

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist  
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Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern 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, January 23 and was completed on Tuesday, January 30 at 10 a.m.

Information on noteworthy birds is presented below in taxonomic order, as set forth in the American Ornithological Society Checklist for North and Middle American Birds, as revised through the 58<sup>th</sup> Supplement (July 2017).

The top birds this week were BARROW'S GOLDENEYE\* in MD, SNOWY OWL in DC, DE, MD and VA, HARRIS'S SPARROW\* in MD, and WESTERN TANAGER\* in VA.

Other birds of interest this week included waterfowl, RED-NECKED and EARED GREBES, RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD, rails, SANDHILL CRANE, DOVEKIE, COMMON MURRE, RAZORBILL, gulls, GREAT CORMORANT, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, AMERICAN BITTERN, OSPREY, "NORTHERN" RED-TAILED HAWK\*, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, GOLDEN EAGLE, SHORT-EARED OWL, LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE, NORTHERN SHRIKE, SEDGE WREN, RED CROSSBILL, LAPLAND LONGSPUR, sparrows, BALTIMORE ORIOLE, and warblers.

#### TOP BIRDS

A male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE\* continues (for the seventh consecutive winter) to be seen at The Elms Environmental Education Center (private), St. Mary's Co, MD with the most recent reported sighting on Jan 27.

One, and possibly two, SNOWY OWLS, were seen in flight and photographed perched on buildings in SW DC throughout the week; one appears to be using an interior courtyard (restricted) at the USDA building (13<sup>th</sup> and Independence) as its roost. The continuing SNOWY OWL was seen at Dulles Airport, Loudoun Co, VA on Jan 23 and 27. Another was seen at Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA on Jan 25 and 26. There was also one seen at West Point, King William Co, VA on Jan 27 and 28. There was also one on the 26<sup>th</sup> at the Chincoteague NWR, Accomack Co, VA. A continuing SNOWY OWL at Assateague State Park/Assateague Island NS, Worcester Co, MD was seen most recently on Jan 26. On Jan 23 a SNOWY OWL was scoped at the end of Green Dumpster Rd, Deal Island, Somerset Co, MD. Four SNOWY OWLS were seen Jan 24 at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD; two were seen there Jan 26. A SNOWY OWL was seen Jan 27 on the beach at Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE.

A HARRIS'S SPARROW\* continues along a short spur to a boat ramp off the Anacostia River Trail in Prince George's Co, MD, with the most recent sighting on Jan 28.

A male WESTERN TANAGER\* continued (for the seventh winter) to visit a residential feeder in Settlers' Mill, Williamsburg, VA throughout the week. Additionally, two WESTERN TANAGERS\* continued to visit a feeder in the Alanton neighborhood, Virginia Beach, VA, with the most recent reported sighting on Jan 24.

#### OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

SNOW GEESE continue to turn up at several inland locations during the week including a flyover flock of about 40 at Sky Meadows SP, Fauquier Co, VA on Jan 24. ROSS'S GEESE, GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE, and CACKLING GEESE continued to be seen in a number of locations throughout the area this past week.

The continuing inland BRANT in Nottoway Co, VA was seen most recently on the 29<sup>th</sup> in and near a pond at the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital.

Six TRUMPETER SWANS, five adults and one juvenile, were seen and photographed Jan 27 along Parrott River Rd, Pulaski Co, VA. Seen throughout the week were the continuing TRUMPETER SWAN (P95) at Lake Elkhorn and at Stone Lake (private), Howard Co, MD and the two TRUMPETER SWANS at the Owensville Road ponds in Anne Arundel Co, MD. Other sightings of TRUMPETER SWAN include three on the 28<sup>th</sup> at the Central Tract, Patuxent Research Center (private), Prince George's Co, MD and a continuing individual at the Ivy Street ponds in Waynesboro, VA, seen most recently on Jan 29.

A BLUE-WINGED TEAL was seen Jan 23 at the Messick Rd Pond, Somerset Co, MD. Four BLUE-WINGED TEAL were seen Jan 27 at the Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield Co, VA; five were there on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A GREATER SCAUP was seen Jan 24 at Dyke Marsh, Fairfax Co, VA. A female HARLEQUIN DUCK was seen Jan 24 and 28 in a dammed area of the North Branch of the Potomac in Luke, MD. Fifteen SURF SCOTERS were seen Jan 26 at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD. A WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was seen Jan 24 at Lake Anna SP, Spotsylvania Co, VA. A WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was also seen at Fort McHenry NM in Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 23. Inland LONG-TAILED DUCKS included one seen in the Potomac River at Belle Haven Park and the next-door Dyke Marsh, Fairfax Co, VA during the week; there was one at Belle Isle, James River Park, Richmond, VA on Jan 24 and two there on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The continuing LONG-TAILED DUCK at Silver Lake, Rockingham Co, VA was seen again Jan 24.

A RED-NECKED GREBE was seen Jan 27 from Pots Net, Sussex Co, DE. One was also seen Jan 27 and 28 from Burton's Island, Delaware Seashore SP, Sussex Co, DE. The continuing RED-NECKED GREBE in the Roanoke River Greenway, Roanoke, VA was seen as recently as Jan 29. The EARED GREBE at King-Lincoln Park in Newport News, VA was seen again on Jan 27.

The continuing out-of-season male RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD at a feeder in the Alanton neighborhood in Virginia Beach, VA was seen most recently on Jan 23.

A VIRGINIA RAIL was seen Jan 23 at Hughes Hollow/McKee Beshers WMA, Montgomery Co, MD. A COMMON GALLINULE was seen Jan 24 in the Bayside Development Pond, Worcester Co, MD.

In VA the two continuing SANDHILL CRANES were seen along the Sanctuary Trail at Algonkian Nature Preserve, Loudoun Co on Jan 27.

A pelagic trip in DE waters on Jan 27 found a DOVEKIE, a COMMON MURRE, five RAZORBILLS, and two BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES. A DOVEKIE was seen Jan 27 at the Ocean City Inlet, Worcester Co, MD. One to three RAZORBILLS were seen Jan 27 in Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE.

One of the two continuing BLACK-HEADED GULLS was seen Jan 24 and 27 at Wolfe Neck WTP (restricted access), Sussex Co, DE. Single ICELAND GULLS continued to be seen at a number of locations: In VA they were seen at the Belmont Bay Marina, Prince William Co on Jan 27; on Jan 27 on Island #3 of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, Northampton Co, VA during a boat trip for the Virginia Beach Winter Wildlife Festival; a continuing bird on Jan 27 at the Walmart Ponds in Colonial Heights, VA; and one seen Jan 28 at the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center, Northampton Co, VA. In MD an ICELAND GULL was seen Jan 27 and 28 at Riley's Lock, C&O Canal, Montgomery Co, MD; in the Great Marsh, Cambridge, Dorchester Co, MD on Jan 23; on Jan 26 at Cox Point Park, Baltimore, MD; on Jan 27 at the Jefferson Patterson Park & Museum, Calvert Co, MD; and on Jan 25 and 28 at the Naylor Mill Rd Pond, Salisbury Landfill, Wicomico Co, MD. A GLAUCOUS GULL was seen Jan 28 at the Jones Crossroads Landfill, Sussex Co, DE.

A GREAT CORMORANT was seen Jan 27 at the Norris Farms Landfill (private), Baltimore Co, MD.

Eight AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were at Pleasure House Natural Area, Virginia Beach, VA on Jan 26. Eleven AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were seen Jan 27 at Blackwater NWR, Dorchester Co, MD.

An AMERICAN BITTERN was observed Jan 24 at Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD.

An OSPREY continues to be seen at Dutch Gap Conservation Area, Chesterfield Co, VA with the most recent report from Jan 27. Another was seen at Jamestown Island, James City Co, VA on Jan 24 and 27. A so-called "NORTHERN" RED-TAILED HAWK (*abieticola*)\*, a distinctive subspecies that is not uniformly recognized as separate from the eastern subspecies, was again at Oxon Hill Farm, Prince George's Co, MD on Jan 25. A GOLDEN EAGLE was seen Jan 25 at Oxon Hill Farm, Prince George's Co, MD. GOLDEN EAGLES were seen Jan 26 and 27 in Blue Grass Valley, Highland Co, VA. In MD a continuing ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was seen most recently at Pemberton Manor (Jan 25) and Quail Covey Farm Pond (Jan 29), both in Queen Anne's Co. One was also seen Jan 27 along Russell Rd, Garrett Co, MD. One and sometimes two ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were seen during the week at Broadkill Marsh, Sussex Co, DE. One was also seen Jan 27 at Bear Swamp, Prime Hook NWR, Sussex Co, DE.

In MD single SHORT-EARED OWLS were reported on Jan 25 at private residences in both Anne Arundel Co and Prince George's Co. On Jan 23 in Somerset Co, MD two SHORT-EARED OWLS were seen along Rumbly Point Rd and later in the day there were three SHORT-EARED OWLS at the end of Green Dumpster Rd, Deal Island. A single SHORT-EARED OWL was seen Jan 25 from the Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Anne Arundel Co, MD. A SHORT-EARED OWL was seen Jan 29 at Cedar Point WMA, Charles Co, MD. Two were seen Jan 27 along Russell Rd, Garrett Co, MD. One was seen at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 24. SHORT-EARED OWLS were seen in a number of locations in VA including throughout the week at St. Louis Rd just north of the intersection with Foxcroft Rd in Loudoun Co, VA; in Lucketts, Loudoun Co, VA on Jan 28; seven at Bell's Ln, Staunton, VA on Jan 25; and on Jan 23 between the Thomas Jefferson Rollins Nature Area and the Public Boat Ramp at Messick Point, Poquoson. There was also one on Jan 24 along Featherbed Rd, White Post, Clarke Co, VA.

The continuing LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE at the Smith Farm in Lunenburg, VA was recently seen Jan 27. A NORTHERN SHRIKE\* continues for the second consecutive winter at the Sully Woodlands in Fairfax Co, VA, with the most recent sighting Jan 29.

A SEDGE WREN was found at Jefferson Patterson Park in Calvert Co, MD on Jan 27.

A single RED CROSSBILL was found Jan 24 at Reddish Knob, Augusta Co, VA while six were found the same day at Briery Branch Gap, Rockingham Co, VA.

A LAPLAND LONGSPUR was seen again near the intersection of Nicholson and Model Rd, Rockingham Co, VA on Jan 24.

The continuing CLAY-COLORED SPARROW at the Laurel Hill Equestrian Center, Fairfax Co, VA was seen most recently Jan 28. Ten VESPER SPARROWS were seen at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, Dorchester Co, MD on Jan 27.

A continuing BALTIMORE ORIOLE visited a feeder in Lincoln, Loudoun Co, VA throughout the week. A BALTIMORE ORIOLE was photographed Jan 23 eating an orange on the Jefferson Park Trail, Charlottesville, VA.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were found at several locations in the reporting area. Out-of-season warblers included a continuing YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER at a residential feeder in Virginia Beach, VA throughout the week.

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This week's report was based on reports on the DE, MD, VA, and WV list servers, and 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, e-mail or phone.

Thank you for your interest, and enjoy the birds.

\*Of interest to the applicable state records committee