

Hotline: Voice of the Naturalist
Date: 4/2/2019
Coverage: MD/DC/VA/central and southern DE/WV panhandle
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States (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, March 26, and was completed on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at approximately 5:00 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 bird this week was: BAR-TAILED GODWIT* in VA.

Other birds of interest include: CACKLING GOOSE, TRUMPETER SWAN, EURASIAN WIGEON, GREATER SCAUP, COMMON EIDER, LONG-TAILED DUCK, RED-NECKED GREBE, ANHINGA, AMERICAN BITTERN, KING and VIRGINIA RAILS, SORA, SANDHILL CRANE, AMERICAN AVOCET, RUFF, GREAT CORMORANT, ANHINGA, AMERICAN BITTERN, YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON, NORTHERN SHRIKE, LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE, MARSH WREN, BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER, EVENING GROSBEAK, AMERICAN TREE, VESPER AND LINCOLN'S SPARROWS, LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH, BLACK-AND-WHITE, YELLOW, PROTHONOTARY, YELLOW-THROATED, PALM, ORANGE-CROWNED, BLACK-THROATED GREEN, PRAIRIE and NASHVILLE WARBLERS, AMERICAN REDSTART, NORTHERN PARULA, and PAINTED BUNTING.

TOP BIRDS

The BAR-TAILED GODWIT continues to delight twitchers at Chincoteague NWR, Accomack, VA. It was seen on March 28 on the mudflats in Tom's Cove all alone. Tom did not see it. It's been a rather slow birding week overall (warblers the exception), but spring has sprung and warbler sightings are starting to pop – along with other returning and migrating birds as outlined below.

OTHER BIRDS OF INTEREST

As usual, CACKLING GEESSE had birders cackling in several locations, including Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford, MD on March 29.

TRUMPETER SWANS were reported in several locations, with sightings at

Patuxent Research Refuge – North Tract, Anne Arundel County, MD on March 30, and at Clifton Institute (Restricted Access), Fauquier, VA also on March 30.

EURASIAN WIGEONS are continuing in the area, with one reported at 5978 Old Hickory Fork Road, Abingdon, VA on March 27.

GREATER SCAUP was seen at several VA locations, including George Washington Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland, VA on March 30.

A COMMON EIDER was confirmed at the Lewes-Cape May Ferry dock in DE waters on March 26.

LONG-TAILED DUCKS continue at several locations, including Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Fairfax, VA on March 27.

RED-NECKED GREBE was reported from Piney Run Park, Carroll County, MD on March 29.

KING RAIL continued at Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford, MD as recently as March 29.

VIRGINIA RAILS are grunting at Heritage Community Park, Montgomery, VA with recent appearances on March 30.

A SANDHILL CRANE was seen on March 29 in Frederick County, MD. A breeding pair has returned to 6999 Rock Ledge Road, Accident, MD in Garrett County on March 29, apparently NOT by accident.

An AMERICAN AVOCET was reported at Back Creek Park in Talbot, MD on March 29.

Strutting his fancy stuff was a RUFF at Wharton's Bluff (seen at a private residence) in Sussex, DE on March 31.

GREAT CORMORANT was at the Kent Point Marina, Queen Anne County, MD on March 29.

An ANHINGA snaked its way into view at Carson Wetland, Prince George, VA on March 27.

An AMERICAN BITTERN tried to elude birders at Bles Park, Loudoun, VA on March 27 but, alas, was seen in flight and heard calling to another one.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON was widely seen, including in an urban setting at Baker Park, Frederick, MD on March 28.

A NORTHERN SHRIKE was hunting and impaling insects at Sully Woodlands, Fairfax, Virginia on March 30.

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE continues at Smith Farm, Lunenburg, VA on March 31.

A MARSH WREN is still seen at Blandy Farm/State Arboretum in Clarke CO, VA, with one encountered on March 30, among other dates.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS are widely reported. Sighting include March 29 at 3837 Balsam Road, Calvert, MD and March 27 in Montgomery County, MD (exact location 38.9756,-77.1408 GPS).

EVENING GROSBEAKS are still hanging out gorging on Black Oil sunflower seed, with several at 44 Longview Drive, Bacova, VA on March 30 and three more at Burke's Garden, Gose Mill Pond, Tazewell, VA also on March 30.

Late AMERICAN TREE SPARROWS are lingering, with two at 90 Weaver Road, Accident, MD on March 28.

VESPER SPARROW was reported on March 29 at Southwest Area Park in Baltimore, MD and several at the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital in Nottoway, VA on March 31.

A LINCOLN'S SPARROW continues at 1203 Tugwell Drive, Catonsville, MD on March 29.

A LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH was flying along a stream off Big Gunpowder Trail, Distillery Road, Baltimore MD on March 28.

WARBLERS!! Yes, Warbler chasing season is here, my favorite (birding) time of year!

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLERS are all over the place, with VA sightings at Mallardee Farm B&B in Williamsburg; James City County on March 30; New Kent on March 30; and Swift Creek Court in Fairfax, also on March 30. Numerous other VA sightings were reported all last week.

YELLOW WARBLER is here at Rutherford Lane, Augusta CO, VA on March 28.
PROTHONOTARY WARBLERS are winging in at Great Dismal Swamp NWR at Jericho Ditch Lane in Suffolk Co. VA on March 30, and at New Dragon Bridge Road in Middlesex, VA on March 28.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER was seen at Watkins Pond, King Farm Stream Park, Montgomery Co. MD on March 29.

PALM WARBLERS are moving through, with several seen by many birders at Greensprings Interpretive Trail in James City, VA on March 28. Another was at Dutch Gap Conservation Area in Chesterfield, VA on March 29. One was seen drinking beer and sunning itself at Buckroe Beach, Hampton, VA on March 27.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER is not at all that uncommon this year. One was noted at Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore, MD on March 29. Another is at Deal Island WMA in Somerset Co, MD on March 28.

A BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER was reported at Hermitage Foundation Museum, 737 New Jersey Avenue, Norfolk VA on March 29.

PRAIRIE WARBLER was singing like a cowboy at grid (36.5740,-78.9283), Halifax, Virginia on March 30.

NASHVILLE WARBLER was reported, with one at Clark Yard, Windsor Point, Norfolk VA on March 31.

AMERICAN REDSTART delighted, with a male in full Halloween colors at 451 Coxendale Road, Chester VA on March 29.

NORTHERN PARULA was at the Richmond & Danville Rail-Trail—Hackberry Road Access, Pittsylvania, VA on March 31.

Lastly, a PAINTED BUNTING was in full technicolor display at 737 New Jersey Avenue in Norfolk, VA on March 29.

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 Naturalist 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