

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist  
Date: March 6, 2018  
Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern DE/WV panhandle  
Reports, comments and questions: [voice@anshome.org](mailto:voice@anshome.org)  
Compiler(s): Rick and Nancy Sussman  
Sponsor: Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central Atlantic States (independent of NAS)  
Transcriber: Steve Cordle

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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 27, and was completed on Tuesday, March 6, at 8:30 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).

Top Birds: SNOWY OWL in MD, HARRIS'S SPARROW\* in MD, and WESTERN TANAGER in VA.

Other Birds of Interest: waterfowl, RED-NECKED GREBE, rails, SANDHILL CRANE, shorebirds, RAZORBILL, gulls, FORSTER'S TERN, RED-THROATED LOON, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, OSPREY, GOLDEN EAGLE, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, SHORT-EARED OWL, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, LOGGERHEAD and NORTHERN SHRIKES, MARSH WREN, sparrows, YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD, EASTERN MEADOWLARK, RUSTY BLACKBIRD and warblers.

### **TOP BIRDS**

SNOWY OWL reports this week included one still being seen in the campground at Assateague State Park, Worcester Co, MD on Feb 28 and the continuing bird seen along Hooper's Island Road in Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 28, Mar 1, 3, and 4. On Mar 5, a SNOWY OWL was seen and photographed at Prime Hook NWR-Fowler Beach Rd, Sussex Co, DE, and a continuing bird was seen again at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD the same day.

The wintering HARRIS'S SPARROW is still being seen along the Anacostia River Trail in Prince George's Co, MD, with the most recent sighting on Mar 4.

The female WESTERN TANAGER was still visiting a feeder on Feb 27 in a yard in Chesapeake Co, VA.

### **OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST**

3 ROSS'S GEESE were seen in a cutover corn field in Rockbridge Co, VA on Feb 28 and again on Mar 2 and 3. On Mar 4 a single ROSS'S GOOSE was seen at Hog Island WMA, Surry Co, VA. A continuing BRANT was seen again on Mar 1 and 3 at a pond at the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital grounds, Nottoway Co, VA. The only CACKLING GOOSE report this week came from Trout Run WWTP, Garrett Co, MD on Mar 3 and 4.

Four TRUMPETER SWANS were seen at Patuxent Research Refuge in Prince George's Co, MD on Feb 27 and the continuing TRUMPETER SWAN in Hansonville, Russell Co, VA was spotted on Feb 27, 28, and Mar 3. A banded TRUMPETER SWAN was seen on Mar 3 at Lake Brittle, Fauquier Co, VA. On Mar 4 a pair were seen swimming in a pond on Owensville Road in Anne Arundel Co, MD. TUNDRA SWANS were moving north in large flocks throughout the Chesapeake watershed, on Feb 27.

A EURASIAN WIGEON was seen at the Clifton Institute (Restricted Access), Fauquier Co, VA on Feb 27, while another continued at the Pleasure House Point Natural Area in Virginia Beach, VA throughout the week. On Mar 4 a Eurasian GREEN-WINGED TEAL (COMMON TEAL) was spotted at Blackwater NWR, Dorchester Co, MD, and was seen again on Mar 5.

The continuing female HARLEQUIN DUCK was seen most recently on Mar 1 at the Luke River access in Allegany Co, MD. A SURF SCOTER flew in at dusk to the boat ramp area of Sandy River Reservoir in Prince Edward Co, VA on Mar 3. A WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was on Lake Holiday (gated community/restricted access) in Frederick Co, VA on Feb 28. Eleven BLACK SCOTERS were reported from Cobb Island, Charles Co, MD on Feb 27. A continuing male LONG-TAILED DUCK was seen on Feb 27, and again on Mar 4 at the Denton WWTP, Caroline Co, MD.

RED-NECKED GREBES were widely reported this week. One to two were seen throughout the week at the C & O Canal-Violette's Lock, Montgomery Co, MD, another at Cobb Island, Charles Co, MD on Feb 27 and Mar 1, another at Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE on Feb 27, four at Loch Raven Reservoir, Baltimore Co, MD on Feb 28 and Mar 1, one continuing at Sandy Point SP, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Mar 2, and another at Myrtle Grove WMA in Charles Co, MD on Mar 3. A RED-NECKED GREBE continued at Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, Fairfax Co, VA on Feb 27 and Mar 1, and two continued at the John H. Kerr Reservoir in Mecklenburg Co, VA on Feb 28. On Mar 3 one was seen at Fort Monroe, Hampton Co, VA and another was off of Hains Point, East Potomac Park, SW DC the same day.

A KING RAIL was heard and recorded at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on Mar 1. On Feb 28 a VIRGINIA RAIL was heard calling from a marsh at Milford Neck Wildlife Area-Big Stone Beach Rd. Kent Co, DE, another was heard on Mar 1 at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD, and two were seen and heard at Newport News Park, Newport News, VA on Mar 3.

The pair of SANDHILL CRANES at Algonkian Nature Preserve, Loudoun Co, VA were seen again on Feb 27 and Mar 3.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS started showing up this week, with reports from Talbot Co, MD on Feb 28, two seen on the end of the jetty at Anderson Park, Newport News, VA on Mar 3, and four seen at Fort Monroe, Hampton Co, VA the same day. Five PURPLE SANDPIPERS were seen at the Hooper's Island Bridge in Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 27, and six were seen there the next day.

The only RAZORBILL report this week was of one bird still being seen at the Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE on Feb 27, and again on Mar 1 and 4.

A BLACK-HEADED GULL is still being seen at Rudee Inlet in Virginia Beach, VA, with the most recent sighting on Mar 2, and another was spotted at Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE on Mar 5. An ICELAND GULL was seen on Feb 28 at the Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE, and another was seen

near the tip of the jetty at the Ocean City Inlet, Worcester Co, MD on Mar 4. On Feb 27 a LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL was seen at the Annapolis Junction Transfer Station, Anne Arundel Co, MD, and on Mar 1 another was seen briefly at the Patton Turf Farm in Montgomery Co, MD, before flying off.

FORSTER'S TERNS were on the increase this week, with small numbers reported from various locations in Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 27, 28, and Mar 1, several reported in St. Mary's Co, MD on Feb 27, and 18 seen at Big Stone Beach, Kent Co, DE the same day. On Mar 4 several were seen over a private farm in Queen Anne's Co, MD.

RED-THROATED LOONS were seen this week at Fort Frederick SP-Big Pool, Washington Co, MD on Feb 27 and 28, one seen again at East Potomac Park-Hains Point SW DC on Feb 27, one seen at Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA on Feb 28, and one continuing at the C & O Canal-Riley's Lock, Montgomery Co, MD on Mar 3 and 4.

Four AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were seen at Hog Island WMA, Surry Co, VA on Mar 4.

OSPREYS were reported from several areas in St. Mary's Co, Talbot Co, and Charles Co, all in MD during the week, as well as from Prime Hook NWR-Broadkill Marsh, Sussex Co, DE on Feb 27.

Two GOLDEN EAGLES were seen at Chesapeake Farms in Chestertown, Kent Co, MD on Mar 4. A ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was seen on Feb 27 and Mar 3 at Prime-Hook NWR-Broadkill Marsh, Sussex Co, DE. On Feb 28 one was seen in Garrett Co, MD at Cherry Creek Glades and again at nearby Rock Lodge Rd. on Mar 3. A continuing ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was seen again at Pemberton Manor, Queen Anne's Co, MD on Mar 3 and 4.

Two SHORT-EARED OWLS were seen at Messick Point, Poquoson Co, VA on Feb 27, and one continued at Russell Road, Garrett Co, MD on Mar 3.

A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER continued to be seen along the Content Lane Trail at Liberty Reservoir, Baltimore Co, MD on Mar 3, and another continued at Fox Chase Pond and Wetlands, Howard Co, MD, seen most recently on Mar 4.

The LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE in Mecklenburg Co, VA was seen most recently on Feb 28. The wintering NORTHERN SHRIKE at the Sully Woodlands, Fairfax Co, VA was seen again on Feb 27.

A wintering MARSH WREN was seen most recently at Hughes Hollow-McKee Beshers WMA, Montgomery Co, MD on Mar 3 and 4.

A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was seen again at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad NHP, Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 27 and again on Mar 4, and another continued at Laurel Hill Equestrian Center, Fairfax Co, VA the same day. Three VESPER SPARROWS were seen at the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad NHP, Dorchester Co, MD on Feb 27, increasing to eleven there on Mar 4. A wintering LINCOLN'S SPARROW was seen at this same location on Feb 28 and Mar 4, and another was seen and photographed at Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, Howard Co, MD on Mar 1.

A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD was spotted in a large mixed flock of grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds in Caroline Co, MD on Mar 3. On Feb 28, an EASTERN MEADOWLARK was seen at

Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, NE DC, and was seen again on Mar 4. On Mar 1 a male RUSTY BLACKBIRD was seen in a swampy area at Red Wing Park in Virginia Beach, VA.

An ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER continued to be seen at a suet feeder in Albemarle Co, VA, with reports on Feb 28, Mar 1, 2, and 3, and another continued at Oxon Hill Farm, Prince George's Co, MD on Mar 4. A female COMMON YELLOWTHROAT was seen along the Bethesda Trolley Trail, Montgomery Co, MD on Feb 27. A YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER was seen and photographed in Hopewell Co, VA on Mar 3.

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This week's report was based on reports on the DE, MD, VA, and WV list servers, eBird records and various birding pages on Facebook.

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