

# Voice of the Naturalist

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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, September 2, at 2 p.m.

Top bird this week is WESTERN MEADOWLARK\* in MD.

Other birds of interest include WHITE-WINGED SCOTER, COMMON LOON, herons and night-herons, GLOSSY and WHITE IBIS, MISSISSIPPI KITE, shorebirds, BLACK-HEADED GULL, SANDWICH and BLACK TERNS, CHIMNEY SWIFT, flycatchers including OLIVE-SIDED, YELLOW-BELLIED, and LEAST, warblers, BOBOLINK, and YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD.

A WESTERN MEADOWLARK--only once before recorded in MD--was observed, heard, and photographed Aug 31 in Dorchester Co, south of Hurlock. It was with other meadowlarks in the southernmost field of a turf farm on the west side of Rte 381, just north of Rte 14. It could not be relocated the following day.

Triadelphia Reservoir, Howard Co, MD, hosted a WHITE-WINGED SCOTER on Aug 30 and a COMMON LOON on Aug 28.

An immature LITTLE BLUE HERON was discovered Aug 29 along Lake Needwood Rd, Montgomery Co, MD. Ten LITTLE BLUE HERONS were tallied at Huntley Meadows Park, Fairfax Co, VA, on Aug 30--along with numerous other herons and egrets.

Two TRICOLORED HERONS were present Aug 29 at Crewe's Channel, Henrico Co, VA.

Two BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were reported from Cameron Run, Alexandria, VA, on Sept 1. A BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON was found along the banks of Weems Creek, Annapolis, MD, on Aug 29, and one was found at Schoolhouse Pond, Upper Marlboro, Prince George's Co, MD, Aug 27. Two adult YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERONS were seen at a pond at the Grosvenor Park apartments in Rockville, Montgomery Co, on Aug 30.

Two GLOSSY IBISES were again seen at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co, MD on Aug 27; the birds were best observed from White Rock Rd. A GLOSSY IBIS was seen Aug 30 at Leesylvania SP, Prince William Co, VA.

An immature WHITE IBIS found last week at Hughes Hollow, Montgomery Co, was seen again throughout the week, with the most recent report from Aug 31. An adult and an immature WHITE IBIS were found Aug 31 at Prime Hook NWR, DE.

MISSISSIPPI KITES were again floating over Northern Virginia, with reports of one adult and one juvenile from West Springfield on Aug 30; 4 kites at the Kings Park subdivision of Fairfax Co on Aug 30; and 3 there on Aug 31.

Shorebird migration accelerated. RED-NECKED PHALAROPES put on a good show, appearing at both ends of MD and also in VA. On Aug 27 and 28, a juvenile RED-NECKED PHALAROPE showed up at North Branch, Allegany Co, MD; Aug 28-30, a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE visited the marsh at North Beach, Calvert Co, MD, as did an AMERICAN AVOCET; and Aug 29, a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE was discovered at Trout Run WWTP, Garrett Co, MD.

In VA, on Aug 31 a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE was one of 18 species of shorebird at Craney Island, a dredge facility in Portsmouth; others included a HUDSONIAN GODWIT and 8 WILSON'S PHALAROPES.

An AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER was again found Aug 29 west of Salisbury, Wicomico Co, MD, at a turf farm next to Wright's Market on Rte 50.

Four UPLAND SANDPIPERS paid a brief visit to the Polo Grounds on Hughes Rd in western Montgomery Co on Aug 26. Two UPLAND SANDPIPERS were found at the Hagerstown Airport, Washington Co, MD, Aug 31.

GODWITS--1 HUDSONIAN and 3 MARBLED--were found at DE's Thousand-Acre Marsh (along Rte 9 below Delaware City) on Aug 28 and 29 but not Sept 1. Two MARBLED GODWITS and a BLACK SKIMMER graced Skimmer Island, Ocean City, Worcester Co, MD, on Aug 31.

Three BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS were found Aug 31 near Wayside, Charles Co, MD; they were at a turf farm on the north side of Morgantown Rd (with best viewing at the end of the road, from Beach Haven Rd); one was found there Sept 1. One BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER was seen at the North Beach Marsh Aug 29, and one was seen at North Branch that same day. On Aug 31, 2 BAIRD'S SANDPIPERS visited North Branch. In Worcester Co, the West Ocean City horse track hosted a BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER and 3 UPLAND SANDPIPERS Aug 31 and a BAIRD'S SANDPIPER was discovered at Assateague Island's Bayside campground.

A RUDDY TURNSTONE made a surprise appearance in Anne Arundel Co, MD, on Aug 28, when one showed up at Fort Smallwood Park. Four RUDDY TURNSTONES, and a STILT SANDPIPER, were found at North Branch Aug 28.

The BLACK-HEADED GULL in non-breeding plumage continues to visit Trueman Point, Prince George's Co; however, the most recent sightings--on Aug 31 and Sept 1--have been limited to the late afternoon. The bird frequents pilings on the north side of Eagle Harbor, south of Cedar River Park, on the Patuxent River. Birders should note that Trueman Point is private property; searches for the bird should be by scope from public land such as Trueman Point Road.

Nine SANDWICH TERNS were seen on Skimmer Island Aug 29, while 2 BLACK TERNS were found at the West Ocean City pond. As many as 12 BLACK TERNS were noted at Prime Hook Aug 31.

CHIMNEY SWIFTS can be seen most nights descending into the chimney at Luther Jackson Middle School, Fairfax Co; the most recent report is from Aug 30.

Flycatchers were on the move this week. OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHERS were sighted Aug 30 along Cockpit Rd, Prince William Co (along with a PHILADELPHIA VIREO and 11 warbler species); Milford Mill Park, Randalstown, Baltimore Co, Aug 31 (plus 15 warbler species); Sept 1 at Finzel Swamp, Garrett Co; and Sept 2 at Hughes Hollow, Montgomery Co.

Reports of YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER came from Milford Mill Park Aug 27; North Branch Aug 29; Leesylvania SP Aug 30; Cylburn Arboretum, Baltimore, Aug 31; the airport in Salisbury, Wicomico Co, Aug 31; and Riley's Lock, Montgomery Co, Sept 2.

A LEAST FLYCATCHER was seen at Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens, NE DC, Aug 30 (along with 9 BOBOLINKS); at Leesylvania Aug 30; and at Hashawa Environmental Center, Carroll Co, Aug 31. Six LEAST FLYCATCHERS were reported from Cromwell Valley Park, Baltimore Co, Aug 31.

PHILADELPHIA VIREOS were observed at Elk Neck SP, Cecil Co, MD, Aug 31, and at the Middle Patuxent Environmental Area, Howard Co, Sept 1.

Warbler migration has picked up, with double-digits reported from some of the usual hotspots, including Rock Creek Park, NW DC. A BREWSTER'S WARBLER was reported from Little Bennett RP, Montgomery Co, Aug 30 and 31. A CONNECTICUT WARBLER was reported Aug 26 from the Daniel's Run section of Patapsco Valley SP, Howard Co. MOURNING WARBLER was noted Aug 27 at Americana Park, Fairfax Co, and Aug 29 at Hain's Point, SW DC.

A YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD was spotted in a large blackbird flock at the Berlin WWTP, Worcester Co, on Aug 29.

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](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.