

Voice of the Naturalist

Date: **7/1/2008**

Coverage: MD/DC/VA/DE

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photo by Michael Benjamin Lester

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This is the Voice of the Naturalist, a service of the Audubon Naturalist Society. This report was completed Tuesday, July 1, at 11:30 a.m.

Top birds this week are a black-billed GREAT EGRET* in VA, and HENSLOW'S SPARROW* in MD.

Other birds of interest include YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON, BLACK-NECKED STILT, sandpipers, BLACK TERN, MONK PARAKEET, WHIP-POOR-WILL, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, MARSH WREN, BLUE-WINGED and SWAINSON'S WARBLER, VESPER SPARROW, DICKCISSEL and PURPLE FINCH.

A black-billed subspecies of GREAT EGRET* has been present at Chincoteague NWR, Accomack Co, VA, since late May. It is thought to be an Old World form, from either Central Europe or sub-Saharan Africa.

The HENSLOW'S SPARROW* in Montgomery Co, MD, continues to sing vigorously, and sporadically offer views, in a grassy field west of Poolesville, with the most recent report from June 30. The field, part of the NIH Animal Facility, is located across from 23021 Club Hollow Rd. Please respect the rights of local residents, do not park on private land, and keep your distance from the NIH fence. [NIH has postponed mowing the field because of the bird.]

The YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON, reported last week, was seen again on June 25 along the easternmost trail off Hunting Quarter Rd, Montgomery Co.

A trip to Elliott Island, Dorchester Co, MD on June 27 yielded BLACK-NECKED STILTS, WILLETS and MARSH WRENS. An AMERICAN WOODCOCK was observed across the street from the entrance to the Oxbow Lake Nature Preserve, Anne Arundel Co, MD on June 27.

Two BLACK TERNS and four WISON'S PHALAROPES were seen at Chincoteague NWR on June 29.

MONK PARAKEETS have built a nest near St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore City with reports from June 29 and 30.

A visit to the Prettyboy Reservoir, Baltimore Co, MD on June 27 startled a WHIP-POOR-WILL into distraction display possibly indicating breeding activity.

A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER was noted on Rte 109 near Comus, Montgomery Co, MD on June 27. Two RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS were noted one at Feeser Road N and the other at Hapes Mill Road, Carroll Co, MD on June 28.

At least seven BLUE-WINGED WARBLERS were sighted on a bird walk to the Blue Ridge Center, Loudoun Co, VA on June 28. A VSO weekend target SWAINSON'S WARBLER was observed in two places at High Knob, Wise Co, VA on June 30.

VESPER SPARROWS and six DICKCISSELS were encountered on June 28 in the back roads of NW Carroll and NE Frederic Counties, MD. A VESPER SPARROW and a DICKCISSEL were found on Middleneck Road and Worsell Manor Road respectively, in Cecil Co, MD on June 28.

A DICKCISSEL was heard from Forest and Stream Club Road, Carroll Co, MD on June 26.

BOBOLINKS continue to be heard in the uncut meadows in the neighborhood of Ebenezer Church Road, Western Loudon Co, VA with a report from June 27.

A PURPLE FINCH has been frequenting a feeder in Myersville, Frederick Co, MD with a report from June 26.

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.