

Voice of the Naturalist

Date: **10/21/2008**

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 21, at 8:30 a.m.

Top birds this week are WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL* in WV, BROWN BOOBY* in VA, BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER* in MD, and HARRIS' SPARROW* in DE.

Other birds of interest include CACKLING GOOSE, geese and ducks, GOLDEN EAGLE, KING RAIL, AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER, REEVE (female RUFF), AMERICAN WOODCOCK, WESTERN KINGBIRD, kinglets, GREY-CHEEKED Thrush, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS, sparrows including CLAY COLORED, FOX and LINCOLN'S, DICKCISSEL, RUSTY BLACKBIRD, PURPLE FINCH and PINE SISKIN.

The WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL* was seen again on Oct 16 in a pond at the Huntfield subdivision south of Charles Town, Jefferson Co, WV. The pond 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 and take a sharp right to the Huntfield subdivision 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.

A BROWN BOOBY* has been viewed almost daily including as recently as Oct 20 at Claytor Lake State Park in Pulaski Co, VA. The bird shows at various locations including cross-water views from the park marina.

A BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER* at Kinder Farm Park in Anne Arundel Co, MD was reported on Oct 14 but the bird has not been subsequently located.

A HARRIS' SPARROW* first found on Oct 11 at Brandywine SP, Wilmington, DE was still there on Oct 18. It was found shortly beyond the entrance booth along a wall on the road that goes to the right to a farm house.

A CACKLING GOOSE was reported at Taylor's Gut close to Woodland Beach in Kent Co, DE on Oct 15 among growing numbers of arriving SNOW GEESSE. A CACKLING GOOSE appeared at Elk Neck State Park in Cecil Co, MD on Oct 19.

Geese and ducks are showing at many locations. BRANT were on the bayside of Assateague Island, Worcester Co, MD on Oct 17. A trip to Poplar Island, Talbot Co, MD, on Oct 15 yielded AMERICAN BLACK DUCK, MALLARD, NORTHERN SHOVELER, NORTHERN PINTAIL, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, LESSER SCAUP, RUDDY DUCK, SURF SCOTER, AND WHITE-WINGED SCOTER. On Oct 17 there were GADWALL, AMERICAN WIGEON, AMERICAN BLACK DUCK, GREEN-WINGED TEAL, RING-NECKED DUCK, HOODED Merganser, and RUDDY DUCK at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD.

Three GOLDEN EAGLES were reported in Herndon, Fairfax Co, VA on Oct 14. Other individual GOLDEN EAGLES were seen above Cromwell Valley Park in Baltimore Co, MD on Oct 18 and Rockville, Montgomery Co, MD on Oct 19.

A KING RAIL was spotted at Occaquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA on Oct 16 on the south side of Catamont Creek and on Oct 17 on Charlie Road.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVERS were seen close to the Worton Treatment Plant near to Chestertown, Kent Co, MD on Oct.16.

A REEVE (female RUFF) was seen near Great Oak Pond in Kent Co, MD on Oct 18 in the vicinity of Route 298 (Fairlee Road) and Route 514 (Melitota Road) close to Handy Point Road.

An AMERICAN WOODCOCK appeared on Capitol Hill in DC on Oct 17.

A WESTERN KINGBIRD was spotted at Assateague Island SP, Worcester, Co, MD on Oct 16.

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS and RUBY CROWNED KINGLETS were plentiful in many areas including sightings on Oct 18 in Rock Creek Park in DC.

A GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH was seen on Oct 20 at Loch Raven Reservoir in Baltimore Co, MD.

Warbler migration has slowed throughout the area. Meanwhile, YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS are arriving. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were seen at Kinder Farm Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Oct 16, the Botanical Garden on the Mall in DC on Oct 16, and Huntley Meadows, Fairfax Co, VA on Oct 17.

A DICKCISSEL was spotted in Baltimore City, MD close to Washington Boulevard north of Carroll Park on Oct 17. Another DICKCISSEL was identified at Elk Neck SP, Cecil County, MD on Oct 17.

Sparrow arrivals remain strong and widely dispersed. A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was at Cape Henlopen SP, Sussex Co, DE on Oct 16. A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was at Spruce Creek Park, Nelson Co, VA on Oct 17. A FOX SPARROW was at Finzel Swamp in Garrett Co, MD on Oct 17. A LINCOLN'S SPARROW was in the Sykesville

Patapsco scrubland in Carroll Co, MD on October 15. A LINCOLN'S SPARROW and SAVANNAH SPARROW were in the Rock Creek Park Maintenance Yard in DC on Oct 16. SAVANNAH SPARROW, WHITE-THROATED SPARROW, SONG SPARROW, FIELD SPARROW, CHIPPING SPARROW and SWAMP SPARROW were at Green Farm Conservation Park in Montgomery Co, MD on Oct 16. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS showed at the Botanical Garden on the mall in DC on Oct 16, the Kinder Farm Park, Anne Arundel Co, MD on Oct 17 and other locations. The first arrivals of DARK-EYED JUNCOS were seen in many parts of our region.

RUSTY BLACKBIRDS were found at Dyke Marsh, Fairfax Co, VA on Oct 19 and Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA on Oct 20.

A PURPLE FINCH was seen at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD on Oct 17. Another PURPLE FINCH was at Occoquan Bay NWR, VA on Oct 18. PINE SISKENS were plentiful in migrating flocks at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD on Oct 17, Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore, Co, MD on Oct 18, Sky Meadows SP, Fauquier Co, VA on Oct 18 and other locations.

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

Finding Birds in the National Capital Area by Claudia Wilds is an excellent source for directions to many birding sites. The **Audubon Sanctuary Shop** (301-652-3606) is an excellent source for this and many other nature-related titles.

To report bird sightings, e-mail your report to 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.

Thank you for calling, and GOOD BIRDING.

*Of interest to the records committee.