

Voice of the Naturalist

Date: **4/29/2008**

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, April 29, at 6:00 p.m.

Top bird this week is WHITE-WINGED TERN* in DE.

Other birds of interest include waterfowl, RED-THROATED LOON, AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN, bitterns, herons, and ibis, MISSISSIPPI KITE, NORTHERN GOSHAWK, falcons, rails, BLACK-NECKED STILT, AMERICAN AVOCET, GULL-BILLED TERN, BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOW and WHIP-POOR-WILL, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, PHILADELPHIA VIREO, COMMON RAVEN, BANK SWALLOW, SEDGE and MARSH WREN, thrushes, AMERICAN PIPIT, warblers, SUMMER TANAGER, sparrows, BLUE GROSBEAK, BOBLINK, and finches.

On April 26, a non-breeding plumage WHITE-WINGED TERN was reported at Ted Harvey WMA, Kent Co, DE. The bird was seen again on April 27 in the "north" pond and on April 28 in the "south" pond.

A drake NORTHERN SHOVELER and a female GADWALL were found at Constitution Gardens, DC on April 24. A lingering COMMON GOLDENEYE was seen at Mason Neck NWR, Fairfax Co, VA on the north side of Belmont Bay on April 26.

A flyover RED-THROATED LOON was seen over a yard in Ferndale, Anne Arundel Co, MD on April 27.

A single AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN is still being seen at Blackwater NWR, Dorchester Co, MD as of April 27.

AMERICAN BITTERN were reported this week from Hagerstown, Washington Co, MD on April 23; Huntley Meadows, Fairfax Co, VA on April 26; and Hughes Hollow (within McKee-Beshers WMA), Montgomery Co, MD on April 26. Two LEAST BITTERN were found at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD on April 26.

A LITTLE BLUE HERON was found in a swamp near the golf course along Paint Branch SVP trail, Prince George's Co, MD on April 26. Three BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were observed on April 23 perched in the BCNH tree at Ben Brenman Park, Alexandria, VA. A YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON has returned to Royal Farms area on Thornton Rd, Towson, MD for the third year in a row. Another YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was found near a yard adjacent to Jug Bay, Prince George's Co, VA on April 25.

A WHITE IBIS was seen April 27, flying in to join a group of GLOSSY IBIS in a field near Black Duck Pool in Chincoteague NWR, VA. A flock of eight or nine GLOSSY IBIS were seen flying due west, directly over the Silver Spring Metro Station, Montgomery Co, MD on April 24. Twenty-two GLOSSY IBIS were observed at Bethel WMA, Cecil Co, MD April 26.

A juvenile MISSISSIPPI KITE was observed soaring with a small kettle of vultures near Bellyache Swamp, Southampton Co, VA on April 26. A NORTHERN GOSHAWK was seen "dog fighting" with a Common Raven over Cragin Cabin, Shenandoah NP, VA on April 24. A MERLIN was seen April 27 along Deephole Point Rd in Occoquan NWR, Prince William Co, VA. A PEREGRINE FALCON was reported from Leesylvania SP, VA on April 26.

Night driving along marshes in Dorchester Co, MD on April 25 yielded a five rail species night (BLACK, CLAPPER, KING, VIRGINIA, AND SORA) plus two AMERICAN BITTERN and both WHIP-POOR-WILL and CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW. Three VIRGINIA RAIL and one SORA were found at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD on April 25. SORA were reported this week from Union Mills Wetlands near Westminster, Carroll Co, MD on April 24 and 27; and in a privately owned wetland in Albermarle Co, VA on April 25. A COMMON MOORHEN was found at Huntley Meadows, Fairfax Co, VA on April 26.

BLACK-NECKED STILT were seen this past week at North Beach Marsh, Calvert Co, MD on April 25 and near the drawbridge on the causeway into the town of Chincoteague, VA between April 25 and 27.

A few BLACK-NECKED STILTS and an AMERICAN AVOCET were seen at Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD on April 26.

Two GULL-BILLED TERN were found on the north end of Assateague Island (Sinepuxent Bay side), Worcester Co, MD on April 26.

The flight call of BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO was heard over Gaithersburg, MD on April 26. Another BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO was found at Blue Mash, Montgomery Co, MD on April 27 and 28.

A CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW was heard calling in Weinberg Park south of White Pond, Anne Arundel Co, MD on April 26. WHIP-POOR-WILLS were heard calling at several locations including along Joplin Rd west of Prince William Forest Park, Prince William Co, VA on April 26 and off Winchester Rd, Allegany Co, MD on April 27.

A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER was seen at Hughes Hollow, Montgomery Co, MD on April 26.

A PHILADELPHIA VIREO was reported April 26 along Possum Point Rd, Prince William Co, VA at the first pullover (before all the no parking signs). Another PHILADELPHIA VIREO was reported from Huntley Meadows, Fairfax Co, VA on April 27.

A pair of COMMON RAVENS are nesting on a water tower near Cabin John, Montgomery Co, MD. Two COMMON RAVENS were seen at the Beltsville Agriculture Research Center, Prince George's Co, MD on April 27.

A BANK SWALLOW was seen flying over the University of MD Central Farm in Howard Co, MD on April 24. Another BANK SWALLOW was seen at Huntley Meadows, Fairfax Co, VA on April 28.

A SEDGE WREN was observed at Irish Grove Sanctuary, Somerset Co, MD on April 27. MARSH WRENS were reported this week from Patuxent River Park, Aquasco Farm, Prince George's Co, MD on April 23; Swan Harbor Farm Park, Harford Co, MD on April 24; and Dyke Marsh, Fairfax Co, VA on April 27.

Reports of a few "first of the season" VEERY and SWAINSON'S THRUSH trickled in from wooded locations in MD and VA.

AMERICAN PIPITS were found this past week in a flooded field at McKee-Beshers WMA, Montgomery Co, MD on April 25 and the mudflats at Quantico Creek, Prince William Co, VA on April 27.

Warbler numbers and diversity continue to increase across the region. A GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER was found at the New Windsor Wetlands behind the New Windsor MS, Carroll Co, MD on April 27 and also at Schooley Mill Park, Howard Co, MD on April 26. A BREWSTER'S WARBLER (Blue-winged x Golden-winged hybrid) was found in the Azalea Collection at the National Arboretum, DC on April 27. CERULEAN WARBLERS were found at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship in northwestern Loudoun Co, VA on April 26 and at the McKeldin Area of Patapsco Valley SP, MD April 26 and 27. SWAINSON'S WARBLERS continue along the Jericho Ditch in the Great Dismal Swamp NWR, Suffolk Co, VA. A YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT was a surprise visitor to a backyard bird bath in Arlington, VA on April 26.

A SUMMER TANAGER was observed near Bushwood, St. Mary's Co, MD on April 24. Another SUMMER TANAGER was heard calling in Monticello Park, Alexandria, VA on April 27.

A VESPER SPARROW was found at Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA on April 26. Reports of GRASSHOPPER SPARROW increased this past week. Multiple HENSLOW'S SPARROW were found along Old Legislative Rd in Allegany Co, MD on April 25 and 26. A LINCOLN'S SPARROW showed up in the "nets" at the Occoquan Banding Station, Prince William Co, VA on April 27.

BLUE GROSBEAKS were seen this past week at the National Arboretum, DC on April 25; Greenbury Point, Anne Arundel Co, MD on April 26; and Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore, MD on April 27.

A BOBOLINK was found at the New Windsor Wetlands behind the New Windsor MS, Carroll Co, MD on April 27.

PURPLE FINCH continue to be seen around the area. PINE SISKINS were seen at a feeder off Winchester Rd, Allegany Co, MD on April 27; a backyard feeder in northern Prince George's Co, MD on April 27; and in Davidsonville, MD on April 28.

Some of this week's reports have been gleaned from the MDOsprey and VA-Bird list servers and the eBird Rare Bird Google Gadgets for MD and VA.

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.