

middle atlantic coast



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This season has frequently been referred to as the one where “everything that could irrupt, did.” Indeed, by October it seemed we would be in for the winter of all winters, complete with the gamut of finches, a wealth of owls and northern raptors, and constant amusement from Red-breasted Nuthatches. Alas, most movements reached their zenith early in the season and by December even the once-ubiquitous siskins were hard to come by. Two hurricanes hit the Region, but each behaved quite differently and had drastically different effects on birdlife, though seabird fallout was noted with both storms. Several species reported without details were not included. All locations can be assumed to be in Maryland except that each Virginia locale is annotated the *first time* it appears in the text.

SA The two Regional hurricanes this season (*Dennis* and *Floyd*) behaved very differently and had very different effects on seabirds in the Region. *Dennis* arrived off the mid-Atlantic Coast 30 Aug and stalled offshore for seven days, blasting our coastlines with persistent easterlies. Comparatively little seabird fallout was observed at the C.B.B.T. or elsewhere until it moved onshore on 5 Sep. At the C.B.B.T. 5 Sep (BP, JC, ESB, RM) were five each of Cory’s and Audubon’s Shearwaters, two Greater Shearwaters, one gadfly petrel sp. (probably Black-capped Petrel), and two Wilson’s Storm-Petrels. A most interesting observation there was a Brown Pelican devouring a hapless Audubon’s Shearwater (HTA). The most unusual

Abbreviations: Assat. (*Assateague Island N.S., Worcester, MD*); Bay (*Chesapeake Bay*); C.B.B.T. (*Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, Northampton, VA*); Chinc. (*Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA*); Craney (*Craney I. Disposal Area, Portsmouth, VA*); E.S.V.N.W.R. (*Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R., Northampton, VA*); Hart (*Hart-Miller I., Baltimore, MD*); Kipt. (*Kiptopeke S.P., Northampton, VA*); p.a. (*pending acceptance by state records committee*); P.R.N.A.S. (*Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Saint Mary’s, MD*); P.L.S.P. (*Pt. Lookout S.P., Saint Mary’s, MD*); S.P.S.P. (*Sandy Point S.P., Anne Arundel, MD*); W.T.P. (*waste water treatment plant*).

LOOMS THROUGH STORKS

Red-throated Loons seem to be more common on the lower Nanticoke R., *Wicomico*, than previously, with 12 there 28 Nov (JLS). Despite at least two credible reports, the **Pacific Loon** remained through this year as the most surprising omission from the MD state list. This year, finally, the species was well-documented when a report of a possible Pacific Loon 12 Nov (p.a. D. Burggraf) on Conowingo L., *Harford/Cecil*, was followed up and confirmed 14 Nov (†P. O’Brien, EB). Many observers saw this juv. through 28 Nov (SHM, MJI) and it was well-photographed from a boat 19 Nov (ph. M. Hoffman). A juv. **Pacific** was also at Romancoke, *Queen Anne’s*, 28 Nov (†JLS), presumably a different bird (although the sightings did not overlap). A small pulse of Red-necked Grebes comprised one imm. at

effect of *Dennis* was the massive beaching of dead and dying shearwaters along the coastal barrier islands. At Chinc., refuge staff reported salvaging multiple individuals of Cory’s and Manx Shearwaters, while Paxton reported counting over 100 Cory’s Shearwaters and nearly as many Manx/Audubon’s Shearwaters at Assat. Apparently the stationary nature of the storm simply wore out these birds, resulting in massive beaching unlike that seen in any other Regional storm to date. A live Manx Shearwater salvaged from the beach at Ocean City during *Dennis* may become Maryland’s first specimen (*fide* Tri-State Rescue, *). That a number of Manx were seen is interesting because pelagic trips at this season rarely record them and find

Black Hills Res., *Montgomery*, 27–30 Oct (DC, AR, JLS) and two ad. and one imm. at Conowingo L. 28 Oct (EB), the imm. lingering to 13 Nov (EB). An Eared Grebe at P.R.N.A.S. 11–19 Oct (Walt Graham, ph. GM, KR et al.) was extremely well-documented. A **Western Grebe** at Assat. 1–6 Nov (p.a. †P. Decker, v.o.) would constitute *Worcester’s* second if accepted.

Remains of a **Brown Booby** salvaged from Fisherman I., *Northampton, VA*, in Nov would constitute the first specimen and only the fifth VA record (*fide* ESB). It was most likely a deposit from Sep hurricanes because the carcass was badly decomposed. Though identification was apparently well established by measurements, current whereabouts of the specimen are not clear. A much-enjoyed **American White Pelican** was discovered at Wilson Bridge 17 Aug (BC, F. W. Fallon) where it obligingly criss-crossed all three Regional boundaries to provide D.C.’s first (p.a.), Maryland’s 25th (p.a.) and *Prince George’s* third, and one of few non-coastal Virginia sightings in *Fairfax*. It lingered through 21 Sep (m.ob. ph.†). If arriving from the West, one seen 10 Aug (*fide* FS) at Great Falls, *Montgomery*, may have been the same bird. Other Regional white pelicans were at Kipt. 9 Oct (RLA) and an undocumented *Queen Anne’s* first at The Wildfowl Trust 10 Nov (p.a. H. A. Patton). Brown Pelicans were widely seen in the Bay, but interestingly the farthest-flung individuals occurred in late Nov. There is precedence for late-season movement and

Audubon’s Shearwater far more common.

By contrast, *Floyd* dealt a solid blow to the Outer Banks and Tidewater VA before moving over the Eastern Shore of MD and on up the Atlantic Coast. It passed through the Region quickly and with its track east of the Bay (where observers are fewest) it only carried a moderate storm load, at least compared to Hurricane *Fran* of 1996, which tracked far inland and dumped hundreds of storm birds Regionwide. In Maryland the storm-blown tubenoses 16 Sep were an *Oceanodroma* storm-petrel at N. Beach, *Calvert*, (p.a. JLS) and a Leach’s Storm-Petrel at Ocean City Inlet (C&DB). Several parties that walked the beaches found nothing at all.

this year there were five, a *Charles* first, at the Rte. 301 bridge over the Potomac R. 23 Nov (J. Smith) and one at N. Beach 26 Nov (DB, GM, BC). Far out-of-place inland and defying explanation was one at L. Artemesia, *Prince George's*, 25 Sep (DM). Very early imm. Great Cormorants were at P.L.S.P. 8 Aug (ph.PC) and Havre de Grace, *Harford*, 28 Aug (EB, Brian Monk). Locally rare were one at Jug Bay 2–6 Nov (DM, DB et al.) and an ad. at Conowingo L. 5 Nov (EB). A leucistic Double-crested Cormorant was seen at Fisherman I. 11 Nov (W. Beebe). Up to two Anhingas continued at Stumpy L., Virginia Beach, through at least 2 Oct (v.o.). **Frigatebirds**, presumably Magnificent, were at Suffolk, VA, 30 Aug (B. Chambers), Perrin Cr., *Gloucester*, VA, 2 Oct (v.t. *fide* LL), and West Pt. Bridge, *Prince William*, VA, 6 Oct (W. Baker). Only the Suffolk bird could really be associated with hurricane. A Least Bittern at Chinc. 2 Oct (KG) was late. The last Green Heron was at Jug Bay 7 Nov (DB, CMM) and 25 Cattle Egrets were notably late at Girdletree 15 Nov (J&DC). Four White Ibis at Hooper's I., *Dorchester*, 1 Sep (KR) were especially remarkable given all were adults. An imm. **Wood Stork** at Walkersville was a one-day wonder 2 Aug (p.a. ph. WLH et al.), but was well photographed for a *Frederick* first.

WATERFOWL THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The only Gr. White-fronted Goose reported was one at Curles Neck Farm, *Henrico*, VA, 11–14 Nov (F. Day et al.). Easy to find in the Region with any effort, Ross's Goose reports continue, with sightings from Chinc., Hog I., Surry, VA, Curles Neck Farm, and Snow Hill, *Worcester*. An ad. at Kipt. 18–22 Nov (M. Argenteau et al.) associated with Canada Geese and provided a rare area record. A rare event for the Upper Bay was an impressive Brant flight 24 Oct: Blom counted 117 in several groups flying down the Susquehanna R. from Conowingo Dam, *Harford/Cecil*, while a different group of 50 passed Turkey Pt., *Cecil* (S. Crabtree, LF). With its large Canada Goose populations, the Region gets a lion's share of records of small-race individuals, most presumably *hutchinsii*. This season singles were at Dameron, *Saint Mary's*, 6, 7, and 11 Oct (PC), Eldersburg, *Carroll*, 11 Oct (RFR), and Daniels, *Howard*, 1 Nov (BSO). A notable high count was the 642 N. Pintail in the Bloodsworth I., *Dorchester*, area 30 Oct (HTA). The first Eur. Wigeon was early at Deal I. W.M.A., *Somerset*, 25 Sep (SHD), followed by single males at Airrie, *Fauquier*, VA,



Maryland's first record of the Pacific Loon was provided by this juvenile along the Susquehanna River 12–28 Nov 1999 and photographed 19 Nov. Photograph/Mark L. Hoffman

24 Oct (SHe), W. Ocean City Pond 30 Oct–7 Nov (E. Joyce, ph. JLS, v.o.), Summerfield L., VA, 18 Nov (SHe), and Chinc. 26–27 Nov (C. Loeper, J&DC, BSo). This year amounted to a dismal one for eiders. The only 1999 King Eider in MD was an unseasonable female at Ocean City 5 Sep (ph. JLS, RL). Com. Eiders showed up only at Cape Charles, *Northampton*, VA, 22 Nov (ESB) and at both Chinc. and Ocean City 27 Nov (L&DM). The first Harlequin Ducks were three at Ocean City 15 Nov; the first in VA were two females at C.B.B.T. 27 Nov (L&DM). Four Com. Mergansers at Susquehanna S.P., *Harford*, 18 Sep (MH) were out of season but at a traditional location where birds sometimes summer. Breeding (unknown in the Region) on this river is conceivable. As in several recent years, Ruddy Ducks seemed widespread and in excellent numbers.

The Kiptopeke Hawkwatch was manned this year by Hopkins (776.05 hours), and despite losing many count days to hurricanes, she tallied 42,681 hawks and vultures (Table 1; see www.cvwo.org and www.bird-source.org/HawkWatch for more details). Notable flights were 238 Ospreys 18 Sep and a late 16 on 12 Nov, 20 Bald Eagles 28 Oct, seven N. Goshawk 17 Nov (record), 289 Red-tailed Hawks 8 Nov, four Rough-legged Hawks 19 Oct (record), 234 Peregrine Falcon 26 Sep (second-highest total), and 275 Merlin 27 Sep and 234 on 29 Sep, continuing the amazing run of high counts there in the last third of Sep. Surprisingly,

no unusual Am. Kestrel numbers were counted around 30 Sep, when Cape May had a whopping 4,000+ with nw. winds largely to blame. A disappointment was the lack of Swainson's Hawks this year (eight last year), though a juv. was at Kipt. 23 Aug (BT), the earliest Regional record. The invasion of Rough-legged Hawks (7 light, 6 dark, 1 intermediate) and N. Goshawks was surely the highlight; given the preponderance of unfavorable nw. winds in Nov one wonders how many moved down the other side of the peninsula and were missed. Both were widely reported elsewhere as well, with the first Rough-legged at Hart 9 Oct (EJS et al.). A juv. Mississippi Kite was at Gunston Hall, *Fairfax*, VA, 30 Aug (Earl Baisinger) and another was near Williamsburg, VA, 5 Sep (BT).

Alarming, of 31 N. Bobwhite reports, most were of singles and only three of covys of 10–15. Greg Kearns again conducted banding of Soras at Jug Bay from early Sep–early Nov. This year's total was only 300 (compared to last year's 1,300) and the lower proportion of juveniles (5:1 vs. 15:1 last year) indicated a poor breeding year, doubtless due to drought conditions in the Northeast. Up to 60 radio transmitters were fitted on the birds in early Oct and a surprising number of Soras (up to 20!) lingered through mid-Nov. Also surprising was the departure of about 12 on one early Nov night following a cold front. A Black Rail was flushed from a field by a mower near Locustville, *Accomack*, VA, 12 Nov (G.

Reiger). A Virginia Rail at Hughes Hollow, *Montgomery*, 28 Nov (AR) was surprisingly late for an inland locale. Com. Moorhens were out of place at Centennial L., *Howard*, 17–22 Sep (E. Holdridge, v.o.), Clopper L., *Montgomery*, 19 Oct (AR), and Huntley Meadows, *Fairfax*, VA, 9–30 Nov+ (EH et al.), with two imm. at Dutch Gap Conservation Area, *Chesterfield*, VA, 26–30 Sep (LL et al.). An ad. Sandhill Crane at Tarbuton Mill Rd., *Talbot*, was discovered by birders 25 Oct (L. Willey) and remained to winter, but apparently was present for “several months” according to the farmer. A Jul or Aug arrival would not match this species’ migration peak, possibly raising suspicions about its natural occurrence.

As in most recent years, Am. Golden-Plovers again were reported in excellent numbers. It is encouraging to think the increase results from population recovery, but it seems more likely a result of better coverage, especially with increased Eastern Shore focus. The highlight was 151 (mostly juv.) at a flooded field in *Caroline* 26 Sep (JLS). A Piping Plover was found again at Bethel Beach Preserve, *Mathews*, VA, 6–9 Aug (J&DM). Black-necked Stilts usually depart early, so two at St. Jerome’s Cr. 1 Sep (KR) were late (but were a *Saint Mary’s* second) and one at Chinc. 19 Sep (EH, B. Leeuwenberg) was especially so. Though Delaware gets hundreds, the Region’s only regular Am. Avocet locations are Chinc., Craney, and Hart (one 28 Aug; EJS). Four at Scotland, *Saint Mary’s*, 5 Aug (PC) were rarities. Small ponds at Ridgely W.T.P., *Caroline*, received widespread attention. Highlights among 18 shorebird species were an Am. Golden-Plover 9–10 Aug (GF, L. Roslund), *Caroline’s* second Hudsonian Godwit record with nine 25–26 Aug (RL, ph. JLS, ph. GMJ), Sanderlings 4 Aug (RH, LS) and 15 Aug (JLS), and seven White-rumped Sandpipers 20 Sep (JLS, MH). The only other Hudsonian Godwit was at Craney 11–12 Nov (D. Clark, D. L. Hughes). Havre de Grace produced good shorebirds, the best a Red Knot 18 Aug (EB). The Virginia Barrier Islands support immense staging Whimbrel flocks, evidenced by a count of 1,000+ in the Cobb I. area 15 Aug (J. S. Weske *vide* HTA). Baird’s Sandpipers were found a number of times, with reports from *Wicomico*, *Frederick*, *Baltimore*, *Caroline*, and *Dorchester* and two at Aldino Sod Farm, *Harford*, 28 Aug (EB) and N. Beach 8 Oct (JLS). A Purple Sandpiper was at S.P.S.P., the first there in many years in Nov (HLW). Buff-breasted Sandpipers were seen widely; in addition to birds at tradi-

tional sites such as P.R.N.A.S., Hart, Bullfrog Rd. Pond, *Frederick*, and John Brown Rd. Turf Farm, *Queen Anne’s*, were a flyby in the central Bay, *Somerset*, 21 Aug (JLS) and *Caroline’s* second just n. of Ridgely 4 Sep (NS, FS). Fourteen was a record high for P.R.N.A.S. 9 Sep (KR). Single Long-billed Dowitchers reported regularly at Hunting Cr., *Fairfax*, VA, 21 Aug–21 Oct (KG, m.ob.) involved one or several birds. A much-admired juv. Red-necked Phalarope at P.L.S.P. 5–9 Aug (ph. JLS, ph. GMJ, m.ob.) was a *Saint Mary’s* first until *Floyd* dropped seven in at P.R.N.A.S. 16 Sep (KR). One at Opal, *Fauquier*, VA, 22–23 Aug (†TMD, KG et al.) was a great inland sighting; 17 at Craney 7 Sep and 16 the next day (LW) was unprecedented, undoubtedly due to *Dennis*. Other *Dennis* Red-neckeds were two at the C.B.B.T. 5 Sep (RLA et al.), two at Williamsburg 5 Sep (BT), and one at Spring Meadow Farms, *Howard*, 6 Sep (P. Norman); one at Rum Pt. Golf Course, *Worcester*, 16 Sep was surely a gift of *Floyd* (SHD).

JAEGERS

THROUGH GNATCATCHERS

Hurricanes moved jaegers into the Bay, with firsts in Maryland in recent history. A Pomarine at P.L.S.P. 8 Sep (GM, JLS) was a county first, as was a Parasitic there 2 Oct (GM, GMJ). An imm. Parasitic at Cobb I., *Charles*, was likewise a county first 17 Sep (GMJ) and was preceded by light adults at P.R.N.A.S. (KR) and N. Beach 16 Sep (T. Harten). Two jaeger sp. were seen from nearby Rose Haven, *Anne Arundel*, 16 Sep (B. Abrams, TMD). C.B.B.T. gets jaegers considerably more regularly, but a dark juv. Long-tailed 5 Sep (JC, BP, RM) was superb, as was one of few MD reports, a juv. off Ocean City 19 Sep (p.a.BP). Little known

on Virginia’s Piedmont outside of the context of storms, counts of 175 Laughing Gulls near Bristow, *Prince William*, VA, 30 Sep (TMD) and up to 400 there a month later may indicate more regular presence in some sectors. An interesting leucistic Laughing Gull was at E.A. Vaughn W.M.A., *Worcester*, 16 Aug (DM). The Region continues to produce Franklin’s Gulls regularly. A first-winter at Haines Pt., D.C., lingered 7–18 Sep (OJ et al.) and Craney had one 23 Oct (C. Smith). Brown’s Station Landfill, *Prince George’s*, perhaps the most regular Regional locale, produced lone first-winters 16 (GMJ) and 30 Oct (ph. OJ), joined by another 22 Oct (JLS, GMJ, JBC), probably involving the same bird on the three dates. A first-winter was at Craney 22 Oct (C. Smith). August arrival of juv. Bonaparte’s Gulls is always interesting; this year one was at Seneca, *Montgomery*, 11 Aug (DC) and another at the Wilson Bridge 14 Aug (DC). An Iceland Gull at Linkwood, *Dorchester*, 27 Nov (JBC, M. Callahan) was a bit early. The much-acclaimed **Kelp Gull** continued through the season at Sandgates, *Saint Mary’s*.

Two Gull-billed Terns at Vienna 10 Aug (D&CB) were a rare *Wicomico* second. A Royal Tern at Havre de Grace was out of place 2 Sep (R. Hagenston) and may have been deposited by *Dennis*. Another at Gravelly Pt., D.C., was rare so far up the Potomac R. 13 Sep (SS). Sandwich Terns staged a fine showing at the coast and in *Saint Mary’s*, with one ad. at Havre de Grace 10 Aug (EB, R. Hagenston) being the most unusual and providing a *Harford* first. In the winds of *Dennis*, an ad. Roseate Tern at Magotha Landing, *Northampton*, was out of place away from barrier islands 5 Sep (ESB, BP, JC). Better still was an ad. **Arctic**



An immature Franklin’s Gull with Laughing Gulls at Brown Station Landfill, Prince Georges, Maryland, 23 Oct 1999. Photograph/Jim Stasz

Tern at the C.B.B.T. 2–5 Sep (RM, ESB, BP, JC et al.), a first there and one of the latest Regional records. Least Terns withdraw sharply in early Sep, so a juv. at Ocean City 17 Sep (JLS) and one at Bethel Beach Preserve 20 Sep (J&DM) were noteworthy. Strays far up the Potomac R. occurred at Ft. Belvoir, *Fairfax*, VA, 18 Aug (Greg Fleming) and Jones Pt., D.C., 16 Sep (SS), the latter the result of *Floyd*. Nine Bridled Terns on the 12 Sep (BP et al.) pelagic from Virginia Beach was a decent tally. During *Dennis* a single Sooty/Bridled Tern was seen over E.S.V.N.W.R. 30 Aug (JC) while a **Bridled Tern**, the second away from the MD coast and first for *Saint Mary's*, was at P.L.S.P. 2–7 Sep (†PC et al.); it was joined by a second bird 7 Sep (p.a. †PC). Also storm-related were Black Skimmers at S.P.S.P. 6 Sep (S. Riccardi) and at Georgetown Res., D.C., 7 Sep (T. Unseth, RH, OJ et al.). Single Bridleds on the MD coast were one imm. roosting with terns at W. Ocean City (C&DB) and one flyby at Ocean City Inlet (JLS, RL). One at P.R.N.A.S. was more unusual (p.a. †KR). Two **Sooty Terns** seen 16 Sep were a *Saint Mary's* first at P.R.N.A.S. (p.a. †KR); three were at Ocean City Inlet (p.a. †C&DB) and two were at Back Bay N.W.R. 2 Sep (L. Gore). Black Terns made a good showing in Aug, including one inland at Browns Bridge, *Howard*, 22 Aug (J&DC et al.) and firsts for Ridgely W.W.T.P., with two 26 Aug (JLS, GMJ) and one 24 Sep (SHM), also the last of the season. Hurricanes did not have a noticeable effect on Black Terns. A flyby **Thick-billed Murre** at Ocean City Inlet 6 Nov (p.a. †JLS) would constitute Maryland's ninth and the third for November.

A small pulse of Snowy Owls resulted in one at Chinc. 26 Nov (C. Leoper). Evidence of an excellent Short-eared Owl year were up to three at Bull Run Post Office Rd., *Fairfax*, VA, 24 Nov+ (B. Frazier) and a high of 12 at Deal I. W.M.A. 27 Nov (JLS, MH, K. Fehskens).

The latest reported Ruby-throated Hummingbird was at a Towson, *Baltimore*, feeder 16–30 Oct (J. Murphy). Rufous Hummingbirds are nothing short of regular and annual these days. This year one was at a *Carroll* feeder 25 Sep+, while another arrived at Paul Dowell's *Prince George's* feeder in early Nov+; both provided county firsts, were banded and photographed by Gustafson (p.a.), and were identified as ad. females. The real stage was at Vienna, *Fairfax*, where Mary & Luther Martin began hosting an im. female Rufous ("Ms. Rufous") 31 Oct (or earlier?). It lingered

through the end of the season (m.ob. ph.), being later joined by two others (see winter report)!

A flyby ad. **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** was heading n. at Kipt. 26 Oct (p.a. JC) for about Virginia's fourth record. A **Gray Kingbird** at Sunset Beach Inn, *Northampton*, 29 Oct (B. J. Rose) was about as unusual, constituting Virginia's ninth; another was seen 19 Sep (R. H. Swiader) at Lynnhaven Inlet, Virginia Beach. The only W. Kingbird was enjoyed near Kipt. 10–11 Oct (B. Ake, m.ob.). Oyster, *Northampton*, VA, produced 535 E. Kingbirds 5 Sep (HTA). A shrike at a Bel Air, *Harford*, feeder 27–28 Nov (M. Muth) must have been a Northern, but one at Reisters-town, *Baltimore*, 27 Oct (GF) was perhaps more likely a Loggerhead (as it was originally identified). Essentially gone from the Region, single Loggerheads at Remington, *Fauquier*, 23 Aug (TMD et al.), at Lilypons, *Frederick*, 28–30 Nov (WLH, CMM), and near Poolesville, *Montgomery*, 24 Nov+ (L. Schindler) made for an above-average total. A Warbling Vireo at Rock Cr. Park, D.C., 21 Oct (GM, BC) was exceptionally late.

Fewer late-lingering swallows were reported than usual, exceptions being a Bank on 11 Oct at Perryman, *Harford* (RFR) and a 3 Nov (CMM) N. Rough-winged at P.L.S.P. corresponding closely with a large eastward displacement of Cave Swallows by a low-pressure system. This exceptional movement brought a **Cave Swallow** (p.a.) to E.S.V.N.W.R. 4 Nov (BS, ESB, BT), 6 Nov (B. Williams), 12 Nov (BS), and two 18 Nov (*fide* ESB). Virginia's first report came 1 Nov 1998 from the same area. Red-breasted Nuthatches invaded the Region in force, the first reports coming 22 Aug, with daily sightings thereafter. On 12 Sep (LF, MWW) 50+ were at Turkey Pt., *Cecil*, and comparable numbers were widespread with reports from nearly every backyard. By late Nov the species was less in evidence but a good number stayed to winter. Five Sedge Wrens at Easton W.T.P. 22 Aug (JR) was a great number there; one at Indian Cr. W.M.A. 1 Oct (JLS) and two there the next day (GMJ) were rare for *Charles*. One was at Dulles Greenways, *Loudoun*, 10 Aug (KG). Late Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were at Occoquan Bay N.W.R., *Fairfax*, VA, 6 Oct–21 Nov (D. Smith) while one long-stayer in Cape Charles was first seen 28 Nov (ESB).

WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Blue-winged Warbler with an injured foot remained in D.C. on the late date of 23 Oct (OJ, RH, LS). A very late Cape May Warbler was in a Williamsburg, VA, backyard 29 Nov

SA One of the most incredible movements of the season was documented by the growing guild of N. Saw-whet Owl banders across the Region. There were four operational banding stations this year, Assateague, Kiptopeke, Jug Bay, and Adkins Arboretum, *Caroline*, all using powerful audio lures and mist nets. These stations and others outside the Region reported a boom year, with record or near-record numbers and a high proportion (80% at Kiptopeke) of juveniles. The Jug Bay station captured a record 45 owls in 35 nights 13 Oct–27 Nov; all but five were juvs. The best single night on the coast was 7–8 Nov (BS, BPa) when the Kiptopeke station (in its sixth year) banded a national record of 173 new birds (plus seven recaptures). Compared to 1995, the only other invasion year with comparable coverage, this movement appeared to be stronger in the mountains but weaker on the coast (1,007 banded at Kiptopeke in 1995). Montane movement is a full two to three weeks earlier than coastal movement and involves a higher proportion of adults. Migration is bi-modal on the coast, with juveniles peaking in early Nov and adults peaking later in Nov. A surprising reverse migrant banded at Kiptopeke 7 Nov and was recovered at Cape May the next night! These invasions can be closely tied to periods of extremely high owl productivity, given high ratios of juveniles. At Kiptopeke in 1996, 86% of 91 birds caught were adults.

(M. Weber). A 7 Nov (KG) Blackpoll Warbler at Dyke Marsh was unusual. One of the better warbler movements this year occurred 12 Sep, when the 16 spp. at Turkey Pt. (LF, MWW et al.) included 50 Magnolias, 30 Chestnut-sideds, 12 Tennessees, and ten Black-throated Blues. A Canada Warbler banded 1 Aug (JG) at Chino Farms was notably early. At the small oasis of Rock Cr. Park in D.C., an impressive collection of early warblers 10 Aug (GM, BC) included one Nashville, two Chestnut-sideds, one Blackburnian, and two Canadas.

A wintering Le Conte's Sparrow found at E.S.V.N.W.R. 21 Nov (BS) and remained at least through the CBC season. The only inland Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was at University of MD Central Farm 22–23 Oct

(BO, ph. GMJ, m.ob.), about the 10th inland record for MD and third for *Howard*. No exceptional Clay-colored Sparrow numbers were reported from the coast, but singles at Chicawicomico Cr., *Dorchester*, 25 Sep (JLS), a county first, and P.L.S.P. 1 Nov (PC) were unusual. Maryland's earliest White-crowned Sparrow on record was found 18 Sep in Finksburg, *Carroll* (RFR). Rare Midwest *Zonotrichia* staged an unusual movement. An ad. **Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow** banded at Chino Farms, *Queen Anne's*, 3 Oct (p.a. JG, RL) was on the heels of one banded there in the spring. An imm. *gambelii* was at Dameron, *Saint Mary's*, 14–15 Oct (p.a. ph. PC) and Virginia's first was an ad. at E.S.V.N.W.R. 12 Nov (BS, ESB). An ad. **Harris's Sparrow** (p.a.) staked out the Harvey's feeder in Sykesville, to be found 18 Nov when Dave and Maureen returned from travel. It lingered well into the winter and was enjoyed by many (m.ob. ph.).

Phragmites stands at Oyster, *Northampton*, VA, are a great location to watch numerous migrants settle in for the night. Large numbers of Bobolinks usually are found, but 13,010 there 5 Sep (HTA) was well above average. An ad. male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Hooper's I., 18 Sep (HTA, P. R. Spitzer) was the only report. Purple Finches moved in good numbers, with near-daily reports 6 Oct+ (following a few Sep reports), though few large numbers were reported. Pine Siskins staged an even more impressive movement: by the end of Oct, judging from Internet reports, hardly a feeder in the Region lacked siskins. The movement rushed in, with the first report from Kipt. 1 Oct (SH) followed by widespread reports two weeks later. To the disappointment of most, the invasion fizzled by mid-Nov. Com. Redpolls also flirted with a large-scale invasion but their movement was limited to a distinct push 12–13

SA Given extreme variation and complexities among the Slate-colored and Oregon Junco groups, claims of both Oregon and Pink-sided from the East are shrouded in mystery. Further, since juncoes are not (presently) awarded specific status, they are rarely well documented or given due attention by the birders. Thus, top honors for the most exciting bird of the season may go to a male **Pink-sided Junco** found at Kipt. 10 Nov by Hopkins. Widely seen and photographed by many through at least Jan, this individual represented one of few ironclad East Coast records amid a swarm of suspected mis-identifications (though there may be a specimen from Maryland).

Nov, when reports came from Kipt. (four banded, a first there), Back Bay N.W.R., Assat., and C.B.B.T., the latter a first record there 12 Nov (C. Cabe). Outside this brief window, the only reports were of one banded 20 Nov (JG) at Chino Farms and one at E.S.V.N.W.R. 28 Nov (BS). Red Crossbills were more consistent, occurring at Kipt. almost daily 22 Oct+, with a high of 22 on 3 Nov (SH). Even White-winged Crossbills appeared, with a male at a Stockton, *Worcester*, feeder 12–13 Nov (F. Hirst) and five flybys at E.S.V.N.W.R. 18 Nov (BS). The Evening Grosbeak movement peaked 1–13 Nov, with reports even from Virginia's Eastern Shore, which has not had them in several years. In keeping with the theme, Am. Goldfinches were in excellent numbers.

ADDENDA

The results of a fall hawkwatch at Snicker's Gap (on the Regional boundary) were omitted from the Fall 1998 report (*N. Am. Birds*

53:39–43). A record-smashing 19,004 Broad-winged Hawks were tallied 16 Sep (B Harry), comprising the bulk of the seasonal count of 25,889 Broad-wingeds (the average is 5,152) and 29,554 total hawks. The watch had its third **Swainson's Hawk** 13 Sep (B Abrams), one of few for the Virginia Piedmont, and a good count of 12 Peregrine Falcons 6 Oct (K. Kirkpatrick). *Accipiter* numbers were roughly half average, with N Goshawks under-represented (seven compared to an average of 21).

Observers (area compilers in boldface):

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Table 1. Results of the Kiptopeke Hawkwatch, Fall 1999

Species	1999 Total	Remarks
Black Vulture	782	
Turkey Vulture	4,188	
Osprey	3,085	up from 1998, below 5-year average
Bald Eagle	236	up from 1998, below 5-year average
Northern Harrier	1,626	near record 1,697 in 1995
Cooper's Hawk	1,902	
Northern Goshawk	27 juv.	record was 26 in 1997
Red-shouldered Hawk	145	
Broad-winged Hawk	956	low
Red-tailed Hawk	2,261	near record 2,370 in 1996
Rough-legged Hawk	14	doubles total of 23-year history of watch
Golden Eagle	14 juv.	
American Kestrel	9,678	
Merlin	2,086	average
Peregrine Falcon	897	

Place names that are frequently mentioned, but very long, may be abbreviated in a form such as "C.B.B.T." or "W.P.B.O." Such local abbreviations will be explained in a key at the beginning of the particular regional report in which they are used. In most regions, place names given in italic type are counties. Standard abbreviations that are used throughout *North American Birds* are keyed on page 20.