observed at this location 29 Jun (JSp) and one was heard in Hidden Valley, Bath 24 Jun (KD). A Loggerhead Shrike was found at the same location near Dublin, Pulaski 29 Jun and 19 Jul (AK, CK). Ten adult and two hatch-year Blue-headed Vireos were reported in Augusta 13 Jul (AC, AL, GM). Twenty or more Purple Martins, mostly imms., were at Willow L., Rockbridge 24 Jul (RR). A new local peak count 673 Tree Swallows were in Swoope, Augusta 21 Jul (VL). Twenty Bank Swallows were near Pembroke, Giles 26 Jul (JS). Twenty-one Cliff Swallows were found e. of Stanley, Page 12 Jun (DH). Elsewhere, three were in Highland 29 Jun (JSp), thirteen were near Monterey, Highland 18 Jul (KD) and three were near Pembroke, Giles 26 Jul (JS). About 100 nests were counted on Memorial Bridge, Bisset Park in Radford, with adults gathering mud for the nests at nearby shallow puddles 13 Jun (WR). A new county summer peak count twenty-seven Black-capped Chickadees were tallied in higher elevation areas in the Bentsen Run area of Augusta 13 Jul (AC, AL, GM). One Red-breasted Nuthatch was found on Middle Mt., Highland 29 Jun (JSp). Two Brown-headed Nuthatches were observed in Dublin, Pulaski 24 Jun (LD, CK, KP). A small population of this species was first discovered here in 1994 and has continued in low numbers since then. This disjunct population is the only one that occurs year round in the Mountains and Valley Region of the state. A Brown Creeper was singing near Braley Pond Rd., Augusta 28 Jun (VL, GM) for a fifth summer record in the county. Eight Veeries were found on Paddy Knob, Bath 1 Jun (BK). Five were tallied on the Front Royal BBS, Warren 16 Jun (GK) and five were at Mountain L., Giles 27 Jun (RC). Twenty-five Wood Thrushes were counted on the Front Royal BBS, Warren 16 Jun (GK). Numbers for Gray Catbirds were the highest locally in several summers with a season high count of 29 tallied during a half mile walk in Blacksburg, Montgomery 27 Jun (CK).

WARBLERS–FINCHES

A Golden-winged Warbler was found during the ACBC field trip to Highland 1 Jun and one was in Hidden Valley, Bath 24 Jun (KD). The ACBC also recorded two Mourning Warblers in Highland during its 1 Jun field trip. A singing Magnolia Warbler found at low elevation in Staunton 28 Jun (AL) was the county’s second summer record (the previous record was 6 Jun 1983). Twelve were tallied at high elevation in Highland 29 Jun (JSp). One Yellow-rumped Warbler was observed on Paddy Knob, Bath 27 Jun (BH). An adult with two hatch-year birds was found in Augusta 13 Jul (AC, AL, GM). Four Prairie Warblers were found along Laurel Run, Shenandoah 1 Jun (ET); nine were at Cub Run Rd., Rockingham 14 Jun (GMo) and six were singing in Dublin, Pulaski 24 Jun (LD, CK, KP). Forty-three singing Field Sparrows were tallied in Dublin, Pulaski 24 Jun (LD, CK, KP) with 36 at the same location 22 Jul (AC, LD, CK). Six Grasshopper Sparrows were found in Dublin, Pulaski 24 Jun (LD, CK, KP). Additional sightings were six along the Third Battle trails 5 Jul (BJL), one carrying nesting material at Piedmont, Augusta (HH, GM) 24 Jul, and 12 in Swoope, Augusta 28 Jun (VL, GM). A Swamp Sparrow was found at Swoope, Augusta 19 July (DH), for a first summer record there. A singing White-throated Sparrow was observed at New Hampden, Highland 29 Jun (JSp). Forty-five Dark-eyed Juncos were found in Augusta 13 Jul for a new county peak summer count (AC, AL, GM). A Summer Tanager was found in Swoope, Augusta 28 Jun (BH), the sixth summer record in that county. Other reports included one at Loft Mt. Campground, Rockingham 2 Jul (JE), one on the Blue Ridge Parkway near Clark’s Gap, Rockbridge 6 Jul (EB), and one at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Front Royal, Warren 10 Jul (SM). Two Dickcissels were seen in Highland 29 Jun (JSp) and two were singing near Piedmont, Augusta 23 Jul (HH, GM). Ten Bobolinks were in Swoope, Augusta 28 Jun (VL, GM). The Swoope area subsequently had ten recently fledged Bobolink young 10 Jul (AL) and twelve, mostly imms., 21 Jul (VL). Two Bobolinks were in Highland 29 Jun (JSp). Five Purple Finches observed in Crimora, Augusta 25 Jul (AW) established
This summer was rather moist compared to previous summers here in the Central Region, as several birders noticed. As always, Albemarle hosted the most reports. Though mainly the typical breeders were reported, there were a few unusual birds seen.

**Abbreviations:** ICNA (Ivy Creek Natural Area, Albemarle); PWMA (Powhatan WMA, Powhatan); SRFT (South River Falls Trail, Shenandoah National Park, Greene)

**GREBES–SHOREBIRDS**

At least one Red-necked Grebe was reported at L. Anna, Louisa 4 (TR) and 21 Jun (ph. MN). This bird is listed as a rare transient and rare winter resident, but a report as late as 21 Jun is extremely rare. Two Double-crested Cormorants were reported, one at L. Anna, Louisa 4 Jun (AD, BS), the other in Fredericksburg 24 Jun (BB). A Least Bittern was heard at Bentivar Marsh, Albemarle 14 Jun (WL). Four Great Egrets were reported, one at Chamberlayne Swamp, Hanover 29 Jun (JF, JL) and three at Lickinghole Cr., Albemarle 21 Jul (PM). There were two shorebird species reported. Among five Spotted Sandpipers entries were one at Beaver Creek Reservoir Park, Albemarle 27 Jul (HH), two at the Walmart Distribution Center, Louisa 29 Jul (AR), one at Riverview Park, Albemarle 30 Jul (JP, TJ), and one at L. Anna, Louisa 31 Jul (AD, BS). Single Solitary Sandpipers were at Red Fox Lane, Albemarle 17 Jul (AR, EG), and at Lickinghole Cr., Albemarle 21 Jul (PM).

**FLYCATCHERS–JUNCOS**

A high count of nine Acadian Flycatchers was recorded in Lynchburg 7 Jun (MK). Two to three Willow Flycatchers were detected at Bentivar Marsh, Albemarle 8 & 14 Jun (DW, WL). At least two different Least Flycatchers were reported, one at SRFT 7 Jun (JP) and one at Pocosin Cabin, Greene 11 and 15 Jun (GK, MAK). Two Yellow-throated Warblers were recorded, one at Ivy Creek Natural Area, Albemarle 26 Jul (EG, HH) and one at Ridge Rd., Albemarle 26 Jun (AR). Good counts of Cerulean Warblers were reported, including four at SRFT 25 Jun (JM) and three at Pocosin Cabin, Greene 15 Jun (GK). A total of three Prothonotary Warblers were reported, one at Powhatan WMA, Powhatan 22 Jun (MG) and two at Powhatan SP, Powhatan 5 Jul (PE). A high count of three Kentucky Warblers was recorded at Heard Mt., Albemarle 21 Jun (JP). Two Canada Warblers were recorded at SRFT 26 Jun (JM). A total of three Vesper Sparrows were reported, two at Green Editors: Andrew Rapp 3689 Red Fox Lane Keswick, VA 22947 laxbirder@live.com Janet Paisley 1435 Gentry Charlottesville, VA 22903 janetpaisley@comcast.net

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

Springs, *Louisa* 12 Jun and 13 Jul (AR) and one at a private feeder at L. Monticello, *Fluvanna* 9 Jul (EG). A high count of eight **Grasshopper Sparrows** was reported at Green Springs, *Louisa* 12 Jun (AR). A high count of seven **Dark-eyed Juncos** was recorded at Apple Orchard Mt., *Bedford* 12 Jul (CK).

**Contributors:** Andrew Rapp, Eve Gaige, Huck Hutchens, Janet Paisley, Pete Myers, Thomas Jones, Glenn Koppel, Mary Alice Koeneke, William Leigh, Amy Dispanet, Bradford Schmonsees, Tom Rapp, Max Nootbar, David Wendelken, Michael Kelly, Joel Martin, Bill Boyd, Clyde Kessler, Patty Elton, Mario Grasso, John Loughman, Janice Frye

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. Even though the northern and eastern shorelines of the Northern Neck overlook the Maryland waters of the Potomac River, those Maryland birds are reported here since they are not reported anywhere else.

The 2014 annual VSO Breeding Bird Foray was conducted from 7–15 Jun in *King and Queen and Middlesex* counties, greatly increasing the number of bird reports received from this part of the Region. In particular, several warbler species that are typically rarely reported in the summer frequently showed up in small numbers on Foray participants’ checklists. The increased frequency of reports of other species such as *Northern Bobwhite,* nightjars, Grasshopper Sparrow and Dickcissel is also likely partially attributable to the increased coverage of these two counties. Highlights from the Region this summer included Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Wilson’s Storm-Petrels, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Sora, Sandwich Terns, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Coastal Plain Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Dickcissel. Many reports were gleaned from eBird records, VA-Bird and NNAS listservers.

**Abbreviations:** Bethel Beach (Bethel Beach NAP, *Mathews*); BBS (Breeding Bird Survey); Hutchinson (Hutchinson Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR, *Essex*); Mulberry (Mulberry Island Private Hunting Reserve, *Richmond*); Tayloe (Tayloe Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR, *Richmond*); Wilna (Wilna Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR, *Richmond*)

**WATERFOWL–RAILS**

There were more **Mute Swan** reports than usual this summer, all from *Mathews and Northumberland* with a high count of 18 at Bethel Beach 11 Jul (EO). Only two other noteworthy waterfowl observations were reported: one **Red-breasted Merganser** in *Mathews* 11 Jul (EO) and one **Ruddy Duck** at George Washington Birthplace National Monument, *Westmoreland* 5 Jul (RM). Small numbers of **Northern Bobwhites** were reported from many locations in the counties covered during this year’s VSO Foray; the highest number reported was 10 counted from Rte. 640 to Rte. 635, *King and Queen* 7 Jun (BWl). Nine Bobwhites on the Truhart BBS 14 Jun was another respectable total (FA),
though down from survey counts in some previous years (FA). At least a portion of the 26 *Wilson's Storm-Petrels* counted during a Chesapeake Breeze cruise out of Reedville, *Northumberland* 27 Jul occurred within this Region’s boundaries (AB, JF, MG, EO). *Yellow-crowned Night-Herons* are rarely encountered in the Region, so one found along the Mattaponi R. at Muddy Pt., *King and Queen* 12 Jun was exciting (SB, JC, LS). The only report of *White Ibis* this season was 8 at South Haven Beach, *Mathews* 11 Jul (EO), matching an expected pattern of post-breeding individuals dispersing to the Region beginning in mid-Jul. There were far more observations of *Cooper’s Hawks* reported this season than previous summers, likely from a combination of increased coverage due to the VSO Foray and the expanding breeding range of this species in the Coastal Plain. One *Sora* in marshes at Cat Point Cr., *Richmond* 24 Jul (NS) furnished a rare summer report.

**SHOREBIRDS–TERNS**

Reports of non-breeding shorebird species were few this summer and likely included both over-summering individuals and south-bound migrants. Bethel Beach hosted 6 *Dunlin* 1 Jun (MS); one *Black-bellied Plover* and 2 *Short-billed Dowitchers* were at this site 11 Jul (EO). *Spotted Sandpipers* were reported in small numbers across the eastern portion of the Region beginning with one in *Mathews* 2 Jul (AB). One *American Woodcock*, a breeding species in the Region rarely detected in summer, was reported from *Mathews* 25 Jun (MS). A report of one *Laughing Gull* on the Port Royal BBS 22 Jun was of interest so far inland in summer (FA). The only reports of *Ring-billed Gulls* came from Colonial Beach, *Westmoreland* where counts increased from 4 on 20 Jun to 17 on 27 Jul (HT). Three *Least Terns* in the mouth of Locklies Cr., *Middlesex* 30 Jul were notable in the Region away from the immediate shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay (MB, LP, MP). Similarly, 6 *Royal Terns* reported from the Rappahannock R. near the Hwy. 360 Bridge, *Essex* 21 Jul was a high count so far upriver (HT). Five *Sandwich Tern* reports from the Region this season was an impressive total; most reports were from *Mathews* with a high count of 8 at South Haven Beach 11 Jul (EO). There was one report from *Northumberland*, where 2 were observed 27 Jul at Buzzard’s Point Marina (AB, JF, MG, EO).

**NIGHTJARS–SWALLOWS**

Increased coverage in *King and Queen* by VSO Foray participants led to more *Chuck-wills-widow* and *Eastern Whip-poor-will* reports than normal from the county, although the seasonal Chuck-wills-widow high count of 8 along Rte. 602, *King and Queen* 15 Jun (NF) was lower than past years. High counts of Eastern Whip-poor-wills were more typical, with 19 detected during a nightjar survey along the first nine mi. of the Truhart BBS, *King and Queen* 14 Jun (FA). Two *American Kestrels* at Wilna 13 Jul (RM) was an excellent find for the summer season. A *SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER* was an amazing find along Rte. 30 near Rte. 604, *King William* 14 Jun (ph. PK, ph. RT).

Russ Taylor’s photo of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, taken 14 Jun 2014 in King William County.

There were few reports of *Horned Larks* in the Region this season; the highest counts were in *King and Queen* 8 Jun where 4 individuals were observed (FA) and at Corbin Hall Dr., *Middlesex* 15 Jun which also hosted 4 individuals (TS). Small numbers of *Tree Swallows* were commonly reported from counties covered during the VSO Foray, but a count of 145 individuals from *King George* 24 Jul was the first observation of a post-breeding flock (HT). The only *Bank Swallow* report came from Parrot’s Cove, *Middlesex* where 2 were observed 7 Jun (BP, JS). Three of four *Cliff Swallow* reports received were from the Mattaponi R., with a high count of 150 at the Walkerton Bridge on the border of *King William* and *King and Queen* 8 Jun (RA). Nine *Cliff Swallows* were counted on the Port Royal BBS 22 Jun (FA).
NUTHATCHES–WARBLERS
A count of 11 Brown-headed Nuthatches at the mouth of Locklies Cr. 14 Jun was an impressive total for the Region (NF). House Wrens were reported in low numbers from eastern counties such as Mathews and Middlesex; reports of one individual also came from Rte. 610, King and Queen 15 Jun (J&MA, L&MB) and the Port Royal BBS 22 Jun (FA). The only Marsh Wren observations this season came from Cat Point Cr., Richmond where a high of 19 were reported 25 Jul (NS). The highest Wood Thrush count reported came from the Port Royal BBS where 17 were tallied 22 Jun (FA). VSO Foray participants frequently encountered small numbers of Worm-eating Warblers in King and Queen, with a high count from that county of 13 in Dragon Run SF 9 Jun (TH). Worm-eating Warbler reports from elsewhere were all of single individuals: Hutchinson 30 Jul (HT), Old Garden Rd., Mathews 23 Jun (G&RH), Rte. 603 at Dragon Swamp, Middlesex 10 Jun (THl), and Wilna 2 Jun (G&RH). A count of 8 Black-and-white Warblers was a nice summer total from King and Queen 8 Jun (BT, BWi). Two of three Kentucky Warbler reports received were from King and Queen 7 Jun: one at Minter Lane and one on private property (FA, NVTBC). One Kentucky Warbler was found on the Port Royal BBS 22 Jun (FA). There were many reports of low numbers of American Redstarts from the two counties covered during the VSO Foray, with a high count of 4 along Rte. 603 on the border of King and Queen and Middlesex 15 Jun (J&MA, L&MB). Other American Redstart reports came from Hutchinson where 2 were observed 21 Jul and from Steppe Estates, King George where one was observed 10 Jun (HT). VSO Foray participation also appeared to increase the number of summer Yellow Warbler observations in the Region, with five reports of no more than 2 individuals coming from this effort. Yellow Warbler reports from outside the Foray area all involved single individuals and came from Tayloe 22 Jul (NS) and from George Washington Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland 5 Jul (RM).

SPARROWS–ORIOLES
Grasshopper Sparrows were frequently reported in small numbers from across the Region, with a high count of 8 at Wilna 19 Jul (J&MA, G&VB, JCr, AH, CJ). Only three Seaside Sparrow reports were received, all from Bethel Beach with a high count of 6 on 23 Jun (G&RH). Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrow counts from the Region continue to decline, with 5 found during a survey at Mulberry 7 Jun where a count of 41 was made in 2005 (CCB, fide BW, MW). One late Rose-breasted Grosbeak at Wilna 2 Jun was notable (G&RH). The number of Dickcissel reports from Wilna was down this year, and while the site still hosted the highest count for the season at 4 on 2 Jun (G&RH) and 19 Jul (J&MA, G&VB, JCr, AH, CJ), this total is lower than high counts from the site in some previous years. However, small numbers of Dickcissels were reported from several additional sites this year, perhaps in some part due to increased coverage of the Region during the VSO Foray. Single individuals were reported from the Mattaponi R. between Aylett and Rosesport, King and Queen 8 Jun (RA), the Westmoreland Berry Farm, Westmoreland 5 Jul (RM) and from near Manquin, King William 22 Jun (FD, fide FA), the latter location also hosting the species 12 Jun 1997 and 22 Jun 1998 (FD, fide FA). Only one sizeable blackbird flock was reported from the Region this summer: 76 Brown-headed Cowbirds at Tayloe 24 Jul (NS). Baltimore Orioles are rarely encountered in the Region in summer, especially in the eastern counties, so one at Old Garden Rd., Mathews 23 Jun was interesting (G&RH).

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The average temperature for the 14 Southwest counties was 75°F in June and an unusual cooler 70°F for July. The area experienced 8 days of rain in June and 12 days in July. The overall weather pattern should have had no negative effects on wild foods for birds or on their nesting. Highlights of the period were Bald Eagles found in Wythe and Russell and a Willet in Tazewell.

**Abbreviations:** BP (Breaks Interstate Park, Dickenson); RRL (Rural Retreat Lake, Wythe); SHL (South Holston Lake, Washington)

**QUAIL–ICTERIDS**

Two Northern Bobwhites were found 7 Jun at Troutdale in Grayson (AB). Another Bobwhite was heard calling on Belfast Mills Rd in Russell 21 Jun (PH). A Green Heron was photographed in Breaks 7 Jun (ph. HR). This species is not normally found in that area during breeding season (RM). The third recorded observation of a Black Vulture on Compton Mt. in Buchanan took place 6 Jun (DO, RM). A Bald Eagle was observed at RRL 5 Jun (AB). An imm. Bald Eagle was discovered on Mountain Rd. in Belfast in Russell 3 Jul (PH). On 19 Jul a Willet was found at Cavit’s Creek Park in Tazewell (CD). The first recorded sighting of a Red-headed Woodpecker during breeding season on Compton Mt. in Buchanan happened 6 Jun (DO, RM). A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was heard in the Mount Rogers area of the Jefferson National Forest in Grayson 7 Jun (AB). Also found on the same date in the same general area were 2 Vesper Sparrows (AB). Compton Mt. in Buchanan had its first recorded nesting of Baltimore Orioles when a pair was observed and photographed feeding a lone nestling 6 Jun (RM). A possible breeding male Baltimore Oriole was observed in a Mulberry tree on Peach Bottom Cr. in Grayson 13 Jun. Baltimore Orioles had not been seen in that immediate area for years (BS).

**Contributors:** Allen Boynton, Clancey Deel, Peggy Herbert, Daryl Owens, Roger Mayhorn, Holden Raines, Betty Scott

**First Baltimore Oriole nest for Compton Mountain, Buchanan County. Photo by Roger Mayhorn 6 Jun 2014**
Few reports were submitted for the summer season, and many of those included here were garnered from eBird. The most interesting concerned the possible nesting of uncommon species plus reports of shorebirds that were probably early fall migrants.

**MERGANSERS–DOVES**

A **Common Merganser** was photographed at Tailrace Park, below the dam at Kerr Res., Mecklenburg 27 Jul (ph. AD). This species is not expected anywhere in or near this Region in summer, but it was found elsewhere in the state, including breeding individuals, this season. Although not reported during spring in the immediate area, single **Mississippi Kites** were noted in South Boston, Halifax 2 Jun (PG) and 7 Jul (JB) and elsewhere in the s. portion of the county in early Jul (JB). Repeated sightings in s. Halifax in recent summers suggest a breeding presence of the species in that area. **Bald Eagles** summered at Briery Cr. L. and Sandy R. Res., Prince Edward (CMS) and at Kerr Res., Mecklenburg (m.obs.), all lakes where active nests are known. Several **Spotted Sandpipers**, presumably southbound migrants, were at two locations on Kerr Res., Mecklenburg 27 Jul, including 5 at Staunton View Public Use Area (AD, PG) and 3 at Tailrace Park (AD). Also at Staunton View on the same date were single **Solitary** and **Least Sandpipers** (AD, PG).

Another Least Sandpiper was also at Tailrace on 27 Jul, along with one **Greater Yellowlegs** (AD). A single **Eurasian Collared-Dove** at South Boston, Halifax 1 Jul (JB) indicated the continuing presence of this invasive species, at least in small numbers.

**SHRIKES–SWALLOWS**

As in spring 2014, no **Loggerhead Shrikes** were reported in the Region this summer. This is notable because the species maintained a small breeding population in this area in the late 20th century, but it has now been about five years since a breeding season report here. **Common Ravens** summered in the area as in recent years, perhaps indicating additional undiscovered breeding sites; records included one at Halifax, Halifax 13 Jul (PG) and one along Dry Fork Rd., also Halifax, 16 Jul (MF). **Cliff Swallows** were reported on various dates from Kerr Res., Mecklenburg, near the s. border of the Region and from James R. SP, Buckingham, on its n. border (m.obs.). These reports come from areas with known breeding colonies and so are not surprising by themselves, but they do suggest the potential for nesting somewhere in the Region between these two extremes.

**Observers:** Jeff Blalock, Adam D’Onofrio, Mary Foster, Paul Glass, C. Michael Stinson
Temperatures averaged slightly above normal and precipitation was below normal for the short two month reporting period. As is typically the case, interesting bird reports were few and far between in what some consider the “slow” time of year. I beg to differ as I think “good” birds can be found at any time of year—all we have to do is get out and look around. Richmond’s famous Peregrine Falcon pair successfully raised two chicks this summer. Both juvenile birds fledged on June 17 but on June 19, one of the birds collided with a building. Thankfully, the bird survived and was admitted to the Wildlife Center of Virginia in Waynesboro with eye and beak injuries. After a while, it was determined that the falcon’s eye would not sufficiently heal to allow release back into the wild. Experts at the center will, instead, train the falcon for use in educational programs.

**Abbreviations:** Branchville BBS (Branchville Breeding Bird Survey, Southampton): Hog (Hog Island W.M.A., Surry): Newsoms BBS (Newsoms Breeding Bird Survey, Southampton): Newville BBS (Newville Breeding Bird Survey, Sussex): Ragged Is. (Ragged Island W.M.A., Isle of Wight): Shirley (Shirley Plantation, Charles City); SR (State Route)

**NORTHERN BOBWHITE–SPARROWS**

The Newville BBS, run on 7 Jun, tallied 13 **Northern Bobwhite** (NF). The Newsoms BBS, run on 8 Jun, counted 10 Northern Bobwhite (NF, PR). The Branchville BBS, which was started 22 Jun and was finished on 5 Jul due to heavy rain, had 8 Northern Bobwhite (NF, LB, EE). An ad. m. **Anhinga** was spotted at Harwood's Mill Res., York 15 Jul (DY). This species has become a fairly consistent visitor to this reservoir in recent years. A juv. **Tricolored Heron** was seen flying around Ragged Is. 27 Jul (NF). A juv. **White Ibis** flew over Jamestown Is., James City 21 Jul (DY). Two **Glossy Ibis**, uncommon inland, were at Shirley 18 Jul (EO). **Mississippi Kite** sightings this summer included two on SR 730, Southampton 8 Jun (NF, PR), one near the crossing of SR 615 and SR 661, Southampton 22 Jun (NF, LB) and one circling near exit 47 on I-95, Petersburg 24 Jun (JB). A **Broad-winged Hawk**, unusual in the coastal plain in summer, was noted at Freedom Park, James City 6 Jul (BT). Two **American Avocets** were present at Hog 30 Jul (FF, NM, ph. by AD).

American Avocet at Hog Island WMA, Surry in a photo taken by Adam D’Onofrio 30 Jul 2014

Also present at Hog that day was an ad. **Western Sandpiper** (AD, FF, NM). A dead **Barn Owl** was found on I-64 near Toano, James City 29 Jun (BW). Two **Chuck-will's-widows** were heard on SR 613, Sussex 7 Jun (NF). Two **Eastern Whip-poor-wills** were heard on SR 156, Prince George 7 Jun (NF). The Blackwater Nightjar Survey Network Route, Isle of Wight counted eleven Chuck-will’s-widows and two Eastern Whip-poor-wills 16 Jun (NF, AF, MM). The Branchville Nightjar Survey Network Route, Southampton counted six Chuck-will’s-widows 19 Jun (NF). Four **Horned Larks** were counted on the Newsom BBS (NF, PR). Four **Tree Swallows** were
noted at Little Texas, Southampton 22 Jun (NF, LB). A Cliff Swallow, a very local summer resident on the Coastal Plain, was a good find during the latter half of the Branchville BBS (NF, EE). Two Cedar Waxwings were found on the first half of the Branchville BBS (NF, LB). Five Black-and-white Warblers and two Kentucky Warblers were tallied on the Newville BBS.

A Nelson’s Sparrow at New Quarter Park/Queens Cr., York 5 Jun set a new local late date (CJ).

Contributors: Jeff Blalock, Lee Bristow, Adam D’Onofrio, Elisa Enders, Alan Flanders, Nick Flanders, Frank Fogarty, Cheryl Jacobson, Mary Ella Mitchell, Nicole Motzer, Ellison Orcutt, Peggy Rommen, Brian Taber, Bill Williams, Dave Youker

Hurricane Arthur crossed North Carolina’s southern Outer Banks as a Category 2 storm 3–4 July, then dashed rapidly northeast without a bother or any displaced birds to the Virginia coast. What made this season exceptional was the number and diversity of breeding bird species monitored across the Region, one of which put certainty on a long overdue first for the state. Just as remarkable were the out-of-season waterfowl that frequented coastal waters, part of a more extensive pattern along the U.S. southeast Atlantic coast. Ruff, Leach’s and Band-rumped storm-petrels, White-faced Ibis, and Vermilion Flycatcher gave Anhinga and Mississippi Kite a run for top spots on the season’s most wanted.

Abbreviations: Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel s. of Northampton); CCB (Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and May/Virginia Commonwealth University); Chinc. (Chincoteague NWR, Accomack); Craney (Craney Island, Portsmouth); Dismal (Dismal Swamp NWR, Suffolk/Chesapeake); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, Northampton); False Cape (False Cape SP, Virginia Beach); Grandview (Grandview Nature Preserve, Hampton); HRBT (Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, Hampton/Norfolk); KSP (Kiptopeke SP, Northampton); NAP (Natural Area Preserve); PHP (Pleasure House Point, Virginia Beach)

WATERFOWL–HAWKS

An injured Snow Goose toughed it out at Chinc. through at least 17 Jun (m. ob.); another, an apparently healthy individual, was on Metompkin Is., Accomack 4 Jun (ph. M&JC). A Brant near Wachapreague, Accomack was last noted there 5 Jul (JL). Gadwalls are rare in summer away from Eastern Shore marshes where the species has been known to breed, thus 2 at Grandview 9 Jun (MS) and 2–3 at Craney through 3 Jul (RB et al.) were noteworthy. So too were 3–6 Northern Shovelers that frequented Craney through at least 26 Jun (AM et al.). Also at Craney were a female Canvasback and a m. Lesser Scaup, both present the entire season (BW et al.). All three Melanitta species were found during the report period, part of a more widespread phenomenon along the mid- and southern Atlantic Coast. Sightings for the Region included a Surf Scoter off False Cape 25 Jun (DH, TM), and single White-winged Scoters at Grandview 3 & 9 Jun (ph. MS), off Back Bay 25 Jun (DH, TM), in Gargathy Bay, Accomack 28 Jun (DS), and at Little Creek, Norfolk 29 Jun (SR). Black Scoters, the trio’s most oft-encountered summering species, were widely reported and numerous, including a new summer peak count 439 off Metompkin Is., Accomack 13 Jun (JL). The previous high count was “200” off Metompkin Is. Jun–Jul 2013. Elsewhere, up to 10 were off Grandview/Buckroe Beach, Hampton
through 22 Jun (m. ob.), 8 were in Gargathy Bay, *Accomack* 28 Jun (DS), as many as 29 were off Back Bay/False Cape through 25 Jul (BA, DH, TM, RW), and a “dozen to several dozen” were observed “2–3 mi. from the s. end of Assateague” Is., *Accomack* through the report period’s conclusion (JB, CM). A **Ruddy Duck** was at Back Bay 25 Jun (DH, TM, GM) and 4 were at Craney into the fall season (RB et al.). One to two **Common Loons** foraged near Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach 16–25 Jun (RBr) and one was reported at Chinc. 7 & 21 Jul (JB, CM). The nesting **Pied-billed Grebe** pair noted at Craney 29 May (BW et al.) had 5 chicks 10 Jun (RB et al.). Subsequently, two adults attending 5 small young 31 Jul (BW et al.) led the survey team to conclude two successful breeding efforts had been accomplished, likely by two different pairs. A **Horned Grebe** was off Metompkin Is., *Accomack* 5 Jun (S&WB, JL), another was at Craney 20 Jun through 24 Jul (RB et al.), and one was in Pompco Sound, *Accomack* 21 Jul (ph. LG). There were 3 **Cory’s Shearwaters** off Virginia Beach 17 Jul (ph. RF). A **Great Shearwater** was off Dam Neck, Virginia Beach 23 Jun (ph. K&KR) and an **Audubon’s Shearwater** was off Virginia Beach 17 Jul (ph. RF). **Wilson’s Storm-Petrel** reports chronicled one off Back Bay 3 Jul (RF), 28 off Virginia Beach 17 Jul (RF), and one passing through Thimble Shoals Channel, Virginia Beach 19 Jul (BT). One **Leach’s** and 3 **Band-Rumped Storm-Petrels** were reported off Virginia Beach 17 Jul (RF). An **Anhinga** pair nested at a small pond near the junc. of Fentress Airfield Rd. and Blackwater Rd., Chesapeake, providing the Region’s first and the state’s second confirmed breeding effort for this species. More importantly, this proved to be the first and the state’s second confirmed breeding effort for this species. Summering **American Coot** reports included one to two at Craney 5 Jun through 3 Jul (RB, DY et al.) and one at Sherwood Lakes, Virginia Beach 6 Jun (ph. PM). The 29th annual Virginia Plover Survey posted an end-of-season 245 **Piping Plover** and 29 **Wilson’s Plover** breeding pairs, the majority of which were on the northern *Accomack* Atlantic barrier islands Assateague to Cedar. The Piping Plover total was 21% above the 203 pairs in 2013 and the Wilson’s Plover total was one pair above the 28 from 2013 (fide RBr). At least 14 **Black-necked Stilt** pairs produced young at Craney. Downy chicks (4) were first observed 8 Jun (FD et al.), with additional recently hatched broods as late as 24 Jul. The facility’s peak Black-necked Stilt count, including adults, fledged young, and 9 downy chicks, was 68 on 24 Jul (RB et al.). Six Black-necked Stilts were at Queen’s Sound Channel, *Accomack* 6 Jul (JH). The number of **American Avocets** at Craney rose from 2 on 5 Jun to 77 by 31 Jul (RB et al.); singles were at PHP 15 Jul (EO) and at Chinc. 21 Jul (MY). Two **American Oystercatcher** pairs raised young on HRBT (RB et al.) and 5 pairs made nesting attempts on the n. end of Grandview (MS). A season high 900 **Willets** were at Chinc. 14 Jul (JB, CM). A downy Willet chick was observed at Craney 24 Jul (BW et al.). A **Ruff** (Reeve) was an unexpected find at Craney 5 Jun (BW et al., ph. MS). A **Wilson’s Phalarope** was at Chinc. 21 Jul (JB, CM) and 3 were at Craney 31 Jul (BW et al.). **Red-necked Phalarope** reports showed 2 were at Craney 5 Jun (BT, BW et al.), one was at Chinc. 28 Jun (ph. AW, NM), and 3 were at Craney 5 Jun (BW et al.) and 4 were at Craney through 17 Jul with a peak count of 5 there 26 Jun (RB et al.). An ad.

**Virginia Birds** Volume 11 • Number 1

**WHITE-FACED IBIS** was at Chinc. 27 Jul (TJ, NB, DG, ph. BB). Enthusiastically crafted **Mississippi Kite** reports 9 Jun through 31 Jul (TT) drew m. ob. to Church Point Park in the Thoroughgood section of Virginia Beach. The birds’ predictable presence, including two adults feeding what appeared to be a fledgling 31 Jul (TT, RBr), made a compelling case for this species’ first breeding in the Region. A **Broad-winged Hawk** near Onancock, *Accomack* 8 Jun (DM) was highly unusual for the season.

**RAILS–OWLS**

The CCB conducted a comprehensive survey of potential **Black Rail** sites this summer, finding only 2 birds, those at Saxis, *Accomack* (KRt, ZP fide MW). A partially feathered juv. **Common Gallinule** at Craney 3 Jul (BW et al., ph. IC) was confirmation the species had bred there. Summering **American Coot** reports included one to two at Craney 5 Jun through 3 Jul (RB, DY et al.) and one at Sherwood Lakes, Virginia Beach 6 Jun (ph. PM). The 29th annual Virginia Plover Survey posted an end-of-season 245 **Piping Plover** and 29 **Wilson’s Plover** breeding pairs, the majority of which were on the northern *Accomack* Atlantic barrier islands Assateague to Cedar. The Piping Plover total was 21% above the 203 pairs in 2013 and the Wilson’s Plover total was one pair above the 28 from 2013 (fide RBr). At least 14 **Black-necked Stilt** pairs produced young at Craney. Downy chicks (4) were first observed 8 Jun (FD et al.), with additional recently hatched broods as late as 24 Jul. The facility’s peak Black-necked Stilt count, including adults, fledged young, and 9 downy chicks, was 68 on 24 Jul (RB et al.). Six Black-necked Stilts were at Queen’s Sound Channel, *Accomack* 6 Jul (JH). The number of **American Avocets** at Craney rose from 2 on 5 Jun to 77 by 31 Jul (RB et al.); singles were at PHP 15 Jul (EO) and at Chinc. 21 Jul (MY). Two **American Oystercatcher** pairs raised young on HRBT (RB et al.) and 5 pairs made nesting attempts on the n. end of Grandview (MS). A season high 900 **Willets** were at Chinc. 14 Jul (JB, CM). A downy Willet chick was observed at Craney 24 Jul (BW et al.). A **Ruff** (Reeve) was an unexpected find at Craney 5 Jun (BW et al., ph. MS). A **Wilson’s Phalarope** was at Chinc. 21 Jul (JB, CM) and 3 were at Craney 31 Jul (BW et al.). **Red-necked Phalarope** reports showed 2 were at Craney 5 Jun (BT, BW et al.), one was at Chinc. 28 Jun (ph. AW, NM), and 3 were at Craney 5 Jun (BW et al.) and 4 were at Craney through 17 Jul with a peak count of 5 there 26 Jun (RB et al.). An ad.
31 Jul (RB et al.). A Parasitic Jaeger was ~20 mi. e. of Virginia Beach 17 Jul (RF) and a molting Bonaparte’s Gull was at Craney 12 & 20 Jun (AM et al.). The HRBT was nest-site conducive for 3374 Laughing Gull pairs, 20 Herring Gull pairs, and 10 Great Black-backed Gull pairs (RB et al.). The season’s peak Lesser Black-backed Gull count was 136 at Back Bay (47)/False Cape (89) 25 Jul (BA, DH, TM, RW). At Chinc. the high count was 95 on 21 Jul (JB, CM). The VDGIF-coordinated Virginia Atlantic Coast Least Tern Survey completed its eighth consecutive breeding season documenting 865 total pairs, the second highest total since the survey began in 2006 and 1.5% above the 2013 total. Fifty-six percent (496) of those pairs were on the Accomack/Northampton coastal barrier islands; 27% (132 pairs) were at Craney. The combined effects of inclement weather and possible avian predation caused the remaining 15% (237 pairs) to fail in their efforts to nest on a Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach rooftop (fide RBt). Single Black Terns were at Craney 5 Jun (DY et al.) and at Chinc. 2 (WL) through 5 Jul (JE, CO, LR). These were followed by 3 at Craney 9 Jul (BA) and one there 31 Jul (BW et al.). In addition to the HRBT’s nesting gulls mentioned above, there were 24 Gull-billed Tern pairs, 1036 Common Tern pairs, 6140 Royal Tern pairs (an all-time high for this site), 30 Sandwich Tern pairs, and 220 Black Skimmer pairs. This was the ninth consecutive year Royal Terns have nested on the facility and the fifth for Sandwich Terns. A Barn Owl was detected at the ESVNWR 1 Jun (JS).

**NIGHTHAWKS–FINCHES**

Weekly field work at Craney found one Common Nighthawk 5, 12, & 26 Jun and 10 Jul (RB et al.). On 17 Jul an ad. f. with 2 fully feathered young were discovered (BW et al.). Seven days later that ad. with only one fledgling were in the exact same spot (BW et al.). This was the fifth consecutive year and 7 of the last 9 years successful breeding for this species has been documented at the facility. The CCB’s annual Peregrine Falcon nest monitoring project revealed the Region’s 19 active nests “produced 38 chicks that reached banding age” (LM). A color-banded f. Peregrine Falcon photographed at Craney 3 (IC) & 19 Jul (JR) had been tagged by the CCB as a hatching on Mockhorn Island, Northampton 11 Jun 2013. A Willow Flycatcher was heard and seen actively defending a territory at Craney through 17 Jul (BW et al.). On two occasions, 26 Jun & 3 Jul, two individuals were detected by song in that territory. Because female Willow Flycatchers have been known to sing at or near a nest site, suspicions were raised that a breeding effort may have occurred. Rhyme and Reason were both at a loss to explain the well-described Vermilion Flycatcher that was at Chinc. 2–3 Jul (LR). One to three (17 Jun) Cedar Waxwings were reported from various locations in Dismal 6 Jun through 21 Jul and one was near Cypress Swamp, Suffolk 4 & 6 Jun (NF). Worm-eating Warblers are rarely detected in the Region during the breeding season, thus 6 in Dismal 3 Jun and 2 there 23 Jun (NF) were real prizes. The 19 Jun Dismal BBS tallied 3 Black-and-white Warblers, one in Suffolk and 2 in Chesapeake (NF, LL). The Northwest River (Chesapeake) Prothonotary Warbler Project, part of the Virginia Prothonotary Project, completed its sixth consecutive summer monitoring efforts. Ninety-four percent of the study-site’s 98 boxes had nesting activity that produced an estimated 410 nestlings, of which 270 were banded (SD et al.). Six American Redstarts were detected during 19 Jun Dismal BBS, 4 in Suffolk and 2 in Chesapeake (NF, LL). A Vesper Sparrow at Chinc. 28 Jun (NM) was most intriguing given this species’ “rare and local summer visitor” status in the Region. Very much out of season was a carefully identified White-throated Sparrow in Hampton 10 Jul (BB). Two Dickcissels were recorded at Chinc. 28 Jun (NM).

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