

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist  
Date: 1/2/2018  
Coverage: MD/DC/N. VA/C. & S. DE/WV panhandle  
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This is the Voice of the Naturalist, a service of the Audubon Naturalist Society. This report covers the week starting Tuesday, Dec 26, 2017, and was completed on Tuesday, Jan 2, 2018 at about 9:00 p.m.

Information on noteworthy birds during this week is presented below in taxonomic order, as set forth in the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist for North and Middle American birds, as revised through the 57th Supplement (July 2016).

TOP BIRDS THIS WEEK: BARROW'S GOLDENEYE in MD, GLAUCOUS GULL in VA, SNOWY OWL in DE, MD, and VA, BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER in VA, HARRIS'S SPARROW in DC, SHINY COWBIRD in MD

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST: GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, BRANT, TRUMPETER SWAN, EURASIAN WIGEON, HARLEQUIN DUCK, RING-NECKED PHEASANT, EARED GREBE, GOLDEN EAGLE, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, SORA, SANDHILL CRANE, shorebirds, LAUGHING GULL, ICELAND GULL, late songbirds & sparrows, PAINTED BUNTING, YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD, PINE SISKIN

TOP BIRDS

A BARROW'S GOLDENEYE was seen Dec 29 at The Elms Environmental Education Center (private) in St. Mary's Co MD.

On Dec 31, a juvenile GLAUCOUS GULL was spotted at Occoquan Bay NWR in Prince William Co VA.

The SNOWY OWL irruption continues. In Kent Co DE, one was seen Dec 26 at the Slaughter Beach Boat Launch, and another was seen

Dec 28 along Cedar Creek Canal. Also in DE, the SNOWY OWL continued thru Jan 1 along Fowler Beach Rd, Prime Hook NWR, Sussex Co. In MD, a SNOWY OWL was seen at the Ocean City Inlet on Dec 27, another at the Havre de Grace marina (Harford Co) thru Dec 28, another on the Assateague I. NS ranger station beach Dec 29-31, and one continuing at the Assateague SP campground (Worcester Co) thru Jan 1. In VA, the SNOWY OWL at Dulles Airport (Loudon Co) continued thru Jan 1, as did the one in Rockingham Co around the Walmart property.

The BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER continued through Dec 29 in a yard in James City County VA.

In SE DC, the continuing HARRIS'S SPARROW was seen Dec 26 & 30, and Jan 1.

The SHINY COWBIRD continuing in Bethesda MD (Montgomery Co) was last reported Dec 26.

#### OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

The GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE continued at Centennial Lake (Howard Co MD) thru Jan 1. A single BRANT was seen Jan 1 on the southern pond of Darnstown Ponds, Montgomery Co MD.

The TRUMPETER SWAN (tagged P95) continued thru Jan 1 at the Lake Elkhorn spillway in Columbia MD (Howard Co); another continued thru Dec 29 in McHenry MD near Deep Creek Lk (Garrett Co), and a third (tagged P61) continued thru Jan 1 along VA254 Hermitage Rd in Augusta Co VA.

On Jan 1, an EURASIAN WIGEON was spotted in Pohick Bay Regional Pk, Fairfax Co VA. HARLEQUIN DUCKS continued thru Dec 26 around Ocean City Inlet, Worcester Co MD.

A RING-NECKED PHEASANT was seen Dec 31 along Swauger Rd, in Oakland MD, Garrett Co.

Pohick Bay RP hosted an EARED GREBE ON Jan 1.

Three GOLDEN EAGLES were seen in MD on Dec 28: one near the Hagerstown Mall ponds (Washington Co), one at Jenkin's Pond (private; Worcester Co), and the third at Blackwater NWR (Dorchester Co). VA had a GOLDEN EAGLE Dec 29 in Bath Co around VA603 and VA607. Two ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were seen in VA, one Dec 28 around Bell's Lane & VA262 (Augusta Co), the other Dec 30 at Dulles Airport (Loudon Co).

A Sora was reported Dec 27 at the Fairmont WMA, Somerset Co MD, and another was present Dec 29 in the central section of E. A. Vaughn WMA (Worcester Co MD). A single SANDHILL CRANE was seen Dec 28 at Violette's Lock on the C&O Canal (Montgomery Co MD).

Late shorebirds included 5 SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS seen Dec 30 at the Cheriton Landfill, Northampton Co VA, and 7 seen the same day on offshore islands near the town of Kiptopeke VA, also Northampton Co. Single RED KNOTS were present Dec 28&29 in Worcester Co MD at the Ocean City Inlet and along the Assateague SP causeway, but 36 of them were reported Dec 30 on Smith Island VA (Northampton Co VA). LEAST SANDPIPERS were seen, one Dec 28 at Milford Neck Wildlife Area - Big Stone Beach Rd (Kent Co DE), four on Dec 30 at Smith Island. A single LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER was present Dec 28 at the Marshall Creek Boat Ramp, Worcester Co MD.

On Jan 1, an ICELAND GULL was seen at Occoquan Bay NWR.

Some small birds are undoubtedly wishing they were somewhere else: a WHITE-EYED VIREO in Berlin MD (Worcester Co) Dec 28; BLUE-HEADED VIREOS in Somerset Co MD on Dec 27 and in Cape Charles VA (Northampton Co) on Dec 30. SEDGE WRENS were surprising in number: one Dec 27 at the Fairmont WMA, one Dec 28 at the Brownsville Seaside Farm, Northampton Co VA, one Dec 29 at the E. A. Vaughn WMA, Worcester Co MD, one Dec 29 at the Assateague SP campground, and one Dec 30 along Magotha Rd, in Northampton Co VA. Two BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS were seen in MD, one at the Perryville Community Pk, Cecil Co, and another at the C&O Canal Sycamore Landing, Montgomery Co.

The SNOW BUNTING and the LAPLAND LONGSPUR seen Dec 30 along Meyerstown Rd in Jefferson Co WV are undoubtedly better equipped to handle our current weather.

A YELLOW WARBLER was spotted Jan 1 at Leesylvania SP, Prince William Co VA.

A NELSON'S SPARROW was seen Dec 28 at Assateague Island NS, and five were reported Dec 30 in Northampton Co VA near the town of Kiptopeke. A VESPER SPARROW was reported Dec 29 at JD's Farm (private), Worcester Co VA. MD hosted two PAINTED BUNTINGS: one Dec 28 along Carmody Lane in Worcester Co, the other along the Anacostia River Trail in Prince George's Co.

A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD was reported Dec 31 near Red Lion Branch Rd & MD544, Queen Anne's Co MD.

PINE SISKINS were seen: one in DE Dec 29 at a home in Sussex Co; two Dec 31 at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax Co VA; three Jan 1 at Point Lookout SP; and two at Patuxent Research Refuge, Central Tract (private, Prince George's Co).

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This report was based on reports on the DE, MD, VA, and WV list servers via the ABA Internet links, and on eBird records.

The Audubon Sanctuary Shop (301-652-3606, <http://anshome.org/naturalist-shop>) is an excellent source for guidebooks and many other nature-related titles.

To report bird sightings, e-mail your report to [voice@anshome.org](mailto:voice@anshome.org). Please post reports before midnight Monday, identify the county as well as the state, and include your name and a Tuesday morning contact, either e-mail or phone.

Thank you for your interest, and enjoy the birds.

\*Of interest to the applicable records committee