

Voice of the Naturalist

Date: **5/6/2008**

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, May 6, at 6:00 p.m.

Top birds this week are FRANKLIN'S GULL in DC and WHITE-WINGED TERN* in DE.

Other birds of interest include RED-THROATED LOON, AMERICAN BITTERN, herons, kites, NORTHERN GOSHAWK, PEREGRINE FALCON, shorebirds, BLACK-NECKED STILT, BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO, CHUCK-WILL'S WIDOW and WHIP-POOR-WILL, PHILADELPHIA VIREO, CLIFF SWALLOW, thrushes, warblers, sparrows, grosbeaks, BOBLINK, and PURPLE FINCH.

A FRANKLIN'S GULL was on the golf course at Haines Point, DC on May 3.

During the week, a WHITE-WINGED TERN was reported at Ted Harvey WMA, Kent Co, DE. The bird was seen in the "north" pond of the Logan Land Tract. It has also been seen in the south side of the Logan Tract.

A RED-THROATED LOON was a fly-by at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center, Grasonville, Queen Anne's Co, MD on May 2.

AMERICAN BITTERNS were reported this week from the Ft. McHenry NM, Baltimore, MD on April 30; Greenbury Point, Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 1; Susquehanna SP, Cecil Co, MD on May 2; Swan Harbor, Harford Co, MD on May 3 and Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax Co, VA on May 4.

A LITTLE BLUE HERON was found at the Oxbow Lake Nature Preserve, Anne Arundel Co, MD and at the Forbay Pond area at Lake Elkhorn, Howard Co, MD on May 2. Two YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were seen at the Glen Artney section of Patapsco Valley SP on April 30 and May 5 and another two were spotted on Hunting Quarter Road, Montgomery Co, MD also on April 30. A YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was seen at Lake Elkhorn, Columbia, Howard Co, MD on May 1. Two YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were seen at Sligo Creek Parkway, Montgomery Co, MD on May 4

A SWALLOW-TAILED KITE flew over the office at Eastern Shore of VA NWR, Northampton Co, VA on May 2. A MISSISSIPPI KITE flew over a yard in North East, Cecil Co, MD on May 3 and another was seen at Huntley Meadows Park on May 4. A NORTHERN GOSHAWK was seen at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co, MD on May 2. Two PEREGRINE FALCONS were reported from Greenbury Point on April 29 and another was spotted at Turkey Run Park, Fairfax Co, VA on May 4.

A COMMON MOORHEN was noted at Flag Ponds Nature Park, Calvert Co, MD on May 3.

A SANDHILL CRANE was flying west over Partnership Road near Poolsville, Montgomery Co, MD on May 3.

Shorebirds have started to arrive with reports from throughout the region including BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS at North Branch, Allegany Co, MD and RED KNOTS near the Eastern Shore of VA NWR on May 2. A visit to Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore Co, MD on May 4 reported 15 shorebird species.

Two BLACK-NECKED STILTS were seen on Elliott Island Road, Dorchester Co, MD on April 30.

The BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO reported from the Blue Mash Nature Trail, Montgomery Co, MD, last week was re-found on April 30 and the number had increased to 2 by May 1. A BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO was spotted at the National Arboretum, DC on May 3 and others were reported from a yard in Colesville, Montgomery Co, MD; along the C&O Canal in Washington Co, MD and from Fort C.F. Smith Park, Arlington, VA on May 4.

CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOWS were heard calling in Black Marsh, Baltimore Co, MD and Weinberg Park south of White Pond, Anne Arundel Co, MD on April 30. A single CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOW was seen and heard from the Edgewood Area of the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Harford Co, MD on May 2. CHUCK-WILLS-WIDOWS and WHIP-POOR-WILLS were calling from the Solley Road powerline in Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 4.

A PHILADELPHIA VIREO and a GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH were seen at Soldier's Delight, Baltimore Co, MD on May 4.

CLIFF SWALLOWS were noted at the Belle Isle footbridge, Richmond VA on May 4.

A SWAINSON'S THRUSH was observed in Upper Watts Branch Park on May 1 and another was encountered from the hiker/biker trail in Montgomery Co, MD on May 2. On May 3, a SWAINSON'S THRUSH was observed at Wakefield Park, Fairfax Co, VA.

Warbler numbers and diversity increased to a flood across the region. Highlights include GOLDEN-WINGED, BLUE-WINGED, BREWSTER'S, LAWRENCE'S hybrid, CHESTNUT-SIDED, CAPE-MAY, BLACKBURNIAN, BAY-BREASTED, CERULEAN, SWAINSON'S, KENTUCKY. MOURNING and HOODED WARBLERS.

A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW was found at the edge of Constitution Gardens, DC with sightings on May 1, 2 and 4. A GRASSHOPPER SPARROW was spotted near the intersection of Church Road and Rte 50 in Bowie MD and on Country Farm Road, Caroline Co, MD on May 1. More GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS were heard from roads in the west-central part of Carroll Co, MD on May 1 and a few GRASSHOPPER SPARROWS were seen along Carr Lane near Sky Meadows SP, Fauquier Co, VA on May 4. Four SEASIDE SPARROWS were at Sandy Point SP, Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 3.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAKS appeared in the area this past week with reports from many sites; BLUE GROSBEAK reports continued, but at a lower level.

BOBOLINKS have returned to the Beltsville Ag Research Center, Prince George's Co, MD. Two BOBOLINKS were noted at Gravelly Point, Arlington, VA on April 30 and May 1 and 2. 17 BOBOLINKS were found in a tree in Gambrills, Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 1. A northbound flock of BOBOLINKS serenaded birders in Kent Co, MD on May 3 while 20 more were singing loudly on Old Hanover Road, Baltimore Co, MD on May 4.

PURPLE FINCH continue to be seen around the area.

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.