

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist
Date: 3/5/2019
Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern DE/WV panhandle
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(independent of NAS)
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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 26, and was completed on Tuesday, March 5, at approximately 5:00 P.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 were: TUFTED DUCK* and WESTERN GREBE* in VA, ROCK WREN* and VARIED THRUSH* in MD.

Other birds of interest include: GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE, TRUMPETER SWAN, EURASIAN WIGEON, COMMON EIDER, BLACK and WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, RED-NECKED GREBE, SANDHILL CRANE, AMERICAN WOODCOCK, LITTLE BLUE HERON, RED-COCKADED and RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, NORTHERN SHRIKE, TREE SWALLOW, EVENING GROSBEAK, SNOW BUNTING, LAPLAND LONGSPUR, BREWER'S BLACKBIRD, ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER.

TOP BIRDS

The TUFTED DUCK* continues to be seen on a pond behind Chartway Federal Credit Union, at 5700 Cleveland Street, Virginia Beach VA as recently as March 1.

A WESTERN GREBE* was seen on March 3 at John H. Kerr Reservoir-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Visitor's Center, Mecklenburg Co, VA.

A ROCK WREN* continues in St. Mary's County, MD as recently as Mar 1. Viewing of this rare bird is by appointment only. Contact Kyle Rambo for a reservation and set of guidelines at kerambo+rockwren@gmail.com.

Thanks to Tyler Bell for keeping us informed, to Kyle Rambo for leading trips, and of course to the hospitality of the homeowners.

Sadly, the VARIED THRUSH* delighting area birders in St. Mary's County, MD as recently as Feb 28 is now deceased, the victim of a window strike. The late Thrush's body has been taken to the bird lab at the Smithsonian Institution where it will no doubt educate Mid-Atlantic ornithologists for many years to come. This was the first confirmed record of Varied Thrush from Maryland.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

ROSS'S GEESE continued at Accident Bittering Rd, in Accident, Garrett Co, MD on Feb 28. GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE are still being seen at North Point SP, Baltimore Co, MD on Feb 27. Six CACKLING GEESE are at Smith Lake, Augusta County, VA on March 1.

Sightings of TRUMPETER SWANS continued throughout the reporting area with two at Merganser Pond-Patuxent Research Refuge-North Tract, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Mar 1. The male EURASIAN WIGEON is still being found at Deal Island WMA, Somerset Co, MD as recently as Mar 1.

COMMON EIDERS are reported from Fort Monroe, Hampton, VA on March 2. A lone WHITE-WINGED SCOTER was found in Rockbridge Co, VA on Mar 1 of all places. BLACK SCOTERS continue in the Chester River Sound, Kent Co, MD on Feb 28.

A LONG-TAILED DUCK was seen at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD on Feb 28.

Also seen at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD on Mar 1 was a RED-NECKED GREBE.

Two SANDHILL CRANES were reported at the Hughes Road Polo Fields, Montgomery Co, MD on Mar 1.

Reports of the first AMERICAN WOODCOCK are occurring, with a nice display off Hipsley Mill Road, Howard Co, MD on Feb 28.

LITTLE BLUE HERON was seen at the Oxbow Lake at Russett in Laurel, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Feb 28.

A BARN OWL was sighted on Mar 1 on Chelsea Dr, Charlottesville, Albemarle Co, VA.

Somewhat out of the area but worth noting were four RED-COCKADED WOODPECKERS off Chinquapin Rd in Waverly, Sussex Co, VA on Mar 1. RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS were seen again at Hughes Hollow-McKee Beshers' WMA, Montgomery Co and on Lloyd Bowen Road in Calvert Co, MD on Mar 2.

A NORTHERN SHRIKE was reported on Mar 1 at Sully Woodlands, Fairfax Co, VA on Mar 1.

The EVENING GROSBEAKS that have been visiting a feeder in Boonsboro, Washington Co, MD for over a month now are still there. To make arrangements for viewing, please call Bob at 240-816-1288 or 301-432-8030. EVENING GROSBEAKS are still at Riley's Lock, Montgomery Co, MD as of Mar 1.

TREE SWALLOWS were seen at several locations, most recently Patuxent Research Refuge-South Tract, Prince George's Co, MD on Feb 28.

SNOW BUNTINGS are still reported at North Point State Park, Baltimore Co, MD with eighteen recorded on Mar 1.

LAPLAND LONGSPURS were seen again on Savannah Rd, Dover, Kent Co, DE with 35 on Mar 1.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRDS along West Gibbs Road in the Blackwater section of Virginia Beach, VA were seen in their wintering flock on Feb 27.

The ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER seen last week at a suet feeder in Kent Co, DE was still there as of Mar 1.

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, <https://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