

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, May 15 and was completed on Tuesday, May 22 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).

The top birds this week were BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK* in VA, BAR-TAILED GODWIT* in VA, and SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER* in DC.

Other birds of interest this week included waterfowl, NORTHERN BOBWHITE, BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, KING RAIL, COMMON GALLINULE, SANDHILL CRANE, BLACK-NECKED STILT, shorebirds, PARASITIC JAEGER, gulls, terns, ANHINGA, AMERICAN and LEAST BITTERN, SNOWY EGRET, LITTLE BLUE HERON, TRICOLORED HERON, CATTLE EGRET, SWALLOW-TAILED and MISSISSIPPI KITES, flycatchers including OLIVE-SIDED, YELLOW-BELLIED, ALDER, and LEAST, PHILADELPHIA VIREO, BICKNELL'S THRUSH, AMERICAN PIPIT, LINCOLN'S SPARROW, MOURNING WARBLER, and DICKCISSEL.

TOP BIRDS

On May 15 a flock of 19 BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCKS* paid a visit to the Walmart Ponds in Colonial Heights, VA.

A BAR-TAILED GODWIT* was seen May 15 at Chincoteague NWR, Accomack Co, VA.

A SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER* was seen in flight from the east side of the golf course at Hains Pt, SW DC on May 20.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

A late BRANT was reported flying with a flock of Double-crested Cormorants at Big Water Farm (private), Queen Anne's Co, MD on May 20.

A TRUMPETER SWAN was seen May 20 at Woodward Turf Farm, Culpeper Co, VA.

Other late waterfowl included two a NORTHERN PINTAIL at Patterson Park, Baltimore, MD through the 20th; a REDHEAD on May 18 near the dam at the John H. Kerr Reservoir, Mecklenburg Co, VA; and a SURF SCOTER May 19-21 at Lake Holiday (gated community/restricted access) in Frederick Co, VA. Two WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were seen at Big Water Farm (private) on the 18th. Inland LONG-TAILED DUCKS continued to turn up with one at Lake Holiday on May 19 and there was one on May 17 at Lake Frederick, Frederick Co, VA.

NORTHERN BOBWHITES were observed at a private residence on May 15 at Piney Point, St. Mary's Co, MD and along Long Neck Rd, St. Mary's Co, MD on May 17.

Migrating BLACK-BILLED CUCKOOS continued to turn up at a number of locations in the Greater Washington Area.

KING RAILS continue to be observed at Occoquan Bay NWR in Prince William Co, VA, with two King Rails foraging along the path near Deephole Point Road on May 20. A KING RAIL was heard May 20 in Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD. A continuing COMMON GALLINULE was seen throughout the week at Back Bay NWR in Virginia Beach, VA.

A continuing SANDHILL CRANE was seen May 16 along Rock Lodge Rd, Garrett Co, MD.

A BLACK-NECKED STILT was seen May 17 at Point Lookout SP, St. Mary's Co, MD.

Inland WHIMBRELS were reported from several locations in VA included 13 on May 19 at the Woodward Turf Far, Culpeper Co, VA; and five on May 19 at Leesylvania SP, Prince William Co, VA. On May 20 a flock of 57 flew over the Rockfish Gap Hawk Watch, Augusta Co, VA. They also turned up at multiple locations in Anne Arundel Co, MD including Franklin Point Park on the 20th; at Sandy Point SP on the 17th; and on the 19th there was a flock of 34 at Swan Creek Wetland/Cox Creek DMCF. On May 19 a RUDDY TURNSTONE was also there as well as one nearby along Kembo Rd, Curtis Bay. A single RUDDY TURNSTONE was also seen at Swan Harbor Farm Park on May 20. Sightings of WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER included individuals at the Nazarene Church Road Wetlands, Rockingham Co, VA on May 15 and along Foxtown Rd, Accident, Garrett Co, MD on May 16. A WESTERN SANDPIPER was at Long Creek/Great Neck, Virginia Beach, VA on May 16. A RED-NECKED PHALAROPE was seen May 19 along Foxtown Rd, Accident, Garrett Co, MD. A RED-NECKED PHALAROPE was seen May 19 at 2945 Big Falls Rd, Blacksburg, Montgomery Co, VA. RED-NECKED PHALAROPES were also seen in DE with one at Indian River Inlet, Sussex Co, DE on May 17 and another along Whitehall Neck Rd, Kent Co, DE on May 19.

A PARASITIC JAEGER was seen May 19 at Little Island Park, Virginia Beach, VA.

An ICELAND GULL was seen May 19 at the Point, Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE.

On May 17 a highly unexpected LEAST TERN turned up at a pond on Middlesex Dr, Loudoun Co. Both a BLACK TERN and a COMMON TERN were seen at Hains Pt, SW DC on May 20. BLACK TERNS were also seen in DE with one at Taylor's Gut, Woodland Beach WA, Kent Co, DE on May 18; another at Gordon's Pond, Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE on May 19; and still another the same day at Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE.

An ANHINGA was photographed at the Darnestown Rd (Montgomery Co, MD) ponds on May 15. ANHINGAS were observed at several locations in Virginia, including one on May 15 at New Quarter Park,

York Co, VA; another on May 19 and 21 along the Noland Trail at the Mariners' Museum Park, Newport News, VA; and two that flew over Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax Co, VA on May 21. There was also a report of 15 ANHINGAS flying over Lake Accotink, Fairfax Co, VA on May 20.

An AMERICAN BITTERN was seen May 20 in the western wetland cell at the Phelps WMA, Fauquier Co, VA. An AMERICAN BITTERN was also observed at Davidsonville Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 16 and at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on May 16 and 17. A LEAST BITTERN was seen May 20 at Occoquan NWR, Prince William Co, VA.

A SNOWY EGRET was seen at Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, NE DC on May 19 and 20 and a LITTLE BLUE HERON was there on May 20. A LITTLE BLUE HERON was also seen at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on May 18 and 21. A TRICOLORED HERON was seen May 21 in the North Beach marsh, Calvert Co, MD. Two flyover CATTLE EGRETS were seen May 20 at Hains Pt, SW DC. A CATTLE EGRET was seen the same day flying over the Occoquan NWR.

On May 20 a SWALLOW-TAILED KITE was seen flying over a yard in Seabrook, Prince George's Co, MD. MISSISSIPPI KITES were seen at numerous locations in VA and MD.

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were seen at several locations including Violette's Lock on the C & O Canal in Montgomery Co, MD on May 14; on May 19 at Gwynns Fall Leakin Park, Baltimore, MD; Milford Mill Park, Baltimore, MD on May 15; on May 18 at the Patapsco Valley SP, Howard Co, MD; and on May 15 at the North Tract, Patuxent Research Refuge, Anne Arundel Co, MD. In VA single OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were seen May 20 at the Great Falls Park, Fairfax Co, VA; on the Deerfield Trail, Jefferson NF, Montgomery Co, VA on May 18; and at the Wetland cells at the Phelps WMA, Fauquier Co on May 20.

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER were reported at the Hanover Watershed WMA, Carroll Co, De on May 17. One was also reported near Lusby, Calvert Co, DE on May 16. ALDER FLYCATCHERS were observed at a number of locations throughout the week. LEAST FLYCATCHERS were also reported at the Wes Ocean City Park & Ride, Worcester Co, MD on May 15 and on May 20 at Triadelphia Reservoir, Howard Co, MD.

A PHILADELPHIA VIREO was seen May 17 at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD.

A BICKNELL'S THRUSH at Weyanoke Sanctuary, Norfolk, VA was seen and heard again on May 15. A BICKNELL'S THRUSH was also heard and recorded at Double Rock Park, Baltimore, MD on May 18. And still another was at the Maintenance Yard, Rock Creek Park, NW DC on May 21.

An AMERICAN PIPIT was seen May 19 at the Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens, NE DC.

Multiple RED CROSSBILLS were encountered at several locations in Virginia, including private Skylark Farm along the Blue Ridge Parkway in extreme western Nelson Co on May 8 and Paddy Knob in Bath Co on May 13. RED CROSSBILLS also continue at Briery Branch Gap in Rockingham Co, VA, with 14 individuals counted on May 10.

LINCOLN'S SPARROWS were seen at several locations, including Sunset Park, Ocean City, MD on May 15; the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Trail, Susquehanna SP, Harford Co, MD on May 16; and a private yard in Silver Spring, Montgomery Co, MD on May 19.

MOURNING WARBLERS continued to migrate through the area with one at the Blue Mash Nature Trail, Montgomery Co, MD on May 17; a continuing one at Violette's Lock, C&O Canal, Montgomery Co, MD on May 15; on the same day at Meadowbrook Park, Montgomery Co, MD; and on the 15th and 16th at Patapsco Valley SP, Howard Co, MD. On May 16 there was one at the Maintenance Yard, Rock Creek Park, NW DC. A MOURNING WARBLER was seen May 15 and 20 at Algonkian RP, Loudoun Co, VA; another was seen the same day at Hillendale Park, Harrisburg, VA and at Sappling Ridge, Highland Co, VA. On May 16 one was seen along the Rockfish Valley Trail, Nelson Co, VA. A MOURNING WARBLER was seen May 20 at the Occoquan Sewage Plant, Fairfax Co, VA.

DICKCISSELS continued to be seen at a number of locations including one on May 15 at Sands Road Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD; one on May 16 and 20 at the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, Prince George's Co, MD; as many as 7 throughout the week in the Underwood Rd area of Howard Co, MD; two on May 17 along long Neck Rd, St. Mary's Co, MD; and as many as five along Phelps Road in Bedford Co, VA on May 19. Multiple DICKCISSELS were also seen at the Bristoe Station Battlefield, Prince William Co, VA on May 18 and 19. One was seen May 17 from the River Rd W pull off, Goochland Co, VA. Five DICKCISSELS were seen May 18 at the Swan Rd-Silo Rd junction, Appomattox Co, VA. There was also a DICKCISSEL seen along Gusty Ln, Orange, VA on May 20. Two DICKCISSELS were also seen May 20 along Oak Rd, Oak Grove, Sussex Co, DE.

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