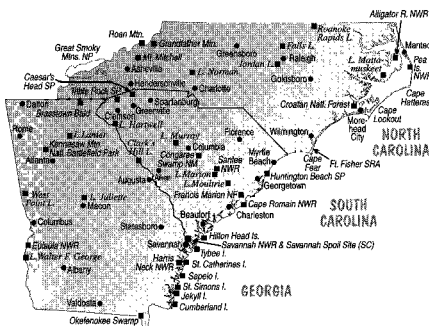


Southern Atlantic



Ricky Davis

This summer's weather could best be described as dry and hot. The drought conditions in the mountains and Piedmont were severe to extreme, while moderate to minor drought was noted in the coastal regions. Making this situation worse were above-average temperatures throughout the Region, especially in July. The weather's effects on nesting birds were minimal, except in areas where water resources were compromised. Only one tropical storm, *Barry*, passed by the coast, 2-4 June. Seabird displacement was noted by a handful of observers, but the number of birds involved was rather small.

Abbreviations: C. Hatt. (Cape Hatteras, *Dare*, NC); E.L.H. (E. L. Huie Land Application Facility, *Clayton*, GA); H.B.S.P. (Huntington Beach S.P., *Georgetown*, SC); Hoop. (Hooper Lane, *Henderson*, NC); Kennesaw Mt. (Kennesaw Mt. National Battlefield Park, *Cobb*, GA); Pea I. (Pea Island N.W.R., *Dare*, NC); S S S. (Savannah Spoil Site, *Jasper*, SC).

WATERFOWL THROUGH STORK

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks have definitely become part of the breeding avifauna of the Region. Adults with young were noted at the Altamaha W.M.A., GA and at Donnelley W.M.A., SC several times this summer, and a pair with 14 young was at the S.S.S. 26 Jul (SC). Away from the coast, 7 were at Phinizy Swamp, Augusta, GA 26 Jun+ (LS et al.). It will probably only be a matter of time until this species becomes established somewhere in North Carolina! Noteworthy lingering/summering waterfowl included 2 male Ring-necked Ducks all summer (joined by a female 31 Jul!) at the E.L.H. (CL), a Ring-necked at Santee N.W.R., SC 23 Jun (RC, CE), a Surf Scoter at Emerald Isle, NC 22 Jun (BH), and Black Scoters at two locations: 6 at Ft. Fisher, NC 6 Jun (HS) and 5 at H.B.S.P. 12-14 Jun (PSe). Hooded Merganser and Ruddy Duck are found in the Region each summer, with sporadic localized breeding. Of note this

year was the female Hooded with 3 young at Dawson Forest, *Dawson*, GA 5 Jun (JF) and the female Ruddy with 3 young at the S.S.S. 13 Jul (SC).

A few Common Loons linger somewhere in the Region each summer, usually near the coast. Thus of interest were up to 2 at Carters L., GA 11-21 Jun (*vide* TM), one at Salem L., *Forsyth*, NC 12 Jun (JH), and one at Long Pond, *Lowndes*, GA 23-30 Jun (JA). Pied-billed Grebes, rare breeders outside of the Coastal Plain, nested again at the E.L.H., with at least three pairs noted (CL). Horned Grebes are rarely found lingering in the Region; of interest was one at Carters L., GA 21-24 Jun (JF, SB).

Pelagic birding trips out of Hatteras, NC produced single Herald Petrels 6 & 27 Jul and a Fea's Petrel 1 Jul (BPI). Shearwater numbers offshore were about average for this time of year; however, several onshore reports were of interest. Tropical Storm *Barry* was most likely responsible for bringing numbers of Cory's, Greater, Sooty, and Audubon's Shearwaters to the inshore waters during early Jun. The best count from shore was at C. Hatt. 3 Jun, when 600+ Greaters, 25 Sooties, and several Audubon's were noted (GL, GBU). A Greater Shearwater found in a field in *Lancaster*, SC 12 Jul (*vide* TP) defies explanation—no storms were active at this time. This bird was captured and taken to a local rehabilitator in the Charlotte, NC area. North Carolina got its 3rd (in four years!) Black-bellied Storm-Petrel, one photographed off Hatteras, NC 23 Jun (BPI). As in the case of recent European Storm-Petrel sightings, one wonders if this species has been overlooked in the past. Always a highlight of any pelagic trip, a White-faced Storm-Petrel was a good find off Hatteras, NC 28 Jul (BPI), providing one of only a few sightings from waters off that section of the Outer Banks.

This summer's tropicbird sightings involved single White-taileds off Hatteras, NC 22 Jun and 27 Jul and a Red-billed off Hatteras, NC 30 Jul (BPI). Lingering Northern Gannets are seen along the beaches each summer, and this year the best counts involved 5 at Tybee I., GA 25 Jun (SWa) and 7 at Ocean Isle Beach, NC 2 Jul (SCo). Inland Brown Pelicans, always unexpected, were found at Walter F. George L., GA 3 Jun (JF, EH) and at L. Lanier, *Hall*, GA 3 Jun (*vide* JF). Anhingas continued to be found at inland sites this summer, as the species expands its summer range northward and westward. The farthest inland was one in *Walton*, GA 7 Jul (MF), very unusual that far from the Coastal Plain. One also summered at a heronry along the Yadkin R., *Rowan*, NC (*vide* MS), apparently not the first time at this location. Is

breeding possible that far west in that state? This summer's Magnificent Frigatebird sightings included one at Seabrook I., *Charleston*, SC 9 Jun (JE et al.), one at Jekyll I., GA 18 Jun (*vide* TM), one at Southport, NC 18 Jul (*vide* WC), and a remarkable 3 near Mann's Harbor, NC 26 Jul (SM).

American Bitterns are rarely found in the Region during summer, thus of note were singles at the Goldsboro, NC W.T.P. 2 Jun (GH), at Carters L., GA 18 Jun (MM et al.), at Mt Pleasant, SC 30 Jun (DA), and in *Martin*, NC 18 Jul (JL). Great Egrets have apparently expanded their breeding range inland somewhat, along with the increasing Great Blue Herons. At a large Great Blue Heron colony along the Yadkin R. in *Rowan*, NC, 12 pairs of Great Egrets with at least five nests were present (MS). This is the 3rd year of known nesting by this species at that Piedmont site. Reddish Egrets are annual summer visitors to coastal sites in the Region. The best counts this summer were the 3 at Bear Island W.M.A., SC 31 Jul (SW) and the 3 at H.B.S.P. 15 Jun (PSe). Interesting inland night-heron reports included 2 Black-crowneds at Beaver L., *Asheville*, NC 2 Jul (RP, MW, WF, ST), one Black-crowned at the E.L.H. 4-12 Jun (CL), and a Yellow-crowned along Little Laurel Cr., near Hot Springs, *Madison*, NC 10 Jun (BB)—the latter a very unusual sighting for the mts of that state. Along with the usual post-breeding wandering White Ibis to inland portions of the Region was a much less expected Glossy Ibis at Phinizy Swamp, Augusta, GA 1 Jul (JF, EH). Roseate Spoonbills were found once again at the usual select coastal sites, with the best count being the 26 at the S.S.S. 26 Jul (SC). Of note inland was one at a pond near Tifton, *Tift*, GA 13 Jun (*vide* TM). A Wood Stork was a good find flying over Southern Pines, NC 12 Jun (SCa), furnishing a locally rare sighting.

KITES THROUGH SKUAS

Swallow-tailed Kites have been reported along the Cape Fear R. in the *Bladen-Columbus*, NC area for several years now, but no evidence of breeding has been obtained. This summer, an aerial survey in early Jun revealed "several" roosting in one area, without a nest being found; nests of the species are relatively difficult to find (CW). Swallow-tailed Kites routinely gather in post-breeding flocks each year, and the best count received was of 80+ over a field s. of Allendale, SC 28 Jul (JC et al.). The Region's first Snail Kite, present at a crawfish farm at Elliott's Landing, *Clarendon*, SC from late May, was last observed 15 Jun (JB), when the ponds it used for feeding were drained. Sharp-shinned Hawks nested for the 3rd year

in a row at Weymouth Woods Pres., Southern Pines, NC (SH). Breeding by this species in the Region is sparse and localized. Also one at Mt. Pleasant, SC 12 Jun (DA) was very unusual for that coastal locality on that date. Another interesting coastal hawk was the Broad-winged at Ft. Moultrie, Sullivan's I., SC 3 Jun (DA); there are only a few Broad-wingeds in the outer Coastal Plain during any given summer season, and this bird was likely a straggling subadult (which migrate much later than adults). The most unusual bird of prey this summer was the Merlin seen twice during the day at Wilmington, NC 16 Jun (*vide* JE). This date is a full month later than the usual time period when all Merlins have normally left the Region but part of a widespread pattern of late-lingering Merlins in the East.

The summering Black Rails in n. Greene, GA were not present after early Jun this summer (PS). This is the first time since the late 1980s that they did not remain in the area, possibly due to the continuing drought conditions. Elsewhere, Black Rail sightings of note included one calling along the Cape Fear R., New Hanover, NC 9 Jun (SCo) and up to 9 at Bear Island W.M.A., SC 13 Jul (ND). The rice fields at the Tidewater Research farm near Roper, NC hosted several King Rails, Virginia Rails, and Soras 21-29 Jul (RD, DR). While Virginia Rails are localized breeders in North Carolina, Sora has not been documented as a nester in that state. Were these birds just very early fall migrants? The E.L.H. had several noteworthy nesting records this summer. At least eight pairs of Common Moorhens nested, continuing a recent trend (CL). Five pairs of American Coots nested this summer, providing the first documented local breeding of this species, which has summered there in previous years (CL). Georgia had another Limpkin, this time at Bluff L., Big Hammock W.M.A., *Tattnell* in early Jun (*vide* GB). Very unusual, but not unprecedented for summer, was the one-day presence of a wandering Sandhill Crane at the Biltmore Estate, Asheville, NC 12 Jun (*vide* TP).

South Carolina hosted its 5th Snowy Plover, one photographed at Hunting Island S.P. 27 Jul (SMa). This species has been reported from the Carolinas annually in the past several years; is the same individual involved, or has the species started to wander more during this time period? Rare anywhere inland in the Region, 4 Black-necked Stilts were good finds at Phinizy Swamp, Augusta, GA 26-30 Jun (LS, m.ob.). Another good inland bird was an early fall migrant Willet at Beaver L., Asheville, NC 2 Jul (ST, WF). Also of note was the Western Willet with Easterns at Emerald Isle, NC 22 Jun (BH); this could

have been a very early migrant or a non-breeding lingerer. The Upland Sandpiper migration started in mid-Jul, as usual, with one near Combahee Plantation, SC 14 Jul (ND), and the best count being 4 at the Orangeburg, SC sod farm 31 Jul (*vide* TP). Several late sandpipers were noted in Georgia, with 2 White-rumpeds at the E.L.H. 9 Jun (SB) and a Dunlin at Carters L. 6 Jun (CK et al.) being most notable. And at the other end of the season, a Wilson's Snipe along Taff Rd., Bartow, GA 31 Jul provided a new early returning date for that species. A Wilson's Phalarope was a good find at C. Hatt. 3 Jun (GL, GBu), while the peak count of the annual group of Wilson's at the S.S.S. was 9 on 10 Jul (SC). Very rare inland, and late, was the male Red-necked Phalarope at the American Proteins pond, Forsyth, GA 2-3 Jun (JFI, m.ob.); one wonders if Tropical Storm Barry brought this bird inland. Also 8 just outside Beaufort Inlet, NC 1 Jun (*vide* JF) were good finds that close to the beach.

A molting ad. gull found at Carters L., GA 16-18 Jun was identified as a Franklin's Gull (DE et al., JSp et al.) and provided the first summer report for that state. Tropical Storm Barry was probably responsible for bringing 2 Sooty Terns close to shore at C. Hatt. 3 Jun (GL, GBu), although individuals of this species have been known to be present in the area's tern colonies in years past. The presence of 2 ad. Gull-billed Terns at L. Walter F. George, GA 7 Jul (WCh) was truly unexplainable. This strictly coastal species has only been noted inland in that state a few times previously. A late Roseate Tern was a good find just e. of Hatteras Inlet, NC 14 Jun (BPI) and represented one of the few sightings of this tern in that state the past few years. Another bird possibly brought in by Tropical Storm Barry was the South Polar Skua found at Carters L., GA 12-28 Jun (JSp, m.ob.). This bird caused quite a stir in the area, was seen by many observers during its stay, and represented the first inland report of the species for that state and about the 3rd inland for the Region (two previous inland North Carolina reports, both in the context of hurricanes).

DOVES THROUGH CROSSBILLS

Common Ground-Doves continue to be found at sites away from the immediate coast in South Carolina. Three were in the Mayesville, Sumter area 20 Jun (RC, CE), an area in the inner Coastal Plain. The species continues to decline along the beaches in that state and has been absent as a breeder from North Carolina coastal sites for almost three decades now. An Olive-sided Flycatcher in Asheville, NC 8 Jun (ST) was not only locally

unusual but rather late for a spring migrant. Willow Flycatchers have rarely summered far to the e. of the usual montane and w. Piedmont locations in the Region. Thus of note were single singing Willows in extreme e. Franklin, NC 23 Jun-4 Jul (RD) and at the Flat R. Impoundment, Durham, NC 23-24 Jun (RD, WCo et al.). The presence of 2 birds in this part of e.-cen. North Carolina during summer is quite unusual. Gray Kingbird reports this summer included one at Ft. Moultrie, Sullivan's I., SC 3 Jun (DA) and an ad feeding 3 fledglings at Savannah, GA 28 Jun (SWa), providing rare breeding confirmation for that area. The Region's summering Scissor-tailed Flycatchers continued again this year with varying success. The McDonough, GA male arrived in spring but was never joined by the female and was last seen 10 Jun (*vide* TM). The Monroe, NC pair returned for the 5th year and attempted to nest, but by 7 Jul the birds had disappeared (AO). The Southern Pines, NC pair returned in the spring and by Jun were nesting again, for the 2nd year in a row (m.ob.). Other Scissor-tailed sightings, of wandering birds, included one near Baldwin, Brooks, GA 15 Jul (*vide* MB) and one at Pea I. 20 Jul (P&NM et al.). A family group of 3 Blue-headed Vireos at Peachtree Rock Pres., Lexington, SC 8 Jun (RC) was locally significant for breeding in that part of the state. This summer's Common Raven report outside of the mts. was of the continuing individual in e. Greenville, Pitt, NC, observed several times (V&NP). Though fairly common as breeders in coastal Virginia, Horned Larks are generally absent from the Region's outer Coastal Plain as breeders; thus of note were one in Pamlico, NC 15 Jun (SW et al.) and 30 at North R. Farms, Carteret, NC 15 Jul (JF et al.). The latter report undoubtedly involved post-breeding dispersants, as there is still no evidence of breeding from that site. Cliff Swallows have apparently been spreading eastward and southward as breeding birds in the Region. This summer, several dozen nests were located on two bridges over the Ogeechee R. in the Savannah, GA area 6 Jun (*vide* DCh), extending the breeding range to the coast in that state. Also of note, up to 40 nests were found on the outside wall of a motel building in the Havelock, NC area in early Jul (JF). Practically all Cliff Swallow nests in the Region have been placed under bridges and on dams.

Swainson's Thrushes are not known to breed anywhere in the Region; the closest known sites are in the mts. of w. Virginia. Breeding-season reports of Swainson's in the Region have always seemed to pertain to late or lingering migrants; thus of great interest

was the locating of 6 territorial males in one area near Mt. Mitchell, NC this summer (MW et al.). The birds, present all of Jun and most of Jul, were in an area that also hosted territorial Hermit Thrushes and Veeries. Even though no definite evidence of breeding was obtained, it most likely occurred; and certainly the area will be checked again next year. The Roan Mt., NC area once again had summering Magnolia Warblers, with 3 males 10 Jun (RD) and 2 on 18 Jun (RK). This site is easily the most dependable for that species in the North Carolina mts. during summer. Yellow-rumped Warblers were found at high elevations again this year, with a non-singing male at Roan Mt., NC 10 Jun (RD) and 2 singing males near Mt. Kephart in the Great Smoky Mts., NC 9 Jun (*vide* DE). Much less expected were wandering Yellow-rumped at the coast—a singing male on Roanoke I., NC 15 Jun (JL) and a female at Charleston, SC 8 Jul (ND). Very unusual was the Eastern Towhee of the white-eyed subspecies *rileyi* found in n. *Greene*, GA 10 Jun (PS). This form is usually found only in extreme se. and coastal areas of that state. A Chipping Sparrow summered in a yard on Skidaway I., GA (*vide* BR), providing a most unusual report from an

area of the state where the species does not breed. Other totally unexpected summer sparrows included an ad. White-crowned Sparrow of the *gambelii* subspecies at a feeder in *Pamlico*, NC 14 Jul (SW, LL), a Dark-eyed Junco in Brunswick, GA 11 Jun (GK), and another Dark-eyed Junco at Meggett, SC 29 Jun (CS). Dickcissels were noted locally throughout the Region again this summer, and the best count as usual came from North R. Farms, *Carteret*, NC when 19 singing males were noted 24 Jun (JF et al.). Also of interest were at least 3 immms. seen there 8 Jul (JF). The nesting site for Baltimore Oriole in the North Carolina Piedmont in the Shimpock Rd., *Cabarrus* area hosted only a male until early Jul (JB); the female was not seen after the spring season. Red Crossbills were reported much more than usual this summer, indicating good numbers of this cyclic species. The best totals involved 35-40 in the Mt. Mitchell, NC area 2 Jun (MW et al.), 20-25 along Heintooga Rd., Great Smoky Mts., NC 3 Jun (MW et al.), and up to 25 in the Roan Mt., NC area during most of Jun (RK). In the s. part of their range, 9 at a feeder in Epworth, *Fannin*, GA 12 Jun (NS) and one at a feeder in Big Canoe, *Dawson*, GA 12 Jul (*vide* TM) were noteworthy.

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Florida



Atlantic were recorded from boats and from shore, the latter observations aided by strong easterly winds.

We note with great sadness the death of Glen E. Woolfenden following surgery on 19 June at the age of 77. Glen's death marks an incalculable loss to the Florida ornithological community.

Abbreviations/definitions: N.S.R.A. (North Shore Recreation Area, *Orange*); report (any observation); record (only reports verifiable from photograph, videotape, or specimen evidence); S.T.A. (Stormwater Treatment Area, *Hendry*).

WATERFOWL THROUGH SPOONBILL

As is now expected, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were widespread, with reports from several new sites, including three in *Leon*: 2 at Tallahassee 22-24 Jun (JC), 4 others there 5 Jul (TS), and 2 at Tall Timbers Research Sta-

tion 29 Jul (CB). Lingering waterfowl at S.T.A.-5 on 30 Jun included one American Wigeon, 13 Blue-winged Teal, and 2 Ring-necked Ducks (ME et al.). Casual inland and so late, a Greater Scaup lingered at Lake Apopka N.S.R.A. through 3 Jun (HR). A male Surf Scoter in eclipse plumage at St. Vincent N.W.R., *Franklin* 29 Jul (TL) and a Pacific Loon in *Walton* that was rescued 5 Jul and released three days later (PGa) furnished rare summer reports for the Panhandle.

Interest in pelagic species has increased the past few years, as several trips—mostly in small private boats—are now taken regularly, primarily from Ponce de Leon Inlet, *Volusia*. Table 1 summarizes most of the significant reports, with the rest detailed here. There again was a die-off of Greater Shearwaters along the cen. Atlantic coast, with hundreds of live birds, many of these in distress, observed from shore. The largest numbers totaled 500 at Huguonot Memorial Park, *Duval* 4 Jun (RC), 100 at Treasure Shores Park, *Indian River* 16 Jun (DS), 50 at Ponce de Leon Inlet 14 Jun (MBr), and 43 along a one-km stretch of beach at Boynton Inlet, *Palm Beach* 16 Jun

Bill Pranty

It was a quiet summer. The only storm activity during the period was Tropical Storm Barry on 2 June, which made landfall at St. Petersburg and exited west of Jacksonville. A few pelagic species were found in the storm's wake. Many other pelagics in the