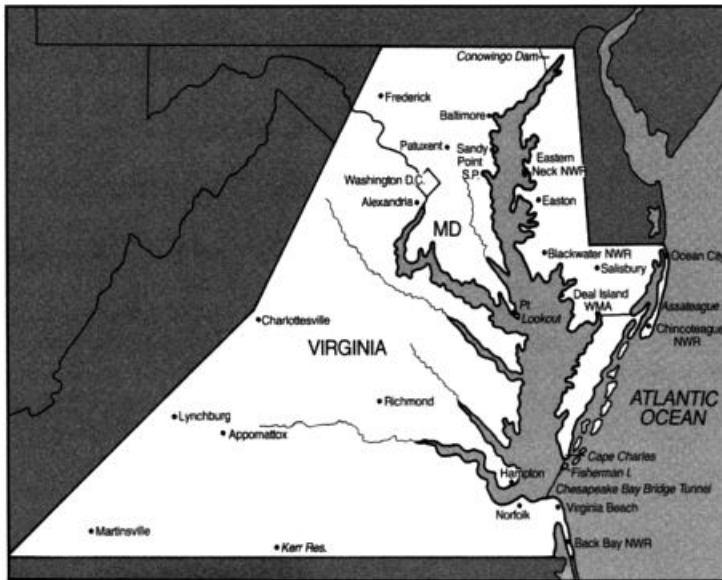


# Middle Atlantic Coast



## Marshall J. Iloff

901 Crystal Spring Farm Road  
Annapolis, Maryland 21403  
(milloff@aol.com)

Relatively little frontal activity was blamed both for the lack of many significant land-bird flights and the extremely poor hawkwatching season at Ft. Smallwood. Perhaps as a result, comments on this spring's migration were another echo that this year was even poorer than last. Among the season's highlights were a spectacular coastal fallout 19-20 May (compliments of one of the few fronts that did pass through) and yet another year of record-high Mississippi Kite numbers. The season was punctuated by such rarities as Pacific Loon, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, and Painted Bunting in Maryland, and White-faced Ibis, several Swallow-tailed Kites, Swainson's Hawk, Eurasian Collared-Dove, and possible Lark Bunting in Virginia.

For the 3rd year, the Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory (formerly K.E.ST.R.E.L.) has employed a field worker to survey the birdlife at the southern tip of the Delmarva Peninsula. Calvin Brennan returned for a second year and conducted regular surveys at

Kiptopeke S.P., Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R., and other hotspots in Northampton County, Virginia. Of particular interest were the comparative data he provided for the 19 May fallout, as well as a couple great rarities and an unusual Myrtle Warbler migration event. Note that due to reporting biases, all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland except that each Virginia location is mentioned the *first time* it is mentioned in the text.

**Abbreviations:** Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, s. of Northampton, VA); Chinc. (Chincoteague N.W.R., Accomack, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); Deal (Deal Island W.M.A., Somerset, MD); E.S.V.N.W.R. (Eastern Shore of Virginia N.W.R., Northampton, VA); Hart (Hart-Miller Dredge Spoil Containment Facility, Baltimore, MD); Huntley (Huntley Meadows C. P., Fairfax, VA); K.A.G. (Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, D.C.); P.R.N.A.S. (Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Saint Mary's, MD); Vaughn (E.A. Vaughn W.M.A., Worcester, MD).

## GREBES THROUGH WATERFOWL

Although Maryland has a number of reports now, an ad. **Pacific Loon** in nearly full alternate

plumage at Ocean City Inlet 15-25 May (ph †MJI, GLA, m. ob.) provided only the 2nd well-documented record for the state, the first documented record for *Worcester*, and the latest spring report. Out-of-place Eared Grebes included one 20 Mar (MH, DP) at Bald Friar Rd., seen in both *Harford* and *Cecil*, one at Hart 24 Mar (EJS), and one at traditional N. Beach, *Calvert* 8 Apr (JLS). A Red-necked Grebe was at Solomons, *Calvert* 6-7 Apr (B. Millsap, v. o.).

Observers had fairly good luck with Sooty Shearwaters from shore, including several sightings of singles at Ocean City 17-20 May and one at Chinc. 21 May (V. Kitchens et al.). More unusual were 2 Greater Shearwaters seen from Ocean City Inlet 24 May (DM, LB). A subad Great Cormorant lingered somewhat late at Ocean City 15 (MJI, GLA) & 19 May (MJI, GLA, MH), while an ad. was late and out of place at Sparrows Pt., *Baltimore* 13 May (EJS).

Easterly winds overnight and on the morning of 20 Mar produced a major Northern Gannet flight into the Bay, with at least 10,000 counted in 3 hours (ESB). An American White Pelican at Havre de Grace 13-15 Apr (A. Hirvonen, ph. vt †m. ob.) provided the 2nd well-documented record from *Harford*. Interestingly, one showed up to the n. in *Centre*, PA the next day. Since they are such a recent arrival in the Maryland portion of the Bay, we are just now learning the pattern of arrival for Brown Pelicans. Six at Smith I. 22 Mar (MC) and 2 at Elliott I. 25 Mar (HTA) were the first arrivals. On 5 May Armistead and party only found 6 on a full-day survey of *Dorchester*, but by 12 May (HTA et al.) there were 52, indicating a recent influx. Few were seen any farther up the Bay this spring until Jun.

A Tricolored Heron at K.A.G. 18 May (GM, BC, MB, MP) was a D.C. rarity. Likewise a Cattle Egret at Haines Pt., D.C. 27 May (PP) and one at L. Elkorn, *Howard* 20 Apr (B. Ott) were unusual inland. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Smith I. 12 Mar (MC) was quite early but not surprising at this cen. Bay location. This is the first year that there has been regular observer coverage there through the winter and early spring. Surprisingly irregular in *Worcester*, an ad. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at W Ocean City Pond 2 Apr (MJI) bested the 23 Apr 1992 record-early date for the county. An ad **White-faced Ibis** found at Chinc. 6 May (ph., †MJI, †GLA) and seen again 11 May (ESB et al.) furnished only the 4th report for Virginia, with all previous reports also hailing from Chincoteague in 1979, 1998, and 1999. It is possible that the same wandering ad. has been frequenting Glossy Ibis colonies in the area since 1998, but it is certain that White-faced Ibis is

being found Regionally and across the East far more frequently than in the past. An ad. White Ibis at Chinc. 19 Apr (†LN) corresponded to a weak pattern of mid-Apr occurrences n. of their regular range at Fisherman I. Always unusual in the Region and especially so in spring, a report of 10-12 Wood Storks flying over Hanover Courthouse, VA, was a shocker 10 Apr (D. Hopler).

The overwintering Greater White-fronted Goose at Harrison Rd., *Fauquier*, VA was last seen 13 Mar (SH), while a Ross's Goose at Blackwater N.W.R., *Dorchester* 11 Mar (HTA) was the last of the season and one of Maryland's later reports. The enigmatic Schoolhouse Pond swan remained through 23 Mar (JLS). Annual in the Region in recent years, and probably soon to be accorded status as a full species, a Common (Eurasian Green-winged) Teal at E.S.V.N.W.R. from the winter season remained to at least 3 Mar (ESB, CB), when it was seen at nearby Kiptopeke S.P. Eurasian Wigeon from the winter season were last noted at Fairlee, *Fauquier*, VA 7 Mar (SH) and at Chinc. 9 Mar (*fide* ESB), and another was at W. Ocean City Pond 1 Mar (E. Lawler). Harlequin Ducks lingered at C.B.B.T. through at least early May (CB). A female Hooded Merganser was found sitting on 12 eggs in a Wood Duck box at Huntley 25 Mar (K. Hollinga). While the species breeds at Huntley regularly, confirmation is more often in the form of nestlings, such as the 5 seen with a female 25 May (S. Eccles). A Common Merganser at K.A.G. 31 May (MB) was late.

## HAWKS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The Ft. Smallwood, *Anne Arundel* hawkwatch logged 70 more hours of coverage this year, with 514 total hours 9 Feb–8 Jun (*fide* SR). Despite the record coverage, the season total was a depressing 9785, the 3rd lowest total since regular (350+ hours) coverage began in 1993. The poor totals were blamed on the lack of good frontal passages, which resulted in a persistent lack of strong southerly or westerly winds needed at this site. Seasonal totals of 130 Northern Harriers, 333 American Kestrels, and 717 Broad-winged Hawks were all notably low. Mississippi Kites, however, continued their streak at the Fort, being seen for the 5th consecutive year. The first was seen 5 May, followed by others 8 & 14 May, 6 (a new single-day high count) on 23 May, and singles 28 & 29 May. The 11 Mississippi Kites surpassed the previous seasonal record of 4. The 5 May Mississippi Kite was an ad., the only one out of the 27 Mississippi recorded here since 1993.

Mississippi Kites elsewhere also reflected a

continued increase in the Region. The recently resident pair that must be nesting near Huntley returned there 6 May (D. Hinkley). A selection of other reports included one ad./subad. in Annapolis 11 May (DM), one at the Rte. 235 intersection with Rte. 5, *Saint Mary's* 15 May (MC), a subad. at P.W.R.C. 17-18 May (D. Dawson, m. ob.), one at Selby's Landing, *Prince George's* 22 May (DBY), an ad. at E.S.V.N.W.R. 24-28 May (BT, ESB), and singles at Woodbridge (B. Studholme) and over Leakin Park, *Baltimore* 27 May (RFR et al.). **Swallow-tailed Kites** put in another strong showing in *Northampton*, VA, with one at E.S.V.N.W.R. 15 Apr (CB), one near Oyster 21 Apr (*fide* CB) that was possibly the same bird, and one at Weirwood Station 26 May (R. L. Anderson, T. Tran). Another at Pickering Cr. Audubon Center 5 May (J. Wilson, G. Ratchliff et al.) would provide a *Talbot* first but was not described. Taber manned the College Creek hawkwatch in Williamsburg, VA for 78 hours this spring and was rewarded with a dark imm. **Swainson's Hawk** 22 Apr. The dark morph *calurus* Red-tailed Hawk that wintered at the I-66 interchange with Rte. 246 was last seen in late Mar (TMD). Dark Rough-legged Hawks were last seen at Deal 14 Apr (SHD, C&DB) and at Elliott I. 13 Apr (HTA). An ad. Harris's Hawk with bands and jesses was noted in

*Montgomery* 9 Apr (ph. J. Wilkerson). There are at least four previous reports of such escapees in the state, so it must be quite a popular species with falconers.

Droege discovered an active **Sharp-shinned Hawk** nest at Soldier's Delight, *Baltimore* 4 May, which represents the first confirmed nesting for the Region in over 25 years. The nest was 15 m up in a Virginia Pine. Harry Armistead mentioned noticing that Osprey in the Region return earlier to freshwater locales than to saltwater locations, supported by the 28 that he counted in inland *Caroline* 17 Mar while the species still had not returned to more brackish waters around his *Talbot* home the next day. This seems to hold throughout the Region, as the earliest Ospreys often appear far up the Bay tributaries. A Peregrine Falcon seen 10 Apr (W. Cole) at the drilling structure off Cove Pt., *Calvert* appeared to be territorial. This would be a new nesting location.

Two Sandhill Cranes were seen circling n. at E.S.V.N.W.R. 14 Apr (CB, BT). Single Sandhill Cranes seen in s. *Northampton* at Capeville 20 Apr (ESB, SWH), near Eastville 23 Apr (CB), and at E.S.V.N.W.R. 13-14 May (G. Weinberger, L. Cole, m. ob.) may have been one of the same individuals. A Clapper Rail at Ft. Smallwood 21 Apr (SR et al.) provided a rare migrant record for the species on the upper Bay, and one found



This Pacific Loon photographed 24 May at Ocean City Inlet is one of few satisfactorily documented from the Region  
Photograph by Marshall J. Iloff.

dead at Bay Hundred, *Talbot* 12 May (JR) was another migrant or a nester near the n. limit for the species on the Eastern Shore. Night listening in bayside *Accomack*, VA produced 81+ Clapper, 42 Virginia, and 3 Black Rails 11 May (ESB et al.). Unusual inland Common Moorhens appeared at Warfield's Pond, *Howard* 15 May (K. Schwartz) and Piney Run Res., *Carroll* 25 May (D. Perry).

Although the Virginia barrier islands (Cedar, Metompkin, and Assawoman) where they nest are not far away, a Wilson's Plover at Chinc. 9 May (ESB et al.) was a surprise, as they have not been regular here for over 20 years. One plowed field along Ironshire Rd., *Worcester* held 1060 Black-bellied Plovers along with a few other shorebirds 15 May (MJI, GLA), and another near Oyster, *Northampton*, VA held 1500 19 May (CB). An American Golden-Plover joined 500+ Black-bellied Plovers in a disked field near Carmean Rd., *Worcester* 20 May (SHD). Black-necked Stilts were noted at E.S.V.N.W.R. on several dates, with a 4 May (CB) high of 7. A Willet reported from Lakeside Ponds 22 Apr (LN) would furnish only a 2nd *Harford* record, and one from D.C. was about as rare at Haines Pt. 26 May (PP): both were identified as the w. subspecies *inornatus*. A male Ruff visited a drawn-down impoundment at Deal 13 Mar (C&DB). A few Stilt Sandpipers are noted each spring, and this year there were singles at Hart

14 & 22 Apr (EJS), at Deal 18 Apr (MJI), and at Blackwater N.W.R. 5 May (HTA et al.), and one was at E.S.V.N.W.R. 22-25 May (CB). Always rare in spring, single Western Sandpipers and Long-billed Dowitchers at Hart 12 May (EJS et al.) were perhaps all the more noteworthy given the low numbers of other species of shorebirds that day (e.g., 4 Semipalmated Sandpipers and 2 Short-billed Dowitchers). Another Western Sandpiper was described from Hunting Cr. 19 May (†SS), but several others reported were not described and some were probably misidentified. Observers should keep in mind that Western Sandpiper is quite rare in the mid-Atlantic area in spring. Shorebirds numbers at Hart built by 20 May (EJS), with 14 species including at least 665 Semipalmated Sandpiper and 492 Dunlin, as well as 3000 small shorebirds too distant to identify. Five White-rumped Sandpiper at Kingman L. 31 May (MB) were rare for D.C. In Maryland, Poplar I. held Purple Sandpipers at least until 19 May (MJI, GLA, MH), another late upper Bay record (the species is always present in small numbers at the C.B.B.T. and on the jetties at Cape Charles through late May and early Jun). Long-billed Dowitchers continue to be found in early spring in Lower Eastern Shore marsh areas of Maryland where they probably winter. Two to 3 were at Deal 29 Mar (SHD), 13 (C&DB) & 14 Apr (SHD), and 10 were at

Elliott I. 25 Mar (HTA). Inland Whimbrel passage was evidenced by 13 at Havre de Grace 26 May (D. Webb). A female Wilson's Phalarope at Cedartown Rd., *Worcester* frequented a rain puddle 15-16 May (ph. GLA, ph. MJI, SHD).

**SA** Heatwole had one of the more interesting discoveries this season when a Short-eared Owl seen 17 May was seen again 20 May leaving prey at various points in a hayfield at her *Culpeper*, VA farm. On 29 May she discovered 2 young, thus confirming breeding activity. The Region has very few prior indications of nesting. Maryland has three older nest records from *Montgomery*, *Caroline*, and *Dorchester*, as well as several other summer observations of suspected nesting. Virginia has two previous Piedmont nest records, the most recent in 1972. Given the recent discovery of a nesting site barely outside the Region in w. Maryland (displaying birds present 2000 and 2001, young found Jul 2000) and suspected nesting this year at Alligator River N.W.R. in coastal North Carolina, we may be witnessing a slight increase in nesting activity in this species at the s. margins of its range in the East.



This White-faced Ibis was first noted 6 May at Chincoteague N.W.R., Virginia, where all of the Region's records have been made. Photograph by Marshall J. Iliff.

## GULLS THROUGH PIPITS

Little Gulls were much enjoyed this year in the Back R. W.T.P., *Baltimore*, with 18+ reports 29 Mar–21 Apr (BC, GM, m. ob.). Highs included 5 on 31 Mar, 5 & 7 Apr, but age ratios suggested that at least 7-10 individuals were present. More unusual were 2 on the Susquehanna R., *Harford/Cecil* 20 Mar (MH, DP), with one remaining through 24 Mar (MH, JLS). Rarest were the first **Little Gull** records for *Montgomery* and the first Piedmont record for the Region (away from the Susquehanna R.) One was at Sycamore Landing 6 Apr (†, vt DC), and 2 ads. were at Riley's Lock 27 Apr (vt DC, v. o.). The only Black-headed Gulls this season were first-winter birds at Ocean City Inlet 21 Mar (C&DB) and on the Susquehanna R. at Lapidum, *Cecil* 9 Apr (MJI, MH). A Franklin's Gull identified 5 Apr (E. Blom, B Monk) at Diamond Pt., *Baltimore* supplied one of few Apr sightings in the Region. Three to 5 imm. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were seen on several dates 15-24 May (MJI et al.) in the Ocean City area, an above-average but not surprising total for the area. A second-winter Glaucous Gull at Hooper's I. 13-20 Apr (HTA,

v o., ph. MJI, SA) was locally interesting for *Dorchester* and a bit on the late side. Iceland Gulls included a first-winter at Ocean City through 2 Mar (C&DB, ELP) and an ad. at Ocean City 25 Mar (DC, MAT). One first-winter in a large gull flock (with 7 Lesser Black-backed) at the Indiantown Pig Farm, *Dorchester* was getting late 29 Apr (MH, JLS, KF). Finally, the reliable Maryland **Kelp Gull** was seen only on 8 Mar (L. Schindler) and 24 May (*fide* J. Kostenko) this spring. It has typically been sporadic in spring and returns to be regular again in mid-summer.

Roseate Terns have been semi-annual at Ocean City recently, and this year one was seen 16 (M.L. Hoffman, SHD) & 19 May (vt. DC, M. A. Todd, JLS). Least Terns returned to the D.C. metro area again, with one at Greenbelt, *Prince George's* 6 May (D. Mozurkewich), one at Kingman L., D.C. 10 May (MP), and sightings at Hunting Cr. starting with 2 on 19 May (SS). One Razorbill was seen in the Northern Gannet flight at the C.B.B.T. 20 Mar (ESB), and 3 remained at Ocean City Inlet from the winter season through at least 3 Mar (K. Lambert).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove** seems to be taking an amazingly long time to investigate the East Coast, especially given the rapid and far-reaching progress that it is making in sweeping through the Midwest and West. This year, one singing in Sterling, *Loudoun* 10-28 Mar (B. Hill, G. Wheaton, v. o.) provided Virginia's 3rd and was at the same location as the first state record, seen just one year ago. Common Nighthawks sometimes arrive early on southerly winds. One was seen this year in Baltimore 9 Apr (J. Martin). A Chuck-will's-widow at Soldier's Delight 4 May (SD) was at a regular location; more unusual was a migrant seen during the day at Ft. McHenry 19 May (S. Crabtree, Jim Peters), perhaps the 2nd record for Baltimore City (*fide* K.E. Costley). The imm. female Rufous Hummingbird in Portsmouth, VA remained through 6 Apr (D. L. Hughes).

Among 4 migrant Alder Flycatchers reported, one at K.A.G. 25-27 May (PP, v. o.) was perhaps most noteworthy. A male **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was back at the same *Culpeper*, VA location where they nested last year 4 May (KH) and remained into the summer, though a mate was not seen this year. Another Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Dameron 12 May (†, ph. PC et al.) provided a new record for well-birded *Saint Mary's* and is the 14th species of flycatcher recorded there. The Northern Shrike at P.R.N.A.S. remained late into spring, last being seen 20 Mar (A. Ripley). Loggerhead Shrikes persist in the Virginia Piedmont, with several

**SA** On 18 May, a stationary front began moving n. through the Region, producing cloudy conditions and southerly and southwesterly winds overnight. After midnight, a cold front moved in from the w., and winds blew lightly from the n., grounding any migrants caught offshore or near the coast. The four islands of the C.B.B.T. that anchor that span's two mile-long submarine tunnels have long been known as a great place to find grounded, tired migrants under appropriate weather conditions, but in recent decades, spring fallouts here have been mostly minor. Calling it the best spring fallout ever on the C.B.B.T., Brinkley (†) provided a summary of the sightings by Don Schwab, Tom Gwynn, Barbara Begg, and himself on 19 May: the roster that day included 47 landbird species, among them 15 species of warbler (with about 550 individual warblers counted). Most in evidence were Common Yellowthroats, which were conservatively counted at 234 and estimated at about 350. At least 96 Magnolia Warblers and 65 Blackpoll Warblers rounded out the species that were present in abundance. Some species were observed in active migration (Indigo Buntings, Bobolinks, Eastern Kingbird, Blackpoll Warblers, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, various swallows) over the day, whereas others remained on the islands' bare ground just a meter or more from observers. At least 28 additional species, including 12 shorebirds, were observed that day, with the most notable being Veery, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked Thrushes, both cuckoos, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Least, Willow, and Acadian Flycatchers, Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows, and singles of Least Bittern, Black Tern, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Wilson's Warbler. The presence of early season migrants such as a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, a Savannah Sparrow, 3 Swamp Sparrows, and a Seaside Sparrow was interesting but not surprising given the magnitude of the fallout. The next day, many of the Magnolia Warblers remained, Blackpoll Warblers had dropped to 40, and Common Yellowthroat numbers had fallen to 45; there were new arrivals such as Summer Tanager, more Indigo Buntings, and a Great Crested Flycatcher, and the rarer flycatchers and warblers were still present but the bittern and sharp-tailed sparrows absent (Field Guides, Inc. tour; M. Iwanik et al.). This fallout was apparently a strictly coastal phenomenon and was also noted at Cape May, NJ, but it was not observed at inland sites in the Region. At nearby E.S.V.N.W.R., there was less evidence of this fallout, but Brennan did count 150 Common Yellowthroats, 50+ Blackpoll and 6 Magnolia Warblers, and 20 Northern Waterthrushes 19 May, and 10 Black-throated Blue Warblers and American Redstarts 20 May. Above-average numbers of migrants were noted around Ocean City, MD late in the day on 19 May (MJI, GLA, MH), but the extent of the fallout there could not be fully explored.

reports from several counties this spring. A Philadelphia Vireo at St. Mary's River S.P., *Saint Mary's* was record early 27 Apr (MH, KF), and a White-eyed Vireo at E.S.V.N.W.R. had an early start to arrive 17 Mar (CB), unless it wintered locally. The only other Philadelphia Vireo was at Rock Cr. Park, D.C. 15 May (GM, BC). Piedmont Common Ravens continue to be of interest, as a slight range expansion seems to be underway. Two fed on roadkill off Rte. 229 in *Fauquier* 4 Mar (TMD), one was seen off Sudley Manor Rd., *Prince William* 4 Apr (TMD), one was seen 26 Apr (KH) in *Culpeper*, and one was on Manor Rd. in *Frederick* 28 May (SA et al.). A Sedge Wren singing at Elliott I. on the night of 18 May (M. O'Brien et al.) was the only late report of the species. An early *Petrochelidon* swallow at E.S.V.N.W.R. 20 Mar (CB) could not be identified to species. A Wood Thrush in Salisbury was quite early 13 Apr (SHD), when another arrived at E.S.V.N.W.R. (CB). Single Bicknell's Thrushes were banded at Wise Pt., *Northampton* 12 May (CB) and

P.R.N.A.S. 21 May (B.Boxwell). Fairly late American Pipits 12 May included 2 at Flag Ponds, *Calvert* (AR) and one at Hart 12 May (EJS et al.).

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Brennan's work at E.S.V.N.W.R. produced 32 species of warbler over the season, although many migrants recorded were single sightings of single birds (e.g. Golden-winged, Nashville, Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Wilson's). The s. tip of Delmarva has been thought depauperate for northbound migrants, which would presumably avoid crossing the Chesapeake Bay from the s., but the right weather conditions (as on 19 May) will continue to produce noteworthy coastal fallouts here, as migrant birds are pushed offshore and must work their way back to land. For several reasons, the C.B.B.T. will likely be the best place to chronicle such events, as long as access for birders continues to be permitted. On 24 Mar, an inexplicable Myrtle Warbler flight occurred at Wise Pt. on moder-

ate sw. winds under clear skies (CB). From 0600 to 0800, about 34,000 were tallied as they flew southward! A good flight was noted at Hart 12 May (EJS et al.), with 17 species of warblers on the small patch of woods on that island. A local rarity was an apparent *albilora* Yellow-throated Warbler videotaped well in Stasz's North Beach, *Calvert* backyard 21 Apr. Breeders in the Coastal Plain are of the nominate subspecies, and obvious migrants are rarely found and even more rarely identified to subspecies. A wintering Nashville Warbler at Hurlock, *Dorchester* remained through 7 Mar (ph. C. Diedrich).

Uncommon in the Piedmont, 2 Summer Tanagers at Great Falls, *Montgomery* 12 May (MH, K. Caughey) were noteworthy. Three single Dickcissels were noted at E.S.V.N.W.R. between 1 and 19 May (CB). A male **Painted Bunting** at a Frederick feeder 21 May (L. Solomon, *fide* M. Balestri) was new for *Frederick*, Maryland's 14th, and the first report since 1995. One of the wintering Le Conte's Sparrows at n. Vaughn was seen again 24 Mar (SHD), while the bird at Beltsville Agricultural Research Station, *Prince George's* was last seen 13 Mar (P. Osenton, M. Gustafson, ph. MJI, MH). A Lark Sparrow was seen 10 Mar (T. Barry) in the Baylake Pines section of Virginia Beach, fairly rare in the Region in spring and possibly a wintering bird. Surprisingly, other Lark Sparrows were at Back Bay N.W.R., VA 4 May (R. L. Ake) and Merkle N.W.R., *Prince George's* 16 May (F. Fallon). A much rarer **Lark Bunting** was described from a Lincoln, *Loudoun*, VA feeder 12 Mar (†M.A. Good) and is under review by the Virginia Avian Records Committee. Chino Farms continues to hold a near-monopoly on recent Regional **Gambel's White-crowned Sparrows**: another imm. was banded there 6 May (ph. J. Gruber et al.). A singing Clay-colored Sparrow discovered at Kinder Farm Park, *Anne Arundel* 12 May (DM, LB) remained into summer, the first such record in the Region. This bird appeared to be unpaired, but breeding should be watched for in the Region. The 2 wintering Clay-colored were still at n. Vaughn 31 Mar (S. Sanford). Eight Lapland Longspurs among a Horned Lark flock at Sparks Rd., *Caroline* 1 Apr (B. Schreitz) made for one of the latest reports for Maryland.

A male Brewer's Blackbird 12 Apr (ESB) at Sunset Beach, *Northampton*, VA was the season's only unusual blackbird. For a year without any winter crossbill reports, it was surprising that a *Calvert* first Red was found at a Dunkirk feeder for a week around 13 Apr (J. Bourdat, DBy). Unfortunately, call notes were not recorded, and the type is unknown.

**Observers (area compilers in boldface):** George L. Armistead, Henry T. (Harry) Armistead, Stan Arnold, Linda Baker, **Debbie Bennett** (*Caroline*, P.O. Box 404, Denton, MD 21625), Michael Bowen, Calvin Brennan, Edward S. Brinkley, Carol & Don Broderick, Danny Bystrak (Dby), Barry Cooper, **Patty Craig** (*Saint Mary's*, P.O. Box 84, Lexington Park, MD 20653), Marty Cribb, Dave Czaplak, Todd M. Day, Sam Droegge, Samuel H. Dyke, Kevin Fehskens, Matt Hafner, Steven W. Hairfield, Sue Heath, **Jane Hill** (Voice of the Naturalist), **Larry Lynch** (VA-BIRD internet

group), Gail Mackiernan, Dotty Mumford, Mary Paul, **Helen A. Patton** (*Montgomery*, 429 Hamilton Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20901 <helen@dataprompt.com>), Paul Pisano, **Elizabeth Pitney** (*Wicomico*, 7218 Walston Switch Rd., Parsonsburg, MD 21849), Dave Powell, Sue Riccardi, Robert F. Ringler, **Norm Saunders** (MDOsprey internet group), Eugene J. Scarpulla, **Jo Solem** (*Howard*, 10617 Graeloch Rd., Laurel, MD 20723), James L. Stasz, Sherman Suter, Brian Taber, **Les Willis** (Virginia Birdline).



# Southern Atlantic Coast



**Ricky Davis**  
608 Smallwood Drive  
Rocky Mount, North Carolina 27804  
(RJDNC@aol.com)

The spring migration through the Region was generally uneventful, with mostly fair weather keeping birds on the move. Temperatures were about normal, with April's temperatures below average. Precipitation was also below average, and quite dry conditions persisted until mid-May, when several systems brought rain and produced the spring's only observed grounding of migrants. With low numbers of migrants and no new rarities found,

many observers felt that this was one of the slowest, poorest spring migrations in years.

**Abbreviations:** B.R.C. (Bird Records Committee); C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, NC), E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, *Clayton*, GA); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach S. P., SC); K. Mt. (Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, GA); P.I. (Pea I. N.W.R., NC); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, *Jasper*, SC).

## LOONS THROUGH SPOONBILL

Always good finds inland, single Red-throated Loons were in *Gwinnett*, GA 6 Apr (EH) and 6 May (*fide* TM). The only Red-necked Grebes