

# Voice of the Naturalist

Date: **7/15/2008**

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, July 15, at 2:00 p.m.

Top birds this week are WILSON'S STORM-PETREL and WHITE IBIS in MD and LITTLE EGRET\* in DE.

Other birds of interest include NORTHERN BOBWHITE, RED-THROATED LOON, BROWN PELICAN, LEAST BITTERN, CATTLE EGRET, YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON, KING and VIRGINIA RAILS, shorebirds, ALDER FLYCATCHER, CLIFF SWALLOW, RED-HEADED WOODPECKER, RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER, GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, BLUE GROSBEAK, and DICKCISSEL.

Some 20 to 25 WILSON'S STORM-PETRELS were plying the waters of the Chesapeake Bay in Somerset Co, MD, on July 13; they were observed from a boat traveling from Smith Point, VA, to Smith Island.

The LITTLE EGRET\* that has been luring birders to Bombay Hook NWR, DE, was last reported on July 8.

A WHITE IBIS was seen flying over Race Rd Wetlands in eastern Howard Co, MD, on July 13.

A NORTHERN BOBWHITE was heard calling in the heart of suburban Woodbridge, Prince William Co, VA, July 9, from the vicinity of a power line cut. On July 12 and 13, a BOBWHITE was calling on the grounds of the Hyatt resort in Cambridge, Dorchester Co, MD.

A distant probable RED-THROATED LOON was sighted July 10 from the Tydings Landing marina, Havre de Grace, Harford Co, MD.

Two second-hand reports of BROWN PELICAN come from Cecil Co, MD--2 birds at North East Town Park on July 10 and later a single bird flying over the North East River near Red Point.

A LEAST BITTERN, as well as a KING RAIL and a VIRGINIA RAIL, were calling at Swan Harbor, Harford Co, July 10. A LEAST BITTERN was calling at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax Co, VA,

on July 13. Two KING RAILS were found at Occoquan NWR, Woodbridge, Prince William Co, on July 12.

A CATTLE EGRET was spotted July 10 in Hanover, MD, on the Howard Co side of Deep Run; the bird was on a weedy sidewalk along High Tech Rd near Hanover Rd.

A YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON afforded spectacular views at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens [KAG], NE DC, on July 8; it was at the pond in front of the nature center. On July 11, 3 newly fledged YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS could be seen on the Johns Hopkins Homewood campus in Baltimore, near the nest overhanging San Marino Drive.

Shorebirds are beginning to trickle in. SPOTTED and SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS were reported from North Beach, Calvert Co, MD, July 8. That same day Bombay Hook hosted both LESSER and GREATER YELLOWLEGS, LEAST, PECTORAL, and STILT SANDPIPERS, and SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (and lots of flies). By July 10, WILSON'S PHALAROPE had joined the mix.

On July 14, 4 BLACK SKIMMERS and a very distant PIPING PLOVER were sighted near the north end of Assateague Island, Worcester Co, MD, from the end of Eagles Nest Rd.

The ALDER FLYCATCHER in the vicinity of the short boardwalk at KAG was still singing as of July 10.

A large flock of CLIFF SWALLOWS (45-50 birds) descended on a property in Sykesville on July 14 and spent a half hour swirling around the house--presumably from the colony that nests on the nearby Sykesville/Rte 32 Bridge.

A RED-HEADED WOODPECKER was found July 10 along the C&O Canal in Washington Co, MD, between Snyder's Landing and Shepherdstown; it landed and drummed on a utility pole near the power line cut--about the same place one was seen a year ago.

Researchers report that the nesting program for RED-COCKADED WOODPECKERS in southern VA continues to register success; in 2008, 4 nesting clusters successfully fledged a total of 8 young birds.

Grassland birds were in evidence at the Mt Horeb area of NE Augusta Co, VA, with a July 11 report of GRASSHOPPER SPARROW, BLUE GROSBEAK, and DICKCISSEL.

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

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.