**Virginia Birds Regions**

**Cities/towns numbered on map**

1. Abingdon 18. Fredericksburg 32. Poquoson 42. Virginia Beach
10. Clifton Forge 27. Martinsville 41. Tazewell
14. Emporia 34. Radford 35. Richmond
15. Fairfax 36. Roanoke 37. Salem
16. Falls Church 38. South Boston 39. Staunton
17. Franklin 40. Suffolk 41. Tazewell

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

**Season** | **Reports due to Regional Editors**
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Summer (Jun–Jul) | 15 Aug
Fall (Aug–Nov) | 15 Dec
Winter (Dec–Feb) | 15 Mar
Spring (Mar–May) | 15 Jun
Terms and Abbreviations
Species name in **bold** first time mentioned (VARCOM Review Birds **BOLD CAPS**); county names are in *italics*.

**Abbreviations**

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*On the cover:* Amy Johnson photographed this White-tailed Kite in *Fauquier 1 Jun.*
Editors’ Note

Southwest Region Editors Retire

This *Virginia Birds* edition chronicles the twelfth consecutive state-wide summer breeding season since the journal was first published in 2004. Roger and Lynda Mayhorn faithfully compiled the Southwest Region reports for each of those June-July periods as well as every season in between. With their summer 2015 report filed, Roger and Lynda chose to step aside as editors to devote more time to their Compton Mountain home near Grundy. Their editorial service to the journal has been first-rate, giving voice to a network of contributors that brought depth, context, and perspectives about the birdlife of a region of the Commonwealth many of us know little about. Thank you, Roger and Lynda, for your very significant contributions to Virginia’s ornithology. Your dedicated work, attention to detail, and gracious service to *Virginia Birds* have been immensely appreciated. Zak Poulton of Bristol will be taking over the Southwest Region editorship beginning with the dauntingly complex task of compiling the Fall 2015 issue.

Virginia Birds Archives Online

By the time you cozy up to digest this past summer’s bird highlights, all of *Virginia Birds* volumes 1–11 will be accessible online through a link on the Virginia Society of Ornithology’s website. As always, we look forward to your input and contributions. After all, these are your Virginia Birds!

*Bill Williams
Louise Menges*
Temperatures were fairly typical throughout the period; rainfall was generally above average. Only 10 days with temperatures above 90 °F were recorded at Dulles International Airport in June and July. The highlight of the season was a White-tailed Kite observed in Fauquier County in June.

Abbreviations: Dyke Marsh (Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Fairfax); Hunting Cr. Bridge (Hunting Cr. Bridge, Fairfax); Huntley Meadows (Huntley Meadows Pk., Fairfax); Occoquan Bay (Occoquan Bay NWR, Fairfax)

**WATERFOWL–SHOREBIRDS**

A *Redhead* was observed at Riverside Pk., *Fairfax* 9 Jun (ph. KJ, CK), considerably outside its 15 Apr Coastal Plain late date; 2 were observed there 2 days later. A *Lesser Scaup* was observed 6 Jun at Dyke Marsh (KG), and 4 were there 29 Jun (RR). These and 5 Scaup sp. seen at Occoquan Bay 6 Jun (DB) were well outside the 20 Apr Coastal Plain late date for either scaup species. *Common Mergansers* continued to be seen along the Potomac R. long past the species’ 10 Apr Piedmont late date, with singles (perhaps the same individual) at Riverbend Pk., *Fairfax* 20 Jun (AB) and at nearby Great Falls NP, *Fairfax* 28 Jun (LF, AS). A *Common Loon* was seen at Upper Occoquan Service Authority, *Fairfax* 8 Jun (KG), well past its 15 May Piedmont late date. A *Pied-billed Grebe*, found 26 June at Massey Cr., *Prince William* (KG), was a fairly rare summer visitor in the Coastal Plain. A juv. *Double-crested Cormorant* was seen at a farm pond on Loudoun Orchard Rd., *Loudoun* 20 Jun (MG), a fairly rare summer visitor in the Piedmont. A juv. *Little Blue Heron* was observed at Huntley Meadows 10 Jul (WH). *Black-crowned Night-Herons* were observed at a couple of locations in the Piedmont, where they are rare summer residents, including singles at a pond in Falls Church, *Fairfax* 4 Jul (PF) and at a private residence near Gainesville, *Prince William* 24 Jul (SF). A similarly rare summer *Yellow-crowned Night-Heron* was observed at the Ashby Pond Conservation Site, *Fairfax* 21 Jun (KG). A juv. *White Ibis* was found at Huntley Meadows 10 Jul (WH), where 2 and possibly 3 individuals were observed through 27 Jul (m. obs.). There were various sightings of *Mississippi Kites* in addition to multiple sightings throughout the period near their now-established nesting sites in Annandale and Burke, *Fairfax*. Singles were observed over Bayfield Ln., *Fauquier* 6 Jun (GS); at Conway-Robinson SF, *Prince William* 18 Jun (Voice); and at the junc. of Rt. 50 & Washington Blvd., *Arlington* 20 Jun (PP, *fide*). A pair was observed perched and flying as well as mating at a private yard near Monticello Pk., Alexandria 22 Jul (DS et al.). A *WHITE-TAILED KITE*, the first accepted record in the Piedmont and only the fourth for the state, was seen and photog. 1 Jun (AJ) near Marshall, *Fauquier*, where it lingered through the month of June. *King Rails*, considered a rare breeder in the Region, were confirmed as
nesting at Crow’s Nest NAP, Stafford (ML). An American Avocet, a bird found only rarely in the Region, was seen at Belle Haven Pk., Fairfax 10 Jul (MW), and 3 were at nearby Dyke Marsh 22 Jul (GH). A Greater Yellowlegs, a rare inland summer visitor, was seen between its respective late and early dates of 5 Jun and 10 July at Hunting Cr. Bridge 2 Jul (DL). A Spotted Sandpiper was reported from Algonkian RP, Loudoun 5 Jun (SJ), outside its 25 May Piedmont late date. A Solitary Sandpiper was reported from Belvoir Pond, Fauquier 5 Jun (GS), well after its 20 May Piedmont late date. Two Whimbrels, a rare inland summer visitor, were reported from Dyke Marsh 21 Jun (LM).

GULLS–SHRIKES
A Bonaparte’s Gull, a very rare summer visitor inland, was reported from Hunting Cr. Bridge 21–26 Jun (DL), and it or another was at nearby Dyke Marsh 27 Jul (AD, KM). A Black Tern, a rare transient in the Piedmont, was reported at Airlie Conference Center, Fauquier 5 Jun (TDe). A Royal Tern, rare inland even in post-breeding dispersal, was reported from Hunting Cr. Bridge 26 Jul (PK). A Black-billed Cuckoo, a rare summer resident in the Region, was reported from Curling Cr. Farm, Culpeper 2–3 Jul (CH). A Chuck-Will’s-widow, considered rare in the Piedmont N of the James R., was reported along Snake Castle Rd., Fauquier 11 Jun (GS, TD). Individual Least Flycatchers, a fairly rare summer resident in the Mountains and Valleys, were reported 17 Jun from two locations 20 miles apart in Shenandoah NP, Madison and Rappahannock (KGr, GM, respectively). A Loggerhead Shrike was seen from the Middleburg Agricultural Research and Extension (MARE) Center, Loudoun and on nearby property in Fauquier 14 Jun (RT, PK).

WARBLERS–CARDINALS
A Northern Waterthrush was reported on Old Waterford Rd., Loudoun 20 Jun (MG), well outside its 10 Jun Piedmont extreme late date. Another Northern Waterthrush, preceding the 29 Jul extreme early date for the Coastal Plain, was reported from Monticello Pk., Alexandria 25 Jul (TA). Two Vesper Sparrows were reported from George Washington’s Ferry Farm, Stafford 28 Jun (TC). Ten Grasshopper Sparrows, a declining species, reported at North Buena Flatwoods, Culpeper 4 Jun (JT), were an eBird high count for the season. A Dickcissel was observed at Meadowood Rec. Area, Fairfax 6 Jun (KG), with up to 2 continuing through 21 Jun. A Dickcissel was observed on Nokesville Rd., Prince William 22 Jun (CL), with up to 2 continuing through 6 Jul. Ten Dickcissels were reported along Grassdale Rd., Fauquier 5 Jul (MC).

Contributors: Tom Albright, Adam Biedler, Dave Boltz, Tucker Caldwell, Mary Coker, Todd Day, Tony DeFalco (TDe), Amelia Dungan, Suzanne Felton, Linda Fields, Peter Frechtel, Kurt Gaskill, Mary Ann Good, Kerry Grim (KGr), Gerry Hawkins, Caroline Heald, William Higgins, Amy Johnson, Stephen Johnson, Karen Jones, Phil Kenny, Claire Kluskens, David Ledwith, Michael Lott, Candice Lowther, Keith Maley, Gabriel Mapel, Larry Meade, Paul Pisano, Rich Rieger, Alan Schreck, Greg Slader, Donald Sweig, Russell Taylor, The Voice of the Naturalist (Voice), Martin Wall
Summer 2015 seemed rather steady and quiet, with some interesting nesting documentation (Black Vulture, Pied-billed Grebe, Spotted Sandpiper, and Brown Creeper, for instance). Surprises included the Brown Pelican in Shenandoah County and the sightings of Mississippi Kites.

**WATERFOWL–IBIS**

A pair of Mute Swans with two young was observed near Dayton, Rockingham 26 Jun (KDu). Fourteen Wood Ducks were found in Bath 17 Jun (BK); ten were at Third Battle of Winchester, Frederick 28 Jun (BL, JL), nineteen at Gala Wetlands, Botetourt 8 Jul (BK), 32 at the Roanoke sewage treatment ponds 12 Jul (KD), twelve at Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 22 Jul (JSh), eleven there 25 Jul (WL), and sixteen at the Berryville Sewage Lagoon, Clarke 31 Jul (JF). One ad. with nine young was seen near Swoope, Augusta 8 June (DH). A juv. Blue-winged Teal was observed in Waynesboro 22 Jul (EC). A Hooded Merganser was noted in Alleghany 21 Jul (BK). A f. Common Merganser with two young was found in Rockbridge 21 Jun (JP). Four Ruddy Ducks were at L. Shenandoah, Rockingham 11 Jul (AL). Five Northern Bobwhite were found in Highland 24 Jun (RK), and one ad. with eleven chicks was seen at Swoope, Augusta 23 Jul (fide PW). An imm. BROWN PELICAN was found in Shenandoah 10 Jun (DH). An imm. Common Loon was seen at L. Frederick, Frederick 10 Jun (DH); two were there 25 Jun (DH) and two were at Carvins Cove, Botetourt 12 Jun (BK). An ad. Pied-billed Grebe with three young was seen at Augusta Springs Wetland, Augusta 20 Jun (AC, AL). One was found on the South Fork of the Shenandoah R., Rockingham 6 Jul (CJ). Six Double-crested Cormorants were seen near McCoy, Montgomery 18 Jul (ZP). A Great Egret was found at New Hope, Augusta 8 Jul (GM). Other reports included one also 8 Jul at Greenfield L., Botetourt (JD), three in Rockingham and one in Augusta 10 Jul (GMo), three near Eggleston, Giles 12 Jul (BS), one at Tardy Flats, Rockbridge 15 Jul (WR), five at New River Junction Campground, Montgomery 17 Jul (JSt), two near McCoy, Montgomery 18 Jul (ZP), one at Cook's Cr. Arboretum, Bridgewater, Rockingham 19 Jul (JSh), one at the Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 22 Jul (JSh), two there 25 Jul (WL), and two near Edinburg, Shenandoah 28 Jul (DH). Three Black-crowned Night-Herons were seen at the Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, Page 9 Jun (GW). There was one ad. in Dayton, Rockingham 23 Jun (SS), one imm. at Lone Fountain, Augusta 29 Jun (SL), and one ad. at Bisset Pk., Radford 19 Jul (CK). An imm. White Ibis was observed at Eagle Rock, Botetourt 8–9 Jul (KD, BH, BK) and one was near Woodstock, Shenandoah 19 Jul (SG).

**RAPTORS–SHOREBIRDS**

A Black Vulture nest was found on the ground in Parnassus, Augusta for a first documented nesting record in that county. Dates of observation ranged from 2 Jun to 20 Jul; documentation included video and photos (BLa). One MISSISSIPPI KITE was seen at Heritage Pk. in Blacksburg, Montgomery 4 Jul (KD, BK, MS), and one in Frederick 17 Jul (BL, JL). A Northern Harrier was at the Third Battle of Winchester, Frederick 7 Jun (BY). Another was near Saumsville, Shenandoah
12 Jun (ET) and one was near Blacksburg, Montgomery 14 Jun (LA). One ad. and one imm. Bald Eagle were seen in Warren near Front Royal 25 Jun (DH); two ads. were photographed in the Swoope area of Augusta 15 Jul (MF). A Sora was heard at the Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 18 Jul (WL), and again 25 Jul. An American Avocet was found at L. Arrowhead, Page 6 Jul (fide GM). Two Spotted Sandpipers were seen at L. Frederick, Frederick 5 Jun (DC). Additional reports were: one at the Roanoke sewage treatment ponds 12 Jul (KD); two at Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 25 Jul (WL); and two in Radford 26 Jul (CK). Two ads. were observed feeding one young at Sherando, Augusta 29 Jun (SR). One Solitary Sandpiper was at Greenfield L., Botetourt 8 Jul (JD); four were at Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 25 Jul (WL). Two Least Sandpipers were at Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 25 Jul (WL); three were at Roanoke water treatment facility 28 Jul (KD). A Semipalmated Sandpiper was found near Bridgewater, Rockingham 5 Jun (WL) and one was at the Roanoke sewage treatment facility 26 Jul (KD). A Western Sandpiper was present at the Roanoke sewage treatment facility 28 Jul (KD). A Black Tern was found at Silver L., Rockingham 9 Jun (WL, GM, TM).

Cuckoos–Finches

Four Yellow-billed Cuckoos were found in Augusta 20 Jun (AC, AL) and five were at the Cool Spring Battlefield, Clarke 14 Jul (BL, JL). A Black-billed Cuckoo was found at Warm Springs, Bath 12 Jun (EO). Other singles were noted in Highland 14 Jun (JSt), near Buena Vista, Rockbridge 20 Jun (EG), and near Switzer L., Rockingham 19 Jul (TH). Fourteen Eastern Whip-poor-wills were heard in Rockingham 1 Jul (DH), and five at Poverty Hollow, Montgomery 17 Jul (JSt). Two or three Chuck-will’s-widows were heard in Rockingham 29 Jun (KS). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was found at the Morris Hill Campground, Bath 10 Jun (JS). An Alder Flycatcher was heard singing at North River, Augusta 9 Jun (AL), then photographed there 21 Jun (AC, AL). A Loggerhead Shrike was seen near Dublin, Pulaski 23 Jul (BK, JP).

Four (two ad. and two juv.) were found in Warren 13 Jun (DS). The youngsters were begging the adults for food. A flock of 22 Common Ravens was observed near Crimora, Augusta 15 Jul (AW). Ninety-eight Northern Rough-winged Swallows were tallied at the Cool Spring Battlefield, Clarke 6 Jul (BL, JL). Fifty Purple Martins were at White Post, Clarke 20 Jul (FD). About 100 nest holes for Bank Swallows were found near Strasburg, Shenandoah 11 Jun (KSe). Thirty Cliff Swallows were seen near Waterloo, Clarke 11 Jun (FJ), ten at the Nazarene Church Wetlands, Rockingham 18 Jul (WL), and fifteen there 19 Jul (DL). A Brown Creeper nest with young was found in Poverty Hollow, Montgomery 28 Jun (RM). A new summer peak count of 23 Wood Thrushes in Augusta was set 20 Jun (AC, AL). A Prothonotary Warbler was seen at Woodpecker Ridge Nature Center, Botetourt 1 Jul (BK). A Summer Tanager was found near Front Royal, Warren 7 Jun (JW), and one was near Lexington 25 Jul (DI). A Dickcissel was seen near Dublin, Pulaski 11 Jul (MB, SB), and two were near Swoope, Augusta 16 Jul (PW). A pair of Bobolinks was found on Bent Mt., Roanoke 7–11 Jun (EK, JK), and twenty were near Swoope, Augusta 5 Jul (PW). A Pine Siskin was seen at Mountain L., Giles 12 Jun (JD).

The weather for the period was rainy with 18 days of rain in June and 16 in July. The temperature averaged 75 °F for both months.

Highlights for the period were a Common Loon in Dickenson County in July, a Eurasian Collared-Dove in Washington County, House Wrens sharing a nest box with a snake in Washington County, a low Wood Thrush count on BBS in Grayson County, a Clay-colored Sparrow found in Wythe County, and first records of Blue Grosbeaks nesting in Buchanan County.

Abbreviations: JNF (Jefferson National Forest); RR (Rural Retreat, Wythe)

QUAIL–FINCHES

A Northern Bobwhite was heard several times at Southern Gap, Buchanan 20 Jun (DC, RM, DO, MS). This species has become very rare in the Region. A Common Loon was discovered on John Flanagan Reservoir, Dickenson 20 Jul (DR). A Great Egret was observed fishing on the N. Fork of Clinch R., Russell 4 Jul (J&JT). On the same date another Great Egret was found at Ivanhoe, Wythe (PE). A Bald Eagle was observed catching trout at a lake in Burkes Garden, Tazewell 1 Jun (CD). The unusual sighting of a Merlin during breeding season took place at Southern Gap 19 Jul (DO). A Pectoral Sandpiper was reported at Burkes Garden, Tazewell 7 Jun (CD). An American Woodcock, a species not common to the area, was found standing at the side of the road at Elk Garden, Russell 28 Jun (JT). A EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE was discovered on W. Bank St. in Damascus, Washington 25 Jun (MSm). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was heard repeatedly on Pine Mt. in the JNF, Grayson 13 Jun (BBC). Two Loggerhead Shrikes were observed on Green Valley Rd., Russell 13 Jun (CD). Eighty-three Red-eyed Vireos were counted on the Iron Mt. BBS 10 Jun, the highest count since 2008 (RL). A Bank Swallow was reported at New R. SP in Austinville, Wythe 7 Jul (WA). Eleven active Cliff Swallow nests were found on the J. P. Carico bridge over the New R., Grayson 16 Jun (WD). Five Red-headed Woodpeckers were counted in Burkes Garden 19 Jun (J&JP). The species is known to nest there. Nine Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were counted on the Iron Mt. BBS near Mt. Rogers, Grayson 10 Jun (RL). This ties the previous high count in 2010 (RL). A pair of House Wrens in Bristol, Washington was reported sharing their nest box with what appeared to be a small snake 9 Jun, and had been for about 10 days. The parent birds continued to feed their young and “seemed to pay little attention to the snake” (LK).

A new low count of 4 Wood Thrushes was recorded on the Iron Mt. BBS 10 Jun (RL); 2015 was the 19th consecutive year for this count. A Blackburnian Warbler was observed on East R. Mt., Bland 2 Jun (JP). A Prairie Warbler was discovered at Cedar Bluff, Wardell Rd., Tazewell 7 Jun (DO). On the same date and also in Tazewell another Prairie Warbler was found in Burkes Garden (CD). A Cerulean Warbler was found 2 Jun on East R. Mt., Bland (JP). High counts of 4 American Redstarts, 3 Worm-eating Warblers, and 10 Canada Warblers were logged on the Iron Mt. BBS, Grayson 10 Jun (RL). A Clay-colored Sparrow was heard singing at RR, Wythe 5 Jun. The bird was
found there again 7 Jun (JM). A Vesper Sparrow was noted in Burkes Garden, Tazewell 19 Jun (J&JP). Ten Bobolinks were found in the same location also 19 Jun (J&JP). Two singing m. Blue Grosbeaks were discovered at Southern Gap, Buchanan 20 Jun (DC, RM, DO, MS). There are no known previous records of the species nesting within Buchanan (RM). A Blue Grosbeak was found in Lebanon, Russell at the Park and Ride 21 Jun (DO). A single Pine Siskin came to a feeder in Abingdon, Washington 30 Jun (SH).

Contributors: William Anderson, Bristol Bird Club, Don Carrier, Clancey Deel, William Dunson, Patty Elton, Sheri Hiter, Larry Kirksey, Richard Lewis, Roger Mayhorn, Judy Moose, Daryl Owens, Jim Phillips, Jim and Judy Phillips, David Raines, Mike Smith (MSm), Mike Sanders, Jerry Thornhill, Jerry and Jane Thornhill

South Central

A majority of the summer reports concerned birds that appear to have been late migrants, early migrants, or non-migrants, while only a few breeding reports of note were received. Several species such as Bald Eagle, Loggerhead Shrike, and Cliff Swallow were reported in low but expected numbers at known breeding locations; these are generally not included in this report. Several other species were reported less frequently than might be expected and are mentioned here.

Abbreviations: HLSP (Holliday Lk. SP, Appomattox/ Buckingham); Kerr (John H. Kerr Res., Charlotte [upper lake only], Halifax [upper lake only], and Mecklenburg [lower lake]); SRR (Sandy R. Res., Prince Edward)

COMMON MERGANSER–CASPIAN TERN
Unexpected in summer, a f. Common Merganser was photographed at Tailrace Pk. below Kerr Dam, Mecklenburg, 25 Jun (JB, AD ph. PG) and seen there again 27 Jun (JB). A Red-throated Loon with an injured wing remained near the dam at Kerr all summer (m.obs.), perhaps the same individual seen here last summer. Two juv. Pied-billed Grebes were being fed by an ad. at Clyde’s Pond, Dick Cross WMA, Mecklenburg, 25 Jul (JB, AD ph., PG, CW), with two other ads. nearby. Although the species has bred at this site before, it is not a typical breeder in the Region. Double-crested Cormorants were reported at several lakes through the summer, with a high count of 48 below Adam D’Onofrio’s photo of a Pied-billed Grebe at Dick Cross WMA, Mecklenberg 21 Jun
the dam at Tailrace Pk., Kerr, on 21 Jun (AD). A Black-crowned Night-Heron at a private lake in w. Prince Edward (WR) was the only report this season and is one of the few records for the county. An American Coot at Dick Cross WMA 25 Jul was unseasonal (JB, AD, PG). While a Spotted Sandpiper at SRR 2 Jun (ES) could be explained as a late migrant, it’s less clear what to think about the one in breeding plumage photographed at HLSP 2 Jul; one was also there 18 Jul, and two on 19 Jul (all ES). It’s uncertain whether these represent transient birds or undocumented breeding in the Region. Shorebirds at Staunton View Pk. on upper Kerr (Mecklenburg) the morning of 25 Jul included 8 Spotted Sandpipers, one Solitary Sandpiper, one Lesser Yellowlegs, 8 Least Sandpipers, and 8 Pectoral Sandpipers (JB, AD, PG, CW). All of these except the Spotted Sandpipers were first Regional reports for this year’s fall migration. On 29 Jul at the same location, 3 Semipalated Plovers appeared along with most of the previously mentioned shorebird species (no Solitary noted; JB). One Caspian Tern was seen at Staunton View Pk., Kerr, 25 Jul (m.obs.), one was at SRR 26 Jul (MA), Mecklenburg and one was at HLSP 30 Jul (ph. ES); this is a better than average Regional showing for the species in late summer (or early fall migration).

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE–DICKCISSEL**

The only Eurasian Collared-Dove report was of two individuals in Crewe, Nottoway 17 Jun (CMS). Mississippi Kites were reported from s. Greensville 7 Jun (EF, NF) and later (m.obs.), but not elsewhere; this is fewer Regional reports than might be expected considering the numbers being seen in Virginia locations in recent years. The only Warbling Vireo report was a single bird singing at the s. end of the Howardsville bridge, Buckingham 5 Jun (CMS). A single Worm-eating Warbler was noted in the Appomattox portion of HLSP 14 & 22 Jun (ES); this was the only report of a species more commonly seen in the Blue Ridge counties to our west. A Swainson’s Warbler found along Steel Bridge Rd. at Fountains Cr., Greensville 7 Jun (EF, NF, PR) was the only report. Kentucky Warblers were reported only from HLSP 25 Jun and 9 Jul (ES), and from a yard in South Boston, Halifax 30 Jul (ph. JB). The Dickcissels reported in spring in w. Prince Edward remained well into Jun (ES, CMS) but were displaced by mowing at an uncertain date. They appeared to be maintaining breeding territories, though no conclusive breeding evidence was seen.

A Dickcissel sings from its perch on a wire in Prince Edward 5 Jun. Photo: Evan Spears

**Contributors:** Mary Ames, Jeff Blalock, Adam D’Onofrio, Elisa Flanders, Nick Flanders, Paul Glass, Peggy Rommen, Evan Spears, C. Michael Stinson, Clyde Wilson
The Central Region had an average monthly temperature in June of 74.5 degrees, a 2.6-degree departure from normal, and received 8.23 inches of rainfall, a 4.50-inch departure from normal. July’s average monthly temperature was 76.5 degrees, a 1.1-degree departure from normal. Rainfall in July was 4.01 inches for the month, a departure from normal of –0.31 inches.

As all birders know, the summer season can be slow birding, but on occasion interesting birds can show up for the Region. The most interesting find was a Cattle Egret in Albemarle County representing Albemarle’s fourth county record.

**Abbreviations:** ICNA (Ivy Creek Natural Area, Albemarle)

**GREBES–WARBLERS**

A lone Pied-billed Grebe at ICNA 7 Jul (JP) represented the only report of one this season. Two Double-crested Cormorants were recorded: one in Fredericksburg 8 Jun (BB) and another flying over Belmont, Charlottesville 31 Jul (DS). Northern Bobwhites were represented in seven counties, all reports being of either lone individuals or a small group ranging up to three birds: Albemarle, Bedford, Caroline, Fluvanna, Louisa, Powhatan, and Spotsylvania. Three Great Egrets were found: two from Young Corner, Caroline 14 Jul (GT) and the third from Lickinghole Creek, Albemarle 26 Jul (PM). A Cattle Egret, a rare summer visitor, was found hanging around Ispwich Place, Albemarle 27 Jun (DH, SM, ph. JP). The shorebirds found were Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, and Least Sandpiper. The Least Sandpiper report came from a pond behind McDonald’s in Louisa 17 Jul (AR). Chuck-will’s-widows were only reported from Fluvanna. Though there are known breeding areas in other counties none were pursued. They were seen from two locations: one location on private property off Paynes Mill Rd., Fluvanna where up to three individuals were seen 1–6 Jun (ph. AR) and the other location on Blue Bell Ln., Fluvanna where only one was reported 29 Jun (EG). The only Eastern Whip-poor-will report was from Highland Dr., Powhatan 10 Jun (PE). An early Yellow-bellied Flycatcher report came from Secluded Farm, Albemarle 24 Jul (JP). The only Willow Flycatcher report was from Browns Gap, Albemarle 7 Jul (TH). Least Flycatchers were found along the mountains at many locations in Albemarle.
The only pair of Least Flycatchers was reported from Pocosin Cabin, Greene 10 Jun (DW, GM). An exciting report of a pair of Brown-headed Nuthatches from a beaver pond, Caroline 1 Jun (GT) might foreshadow the gradual return of this species in the Region. A high count of five Veerys came from Pocosin Cabin, Greene 10 Jun (DW). Nineteen warbler species were recorded: Ovenbird, Worm-eating, Louisiana Waterthrush, Black-and-White, Prothonotary, Kentucky, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded, American Redstart, Cerulean, Northern Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Pine, Yellow-throated, Prairie, Black-throated Green, Canada, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

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Temperatures averaged near normal for the short two month reporting period. Precipitation, on the other hand, averaged 1.75 inches above normal. It was another typical summer season complete with a few out of place waterfowl, a few wandering juvenile waders and a few breeding bird surveys. Rarities this season included Anhinga, which may not really be that rare anymore, as well as Red-necked Phalarope and Loggerhead Shrike, both continuing from the spring.

Richmond’s famous Peregrine Falcon pair were at it again this year, nesting in the same location as in previous years on the 21 St walkway of the Riverfront Plaza and producing four eggs. Unfortunately, only one of these eggs hatched but this one chick fledged successfully and was last seen flying strongly over the city in late June.

Bucking a recent trend of continued growth, the Red-cockaded Woodpecker population at Piney Grove Preserve in Sussex County took a slight turn in the other direction with a low reproductive output this season. According to Mike Wilson of the Center for Conservation Biology, “Thirteen breeding groups produced only twenty-one young. The 2015 reproductive rate was low compared to the last several years when young per pair has averaged 1.5. The lower reproductive output was due in part to new breeding pairs that have settled in lower quality habitat and/or are inexperienced.” It will be interesting to see how the population and the habitat fares in future years.

Bald Eagles continue to make an amazing comeback in the region along the James River. An article in the Richmond Times-Dispatch on the Fourth of July cited that 236 pairs of eagles produced 313 young this spring, tying a modern day record set last year. As recently as 2000, there were just 56 eagle pairs in the James River region and for the first time in modern history, three pairs of eagles nested in Richmond this year. We’ve come a long way since the DDT days.
Abbreviations: Branchville BBS (Branchville Breeding Bird Survey, Southampton); College Creek (College Creek Hawkwatch, James City); Dutch Gap (Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield); Hog (Hog Island WMA, Surry); Newsoms BBS (Newsoms Breeding Bird Survey, Southampton); Newville BBS (Newville Breeding Bird Survey, Sussex); Shirley (Shirley Plantation, Charles City).

DUCKS--SPARROWS

“Out of season” ducks found in the Region this summer included a m. Ring-necked Duck at a retention pond behind the Lowes Home Center on Hull St., Chesterfield 15 & 29 Jun (ph. EO). In that same area, a m. Hooded Merganser was photographed at a pond in the Brandermill subdivision, Chesterfield 29 Jun (ph. NH, AS). Finally, three Ruddy Ducks, 2 m. and 1 f., were at Hog 10 Jun & 29 Jul (ph. AD). Seven Northern Bobwhites were counted on the Newville BBS 6 Jun (N&EF. Seven Northern Bobwhites were also counted on the Branchville BBS (N&EF). An Anhinga was spotted at Harwood’s Mill Res., York 25 Jun (JS). This location has hosted Anhingas in the past including the first ever documented nesting of the species in Virginia. Two Anhingas were seen soaring fairly low over I-95 just south of the Carson rest area, Prince George 12 Jul (GL). Tricolored Heron reports included one at Dutch Gap 16 Jul (AM), two at New Quarter Pk., York 25 Jul (BW et al.), three at Queens L., York 26 Jul (ph. JL), and 4 at Hog 29 Jul (ph. AD). At least four Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were at Queens Cr., York 25 Jul (BW et al.). Three juv. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were seen at Hog 29 Jul (ph. AD). A number of juv. White Ibis drifted inland this season. The high count was sixteen at Mogarts Beach Rd. mud flats, Isle of Wight 3 Jul (TC). Elsewhere, ten were counted at Tormentor Lake, Isle of Wight 8 Jul (TC), two were at Shirley 25 Jul (ph. EO), and singles were at New Quarter Park, York 25 Jul (BW et al.) and at College Creek 27 Jul (BW). The only Glossy Ibis reported in the Region were two spotted in a flooded field just south of the intersection of Rte. 10 and Wrenns Mill Rd., Isle of Wight 25 Jun (JS). A Red-necked Phalarope, first discovered 31 May, was photographed at Harwood’s Mill Res., York 1 Jun (ph. EM). Single Common Terns, uncommon in the Region, were noted from the Scotland-Jamestown Ferry, Surry & James City 6 Jun (NF) and again on 22 Jun (TC). A singing Chuck-will’s-widow was off the Yorktown tour road, York 9 Jun (DG). There was new information recently received from Summer 2014 regarding the discovery of two Chuck-will’s-widow nests off Crawford Rd., York. One nest had a downy chick 6 Jul and the other had two feathered chicks 11 Jul. Both nests were photographed (VJ). Eleven Chuck-will’s-
widows were counted during the Branchville Nightjar Survey Network route, *Southampton* 24 Jun (N&EF). Six *Eastern Whip-poor-wills* were counted during a nightjar survey in *Chesterfield* 24 Jun (JSh). The *Loggerhead Shrike*, reported in the spring column on Burwells Bay Rd., *Isle of Wight*, was seen singing from that location 5 Jun (TC). A singing *Warbling Vireo* was in Monticello Woods, *James City* 17 Jun (DC). This sighting represented only the second June record and tenth local record overall. Nine *Horned Larks* were counted on the Newsoms BBS 7 Jun (N&EF, PR). Two Horned Larks were tallied on the Branchville BBS 14 Jun (N&EF). A *Swainson’s Warbler* was recorded on the Newsoms BBS at the intersection of SR 35 and Tarrara Cr. 7 Jun (N&EF, PR). This location has hosted at least one Swainson’s Warbler during the breeding season on more than one occasion in recent years. Three *Kentucky Warblers* were counted on the Newville BBS 6 Jun (N&EF). Single Kentucky Warblers were noted on the Newsoms BBS 7 Jun (N&EF, PR), on the Branchville BBS 14 Jun (N&EF), and at the Nottoway R. off Carys Bridge Landing, *Southampton* 1–2 Jun (NF). A *Savannah Sparrow*, found on the Newsoms BBS 7 Jun, was rare for the season (N&EF, PR). Also rare for the season were two *White-throated Sparrows*. One was at Rolling Woods, *James City* to at least 13 Jun (DC) and the other was near Yorktown, *York* through 17 Jun (ph. AH). Both constituted first local June records. Another first local June record came in the form of a *Dark-eyed Junco* at Riverview Plantation, *James City* 26 & 27 Jun (ph. NB).

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Editor’s Note: The author of the Volume 11 (4) Spring 2015 East report was Nick Newberry.

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.

Highlights from the Region this summer included Anhingas, Least Bitterns, Tricolored Herons, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, White Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Piping Plover, Whimbrels, Sandwich Terns, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Dickcissels, and Bobolinks. Increased coverage in 2015 of sites adjacent to the Chesapeake Bay in Mathews County, especially Bethel Beach, produced late July lists with impressive tern counts and shorebird diversity. The counties receiving attention during the 2014 annual VSO Breeding Bird Foray saw a reduction in coverage in 2015. This reduction was at least partially responsible for the decline in reports of nightjars and some passerines such as Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Dickcissel in the Region from 2014 to 2015. Many reports were gleaned from eBird records and VA-Bird and the Northern Neck Audubon Society listservers.

Abbreviations: Bethel Beach (Bethel Beach area, Mathews); Guinea (Guinea Neck area, Gloucester); Hutchinson (Hutchinson Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR, Essex); Wilna (Wilna Tract of the Rappahannock River Valley NWR, Richmond).

WATERFOWL–RAILS

There were few notable waterfowl observations reported this summer, but one unidentified Aythya on a tributary of Indian Cr., Northumberland 8 Jun was extremely late (PS, \textit{fide} TS). One Hooded Merganser at the East R., Mathews 7 Jun was an interesting find during the breeding season (MS). Ruddy Ducks have been reported from the Region in summer annually since 2012, and this year was no exception with one report of 4 from Colonial Beach, Westmoreland 29 Jul (PN). As in 2014, a Chesapeake Breeze cruise out of Reedville, Northumberland produced an impressive count of Wilson’s Storm-Petrels with 21 reported 18 Jul (DL). Four ANHINGAS near the York R., Gloucester 20 Jun (CJS) was an amazing count and provided the first summer report of the species from the Region since 2009. Single Least Bitterns were reported from Richmond 24 Jun and from King William 1 Jul (FA). Tricolored Heron reports were more numerous than usual, with several observers noting the species in Mathews in late Jul. Reports of one Tricolored Heron 24 Jul came from Bethel Beach (EO, BO) and Fickle Fen Rd. (MS), while 2 were
found at South Haven Beach 26 Jul (AB, JSr). One **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** in *Gloucester* 11 Jun (FR) was a great find and furnished a summer report for the Region for the second consecutive year. Small flocks of **White Ibises** observed in Jul matched the expected timing of post-breeding dispersal; 5 were at Balls Neck Rd., *Northumberland* 11 Jul (TS) and 3 were at Ware Pt. Rd., *Gloucester* 23 Jul (JSr). **Glossy Ibis** is not reported in the Region every summer, but two were found in Jun: single individuals were observed in *Northumberland* 6 Jun (SE) and at the e. end of Maryus Rd., *Gloucester* 17 Jun (ET). **Virginia Rails** are rarely reported from the e. Regional counties in the summer, so one at Bethel Beach 26 Jul was a notable find (AB, JSr).

**SHOREBIRDS–TERNS**

A diversity of shorebirds was reported from across the Region in Jul, with Bethel Beach a hot-spot. The high count of **American Oystercatchers** came from Bethel Beach, where 9 were counted 7 Jun (EO). The only **Semipalmed Plover** report from the Region came from Bethel Beach 26 Jul when 8 were counted (AB, ABs, JSr). One **Piping Plover** at Bethel Beach 26 Jul (ABs) was a great find. **Whimbrels** are also rarely reported from the Region, so counts from Bethel Beach of 2 on 24 Jul (EO, BO) and one on 26 Jul (ABs) were very exciting. One **Ruddy Turnstone** at Bethel Beach 5 Jun (BW) may have represented an over-summering individual. Bethel Beach also hosted the only reports of **Sanderling** (AB, JSr) and **Western Sandpiper** (ABs, JSr), with one of each found 26 Jul. A couple of w. counties hosted shorebirds of interest in late Jun/early Jul; reports of one **Lesser Yellowlegs** came from **King George** 25 Jun and 24 Jul and from *Westmoreland* 24 Jul (FA). These same two counties held **Least Sandpipers**, with one in **King George** 24 Jul (FA), 6 at Chandlers Millpond, *Westmoreland* 26 Jul (AC, MC), and 12 in *Westmoreland* 24 Jul (FA). Three **Pectoral Sandpipers** and 5 **Semipalmed Sandpipers** were found in *Westmoreland* 24 Jul (FA). Counts of 110 **Laughing Gulls** and 36 **Royal Terns** at the Rappahannock R. off Tappahannock, *Essex* 24 Jul (FA) were high so far up-river. Bethel Beach held impressive numbers of terns in late Jul; 200 was the peak **Least Tern** count and 47 **Common Terns** were also present 26 Jul (ABs). For the second consecutive year five **Sandwich Tern** reports were received from the Region, with all 2015 reports from *Mathews*. The peak Sandwich Tern count reported was 5 at Bethel Beach 24 Jul (EO, BO). Double digit counts of **Black Skimmers** came from Bethel Beach in the beginning and end of the summer season, with 28 present 7 Jun (EO) and 18 present 26 Jul (ABs).

**NIGHTJARS–SWALLOWS**

One **Common Nighthawk** at Fickle Fen Rd., *Mathews* 17 Jun (MS) and 2 in *Westmoreland* 3 Jul (LW) provided the first summer reports of the species in the Region since 2011. **American Kestrels** are not reported every summer, but one was at Guinea 27 Jul (G&RH). The presence of nesting **Peregrine Falcons** on the Hwy. 360 bridge over the Rappahannock R. furnished records for both *Essex* and *Richmond* this summer, with 2 adults and 2 nestlings observed from Tappahannock, *Essex* 25 Jun (FA). **Willow Flycatchers** are rare in the Region during the breeding season, but were present at Wilna this year with one found 7 Jun (JA, AB, EM, JSr) and 2 reported 26 Jul (AC, MC). A few **Horned Lark** reports were received from w. counties, all of low numbers with 16 at Woodbury Rd., *King William* the exception (FA). Trips to *King George* and *King William* in Jul produced impressive swallow counts; *King George* held 680 **Tree Swallows** and 555 **Bank Swallows** 24 Jul; 915 **Tree Swallows** were in *King William* 1 Jul, and 10 **Bank Swallows** and 5 **Cliff Swallows** were at Woodbury Rd., *King William* 24 Jul (FA). Six **Cliff Swallows** were at Walkerton, *King and Queen* 11 Jun (GG).

**WRENS–WARBLERS**

Breeding season **House Wren** reports from the Region are rarely numerous, but it was surprising to receive only two this year. Two House Wrens were at Guinea 27 Jul (G&RH) and one was at South Haven Beach, *Mathews* 26 Jul (AB, JSr). Only two **Marsh
Wren reports were received; one Marsh Wren was at the e. end of Maryus Rd., Gloucester 17 Jun (ET) and 41 were in Richmond 24 Jun (FA). Ten Wood Thrushes on the Truhart BBS 25 Jun provided the highest count reported from the Region (FA). A few Worm-eating Warbler reports were received from w. counties, with a high count of 4 at Sandy Point SF, King William 14 Jun (VJ, JS). One Worm-eating Warbler in Northumberland 7 Jun was notable to the e. (SE). Twelve Black-and-white Warblers tallied on the Truhart BBS furnished the high count for the Region (FA). Of the few American Redstart reports received the highest count came from the Rte. 603 bridge over Dragon Swamp, Middlesex where 3 were present 25 Jun (FA). Suggett’s Point, Richmond held the only Yellow Warbler reported this season with one present on 22 Jul (LA), likely an early migrant. One Black-throated Blue Warbler on the Port Royal BBS 7 Jun was late (FA).

SPARROWS–ORIOLES

Grasshopper Sparrows were frequently reported from w. counties, with a high count of 15 at Wilna 26 Jul (AC, MC). One Grasshopper Sparrow in Gloucester 18 Jun (ET) was notable as fewer reports of the species are received from e. counties. Seaside Sparrows were frequently reported from e. counties bordering the Chesapeake Bay with a high count of 11 at Bethel Beach 7 Jun (EO). For the second consecutive year only 5 Coastal Plain Swamp Sparrows were found in Richmond with this year’s count made 24 Jun (FA). As in 2014, a report of a late Rose-breasted Grosbeak came from the Region in early Jun; a single Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at Clay Bank, Gloucester 8 Jun (GB). Reports of Dickcissels from the Region were much less numerous than in recent years, partially due to the continuing decline of the species at Wilna. Five Dickcissels at Wilna 19 Jul (LA) was the only report received from the site despite numerous visits by other parties this summer. The only other Dickcissel report from the Region came from the Port Royal BBS where 2 were counted 7 Jun (FA). It was nice to see summer Bobolink reports from the Region after a hiatus last year; 2 were at Wilna 19 Jul and 4 were at Hutchinson 25 Jul (LA). Thirty Boat-tailed Grackles at Bethel Beach 26 Jul (ABs) was the high count. The only sizeable blackbird flock reported was 450 Brown-headed Cowbirds in Westmoreland 24 Jul (FA). A singing Baltimore Oriole at Waterview Rd., Richmond 24 Jun (FA) was a great find as most summer sightings from the Region occur in late Jul.

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The signature event for this report period was a Virginia Beach Mississippi Kite pair successfully fledging a single nestling in late July, unequivocally validating the breeding status of this species in the Region. Birds of special note included Harlequin Duck, White-faced Ibis, Roseate Tern and Arctic Tern.

**Abbreviations:** Back Bay (Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach); CBBT (Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, s. of Northampton); Chinc.(Chincoteague NWR,Acomack); Craney (Craney Island, Portsmouth); CVWO (Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory); Dismal (Dismal Swamp NWR, Chesapeake/Suffolk); ESVNWR (Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR, Northampton); False Cape (False Cape SP, Virginia Beach); HRBT (Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel, Hampton/Norfolk); KSP (Kiptopeke SP, Northampton); Little Is. (Little Island Park, Virginia Beach); NNP (Newport News Park, Newport News); PHP (Pleasure House Pt., Virginia Beach)

**WATERFOWL–WADERS**

The *Tundra Swan* at Chinc. as the spring season ended continued through 31 Jul (m. obs.). A f. *Common Eider* spotted off Back Bay 13 Jun (BO) was subsequently seen at nearby Little Is. 8 Jul (AB). A m. *Harlequin Duck* spent time among oyster floats on Occohannock Cr., *Acomack* 18 Jun (ph. JH). An injured f. *White-winged Scoter* was at Back Bay 17 Jul (ph. RBi). *Black Scoters* were at several sites throughout the season with a peak count of 200 off Metomkin Is., *Acomack* 13 Jun (JL). By 20 Jul the number there had declined to 5 (JL). Elsewhere, one was off False Cape 3 Jun (NF), 6 were off the CBBT 5 Jun (RH) with 4 there 6 (RBi) & 9 Jun (SW), 2 were off the CBBT (BO) and one was at KSP 12 Jun (SB), 10 were at Chinc. 3 Jul (DL, CO), 2 were off Ft. Story 12 Jul (KB), and one was off PHP 17 Jul (KS). A *Horned Grebe* was at Ft. Monroe, Hampton 27 Jul (ph. DY). A “sick” *Sooty Shearwater* was recovered at Chinc. 10 Jun (MY et al.). Two to 3 *Wilson’s-Storm Petrels* were off 85th St., Virginia Beach 26 Jun (AB, TT) and 5 were off Little Is. 8 Jul (AB). A “rough estimate” 1960 *Double-crested Cormorants*, many of which were large young-of-the-year, were in a colony on the Shanks Is., Cheeseman Is., South Pt. Marsh complex, *Acomack* 24 Jun (HA, JW). An *Anhinga* flew over Bennetts Creek Nursery, Suffolk 11 Jun (CO); another was at NNP 5 Jul (m. obs.). An *American White Pelican* was at the ESVNWR 1 Jul (anonymous). An estimated 1640 *Brown Pelicans* (95% breeding ads.) were on the Shanks Is., Cheeseman Is., South Pt. Marsh complex, *Acomack* 24 Jun (HA, JW). Exactly 1,000 Brown Pelican chicks were banded there 16 Jul with “perhaps just as many” youngsters in 2 adjacent colonies that were not banded (*fide* HA, JW). A record-shattering 1700 *White Ibis* were carefully counted as they flew past Queen’s Sound Channel, *Acomack* 23 Jul (GA, DG, TJ); the state’s previous high count was 674 set at the ESVNWR 9 Sep 2011. A *WHITE-FACED IBIS* was reported at Chinc. 28 (DL) & 30 Jun (ph. SJ) and 3 Jul (CO).
RAPTORS–FINCHES

An ad. Mississippi Kite was at the ESVNWR 7 Jun (ph. DC). However, it was the breeding activities of a Mississippi Kite pair off Burroughs Rd. in the Thoroughgood section of Virginia Beach that highlighted the season. Careful observations of the pair, accompanied by an attendant sub-ad. believed to have fledged at the site in 2014, revealed a nest with a single downy chick 1 Jul (TT). The hatchling fledged 25 Jul (TT), confirming the Region’s first successful breeding record for this species. A m. Northern Harrier was on the Shanks Is., Cheeseman Is., South Pt. Marsh complex, Accomack 24 Jun (HA, JW). A Sandhill Crane “heading southwest” passed over Onancock, Accomack 6 Jun (DM). An exceptionally early American Golden-Plover was at Craney 16 Jul (BW, DY). Preliminary end-of-season results from the VDGIF-coordinated 30th annual Virginia Plover Survey documented 34 Wilson’s Plover pairs, a 17% increase over the 2014 end-of-season 29 pairs total, and 256 Piping Plover pairs, 4% above last year’s end-of-season 245 pairs total (fide RBt). At least 11 Black-necked Stilt pairs nested at Craney this summer. A pair with 2 downy chicks was found 18 Jun (LS et al.). Two broods of 4 downy young each were observed as late as 23 Jul (DY et al.). The season’s high count, 73 on 30 Jul, included ads., recent fledglings, and large unfledged young (LS et al.). A displaying ad. Black-necked Stilt off the causeway near Chincoteague, Accomack 26 Jun (BH) suggested breeding activity nearby; 22 ads. were counted at the site 27 Jun (BH); 4 were there 25 Jul (HA).

American Avocets were only reported from Craney, where the count increased from one on 2 Jul to 119 on 23 Jul (LS et al.). “Western” Willets (14+) were noted at Chinc. the third week of June (ph. BH) and one was at Craney 25 Jun (BW et al.); 457 Willets (“mostly Westerns”) were at Chinc. 21 Jul (JB, CM).

Wilson’s Phalaropes were at Craney almost weekly 18 Jun (one) (LS et al.) through 30 Jul (8) (BT et al.). Two Red-necked Phalaropes were at Craney 23 Jul (BW et al.) followed by 3 there 30 Jul (BW et al.). A total of 3215 Laughing Gull nests were tallied on the HRBT in early Jun (RBt fide LS). The 1–15 Jun VDGIF coordinated Virginia Atlantic Coast Least Tern Survey documented 557 nesting pairs, 119 of which were on the Dick’s Sporting Goods store rooftop at Lynnhaven Mall, Virginia Beach (fide RBt et al.). Eleven Gull-billed Tern pairs successfully nested on the HRBT (LS et al.). A Black Tern was at Chinc. 2 Jul (SM) and a Roseate Tern was observed there 3 (AC) & 25 Jun (BH). The HRBT had 380 nesting Common Tern pairs (LS et al.). An Arctic Tern was at Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach 20 Jun (AB); another was at Chinc. 12 Jul (FF, ph. EM, ph. JS). In addition to the aforementioned breeding Gull-billed and Common terns the HRBT had 1815 Royal Tern pairs, 14 Sandwich Tern pairs and 203 Black Skimmer pairs. The peak Sandwich Tern count for the season was 44 in Hampton 29 Jul (LS, DY, HB). The Region’s only Common Nighthawk reports were from Craney where 3 were detected 11 Jun (LS et al.) and 4 were encountered 9 Jul (LS et al.). Two Cedar Waxwings were recorded during the 17 Jun Dismal Swamp BBS (NF) and one was at Paradise Cr. Nature Pk., Portsmouth 26 Jun (E&NF). The 17 Jun Dismal Swamp BBS also yielded the Region’s lone Worm-eating Warbler observation (NF). The Northwest River Prothonotary Warbler Project, a CVWO program since 2011, completed its seventh consecutive nest-box monitoring year this summer. Ninety-seven percent of the project’s 99 boxes had nest activity from which 305 nestlings were banded (SD et al.). It is quite a credit to the field team that the percentage of active nest boxes at this study site has increased from 54% in 2011 to 97% in 2015. A season-high count 15 Grasshopper Sparrows were tallied in lower Northampton 26 Jun (HA et al.). A Pine Siskin was a surprise visitor to a Virginia Beach feeder 18 Jun (ph. RF, MM).

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