

## Voice of the Naturalist

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Coverage: MD/DC/VA/DE

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This is the Voice of the Naturalist, a service of the Audubon Naturalist Society. This report was completed Tuesday, October 14, at 10:00 a.m.

Top birds this week are WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL\* in WV, GREAT WHITE HERON\* in VA, CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD\* in MD, and HARRIS' SPARROW\* in DE.

Other birds of interest include CACKLING GOOSE, ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, GOLDEN EAGLE, KING RAIL, shorebirds, LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL, LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE, PHILADELPHIA VIREO, COMMON RAVEN, SEDGE WREN, thrushes including BICKNELL'S, warblers including ORANGE-CROWNED, CONNECTICUT, and MOURNING, both VESPER and LINCOLN'S SPARROW, DICKCISSEL, RUSTY BLACKBIRD, and PINE SISKIN.

The WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL in a pond at the Huntfield subdivision south of Charles Town, Jefferson Co, WV continues. Because it appeared in the wake of Hurricane Hanna, some area birders believe that it blew in naturally while others believe it is an escapee. It can be found by taking Rte 340 south at Charles Town from the interchange of US 340, Rt. 9, and Rt. 51, go about 3.3 miles to Augustine Avenue where you need to take a sharp right. The Huntfield subdivision is just ahead on the left. Take the second left onto Prospect Hills Blvd. At the circle/obelisk, go right onto Butler Street. At the next circle, go 3/4 of the way around circle, taking the first right (Colston Road). The pond will be on your right a little ways ahead.

While unsuccessfully searching for the Brown Booby that was recently reported there, a GREAT WHITE HERON\*, a white morph of the GREAT BLUE HERON, was found Oct 11 at Claytor Lake, Pulaski Co, southwestern VA.

Last October a CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD at North Beach, Calvert Co, MD, was the first state record for this species. On Oct 9 of this year a CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD was again seen feeding on Blue & Black Sage and Pineapple Sage in the same yard. While it hasn't been seen again, it was at 9119 Bay Avenue, North Beach, MD,

20714; there is a lot of free parking available in the gravel lot accessed from 5th Street between Bay & Chesapeake which is a short walk to the yard.

A HARRIS' SPARROW\* found on Oct 11 at Brandywine SP, Wilmington, DE was still there on Oct 13. It was found shortly after the entrance booth along a wall on the road that goes to the right to a farm house. The HARRIS' SPARROW\* is one of several different sparrows in the same area.

A CACKLING GOOSE was found at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD, on Oct 10.

A ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK, a species not seen every year at the hawkwatch, was observed as it flew over the Kiptopeke St Pk Hawkwatch, Northampton Co, VA on Oct 13.

A GOLDEN EAGLE was reported from the Snicker's Gap Hawk Watch, Clarke Co, VA on Oct 11. A GOLDEN EAGLE was observed Oct 12 from the Rockfish Gap Hawkwatch, Waynesboro, VA.

A KING RAIL was feeding just below the culvert along the wildlife drive at the Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA, on Oct 12. On Oct 13 two KING RAILS were found in the marsh along the wildlife trail.

The Oct 11 trip to Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD found a number of shorebirds and gulls including one AVOCET, one WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER, and an adult LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. A WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER continues to linger at Leonard's Pond, Rockingham Co, VA, with a report from Oct 13.

An AMERICAN WOODCOCK was found at the maintenance yard, Rock Creek Park, NW DC on both Oct 12 and 13.

A first cycle LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL was found at the pier at Herrington Harbor, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Oct 10.

A LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE was found Oct 7 along Grassdale Road near Remington, Fauquier Co, VA.

A PHILADELPHIA VIREO was seen Oct 9 in a yard in Baltimore, MD, near Leakin Park.

A COMMON RAVEN was well seen and heard Oct 11 at Leesylvania SP, Prince William Co, VA. And on Oct 12, four COMMON RAVENS were seen and heard flying over Rockville, Montgomery Co, MD on Oct 12.

A SEDGE WREN was found on Oct 12 at Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA, along the Bayview Road near the intersection with the wildlife drive. Two SEDGE WRENS were found Oct 13 in the tall grass at Kenilworth Park, NE DC.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES were among the different species of thrushes found moving through the area this past week. On Oct 7 a GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was found at Little Bennett Regional Park, Montgomery Co, MD and another at the maintenance yard, Rock Creek Park, NW DC. A GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was found

Oct 12 at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in northwestern Loudoun Co, VA. Five thrush species including a BICKNELL'S and a GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH were the highlights at the Kiptopeke SP banding station, Accomack Co, VA on Oct 7.

Warbler migration continued, though at a slower pace, throughout the area with a fair number of different species reported from a number of different locations.

Two ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS were found Oct 7 at the Green Farm Conservation Park, Montgomery Co, MD. An ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER was sighted Oct 11 at Fort Smallwood Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD.

On Oct 7 the third CONNECTICUT WARBLER of the season was banded at the Kiptopeke SP banding station. And on Oct 11 another CONNECTICUT WARBLER was banded there. On Oct 10 a hatch-year CONNECTICUT WARBLER was found along Lower Pindell Road, Lothian, Anne Arundel Co, MD.

On Oct 11 a MOURNING WARBLER was found at the Elkhorn Garden Plots, on the side which borders Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia, Howard Co, MD.

Sparrows popped up all over the place this past week. On Oct 7 a VESPER SPARROW was found at Flint Hill School, Oakton, VA. The same day a VESPER SPARROW and two LINCOLN'S SPARROWS were found at Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore Co, MD. Three LINCOLN'S SPARROWS and a WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW were found at Huntley Meadows Pk, Fairfax Co, VA on the 7th. On the 11th two LINCOLN'S SPARROWS were found at the Elkhorn Garden Plots in Columbia. Three LINCOLN'S SPARROWS, a GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, a few WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS, and all seven woodpecker species were the highlights of a ten-sparrow day on Oct 12 at Sky Meadows SP, Fauquier Co, VA on the east side of the park. A LINCOLN'S SPARROW and two WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS were found at Layhill Park, Montgomery Co, MD on Oct 13. DARK-EYED JUNCOS were also seen in several locations.

The best bird on an Oct 11 walk at George Washington's Boyhood Home, Ferry Farm in Stafford Co, VA was a DICKCISSEL. Another DICKCISSEL was found the same day at the Spray Fields, near North Branch, Allegany Co, MD.

A dozen RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were found on Oct 12 at the Occoquan NWR and one was found there on Oct 13.

On Oct 13 a PINE SISKIN was found at Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA, and another was at the maintenance yard, Rock Creek Park, NW DC.

Some of this week's reports have been gleaned from the MDOsprey, VA-Bird, and DE-bird list servers.

To report bird sightings, e-mail your report to [voice@AudubonNaturalist.org](mailto:voice@AudubonNaturalist.org) or call 301-652-1088 and select menu option 2. Please post reports before midnight Monday, identify the county as well as state, and include your name and a Tuesday morning contact, either e-mail or phone.