

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist
Date: 7/17/2018
Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern DE/WV panhandle
Reports, comments, questions: voice@anshome.org
Compilers: 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, July 10, and was completed on Tuesday, July 17, 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: BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK* in MD, RUFF in DE, GREAT BLUE HERON* (White Form) in MD.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST: waterfowl, including TRUMPETER and TUNDRA SWANS, ducks, NORTHERN BOBWHITE, COMMON GALLINULE, shorebirds, BONAPARTE'S GULL, terns, WILSON'S STORM-PETREL, ANHINGA, WHITE IBIS, ROSEATE SPOONBILL* (unconfirmed), MISSISSIPPI KITE, MERLIN, PEREGRINE FALCON, COMMON RAVEN, RED-BREASTED and BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCHES, SALTMARSH SPARROW, BOBOLINK, SUMMER TANAGER and DICKCISSEL.

TOP BIRDS

A flock of 10-12 BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCKS* were circling and landing repeatedly at a lake in the Hampshire neighborhood off Smallwood Drive, Waldorf, Charles Co, MD about 7:30 P.M. on July 15. As they landed near the shore, a cellphone photo was obtained. They were not relocated.

A male RUFF, in breeding plumage, was discovered at Ted Harvey WMA-Logan Lane Tract, in Kent Co, DE on July 10. Based on

plumage differences, a different RUFF was seen and described on July 12-15 at Milford Neck Wildlife Area-Big Stone Beach Road, also in Kent Co, DE. Yet another RUFF was seen in Raymond Pool at Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE on July 13.

The GREAT BLUE HERON* (White Form, aka GREAT WHITE HERON) seen last week, was spotted most recently along the Israel Creek area in Frederick Co, MD on July 10. This is along MD 26 just east of the intersection with Route 194.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

Unusual summering waterfowl in the area included a continuing pair of TRUMPETER SWANS seen at the Owensville Road Pond (private) in Anne Arundel Co, MD on July 11, and a TUNDRA SWAN lingering at Kinder Farm Park, also in Anne Arundel Co, MD on July 11.

A pair of NORTHERN SHOVELERS were seen again at Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD on July 12, and a single AMERICAN BLACK DUCK was spotted at North Beach-marsh, Calvert Co, MD on July 13. A male RING-NECKED DUCK was seen at Great Falls Park, Fairfax, VA on July 15. On July 13, a male GREATER SCAUP was on the beach at Swan Creek Wetland-Cox Creek DMCF, Anne Arundel Co, MD. A drake LESSER SCAUP has been seen in the company of Mallards at the north end of the parking lot at Lapidum, Harford Co, MD on July 12, and four SURF SCOTERS remained off shore at Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD on July 12. A BLACK SCOTER was also seen at North Beach-marsh in Calvert Co, MD on July 13. A male RED-BREASTED MERGANSER was seen at Prettyboy Reservoir, Baltimore Co, MD on July 14. Nine RUDDY DUCKS were seen at Little Creek Wildlife Area-South Impoundment, Kent Co, DE on July 10.

A NORTHERN BOBWHITE was heard at Gunpowder Falls SP in Harford Co, MD on July 11.

A COMMON GALLINULE was seen on the mudflats at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary, Anne Arundel Co, MD on July 12 and 13.

Shorebird migration is underway. A survey of Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD on July 12 tallied a possible new high for BLACK-NECKED STILTS in MD, with 91 birds being seen, about an equal mix of adults and young of the year. AMERICAN AVOCETS were seen in two flocks of 40 and 45 birds, as were two AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS, five STILT SANDPIPERS, one DUNLIN, 37 LEAST SANDPIPERS, 40 SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS, three WESTERN

SANDPIPERS, 290 SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHERS, 423 LESSER YELLOWLEGS and one WILSON'S PHALAROPE (a female first seen on July 11 at this location). On July 14, an AMERICAN AVOCET was seen flying up the Potomac River from the C&O Canal-Violette's Lock, Montgomery Co, MD, and ten were seen flying SW over the Chester River at Eastern Neck NWR, Kent Co, MD the same day. Two AMERICAN AVOCETS were seen flying over the Staunton River from the Staunton View Public Use Area, Mecklenburg Co, VA on July 14. On July 15, a lone AMERICAN AVOCET was seen flying up the Potomac River and then veering up the Anacostia River, from East Potomac Park-Hains Point, SW DC. A WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER was seen at Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE on July 14. An early SOLITARY SANDPIPER arrived at Princess Anne WMA in Virginia Beach, VA on July 12, and another was seen at Milford Neck Wildlife Area-Big Stone Beach Road, Kent Co, DE the same day. Another WILSON'S PHALAROPE was in Sheariness Pool at Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE on July 14.

Single BONAPARTE'S GULLS were spotted at Raymond Pool, Bombay Hook NWR and Ted Harvey WMA-Logan Lane Tract, both in Kent Co, DE on July 10, and another was seen during the survey of Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD on July 12. On July 15 a single BONAPARTE'S GULL was seen at Blackwater NWR, Dorchester Co, MD.

Two LEAST TERNS were flying by at Patuxent River Park-Jackson Landing in Prince George's Co, MD on July 13, and were seen again on July 14 and 15. On July 10, a GULL-BILLED TERN was reported from Raymond and Sheariness Pools, Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE. Three CASPIAN TERNS were at Battery Island, Harford Co, MD on July 13. A single COMMON TERN was seen sitting among a large group of FORSTER'S TERNS at Ted Harvey WMA-Logan Lane Tract, Kent Co, DE on July 10. Another FORSTER'S TERN was seen at Battery Island, Harford Co, MD on July 13. A ROYAL TERN was seen flying over the Choptank River at Hog Island Road, Caroline Co, MD on July 14.

A WILSON'S STORM-PETREL was seen flying towards Sunset Beach low over the Chesapeake Bay, near Cape Charles, Northampton Co, VA, on July 10.

A report of four adult ANHINGAS on three nests came from Coventry Trail, Yorktown, York Co, VA on July 12.

Post-breeding long-legged wader dispersal is just beginning, as evidenced by the early arrival of an immature WHITE IBIS seen at Big Stone Beach in Kent Co, DE on July 14. Eight were

seen there, including seven immatures and one adult, on July 15.

A single and unconfirmed report of the MD ROSEATE SPOONBILL* came in this week, from Patuxent River Park-Jackson Landing in Prince George's Co, MD on July 13.

MISSISSIPPI KITE reports waned a bit this week, with three seen at Dumfries Road, Fauquier Co, VA and another seen (and well described) from a car stopped at a traffic light on Parham Road in Henrico Co, VA, both on July 13.

On July 16, an unexpected MERLIN was seen being mobbed by birds at a home before it flew off, near Front Royal, Warren Co, VA. The same day a PEREGRINE FALCON was seen circling then flying south near a storm pond along I-70 at East Street in Frederick Co, MD.

A pair of COMMON RAVENS continued to be seen and heard at Terrapin Nature Park in Queen Anne's Co, MD on July 11 and 13. Another COMMON RAVEN was seen and heard at Whitaker Woods, Cecil Co, MD on July 15.

Unusual for this time of year, a pair of RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES were seen, heard and photographed at Whitaker Woods in Cecil Co, MD on July 15. Two to three BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCHES were seen at Milford Neck Wildlife Area-Big Stone Beach Road, Kent Co, DE on July 15.

A SALTMARSH SPARROW was spotted in the marsh at Prime Hook NWR-Fowler Beach Road, Sussex Co, DE, on July 14.

An early pair of BOBOLINKS were seen and heard as they flew over the Oaks Landfill, Montgomery Co, MD on July 13.

Three SUMMER TANAGERS were reported from the North Tract of Patuxent Research Refuge, Anne Arundel Co, MD, on a field trip there on July 14.

Two DICKCISSELS were seen at the Oaks Landfill, Montgomery Co, MD on July 10 and 13, and three at the Underwood Road area in Howard Co, MD on July 10, 11 and 13. A singing male DICKCISSEL was seen sitting on a wire at the entrance road leading to the headquarters building at Prime Hook NWR-Headquarters Area, Sussex Co, DE on July 12 and 14. Four DICKCISSELS continued at Bristoe Station Battlefield, Prince William Co, VA on July 14.

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