

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, January 8, and was completed on Tuesday, January 15, 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 59th Supplement (June 2018).

Top Birds this week are: BARNACLE GOOSE* in MD, BARROW'S GOLDENEYE* in MD, BAR-TAILED GODWIT* in VA, WOOD STORK* in MD and VA, ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER* in VA, and VARIED THRUSH* in MD.

Other Birds of Interest include: SNOW GOOSE, ROSS'S GOOSE, GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, CACKLING GOOSE, TRUMPETER SWAN, other waterfowl, RED-NECKED GREBE, SANDHILL CRANE, AMERICAN AVOCET, AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER, PURPLE SANDPIPER, PARASITIC JAEGER, RAZORBILL, gulls, RED-THROATED and PACIFIC LOON*, GREAT CORMORANT, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, egrets and herons, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, GOLDEN EAGLE, SNOWY and SHORT-EARED OWL, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, EASTERN and SAY'S PHOEBE*, SEDGE and MARSH WREN, BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER, WOOD THRUSH, EVENING GROSBEEK, SNOW BUNTING, CLAY-COLORED SPARROW, BALTIMORE ORIOLE, over-wintering warblers, WESTERN TANAGER, and PAINTED BUNTING.

TOP BIRDS

A BARNACLE GOOSE* was discovered and photographed among a large flock of Canada Geese mid-day on Jan 11, at Whittier Lake Park in Frederick Co, MD. It was relocated the following day at the same location and later in a field east of Rocky Springs Rd. about 0.3 mile west of Yellow Springs Rd. The bird was seen again briefly on the afternoon of Jan 13 in a field south of the lake, with a large flock of Canada Geese, and then it was back at Lake Whittier on Jan 14.

A BARROW'S GOLDENEYE* continued to be seen sporadically at The Elms Environmental Education Center (private), in St. Mary's Co, MD, seen most recently on Jan 12.

The BAR-TAILED GODWIT* was still being seen at Chincoteague NWR-Tom's Cove in Accomack Co, VA as recently as Jan 12.

A very out-of-season WOOD STORK* was seen by two different individuals in MD on Jan 10. Shortly before noon, it was spotted flying over Point Lookout SP, St. Mary's Co, north of the causeway and heading north. About an hour later, another observer saw it from the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, also in St. Mary's Co, and was able to capture two very distant cell phone photos as it flew low over the treetops. On Jan 14, a second WOOD STORK* was discovered feeding in a marshy area of Wayne Creek-Lafayette River, in the Suburban Acres neighborhood in Norfolk, VA.

An ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER* was still being seen at Ancarrow's Landing, Richmond City, VA, with reports from Jan 9, 11, and 12.

The VARIED THRUSH*, first found on Dec 22, 2018, continued to delight birders in Leonardtown, St. Mary's Co, MD, with recent sightings for Jan 8-12. Access guidelines: the bird has mostly been seen in the area around 22070 Philip Drive or sometimes across the street. Please park along the left side of the road beyond the drainage basin after the first house on Philip and before the homeowner's house (both houses are on the left side). Parking priority is along the street only from half the drainage basin towards 22070 Philip Drive. If that is full, people can park in the horseshoe section of the 22070 driveway-the second entrance around to, but not blocking, the first entrance to the garage. If that is full, park along the neighbors' section of the road (i.e., the half of the drainage basin towards their house). They have not complained at all,

but at this point we'll try to limit further damage to their section of property. If that space is full, please try to avoid parking directly in front of another house.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

Over one thousand SNOW GEESE were seen at North Point SP, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 8, with smaller numbers there the following day. A continuing lone SNOW GOOSE was seen several times this week along the Anacostia River Park in SE DC, most recently on Jan 9, 10, and 12. A ROSS'S GOOSE was reported this week at Wells Road, Milford, Sussex Co, DE on Jan 10, and relocated south of there, near Prime Hook NWR on Jan 12. On Jan 14, a ROSS'S GOOSE was found in a rain pool along Lewistown Rd., Talbot Co, MD. Compared with last year, GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE have been rather scarce this season. A single bird continued at Fort Howard Veteran's Park-Todd's Inheritance Historic Site, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 9-12, and another was found at the Rt 213 south pond in Queen Anne's Co, MD on Jan 12. A CACKLING GOOSE continued to be seen at Belle Haven Park-North Parking area, Fairfax Co, VA on Jan 9 and another was reported in the vicinity of the Barnacle Goose on Jan 11, at Whittier Lake Park, Frederick Co, MD.

A TRUMPETER SWAN remained at Alter Pond at Soil Conservation Road in Prince George's Co, MD on Jan 8 and 12, and a pair continued at Lake Brittle in Fauquier Co, VA on Jan 11-14.

A pair of lingering BLUE-WINGED TEAL were at Lake Collusion, Seahorse Beach, in Calvert Co, MD on Jan 9. A REDHEAD continued through Jan 12 at Rocky Gap SP, Allegany Co, MD. A continuing first-winter male COMMON EIDER was still being reported at Fort Monroe, Hampton Co, VA, seen most recently on Jan 14. A female HARLEQUIN DUCK was scoped at Pleasure House Point Natural Area, Virginia Beach, VA on Jan 12. A female LONG-TAILED DUCK continued at Holliday Lake SP, Appomattox Co, VA, seen as recently as Jan 9-14, and another was seen at Broadway Wastewater Treatment Facility (restricted access) Rockingham Co, VA on Jan 11. An uncommon COMMON GOLDENEYE continued at Cumberland-Terminus in Allegany Co, MD on Jan 9 and 10, and a continuing male RED-BREASTED MERGANSER remained at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD Jan 9-11.

A RED-NECKED GREBE was reported from Loch Raven Reservoir-Old Picnic Area Trail, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 12.

SANDHILL CRANES were still viewable in the Bradshaw Rd. area of Kingsville, Baltimore Co, MD with five there on Jan 8, and eight seen on Jan 9.

A late pair of AMERICAN AVOCETS were spotted at Gordon's Pond in Rehobeth, Sussex Co, DE on Jan 11, and a lingering pair of AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHERS were seen in flight at Grandview Nature Preserve, Hampton, VA on Jan 12. PURPLE SANDPIPERS continued at Chesapeake Beach Veteran's Memorial, Calvert Co, MD, with five there on Jan 8, and a pair remaining on Jan 9.

A light-phase PARASITIC JAEGER was spotted from the Cape Henlopen Hawk Watch, Sussex Co, DE on Jan 8.

An impressive southbound movement of RAZORBILLS has been going on along the Atlantic coast recently. On Jan 8, 25 were seen on the water from the Lewes-Cape May Ferry terminal in Sussex Co, DE, and more than 100 were seen in flight going past Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE the same day, with smaller numbers reported from this location on the following days as well.

On Jan 8 and 9, an ICELAND GULL was seen at the Annapolis Junction Transfer Station in Anne Arundel Co, MD, one continued at Georgetown Reservoir, NW DC on Jan 9, another lingered at Lorely Beach Community Pier (private) in Baltimore Co, MD, Jan 10-12, and one more was spotted on the water at the Choptank River-Rt 50 bridge in Dorchester Co, MD also on Jan 12. In Virginia, an ICELAND GULL was seen at the Prince William County Landfill, Prince William Co, on Jan 12. A beautiful immature GLAUCOUS GULL was seen and enjoyed by a birding group near the Ocean City Inlet, Worcester Co, MD on Jan 12.

RED-THROATED LOONS continued at North Point SP, Baltimore Co, MD with six seen there on Jan 9. Further inland, a pair of RED-THROATED LOONS were discovered at Lake Artemesia, Prince George's Co, MD on Jan 12. An unconfirmed yet detailed report of a PACIFIC LOON* came from the Lewes-Cape May Ferry (DE waters) Sussex Co, DE on Jan 8, but was not relocated.

GREAT CORMORANTS continued to be seen at the Kent Point Marina in Queen Anne's Co, MD, with 26 there on Jan 8 and 16 on Jan 12.

A group of 17 AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS were seen and photographed at Hog Island WMA, Surry Co, VA on Jan 13.

GREAT EGRETS continued to winter in a few areas this week. One was at Lake Artemesia, Prince George's Co, MD, seen as recently as Jan 12. Another was at Little Creek Wildlife Area, Kent Co, DE on Jan 9, and another was at Ashburn-Alder Lake in Loudoun Co, VA on Jan 12. A very late SNOWY EGRET continued at Grandview Nature Preserve in Hampton, VA, as reported on Jan 8 and 14. An immature LITTLE BLUE HERON was seen at Government Island, Stafford Co, VA, with sightings from Jan 9-11. A wintering GREEN HERON was discovered at Berlin Falls Park, Worcester Co, MD on Jan 14. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were seen in several places in MD this week, with individuals reported from Baker Park, Frederick Co, and Wheeler's Pond and Woods, Charles Co, both on Jan 9, and the Anacostia River Trail, Prince George's Co, on Jan 12.

Two ROUGH-LEGGED HAWKS were spotted this week, with a dark morph bird continuing at Prime Hook NWR-Fowler Beach Rd, Sussex Co, DE on Jan 8 and a light morph bird being seen at Dulles Airport, Loudoun Co, VA on Jan 12. A GOLDEN EAGLE was seen at the Town Hill Overlook, Allegany Co, MD on Jan 9, and another was reported from Lake Brittle, Fauquier Co, VA on Jan 12.

A SNOWY OWL was seen and photographed on a jetty at Kent Point Marina, Queen Anne's Co, MD on Jan 12. SHORT-EARED OWLS have been scarce this winter, but a single bird continued at Messick Point, Poquoson, VA on Jan 10. Another delighted a homeowner as it flew through her yard (Accident, Garrett Co, MD) and landed on a fencepost about 100 yards away, and then continued in the area for another 20 minutes, in the snow, on Jan 12.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS continued to be seen at Prime Hook NWR-Fowler Beach Rd, Sussex Co, DE Jan 8-12, two were at Gibson Rd, Whitehall, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 8 and 14 and four were at Lloyd Bowen Rd, Calvert Co, MD, on Jan 8. A single bird continued at Fox Chase Pond in Howard Co, MD with reports from Jan 9-12.

An EASTERN PHOEBE was seen near the entrance to Bombay Hook NWR, Kent Co, DE on Jan 11, and one was also found at a home in Fauquier Co, VA on Jan 14. The SAY'S PHOEBE* seen last week along Sandiges Rd, Amherst Co, VA, was spotted again on Jan 8, but not after that, despite diligent searches.

A continuing SEDGE WREN was heard at Cornfield Harbor Drive, St. Inigoes, St. Mary's Co, MD on Jan 8. MARSH WRENS were

reported from the Chesapeake Beach Railroad Trail, Calvert Co, MD on Jan 8, and another from Blandy Experimental Farm/State Arboretum of Virginia, Clarke Co, VA the same day. On Jan 12, a skulking MARSH WREN was briefly seen and clearly heard in the mitigated wetland at Swan Creek Wetland-Cox Creek DMCF (access by guided tour only), Anne Arundel Co, MD.

A wintering BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER was seen again Jan 8-11, at Ancarrow's Landing, in Richmond City, VA.

A WOOD THRUSH, unusual for this time of year, was found along the Gwynns Falls Trail South, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 8 and 9.

Six EVENING GROSBEAKS were continuing at Union Springs Hollow Lake, Rockingham Co, VA, on Jan 8-10, and a single bird was at a feeder in Albemarle Co, VA on Jan 12.

A group of at least eight SNOW BUNTINGS have been faithful to the rock jetty at North Point SP, Baltimore, with sightings from Jan 8-12.

A wintering CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was seen throughout the week at the Laurel Hill Equestrian Center, Fairfax Co, VA, most recently on Jan 14.

Lingering BALTIMORE ORIOLES were seen at Crest Lawn Memorial Gardens, Howard Co, MD on Jan 8, one coming to a feeder in Clintwood, Dickerson Co, VA and another at a feeder in Virginia Beach, VA, both on Jan 10. On Jan 13, a Baltimore Oriole visited a snow-covered hummingbird feeder at a home in Baltimore Co, MD.

Over-wintering warblers seen this week included an OVENBIRD confirmed at Gwynns Falls Trail South, Baltimore Co, MD on Jan 8, and a BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER continuing at Ancarrow's Landing, Richmond City, VA on Jan 8-12. Three ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were seen and heard by a group of birders on Jan 12 at Swan Creek Wetland-Cox Creek DMCF, Anne Arundel Co, MD, and a NASHVILLE WARBLER was also at Ancarrow's Landing, Richmond City, VA on Jan 12. A CAPE MAY WARBLER was faithfully visiting a suet feeder in Hanover Co, VA through Jan 13, a NORTHERN PARULA was seen along the Anacostia River Trail in Prince George's Co, MD on Jan 12, three PALM WARBLERS were at Swan Creek Wetland-Cox Creek DMCF in Anne Arundel Co, MD on Jan 12, and another at Ancarrow's Landing, Richmond City, VA the same day. Three PINE WARBLERS continued to be seen at the LBJ Memorial Grove-Columbia Island Marina, SW DC, with reports for

Jan 8 and 10, and a YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER has been feeding on suet in a yard in Virginia Beach, VA through at least Jan 10.

A WESTERN TANAGER continued Jan 11-13 at Lake Windsor, Virginia Beach, VA.

Two different male PAINTED BUNTINGS were visiting feeders at homes in Virginia; one in Chesapeake, VA and one in Mechanicsville, Hanover Co, VA both reported on Jan 9.

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