

Middle Atlantic Coast



Marshall J. Iliff

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

The mild weather of this season was strongly reflected in reports of lingering hardy and semi-hardy species, especially from the Regional C.B.C. data. Birds that winter annually, usually in small numbers—such as phoebes, thrashers, and catbirds—scored record-high counts on a large number of C.B.C.s. Other unusual lingerers such as Least and Spotted Sandpipers, Laughing Gulls, Forster's Terns, and some exceptional warblers strengthened the pattern. The Audubon C.B.C. website (<<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/>>) was invaluable again this year, as the count data were far easier to access. I would like to thank Todd M. Day for helping to track down data on some records.

Abbreviations: Assat. (Assateague Island, Worcester, MD); Bay (Chesapeake Bay); C.B.B.T. (Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel complex, s. of Northampton, VA); D.C. (District of Columbia); p. a. (pending acceptance by state records committee); Vaughn (E. A. Vaughn W.M.A., Worcester, MD). All locations can be assumed to be in Maryland except that each Virginia location is noted as such the first time it is mentioned in the text.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

The Mathews, VA C.B.C. 30 Dec had good totals for Red-throated Loon (107), while a number of Regional C.B.C.s counted record-high counts of Pied-billed Grebes. Two **Western Grebes** seen together (!) at The Wildfowl Trust, at Kent Narrows, *Queen Anne's* 12 Jan (p. a. FF, P. Webb, v. o.) were unfortunately not seen after the morning of 13 Jan and were undocumented, despite being seen by a number of observers. A Clark's Grebe was reported from the Atlantic Ocean at Cape Henry, Virginia Beach, first noted near 87th Street 18 Dec (Elisa Enders, Frank Enders et al.) and again just a few km away at Ft. Story 31 Dec (p. a., †Mike Iwanik, DLH, David Clark). Written documentation is strongly suggestive of the species, but for a rarity of this magnitude, more compelling descriptions are needed that would rule out the possibility of a hybrid Clark's x Western Grebe conclusively. While there are some 50+ East Coast records pertaining to definite Western Grebes, Clark's Grebe has yet to be documented well e. of its regular range. The Virginia Avian Records Committee has accepted a sight record from the C.B.B.T. 11 Feb 2000, but until such time as unequivocal documentation is obtained, I prefer to consider this species hypothetical in the Region and on the East Coast. Every possible effort should be made to obtain photographs or videotape of this species out of range.

Two pelagic trips off Virginia Beach, VA succeeded in finding all regular winter pelagic species (Table 1). The 503 Northern Fulmars 3 Feb (BP et al.) made for a record Virginia count, and, amazingly, most were about 65 km offshore around a fishy slick created by a pod of 3-5 feeding Orcas, themselves establishing one of very few Regional records!

Table 1. Totals for Virginia Beach pelagic trips 3 February & 9 February 2002.

Species	3 Feb	9 Feb
Northern Fulmar	503	144
Manx Shearwater	7	4
Red Phalarope	52	40
Great Skua	1	1
Black-legged Kittiwake	61	178
Little Gull	1	0
Razorbill	54	42
Atlantic Puffin	34	12
Dovekie	1	0

The Mathews C.B.C. noted 28 Brown Pelicans, this species continues its expansion in the Region, with more winter sightings coming from increasingly farther up the Bay, as evidenced by one at Waterview, *Wicomico* 28 Dec (C&DB). A Great Cormorant at Salisbury, *Wicomico* 2 Jan (SHD) was a first local record and a surprise so far up a Chesapeake tributary; the trend toward more inland records of this species has also been noted in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York in recent years. Northern Gannets staged one of their most impressive movements into the Bay and coastal areas, with counts of minimally 13,000 at the C.B.B.T. on the Chesapeake Bay C.B.C. 26 Dec (ESB et al.), 14,100 on the Cape Charles C.B.C. 30 Dec, and 1304 on the Pt Lookout C.B.C. 23 Dec, while 13 off *Dorchester* 1 Jan (JLS) were also late that far up the Bay. Double-crested Cormorant continues to expand as a wintering bird in the Region, with many counts reporting record highs, such as the 115 on the Annapolis C.B.C. 31 Dec.

The only noteworthy ardeids wintering at Deal were 49 Tricolored Herons 11 Jan (JLS), 11 Great Egrets and 20 Tricolored Herons 20 Feb (SHD), and 3 Glossy Ibis 11 (JLS) & 13 Jan (SHD). Tricolored Herons made a good showing for the Ocean City C.B.C. 28 Dec, with a record total of 10, half of which were noted in the area 26 Jan (GL), with 4 still present 17 Feb (MLH).

Regular reports of *hutchinsii* Canada Geese continue from areas of goose concentration Regionwide, with a notable high count of 13 in several *Cecil* locations 16 Jan (MJI, MH). A small-form Canada Goose photographed at Hunting

SA One of the great sensations in the Region this winter was a confiding ad. **Barnacle Goose** that frequented the Belle Haven, *Fairfax*, VA area of the Potomac R. and adjacent Cameron Run Regional Park and Bill Brenman Park, Alexandria 6 Jan—19 Feb (p. a. KG, m. ob., ph.). This species is common in captivity and escapes frequently. Although the Alexandria bird was unbanded and had all toes intact (collectors usually clip the halux), 4 Canada Geese accompanying the Barnacle Goose bore bands from near Peterborough, Ontario. Had the Barnacle been associating with Canada Geese from Greenland (as was the case in Connecticut this winter, for example), or Baffin Island, or another far-northern population, one might more easily make a case for natural vagrancy. The lack of wariness of the entire flock might also be construed as an argument against vagrancy. On the other hand, the species is highly migratory, has appeared as a legitimate vagrant in Newfoundland, has appeared most often in the Northeast (as one would expect of legitimate vagrants), and shows clear peaks of occurrence in November-December and March, migratory peaks that closely match those of Canada and Snow Geese with which they associate. It is best that birders continue to consider Barnacle Goose vagrancy an open question and look upon each record with an open mind, weighing the likelihood of either of the two possible theories to explain these appearances. I consider this bird most likely an escapee.

Cr., *Fairfax*, VA was present for several days starting 9 Feb (GM, BC, DM, ph. J. Alderfer) showed the extremely small proportions and dark, almost purplish breast of *B. c. minima*. However, *minima* is apparently the most common small Canada Goose form in captivity and breeds so far w. that natural vagrancy seems improbable. An ad. *flavirostris* Greater White-fronted Goose seen at the Pocomoke W.T.P., *Worcester* 26 Dec (MLH) was likely the same bird seen at nearby Sheephouse Rd. 15 Jan (MJI, GLA). One imm. n. of Townsend, *Northampton* found 30 Dec on the Cape Charles C.B.C. remained through 9 Jan (D. Matson, N. Matson, v. o.); another was seen 5 Jan (JLS) at Worton, *Kent*, and 2 were near John Brown Rd. Turf Farm, *Queen Anne's* 27 Jan (LMD, HLW), in an area that has hosted up to 2 fairly consistently since 1997.

Eurasian Wigeon, rarely if ever considered to be escaped former captives (though they are common in captivity as well), were at Deal, with one 12 Feb (C&DB) and 3 on 20 Feb (SHD), at Assat. 2 Dec (SHD) and 28 Dec (Ocean City

C.B.C.), at Upper Marlboro, *Prince George's* 22 Feb+ (DBY, v. o.), Lapidum, *Harford* 23 Feb (vt.JLS), Virginia Beach early Feb+, and Henricus, VA 27 Jan (Ben & Betsy Sanders). A record count of 252 Blue-winged Teal on the Southern Dorchester C.B.C. 26 Dec was an order of magnitude higher than other Maryland counts in Dec. Other Blue-winged Teal apparently wintered at Henricus, near Richmond, and may do so regularly at this good duck spot; 2 were seen in Dec (Ben Saunders) and 30 Jan (G. Weinberger). Gadwall were noted in excellent numbers, one of the more surprising counts being 850 at Perryville Park, *Cecil* 16 Jan (MJI, MH). The 1000 Redheads at Roaring Pt., *Wicomico* 11 Jan was an encouraging count and not far from the Pocomoke Sound flock, which has numbered up to 10,000 (JLS)! A Surf Scoter at Triadelphia Res., *Montgomery/Howard* 5 Jan (EH, †NM, ph. R. Cullison) was very rare inland in mid-winter, though a pair of Long-tailed Ducks there 2 Feb (NM) might have been early migrants. Another Surf Scoter at Sandy River Res., *Prince Edward*, VA, 12 Nov—19 Dec (MSt) might have been a lingering fall migrant. A flyby female Harlequin Duck at Back Bay N.W.R. 29 Dec (†PWS, BP, ESB, GP) was the 2nd for the Back Bay C.B.C. in its 62-year history. Another flyby female was rare in the Bay at Pt. Lookout S.P. 23 Dec (†MJI, MH). A female Common Merganser at Public Landing 26 Jan—17 Feb (GL; ph. MJI, MLH et al.) was an unusual *Worcester* find.

RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

A dark Rough-legged Hawk at University of Maryland Central Farm 15 Dec (BO, EH) was rare for *Howard*. Two Ospreys at Pt. Lookout S.P. 30 Jan (M. Cribb) were apparently early returnees, the earliest such record for Maryland.

Lesser Yellowlegs might be increasing as a wintering bird in Maryland, as it has been annual at Lower Shore sites for most recent years; this winter, there were several reports from *Dorchester* and *Somerset*, highlighted by an exceptional count of 42 at Elliott I. on 9 Feb (JLS). Five Lesser Yellowlegs at Hunting Cr. 24 Feb (P. Sullivan, BA) were more odd at an inland locale in late winter. Long-billed Dowitcher has also been annual in coastal Maryland recently, with 3 at Elliott I. 29 Jan (HTA), 7 there 9 Feb (JLS), and 12 (plus 20 unidentified dowitchers) on the Ocean City C.B.C. 28 Dec; both areas have been consistent in recent years. Willets are also being found in Maryland more regularly in winter, and one Western Willet was on Assat. 16 Feb (vt. JLS). Spotted Sandpiper made news on a couple Regional C.B.C.s, with singles at Oyster, *Northampton* 30 Dec (GLA, MS) and Isle of Wight, *Worcester* 28-29 Dec (SRI, S. Hamilton, J. Sheppard), an Ocean City C.B.C. first. Extremely

rare in winter on the Upper Eastern Shore, and a first for the Denton C.B.C., were 3 Least Sandpipers at Ridgely W.T.P. 15 Dec (JLS, SRi et al.). Other notably late shorebirds included 15 Least Sandpipers, one Dunlin, and one unidentified dowitcher on the Banister River, VA C.B.C. 16 Dec. A juv. Pomarine Jaeger and an ad Parasitic Jaeger at the C.B.B.T. 26 Dec were noteworthy in winter (RLAn, ESB et al.), while a Pomarine and an unidentified jaeger on the Ocean City C.B.C. 28 Dec and an imm. dark Pomarine 12 Jan (JLS) were even more so for Maryland waters.

Late Royal Terns were noted on several counts, including count-week on the *Mathews* C.B.C. 30 Dec. Maryland's latest-ever were one at North Beach, *Calvert* 16 Dec (Jug Bay C.B.C.; JLS) and on the Point Lookout C.B.C. 23 Dec (3 birds) Forster's Tern lingered in record numbers, with counts such as 456 on the Chincoteague C.B.C. 29 Dec and an amazing 1100 on the Ocean City C.B.C. 28 Dec, with 40 birds lingering in the Ocean City area through 17 Feb (MLH et al.) for a record Feb count in Maryland. Other Forster's stayed late for most Bay C.B.C.s but not much thereafter. The 3 Feb Virginia Beach pelagic trip (BP et al.) recorded Virginia's second-best Atlantic Puffin count (Table 1), most of which were concentrated from 64-104 km offshore, inshore from Norfolk Canyon, where there was a strong thermocline.

OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

Snowy Owls continued a good showing this season, with one at Craney 9 Jan—19 Feb the most widely enjoyed. Others were noted at the C.B.B.T. 3 Dec (bridge-tunnel staff, *vide* ESB), downtown Baltimore 27 Dec (J. Landers et al.), and Assat. 11 Feb (F. Saunders, ph. NS).

A female-type *Archilochus* hummingbird visited the feeders of Andy and Farimae Tate in Virginia Beach 6 Jan—5 Feb. Photographs of the bird seem to show the coloration, bill shape, dull face pattern, and most importantly, the primary shape characteristic of **Black-chinned Hummingbird**. Pending acceptance by the Virginia Avian Records Committee, this will represent a first state and Regional record, though another was identified (but not documented by photographs) from Portsmouth this past Oct (DLH). Black-chinned Hummingbird has been documented regularly in North Carolina in recent years (cf. *The Chat* 66: 3). Although Maryland had none, Virginia held at least 7 Rufous Hummingbirds this winter, with singles banded and identified in *Loudoun* (late Nov—17 Jan) and *Albemarle*, 2 in *Chesterfield*, and 3 in the Williamsburg area (*vide* MG). An unidentified *Selasphorus* visited a Springfield, *Fairfax*, feeder late Nov—10 Feb (v. o., ph. KG).

SA Each winter seems to outdo the last in terms of rare (and odd) gulls. In addition to the increasing cadre of unidentified "mystery" gulls (which I do not detail below), between 18 and 19 species of gull were identified in this Region, though at least two species (Silver/Red-billed Gull and Kelp Gull) present a problem of origin. In addition, another two gull species were reported without adequate details this season (Black-tailed Gull and Franklin's Gull). *Compelling, thorough documentation is imperative for rare and unusual gulls; observers are encouraged to photograph their findings exhaustively.* Gull-watching is a relatively new activity in the Region, at least away from metropolitan D.C./Virginia/Maryland, and the high diversity of gulls documented this season suggests that the Chesapeake Bay could be one of the continent's better gulling grounds—all the more reason to document these birds very carefully.

The season's gull extravaganza commenced promptly with the arrival of the season's first strong cold front 9 Dec: in the first large flight of Bonaparte's Gulls down the Bay, an ad. **Sabine's Gull** was seen well by many observers at the C.B.B.T. (DLH, LL, M. A. Byrd, VSO et al.), along with 3 imm. Black-legged Kittiwakes. The Sabine's was the 2nd record for the C.B.B.T. (the first was 20-22 Jun 1968) and the 9th for Virginia. Little Gull was noted in small numbers (up to 4) around the mouth of Chesapeake Bay from the C.B.B.T. to Virginia Beach, and single Black-headed Gulls were seen at least three times in the same area (v. o.). A probable first-winter **Yellow-legged Gull** was described 24 Dec (†ESB) from the C.B.B.T., where there are two previous sight records. First-winter Yellow-legged Gull seems still to be very poorly known by North American birders and might be overlooked with some regularity.

If this winter had a theme larid, it was surely **California Gull**: when the winter's reports are combined with the fall reports, 2001-2002 was clearly the best season ever. Single ads. were found at the C.B.B.T. 10 Feb (ph. A. Merritt) and Hunting Cr. 21 (E. Wilson et al.) & 24 (BA et al.) Feb, and first-winter birds, including the first well-documented individual of this age class in the Region, were seen at the *Prince William* Landfill 16 Feb (SCR et al., ph. B. Tekin) and at the *Cecil* Landfill 9 Feb (p. a. E. Blom, E.J. Scarpulla). The C.B.B.T. bird was probably a fourth-winter and likely an *albertaensis*, based on photos. The *Prince William* Landfill had several other highlights, including several Iceland Gulls, at least 2 Glaucous Gulls, and an apparent Herring x Glaucous Gull hybrid 23 Jan (ph. MJI). Undoubtedly the most interesting gull of the season was an ad. four-year gull photographed at the *Prince William* Landfill 31 Dec (ph., †SCR). Rottenborn's extremely detailed description noted brownish eyes, mantle color a shade darker than Herring, pale gray primary pattern closely matching the mantle in color, and an extensive hood of transverse vermiculation in the head and neck, a plumage strongly suggesting ad. **Glaucous-winged Gull**. Given the relatively small bill, shallow gonydeal angle, and small size of this bird, it is conceivable that it represented a hybrid combination, perhaps Herring x Glaucous-winged. The Virginia Avian Records Committee will have a tough task assessing this record, which would be a first for the Region and the East Coast if judged a Glaucous-winged.

Overall this was a good winter for Glaucous Gull, with reports at a number of locations (Beulah Landfill, *Prince William* Landfill, Neabsco Creek, Salisbury Landfill), including a rarely-seen ad. at Salisbury Landfill, *Wicomico* 11 Jan (JLS). A small handful of Iceland Gulls was reported from the more productive landfills, mostly first-winters except for a third-winter at the Beulah Landfill 25 Jan—9 Feb (MJI, GLA, MH). A final gulling highlight was a straightforward ad. **Common Gull** (*Larus canus canus*) found by Brinkley among massive numbers of Ring-billed Gulls on the C.B.B.T. 26 Dec (ESB, D. Clark; vt. RLAn, ph. RLAK). Virginia has one previous record, documented by written description, as does Maryland (though the latter record has recently been called into question). Notably, another *Larus canus* was a first for Delaware 15 Feb 2002, and though its subspecific identity is in question, Common Gull seems most likely. Scrutinizing Ring-billed Gull flocks in the Region may feel tedious, but is worthwhile in light of these records. Among several **Thayer's Gull** reports were first-winters at the C.B.B.T. 31 Dec (†PWS) and at the Salisbury Landfill 15 Jan (ph. MJI, ph. GLA), and a well-studied ad. at the C.B.B.T. 31 Dec (GLA, MS et al.). Rounding out the list, the consistent **Kelp Gull** continued at Sandgates, *Saint Mary's* throughout the season. Finally, the (presumed) escapee Silver Gull (*Larus novaehollandiae*; sometimes split as Red-billed Gull, *Larus scopulinus*), first noted at Brown's Station Landfill last winter, was seen 25 Dec at nearby Schoolhouse Pond, *Prince George's* (DBY). Lesser Black-backed Gulls were noted in record-high numbers on the Back Bay C.B.C. (34) and the Chesapeake Bay C.B.C. (30+) and were found in particularly good numbers at most other gull concentration spots. Bonaparte's and Laughing Gulls both lingered in the Region in excellent numbers, with many Regional C.B.C.s finding record-high counts, especially of Laughing Gull into late Dec (e.g., 44 on Annapolis C.B.C., 550+ at the C.B.B.T. 26 Dec). As has been the pattern in the Region, Laughing Gulls pulled out rapidly in early Jan and were unreported away from the Virginia Beach area after 10 Jan.

One of the more interesting questions this winter was whether a Western Kingbird at Eastern Neck N.W.R., *Kent* 9 Dec—27 Jan (S. McCandless, vt., ph., m. ob.) was the same individual noted here Nov 2000 to Jan 2001. Photographs appear to show an ad. bird, and it frequented the same location in which last year's was reported, which had been the first long-staying wintering Western Kingbird ever in Maryland. Two Common Ravens 16 Feb (SCR et al.) were unusual for e. *Prince William*. Tree Swallows returned early, with 4 at Grove Neck W.M.A., *Cecil* being exemplary 24 Feb (JLS). Scattered Loggerhead Shrikes are still reported regularly by observers in the n. Virginia Piedmont counties such as *Loudoun*, *Culpeper*, and *Fauquier*. Stinson had 2 this winter from farther s. in the Virginia Piedmont in *Charlotte* and

Prince Edward, the latter a new location for the species, and another was reported from w. of South Hill, *Mecklenburg* 28 Jan (JSp et al.), where the species winters annually. A Brown-headed Nuthatch at Jefferson-Patterson Park 28 Jan was n. of its regular range on the Western Shore (T. Bell); there were several sightings from this area of *Calvert* in the winter of 2000 as well. The poor Red-breasted Nuthatch year was evidenced by the low C.B.C. counts.

Yellow Warbler is extremely rare in winter in the Region, so 2 reported this season were exceptional. One at Hunting Cr. 15 Dec (KG) and 25-28 Jan (v. o., ph. MJI, †KG) was probably the same bird reported here in the fall season 15 Nov (KG). Another appeared at Tailrace Park, below the dam at John H. Kerr reservoir, *Mecklenburg*, VA 23 Nov (†Phillip Kline), 1 (†J. Blalock) & 28

Jan (JSp et al.). Almost as unusual were 2 wintering Northern Parulas in the Region: one at Stumpy L. Golf Course on the Little Creek C.B.C. 31 Dec (†ESB, †RLAK) and one at Ft. McHenry, *Baltimore* 29 Dec—24 Jan (KEC, JP, m. ob.). A Nashville Warbler and Blue-headed Vireo in the same area of Kiptopeke S.P., *Northampton* 30 Dec (†ESB, BP) was a nice combination for the Cape Charles C.B.C., both still present 11 Jan (GLA et al.). A Yellow-breasted Chat remained in D.C. near R.E.K. Stadium at least 4-26 Jan (Kevin Krough, Craig Richard), and another was seen at L. Roland, *Baltimore* 9 Feb (E. Kichbaum).

A **Western Tanager** (p. a.) at Ross Boddy Community Center, near Ashton, *Montgomery* was found on the 15 Dec Triadelphia C.B.C. (Dave & Elaine Pardoe). It was seen widely the next day but then disappeared before being relo-

cated at an adjacent nursery 19-22 Dec (ph. †MJI, ph. m. ob.). Maryland has just three previous well-documented records (from *Worcester, Montgomery*, and *Anne Arundel*), unlike many other East Coast states, which have five to 10 times as many records. A Dickcissel at Back Bay N.W.R. 29 Dec (ESB, J. Beard) was the 2nd for that C.B.C. An ad. male Rose-breasted Grosbeak was noted at a Greenbelt, *Prince George's* feeder Sep—1 Jan (ph. M. Balzer *vide* F. Fallon).

This proved to be a very good winter for Fox Sparrows in some locations, with the Bowie C.B.C. 1 Jan reporting an exemplary total of 132, while other counts, especially on the Coastal Plain, found the species nearly absent. A Le Conte's Sparrow (p. a.) again wintered at the same n. Vaughn location as in past years, seen 12 Jan (JLS) and 4 Feb (MJI). A single Grasshopper Sparrow at s. Vaughn was seen 30 Dec (MLH) and 17 Feb (MLH et al.). A rare winter Lincoln's Sparrow was found at Taylor I., *Dorchester* 1 Jan (JLS). Single Lincoln's in the Piedmont, where also rare in winter, were in *Howard* at University of Maryland Central Farm 1 Jan (BO et al.) and Middle Patuxent Environmental Area 29 Jan (H. Holbrook). A Clay-colored Sparrow at Manassas Battlefield, *Prince William*, VA for that C.B.C. 22 Dec (p. a. TMD, ph., †MJI, m. ob.) was seen through at least 9 Feb (F. Atwood) and provided a first winter record for the Virginia Piedmont. Interesting was an Ipswich Sparrow noted on the Bay shore at Cape Charles Beach 20 Jan (ESB); although this location is only 16 km (overland or via coastline) from the next closest regular winter area, this subspecies has been found just a mere handful of times farther n. in the Bay.

An ad. male Yellow-headed Blackbird was a nice surprise near Capeville, *Northampton* 11 Jan (MJI, TMD, E. Hynes, GLA) and the only one reported in the Region; this county produces about one report of the species per year, on average. Brewer's Blackbird is found less frequently now than formerly, but one was seen 7-9 Dec (BP, LL, VSO) s. of Townsend, *Northampton*. Common Redpolls appeared in several widely-separated areas, the most unusual being one at Back Bay N.W.R. 29 Dec (BP, †PWS, HTA, GP), only the 3rd for that C.B.C. Other redpolls were on the *Mathews* C.B.C. 30 Dec, *Howard* 12 Feb (H. Zeichner), Richmond 6-17 Feb (John & Caroline Cole), and in Feb in *Saint Mary's*. Pine Siskins and Purple Finches were in average to below-average numbers, while Evening Grosbeak matched the recent status quo with a mere handful of reports.

Corrigenda

Several dates were omitted in the fall 2001 report: at Little Island Park, Virginia Beach, the Rufous

Hummingbird banded 30 Oct, and the Western Kingbird and White-winged Dove were seen 4 & 2 Nov 2001 respectively.

Observers (area compilers in boldface): Bob Abrams, Robert L. Ake (RLAk), Robert L. Anderson (RLAn), George L. Armistead, Henry T. Armistead, **Debbie Bennett** (*Caroline*, P.O. Box 404, Denton, MD 21625), Edward S. Brinkley, Carol & Don Broderick, Danny Bystrak (DBy), Barry Cooper, **Patty Craig** (*Saint Mary's*, P.O. Box 84, Lexington Park, MD 20653), Lynn M. Davidson, Todd M. Day, Samuel H. Dyke, Kurt Gaskill, Mary Gustafson, Matt Hafner, Mark L. Hoffman, Emy Holdridge, David L. Hughes, Glen Lovelace, **Larry Lynch** (VA-BIRD internet

group), Gail MacKiernan, Nancy Magnusson, Dave Mozurkewich, Bonnie Ott, Brian Patteson, **Helen A. Patton** (*Montgomery*, 429 Hamilton Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20901 <helen@dataprompt.com>), Grayson (Butch) Pearce, **Elizabeth Pitney** (*Wicomico*, 7218 Walston Switch Rd., Parsonsburg, MD 21849), Sue Ricciardi (SRi), Stephen C. Rottenborn, **Norm Saunders** (MDOsprey internet group), Matt Sharp, **Jo Solem** (*Howard*, 10617 Graeoch Rd., Laurel, MD 20723), John Spahr (JSp), James L. Stasz, Michael Stinson (MSt), **Paula Sullivan** (Voice of the Naturalist), Paul W. Sykes, Hal L. Wierenga, **Les Willis** (Virginia Birdline); VSO (Virginia Society of Ornithology).



Southern Atlantic Coast



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

The weather this winter was basically a continuation of the warm and dry fall season. In December, mild temperatures and low rainfall were most evident. A large percentage of Christmas Bird Counts had good weather. The only exception was a major snowfall event in the central and eastern Carolinas January 3-4 that provided up to 30 cm in many locations. After this event, which did little to bother bird populations, temperatures in January and February returned to slightly above average. The dry con-

ditions were relieved somewhat in some areas of the Region with increased rainfall during the last half of the season. Also continuing the trend from the fall season was the presence of several good rarities, such as a couple of state firsts and Regional firsts.

Abbreviations: A.R.N.W.R. (Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge, NC); 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 State Park, SC); L.M. (Lake Mattamuskeet, NC), L.W.F.G. (Lake Walter F. George, GA); P.I. (Pea I N.W.R., Dare, NC); S.S.S. (Savannah Spoil Site, Jasper, SC); W.P.L. (West Point Lake, GA).