

# Voice of the Naturalist

Date: 5/26/09

Coverage: MD/DC/VA/DE

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## Reporting Guidelines

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## Archives

Please consider joining ANS, especially if you are a regular user of the Voice (Individual \$40; Family \$50; Nature Steward \$75; Audubon Advocate \$150). The membership number is 301-652-9188, option 12; the address is 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

## Join online

This is the Voice of the Naturalist, a service of the Audubon Naturalist Society. This report was completed Tuesday, May 26 at noon.

Top bird this week is BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK\* in VA.

Other birds of interest include NORTHERN BOBWHITE, SOOTY SHEARWATER, ANHINGA, herons, GLOSSY IBIS, MISSISSIPPI KITE, KING RAIL, COMMON MOORHEN, shorebirds, LEAST TERN, nightjars, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, flycatchers, thrushes, warblers including SWAINSON'S and MOURNING, sparrows, BLUE GROSBEAK, DICKCISSEL, BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE, and RED CROSSBILL.

A BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK\* was found on May 19 in Richmond, VA and was still there through the 25th. It has been seen swimming in the ponds on both sides of Forest Hill Drive in the vicinity of the Stony Point Shopping Center and the Stony Point Office Park.

NORTHERN BOBWHITES were heard at several locations during the past week including the Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA on May 23. Several were also heard in the Leedstown area of Westmoreland Co, VA on May 24.

Eight SOOTY SHEARWATERS were spotted at the Ocean City Inlet on May 19.

Two ANHINGAS were seen flying over Susquehanna SP, Harford Co, MD on May 22.

At least two and possibly three LEAST BITTERNs were seen May 22 at Swan Harbor Park, Harford Co, MD. A LEAST BITTERN was found May 24 on a farm in the Leedstown area of Westmoreland Co, VA. Two LEAST BITTERNs were seen May 25 at Neabsco Creek in Woodbridge, Prince William Co, VA, just before the entrance to Leesylvania SP. The same day a LEAST BITTERN was heard calling at the Oxbow Lake Preserve, Anne Arundel Co, MD. This past week both species of night-herons were reported from a number of locations including Wilde Lake, Howard Co, MD and Lake Roland, Baltimore Co on May 19. A BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was actively feeding at the Sunrise Valley Wetlands in Reston,

Fairfax Co, VA on May 25.

A GLOSSY IBIS was seen May 19 at Hughes Hollow, Montgomery Co, MD.

A MISSISSIPPI KITE flew over the Fort Smallwood Park hawk watch, Anne Arundel Co, MD on May 22. A Mississippi Kite was found May 23 at Runt Powell's farm on Wolf Trap Rd, St Rte 716, in Halifax Co, VA.

The participants on a birding trip to the Occoquan Bay NWR on May 23 also heard KING RAILS.

A COMMON MOORHEN was found during a survey of the private Dulles Greenway Wetlands Mitigation Project, Loudoun Co, VA on May 19.

A PIPING PLOVER was found along the water's edge at Hughlett Point Natural Area Preserve, Northumberland Co, VA on May 24; an AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER was also found there. Last week there were between 3,000 and 7,000 RED KNOTS in the harbor at the DuPont Nature Center at Mispillion Harbor Preserve, Sussex Co, DE.

A Reeve, a female RUFF, was found May 25 in Remington Pond, off of Ricauds Branch Rd at Chesapeake Farms, Kent Co, MD. A STILT SANDPIPER was also there.

Five LEAST TERNS were seen at North Beach, Calvert Co, MD on May 22 and four on the 23rd.

There were some reports of nightjars in the area this past week including a WHIP-POOR-WILL singing along Joplin Rd across from the American Legion Post outside of Prince William Forest Park, Prince William Co, VA on May 23.

A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER was seen at Upper Watts Branch Park, Montgomery Co, MD, on May 19. Two RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS were found at Fighting Creek Park, Powhatan Co, VA on May 24.

An OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER was reported from Governor's Bridge Natural Area & Canoe Launch, Prince George's Co, MD May 19 and 20. An ALDER FLYCATCHER was singing at the back end of the no-mow area, along the river, at Kenilworth Park, NE DC, on May 23. The same day, there was an ALDER FLYCATCHER at Straight Fork west of Lantz Mtn on Rte 642 in Highland Co, VA.

Thrushes continued to thrill many birders this past week. Several thrushes, including three GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSHES, were reported from Upper Watts Branch Park on May 19. The BICKNELL'S THRUSH in Pasadena, Anne Arundel Co, MD, was seen and heard again in a yard on May 19. A BICKNELL'S THRUSH was reported from Upper Watts Branch Park on May 20 and 22nd.

While warbler migration was clearly winding down this past week there were still several interesting reports of both migrant and resident warblers. A BLUE-WINGED WARBLER was singing a GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER song at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, Loudoun Co, VA on May 23 while GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLERS were reported at their usual locations in Highland Co, VA over the weekend. A SWAINSON'S WARBLER was heard at Fair Hill State Natural Resources Management Area, Cecil Co, MD on May 20.

A MOURNING WARBLER was found while looking for the Olive-sided Flycatcher at the Governor's Bridge Natural Area on May 19; it was relocated on May 20.

On May 23 a VESPER SPARROW was found along Laurel Fork Rd, Rte 642, in Highland Co, VA, just above the intersection with Heavner Lane near a yellow sign reading "NO Snow Removal Beyond this point". SALTMARSH SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS were found at Fort Howard Park Veterans Medical Center, Baltimore, MD on May 22. During a survey on May 24 a total of 49 SALTMARSH SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS were found at Rumbly Point Rd, Somerset Co, MD.

A BLUE GROSBEAK was found May 20 at Fort C. F. Smith Park, Arlington Co, VA. On both May 22 and 25 there was one singing at Huntley Meadows Pk, Fairfax Co, VA on the backside off of Telegraph Rd and on the 23rd they were seen at the Occoquan Bay NWR, Prince William Co, VA. And one was at Fighting Creek Park on the 24th.

A DICKCISSEL was seen at Antietam National Battlefield, near Sharpsburg, Washington Co, MD perched atop a telephone pole off of Rte 65 on May 23. On May 24 DICKCISSELS were reported southeast of Culpeper, VA on Batna Rd, about 1/4 mile east of Highland Rd and about 1/2 mile west of Brook Run; the same day there were also multiple pairs on Grassdale Rd near Remington, Fauquier Co, VA.

The College Creek Hawkwatch on the James River just east of Williamsburg, VA, reported it's first-ever BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE on May 24.

On May 24 just across the VA line on US Rte 33 there was a small flock of eight RED-CROSSBILLS. They were found off a parking lot on the WV side of Shenandoah Mountain, .1 mile from the WV/VA line.

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

The **Audubon Sanctuary Shop** (301-652-3606), is an excellent source for guidebooks and many other nature-related titles.

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.

Thank you for calling, and GOOD BIRDING.

\*Of interest to the records committee.

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