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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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THE THIRD VSO FORAY TO MOUNT ROGERS JUNE 1980

F. R. SCOTT

Twenty-nine members and friends of the Virginia Society of Ornithology gathered in southwestern Virginia from 10 to 15 June 1980 to participate in the thirteenth in the recent series of breeding-bird forays held in Virginia and sponsored by the society. This was the third one to concentrate on the high-altitude areas centered around Mount Rogers, the highest point in the state. Headquarters this year, as in 1974, was at the Mount Rogers Inn at Chilhowie. Barry L. Kinzie was foray director ably assisted in his planning by A. M. Decker and N. C. Middleton. Philip C. Shelton also made useful suggestions concerning field coverage of the high-altitude areas.

The emphasis this year, as in 1974, was on Smyth County, eastern Washington County, western Grayson County adjacent to the White Top-Mount Rogers complex, and southeastern Russell County in the vicinity of the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area. A fairly detailed description of the foray area was given in the report of the 1974 foray (Scott, 1975), and only a necessary minimum is repeated here.

Smyth County is drained to the southwest by three tributaries of the Holston River, the North Fork (1670-1800 feet) passing through Saltville, the Middle Fork (1950-2100 feet) flowing through Marion and Chilhowie, and the South Fork (2000-2500 feet) which goes through Sugar Grove. Other low areas mentioned in the annotated list include Rich Valley (2100-2200 feet) just south of and paralleling the North Fork, Hungry Mother State Park (2200 feet at the lake) just north of Marion, and Grindstone Campground (3750 feet) just north of Mount Rogers. The Buller Bass Hatchery is on the South Fork at 2350 feet, and Whitetop Laurel Creek, an interesting gorge east of Damascus in extreme southeastern Washington County, lies between 2000 and 2800 feet. Beartree Recreation Area (Jefferson National Forest) lies in this same area just north of rt. 58 between 3000 and 3400 feet.

The high-altitude localities include White Top (5520 feet), where Grayson, Smyth, and Washington Counties join; Mount Rogers (5729 feet) on the Grayson-Smyth border; and Elk Garden (4450 feet), the saddle between the two. East and southeast of Rogers in Grayson County are Pine Mountain and Wilburn Ridge with considerable areas over 5000 feet, much of which is in pastureland. Wilburn Rige leads south into Grayson Highlands State Park where Haw Orchard Mountain (5100 feet) is the dominant peak. The Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area, much of which is in southeastern Russell County northwest of Saltville, contains Laurel Bed Lake at 3550 feet and Beartown Mountain at 4689 feet. Just south of the lake in northwestern Smyth County is Redrock Mountain (4400 feet), while Middle Knob (4200 feet), like Beartown a part of the Clinch Mountain range, lies southwest of here on the Russell-Washington boundary. Extensive areas of Red Spruce occur on White Top, Rogers, Pine Mountain, and Beartown, while scattered stands can be found elsewhere, notably on Wilburn Ridge and Haw Orchard Mountain.

Earlier breeding-bird forays to this area were in 1966 (Scott, 1966) and 1974 (Scott, 1975), while the Tazewell-Burkes Garden foray in 1972 included

Laurel Bed Lake and Beartown in its coverage (Scott, 1973). The low-elevation records of the 1966 foray are not directly comparable to those of 1974 and 1980 since the emphasis that year was on Washington rather than Smyth County, and the former averages lower in elevation. Other recent publications on this area have been written by Shelton (1976), Simpson (1976a and 1976b), and Stevens (1976), and Decker (1981) has compiled an annotated checklist of the birds here. Earlier publications may be found in the reports of the 1966, 1972, and 1974 forays.

Interpretation of the results of this foray and comparisons with previous ones are subject to the usual potential problems. For a short study such as this, coverage of the area is necessarily uneven and incomplete. Also, much of the field work must be done by ear, and the intensity of bird song in any particular species is dependent on many variables, such as the stage of the breeding cycle and the weather. Thus the true status of at least some species is very probably understated. Although there was no appreciable rain during the foray period, it was very windy the first two days, and temperatures were quite cool from 10 to 13 June (reaching 43° at Chilhowie on 12 June). It was warmer on the 14th and 15th, and the most intense bird singing was evident on the last day where there were only four parties in the field.

Foray procedures were similar to those of previous ones. Participants divided into small parties which covered different areas each day, and many areas were covered by different parties on different days, thus compensating at least in part for differences in weather and observers' field abilities. One or more detailed field cards were submitted by each party each day, and these were then edited, tabulated, and summarized for the following annotated list along with a number of incidental observations. In all, 68 field cards were tabulated for this foray.

One hundred thirty-two species were recorded, one more than the record count made here in 1974. The details of an additional observation of a Virginia Rail found here later in the same summer will be published elsewhere. All of these were breeding or potentially breeding birds with the probable exception of the Great Blue Heron, Green-winged Teal, and Semipalmated Sandpiper. Potentially breeding birds found in this area on previous forays but missed this time included Black Duck, Spotted Sandpiper, Long-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Prothonotary, Nashville, and Swainson's Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, and Savannah Sparrow. Additional birds looked for but not found included Pine Siskin and Henslow's and Swamp Sparrows. Inadvertently overlooked and not searched for was the House Finch, which certainly occurs in the more urban areas (Decker, 1981). The Bachman's Sparrow, formerly locally uncommon (Murray, 1952; Stevenson, 1947), apparently no longer occurs and has not been recorded here since before 1966 and probably much earlier. Birds reported this year, but not on any of the previous local forays, were Green-winged Teal, Cooper's Hawk, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

The following observers are noted by last name only in the annotated list: Ray Chandler, Dan Collins, John and Thelma Dalmas, Allison Davenport, A. M. Decker, John W. Dillard, Cindy Fletcher, Richard Goll, Jill Huntley, Barry Kinzie, Norwood C. Middleton, Bill Opengari, John Pancake, F. R. Scott, Philip C. Shelton, Charles E. Stevens, Mike Stinson, Leonard Teuber,

Robert J. Watson, Thomas F. Wieboldt, and Josephine Wood. As in the 1966 and 1974 foray reports, for the purposes of this list elevations below 2500 feet are considered low, those between 2500 and 4000 feet are termed medium, and altitudes over 4000 feet are considered high.

Pied-billed Grebe. Two records. Single birds were found at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June (Dalmases) and on the Middle Fork of the Holston River at rt. 91 (Washington County) on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber). There are several previous summer records from this area, including a breeding record by A. M. Decker in 1972 (Larner and Scott, 1981).

Great Blue Heron. Two records. Chandler and Stinson saw one at Laurel Bed Lake on 12 June, and one flew eastward over the summit of Rogers on 13 June (Dillard, T. Dalmas, and Scott). At 5729 feet, this last bird was clearly an altitude record for Virginia.

Green Heron. Fairly common in the lowlands with counts of up to 5 birds. One was also found at Laurel Bed Lake at 3550 feet on 14 June (Scott).

Mallard. Common about the Saltville ponds where the best count was 51 on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson). This count included 6 broods totaling 38 young. Three birds were also found at Laurel Bed Lake on 11 June (Decker) and 14 June (Scott).

Green-winged Teal. One record. A single male appeared at Saltville on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Wood Duck. Fairly common up to 3550 feet at Laurel Bed Lake with a peak count of 33 (including 3 broods totaling 19 young) at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June (Dalmases). Seven other broods were reported from the South and Middle Forks of the Holston River and Laurel Bed Lake.

Turkey Vulture. Common throughout the area, the best count being 21 in the Chilhowie area on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber).

Black Vulture. Somewhat uncommon and local; reported by only four parties. However, the peak count was a healthy 17 in Rich Valley on 14 June (Dalmases).

Sharp-shinned Hawk. Three reports of single birds, two on White Top on 9 June (Chandler and Stinson) and 11 June (Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake) and one at Beartree Recreation Area on 14 June (Chandler and Stinson). The last bird was calling loudly and chasing crows as if it might have had a nearby nest.

Cooper's Hawk. Two records. The Dalmases found one at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June, and another was seen by Fletcher and Goll on White Top on 13 June. This species was not recorded on the previous two forays to this area.

Red-tailed Hawk. Fairly common with 11 birds reported by nine parties in at least seven different localities. More common than in 1966 and 1974.

Red-shouldered Hawk. One record. The Dalmases reported one bird at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June.

Broad-winged Hawk. Fairly common with reports from at least 12 localities at all elevations. No party reported more than 2 birds.

American Kestrel. Uncommon with 18 birds reported by eight parties but in only four different localities. The peak count of 5 near Chilhowie on 11 June included several fledged young (Scott and Wood). None were found over 3000 feet.

Ruffed Grouse. Fairly common with reports from 16 parties, all above 2400 feet. The peak count of apparent adults was 6 on Beartown on 11 June (Stevens). Broods of young were reported from Whitetop Laurel Creek (Washington County) on 11 June (Huntley and Opengari), the slopes of Rogers on 14 June (Fletcher, Goll, and Watson), and Laurel Bed Lake, also on 14 June (Scott).

Bobwhite. Fairly common but surprisingly local below 3000 feet. The maximum count was only 15.

Turkey. Uncommon to fairly common with 11 birds reported by nine parties, all below 3600 feet.

American Coot. One record. Three birds were noted at Laurel Bed Lake on 12 June by Chandler and Stinson but were not seen again before or after that date. Several had previously been seen at Saltville during the 1974 foray.

Killdeer. Common in the lowlands with a peak count of 20 in the Chilhowie-Saltville area on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson). Wood found 2 adults with 4 nonflying young near Chilhowie on 10 June.

American Woodcock. Three records. Single birds were seen on 11 June on Rogers at 5380 feet (Shelton) and at Laurel Bed Lake at 3550 feet (Decker), and 2 were found at Beartree Recreation Area (3100 feet) on 14 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Semipalmated Sandpiper. One record. A single bird, probably a late spring transient, was at the Saltville flats on 10 June (Middleton and Teuber).

Rock Dove. Common in the lowlands with counts of up to 50 birds.

Mourning Dove. Common in the lowlands with few birds above 3000 feet. The best count was 43 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Fairly common in the lowlands though a few were found as high as 4500 feet. The maximum was 11 birds in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Black-billed Cuckoo. Three records. Single birds were noted on Beartown (Stevens) and near Hurricane Gap (Chandler and Stinson) on 11 June and on Pine Mountain at 5000 feet on 12 June (Collins and Opengari).

Screech Owl. Fairly common with two peak counts of 4. All records were below 3800 feet.

Great Horned Owl. Two records. Two were noted near Grindstone on 13 June (Chandler and Stinson), and another was found on Walker Mountain on 14 June (Dalmases).

Barred Owl. Fairly common below 4000 feet with a peak count of 4 near Grindstone on 13 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Saw-whet Owl. One record. A calling bird was heard near the summit of White Top on the evening of 13 June by Fletcher, Goll, Middleton, Teuber, and Watson. First found on Rogers and White Top in 1974 (Scott, 1975; Shelton, 1976), this bird was also found on Haw Orchard Mountain in 1975 (Simpson, 1976).

Whip-poor-will. Fairly common below 3500 feet. The Dalmases recorded the best count of 12 near Walker Mountain north of Marion on 14 June.

Common Nighthawk. The only record was 8 birds at Bristol on 14 June (Opengari). It was searched for in vain at Chilhowie and Marion.

Chimney Swift. Common at all elevations with a peak count of 18.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Fairly common at low and medium elevations though several were found above 4500 feet on White Top. The top count was 4 birds.

Belted Kingfisher. Fairly common below 3300 feet with a maximum count of 5.

Common Flicker. Common in the lowlands and fairly common above 3500 feet. The best count was 17 in the Chilhowie area on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber). Watson saw a barely fledged juvenile at Grindstone on 13 June, and Huntley and Wood noted an occupied nest hole in Washington County near Saltville on 14 June.

Pileated Woodpecker. Fairly common, mostly below 4000 feet, with 22 birds reported by 15 parties. There were two peak counts of 3.

Red-bellied Woodpecker. Uncommon and found only below 3000 feet. The two best counts were of only 2 birds each.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. One record. A single bird was seen at 4000 feet at the Old Orchard Shelter on the Appalachian Trail near Grindstone on 12 June by Collins and Opengari. This species was also recorded near here during the 1974 foray.

Hairy Woodpecker. Uncommon at high and medium elevations with only a few below 2500 feet. There were three high counts of 3 birds each.

Downy Woodpecker. Common at all elevations with a top count of 11. An adult was feeding fledged young near Elk Garden at 4800 feet on 11 June (Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake).

Eastern Kingbird. Common at low elevations where the best count was 14 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott). None were found over 3500 feet.

Great Crested Flycatcher. Fairly common at low and medium elevations with a few to 4500 feet. The top count was 8 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Eastern Phoebe. Common below 3800 feet with an unusual peak count of 20 in the Saltville-Marion area on 15 June (Middleton and Teuber). A few

were found higher in Grayson Highlands State Park. Nests with eggs were noted near Troutdale on 10 June (Kinzie, Opengari, and Pancake) and near Hurricane Campground on 11 June (Chandler and Stinson), and a nest with 2 young was discovered near Chilhowie on 11 June (Scott and Wood).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Two singing birds were seen on the summit of Rogers by numerous parties between 10 and 14 June (Shelton *et al.*), but the presence of nesting pairs could not be confirmed. First discovered here in summer in August 1973, these birds nested successfully in 1978 (Hall, 1979; Shelton, 1976 and personal communication). After studying the songs and call notes of this species here, Scott and Stevens felt that the "Least Flycatcher" reported on the summit in June 1974 (Scott, 1975) was most probably this species.

Acadian Flycatcher. Common in the lowlands up to about 3800 feet. The top count was 25 along Whitetop Laurel Creek on 11 June (Huntley and Opengari).

Willow Flycatcher. Common if somewhat local at low elevations and up to about 3300 feet. The best count was 22 singing birds on 14 June, 10 along rt. 107 north of Chilhowie and 12 at Saltville (Scott). These birds were found on dry, shrubby hillsides as well as in the more normal alder thickets.

Alder Flycatcher. Scarce and very local, found only above 4800 feet on Rogers, Wilburn Ridge, and Pine Mountain. Kinzie and Pancake totaled the peak count of 10, including 3 singing birds, on Rogers on 13 June. One or possibly two adults were watched while nest building on Rogers on 12 June by Huntley, Middleton, Teuber, and Wood and on 13 June by Kinzie and Pancake. This appears to be the first breeding evidence for this species in Virginia. This species has increased dramatically here since the 1974 foray.

Least Flycatcher. Locally fairly common between 2500 and 4800 feet with a maximum count of 17 in the Grindstone Campground area on 14 June (Pancake).

Eastern Wood Pewee. Common at all elevations up to about 5000 feet but more so below 3000 feet. The best count was 31 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott). An adult was feeding fledged young along rt. 603 on 10 June (Kinzie, Opengari, and Pancake).

Horned Lark. Fairly common at high elevations with a peak of 5 on Wilburn Ridge on 12 June (Scott). Elsewhere single birds were reported by three parties at low elevations near Chilhowie, near Saltville, and in Rich Valley.

Tree Swallow. Up to 4 birds were found at Laurel Bed Lake and up to 2 at Saltville by several parties. Not recorded elsewhere. Two parties noted adults entering and leaving Wood Duck boxes at Laurel Bed Lake, and Chandler and Stinson saw a "very brown" fledged juvenile here on 12 June. First found in summer here in 1971 (Scott, 1973), this species has apparently not increased much in numbers since the 1972 foray.

Rough-winged Swallow. Common at low elevations and up to 3600 feet. Huntley and Opengari had the peak count of 21 in the Damascus area on

11 June. Two nests with young were found at Chilhowie on 10 June (Chandler and Stinson), and other occupied nests were seen near Damascus on 11 June (Huntley and Opengari) and at the junction of rts. 600 and 603 on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Barn Swallow. Common at low elevations and up to 3600 feet with a high count of 51 in the Chilhowie area on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber). A few were also seen by several parties at Elk Garden at 4500 feet. Kinzie, Opengari, and Pancake found 3 nests with young along rt. 603 on 10 June.

Cliff Swallow. One record. Wood found one bird near Chilhowie on 10 June.

Purple Martin. Six colonies were found near Abingdon and Chilhowie, and on 13 June Middleton and Teuber counted at least 44 adults around these boxes. Some of the adults were feeding young in the nests. There were no reports away from these colonies.

Blue Jay. Fairly common at all elevations with a maximum count of 14.

Common Raven. Fairly common and widely reported in most areas over 3500 feet with a few also in or flying over the lowlands. The peak count of 3 was submitted by three different parties on White Top, at Grayson Highlands State Park, and along Comers Creek near Troutdale.

Common Crow. Common at all elevations. The best count was 57 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott). At Laurel Bed Lake, young were calling from the nest on 11 June (Decker) and fledged young were found on 14 June (Scott).

Black-capped Chickadee. Apparently fairly common above 4500 feet on White Top, Rogers, Wilburn Ridge, and Pine Mountain and in Grayson Highlands State Park. Elsewhere 2 were singing at Laurel Bed Lake at 3550 feet on 14 June (Scott), and Watson had one singing bird at Grindstone Campground at 3750 feet on 13 June. In all, 13 parties reported birds singing the characteristic two-note song of this species. Whatever one thinks of this population, it has certainly increased since the 1974 foray. The peak count was 8 on White Top on 13 June (Fletcher and Goll).

Carolina Chickadee. Rather common in small numbers at low elevations up to 3300 feet with a very few up to 4800 feet. Decker, Middleton, and Teuber had the maximum count of 11 between Beartree and the Damascus area on 14 June.

Tufted Titmouse. Fairly common below 3300 feet with at least one as high as 5000 feet on White Top. Tea peak of 7 birds was recorded by two parties.

White-breasted Nuthatch. Uncommon with only 15 birds recorded by ten parties and a high count of only 3. Most records were at medium elevations, but one was found on Pine Mountain at about 4800 feet by Davenport and Wieboldt on 11 June. None was reported this year on White Top or Rogers in contrast to the 1966 and 1974 forays.

Red-breasted Nuthatch. Fairly common on White Top and Rogers above 4800 feet but less so than in 1974 with a top count of only 8. It was not found on Beartown this year.

Brown Creeper. Fairly common locally on White Top and Rogers above 4500 feet where ten parties recorded a total of 24 birds. Not found elsewhere. The peak count of 5 was obtained on White Top on 11 June by Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake. This species appears to have increased since 1974.

House Wren. Common at low elevations with a high count of 17 in the Chilhowie area on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber). A few were found higher with at least 2 on Rogers at 5500 feet.

Winter Wren. Common above 4800 feet on White Top and Rogers and fairly common on Pine Mountain and Beartown (4600 feet). A very few were also noted elsewhere as low as 3200 feet. Opengari recorded the maximum count of 30 (29 singing males) on Rogers on 13 June.

Bewick's Wren. One singing bird was found in Grayson Highlands State Park on 11 June (Middleton and Teuber) and again on 12 June (Kinzie, Pancake, Scott, and others). It could not be located later. Still decreasing, this bird was listed as "uncommon" in 1966 and "scarce and local" in 1974.

Carolina Wren. Common at low elevations where Middleton and Teuber had the top count of 13 near Chilhowie on 13 June. Not found above 3000 feet. Apparently less common than in 1974 when the peak count was 34.

Mockingbird. Fairly common at low elevations with a high count of 13. Not reported over 2500 feet. An adult was feeding fledged young near Chilhowie on 10 June (Wood).

Gray Catbird. Common at all elevations. Chandler and Stinson totaled an impressive 52 birds between Beartree and Grindstone on 14 June. Fledged young were found near Chilhowie on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Brown Thrasher. Common at low elevations and fairly common to 4000 feet with a few higher. The maximum count of 15 was made in the Chilhowie area on 13 June by Middleton and Teuber.

American Robin. Very common at all elevations. Top counts included 54 on White Top on 13 June (Fletcher and Goll) and 55 around Chilhowie on the same date (Middleton and Teuber).

Wood Thrush. Common at low and medium elevations with a few up to about 5000 feet. The best count of 22 birds was recorded by two different parties. A nest containing 1 egg and 2 young was located in the Middle Knob area of Washington County on 10 June (Stevens).

Hermit Thrush. Fairly common but very local, occurring only above 5100 feet in the spruce zone of White Top, Rogers, and Pine Mountain. Recorded by 14 parties with peak counts of 6 on White Top on 11 June (Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake) and 12 on Rogers on 13 June (Kinzie and Pancake). A nest containing 4 eggs found on Rogers at 5400 feet on 28 May held 4 half-grown young on 11 June (Shelton). This was the second nesting record for Virginia, the first being a nest with 1 young found on Rogers on 21 August 1979 by Shelton (personal communication). The population of this species in 1980 was considerably larger than in 1974.

Swainson's Thrush. Six parties recorded single birds near the summit of Rogers, and on 11 June Shelton found 3 birds here, 2 of which were singing males. Only single birds were noted here on the 1966 and 1974 forays, though Shelton (1976) found 2 singing birds in 1973.

Veery. Common above 3500 feet. The top count of 20 was made by Fletcher and Goll on White Top on 13 June.

Eastern Bluebird. Common at low elevations but a few occurred even above 5000 feet. Huntley and Wood had an astonishing total of 111 between Chilhowie and Saltville (mostly in eastern Washington County) on 14 June. The next highest count was 37 near Chilhowie on 13 June (Middleton and Teuber). This species was much more common than it was in 1974.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. Fairly common at low elevations with a few occurring up to 3500 feet. The best count was 8 in Rich Valley on 14 June (Dalmases). This species was also more common than it was in 1974.

Golden-crowned Kinglet. Common above 4500 feet in the spruce zone of White Top, Rogers, Wilburn Ridge, and Pine Mountain. Several were also found on Haw Orchard Mountain and Beartown, the latter down to 4200 feet. Peak counts included 33 on White Top on 13 June (Fletcher and Goll) and 47 on Rogers on 14 June (Fletcher, Goll, and Watson).

Cedar Waxwing. Common at all elevations, even to the summits of White Top and Rogers. Kinzie and Pancake totaled the best count of 12 in Grayson Highlands State Park on 12 June. The same observers found a pair building a nearly completed nest near the summit of Rogers on 13 June.

Loggerhead Shrike. One record. Huntley and Opengari found a single bird near Lodi in eastern Washington County on 11 June.

Starling. Abundant at low elevations with lesser numbers up to 4500 feet. The maximum count was 178 along the South Fork on 12 June (Dalmases).

White-eyed Vireo. Fairly common at low elevations up to 3600 feet with a peak count of 7.

Yellow-throated Vireo. Uncommon in the lowlands up to 3000 feet only. The top count of 3 was recorded by three different parties.

Solitary Vireo. Common above 3000 feet. Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake had the best count of 31 on White Top on 11 June.

Red-eyed Vireo. Common at low and medium elevations up to about 5000 feet with a peak count of 92 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Warbling Vireo. Fairly common in the lowlands up to 2300 feet. The maximum count of 11 was totaled by Middleton and Teuber in the Chilhowie area on 13 June. In 1974 this bird appeared much less common here.

Black-and-white Warbler. Common at low and medium elevations with one as high as 5000 feet on White Top. Chandler and Stinson had the top count of 15 in the Skulls Gap-Hurricane Creek area on 11 June. The same observers found a barely fledged juvenile near rts. 650 and 16 on the same date.

Worm-eating Warbler. Fairly common but quite local, all records being below 3500 feet. The high count of 10 was obtained by the Dalmases on Walker Mountain north of Marion on 14 June.

Golden-winged Warbler. Uncommon with only 8 birds reported by five parties, all between 2100 and 3500 feet. The maximum count was 4 on Walker Mountain on 14 June (Dalmases).

Blue-winged Warbler. Two records. A singing bird was found along rt. 58 at Beartree Gap (2900 feet) on 14 June (Chandler and Stinson) and another was located the same day in Rich Valley (about 2000 feet) by the Dalmases. The first summer record in this area was apparently made during the 1974 foray.

Northern Parula Warbler. Fairly common with most reports below 3600 feet. The best count of 5 was recorded by three different parties.

Yellow Warbler. Common at low elevations with fewer birds up to 3500 feet. Rich Valley produced the top count of 26 on 15 June (Scott). Wood found an adult feeding young in a nest near Chilhowie on 10 June.

Magnolia Warbler. Fairly common locally above 4500 feet on White Top, Rogers, and Pine Mountain and above 4300 feet on Beartown. Two were also found at Laurel Bed Lake (3550 feet) on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson). Simpson (1976) also reported it on Haw Orchard Mountain in 1975 between 4850 and 4900 feet. There were three peak counts of 5 birds on White Top, two of 7 birds on Rogers, and one of 5 on Beartown. In all, 17 parties reported this species. It has clearly increased since 1974.

Black-throated Blue Warbler. Common above 2600 feet but generally below the spruce zone. Chandler and Stinson had the best count of 16 in the Skulls Gap-Hurricane Creek area on 11 June.

Black-throated Green Warbler. Rather common above 3000 feet with a high count of 16 in the Rogers area on 13 June (Opengari). One was also found at 2400 feet near the Buller Bass Hatchery along the South Fork on 14 June (Pancake).

Cerulean Warbler. Scarce and local with only 4 birds reported by three parties, all between 2100 and 3400 feet. Found only on Walker Mountain and in Rich Valley.

Blackburnian Warbler. Generally uncommon to fairly common and local above 3000 feet. In all, 24 birds were reported by 12 parties with a maximum count of only 5. Apparently less common than in 1966 and 1974. An adult was noted carrying food along rt. 603 on 10 June (Opengari, Kinzie, and Pancake).

Yellow-throated Warbler. Two records. Opengari found a singing male along the Middle Fork at rt. 706 (Washington County) on 14 June, and Middleton and Teuber located one along the North Fork just east of Saltville on 15 June.

Chestnut-sided Warbler. Common above 3000 feet with a few birds at least as low as 2300 feet. There were two peak counts of 23 birds each. A nest with 4 young was found near Laurel Bed Lake on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson).

and an adult feeding fledged young at Grayson Highlands State Park on the same date (Kinzie and Pancake).

Pine Warbler. Two records. Chandler and Stinson had 2 singing birds in the Skulls Gap-Hurricane Creek area on 11 June, and the Dalmases found 3 at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June.

Prairie Warbler. Uncommon below 3000 feet with only 12 birds reported by four parties.

Ovenbird. Common at all elevations with a top count of 25 in the Middle Knob area of Clinch Mountain (Russell and Washington Counties) on 10 June (Stevens).

Louisiana Waterthrush. Fairly common below 3500 feet. Huntley and Opengari had an unusually good count of 13 along Whitetop Laurel Creek on 11 June.

Kentucky Warbler. Fairly common in the lowlands up to about 3300 feet. Although the bird was reported by 14 parties, the best count was only 4.

Common Yellowthroat. Common at low and medium elevations and locally common up to 5500 feet on Rogers. The top count of 20 was in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Yellow-breasted Chat. Common in the lowlands up to 3000 feet with a high count of 8.

Hooded Warbler. Common at low and medium elevations. Scott and Wood totaled the maximum count of 16 in the Beartree-Feathercamp area on 11 June.

Canada Warbler. Common at high elevations above 3500 feet with a few birds as low as 3000 feet. Opengari had the peak count of 51 singing birds in the Rogers area on 13 June.

American Redstart. Common at low and medium elevations with none found over 4200 feet. Laurel Bed Lake produced the best count of 11 on 14 June (Scott).

House Sparrow. Abundant at low elevations with a top count of 134 in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott). None were reported above 3000 feet.

Eastern Meadowlark. Common in the lowlands with a few up to 3500 feet. None were found at high elevations as they were here in 1974. Rich Valley again took the honors with a peak count of 68 on 15 June (Scott).

Red-winged Blackbird. Common at low elevations with lesser numbers up to 3600 feet. Although the best count was 75 in the Chilhowie-Saltville areas on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson), the species was still considerably less common that it was in 1974. An adult was feeding fledged young at Saltville on 14 June (Scott).

Orchard Oriole. Fairly common in the lowlands where Middleton and Teuber recorded the top count of 8 in the Chilhowie area on 13 June. An adult was feeding fledged young in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Northern Oriole. Fairly common at low elevations with a few up to 3200 feet. The maximum of 7 was recorded by Middleton and Teuber on 15 June in northwestern Smyth County.

Common Grackle. Very common at low elevations with lesser numbers up to 4000 feet. Scott had the peak count of 186 on 15 June in Rich Valley. An adult was noted carrying food near Chilhowie on 10 June (Wood).

Brown-headed Cowbird. Common at all elevations with a top count of 18 around Tumbling Creek and Redrock Mountain in extreme northwestern Smyth County on 13 June (Davenport and Wieboldt).

Scarlet Tanager. Common at all elevations though less so above 5000 feet. Chandler and Stinson had the best count of 17 between Beartree and Grindstone on 14 June.

Cardinal. Common at low elevations with a few birds up to 3300 feet. The maximum count of 41 was again in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Common at high elevations down to 3500 feet with a few as low as 2500 feet. Kinzie and Pancake had the best count of 13 on Rogers on 13 June.

Blue Grosbeak. Uncommon and very local at low elevations. Found only near Saltville and in Rich Valley where Scott had 5 singing males on 15 June.

Indigo Bunting. Very common at low elevations and common up to 5500 feet. Rich Valley again had the high count of 107 on 15 June (Scott). The Dalmases noted an adult feeding fledged young at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June.

Purple Finch. Scarce and local in the spruce zone on White Top and Rogers above 4800 feet where 14 birds were reported by seven parties. Three singing males were noted on Rogers on both 11 and 12 June (Shelton). This bird appears to be continuing its slow increase here since it was first found on the 1966 foray.

American Goldfinch. Common at all elevations though less so above 3500 feet. Middleton and Teuber totaled 55 in northwestern Smyth County on 15 June, and Huntley and Wood watched a female collecting nesting material near Troutdale on 13 June.

Red Crossbill. Locally fairly common on White Top, Rogers, and Pine Mountain. Not recorded elsewhere. The top count of 29 was made on White Top on 13 June by Fletcher and Goll. Middleton and Teuber noted a juvenile bird with an adult male on White Top on 12 June. The population here appeared considerably smaller than it was in 1974.

Rufous-sided Towhee. Common at all elevations, even to the summit of Rogers. There were two peak counts of 30 birds each. A female was observed nest building at Beartree Recreation Area on 14 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Grasshopper Sparrow. Rather common at low elevations with a maximum count of 12 along the South Fork on 12 June (Dalmases).

Vesper Sparrow. Common above 4500 feet on White Top, Rogers, and Wilburn Ridge with a top count of 10. Not found at low elevations this year as they were in 1966 and 1974.

Dark-eyed Junco. Very common above 4000 feet with fewer birds down to 3000 feet. Fletcher and Goll had an astonishing count of 248 on White Top on 13 June, whereas the next highest number was 109 at the same place on 11 June (Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake). Three nests with eggs were located in the Middle Knob area on 10 June, two in Russell County and one in Washington County (Stevens); two nests with eggs were found on Wilburn Ridge, one on 12 June (Scott *et al.*) and the other on 13 June (Chandler and Stinson); and Shelton found a nest near Rogers on 10 June with 2 eggs and 1 young. As adult was feeding fledged young on Rogers on 11 June (Collins, Kinzie, and Pancake).

Chipping Sparrow. Common at low elevations up to about 3000 feet with a few birds to 4500 feet. The peak count of 39 occurred in Rich Valley on 15 June (Scott). The Dalmases had an adult feeding fledged young at Hungry Mother State Park on 12 June.

Field Sparrow. Common at low elevations and fairly common up to 4500 feet with some even higher. Scott totaled the high count of 53 in Rich Valley on 15 June. Two fledged young were noted near Laurel Bed Lake on 12 June (Chandler and Stinson).

Song Sparrow. Common to very common at low and medium elevations and locally fairly common to 5400 feet on Rogers. Rich Valley once more had the top count, an impressive 96 birds on 15 June (Scott). Adults were feeding fledged young on 12 June at both Hungry Mother State Park (Dalmases) and Saltville (Chandler and Stinson).

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

CORRIGENDUM. According to Bill Akers, the Northern Phalarope originally reported at Daleville, Virginia, on 18 May 1980 as a male (*Raven*, 52: 67, 1981) was actually a female in brilliant plumage. Akers has a number of photo slides of the bird.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS IN VALLEY. Since the White-rumped Sandpiper is rare in Virginia away from the coast, it was interesting that it was recorded in three localities west of the Blue Ridge in the spring of 1980. In Augusta County there were 4 at the Stuarts Draft sewage lagoon from 12 to 14 May (Mozelle Henkel, Isabel Obenschain, and Leonard Teuber) and one on 22 May (Obenschain, Teuber, and Yulee Lerner). Two were also located on route 776 near New Hope on 23 May (Obenschain and Teuber). At the Roanoke sewage treatment plant a single bird was present between 18 and 23 May and was seen by N. C. Middleton, John Pancake, and R. H. Peake.

MIGRANT LAND BIRDS ON ISLANDS. The four artificial islands along the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel between Kiptopeke and Virginia Beach, Virginia, are well-known concentration points for transient land birds during the fall migration. Concentrations here during the spring are much less common, so the observations of Jackson M. and David F. Abbott on 26 April 1980 were of particular interest. They recorded 20 species of land birds on the four islands on that date, including 17 Sharp-tailed Sparrows, 40 or more Seaside Sparrows, 5 Long-billed Marsh Wrens, 3 Bobolinks, and a very early Gray-cheeked Thrush, the last on the northernmost island. There were only two warblers in the group, a single Prairie Warbler and one Common Yellowthroat. Other species recorded were Merlin, House Wren, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, and Savannah, Chipping, Field, White-throated, Swamp, and Song Sparrows. The value of land bird observations on these islands lies in the fact that regardless of whether or not the species observed are summer or winter residents of eastern Virginia, the birds found here are clearly all transients.

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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VIRGINIA CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS—1981-82 SEASON

F. R. SCOTT

Participation in the Christmas bird counts in Virginia remained at a high level with 860 observers listed on the 34 submitted counts, and about 636 of these were different individuals. This was higher than last year but about 11% lower than the record of 714 different observers in the 1979-80 Christmas counts. Coverage—at 2851 party-hours—was down 6% from last year and 12% from the all-time peak of 3222 party-hours in 1979. These figures, of course, like the others in this summary, are based only on those counts submitted to *The Raven*, and there were five additional Virginia counts totaling 284 party-hours that were submitted to *American Birds* but not to this publication.

The Christmas count period, which lasted from 19 December to 3 January, had fairly good weather for a Virginia winter. There was no heavy rain or snowfall, though several counts, such as Cape Charles, Mathews, Fort Belvoir, and Lake Anna, had light intermittent rain all day, and Blacksburg had intermittent light snow in the morning. Numerous counts, however, had strong northwesterly winds, and some of the western counts had a variable snow cover but apparently not enough to inhibit outdoor activity. Many of the western counts also reported their lakes and ponds as mostly frozen. The weather leading up to the count period was generally cooler than normal. Two hundred four different species were recorded this year, somewhat less than the previous 10-years' average of 207. Four birds were new to Virginia Christmas counts—Western Grebe, Anhinga, Ross' Goose, and Ruby-throated Hummingbird—bringing the cumulative total of all species recorded on Christmas counts in the state to 286.

The only new count this year was from Breaks Interstate Park, though Bristol returned after an absence of one year. Two counts were lost: Darlington Heights was apparently not taken this year, and Gordonsville was not submitted. The five Virginia counts submitted to *American Birds* but not to this publication were Calmes Neck, Danville, Gordonsville, Manassas Bull Run, and Wachapreague. In addition, the counts centered on Seneca, Maryland, and Washington, D. C., overlapped substantially into Virginia, and two others—Crisfield and Point Lookout, Maryland—may have included some Virginia territory.

The mystical 100-species level was attained by eight of the counts, all on the Coastal Plain. Top honors went to Cape Charles with 156 species, whereas the Piedmont record went to Warren with 84, and the top count west of the Blue Ridge was Northern Shenandoah Valley with 93. None of the counts this year totaled over 200 party-hours, the best being Fort Belvoir with 196.

The count tabulation in Table 1 is more or less in order of distance inland from the coast. Counts 1-10 were on the Coastal Plain with 1-4 being directly on the coast and 5 and 6 on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay. Counts 11-16 were on the Piedmont, and 17-34 from the Blue Ridge westward. Ab-

TABLE 1 (following 8 pages). The 1981-82 Christmas bird counts in Virginia. The underlined figures indicate an unusual species or an unusual number of individuals for that particular count.

	1. Chisago Lake	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Mathews	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Chancellorsville	12. Lake Anna	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Sweet Briar
Date	12/28	12/27	1/1	12/29	12/19	1/3	12/20	12/19	12/21	1/3	12/20	1/3	12/27	12/20	1/2
Common Loon	82	12	4	46	2	33	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Red-throated Loon	26	9	81	70	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Horned Grebe	56	8	60	377	48	40	4	...	...	2	...	4	...	...	...
Western Grebe	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pied-billed Grebe	6	20	55	...	11	2	31	3	...	3	9	28	...	2	...
White Pelican	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Gannet	...	2	1160	2125	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Cormorant	1	2	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Double-crested Cormorant	1	3	387	2	35	...	13	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Anhinga	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Blue Heron	92	54	77	39	14	22	66	134	12	41	6	20	5	10	1
Green Heron	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Little Blue Heron	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Egret	8	5	37	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snowy Egret	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Louisiana Heron	13	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-crowned Night Heron	13	14	7	3	8	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Bittern	2	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mute Swan	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Whistling Swan	843	200	...	900	2	371	143	12	80	2	2	...	...	...	...
Canada Goose	6038	4963	67	1225	...	155	2921	8000	1260	842	79	9	513	500	...
Brant	3147	505	300	104	231	40	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White-fronted Goose	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose (white form)	21,700	275	5	26,400	...	...	3	20	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Goose (blue form)	12	2	...	14	...	...	...	150	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rose's Goose	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Mallard	645	851	690	1860	353	199	2366	1095	180	881	579	96	89	684	...
Black Duck	4849	891	180	562	16	26	797	403	600	511	137	27	52	250	...
Gadwall	313	86	16	560	15	...	79	7	7	1	1	...	...	...	...
Pintail	765	151	6	583	...	...	955	150	4	8	...	8	...	2	...
Green-winged Teal	9	39	16	128	5	...	25	21	...	13	2	...	...	...	...
American Wigeon	152	112	152	136	521	9	277	80	...	11	5	...	...	1	...
Northern Shoveler	231	4	9	18	5	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Wood Duck	...	22	32	2	27	...	23	608	...	4	5	...	1	...	...
Redhead	...	2	...	15	8	48	2	...	...	2	4	...	...	...	...
Ring-necked Duck	...	52	253	...	42	2	338	403	...	8	46	...	28	5	...
Canvasback	1	...	68	...	624	325	340	...	28	958	...	...	...	...	...
Greater Scaup	18	5	38	18	110	...	...	...	...	12	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Scaup	20	329	101	68	476	25	93	14	67	239	1	...	7	...	...
Scaup sp.	...	8	...	...	325	...	...	3	...	983	...	...	...	...	...
Common Goldeneye	191	132	64	11	1083	298	60	...	...	40	12	2	...	3	...
Bufflehead	854	1032	216	135	232	754	88	21	23	67	42	4	5	1	...
Oldsquaw	464	303	135	22	275	85	...	...	...	6	...	1	...	...	...
Harlequin Duck	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
White-winged Scoter	39	24	6	10	10	61	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Surf Scoter	696	645	163	900	58	516	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black Scoter	345	68	390	1100	8	34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scoter sp.	...	...	...	...	...	200	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruddy Duck	115	...	231	7	119	60	593	2	41	1342	178	...	...	1	...
Hooded Merganser	28	78	207	3	4	...	99	54	13	12	25	8	5	17	...
Common Merganser	...	3	45	1	...	...	5	99	500	735	...	...	...	...	...
Red-breasted Merganser	61	107	47	16	27	137	...	2	...	7	...	1	...	...	...
Turkey Vulture	129	24	2	79	3	...	78	18	37	1	77	...	126	86	49
Black Vulture	7	...	...	57	...	...	31	18	6	...	16	...	29	68	9
Sharp-shinned Hawk	20	21	14	20	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3	2	...
Cooper's Hawk	1	1	1	1	...	6	9	6	2	6	2	...	1	1	...
Red-tailed Hawk	20	53	17	28	16	1	...	1	2	20	2	...	1	...	...
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	5	...	14	...	6	3	37	5	20	11	6	26	31	3
Rough-legged Hawk	...	1	1	3	...	...	...	7	14	24	4	4	1	4	...

[illegible]

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.
	Chincoteague	Cape Charles	Little Creek	Back Bay	Newport News	Mathews	Williamsburg	Hopewell	Brooke	Fort Belvoir	Chancellorsville	Lake Anna	Charlottesville	Warren	Sweet Briar
Date	12/28	12/27	1/1	12/29	12/19	1/3	12/20	12/19	12/21	1/5	12/20	1/5	12/27	12/20	1/2
Buteo sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Golden Eagle	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Bald Eagle	1	1	1	...	...	...	9	27	8	14	...	2	...	...	...
Marsh Hawk	39	48	7	48	9	4	4	15	5	2	1	3	...	2	...
Peregrine Falcon	1	3	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Merlin	3	4	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Kestrel	49	104	40	85	22	21	23	25	11	13	9	12	13	23	3
Ruffed Grouse	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Bobwhite	138	242	18	63	8	5	20	40	30	68	2	6	30	2	6
Japanese Green Pheasant	...	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ring-necked Pheasant	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Turkey	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	...	...	...
King Rail	...	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Clapper Rail	5	20	12	...	1	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Virginia Rail	9	6	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sora	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow Rail	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Gallinule	3	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Coot	1	15	230	10	47	...	...	...	...	35	210	752	...	...	...
American Oystercatcher	344	222	51	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Semipalmated Plover	3	6	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Piping Plover	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Killdeer	29	18	40	31	68	49	44	216	14	33	1	1	3	9	1
Black-bellied Plover	291	856	46	5	8	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruddy Turnstone	55	74	30	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Woodcock	8	52	...	7	...	...	...	2	...	4	...	...	...	...	...
Common Snipe	3	16	14	28	...	1	1	35	...	41	...	...	3	2	2
Whimbrel	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Killet	5	24	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Greater Yellowlegs	21	45	10	10	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Yellowlegs	7	29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Red Knot	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Purple Sandpiper	...	...	34	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Least Sandpiper	5	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dunlin	5500	4394	241	24	61	231	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Dowitcher	1	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Long-billed Dowitcher	3	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dowitcher sp.	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Western Sandpiper	324	112	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Marbled Godwit	1	28	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sanderling	928	217	420	236	79	29	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
American Avocet	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Parasitic Jaeger	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Iceland Gull	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...
White-winged Gull sp.	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Great Black-backed Gull	302	215	1240	151	80	39	45	32	41	172	...	...	...	...	...
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Herring Gull	2027	3088	8570	925	1775	377	453	508	155	1067	27	2	...	...	...
Ring-billed Gull	695	1414	13,700	2900	11,179	1337	890	4746	1000	3228	874	178	...	...	...
Black-headed Gull	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Laughing Gull	6	...	6	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bonaparte's Gull	3	4	601	17	...	5	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
Forster's Tern	1	...	12	4	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black Skimmer	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rock Dove	282	456	1000	172	579	26	119	102	10	279	15	27	328	94	300
Mourning Dove	324	641	675	260	665	337	111	653	430	590	200	186	685	833	93
Barn Owl	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Screech Owl	3	22	3	12	3	1	11	2	...	...	5	1	7	4	...
Great Horned Owl	3	16	...	7	2	1	10	5	3	8	1	1	10	1	...
Barred Owl	...	...	3	5	...	...	...	6	2	7	2	...	1	1	...

[illegible]

	1. Chicotague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Natona	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Chancellorsville	12. Lake Anna	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Sweet Briar
Date	12/28	12/27	1/1	12/29	12/19	1/3	12/20	12/19	12/21	1/3	12/20	1/3	12/27	12/20	1/2
Long-eared Owl	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-eared Owl	7	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Saw-whet Owl	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Owl sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Belted Kingfisher	27	24	28	6	19	12	16	15	4	24	5	10	19	9	...
Common Flicker	230	267	136	132	68	92	103	115	30	203	14	36	154	39	23
Pileated Woodpecker	14	1	25	24	16	3	16	16	21	36	9	5	39	20	10
Red-bellied Woodpecker	29	35	53	24	31	30	67	61	68	218	15	31	96	87	23
Red-headed Woodpecker	7	...	...	1	...	...	9	8	12	16	2	...	...	...	4
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	6	3	9	2	5	2	35	36	16	14	4	2	15	14	13
Hairy Woodpecker	9	4	2	3	4	1	6	9	5	57	2	5	18	11	1
Downy Woodpecker	71	84	45	52	35	30	57	77	55	288	28	31	124	120	30
Eastern Phoebe	1	2	...	1	1	1	2	5	...	...	...	...	2	3	...
Flycatcher sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Horned Lark	107	15	...	1	...	...	...	115	...	...	16	...	77	201	...
Tree Swallow	...	5	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Blue Jay	195	112	111	60	23	107	58	99	330	875	421	718	331	353	149
Common Raven	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Crow	123	470	310	434	744	507	323	638	900	1548	423	327	1259	771	435
Fish Crow	16	422	15	4	499	5	300	...	15	212	1	...	21	...	32
Black-capped Chickadee	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Caroline Chickadee	212	329	262	180	197	191	268	300	126	1473	96	68	317	281	72
Chickadee sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tufted Titmouse	58	57	82	51	124	62	108	108	100	703	33	45	191	147	53
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	4	16	20	1	1	29	29	5	98	12	9	67	53	24
Red-breasted Nuthatch	43	129	44	15	11	13	24	15	8	61	15	34	36	41	33
Brown-headed Nuthatch	33	24	20	3	...	12	21	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Creeper	12	6	42	16	5	8	25	32	3	66	6	11	13	11	5
House Wren	2	14	3	3	...	...	3	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Winter Wren	4	13	1	4	4	1	5	2	1	7	...	1	8	3	1
Carolina Wren	102	393	51	94	16	75	78	96	60	256	16	18	177	113	33
Long-billed Marsh Wren	7	27	2	7	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Short-billed Marsh Wren	16	26	2	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cockatiel	65	81	54	44	71	57	73	71	59	209	55	35	177	112	39
Gray Catbird	9	19	4	18	1	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...
Brown Thrasher	7	5	8	8	8	2	6	4	3	1	...	...	1	...	...
American Robin	87	249	185	756	91	295	4657	80	103	133	110	1620	107	26	107
Hermist Thrush	7	34	3	4	3	9	10	4	3	11	1	...	29	8	4
Veery	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Eastern Bluebird	30	16	5	41	...	328	77	92	30	59	10	46	106	75	56
Golden-crowned Kinglet	83	43	30	27	6	18	64	40	4	109	10	55	26	36	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	10	27	24	38	17	8	73	53	6	22	7	2	19	8	5
Water Pipit	12	170	...	...	...	...	...	17	...	16	...	...	6	...	...
Cedar Waxwing	137	107	95	24	88	266	410	763	230	1106	92	1272	645	295	22
Loggerhead Shrike	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	2	2	7	...	...
Starling	2021	8990	105,000	1390	1779	1474	2107	1026	2000	2275	353	343	4194	289	334
White-eyed Vireo	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Solitary Vireo	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-and-white Warbler	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Orange-crowned Warbler	...	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Nashville Warbler	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Black-throated Blue Warbler	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Yellow-rumped Warbler	7652	3310	1670	1965	826	2534	671	361	100	263	33	154	123	107	36
Pine Warbler	25	21	30	5	1	7	54	4	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Palm Warbler	7	42	5	3	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Yellowthroat	2	4	...	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Yellow-breasted Chat	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
House Sparrow	431	133	230	90	765	160	205	274	30	645	140	29	76	93	32
Eastern Meadowlark	321	512	48	460	145	294	198	205	46	32	83	51	150	312	35

	16. Lynchburg	17. No. Shenandoah Valley	18. Shenandoah Park	19. Big Flat Mtn.	20. Rockingham Co.	21. Augusta Co.	22. Waynesboro	23. Lexington	24. Peaks of Otter	25. Clifton Forge	26. Fincastle	27. Roanoke	28. Blacksburg	29. Tazewell	30. Glade Spring	31. Bristol	32. Nickelsville	33. Break Interstate Park	34. Wise Co.
	12/19	12/19	12/20	12/23	12/19	1/2	12/19	12/26	12/29	12/20	12/20	12/19	12/19	12/28	12/19	12/27	12/19	1/2	12/27
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	4	24	15	1	12	5	13	22	...	1	12	21	10	5	7	6	9	...	4
79	40	44	6	22	18	12	21	21	2	2	30	26	29	7	7	13	9	9	12
13	16	17	8	5	9	8	16	5	8	13	16	9	3	1	6	4	3	16	
63	81	19	16	24	38	24	33	2	8	30	25	14	6	5	6	2	1	2	
12	1	1	...	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	7	...	...	...	...	2
29	13	18	6	2	3	13	9	8	2	12	8	5	1	3	2	2	1	6	
7	33	3	5	7	7	1	12	3	4	3	6	20	2	6	...	4	2	4	
85	161	71	35	60	93	42	103	23	35	62	91	109	29	38	18	14	7	43	
5	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	7	...	1	6	5	3	...	2	...	2	...	
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
24	1090	448	...	832	72	219	63	...	2	584	40	270	24	60	...	...	...	...	52
...
476	619	178	5	182	349	178	309	4	115	364	166	193	107	276	133	414	52	147	
2	4	27	26	4	2	9	11	1	3	3	5	6	22	1	...	2	...	...
679	2146	1764	5	379	1231	1139	920	49	905	1233	544	565	150	321	360	580	10	661	
1	6	1	...	15	266	3	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	118	13	...	29	6	8	5	10	3	7	6	13	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
239	622	270	67	109	167	147	160	86	192	184	468	206	49	88	73	82	64	155	
...
175	386	159	14	104	106	143	155	28	162	96	149	169	18	69	31	76	19	120	
71	100	59	24	44	76	35	40	30	91	46	49	85	29	41	16	15	28	71	
62	21	30	15	11	13	10	7	22	29	29	62	62	54	6	17	2	6	21	
...
27	33	20	7	3	7	7	10	15	2	7	16	14	4	4	2	3	7	8	
...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
7	4	1	5	3	2	3	3	...	3	4	4	4	1	3	2	3	2	2	1
103	54	62	12	35	35	24	63	23	33	56	83	62	11	26	15	17	13	51	
...
...
101	195	104	2	61	153	71	73	3	27	121	114	102	1	48	41	28	...	13	
1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
177	38	27	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...	...	...	4
15	...	6	15	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
164	142	195	25	67	109	56	130	29	32	125	64	61	18	37	30	76	13	70	
31	42	37	8	8	11	11	19	16	11	35	58	51	6	4	15	1	4	24	
14	10	8	1	...	5	9	4	3	8	9	10	...	5	2	5	1	...	...
28	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
436	327	215	...	99	95	69	422	104	14	117	94	79	5	100	125	458	12	9	
3	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5293	406,757	2272	4	...	1608	7446	307,050	870	...	268	2769	3401	2	1699	1838	7900	4	1	...
...
...
...
...
29	130	90	...	12	131	34	231	1	41	114	30	44	...	15	66	357	...	4	
1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...
...
137	1422	454	...	699	584	290	100	...	109	255	229	461	354	399	33	37	57	254	
74	349	224	...	129	46	35	46	...	54	294	13	75	40	69	57	69	...	72	

	1. Chilcotteague	2. Cape Charles	3. Little Creek	4. Back Bay	5. Newport News	6. Patuxent	7. Williamsburg	8. Hopewell	9. Brooke	10. Fort Belvoir	11. Chancellorsville	12. Lake Anna	13. Charlottesville	14. Warren	15. Sweet Briar
Date	12/28	12/27	1/1	12/29	12/19	1/3	12/20	12/19	12/21	1/3	12/20	1/3	12/27	12/20	1/2
Red-winged Blackbird	1673	1431	975	3650	6273	3683	386,647	1528	1400	1145	36	29	31	441	...
Northern Oriole	...	1	3	...	4	...	7	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Rusty Blackbird	5	6	8	43	2	...	4	20	3	26	4	...	4	1	...
Boat-tailed Grackle	674	806	111	250	63	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Common Grackle	336	263	375,000	1520	8403	114	174,223	15	5000	14	3	...	1	1622	13
Brown-headed Cowbird	56	511	240	165	2251	200	1100	86	56	363	310	1	...	378	40
Blackbird sp.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cardinal	147	384	140	74	128	246	152	234	150	744	75	89	304	362	45
Blue Grosbeak	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Evening Grosbeak	4	...	...	29	1	...	...	4	3	7	...	85	1	5	15
Purple Finch	6	14	4	5	2	14	17	46	40	56	21	231	209	88	79
House Finch	142	55	85	1	97	...	25	240	240	152	21	301	850	762	73
Pine Siskin	...	26	2	6	...	41	2	...	6	...	...	1	...	3	6
American Goldfinch	123	633	88	141	51	151	182	201	176	577	28	278	344	301	40
Red Crossbill	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
Rufous-sided Towhee	56	82	42	31	27	40	43	32	19	29	4	10	39	26	7
Savannah Sparrow	128	580	25	177	1	35	3	3	5	19	1	7	31	12	...
Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow	16	23	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	13	122	35	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Seaside Sparrow	16	44	30	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Vesper Sparrow	...	43	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Lark Sparrow	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dark-eyed Junco	115	215	135	72	211	462	471	645	550	1845	405	534	614	748	105
Tree Sparrow	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	5	1	14	10	...
Chipping Sparrow	4	10	...	87	9	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Field Sparrow	59	352	52	48	83	217	105	245	42	363	14	238	236	359	1
White-crowned Sparrow	...	7	...	...	...	...	...	5	2	4	5	14	119	146	2
White-throated Sparrow	706	3547	510	365	422	517	1118	1184	600	1809	161	433	842	767	306
Fox Sparrow	7	46	15	1	2	1	12	...	1	2	...	...	11	6	...
Lincoln's Sparrow	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Swamp Sparrow	224	262	22	105	12	21	43	27	3	136	...	13	43	20	1
Song Sparrow	490	1024	77	264	85	152	159	356	150	1016	59	286	430	658	14
Lepland Longspur	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Snow Bunting	39	64	11	40	4	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...
Total Species	153	156	133	138	110	100	101	96	83	108	81	76	77	84	53
Total Individuals	70,786	50,404	518,605	55,787	42,075	18,493	585,702	27,486	17,451	31,717	5747	8925	14,718	13,011	2826
Total Party-hours	146	189	125	116	69	72	102	115	76	196	39	58	101	97	22
Number of Observers	36	48	29	35	26	23	24	37	16	50	16	17	20	18	16

	16. Lynchburg	17. No. Shenandoah Valley	18. Shenandoah Park	19. Big Flat Mtn.	20. Rockingham Co.	21. Augusta Co.	22. Waynesboro	23. Lexington	24. Peaks of Otter	25. Clifton Forge	26. Pimcastie	27. Roanoke	28. Blacksburg	29. Tazewell	30. Glade Spring	31. Bristol	32. Nickelsville	33. Breaks Interstate Park	34. Wise Co.
	12/19	12/19	12/20	12/23	12/19	1/2	12/19	12/26	12/29	12/20	12/20	12/19	12/19	12/28	12/19	12/27	12/19	1/2	12/27
367	3062	6	...	1	1453	493	2	...	3	13	14	40	4	32	...	4	...	1055	...
...
2	3082	1	...	...	60	32	...	...	5	10	15	16	70	...	...	...	...	3	...
...
2016	33	...	...	...	3739	5578	1	...	1	4	...	...	64	2100	49	1	...	500	...
51	5862	12	...	74	1247	500	22	...	1	269	380	12	4	37	...	4	...	...	...
307	627	335	32	155	143	179	146	33	112	189	215	258	41	106	59	86	9	77	...
...
7	5	38	17	2	8	6	5	44	300	6	24	1	93	2	...	...	4	46	...
195	145	79	4	156	85	115	327	8	33	161	28	62	...	137	26	189	23	7	...
596	873	135	...	428	365	275	452	...	98	332	242	73	35	14	43	15	...	127	...
...	...	23	18	13	...	69	7	20	11	11	18	46	21	...	2	46	57	2	...
215	288	142	28	213	117	184	165	70	111	87	200	225	87	104	84	153	34	82	...
4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45	1	1	2	2	6	6	13	1	5	20	29	12	3	65	13	21	10	29	...
12	12	8	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...
...
4	5	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	2	...
719	2656	1732	121	531	730	504	806	307	596	562	883	640	81	199	57	263	102	176	...
...	75	7	...	3	...	1	4	...	3	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4	1	...	...	...	...
104	130	49	...	37	73	46	20	25	41	142	42	123	9	64	32	263	3	60	...
...	277	222	...	188	124	49	54	...	1	139	40	94	1	54	23	95	...	8	...
790	559	368	142	392	369	407	514	174	131	413	690	583	20	277	100	165	43	50	...
1	...	1	1	1	...	8	...	...	1	1	2	1	1	...	...	4	6	...	...
...
4	16	3	...	...	1	...	...	1	4	...	7	...	2	5	2	1	...	2	...
179	216	163	1	110	101	59	103	9	45	125	280	224	43	99	88	137	10	213	...
...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	42	...	...	...	...	22	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
79	93	75	38	71	67	74	69	40	67	71	88	79	67	73	71	67	44	60	...
15,384	434,928	11,608	718	8775	23,926	527,577	7438	1230	3963	9923	11,333	9298	3647	13,627	5070	11,581	674	5771	...
123	190	91	20	69	82	67	58	22	29	88	129	123	70	49	35	27	21	35	...
43	50	32	2	28	34	25	25	7	15	32	35	37	23	18	9	12	14	8	...

breviated details on each count are given at the end of this summary. The initial tabulation of these counts was again prepared by Walter P. Smith.

Loons and grebes were in low to moderate numbers, and the Western Grebe at Little Creek was a new bird for the cumulative list. The White Pelican, found on both the Back Bay and Williamsburg counts, had only been recorded on a state Christmas count twice before—in 1971 and 1979. Although Gannets were seen on only three of the coastal counts, the 2125 counted at Back Bay were impressive though not record-breaking. The Anhinga at Little Creek, the last of 4 birds present in the area since 11 November, was another first for a Virginia Christmas count. Great Cormorants were found on three of the coastal counts, and a Double-crested Cormorant inland at Fort Belvoir was unusual, although winter records inland have been getting more regular in recent years. Herons and egrets were generally in very poor numbers, the one exception being the Great Blue Heron which totaled 134 at Hopewell. Northern Shenandoah Valley for the fifth year had the peak count for the mountain and valley area with 35 Great Blues.

The waterfowl situation was fairly normal, as usual depending on many different local conditions. The best bird was a Ross' Goose at Back Bay, a first for a Virginia count, whereas the 4 White-fronted Geese at Williamsburg (the count area includes Hog Island where the birds were seen) were only the fourth record for a state count. Other records of note were a Mute Swan at Fort Belvoir, 44 Gadwall in Northern Shenandoah Valley, 17 Pintail at Blacksburg, 4 Oldsquaw at Lake Anna, and a Harlequin Duck at Little Creek. This last species had not been reported on a state Christmas count since 1977. Unusual numbers for the locations included 178 Ruddy Ducks at Chancellorsville, a Piedmont site, and 96 Hooded Mergansers at Roanoke.

In a continuing effort to monitor population changes in wintering birds, the numbers of six species of hawks recorded on Virginia Christmas counts for the past 12 years have been detailed in Table 2 along with the totals per 100 party-hours as index numbers. In the case of the Rough-legged Hawk, the most uncommon and local of the six, it seemed more useful to note the number of counts on which the bird was recorded rather than the number per 100 party-hours. Fortunately, the only major change in state Christmas counts during this period was the beginning of the Northern Shenandoah Valley count in 1977, but this count seemed to have a significant effect only on the numbers of Rough-legged Hawks. Since total party-hours increased 114% between 1970 and 1981, it is obviously necessary to take these into account when comparing different years, hence the use of the index numbers.

A detailed statistical analysis of the figures in Table 2 would be of great interest but has no place in this summary. Because of the rather large yearly variations in numbers, it seemed best to arrange the 12 years of index numbers for each species into 3-year groups. Thus the figures for 1970-72 were averaged, as were those for 1973-75, 1976-78, and 1979-81. When the figures for the first and last groups are compared, the trends over the period become more evident. Using this method, it appears that the Sharp-shinned Hawk population has increased 53%, the Red-tailed 71%, and the Red-shouldered only 3%—probably insignificant—whereas the Marsh Hawk has decreased 36% and the American Kestrel is down 21%. Of course, if one compares only the figures for 1970 and 1981, the apparent changes become +94%, +62%,

0%, -39%, and -10%, respectively, but I feel the first figures give a truer picture of the changes.

The Rough-legged Hawk has obviously recently begun to increase in Virginia also. Between 1970 and 1976 it appeared on only two or three counts each year, followed by a climb to eight counts in 1980 and eleven this year with 9 birds totaled on the Northern Shenandoah count alone. To fill in a few more gaps, three of the five Virginia counts submitted to *American Birds* but not to *The Raven* also listed this species, with 11 reported at Manassas Bull Run, a count which includes at least a part of Dulles airport. Other interesting hawk totals for this year included 53 Red-tails at Cape Charles, single Golden Eagles at Fort Belvoir and Clifton Forge, and 17 Bald Eagles at Hopewell.

TABLE 2. Christmas count totals for selected raptor species for the past 12 years. The figures in parentheses are the totals per 100 party-hours except for the Rough-legged Hawk, where these figures represent the number of counts on which the species was recorded.

Year	Total Party-hours	Sharp-shinned	Red-tailed	Red-shouldered	Rough-legged	Marsh	American Kestrel
1970	1332	41(3.1)	178(13)	50(3.8)	6(3)	162(12.2)	413(31)
1971	1551	40(2.6)	176(11)	36(2.3)	3(2)	193(12.4)	569(37)
1972	1606	65(4.0)	212(13)	63(3.9)	6(3)	189(11.8)	462(29)
1973	2020	59(2.9)	257(13)	60(3.0)	6(3)	227(11.2)	632(31)
1974	2514	79(3.1)	351(14)	119(4.7)	4(2)	262(10.4)	755(30)
1975	2657	107(4.0)	383(14)	84(3.2)	4(3)	237(8.9)	875(33)
1976	2663	174(6.5)	450(17)	95(3.6)	4(3)	280(10.5)	796(30)
1977	3026	125(4.1)	519(17)	135(4.5)	7(4)	235(7.8)	771(25)
1978	3168	160(5.1)	551(17)	98(3.1)	13(5)	201(6.3)	756(24)
1979	3222	151(4.7)	731(23)	90(2.8)	8(3)	252(7.8)	763(24)
1980	3034	125(4.1)	576(19)	111(3.7)	16(8)	240(7.9)	754(25)
1981	2851	171(6.0)	598(21)	107(3.8)	24(11)	213(7.5)	797(28)

Not immediately evident from Table 2 is the continuing divergence of numbers of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks. In 1970 the ratio of Red-tails to Red-shoulders was 3.6; in 1981 it was 5.6. Newcomers to the Christmas counts might find it hard to believe that at one time the Red-shoulders actually outnumbered the Red-tails. But they did in 1963 and prior years (see, for example, *Raven*, 35: 6-17, 1964), and the increase of the Red-tail in relation to the Red-shoulder was commented on in several subsequent Christmas count summaries (*Raven*, 39: 3-16, 1968; 40: 9-21, 1969; 43: 3-18, 1972).

A Yellow Rail at Back Bay was by far the rarest marsh bird reported, this being only the second occurrence on the Virginia Christmas count. The first time was at Cape Charles in 1967. Other rails were fairly normal except for a King Rail inland at Fort Belvoir. Shorebirds too were in moderate numbers with only one American Avocet (at Chincoteague). Two gull records stand out, an Iceland at Chancellorsville and a Black-headed Gull at Blacksburg, the latter a first for any time of the year west of the Coastal Plain.

Almost unbelievable is the only way to describe the Ruby-throated Hummingbird at Newport News. This was another first for a Virginia Christmas count, although one did spend the 1979-80 winter in Norfolk (*Raven*, 52: 35-36, 1981). Several counts turned up some record or near-record numbers of woodpeckers. Note the 154 Common Flickers and 39 Pileated Woodpeckers at Charlottesville and the counts of Red-bellied, Hairy, and Downy Woodpeckers at Fort Belvoir and Northern Shenandoah Valley. Four of the counts from the mountain and valley area had totals of Horned Larks exceeding the peak count listed in the 1979 "Red Book," the best one being 1090 at Northern Shenandoah. It seemed surprising to have Red-breasted Nuthatches so common two years in a row. This year *every* Virginia count reported this species for a total of 1001, or 35 per 100 party-hours. This compares with 499 birds or 16 per 100 party-hours last year and only token numbers in 1979. Winter Wrens were less common than last year with only 108 recorded versus 194 in 1980. On a 100 party-hour basis, the comparable figures were 3.8 this year and 6.4 last year. There were some excellent counts of American Robins with such totals as 4657 at Williamsburg, 1620 at Lake Anna, and 1088 at Nickelsville, and Eastern Bluebird populations remained relatively high with 2414 in all (85 per 100 party-hours), just slightly below 1980's numbers. A Veery at Little Creek was only the second occurrence of the species on a state Christmas count, the first being in 1973 on the same count.

For the first time since 1970, no Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported on a state Christmas count. Kinglets continued their own separate ways. Golden-crowns backed down considerably from their 1563 last year to only 944 this year, a drop of 37% from 52 to 33 birds per 100 party-hours. On the other hand, Ruby-crowns recovered from 354 in 1980 to 413 this year, or 12 to 14 birds per 100 party-hours. Both species reached their recent peak populations in 1975 with 100 and 79 birds per 100 party-hours, respectively (*Raven*, 49: 29, 1978). There were several excellent counts of Cedar Waxwings, a bird that seems to have been increasing in winter in recent years. The 1279 at Lake Anna was a record Christmas count total, just barely edging out the 1267 at Kerr Reservoir in 1976. Other totals included 1106 at Fort Belvoir, 763 at Hopewell, 498 at Lynchburg, and 458 at Nickelsville. The Loggerhead Shrike, unfortunately, continued at a low level with only 67 birds (2.4 per 100 party-hours), up slightly from last year. Still, the 11 birds recorded at Fincastle are worth noting.

There were numerous holdover vireos and warblers. Both Back Bay and Mathews got one White-eyed Vireo each, while Cape Charles recorded the only Solitary Vireo. Black-and-white Warblers appeared on the Back Bay and Hopewell counts, and Cape Charles recorded single Nashville and Black-throated Blue Warblers; the only Yellow-breasted Chat was at Chincoteague. There were some unusually high numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers west of the Blue Ridge with 231 at Lexington and 357 at Nickelsville, and Williamsburg reported the best total of Pine Warblers—54. Two Common Yellowthroats at Warren were unusual for the Piedmont though winter records inland have been increasing lately.

Warren produced a Blue Grosbeak, the second record for a state Christmas count; the first was way back in 1960 at Little Creek. The population of House Finches had a quantum jump this year to a record 7258 birds, up from the then record of 3711 last year. This calculates to 255 per 100 party-hours versus

122 in 1980, a remarkable 109% increase. It's hard to believe that this bird was first recorded in Virginia in 1962 and on a state Christmas count in 1966. Three counts surpassed the previous record of 641 made last year, the best being 873 at Northern Shenandoah, closely followed by 850 at Charlottesville. And the species finally reached extreme southwestern Virginia with 127 at Wise, a first record for this count. The more usual northern finches were in moderate to good numbers, though this was not considered a big flight year, at least not until later in the winter. Evening Grosbeaks were down some from last year to 762 or 27 per 100 party-hours, but 300 of these were at Clifton Forge and seven counts did not record it at all. Down slightly too were Pine Siskins at 460 or 16 per 100 party-hours. Since Purple Finches hit record numbers last year (4170 or 137 per 100 party-hours), it was not unexpected that they declined in 1981 to 2682 or 94 per 100 party-hours. The only other irruptive northern finch reported was the Red Crossbill, which appeared at Cape Charles, Fort Belvoir, and Lynchburg.

Some impressive sparrow totals from Cape Charles included 23 Ipswich, 122 Sharp-tailed, 44 Seaside, 43 Vesper, and 3547 White-throated Sparrows. A Lark Sparrow was seen at Back Bay, the sixth time this bird has appeared on a Virginia Christmas count and the second year in a row for this locality. Cape Charles produced the only Lincoln's Sparrow, and Lapland Longspurs were recorded only at Northern Shenandoah. Snow Buntings, on the other hand, occurred on all four of the coastal counts, at Newport News, and at three inland spots. There were 2 at Lake Anna, 42 at Northern Shenandoah, and 25 at Waynesboro.

1. CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 2 miles N of center of Chincoteague. Dec. 28. Thirty-six observers in 21 parties. Total party-hours, 146 (122 on foot, 19 by car, 5 by boat) plus 2 hours owling; total party-miles, 451 (101 on foot, 330 by car, 20 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.

2. CAPE CHARLES. Center 1.5 miles SE of Capeville P.O. Dec. 27. Forty-eight observers in 27 parties. Total party-hours, 189 (163 on foot, 22 by car, 4 by boat) plus 6 hours owling; total party-miles, 384 (136 on foot, 234 by car, 14 by boat). Compiler: Henry Armistead.

3. LITTLE CREEK. Center 3.8 miles NE of Kempsville in Virginia Beach. Jan. 1. Twenty-nine observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 125 (88 on foot, 37 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 399 (54 on foot, 345 by car).

4. BACK BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE. Center 1.5 miles E of Back Bay. Dec. 29. Thirty-five observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 116 (90 on foot, 23 by car, 3 by boat) plus 5 hours owling; total party-miles, 547 (94 on foot, 437 by car, 16 by boat). Compiler: Paul Sykes.

5. NEWPORT NEWS. Center SW corner of Langley Air Force Base. Dec. 19. Twenty-six observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 69 (21 on foot, 48 by car); total party-miles, 278 (26 on foot, 252 by car). Compiler: W. P. Smith.

6. MATHEWS. Center 0.5 mile E of Beaverlett P. O. Jan. 3. Twenty-three observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 72 (27.5 on foot, 44.5 by car) plus 3.5 hours owling; total party-miles, 346 (28 on foot, 318 by car). Compiler: Mary Pulley.

7. WILLIAMSBURG. Center Colonial Williamsburg Information Center. Dec. 20. Twenty-four observers in 10 parties. Total party-hours, 102 (44 on foot, 58 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 414 (34 on foot, 380 by car). Compiler: Bill Williams.

8. HOPEWELL. Center Curles Neck. Dec. 19. Thirty-seven observers in 14 parties.

Total party-hours, 115 (100 on foot, 12 by car, 3 by boat) plus 9 hours owling; total party-miles, 324 (84 on foot, 222 by car, 18 by boat). Compiler: F. R. Scott.

9. BROOKE. Center 3 miles ESE of Brooke. Dec. 21. Sixteen observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 76 (66 on foot, 10 by car) plus 1 hour owling; total party-miles, 139 (42 on foot, 97 by car). Compiler: E. T. McKnight.

10. FORT BELVOIR. Center Pohick Church. Jan. 3. Fifty observers, 49-50 in 35 parties, 0-1 at feeder. Total party-hours, 196 (170.25 on foot, 25.75 by car) plus 4 hours at feeders, 4 owling; total party-miles, 473 (156 on foot, 317 by car). Compiler: Jackson Abbott.

11. CHANCELLORSVILLE. Center junction Sickles Drive and McClaws Drive. Dec. 20. Sixteen observers, 15 in 5-6 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 39 (24 on foot, 15 by car) plus 4.5 hours at feeders, 3 owling; total party-miles, 351 (24 on foot, 327 by car). Compilers: Sam Cooper and John Frary.

12. LAKE ANNA. Center rt. 208 bridge over Lake Anna. Jan. 3. Seventeen observers, 16-17 in 8 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 58 (31 on foot, 23 by car, 4 by boat) plus 3 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 341 (33 on foot, 280 by car, 28 by boat). Compiler: Jack Mozingo.

13. CHARLOTTESVILLE. Center near Ivy. Dec. 27. Twenty observers in 12 parties. Total party-hours, 101 (91 on foot, 10 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 206 (100 on foot, 106 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

14. WARREN. Center near Keene. Dec. 20. Eighteen observers in 11 parties. Total party-hours, 97 (90 on foot, 7 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 201 (96 on foot, 105 by car). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

15. SWEET BRIAR. Center Sweet Briar College campus. Jan. 2. Sixteen observers, 15 in 4 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 22 (all on foot) plus 3 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 18 (all on foot). Compiler: Gertrude Prior.

16. LYNCHBURG. Center Lynchburg College. Dec. 19. Forty-three observers, 42 in 14 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 123 (90 on foot, 33 by car) plus 7 hours at feeders, 9 owling; total party-miles, 468 (54 on foot, 414 by car). Compiler: Myriam Moore.

17. NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY. Center junction Crooked Run and rt. 606. Dec. 19. Fifty observers in 21 parties. Total party-hours, 190 (63 on foot, 127 by car) plus 4 hours owling; total party-miles, 1407 (123 on foot, 1284 by car). Compiler: Rob Simpson.

18. SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK-LURAY. Center Hershberger Hill. Dec. 20. Thirty-two observers, 27 in 14 parties, 5 at feeders. Total party-hours, 91 (45 on foot, 46 by car) plus 7 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 523 (46 on foot, 477 by car). Compiler: Dennis Carter.

19. BIG FLAT MOUNTAIN. Center Pasture Fence Mountain. Dec. 23. Two observers in 2 parties. Total party-hours, 20 (all on foot) plus 2 hours owling; total party-miles, 38 (all on foot). Compiler: Charles Stevens.

20. ROCKINGHAM COUNTY. Center Ottobine. Dec. 19. Twenty-eight observers in 13 parties. Total party-hours, 69 (37 on foot, 32 by car) plus 3.5 hours owling; total party-miles, 536 (55 on foot, 481 by car). Compiler: Max Carpenter.

21. AUGUSTA COUNTY. Center junction rts. 780 and 781. Jan. 2. Thirty-four observers, 33 in 14 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 82 (51.5 on foot, 30.5 by car) plus 3 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 414 (55 on foot, 359 by car). Compiler: John Mehner.

22. WAYNESBORO. Center Sherando. Dec. 19. Twenty-five observers, 21 in 13 parties, 4 at feeders. Total party-hours, 67 (38 on foot, 29 by car) plus 12 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 335 (33 on foot, 302 by car). Compiler: Ruth Snyder.

23. LEXINGTON. Center Big Spring Pond. Dec. 26. Twenty-five observers, 24 in 10 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 58 (37 on foot, 21 by car) plus 3 hours

at feeders, 4 owling; total party-miles, 260 (38 on foot, 222 by car). Compiler: Bob Paxton.

24. **PEAKS OF OTTER.** Center Peaks of Otter Visitor Center. Dec. 29. Seven observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 22 (9 on foot, 13 by car); total party-miles, 76 (11 on foot, 65 by car). Compiler: Almon English.

25. **CLIFTON FORGE.** Center junction rts. 42 and 60. Dec. 20. Fifteen observers, 14 in 8 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 29 (21 on foot, 8 by car) plus 2 hours at feeders, 2 owling; total party-miles, 215 (24 on foot, 191 by car). Compiler: Allen Lebew.

26. **FINCASTLE.** Center near junction rts. 220 and 679. Dec. 20. Thirty-two observers in 14 parties. Total party-hours, 88 (39 on foot, 49 by car) plus 5 hours owling; total party-miles, 424 (32 on foot, 392 by car). Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

27. **ROANOKE.** Center junction Oakland Blvd. and Williamson Rd. Dec. 19. Thirty-five observers, 34 in 17 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 129 (72 on foot, 54 by car, 3 by canoe) plus 2 hours at feeders, 8 owling; total party-miles, 507 (63 on foot, 441 by car, 3 by canoe) Compiler: Barry Kinzie.

28. **BLACKSBURG.** Center near Linkous Store. Dec. 19. Thirty-seven observers, 36 in 11 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 123 (78 on foot, 45 by car) plus 6 hours at feeders; total party-miles, 358 (78 on foot, 280 by car). Compiler: Clyde Kessler.

29. **TAZEWELL.** Center Fourway. Dec. 28. Twenty-three observers, 21 in 8 parties, 2 at feeders. Total party-hours, 70 (38 on foot, 32 by car) plus 8 at feeders; total party-miles, 404 (32 on foot, 372 by car). Compiler: Sarah Cromer.

30. **GLADE SPRING.** Center junction rts. 750 and 609. Dec. 19. Eighteen observers, 17 in 6 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 49 (30 on foot, 19 by car) plus 3 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 325 (21 on foot, 304 by car). Compiler: Chuck Byrd.

31. **BRISTOL.** Center junction rts. 647 and 654. Dec. 27. Nine observers in 4 parties. Total party-hours, 35 (13 on foot, 22 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 279 (10 on foot, 269 by car). Compiler: Richard Lewis.

32. **NICKELSVILLE.** Center Nickelsville. Dec. 19. Twelve observers in 8 parties. Total party-hours, 27 (7 on foot, 20 by car) plus 3 hours owling; total party-miles, 174 (6 on foot, 168 by car). Compiler: E. E. Scott.

33. **BREAKS INTERSTATE PARK.** Center 1 mile NW of rt. 83 at Prater. Jan. 2. Fourteen observers, 11 in 3 parties, 3 at feeders. Total party-hours, 21 (18 on foot, 3 by car) plus 8 hours at feeders, 1 owling; total party-miles, 50 (12 on foot, 38 by car). Compiler: Kenneth Markley.

34. **WISE COUNTY.** Center Dorchester. Dec. 27. Eight observers. 7 in 4 parties, 1 at feeders. Total party-hours, 35 (25 on foot, 10 by car) plus 4 hours at feeders, 2 owling; total party-miles, 163 (26 on foot, 137 by car). Compiler: Richard Peake.

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HORDES OF BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS IN VIRGINIA

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

At Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on 11 September 1980 I was birding during an unusual hot, dry spell which had evaporated all the water from Snow Goose Pool (and some of the others) and created a mile square flat of short grass, an ideal habitat for "grasspipers." This pool is encircled by

the paved Wildlife Drive along which I was walking, trying to get close enough to a large flock of mixed shorebirds feeding in the grass to pick out Buff-breasted Sandpipers, *Tryngites subruficollis*, which were reported to have been here for a week. Mike Lerdeau reported that he had counted about 180 Buff-breasts here on 9 September! Suddenly, a Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*, dropped from the sky and scattered the 500 or more shorebirds in all directions. The falcon missed picking out a victim and flew leisurely along about 100 feet above the ground and then soared up and circled in the air for 2 to 3 minutes. It was a dark female, appearing sooty brown on top and heavily barred sooty against a white background below. As it drifted out of sight, the shorebirds drifted back in small and large groups, some passing overhead, to resettle in the grass. I could identify quite a few Buff-breasts in the flocks, adults golden buff with white underwing linings and immatures similar but with white bellies. The rest appeared to be Pectoral Sandpipers, *Calidris melanotos*, and various "peep."

About a half hour later as I scanned the grass near the southwestern corner of Snow Goose Pool, a larger-than-pigeon sized bird flew into view from behind me and landed in the grass about 100 yards away. It was facing away from me showing its blue-gray back set off by a black cap and a whitish tail. I thought for an instant that it was a giant pigeon, but then it flew up to chase a passing dowitcher and revealed the unmistakable size, shape, and silhouette of a Peregrine Falcon. It was an adult male with a whitish tail. This bird failed to catch the dowitcher and broke off the chase to soar up and circle in the air as did the female I saw earlier.

These Peregrines so "spooked" the shorebirds that they became jumpy, flying up now and then for no apparent reason and resettling in other grassy locations. Luckily, some of these moves brought the birds within 100 yards of where I was standing. Three different times I counted and came up with a conservative estimate of 105 Buff-breasted Sandpipers, more than the combined total of all I had seen in my lifetime of birding. There were also at least 150 Pectoral Sandpipers of two different sizes, almost as different as the sizes between Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, *Tringa melanoleuca* and *T. flavipes*, respectively. (Why don't the bird guides describe these?) Other species in this mixed flock were at least 5 Baird's Sandpipers, *Calidris bairdii*, 150 Semipalmated, *C. pusilla*, 100 Least, *C. minutilla*, 40 Western, *C. mauri*, and 2 more White-rumped Sandpipers, *C. fuscicollis*. Three American Golden Plovers, *Pluvialis dominica*, showed up as I was leaving.

Other birders also reported unusually high numbers of Buff-breasted Sandpipers at Snow Goose Pool in September 1980 with an almost unbelievable peak of 340 birds on 13 September found by Richard A. Rowlett. The VSO trip to Chincoteague on 20 September found 211 Buff-breasts, but by 27 September only 6 could be found by David Abbott, Henry Bielstein, and others. The previous peak count of this species in Virginia was 50 found by Claudia Wilds on 23-24 September 1978 on the Washflats at the northern end of the refuge, the usual spot for seeing this species in Virginia.

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EARLY FALL ACTIVITY OF THE BOBOLINK IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY

BROOKE MEANLEY

During the period of 1 September to 11 October 1980 I made daily observations of transient Bobolinks, *Dolichonyx oryzivorus*, near Fishersville, Augusta County, Virginia. Most observations near Fishersville were made in an area approximately two miles square, beginning about 2 miles south of the town in fields bordering or near route 608. In this area the flock reached peak numbers of an estimated 6000 birds on 9 September. The largest flock previously reported from Virginia west of the Blue Ridge was 1500 in Botetourt County on 1 September 1959 (*Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist*, 1979: 95).

The Bobolinks were attracted to a fallow field of about 70 acres in which foxtail or bristlegass (*Setaria* sp.) was the predominant plant. The seeds of foxtail are a favorite food. During the first few days in September most of the birds fed and loafed in the foxtail field throughout the day, but as the flock became larger, segments moved into nearby corn fields in which foxtail and pigweed (*Chenopodium* sp.), another important food plant, grew between the corn rows and along the edges of the fields.

Some of the birds roosted in the 70-acre foxtail field, others in at least three other locations. But those roosting elsewhere used the foxtail field as a staging area in the evening prior to going to other roost sites. Thus most if not all of the Bobolinks staged or gathered in the one field each evening, and it was possible to make fairly reliable flock counts along roost flight lines.

In the 70-acre foxtail field, Bobolinks roosted in scattered thick patches of pigweed, a coarse plant that reached a height of about 5 feet. On 8 September the birds settled in the final roosting site in the field at 8:10 p.m. EDT. Sunset was at 7:28 p.m. The following morning (9 September) wakefulness in the flock was first noted at 6:16 a.m., when two or three birds began to utter their characteristic *pink* or *chink* call. The birds left the roost site by 6:37 a.m.; sunrise was at 6:44 a.m.

Predation on Bobolinks by a Cooper's Hawk, *Accipiter cooperii*, was observed on three occasions. At 6:15 p.m. on 7 September a Cooper's Hawk approached a flock of about 200 birds, which immediately dropped to the ground. The hawk dropped to the ground, picked up one of the birds, and flew off. At 6:30 p.m. the following evening there was a repeat performance in the same general area, and again on the evening of 19 September. On one occasion a Marsh Hawk, *Circus cyaneus*, flew low over a flock of Bobolinks but did not make a pass at them. The Marsh Hawk is more of a rodent predator, but on occasion it does take birds.

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JUVENILE VIRGINIA RAIL AT SALTVILLE PONDS

TONY DECKER

At about 0830 EDT on 25 July 1980 I checked the ponds at Saltville in extreme northwestern Smyth County, Virginia. While I was scanning the upper (south) pond across from the golf course, two birds rose from the sedge-grass

border on my side and flew across about 30 feet of open water. One was obviously a Common Grackle, *Quiscalus quiscula*; the other, though quite dark, was not. Fortunately, it landed on the opposite shore for perhaps 20 seconds, then flew back towards me into the vegetation from which it had come. The light was good, and I was using 7x50 binoculars at a range of 20 to 30 yards. The gray cheek and long, slightly decurved bill were easily seen as the bird turned briefly broadside after alighting on the farther shore. In flight the light transverse stripping of the under tail coverts was not very apparent as I was perhaps 12 feet higher than the bird. The bird was quite dark but not as dark as shown in my copies of two current popular field guides (Robbins *et al.*, 1966; Peterson, 1980). It was clearly a juvenile Virginia Rail, *Rallus limicola*.

After the rail returned to my side of the pond, I went down and walked about a good bit but was not able to flush the bird again.

I know of no previous record of a Virginia Rail for this area. The only other breeding evidence of this species in western Virginia apparently comes from Blacksburg, where C. O. Handley (1939) found a nest with 9 eggs plus 3 adults on 27 May 1939. Two other nests found earlier that year were destroyed by cattle. Four additional Virginia Rail nests were found here in three different marshes in 1940 (Handley, Jr., 1941a). Since that time, however, no further nests and few individuals have been reported from this area (Handley, Jr., 1941b; Murray, 1974).

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BANDING RESULTS AT KIPTOPEKE BEACH IN 1980

F. R. SCOTT

For the eighteenth consecutive year the Research Committee of the Virginia Society of Ornithology sponsored a fall bird-banding project in 1980 at its Kiptopeke Beach Field Station in southern Northampton County, Virginia. This year the station was in operation continuously from 29 August through

26 October except for 1 and 25 October when rain forced the closure of the station. Up to 48 mist nets were used to trap migratory birds, which were then banded and released.

A total of 11,888 birds of 97 species were banded during the season, only 15 less than in 1979. Total net-hours were 20,114, a 14% increase over the previous year, and the trapping efficiency was 59 new birds per 100 net-hours versus 68 in 1979. Other numerical results included the capture of 11 birds banded here in previous years ("returns") and 9 birds banded by others elsewhere ("foreign retraps"). A report of the 1979 banding project was published in 1981 (*Raven*, 52: 37-38, 1981), and in 1980 a four-year summary appeared (*Raven*, 51: 11-13, 1980).

As usual, the Yellow-rumped Warbler was the commonest bird trapped at the station, the total of 5802 comprising 49% of all birds banded in 1980. The next most common species were American Redstart, 1294; Gray Catbird, 577; Common Yellowthroat, 544; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 476; and Black-and-white Warbler, 278. The Black-and-white total was a record count for this station, beating out the previous record of 272 in 1973. The only other record count was the 44 White-eyed Vireos, just one over the 43 trapped in 1974. As the history of the station gets longer, it naturally becomes increasingly difficult to get more record species totals. The House Finch finally appeared in the nets for the first time with single birds on 22 and 23 October, although they have been recorded in the area (mostly in winter) for some years. Also new for this station was a Cerulean Warbler on 5 September, one of the few fall records of this species in eastern Virginia.

Compared to the totals banded in 1979, the numbers of most of the species banded in 1980 were rather surprisingly similar. There were significant increases in all the *Empidonax* flycatchers, the 79 Traill's and 30 Least Flycatchers being the best counts for these species since 1974 for the Traill's and 1970 for the Least. House Wrens, with 160 banded versus 110 last year, had their best year since 1976. Also up significantly was the Black-throated Blue Warbler whose total of 476 was 145% above the 194 trapped in 1979 and the highest total since 1975. Among the more uncommon species, the 13 Chestnut-sided Warblers outnumbered each yearly total since 1970, while the 40 Tennessee Warblers were up from 22 in 1979 and 16 in 1978. The downside included the Veery with 181 this year versus 293 in 1979, Red-eyed Vireo with 119 versus 186, and Cape May Warbler with 38 versus 61. Both the Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes remained near their 17-year lows. The 68 Swainson's Thrushes, in fact, were the lowest number of this species recorded since the first year of the banding project in 1963 when the station operated only one week, a dubious distinction at best. The Gray-cheek total of 97 was the lowest since 1973. Since the arrival of many of the winter residents seemed somewhat delayed this fall—and the station closed on 26 October—the totals of many of these birds (e.g., Hermit Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and most sparrows) were depressed and not really comparable to those of other years.

Since this banding station was set up principally to capture migrating birds, it came as a surprise to find that a nonmigratory resident, the Tufted Titmouse, was one of the features of the fall. Forty-six of these were banded, all but two between 13 and 26 October, and all but one were HY ("hatching year") birds.

Not only is this total more than double the previous seasonal record, but in three different years—1967, 1977, and 1978—no titmice were trapped at all. The only other years in which the number of titmice exceeded 5 were 1968 with 21 birds between 8 and 27 October and 1979 with 19 birds between 17 and 27 October. In both cases, as in 1980, the station closed in late October, so the flights may well have lasted longer than the dates indicate. Age data are not available for the 1968 birds, but the 1979 titmice ages were 1 AHY (“after hatching year”), 17 HY, and 1 unknown. It seems clear that these three occurrences were vivid examples of the well-known dispersal of young enhanced by the concentrating effect of a natural barrier to bird movement (in this case, the Chesapeake Bay). They also indicate how a nonmigratory bird such as this species was able to expand its range into the Northeast in the past 30 years.

Some of the better flight days in 1980 included 4 September when 346 birds were banded, of which 151 were American Redstarts and 35 were Black-and-white Warblers; 8 September with a total of 338 trapped, including 95 American Redstarts and 74 Veeries; and 27 September when the grand total was 346, of which 96 were Gray Catbirds, 64 were American Redstarts, and 42 were Black-throated Blue Warblers. Beginning on 6 October, the Yellow-rumped Warbler took over as the overwhelmingly most common bird. The best October day was the 13th when 888 birds were trapped in all, 473 being Yellow-rumps. Other good totals on this date included 147 Gray Catbirds, 51 Common Yellowthroats, and 42 Black-throated Blue Warblers. Some other peak counts for various species included 23 Traill's and 7 Least Flycatchers on 8 September, 19 House Wrens on 27 September, 17 Hermit Thrushes on 24 October, 25 Gray-cheeked Thrushes on 7 October, 43 Black-and-white Warblers on 9 September, 47 Black-throated Blue Warblers on 6 October, and 725 Yellow-rumps on 20 October, the last on a day when the next largest species total was only 10!

The 11 returns from previous years included 6 permanent residents, 3 Carolina Wrens, all banded in 1979; 2 Carolina Chickadees, 1 banded in 1979 and 1 in 1976; and a Cardinal banded in 1979. The 5 assumed summer residents that returned were 3 White-eyed Vireos, 1 banded in 1977 and 2 in 1979; a Prairie Warbler banded in 1977; and a Blue Grosbeak also banded in 1977. Six of the foreign retraps were Sharp-shinned Hawks, 5 of them direct recoveries of HY birds originally banded in New Jersey or New York from 5 to 14 days prior to being recaptured at Kiptopeke Beach and one an AHY bird originally banded as a HY at Cape May Point in 1978. A HY Northern Waterthrush, recaptured here on 6 September by Walter Smith, had been banded only 7 days before on 30 August 1980 on Appledore Island, Maine, by Mrs. E. W. Phinney. There were also two American Redstart retraps, both also direct recoveries of HY birds. One banded by Raccoon Ridge Bird Observatory near Milford, Pennsylvania, on 27 August 1980 was retrapped by F. R. Scott at Kiptopeke Beach on 3 September, and another retrapped here on 27 September by Dorothy Foy had originally been banded by James Pion near Manhasset, New York, on 21 September 1980.

Attempts were again made to get as accurate an age breakdown as possible of all of the banded birds, and the results were roughly similar to those of previous years. Those migratory species that could be aged and of which there were adequate samples (20 or more individuals) were mostly 95% HY or over and almost always 90% HY or more. (Returns were included with

newly banded birds in determining age breakdowns.) Exceptions included White-eyed Vireo (83% HY) and Prairie Warbler (82% HY), and both of these population samples included summer residents as well as transients. While it can not be known precisely how many summer residents were included in with the transients, at least 3 White-eyed Vireos were, since there was this number of returns from previous years. When these are removed from the sample, the White-eye HY percentage rises to 89. One surprise this year concerned the Veery with an age structure of 98% HY. In the last six years this species's HY percentage has ranged from a high of 90 in 1978 to a low of 63 in 1976. In some past years there have been certain days when the HY percentage for one or more species was well below the mean for the season (see, for example, the 1974, 1976, and 1977 reports—*Raven*, 46: 65-67, 1975; 49: 38-39, 1978; and 50: 15-16, 1979). In 1980 the only hint of this occurred on 21 October and concerned only the Yellow-rumped Warbler. Of the 617 banded that day, 81% were HY versus 92% for the season as a whole.

The licensed banders who operated the station this year were John Buckalew, James Carter, Jane Church, Tom Drumheller, Dorothy and Roger Foy, C. W. Hacker, Kathleen Klimkiewicz, Dorothy and Sydney Mitchell, F. R. Scott, and Walter Smith. There were over 90 additional assistants without whose help the results would have been much less successful. Walter Smith acted as resident bander during most of the 8½-week period and also did the initial editing and tabulation of the daily field sheets.

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

HORNED GREBE FALLOUT. A late migration flight of Horned Grebes, apparently headed for Chesapeake Bay from the Great Lakes, ran into freezing rain and snow the night of 27-28 December 1980, and many birds were forced to land in a wide area in the Shenandoah Valley between Roanoke County on the south to Frederick County on the north. Reports of some 200 birds were received from this area between 28 and 31 December, according to Yulee Larner and Kathleen Finnegan.

Most of the reports were of single birds picked up on roads, in parking lots, or in fields, and for those that were not recovered and released in water, mortality must have been nearly 100% since grebes can not normally take flight from land. Larger numbers reported included a flock of 20 at the Stuarts Draft sewage lagoon, Augusta County on 30 December (Mozelle Henkel and Ruth Snyder) and 51 reported along the Shenandoah River by three parties on the Calmes Neck Christmas bird count (Clarke County) on 28 December (Harriet Gilbert, personal communication). The last report was of 2 on the South River in Waynesboro on 5 January 1981 (Snyder). This fallout of migrating Horned Grebes seemed similar to another one that occurred in southwestern Pennsylvania and western Maryland on the night of 6-7 January 1979 (*Redstart*, 47: 142-144, 1980).

Although one might well speculate on how much mortality occurred during this one flight of Horned Grebes and what effect it might have had on the birds' population as a whole, it is somewhat reassuring to note that Edward S. Brinkley counted some 3500 Horned Grebes on the Elizabeth River off Craney Island, Portsmouth, on 19 March 1981, one of the largest counts of this species in Virginia in recent years.

RED-NECKED GREBE ON PIEDMONT. Unusual on the Piedmont, especially in winter, was a Red-necked Grebe at Lake Anna, Louisa County, Virginia, on 24 December 1979 (Brian Keelan, Todd Wilson, and others) and apparently the same bird again on 19 January 1980 (Keelan, John Bazuin, Sam Cooper, and others).

GREATER SHEARWATERS OFF VIRGINIA. Because of the rarity of the Greater Shearwater off Virginia in the fall (*Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist* published in 1979 listed only three records), it seems important to clarify some records that appeared recently in *American Birds* (35: 166, 1981), some of which apply to Maryland and not to Virginia. During the fall of 1980 Richard A. Rowlett found this species off Virginia on five occasions between 1 September (not 4 August) and 11 October with a peak count of only 3 on 1 September.

MIGRATING SWANS IN YORK COUNTY. Two flocks of Whistling Swans totaling 375 birds were seen flying in a northwesterly direction over Queens Lake, York County, Virginia, on 16 March 1980 (Bill Williams). While flocks of migrating swans are fairly regular inland in the northern part of Virginia's Coastal Plain, flocks of this size are quite unusual inland here.

GODWITS IN JUNE. More Marbled Godwits continue to show up along the Virginia coast in June. In 1980 5 were found on Ship Shoal Island on 24 June (Bill Williams), and 7 were seen along Castle Ridge Creek near Nassawadox on 28 June (Barry Truitt). For more comments on June records of this species in Virginia, see *American Birds* for November 1978 (32: 1148) and November 1979 (33: 852).

TREE SWALLOWS NESTING IN LOUDOUN. On 25 May 1980 John B. Bazuin, Jr., found a pair of Tree Swallows nesting in a bluebird box in Algonkian Regional Park in extreme eastern Loudoun County, Virginia. The box contained 6 eggs. Returning on 7 June he found that five of the bluebird boxes were apparently occupied by Tree Swallows, but he could not determine the contents. This is the same place where nesting of this species was suspected on the 1978 VSO breeding-bird foray (*Raven*, 51: 47, 1980).

EARLY FALL MIGRANT. A disoriented and possibly stunned immature Prothonotary Warbler was picked up in downtown Richmond, Virginia, at the base of a tall office building about 1:30 p.m. on 5 August 1980 (F. R. Scott). With a little water and a paper bag as a cage, the bird survived the afternoon and was released apparently in good condition about 6 p.m. after being banded. There appears to be little information available on the timing of the fall migration of this species, but this date is quite early for all but a very few of the warblers.

The Raven

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

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1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.
2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.
3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.
4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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FAME COMES TO ROANOKE'S "STP" AS STOPOVER FOR TRANSIENTS

NORWOOD C. MIDDLETON

During a mid 1970's Christmas bird count, one observer furtively swept his binoculars over a remote, formidable chain-link boundary fence at the Roanoke sewage treatment plant (STP) to see whether there just might be a bird of interest there. There was—a Killdeer.

Since then, the STP has become something of a mecca for birdwatchers. Its attraction is built chiefly on its affinity for migrating shorebirds, many of which are usually associated with more traditional habitat along the Atlantic seaboard 226 miles to the east. But its ease of access and ideal vantage points for viewing birdlife add to its popularity.

Officially, it is the Roanoke Water Pollution Control Plant. In the lexicon of local birders, however, it is simply the STP. There have been some strained references to the additive the STP has put into the "fuel" that propels the get-up-and-go of birders in western Virginia.

The STP occupies a 59.26-acre tract just inside a 90-degree bend of the Roanoke River as it flows northward and then east through the southeastern section of the City of Roanoke. It may be reached from downtown Roanoke by driving east on Virginia 24, turning south (right) on 13th Street, S.E., then east (left) on Carlisle after crossing the Roanoke River bridge, and north (left) on Brownlee for 0.4 mile to a parking area and office. Birders, after a one-time permanent registration at the office, may drive into the lagoon area at the rear of the main building.

At the time of its completion in 1977, the STP was the most sophisticated of its size in the United States, providing treatment at a flow of 35 million gallons a day with an overall detention time of 19.75 hours. In addition to an assortment of equipment and treatment buildings, there are five sludge lagoons and a massive concrete basin roughly the size of two football fields. The buildings, the basin, and four of the lagoons are at an elevation of 900 feet, the fifth and largest lagoon some 40 feet higher.

The basin, technically a holding pond, provides three ponds of fairly shallow water against a setting of gleaming concrete that some observers believe resemble, in the eyes of flying birds, sand and sea. It is to these ponds and their gently sloping edges that shorebirds flock for resting, bathing, preening, and some of their feeding. Here have come Piping Plover, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Wilson's and Northern Phalaropes, and Red Knot among the shorebirds, as well as Fulvous Whistling-Duck and the Black, Caspian, and Common Terns.

To the some 20 acres of sludge lagoons and what the birds may regard as mud flats and tidal pools have come the Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Black-bellied Plover, and American Golden Plover.

To the adjacent Roanoke River have come the White Ibis, Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, and Osprey.

Movement back and forth between ponds and lagoons is common among most of the shorebirds. Sludge from digestion tanks is discharged to a depth of a foot into the lagoons in rotation and then left to dry. Rich food for the

birds is the result, including worms and hordes of flying insects. Planted on the banks of the dikes around the lagoons are Crown Vetch, *Coronilla varia*, and Common Hop, *Humulus lupulus*. Elevated dikes provide roads around the lagoons, along the south side of the concrete basin, and along the south bank of the river. These afford observation points. Between the road and the river grow American Sycamore, *Platanus occidentalis*; Box Elder, *Acer negundo*; Red Mulberry, *Morus rubra*; and Black Willow, *Salix nigra*.

Records of observations at the STP have been kept by Mike Purdy, a member of the Roanoke Valley Bird Club, since the fall of 1977. He has recorded 27 species of shorebirds and 153 total species. It is from his records based on consistent monitoring that much of the detail of this report comes.

A Fulvous Whistling-Duck, *Dendrocygna bicolor*, first turned up 29 May 1979 and, before it departed 2 July 1979, lured many observers, including participants in the 1979 breeding-bird foray in Craig County conducted by the Virginia Society of Ornithology.

An immature Little Blue Heron, *Florida caerulea*, visited from 11 July 1978 through the end of the month, and two were recorded 2-3 August 1978. On 29 July 1980, two immature White Ibis, *Eudocimus albus*, were seen flying by Sally Nelson and Ernest and Hazel Moore, and Purdy saw a single immature White Ibis cavorting over the river 1 August 1980.

Purdy recorded three Black Terns, *Chlidonias niger*, on 29 July 1980; John Pancake, a Common Tern, *Sterna hirundo*, on 11 November 1979; and Purdy, two Caspian Terns, *S. caspia*, on 3 June 1979.

Purdy observed five Bonaparte's Gulls, *Larus philadelphia*, on 26 March 1979 and nine on 14 April 1979. Ring-billed Gulls, *L. delawarensis*, are erratic in spring, with a count of 79 on 9 April 1979 and a peak of 207 on 14 April 1979 by Purdy. Herring Gulls, *L. argentatus*, are uncommon and erratic, usually one or two, with one record of four.

A Yellow-headed Blackbird, *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*, was recorded 2-4 September 1978 by James Gum and others, and an adult Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*, was seen 24 September 1978 by Norman and Dot Silsby, Dan Puckette, and Purdy.

Blue Grosbeaks, *Guiraca caerulea*, nest at the STP. The riparian habitat and a stand of mixed hardwoods and conifers provide nesting for perhaps 30 other species, in Purdy's estimate, but no thorough study has been made of the breeding birds.

The following observers are identified by last name only in this annotated list of shorebirds recorded at the STP: Jim Ayers, Fenton Day, Mike Donahue, Almon O. English, Barry Kinzie, Paul McQuarry, Norwood C. Middleton, Myriam P. Moore, Bill Opengari, John Pancake, Richard H. Peake, Mike Purdy, and George Stubbs.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER, *Charadrius semipalmatus*

One or two individuals fairly regularly in fall, 9 July 1981 to 3 October 1979 (both Purdy), with a top count of 8 on 5 September 1979 (Purdy). Fewer occurrences in spring but in larger groups of 4, 5, and 7, 20 April 1978 to 13 June 1979 (both Purdy), with a peak count of 72 on 18 May 1981 (Donahue).

KILLDEER, *Charadrius vociferus*

Abundant in fall with frequent counts of 50 to 100, occasional counts of 100 to 150, and peak counts of 176 on 25 August 1978 and 172 on 17 July 1980 (both Purdy). Common in small numbers in spring, with a postbreeding buildup starting in mid June. A nest with 4 eggs was located here on 20 May 1979 (Purdy).

PIPING PLOVER, *Charadrius melodus*

Two records. A single bird on 17 August 1978 (Middleton and Pancake) and a single bird from 29 July to 5 August 1979 (Middleton and Purdy).

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, *Pluvialis dominica*

A few birds found in fall only. Single birds were seen from 5 to 13 October 1977 (Purdy, Moore, and others) and off and on between 12 and 23 September 1978 with 2 on 24 September (Purdy and Middleton); 2 were present on 30 September 1979 (Middleton); and 1 was here 1-3 October 1979 (Purdy).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER, *Pluvialis squatarola*

Four records. One from 21 to 25 May 1979 (Purdy and Moore), joined by a second bird 22-23 May 1979 (Purdy and Kinzie), 2 on 12 August 1979 (Stubbs), 2 on 11 November 1979 (Pancake), and 2 on 20 May 1981 (Middleton and Purdy).

GREATER YELLOWLEGS, *Tringa melanoleuca*

Uncommon in fall, 8 July 1981 to 16 October 1977 (both Purdy), and occasional in spring, 18 April 1979 to 3 June 1979 (both Purdy); usually no more than 2 at a time and often with Lesser Yellowlegs.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS, *Tringa flavipes*

Common in spring and fall, 2 April 1979 to 4 June 1979 and 8 July 1981 to 16 October 1977 (all Purdy). Counts of 10 to 15 are not unusual, and the peak count for spring was 19 on 26 April 1979 and for fall, 77 on 28 July 1980 (both Purdy).

SOLITARY SANDPIPER, *Tringa solitaria*

Regular in spring and fall, 13 April 1978 to 27 May 1979 and 8 July 1981 to 5 October 1978 (all Purdy). There are several records of 5 to 10 birds, and the peak counts are 17 on 24 April 1979 in spring and 30 on 2 August 1978 in fall (both Purdy).

WILLET, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*

Four records. Single bird 2 August 1978 (Purdy), 2 on 10 July 1979 (Purdy), 15 on 11 May 1981 (Purdy and Ayers), and a single 8-11 July 1981 (Purdy and Middleton).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER, *Actitis macularia*

Common in spring and fall, 12 April 1978 to 14 June 1979 and 6 July 1979 to 5 October 1978 (all Purdy). Usually in numbers of 5 and 10, but an impressive 101 were counted on 19 May 1981 (Purdy), and the fall peak was 17 on 25 July 1979 (Purdy).

RUDDY TURNSTONE, *Arenaria interpres*

Five records. One on 21 May 1979 (Purdy), 3 on 12 August 1979 (Stubbs), 5 on 5 September 1979 (Purdy), 3 on 23 May 1980 (Purdy), and 5 on 18 May 1981 (Middleton).

WILSON'S PHALAROPE, *Steganopus tricolor*

Five records. Single birds 25-27 August 1977 (Day, Moore, and others), female 10-20 August 1978 (Middleton, Pancake, and others), male 23-25 May 1979 (Purdy and Opengari), female 3 June 1979 (Purdy), and male 23-29 July 1979 (Purdy and Middleton).

NORTHERN PHALAROPE, *Lobipes lobatus*

Two records. Single female on 24-25 May 1979 (Purdy, Middleton, and Kinzie) and 18 on 5 September 1979 with 2 still present on the two following days (Purdy).

AMERICAN WOODCOCK, *Philohela minor*

One record of a single bird on 20 March 1981 (Donahue).

COMMON SNIPE, *Capella gallinago*

Uncommon in spring, 20 March 1979 to 24 April 1979, and occasional in fall, 30 August 1977 to 30 October 1977 (all Purdy). The peak count was 10 on 5 April 1979 (Purdy).

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER, *Limnodromus griseus*

Uncommon in fall, 10 July 1978 to 27 September 1977 (both Purdy) with a peak of 21 on 20 July 1979 (Purdy). Three spring records: 1 on 2 May 1979 (Middleton), 33 on 18 May 1981 (Donahue), and 1 on 19 May 1981 (Purdy).

RED KNOT, *Calidris canutus*

One record of a single bird 28-30 July 1980 (Purdy, English, and others).

SANDERLING, *Calidris alba*

Scarce in fall with only eight records of single birds, 23 July 1979 (Purdy) to 30 September 1979 (Ayers and Purdy). No spring records.

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER, *Calidris pusilla*

Fairly common in small numbers in spring and fall, 13 May 1979 to 13 June 1979 and 12 July 1979 to 5 October 1978 (all Purdy). Occasionally up to 15 to 25 at a time with an unusual peak count of 259 on 3 June 1979 (Purdy). The best fall count was 26 on 24 September 1978 (Purdy).

WESTERN SANDPIPER, *Calidris mauri*

Uncommon in fall with eleven records between 3 July 1981 and 24 September 1978 (both Purdy). Most records are of single birds but 5 were noted on 24 July 1979 (Purdy). No spring records.

LEAST SANDPIPER, *Calidris minutilla*

Common in spring and fall, 24 April 1979 to 1 June 1979 and 3 July 1981 to 30 September 1978 (all Purdy). Peak counts were an impressive 297 on 11 May 1981 (Purdy) and 398 the next day (Ayers).

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, *Calidris fuscicollis*

Eight records in all, with five in spring between 9 May 1978 and 2 June 1979 (both Purdy) and three in fall of 1 to 2 birds between 20 August 1978 (Middleton and Pancake) and 5 October 1978 (Purdy). Spring peak counts were 8 on 9 May 1978 (Purdy), 16 on 20 May 1981 (Purdy and Donahue), and 18 on 26 May 1981 (Middleton).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER, *Calidris bairdii*

Five fall records, mostly of single birds, between 28 August 1978 (Purdy) and 22 September 1978 (Purdy) with a peak of 5 on 6-7 September 1979 (Purdy and Stubbs). There are two spring records, probably of the same bird, on 18 May 1980 (Peake) and 23 May 1980 (Pancake).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER, *Calidris melanotos*

Common and regular in fall, 6 July 1979 to 16 October 1977 (both Purdy) with a peak count of 46 on 30 September 1979 (Purdy). Two spring records: 1-3 on 9 and 10 May 1978 and 7 on 9 April 1979 (both Purdy).

DUNLIN, *Calidris alpina*

Seven records in all with four in spring between 9 May 1978 and 4 June 1979 and a peak of 3 on 20 May 1981 (all Purdy). The three fall records were 1 on 11 July 1979 (Pancake), 2 on 17 August 1978 (McQuarry), and 1 from 9 to 12 October 1977 (Middleton and Purdy).

STILT SANDPIPER, *Micropalama himantopus*

Uncommon but fairly regular in fall with ten records, 20 July 1979 to 3 October 1979 (both Purdy). The peak count was 12 on 29 July 1980 (Pancake). No spring records.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER, *Tryngites subruficollis*

Four records. Single bird from 21 to 24 August 1977 (Purdy, Moore, and others), 2 from 1 to 8 September 1977 (Purdy, Kinzie, and others), 2 from 17 September to 5 October 1978 (Purdy and Ayers), and 1 from 10 to 14 September 1979 (Purdy).

Mike Purdy is to be commended for his diligence in careful and frequent observations and in keeping written records, which he made available for this article. He and Barry Kinzie reviewed the manuscript, thus helping toward the goal of accuracy and proper assessment of abundance and frequency.

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SWAINSON'S WARBLER AND THE COWBIRD IN
THE DISMAL SWAMP

BROOKE MEANLEY

Swainson's Warbler, *Limnothlypis swainsonii*, is a fairly common breeding bird in the Dismal Swamp of Virginia and North Carolina where it is near the northern limit of its range on the Atlantic Coastal Plain. In the first week in

June 1981, I counted 14 territorial males near the edge of the forest along a 2.7-mile roadside route in the northern Jericho Ditch section. Along this same stretch for the past 10 years the number of territorial males has varied from 12 to 15.

Swainson's Warblers are the last of the resident warblers to arrive in the swamp in the spring. The earliest Swainson's seldom reach the swamp before 15 April, with others following up to about 1 May. Arriving later than the other warbler species, they are also the latest to nest. Thus they are more likely to escape being parasitized by the Brown-headed Cowbird, *Molothrus ater*, because many cowbirds are through laying and have left the swamp before the height of the Swainson's Warbler nesting season. None of the 11 Swainson's Warbler nests that I have found here had been parasitized by cowbirds, although this has occurred elsewhere in places where these birds' ranges overlapped (Meanley, 1971: 62). The nest of the Swainson's is comparatively large and bulky, not well concealed, and the eggs are white.

Nine of the 11 active nests that I found had clutches of eggs after 15 May, and six of these were after 1 June. By the last half of May most of the other species of warblers have fledged their young. There are few records of cowbird parasitism in the Dismal Swamp, apparently because very few nests have been located or reported by researchers. There are records of one nest each (or of fledged young being fed) of the following species having been parasitized by the cowbird: White-eyed Vireo, *Vireo griseus*; Black-throated Green Warbler, *Dendroica virens*; Common Yellowthroat, *Geothlypis trichas*; and Hooded Warbler, *Wilsonia citrina*. Each of these species nests earlier than the Swainson's Warbler, at least in the initial nesting attempt. Except for the observation of the yellowthroat, which was made by Tom Gwynn, all of these occurrences were recorded by the writer.

The vireo nest, discovered on 26 May 1981, contained one cowbird egg only and appeared to be deserted, since the vireos were not seen in the vicinity for several days. The nest of the Black-throated Green Warbler contained two warbler eggs and one cowbird egg on 29 April 1970; a photograph of this nest was published several years ago (Meanley, 1977: 19). Tom Gwynn located a pair of Common Yellowthroats feeding a fledged cowbird the last week of May 1981, and the Hooded Warbler nest, found on 27 May 1982, contained one nestling cowbird, one cowbird egg, and one Hooded Warbler egg. This last nest was empty when checked on 6 June.

From my observations of cowbirds in the swamp, it appears that they are more numerous there in April and May than in June. I observed five cowbirds in 6 hours in the swamp on 26 May 1981; one in 7 hours on 4 June 1980; and one in 28 hours between 7 and 10 June 1981. One-fourth of a mile outside of the swamp in agricultural fields, I saw 35 cowbirds in 30 minutes on 9 June 1981 and 70 in one hour in the same general area on 10 June 1981.

Val Nolan, Jr. (1978: 372) found 135 cowbird eggs in Prairie Warbler (*Dendroica discolor*) nests; 103 eggs were laid in May, 30 in June, and 2 in July. Seventy-six percent were deposited in May and 94 percent before 15 June.

Thus cowbirds probably parasitize nests in the Dismal Swamp more in April and May than in June, when many Swainson's Warblers are still nesting.

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EARED GREBE IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

CHARLES W. S. ZIEGENFUS

At 7:20 a.m. on 27 April 1981 I had taken the ornithology class from James Madison University to Lake Shenandoah, a 55-acre lake east of Harrisonburg, Virginia, to check for any birds which might have come in because of heavy rains during the night. While the class was busy looking at a Common Loon, *Gavia immer*, which was fishing and occasionally calling, I happened to look at the southeast corner of the lake with my binoculars and saw 4 small birds. Immediately I put a Bushnell Spacemaster scope on the birds. There were 2 Buffleheads, *Bucephala albeola*, male and female; 1 Ruddy Duck, *Oxyura jamaicensis*, a female; and 1 Eared Grebe, *Podiceps nigricollis*.

The Eared Grebe was about 40 yards away. There was a little fog on the lake and the light was weak. The class studied the bird, which was in breeding plumage, for 15 minutes. We noted the brilliant ear tufts, black head, black neck, and chestnut sides. I returned to the lake at 10:30 a.m. and observed the bird again for 20 minutes. This time it was 15 to 20 yards away, and every detail of the bird could be seen in good light. Later that afternoon Kathleen Finnegan, Mary Smith, Leonard Teuber, and YuLee Larner came to view it.

There is only one previous record of the Eared Grebe in western Virginia, a breeding-plumaged bird in Augusta County on 16 August 1980 (Raven, 52: 61, 1981), and there are no records from the Piedmont. *Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist* (1979) indicates that this is a rare winter visitor near the coast, with most records from Craney Island and extreme dates of 2 November and 18 April plus one summer record at Chincoteague on 16 August 1972. There is also an inland record for Fairfax County on 3 December 1968, and a specimen was collected at Craney Island on 9 November 1966.

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FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCKS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA

JACKSON M. ABBOTT

At 7 p.m. on the partly cloudy, windless, and warm evening of 2 August 1981, I was sitting in my back yard in Waynewood, Mount Vernon District, Fairfax County, Virginia, watching birds. I am only about two blocks from the Potomac River shore so see quite a few herons, waterfowl, gulls, and the like flying over during the year. I was looking north when a flight of 11 large, fast-flying, dark birds appeared coming towards me. My first thought, before I raised my binoculars, was that they might be Double-crested Cormorants, *Phalacrocorax auritus*, quite a number of which had been along the river here all summer. As they got closer I could see through my binoculars that they were not black but brownish and seemed more like small geese because of their longish necks and large heads. As they came on overhead at about 200 feet above me, I noted their fiat, dark duck-like bills, long dark-gray legs with feet projecting beyond the tail, all dark under-wing linings, rather long pale-brown necks, large dark-brown heads, and reddish-brown bodies. I knew as they passed over that they were Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, *Dendrocygna bicolor*. I did not see their white vents as these were covered by their legs.

This is the first record for this species in Fairfax County.

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WILLETS IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

KATHLEEN H. FINNEGAN

During the early morning hours of 20 April 1981 the weather changed from warm rain and southwesterly winds to the passage of a cold front with strong northerly winds. At 2 p.m. that day my husband and I sighted 10 Willets, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*, flying over Shenandoah Lake in Rockingham County, Virginia.

These 10 birds flew in a tight flock, twisting and turning with much vocalization of *pill-will-willet*. The water level was up so no mud flats were present, and there were fishermen all around the lake shore. During the one hour we watched them, none of the birds came down.

Mozelle Henkel stated she saw 10 Willets on the same date and at about the same time on Shenandoah Lake; she apparently was at another spot, and we did not see each other. At 3:30 p.m. she and her husband John saw the birds fly to a shallow area of the lake and first 2, then 4, then 6 birds perched on the cattails. Several seemed to be swimming in the water for a short time until disturbed by a fisherman.

Donna Triplett saw 2 birds in the shallow area feeding at 6 p.m. with the remaining birds flying and calling. Charles Ziegenfuss checked at 6:30 p.m. and found 14 birds flying in two groups of 10 and 4, never together. A gunshot was heard somewhere near the lake at about this time, and the birds flew off

and were not seen again. On 21 April at 6 a.m. they were not present and were not seen during the day.

This is a new record for Rockingham County. *Virginia's Birdlife: An Annotated Checklist* (1979: 38) lists two previous records for this species west of the Blue Ridge, single birds in Montgomery County on 3 June 1945 and at Roanoke on 2 August 1978.

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A THICK-BILLED MURRE AT BACK BAY

EDWARD S. BRINKLEY

While participating in the Back Bay Christmas bird count at Sandbridge, Virginia, on 1 January 1981, the writer discovered an injured Thick-billed Murre, *Uria lomvia*. The bird was found struggling on the beach approximately 2.4 km south of the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge field headquarters at 11:20 a.m. After carrying the bird back to the refuge parking lot, I rendezvoused as planned with Paul W. Sykes, the count compiler. In view of the bird's injury—two of the three front toes (and accompanying ligaments and muscles) had been completely severed at the proximal end where they join the tarsometatarsus—Sykes decided to collect it for a museum specimen. The injury was thought to have been inflicted by a large fish. Sykes compressed the heart and lungs simultaneously in order to kill the bird quickly and painlessly.

On 15 August 1981 Sykes prepared a study skin of the murre and subsequently sent the specimen to Ralph Browning of the U. S. National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D. C., who assigned the bird catalog number 598416 NMNH.

The following data were obtained: adult female, winter plumage; length of wing, 190 mm; length of exposed culmen, 30.0 mm; greatest depth of bill, 12.5 mm; iris, black; bill, black; legs and feet, dark gray; left ovary, 10 x 6 mm.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Paul W. Sykes, who sacrificed, analyzed, and prepared the bird and sent it to the museum and to Ralph Browning, who cataloged it.

508 Mowbray Arch, Norfolk, Virginia 23507

GROUND DOVE IN AUGUSTA COUNTY

YULEE R. LARNER

On 24 October 1981 my husband, Si Lerner, received a telephone call from Mrs. Martin Hegland in Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, Virginia, who was seeking help in caring for an injured bird. A bird, which she thought was a Ground Dove, *Columbina passerina*, was stunned after crashing into a picture window. The possibility of it being this species seemed very remote, but he advised Mrs. Hegland to place the bird in a paper bag so it could remain quiet and recover without further injury. In the meantime he received a call from

Clair Mellinger about a Groove-billed Ani, *Crotophaga sulcirostris*, which had been seen in Rockingham County. A weak frontal system had passed through the area on the previous day, so the possibility existed that both birds were carried into Virginia by the southerly winds.

Positive identification of the Ground Dove was made by Mozelle Henkel in the early afternoon of 24 October. When I returned home later in the day, I went to see the bird along with Isabel Obenschain. It was quite small with a short tail, rusty wings, and beautiful scaled breast. The bird ate mixed bird seeds and seemed healthy, although it had an injury to its head and seemed to "favor" one wing. It was seen by other members of the Augusta Bird Club and was photographed by David Abbott.

This appears to be the second record of this species west of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, the first being one seen at Mountain Lake on 30 October 1936 by C. O. Handley and John B. Laing (*Raven*, 8: 7, 1937). The bird died on 28 October, and the specimen was placed in the collection of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia.

1020 West Beverley Street, Staunton, Virginia 24401

THE 1982 VSO ANNUAL MEETING

ROBERT J. WATSON

The forty-eighth annual meeting of the Virginia Society of Ornithology took place at the Cavalier Hotel, in Virginia Beach, Virginia, on 7 to 9 May 1982. Attendance was unfortunately lessened by a schedule conflict with the Wilson Ornithological Society which was meeting elsewhere in Virginia at the same time.

The meeting opened on Friday evening, 7 May, with the usual Local Chapters Workshop. Mrs. Myriam P. Moore, Chairman of the Local Chapters Committee, presided over an interesting and challenging program.

President Robert L. Ake formally opened the business meeting by calling upon Mr. Bill Williams to report for the Nominating Committee. Mr. Williams submitted the following nominees:

President: Mrs. YuLee Larner, Staunton

Vice President: Jerry W. Via, Blacksburg

Secretary: Robert J. Watson, Arlington

Treasurer: Mrs. Thelma Dalmas, Lynchburg

Editor: F. R. Scott, Richmond

Board of Directors, Class of 1985:

Mrs. Ruth A. Beck, Williamsburg

Richard E. Goll, Williamsburg

John H. Mehner, Staunton

There being no other nominations, a motion to approve the above nominees was unanimously carried.

Dr. Mehner urged members to participate in breeding-bird surveys throughout the state. Mrs. Lerner spoke briefly on the forthcoming foray in Bath County, and Mr. David Hughes described the field trip plans for Saturday and Sunday. The meeting then adjourned for the members to enjoy a reception put on by the host organization, the Cape Henry Bird Club.

Field trips on Saturday, 8 May, were well designed to cover the many interesting habitats near Virginia Beach. Outstanding features of the trips were numerous warblers in Dismal Swamp; a Least Bittern and Evening Grosbeaks at Back Bay; and, most unusual of all, a King Eider at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, observed from one of the bridge-tunnel islands.

At the Saturday afternoon session, with Vice President Lerner in the chair, the first speaker was Mr. Ed Freiling of the Naval Surface Weapons Center, Dahlgren, Virginia. Since 1977 Mr. Freiling had been engaged in an ecological survey on the grounds of the Weapons Center as a basis for a program of protection. Nine major types of ecological communities had been identified, ranging from open water to residential areas. So far, 177 species of birds had been observed at the Center, but at least 39 others were still being looked for. Mr. Freiling concluded that the operations of the Center had not damaged the environment; on the contrary, Federal custody had prevented commercial development of the area.

Mr. Thomas M. Gwynn, III, of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, presented a "Preliminary Update of Birds of the Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge." His starting point was a survey by Brooke Meanley, published in 1977, in which 185 species of birds were recorded from Dismal Swamp. Mr. Gwynn had added 23 others, including the Philadelphia Vireo and Swallow-tailed Kite.

A change of scene was presented by the third speaker, Ms. Daphne Gemell, of the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D. C. The locale of her speech was a small island off the coast of Australia, where the New Zealand Fish and Wildlife Service has made a study of the Shy, or White-capped, Albatross. Participants in the study, including Ms. Gemell, monitored nest activity, weighed and measured young birds, and carried out extensive banding.

The final speaker was Mr. Murray Honick, of Old Dominion University, who presented a zoogeographic study of the four warblers of the genus *Oporornis* (Mourning, Connecticut, Kentucky, and McGillivray's). The genus probably originated in South America but developed in North America under the influence of Pleistocene glaciation, as a cooling climate sharpened competition in the tropics and drove birds northward. Ranges of the Connecticut and Mourning Warblers partly overlap, but they do not hybridize. Kentucky and McGillivray's Warblers have separate ranges in the southeastern and western United States, respectively. The Mourning and McGillivray's appear rather similar and should perhaps be considered conspecific, according to the speaker. The Kentucky is probably closest to the original ancestral form.

The banquet was held as usual on Saturday evening. Dr. Ake called on field trip leaders to summarize the highlights of each trip. He drew attention to the regrettable absence of Mr. James W. Eike, on account of illness, this being only the second VSO meeting since 1934 that Mr. Eike had missed.

The President asked Ms. Betty Hopkins, of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel District, who was attending the banquet as a guest, to stand and be

recognized for her thoughtfulness in facilitating access by birders to the bridge-tunnel islands.

Dr. Ake awarded the 1982 Conservation Award to Mr. Walter E. Feurer, of the Naval Supply Center (Cheatham Annex), Williamsburg, for his efforts to protect the natural environment at the Center. Mr. Feurer received a standing ovation.

Resolutions tendering thanks to Mr. Gwynn and the Cape Henry Audubon Society for staging the meeting were presented by Mrs. Dorothy Silsby and were carried by acclamation.

Mrs. Moore noted that Dr. Ake was presiding for the last time, and paid tribute to him both as a President and as a skillful teacher of birding. Her remarks drew enthusiastic endorsement.

The featured speaker was Mr. Scott Freeman, of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin. The Foundation was established nine years ago, according to Mr. Freeman, to conduct research on the life history and conservation of the 15 known species of cranes in the world, of which seven are considered rare or endangered. The work of the Foundation is international and involves cooperation with Japanese, Soviet Russian, Chinese, and Indian ornithologists. Conservation measures undertaken thus far include establishment of sanctuaries, educational programs, and breeding in captivity. Following Mr. Freeman's speech, the meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Field trips on Sunday, 9 May, ending about noon at the Cavalier Hotel completed the meeting, which proved enjoyable despite the low attendance.

2636 Marcey Road, Arlington, Virginia 22207

LOCAL CHAPTERS OF THE VSO

This list of local chapters, compiled by Myriam P. Moore, chairman of the Local Chapters Committee, has been revised to May 1982. The number in parentheses after the chapter name is the approximate total number of members of that chapter.

1. Allegheny Highlands Bird Club (20), Clifton Forge
2. Augusta Bird Club (110), Staunton-Waynesboro
3. Bristol Chapter (40), Bristol
4. Cape Henry Audubon Society (400), Norfolk
5. Charlottesville-Albemarle Bird Club (65), Charlottesville
6. Clinch Mountain Bird Club (20), Nickelsville
7. Clinch Valley Bird Club (40), Tazewell
8. Cumberland Nature Club (30), Wise
9. Hampton Roads Bird Club (134), Newport News-Hampton
10. Lynchburg Bird Club (210), Lynchburg
11. Marion Bird Club (25), Marion
12. Montpelier Bird Club (25), Gordonsville-Orange
13. New River Valley Bird Club (30), Blacksburg
14. Northern Neck of Virginia Audubon Society (260), Kilmarnock-White Stone

15. Northern Virginia Chapter (150), Arlington-Fairfax
16. Northern Shenandoah Valley Audubon Society (125), Middletown
17. Richmond Audubon Society (720), Richmond
18. Roanoke Valley Bird Club (180), Roanoke-Salem
19. Rockbridge Bird Club (15), Lexington
20. Rockingham Bird Club (80), Harrisonburg
21. Virginia Beach Audubon Society (265), Virginia Beach
22. Margaret H. Watson Bird Club (20), Darlington Heights
23. Westmoreland Bird Club (25), Montross
24. Williamsburg Bird Club (60), Williamsburg

NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

CORMORANTS INLAND IN SPRING. Double-crested Cormorants continue to be recorded inland in Virginia with increasing frequency. In the spring of 1981 10 were seen at Lake Moomaw, Bath County, on 25 April (Si and YuLee Lerner), possibly a record count for western Virginia, and a single bird was noted at Lake Shenandoah, Rockingham County, on 20 and 24 April (Charles Ziegenfuss). On the Piedmont Sam Cooper and John Bazuin found one on the Spotsylvania County side of Lake Anna on 30 May.

SCREECH OWL NESTING. A nest box placed for Delmarva Fox Squirrels at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge proved attractive instead to a pair of Screech Owls. On 9 May 1981 an adult was discovered in the box with 1 young and 3 eggs (Claudia Wilds and Irvin and Marilyn Ailes).

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW IN VALLEY. The recent spread of the Chuck-will's-widow in Virginia west of the Blue Ridge seems to be continuing. After being discovered at Salem in 1976 (*Raven*, 48: 81, 1977), Botetourt County in 1977 (*American Birds*, 31: 1001 and 1140, 1977), and Craig County in 1979 (*Raven*, 52: 6, 1981), it has now been found farther north. Martha Swartz, of Lyndhurst, just south of Waynesboro, in Augusta County, suspected the presence of this bird in her neighborhood as early as 1979, but it was not until 28 May 1981 that its presence was confirmed (and the song taped) near here by Mozelle Henkel, Ruth Snyder, and others. Another was also heard singing later at another location near Mrs. Swartz's home. Still another Chuck-will's-widow was singing (one night only) on the north side of Harrisonburg in Rockingham County on 26 May 1981 by Clair Mellinger. These records were both new additions to the Augusta and Rockingham county bird lists.

MORE SHRIKES NESTING IN STATE. As the Loggerhead Shrike has declined in recent years in Virginia, nesting reports have become quite rare. So it was quite a surprise to have possibly eight nestings observed in the state during the 1981 season. Details are unfortunately lacking for the three nestings reported for northwestern Virginia (probably the Front Royal-Winchester area—*American Birds*, 35: 824, 1981), but two successful pairs were reported near Timberville in Rockingham County. A pair was feeding 5 well-feathered fledglings here on 20 May, and another pair was discovered about 2 miles

north on 26 May with 4 young still perched on and around the nest (Kathleen Finnegan and others). The first brood stayed close to the nest for at least two weeks. One observed marveled at seeing 13 shrikes in the space of one hour! Farther south, Barry Kinzie found an adult shrike incubating eggs on a nest near Arcadia, Botetourt County, on 14 May. At the eastern edge of the Piedmont in northern Chesterfield County, Darrell Peterson, who had been watching a pair of shrikes near his home, apparently recorded the first Virginia example of two broods in this species. The pair was feeding 2 fledged young on 15 June, and then on 29 August 1981 Peterson noted 2 adults and 3 fledged young in the same place and watched one of the adults feeding one of the young. This late a nesting date is unprecedented for Virginia.

SWAINSON'S WARBLER IN AMHERST. A freshly dead Swainson's Warbler was picked up at the base of a TV tower at Foulconerville, Amherst County, Virginia, on 15 May 1980 by Mike Stinson and Ray Chandler. The specimen is now in the collection of Sweet Briar College. This is the first record for this county.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLERS IN BOTETOURT COUNTY. The recording of 12 singing Yellow-throated Warblers along the James River near Arcadia, Botetourt County, Virginia, on 20 July 1980 (Bill Opengari) is an indication that this sometimes elusive species is probably more common in western Virginia than most people realize, at least locally along the lower river bottoms. The previous record count for western Virginia of 9 was in this same area on 6 May 1978 (*Virginia's Birdlife—An Annotated Checklist*, 1979: 89). The main problem in evaluating the status of this species in western Virginia seems to be that although it appears to sing well in May and July, it seems to sing much less in mid June when most field work on breeding birds in western Virginia is normally done. Thus a canoe trip down the lower Shenandoah River in Clarke County on 2 June 1962 recorded 4 singing birds (*Raven*, 33[3]: 7, 1962); yet the VSO breeding-bird foray to this same area between 7 and 11 June 1967 did not find the species at all (*Raven*, 38: 51-57, 1967). Similarly, F. M. Jones (*Raven*, 3[2-3]: 1-2, 1932) found it nesting regularly and located "quite a number" of nests in the Holston River valley near Bristol, but the three VSO breeding-bird forays to this area of south-western Virginia have amassed a total of only four June records (e.g., *Raven* 53: 12, 1982). Clearly more field work oriented toward this species would be desirable.

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK AT GLOUCESTER. A subadult male Black-headed Grosbeak appeared at Maynard A. Nichols's feeder at his home in Gloucester, Virginia, on 17 March 1981, and by the time it was last seen on 30 March, over 85 persons from all over the state had come to see and photograph it.

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL IN RICHMOND. A male White-winged Crossbill appeared in the West End of Richmond on 22 February 1981 at a feeder at the home of George and Sally Moxley and remained until 17 March. Before the bird left, it had been seen by some 85 persons who came from all parts of Virginia and a few out-of-state localities. This was one of the very few Virginia records of this species in recent years.

The Raven

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The Virginia Society of Ornithology, Inc., exists to encourage the systematic study of birds in Virginia, to stimulate interest in birds, and to assist the conservation of wildlife and other natural resources. All persons interested in those objectives are welcome as members. Present membership includes every level of interest, from professional scientific ornithologists to enthusiastic amateurs.

Activities undertaken by the Society include the following:

1. An annual meeting (usually in the spring), held in a different part of the state each year, featuring talks on ornithological subjects and field trips to nearby areas.

2. Other forays or field trips, lasting a day or more and scheduled throughout the year so as to include all seasons and to cover the major physiographic regions of the state.

3. A journal, *The Raven*, published quarterly, containing articles about Virginia ornithology, as well as news of the activities of the Society and its chapters.

4. Study projects (nesting studies, winter bird population surveys, etc.) aimed at making genuine contributions to ornithological knowledge.

In addition, local chapters of the Society, located in some of the larger cities and towns of Virginia, conduct their own programs of meetings, field trips, and other projects.

Those wishing to participate in any of the above activities or to cooperate in advancing the objectives of the Society are cordially invited to join. Annual dues are \$2.00 for junior members (students), \$5.00 for active members, \$7.50 for sustaining members, \$15.00 or more for contributing members, \$150.00 for life members, and \$9.00 for family members (limited to husband, wife, and their dependent children).

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THE SECOND VIRGINIA RECORD OF THE SANDHILL CRANE

CHARLES R. VAUGHN

On Monday, 17 January 1977, at about 1:20 p.m. I drove onto the beach at the north end of Wallops Island, Virginia. My short birding trip was prompted by curiosity of the effects on the coastal birdlife of the cold that had persisted for several weeks, with Sunday night being bitter cold. The temperature had dropped to near 0°F with the wind blowing 15 to 20 mph from 310 degrees. The Chesapeake Bay was nearly solidly frozen as was the Delaware Bay. In the Chincoteague area all bays were frozen, with Chincoteague Inlet frozen almost outward to the ocean side of Wallops Island on the south. Brant, *Branta bernicla*, were suffering dreadfully. The bays being frozen, many Brant flew to farm fields with winter wheat cover. More pitiful, though, was the sight of Brant walking, as if dazed, in the streets of Chincoteague, not even moving for cars.

The *Monthly Weather Review* (Vol. 105, No. 4, April 1977, pp. 553-560) summarized the January weather: "The strongly amplified wave pattern [in the main circulation of the upper atmosphere], which was remarkable for both its intensity and its persistence, repeatedly advected Arctic air southward to the United States where temperatures averaged as much as 19°F below normal in the Ohio Valley. In this area it was generally the coldest month on record, and ranked among the coldest Januarys over most of the eastern half of the country." In a later portion of the report: "Several cities over a wide area from Illinois to the middle Atlantic coast reported record or near record all-time low temperatures on January 17." Atlantic City, New Jersey, reported a low of -10°F.

The dirt road at the north end of Wallops Island allows beach access about three-quarters of a mile south of the northern tip. I drove on to the hard frozen beach and turned north. Hundreds of Brant flushed from feeding on what little there was of food on the ocean's edge. After driving about 500 yards I observed a flock of about 15 Snow Geese, *Chen caerulescens*, coming toward me at a height of about 50 feet. A second glance at the flock and I had a look of disbelief; flying in formation with the geese was a Sandhill Crane, *Grus canadensis*. I made a quick U turn to chase the birds which, by then, had passed directly overhead. I raced south along the beach, overtook the flock, and slowed to match their speed. The speedometer registered 25 mph. Within 30 seconds the flock became agitated, veered to the west, and disappeared over the shrub line.

I have belabored the description of weather and conditions of observations for the following interesting reason. In talking with Chan Robbins the next day about the bird, I learned that a Sandhill Crane had been seen the week before in southern New Jersey. I was given the name of Albert Conway of Wilmington, Delaware. I called and talked with Mrs. Conway. Subsequently I received a letter from Mr. Conway; the relevant paragraph reads, "My son, Charles, and I last saw the Sandhill Crane near Bridgeton, N.J., about 5:15 p.m. on Sunday, January 16. Mr. Darryle Greene, who lives nearby, was home all the following day, January 17. He did not see it although he was keeping a lookout at my request. I talked with Mrs. Greene this past Saturday evening [January 29], and she said that it has not been seen since my son and I last saw it."

It seemed likely the New Jersey and Wallops birds were one. Assuming this we have one of those rare chances to estimate the average flight speed of a bird over a fairly long distance. In a direct line, the Sunday night (January 16) location of the bird was 106 miles from Wallops. We can only speculate on the true path. However, it seems reasonable to assume the bird took the shortest route over the Delaware Bay and then followed the coast around Cape Henlopen, Delaware, and south to Wallops. This distance is about 125 miles. Since the Conways saw the bird until dark Sunday night, we are probably safe in assuming the southward journey didn't start until at least dawn of the 17th. If the journey started immediately and no interim stops were made, the bird was airborne at most 6 hours and 20 minutes for an average groundspeed of 19.7 mph.

Wind conditions were fairly uniform from New Jersey to Wallops, never deviating by more than ± 5 degrees from the 310 degrees reported above. The wind speed only dropped below 15 mph around 1 p.m. on Monday.

By assuming again that the bird's flight path crossed the narrow part of the Delaware Bay near Bombay Hook and then followed the coast, we see that the bird had a strong headwind while crossing the Bay, a strong tailwind until Cape Henlopen, and then a strong sidewind varying from 110 to 140 degrees (as measured from the head) as it flew down the Atlantic. We compute the total flight time for the bird by first using the observations on Wallops of a ground speed of 25 mph parallel to the coast (i.e., to 205 degrees) and a wind speed of 16 mph from 310 degrees. The addition of the wind vector and the bird's groundspeed vector give an airspeed for the bird of 26 mph. If the bird flew at a constant airspeed (a very reasonable assumption) and only varied his heading to maintain an appropriate course, the total flight time from New Jersey to Wallops would be 4 hours and 14 minutes. The bird could have stayed in New Jersey until 9:06 a.m. and still made it to Wallops by 1:20 p.m., or it could have landed here and there to use up the approximately 2 hours between dawn and 1:20 p.m. As an exercise we could arbitrarily assume an airspeed of 20 mph and recompute the total flight time. So doing gives 6 hours and 5 minutes flight time, or just enough if the trip started shortly after dawn.

This sighting, apparently only the second for the state at that time, was noted in *Virginia's Birdlife—An Annotated Checklist* (Virginia Avifauna Number 2, May 1979, page 29) where the dates of occurrence were given as 17 January through 18 February 1977. In actuality, the bird was never seen on Wallops Island after my brief encounter. Some time later (one to two weeks) I became aware that a local farmer about 2 to 5 miles southwest of Wallops Island on the mainland had a Sandhill Crane with a flock of Snow Geese visiting his yard every day. Many birders apparently saw the bird there (*American Birds*, 31: 317, 1977), although I went several times and never saw it again.

There is one final anecdote of interest. In the early years (from about 1959) of rocket launchings from Wallops Island, there were people working throughout the day outdoors on the island. Jennings B. Aaron related to me that he saw 4 to 5 Sandhill Cranes flying north at the south end of the island sometime between 1962 and 1965, although he didn't remember the time of year.

VIRGINIA'S SECOND GROOVE-BILLED ANI

A. CLAIR MELLINGER

On 24 October 1981 I received a call from Thelma and Clayton Showalter saying they had a grackle-like bird with a parrot-like beak in their backyard. Since I was aware of the Tazewell County sighting of a Groove-billed Ani in October and November 1979 (Larner, 1981), I considered the unlikely possibility that another ani had appeared in our state so soon again. This bird indeed did prove to be the second Virginia record of a Groove-billed Ani, *Crotophaga sulcirostris*. In addition to myself and the Showalters, numerous members of the Rockingham Bird Club and other VSO members observed, photographed, and verified the identification of the ani that day. Among those observers was YuLee Larner, a member of the VSO Records Committee, which validated the sighting at their March 1982 meeting.

The bird was first spotted by the Showalters at 0800 that morning. Their home is located at the junction of Virginia routes 42 and 784 approximately 3 miles south of Broadway, Rockingham County, Virginia. The ani was observed with binoculars and telescopes from the Showalters' kitchen window from about 10 meters. Bright morning sunlight from behind the viewers provided ideal viewing conditions that easily revealed details such as the grooved bill.

The following description is based largely on notes I made as I watched the bird between 0900 and 1000 hours that morning. The bird was roughly grackle-sized with a long thin tail. The tail appeared to be equal in length with the remainder of the head and body, causing it to appear distinctly larger than a nearby Blue Jay. The wings drooped at its side as it stood or walked-hopped about the yard. The head had a flattened aspect, although the bird occasionally ruffled its feathers, giving it a crested appearance. The dark eye and black crown contrasted with the grayer color of the face. The bill was also gray but massive with distinct grooves on the upper mandible. It spent most of its time standing in the sun but also moved about the lawn, once catching a cricket and apparently other smaller insects. The temperature was around 5°C, and the ani occasionally spread its wings in a sunning position. On 11 November Kathleen Finnegan (*personal communication*) recorded the following notes on its behavior: "The ani moves up and down the road between the two houses and in both yards, feeding on the ground and around rocks. It then returns to the cedars [*Juniperus virginianus*] for intervals of 5-30 minutes staying concealed near the trunk or in dense spots." The houses lie along a gravel road which is bordered by scattered Red Cedars and surrounded by farmland. Linville Creek, a perennial stream, runs through the farmland about 200 meters from the Showalter house.

The bird was seen by many observers throughout Saturday, 24 October, and until Sunday noon, 25 October, when it was driven farther down the road and not seen again until the Showalters spotted it two weeks later on Sunday noon, 8 November. This time the ani remained around their home for approximately a week and was seen by more than 90 persons until it disappeared on 15 November.

In attempting to explain the presence of a Groove-billed Ani in Rockingham County, Virginia, one could refer to the scattered and sporadic reports of its

appearance north of its south Texas range (DeBenedictis, 1980, and Kleen, 1981, for example) and simply label it a "postbreeding wanderer" (Williams, 1980). I do not find such an explanation totally satisfying and will list here without comment several other concomitant factors that may or may not have any relationship to the ani's sudden appearance here, with the hope of stimulating further discussion and study.

A Ground Dove, *Columbina passerina*, was also discovered on 24 October in Stuarts Draft, Augusta County, Virginia, less than 50 km away. On the other hand, some of the first White-crowned Sparrows, *Zonotrichia leucophrys*, and a Rusty Blackbird, *Euphagus carolinus*, were at the Showalters' feeders that morning as well. The Daily Weather Map (NOAA, U. S. Department of Commerce) for 23 October 1981 shows that although the surface winds were weak and generally from the northwest, the upper air currents were strong, 30-35 knots, and from the southwest, taking a path almost directly from southwestern Texas to western Virginia. The one thing that is obvious is that in order to obtain a fuller understanding of such "wanderings," we will need more observant people such as the Showalters to inspect closely any unusual birds that visit their yards and feeders.

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MAY RECORD FOR GOLDEN EAGLES IN WESTERN VIRGINIA

NORWOOD C. MIDDLETON

Returning to Roanoke from an early morning business appointment in Blacksburg, I was driving north on Interstate 81 on 14 May 1981 when I observed not one but two Golden Eagles, *Aquila chrysaetos*, soaring over the valley between Fort Lewis Mountain and Poor Mountain.

My first view was of a dark bird gliding toward the highway from Fort Lewis Mountain, a sighting that prompted me to pull well off the roadway instantly. From my driver's seat I checked out the bird with 7x35 binoculars, caught my

breath when I confirmed it was not a vulture, jumped out of the car, and went to the off-traffic side to get a more direct and comfortable view. Its large size, long tail, and uniform dark underparts, in addition to its nearly flat, head-on profile, confirmed my belief that I was looking at a Golden Eagle. It was 10:05 a.m. EDT.

Changing my position for a better view, I raised my binoculars again and, after focusing, realized to my surprise that I was looking at a different bird and wondered whether my eyes had been playing tricks on me. But no, this bird was an immature Golden Eagle, complete with whitish patches at the "wrists" of the wings and some white near the base of the tail. A quick check without glasses brought the two birds into view at the same time. By now the adult was almost overhead, affording me a close-up view, and moving toward the slopes of Poor Mountain and was soon out of sight behind the trees on the ridge beside the highway. The immature was still in sight and was studied for another minute to confirm my identification. By now it was 10:10 a.m.

Only five days before on a Roanoke Valley Bird club field trip, a party of Margaret Brown, Grace Cummings, Bruce Ingram, and I had settled for a call of "unidentified eagle" when we saw another bird (or was it one of the same ones I had just seen?) on the opposite side of Fort Lewis Mountain at a spot 10 miles to the northeast. We declined to identify that bird positively because we were rusty on field marks, not to mention that we were stunned at what we saw. Consequently, in the interim I had carefully reviewed field guides and other aids to brush up on differentiating between our two eagles in adult and immature plumages. This homework had just stood me in good stead.

Hardly had I pulled back into the roadway when I saw I was leaving Montgomery County and entering Roanoke County. Both birds had soared over both counties as I watched. John W. Murray (1974 cited 10 records of this species for Montgomery County, one in August, the others in October, November, December, and February. J. J. Murray (1952) cited a record for Roanoke County, but no date was given.

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1149 Forest Lawn Drive, Salem, Virginia 24153

NESTING BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

KATHLEEN H. FINNEGAN

On 25 April 1981 Brenda Hess of Lacey Springs in northwestern Rockingham County, Virginia, phoned me about "strange water birds" nesting in her trees. The Hess home is on route 806 about 1.5 miles west of Lacey Springs.

Mrs. Hess said the birds were already building nests when the family discovered them. The nesting colony turned out to be a heronry of about 12 or 13 Black-crowned Night Herons, *Nycticorax nycticorax*, in cedar trees about 30 to 40 feet tall and surrounded by dense honeysuckle and briars. We watched the birds go to Black Locust trees not yet leaved out and break off branches about 12 to 16 inches long for nesting material—all this within 50 feet of the house and with no apparent attention to the people and activity in the yard. The birds were quiet during midday and most active after about 5 p.m.

On 15 May at least 3 birds were incubating, and on 22 May 5 nests with incubating adults could be seen (there may have been more in the dense vegetation). Also on 22 May, when all the birds were present one bird's legs had returned to the pale yellow nonbreeding color, and all of the birds had yellow legs on 25 May. There was one brown subadult bird in the group of black-and-white adults which was seen frequently apparently incubating.

On 26 May a night predator (probably a raccoon) began disturbing the birds, and on 31 May Brenda Hess phoned that most of the birds had left, and broken eggs were under the trees. The shells were broken into large pieces, some in halves and some were crushed into small pieces. The birds were not seen in the area again during this season, and the nesting attempt was assumed to have been a failure.

It is interesting to note that on 20 April 1981 Randy Shank reported 13 of these birds flying in a northerly direction at dusk near Broadway, about 4 miles southwest of the heronry.

The old heronry of many years standing near New Market in Shenandoah County (about 3 miles north of the 1981 nestings) was destroyed by an ice storm in 1978, and the birds never returned to it (*Raven*, 49: 75, 1978). This area of northern Rockingham and southern Shenandoah Counties is the only locality in Virginia west of the Blue Ridge where this species has been found nesting.

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ROSS' GOOSE—A NEW BIRD FOR VIRGINIA

WILLIAM S. PORTLOCK

On 29 December 1981 at approximately 8:20 a.m. Henry T. Armistead and I observed a Ross' Goose, *Chen rossii*, flying in close formation with several hundred Snow Geese, *Chen caerulescens*. The bird was seen in good light flying over us approximately 250 yards away. We both observed and studied the bird for about one minute as it passed overhead. The most noticeable identification character was its small size, approximately one-third to one-half the size of the Snow Geese with which it was associated. Its white body and black wing-tips (the black ends appeared to me to be slightly shorter or narrower than the larger Snows') made it resemble a miniature and stubby Snow Goose.

It was seen in rural Virginia Beach, Virginia, from the end of Campbell Landing Road overlooking Back Bay. The flight was from Back Bay heading

west. We both followed the flock as it approached with our binoculars and as it turned by us and flew more southerly.

Field notes were compiled immediately after the sighting and without consulting field guides or discussing our observations with each other. Weather conditions were partly cloudy, a temperature of 40°F, and a wind out of the north-northwest at 15 mph.

Almost certainly the same bird was also seen at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge on 9 January 1982 by Robert L. Ake, David Abbott, Dennis Abbott, and David L. Hughes. According to Ake, this bird, which was also flying with Snow Geese, was clearly seen to have a pure white head, not orange-tinted as in most Snow Geese, and the dark line along the bill, present in the Snow Geese, was clearly absent in the smaller bird.

Route 1, Box 107, Bowling Green, Virginia 22427

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NEWS AND NOTES

COMPILED BY YULEE LARNER AND F. R. SCOTT

SPRING HAWK FLIGHTS. The 1981 spring hawk migration at Harvey's Knob produced several good flights of birds, among which were 274 Broad-winged Hawks on 19 April and 12 Ospreys on both 15 and 19 April (Myriam P. Moore and others). Harvey's Knob is in Botetourt County, Virginia, at mile post 95.3 on the Blue Ridge Parkway about 15 miles north of Roanoke. Extremely unusual were 14 Broad-winged Hawks passing over Fisherman Island, Northampton County, Virginia, on 3 May 1981 in groups of two to four (R. L. Anderson). There are few reports of migrating hawks in the spring

on the Eastern Shore, and this may be the first evidence of any kind of Broad-winged Hawks crossing the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in spring.

PURPLE GALLINULES IN VIRGINIA BEACH. According to Edward S. Brinkley, a "minor invasion" of Purple Gallinules occurred in Virginia Beach in the spring of 1981 with three different birds being recorded. The first bird, found by Chris Paige at Back Bay on 14 April, was noted by Brinkley on 29 April and last reported by Grayson Pearce on 17 May. The second bird was picked up injured at Camp Pendleton on 30 April by N. E. Crowder, who took it to the Virginia Beach SPCA. In spite of a broken wing, leg, and toes, it was apparently successfully rehabilitated by Dee Brandon, of Norfolk, and released at Back Bay on 26 June. The last bird was discovered at Lynnhaven Inlet on 5 May by Brinkley and Jorn Ake and last reported there on 8 May by Brinkley, Robert L. Ake, David L. Hughes, and Tom Gwynn. This bird, which frequented a residential area and fed on lawns, ivy-covered cinderblock fences, and compost heaps, had been in the area "a couple of weeks," according to local residents.

DUNLIN IN AUGUSTA COUNTY. A record count of at least 60 Dunlin was recorded at Swoope, southwest of Staunton in Augusta County, Virginia, on 19 May 1981 (YuLee Lerner). An additional 6 birds were seen the same day near New Hope in the northeastern part of the county by Mozelle Henkel.

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