

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, February 20 and was completed on Tuesday, February 27 at 10:45 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 58th Supplement (July 2017).

Top birds this week were TUFTED DUCK* in MD, BARROW'S GOLDENEYE* in MD, SNOWY OWL in MD, HARRIS'S SPARROW* in MD, and WESTERN TANAGER in VA.

Other birds of interest this week included waterfowl, RED-NECKED GREBE, KING RAIL, SANDHILL CRANE, shorebirds, RAZORBILL, gulls and terns, GREAT CORMORANT, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, AMERICAN BITTERN, OSPREY, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, LOGGERHEAD and NORTHERN SHRIKES, RED CROSSBILL, LAPLAND LONGSPUR, sparrows, BREWER'S BLACKBIRD, and warblers.

TOP BIRDS

A TUFTED DUCK* was found Feb 23 at Swan Harbor farm Park, Harford Co, MD and seen again on Feb 24, 25, and 26.

The continuing (for the seventh consecutive winter) male BARROW'S GOLDENEYE* was seen at The Elms Environmental Education Center (private), St. Mary's Co, MD on Feb 20 and 22. If you look for this bird you need to use the hunter's parking lot before the gate and walk about a mile to the bay and then several hundred yards to the north.

In MD a continuing SNOWY OWL was seen at Assateague Island SP, Worcester Co as recently as Feb 25. Another was seen along Hooper's Island Rd and from the Bridge in Dorchester Co throughout the week.

The continuing HARRIS'S SPARROW* along a short spur to a boat ramp off the Anacostia River Trail in Prince George's Co, MD was seen most recently on Feb 25.

A female WESTERN TANAGER continued to visit a feeder at 3616 Harding Drive in Chesapeake Co, VA, with the most recent sighting Feb 26.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

Inland SNOW GEESE included one on Feb 20 at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD and two on Feb 23 at Homestead Farm (restricted access), Montgomery Co, MD. A ROSS'S GOOSE was seen Feb 21 in a field on Choptank Rd less than a mile from Choptank, Caroline Co, MD. A ROSS'S GOOSE was photographed Feb 22 at 1705 Peppers Ferry Rd, Wythe Co, VA. A ROSS'S GOOSE was seen Feb 24 along Wells Rd, Milford, Sussex Co, DE. As many as 7 GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were observed throughout the week in Smyrna, Kent Co, DE in the vicinity of the Rte 6 & Rte 9 intersection. Seven, perhaps the same ones, were seen Feb 25 at Woodland Beach, Kent Co, DE. A GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE was seen Feb 23 in the Daleville Ponds in Botetourt Co, VA. Two GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE were photographed Feb 25 along Rte 9 west of Hillsboro, Loudoun Co, VA.

A continuing inland BRANT in Nottoway Co, VA was seen Feb 26 at the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital, Nottoway Co, VA.

A CACKLING GOOSE was seen in Four Mile Run Park on Feb 24 and 25.

The TRUMPETER SWAN (P95) at the Broken Land Parkway/U.S. 29 Stormwater Pond in Howard Co, MD continued to be seen throughout the week with the most recent report from Feb 26. A continuing TRUMPETER SWAN was seen most recently at the Ivy Street ponds in Waynesboro, VA on Feb 23. Another continuing TRUMPETER SWAN was seen at the Daleville Ponds in Botetourt Co as recently as Feb 26.

A EURASIAN WIGEON was seen throughout the week in Virginia Beach (VA) on Lake Joyce from Shore Dr. One, perhaps the same, was seen Feb 24 at Pleasure House Point Natural Area, Virginia Beach. A Eurasian GREEN-WINGED TEAL (COMMON TEAL) was seen Feb 22 from Violette's Lock, C&O Canal, Montgomery Co, MD.

The continuing female HARLEQUIN DUCK was seen again on Feb 24 near the dam at Luke, Allegany Co, MD. Two SURF SCOTERS were seen Feb 25 at Switzer Lake, Rockingham Co, VA. A continuing WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was seen Feb 21 at Silver Lake, Dayton, Rockingham Co, VA. Two WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were seen Feb 25 in the John H. Kerr Reservoir (Mecklenburg Co, VA) from the Lower Lake Overlook. One WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was seen Feb 25 at the Pohick Bay Regional Park, Fairfax Co, VA. Inland LONG-TAILED DUCKS continued to be seen at several locations.

RED-NECKED GREBES continued to be seen throughout the reporting area throughout the week including one at Loch Raven Reservoir, Baltimore Co, MD; in the Potomac River from Violette's and nearby Riley's Locks on the C&O Canal in Montgomery Co, MD; and one at Burke Lake Park, Fairfax Co, VA. One was also seen at Dyke Marsh, Fairfax Co, VA on Feb 25 and 26; and another on Feb 25 at Algonkian RP, Loudoun Co, VA. Two RED-NECKED GREBES continued to be seen at the Indian River Inlet in Sussex Co, DE with the most recent report from Feb 24.

The KING RAIL at Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA was last reported Feb 20.

Two SANDHILL CRANES were photographed Feb 25 flying over Riley's Lock on the C&O Canal, Montgomery Co, MD. Eleven SANDHILL CRANES were at Smith's Pond, Augusta Co, VA on Feb 25.

An AVOCET flew over Grand View Nature Preserve, Hampton, VA on Feb 24. Noncoastal PURPLE SANDPIPERS were again seen Feb 21 at the Kent Point marina, Queen Anne's Co, MD and also as many as five at the Hooper's Island Bridge, Dorchester Co, MD as recently as Feb 25. The continuing SPOTTED SANDPIPER was seen Feb 25 at the John H. Kerr Reservoir in Mecklenburg Co, VA. AMERICAN WOODCOCKS were seen during their display flight and heard peenting throughout the area in appropriate locations.

RAZORBILLS continued at Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE, with 1-2 individuals seen on Feb 20, 21, and 25.

A LITTLE GULL was seen Feb 22 at Big Water Farm (private), Queen Anne's Co, MD. An ICELAND GULL was seen Feb 20 and 21 at the Annapolis Junction Transfer Station (restricted access), Anne Arundel and Howard Co, MD. An ICELAND GULL was seen Feb 22 flying up the Potomac at Fletcher's Cove, NW DC. An ICELAND GULL was seen Feb 25 at Mt Vista Park, Baltimore Co, MD. An ICELAND GULL was also seen Feb 26 at the Patton Turf Farm, Montgomery Co, MD.

FORSTER'S TERNS were seen at a number of locations in the area including Blackwater NWR, Dorchester Co, MD early in the week; Hooper's Island Bridge, Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 23; along Fowler Beach Rd, Prime Hook NWR, Sussex Co, DE on Feb 21; and at Pohick Bay RP, Fairfax Co, VA on Feb 25.

In addition to coastal locations, GREAT CORMORANTS continued to be seen at Bloody Point Bar Lighthouse in Queen Anne's Co, MD with the most recent report from Feb 23.

On Feb 24 eight AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were seen at Hog Island WMA, Surry Co, VA.

An AMERICAN BITTERN was seen Feb 22 at Black Marsh, Baltimore Co, MD. An AMERICAN BITTERN was also seen Feb 23 from the boardwalk at the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens NE DC.

Early OSPREYS were seen at even more locations this week. The continuing ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK at Pemberton Manor, Queen Anne's Co, MD was most recently seen on Feb 25. Single ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were seen throughout the week at Broadkill Marsh and along Fowler Beach Road in Prime Hook NWR, Sussex Co, DE.

A continuing LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE was seen most recently at the Smith Farm in Lunenburg, VA on Feb 21. A NORTHERN SHRIKE* continues at the Sully Woodlands in Fairfax Co, VA for the second consecutive winter, with the most recent sighting Feb 25.

Reddish Knob, Augusta Co, VA was a good location for RED CROSSBILLS, with 14 well-photographed individuals there on Feb 21.

Two LAPLAND LONGSPURS were seen with Horned Larks in a corn field Feb 20 along Whitehall Neck Rd, Kent Co, DE.

A continuing CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was seen most recently at the Laurel Hill Equestrian Center in Fairfax Co, VA on Feb 24. The CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, multiple VESPER SPARROWS, the GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, and a LINCOLN'S SPARROW continued to be seen throughout the week at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, Dorchester Co, MD. The continuing LARK SPARROW near the intersection of Valley and Meadow Roads at the National Arboretum, NE DC was

reported most recently on Feb 20. A LINCOLN'S SPARROW was also seen Feb 26 along Big Stone Beach Rd, Milford Neck Wildlife Area, Kent Co, DE.

A BREWER'S BLACKBIRD was seen Feb 25 at the intersection of Routes 721 and 628 in King & Queen Co, VA.

A LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH was seen Feb 25 at Mullinix, Patuxent SP, Montgomery Co, MD. Sightings of ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS included a continuing individual at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens in Washington, DC on Feb 23. During the week PINE WARBLERS seemed to turn up in lots of locations throughout the area.

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. 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