

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist
Date: 5/1/2018
Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern DE/WV panhandle
Reports, comments, questions: voice@anshome.org
Compiler(s): Rick and Nancy Sussman
Sponsor: Audubon Naturalist Society of the Central
Atlantic States (independent of NAS)
Transcriber: Steve Cordle

Please consider joining ANS, especially if you are a regular user of the Voice of the Naturalist (Senior \$35; Individual \$50; Family \$65; Nature Steward \$100; Audubon Advocate \$200). The membership number is 301-652 9188, option 12; the address is 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815; and the web site is <http://www.anshome.org/>.

This is the Voice of the Naturalist, a service of the Audubon Naturalist Society. This report covers the week starting Tuesday, April 24, and was completed on Tuesday, May 1, at 9:00 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: PURPLE GALLINULE* in MD, RED-NECKED PHALAROPE* in VA.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST: late waterfowl, NORTHERN BOBWHITE, HORNED GREBE, EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL, VIRGINIA RAIL, SORA, SANDHILL CRANE, BLACK-NECKED STILT, SEMI-PALMATED PLOVER, WILLET, PARASITIC JAEGER, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, AMERICAN and LEAST BITTERN, egrets and herons, GLOSSY IBIS, SWALLOW-TAILED KITE, EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE, LEAST FLYCATCHER, LOGGERHEAD and NORTHERN SHRIKE, BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH, wrens, thrushes, AMERICAN PIPIT, CLAY-COLORED and SALTMARSH SPARROW, BOBOLINK, warblers, SUMMER and WESTERN TANAGER, and DICKCISSEL.

TOP BIRDS

A PURPLE GALLINULE* was seen by hawk-watchers at Fort Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on the morning of Apr 26, and seen again the same afternoon. It was being seen off and on through Apr 30.

A RED-NECKED PHALAROPE* was seen along the edge of a pond in Bedford Co, VA on Apr 25, a nice record that far inland.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

The unseasonable spring weather seems to have delayed the migration of many varieties of waterfowl. A late TUNDRA SWAN (possibly with an injured wing) was seen on Apr 24, at Kinder Farm Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD. Another was seen on Apr 26 at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Anne Arundel Co, MD and another seen on Apr 29, at Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens NE DC, flying over the boardwalk and landing in the main pool.

Late migrating ducks included many species from throughout the reporting area this week, with NORTHERN SHOVELER, GADWALL, AMERICAN WIGEON, NORTHERN PINTAIL, CANVASBACK, RING-NECKED DUCK, GREATER SCAUP, LESSER SCAUP, WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, BUFFLEHEAD, and COMMON GOLDENEYE all being reported.

Many birders enjoyed a seemingly out-of-place NORTHERN BOBWHITE, of unknown origin, in the Tenley Circle area of NW DC, with confirmed reports (and photos of it walking up an alleyway between homes) for Apr 27 and 29.

HORNED GREBES remained in the area, with two seen at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD on Apr 29, eight at North Beach, Calvert Co, MD on Apr 30, two at Fort Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Apr 30, and another single bird seen from East-Potomac Park-Haines Point, SW DC, also on Apr 30.

At least six EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILLS were heard at Patuxent Research Refuge-North Tract, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Apr 28, while one was heard at Chino Farms-Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory, Queen Anne's Co, MD the same day. Three EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILLS were heard calling from a yard in Northampton Co, VA, also on Apr 28.

A VIRGINIA RAIL was seen and photographed at the Abrams Creek Wetlands Preserve west of Winchester in Frederick Co, VA on Apr 26. Another VIRGINIA RAIL was recorded at Chesland Park, Cecil Co, MD on Apr 27. On Apr 30, two VIRGINIA RAILS were heard and seen together, and two SORAS were vocalizing, from Hidden Swamp, Albemarle Co, VA.

Two SANDHILL CRANES were seen again along Rock Lodge Road in Accident, Garrett Co, MD on Apr 25 and 27, holding out hopes of a possible breeding pair.

A BLACK-NECKED STILT was seen on Apr 26 at the Messick Wetlands in Poquoson, VA and seen again on Apr 27, 28, and 29. An early SEMIPALMATED PLOVER was spotted at the Swan Creek Wetland-Cox Creek DMCF in Anne Arundel Co, MD on Apr 25. A WILLET was seen at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, Queen Anne's Co, MD on Apr 26, another on Apr 27 at Point Lookout SP, St. Mary's Co, MD, and on Apr 28 two were seen flying low over the water at the Gala Wetlands in Botetourt Co, VA.

A PARASITIC JAEGER was seen flying north at the Ocean City Inlet, Worcester Co, MD on Apr 24.

A flock of ten AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were seen again at Hog Island WMA, Surry Co, VA, with the most recent report from Apr 26.

An AMERICAN BITTERN was seen flying across the marsh at Bles Park in Loudoun Co, VA on Apr 25, and again on Apr 29. On Apr 28, one was heard vocalizing in wetlands at Potts Ln, Loudoun Co, VA. A LEAST BITTERN was seen and photographed on Apr 24 at Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, NE DC and continued to be seen (and hidden) on Apr 26-29. Another LEAST BITTERN was seen at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on Apr 25.

A SNOWY EGRET was seen at the Patuxent Research Refuge-Central Tract (private), Prince George's Co, MD on Apr 25, and another flew in to Schoolhouse Pond, Prince George's Co, MD on Apr 26. On Apr 28 a SNOWY EGRET was discovered at Lake Herrington, Herrington Manor SP in Garrett Co, MD, possibly a 2nd county record this far west, continuing through Apr 29. A TRICOLORED HERON was seen at Point lookout SP-The Point, St. Mary's Co, MD on Apr 27, while another was seen the same day at Fort Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD. A pair of YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were seen carrying nesting material to a nest in New Windsor, Carroll Co, MD on Apr 24 and 25, and another was seen flying over a neighborhood in NW DC on Apr 26. A juvenile BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was seen along the C&O Canal-North Branch, Allegany Co, MD on Apr 25.

A continuing GLOSSY IBIS was seen again at Hawthorne Hall Road, Botetourt Co, VA on Apr 24, and another far inland at Sandy River Reservoir, in Prince Edward Co, VA on Apr 25.

Also, on Apr 25, another GLOSSY IBIS was seen and photographed at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Beltsville, Prince George's Co, MD and seen again on Apr 27.

A SWALLOW-TAILED KITE was spotted as it flew NE across the bay from the Fort Smallwood Park hawk-watch, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Apr 27.

An early EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE was seen and photographed at Munden Point Park- Southern portion in Virginia Beach, VA on Apr 28. A LEAST FLYCATCHER was seen at Herrington Manor SP, Garrett Co, MD also on Apr 28.

The LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE at Smith Farm, Lunenburg Co, VA continued through Apr 25. The wintering NORTHERN SHRIKE in Sully Wetlands, Fairfax Co, VA continued to be seen as recently as Apr 24.

While the five BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCHES seen at Bombay Hook in Kent Co, DE on Apr 28 were not terribly unusual, the single BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH seen and photographed on Apr 27 at Cobbs Mountain Road, Bedford Co, VA was notable.

A late WINTER WREN was seen at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on Apr 25, and another was seen along Mullinix Mill Road, Upper Patuxent River, Montgomery Co, MD on Apr 26. On Apr 28, a WINTER WREN was heard singing from a patch of skunk cabbage at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD and yet another was seen along the Rivanna Trail in Albemarle Co, VA, also on Apr 28. A SEDGE WREN was seen and heard in the marsh along Elliott Island Road, Dorchester Co, MD on Apr 25. A continuing MARSH WREN was seen most recently at Hughes Hollow in Montgomery Co, MD on Apr 28, while another was seen skulking at Edward's Ferry-C&O Canal NHP, Poolesville, Montgomery Co, MD on Apr 29.

A VEERY was seen at Melvin Hazen Park, NW DC on Apr 24. A GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was reported at Monticello Park, Alexandria, VA on Apr 29. A pair of SWAINSON'S THRUSHES were spotted at Matoaka Lake and Woods, Williamsburg, VA on Apr 28, a single bird was seen at Patterson Park, Baltimore Co, MD and another was seen at Theodore Roosevelt Island NW DC, the same day. Yet another was seen at the Rock Creek Park Nature Center area, NW DC, on Apr 29.

AMERICAN PIPITS were seen at Back Bay NWR, Virginia Beach, VA with a single bird there on Apr 27, and from Kenilworth Park

and Aquatic Gardens, NE DC, with four heard as they flew over on Apr 26, and six there on Apr 28.

A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was seen foraging among dandelions with several Chipping Sparrows, at the Virginia Tech-Vet School Pond in Montgomery Co, VA on Apr 24. A SALTMARSH SPARROW was seen and trying its best to stay hidden in the marsh at Fort Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Apr 26.

Three early BOBOLINKS were seen along Lloyds Landing Road, Trappe, Talbot Co, MD on Apr 24.

The real hotspots for warblers this week were the C&O Canal-Riley's Lock, Montgomery Co, MD and Rock Creek Park, NW DC, though some birds did show well in other places. On Apr 27, a male CAPE MAY WARBLER fed in a Balsam fir tree, transplanted from Maine, in a yard in Montgomery Co, MD, and another was seen at Hughes Hollow, also in Montgomery Co, MD on Apr 29. A CERULEAN WARBLER was singing from high atop a tree at Westmoreland SP, Westmoreland Co, VA on Apr 26. On Apr 28 a BAY-BREASTED WARBLER showed well at Patuxent Research Refuge-North Tract, Anne Arundel Co, MD. Late PALM WARBLERS were seen at Finzel Swamp and Herrington Manor SP, both in Garrett Co, MD on Apr 28.

A pair of SUMMER TANAGERS were seen at Chincoteague NWR-Wildlife Loop, Accomack Co, VA on Apr 24, while another showed up to feed at a mealworm suet feeder at a yard in Hampstead, Carroll Co, MD on Apr 25. A continuing WESTERN TANAGER showed up again at a feeder in Virginia Beach, VA on Apr 24.

An early and well-described DICKCISSEL showed up at a birdbath and yard in Roanoke City, VA on Apr 26, and continued through Apr 28.

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. 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