

New Jersey Bird Records Committee

— Annual Report 2022

by Bill Boyle and Carole Hughes

The New Jersey Bird Records Committee (hereafter “NJBRC” or “the Committee”) voted by email during 2021 and met by conference call on 6 March 2022 to complete review of rare bird reports for the year 2021. During the year and at the meeting, one hundred seventy-six reports were considered and voted on. There was one new addition to the New Jersey State List in 2021, so the grand total stands at 487 species through 2021.

The current State List and the current NJBRC Review List are available on the Committee web site at <<http://www.njbrc.com>>. (Click on Lists and Annual Reports.) Reports should be sent to njbrcreport@gmail.com or via snail mail to Bill Boyle, Secretary, NJBRC, 13 Strawberry Lane, Cape May, NJ 08204. More information can be found at the NJBRC website <<http://www.njbrc.com/>>.

Voting NJBRC members during the period covered by this report were Amy Davis, Glen Davis, Jason Denesevich, Jeff Ellerbusch, Paul Guris, Kathy Horn, Carole Hughes, Bruce McWhorter, Frank Sencher, Jr., and Dave Weber. Non-voting member Bill Boyle continued as Secretary.

The NJBRC would also like to thank all the observers who submitted documentation during the past year. The Committee would have had an impossible job without the support of these birders. Although digital photography has made the documentation of many rarities easier, field notes still hold an important place as good notes can strengthen the case made by photos of less-than-stellar quality.

Field notes can also make the case for rare birds that are recorded only as brief mentions on the Internet. If you see a Review List bird and post a report to an e-mail list, please take a little extra time and submit a description to the NJBRC as well. Although the identification of rarities with no supporting details is often correct, it cannot be accepted as part of the historical record, which relies on supporting evidence that can be consulted by researchers many years in the future. Even a brief description, or a

sketch by an avowed non-artist, can be sufficient to support an observation well enough to add it to the official record.

The format used to present data is standardized. Records are grouped by Committee actions, with Accepted records listed first, followed by reports that the Committee did not accept (identification was not sufficiently supported by the documentation supplied), and then a group for records treated specially. Within each group, records are presented in phylogenetic order (according to the *A.O.U. Check-list*, 7th edition and supplements through 2019). For each species, the English and scientific names are given, followed by the current total of accepted state records. The records considered by the Committee are then listed, arranged by date. For each record entry, the internal NJBRC index number is given, followed by date, location, and county. If the report involved more than one individual, the number of birds is given following the location; all records involve a single bird unless otherwise noted. Then, for accepted records, data on finders and documenters are given. The finder’s name, if known, is listed first, followed by a semicolon and the names of other observers who submitted some form of documentation to the Committee (in alphabetical order), accompanied by symbols: “*” indicates that written documentation was submitted; “ph” denotes a photo or videotape. Following these data, comments are provided to explain important or interesting aspects of the records.

Other abbreviations used: b = banded; Co. = County; m.ob. = many observers; NJAS = New Jersey Audubon; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; Res. = Reservoir; sk = sketch; SP = State Park; au = audio recording; Twp. = Township; WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (47)

- 2022-053. 25 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. (2). D. Flanagan(ph).
- 2022-056. 20 May 2021. Manchester, Ocean Co. (8). J. Farese(ph).
- 2022-067. 16 – 18 June 2021. Absecon, Atlantic Co. (7). A. Morrison*, C. Engstrom(ph), J. Smallwood*.
- 2022-083. 1 July 2021. Pt. Pleasant Beach, Ocean Co. M. Schuler(ph), D. McKnight(ph), J. Morris*, m.ob.
- 2022-085. 18 July – 29 September 2021. Forsythe NWR, Atlantic Co. J. Denesevich(ph), D. Stewart(ph), S. Barnes*, B. Elrick*, P. Mandala*, m.ob.

Although not as plentiful as in the preceding year, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks continue to appear in the state throughout the warmer months. This species is now annual throughout the eastern half of the United States and has even reached Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. With breeding now apparently established in neighboring Delaware, nesting in New Jersey seems just a matter of time.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchos* (24)

- 2022-001. 1 – 13 January 2021. Spruce Run, Hunterdon Co. M. Hiotis*, D. Bernstein, T. Brown(ph), G. Price, m.ob.
- 2022-016, 10 – 12 February 2021. Burlington. (2). A. Burdo*(ph), E. Hahn(ph), M. Ratcliffe(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-017. 10 February 2021. Salem Co. D. Weber*(ph), M. Henry(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-153. 1 – 21 December 2021. Hamden, Hunterdon Co. M. Rehman(ph), E. Knudsen*(ph), A. Kuhn, m.ob.
- 2022-154. 8 – 10 December 2021. Thompson Park, Monmouth Co. C. Taylor, K. Garrison*(ph), R. Fanning*(ph), R. Dodelson, m.ob.

It was a banner year for Pink-footed Goose, with three records early in the year plus another continuing from December 2020. Both Burlington County and Salem County had their first sightings, although neither lingered long. Following the first state record in Bergen County in 2011, there have now been an additional 23 occurrences in the past decade.



A first for Salem County, this Pink-footed Goose was a one-day visitor. Photo/D. Weber

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis* (41)

- 2022-002. 7 – 23 January 2021. Assiscong Marsh, Hunterdon Co. A. Reichelderfer(ph), D. Bernstein(ph), P. Smeltzer, m.ob.
- 2022-005. 9 January 2021. Mannington Marsh, Salem Co. J. Stippick(ph), E. Nelson(ph), A. Morrison(ph), S. Reynolds(ph), D. Magpiong(ph).
- 2022-006. 10 – 11 February 2021. Pedricktown, Gloucester and Salem Cos. M. Henry(ph), D. Weber(ph), E. Nelson*, S. Reynolds*, C. Carozis.
- 2022-010. 9 – 20 January 2021. Cherry Grove Farm, Mercer Co. J. Hoagland*, L. Eaton(ph), J. Parris(ph), C. Miller(ph), D. Dorini(ph).
- 2022-144. 25 – 29 November 2021. Princeton, Mercer Co. S. Rackowski(ph), J. Cooper(ph), M. Scheuering(ph), m.ob.

Like Pink-footed Geese, Barnacle Geese continue to appear in New Jersey annually in small numbers, some of them staying for a week or two. Both species nest in eastern Greenland, which is presumably the source of the birds that show up here.

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator* (7)

- 2022-152. 21 November 2021 – 14 March 2022. Assunpink WMA, Monmouth Co. (2). R. Dodelson*, C. Holzapfel, E. Knudsen*, m.ob.
- 2022-166. 17 December 2021. Manasquan Res., Monmouth Co. (2). A. Merrill*(ph).

Once again, the presumably returning pair of Trumpeter Swans arrived in late November at Assunpink WMA for the seventh year in a row,

lingering into mid-March. Another pair was photographed just 15 miles away in December. Although the Assunpink birds were not reported that day, they were seen the preceding day and two days later, so it is unclear if different birds were involved. With the increase in wintering records in the Northeast, additional records are to be expected.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* (12)

- 2022-145. 22 – 24 November 2021. Loantaka Brook Park, Morris Co. C. Neff(ph), J. Klizas*(ph), J. Vinosky(ph), m.ob.

The first record for Morris County and only the second inland record for the state, this drake Tufted Duck was enjoyed by many. It showed no evidence of hybridization or captive origin. Tufted Ducks regularly visit similar parks and ponds in their native Eurasia.



A surprise visitor to a small county park, this Tufted Duck was present for three days. Photo/A. Eppedio.

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* (77)

- 2022-008. 18 January 2021. Deal, Monmouth Co. C. Hughes*(ph), S. Treesh*.

Following a record-tying year in 2020, just one well-documented report of Eared Grebe was received in 2021, a one-day occurrence in Deal.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* (85)

- 2022-125. 31 October 2021. Island Beach SP, Ocean Co. S. Barnes*.
- 2022-126. 1 – 2 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. M. Roach, J. Amesbury(ph), m.ob.
- 20202-155. 13 December 2021. West Cape May, Cape May Co. M. O'Brien(ph), L. Zemaitis, R. Horn(ph), m.ob.

The vast majority of White-winged Dove reports in the state come from Cape May, but the Island Beach record marked the third year in a row for the species in Ocean County. This easily identifiable dove, if seen well, is a prime candidate for removal from the review list.



This White-winged Dove was a one-day visitor to a yard in West Cape May. Photo/M. O'Brien.

Allen's Hummingbird *Selasphorus sasin* (8).

- 2022-092. 27 – 29 August 2021. Little Egg Harbor, Ocean Co. D. Roth*(ph), C. Costino(ph), P. & K. Cadigan.



Young male Allen's Hummingbird in Little Egg Harbor, Ocean Co. Photo/C. Costino.

This young male hummingbird visited a feeder in Little Egg Harbor for three days. Although it was well photographed, it departed before it could be banded. Based on evaluation of multiple features revealed by the photographs, two hummingbird experts concluded that it was definitely an Allen's Hummingbird, New Jersey's eighth. Amazingly, the same feeder hosted the state's fifth Allen's in late 2017.

Purple Gallinule *Porphyrio maritima* (76)

- 2022-128. 31 October – 5 November 2021. Mill Creek, Hudson Co. J. Louden*(ph), C. Takacs(ph), m.ob.

Purple Gallinule has been an almost annual vagrant to the state in recent decades, but this juvenile bird was the first in more than two years. Just the second record for Hudson County, it entertained many observers during its six-day visit.

Yellow Rail *Coturnicops noveboracensis* (47)

- 2022-003. 3 January 2021. Holgate, Ocean Co. A. Davis*, P. Mandela*, A. Della Bella.
- 2022-036. 19 – 29 April 2021. Turkey Point, Cumberland Co. (3). D. Weber*, A. Marden, M. Collins*(au), S. Galick, m.ob.
- 2022-109. 11 October 2021. Newark, Essex Co. Deceased. C. McRae(ph).
- 2022-164. 28 December 2021. Manahawkin WMA, Ocean Co. Deceased. A. Davis(ph).

2021 was an exceptional year for Yellow Rail, with four records. Unfortunately, two of the reports were of birds found dead, as is often the case with this secretive species. Turkey Point, Cumberland County, hosted a number of calling individuals in April, as it has on occasion in the past.

Northern Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* (5)

- 2022-160 21 December 2021 – 2 January 2022. Cumberland & Salem cos. A. Hollis(ph), D. Weber*(ph), R. Gallardy*, L. Hapeman(ph), C. Sayers*, D. Ortuso(ph), M. Rhodes*, m.ob.



This handsome Northern Lapwing was seen by hundreds of birders from throughout the Northeast. Photo/L. Hapeman

New Jersey's fifth record of Northern Lapwing was incredibly discovered in a barren farm field in

Cumberland County in late December. It moved to Salem County then back to Cumberland during its 13-day stay and was seen by hundreds of observers. What was probably the same bird was seen a few miles away in early March. This individual was part of a minor influx of the species into the Northeast in mid-winter.

Pacific Golden-Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* (3)

- 2022-042. 15 – 28 May 2021. Tuckerton, Ocean Co. A. Davis*(ph), C. Thomas(ph), T. Johnson*(ph), S. Treesh*, m.ob.

The third record for New Jersey and the first in spring, this striking plover was discovered along Great Bay Boulevard and suspected to be Pacific Golden-Plover. This identification was confirmed by some excellent photographs and the bird remained in the area for two weeks to the delight of dozens of observers.



New Jersey's third Pacific Golden-Plover was enjoyed by many during its two-week stay at Tuckerton. Photo/C. Thomas

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia* (32)

- 2022-031. 23 March 2021. Nummy Island, Cape May Co. J. Fagan*(ph), T. Johnson*, K. Horn(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-034. 29 April – 9 June 2021. Corson's Inlet, Cape May Co. D. River*(ph).
- 2022-054. 25 – 28 May 2021. Stone Harbor, Cape May Co. K. Karlson(ph), M. Garland(ph), C. Marks*.
- 2022-075. 26 June 2021. Ocean City, Cape May Co. N. Larrabee*.

Four records of Wilson's Plover tied with 2019 for the most sightings in recent decades. All reports came from Cape May County, including one that lingered at Corson's Inlet for more than a month. As

other southern species continue to move north, there is hope that this plover might once again nest in the state, as it did until the early 1960's.



This female Wilson's Plover was present for several days at Stone Harbor in late May. Photo/M. Garland.

Whimbrel (White-rumped) *Numenius phaeopus* ssp. (10)

- 2022-041. 13 May 2021. Jarvis Sound, Cape May Co. W. Cairo*, C. Meglino(ph), m.ob.

The photos clearly show a white-rumped Whimbrel, but are not sufficient to distinguish between the several "white-rumped" subspecies. Ebird/Clements currently recognizes four subspecies of this form, while the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) recognizes five subspecies as Eurasian Whimbrel, a separate species from the Hudsonian Whimbrel of the Americas.

Ruff *Calidris pugnax* (21)

- 2022-035. 1 May 2021. Barnegat, Ocean Co. A. Davis*(ph), D. Crawford(ph), J. Howland, m.ob.
- 2022-081. 2 – 4 July 2021. Forsythe NWR, Atlantic Co. J. Shenot*(ph), H. Butts*, G. Butcher*.
- 2022-097. 5 – 6 September 2021. Reed Recreation Area, Monmouth Co. R. Horton(ph), D. McQuade*(ph), T. Smith(ph), m.ob.

A good showing of Ruffs included adult females at Barnegat and Forsythe, but the prize of the year was the juvenile discovered well inland near Allentown, Monmouth County. A first for that county in recent times, and a rarely encountered bird-of-the-year.



Juvenile Ruff at Reed Recreation Area, Monmouth Co. Photo/T. Smith,

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea* (48)

- 2022-040. 13 – 16 May 2021. Forsythe NWR, Atlantic Co. T. Johnson*(ph), C. Engstrom*(ph), M. Webster(ph), M. Jampel(ph), m.ob.

The only Curlew Sandpiper of the year was this drab individual just coming into breeding plumage at Forsythe NWR. This marks three years in a row that none has shown up at the traditional Heislerville impoundments.



Drab Curlew Sandpiper at Forsythe NWR, May 13, 2021. Photo/T. Johnson.

Red Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius* (22)

- 2022-130. 5 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. N. Srivasta(ph), K. Srivasta.
- 2022-167. 25 September 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. J. Ellerbusch*(ph).
- 2022-168. 28 September 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. M. Sabatine(ph).

Red Phalaropes are rarely seen from shore in New Jersey, so one might suspect that the two Sandy Hook

reports represent the same individual. Fortunately, excellent photographs show that two different birds were involved. Two lucky birders encountered a Red Phalarope at their feet on the beach at Cape May in early November.



Red Phalarope at Cape May, November 5, 2021. Note the lobed toes. Photo/ N. Srivasta.

Pomarine Jaeger *Stercorarius pomarinus* (13)

- 2022-080. 19 October 2018. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. T. Boyle*(ph).
- 2022-108. 30 September 2021. Cape May Ferry, Cape May Co. S. Haas*, A. Kohlhaas, J. White.
- 2022-118. 21 October 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. N. Giordano*.

Pomarine Jaeger is far less frequently seen from shore than its smaller cousin Parasitic Jaeger. The 2018 bird was originally listed as Pomarine/Parasitic, but closer inspection of the photograph and details from the observer led the committee to accept it as Pomarine. The September bird flew in front the Cape May – Lewes Ferry as a birding group was crossing to Delaware. Finally, the Avalon bird was seen from the sea watch in direct comparison to a Parasitic Jaeger.

Common Murre *Uria aalge* (30)

- 2022-012. 24 January 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. D. Mizrahi*, E. Nelson*.
- 2022-030. 3 February 2021. North Wildwood, Cape May Co. T. Baxter.

Common Murre is more likely to be encountered well offshore on a winter pelagic trip, so these two records are the first from land in seven years. Although neither was photographed, the reports were accompanied by convincing documentation.

Thick-billed Murre *Uria lomvia* (29)

- 2022-015. 6 February 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. S. Barnes*, L. Mack(ph), K. Leonard(ph), m.ob.



Thick-billed Murre at Sandy Hook, February 6, 2021. Note the short, heavy bill. Photo/L. Mack.

The only report of Thick-billed Murre was this well-photographed individual at Sandy Hook in early February. Unfortunately, it was a one-day wonder. Although they breed farther north than Common Murre, Thick-billed is the species more frequently seen from shore in New Jersey.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini* (21)

- 2022-105. 9 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. T. Reed*.

Just the third Sabine's Gull in the past dozen years, this juvenile provided a brief, but conclusive look as it flew just offshore by the Cape May Point State Park hawkwatch. The observer had the bird fly through his field of view in a 60-power telescope and submitted excellent details.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan* (43)

- 2022-061. 7 June 2021. Reed's Beach, Cape May Co. J. Horn*(ph), R. Wiltraut, C. Griffiths.
- 2022-095. 28 August 2021. Spruce Run Res., Hunterdon Co. J. Ellerbusch*(ph).
- 2022-101. 23 September 2021. DeKorte Park, Bergen Co. M. Collins*(ph).
- 2022-140. 9 November 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. T. Reed*.
- 2022-151. 1 December 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. J. Amesbury*(ph).

Franklin's Gull has occurred in New Jersey with increasing frequency in recent years, although there were no reports in 2017 and 2018. The majority of records come from the late fall, but this year's batch

included an adult at Reed's Beach in June and a juvenile at Spruce Run in August, both supported by excellent photographs and descriptions. Likewise, the adult at DeKorte and juvenile at Cape May were well-photographed. The adult that flew by the Avalon Seawatch was too distant for photos, but seen well through a 60-power telescope and described in convincing detail.

Heermann's Gull *Larus heermanni* (1).

- 2022-059. 30 May – 4 June 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. C. Engstrom*(ph), J. Reb, J. Grudens*, T. Johnson(ph), S. Blazer(ph), m.ob.

New Jersey's first Heermann's Gull was a well-traveled sub-adult (third cycle) that visited Cape May for almost a week in late spring, to the delight of dozens of observers. Comparison of photographs showed it to be the same individual recorded in recent months in Florida, then Georgia, back to Florida, then Virginia, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and finally New Jersey. By the middle of June, what was apparently the same bird was back in Georgia and South Carolina. Several other Heermann's Gulls, both an adult and immatures, have been seen on the East Coast, especially Florida, but also Maryland and Virginia, in the past few years, so observers should be on the lookout for this species.



Subadult Heermann's Gull, molting into adult plumage at Cape May, May 30, Photo/M. Garland.

California Gull *Larus californicus* (8)

- 2022-019. 15 February 2021. Sayreville, Middlesex Co. J. Denesevich*(ph).
- 2022-078. 31 March 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. T. Reed*(ph).

A keen-eyed observer discovered his third, New Jersey's seventh, California Gull at the same location (Ken Buchanan Riverfront Park) in Sayreville where he found one in December 2019. This adult individual, possibly a returning bird, was not relocated in 2022. More surprising was the well-photographed adult that flew by the Cape May Springwatch at the end of March.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea* (38)

- 2022-046. 21 May 2021. Pelagic off Cape May Co. D. Weber*(ph), M. Laurino*, m.ob.
- 2022-047. 24 May 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. (2). T. Reed*.
- 2022-048. 24 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. G. Davis*.
- 2022-049. 25 May 2021. Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth & Ocean Cos. A. Lamoreaux*(ph).
- 2022-073. 28 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. (2). B. Fogg*(ph), M. Lanzone*, D. La Puma.
- 2022-074. 29 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. (4). B. Bassett*, J. Reb*, T. Reed.

From the dozen reports of Arctic Tern submitted in late May, these six were accompanied by photos and/or convincing descriptions. Although this species has long been found to be rarely seen from shore, the past few years have seen a marked increase in the number of documented sightings, primarily during the last third of May, but a few in June. If this trend continues, the Committee may need to considering removing it from the review list.



This Arctic Tern was seen on a pelagic trip out of Cape May, May 21, 2021. Photo/D. Weber

Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica* (63)

- 2022-011. 21 January 2021. Island Beach SP, Ocean Co. J. Gant*, S. Weiss*.
- 2022-107. 9 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. J. Reb*.
- 2022-110. 17 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. M. O'Brien*, M. Turso*.
- 2022-120. 24 – 25 October 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. J. Ellerbusch*(ph), B. Diebold*(ph), L. Mack*, S. Treesh*, m.ob.
- 2022-131. 27 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. V. Elia*, J. Reb*.
- 2022-133. 3 November 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. V. Elia*, T. Reed.
- 2022-134. 5 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. M. O'Brien*(ph), B. Bassett(ph).
- 2022-136. 7 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. T. Reed.
- 2022-137. 7 November 2021. Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth and Ocean Cos. S. Lane*, D. Hockenbury*(ph), S. Barnes*, m.ob.
- 2022-138. 8 November 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. T. Reed*(ph).
- 2022-139. 9 November 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. T. Reed*.
- 2022-141. 10 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. M. Turso, C. Hughes, S. Treesh.

(Some of these Pacific Loon records may represent the same bird moving around Cape May)

An unprecedented number of reports of Pacific Loon were reviewed, mainly coming from late October and early November. Most of them (the twelve accepted here) were accompanied by adequate documentation or photographs. Sightings of this species have increased significantly during the past decade, with a previous maximum of 7 in 2019 (but only 2 in 2020). Separating it from small Common Loons is still an identification challenge, however, so photographs and/or detailed documentation needs to be obtained.

Black-capped Petrel *Pterodroma hasitata* (11)

- 2022-089. 14 August 2021. Pelagic off Cape May, Cape May Co. (3). D. Weber*, C. Fischer(ph), C. Thomas(ph), m.ob.

Although still considered a rarity for New Jersey, this species is to be expected at this time of year beyond the continental shelf. The three birds, a pair and a single, were observed over waters that were 6000 feet deep.



A highlight of the August 14 pelagic trip was Black-capped Petrels, including the one shown here. Photo/C. Fischer

Wood Stork *Mycteria americana* (25)

- 2022-100. 19 – 20 September 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. J. Amesbury*, B. Matthews(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-165. 19 December 2021 – 2 January 2022. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. (2). J. Ellerbusch*, C. Daly(ph), A. Bernzweig(ph), m.ob.

After a year's absence, there were once again two sightings of Wood Stork in New Jersey in 2021, plus numerous others around the Northeast. This species is not quite annual, but has appeared 13 times in the past 11 years. The Cape May bird, apparently an immature, was seen from the hawkwatch late one evening and photographed the next morning, but not seen again. More surprising was the arrival of two young storks at Sandy Hook on December 15, just in time for the Christmas Count. The pair lingered for two weeks and were enjoyed by many.



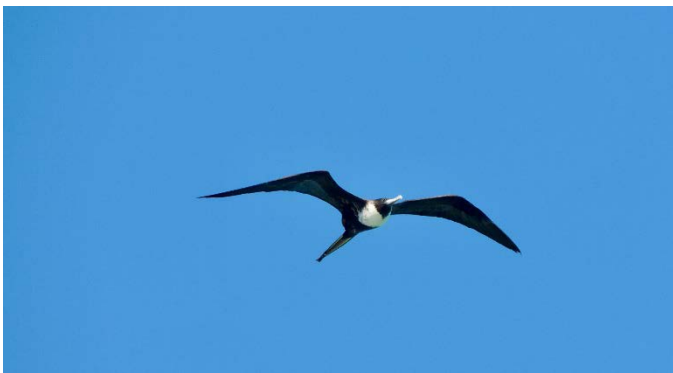
Totally unexpected in mid-December was this pair of young Wood Storks found at Sandy Hook. Photo/C. Daly.

Magnificent Frigatebird *Fregata magnificens* (12)

- 2022-060. 6 – 9 June 2021. Avalon, Villas, Reeds Beach, West Cape May Co. *vide* Jeff Dale(ph), J. Parker*, K. Parker*, B. Ewald*(ph), D. Weber*, M. O'Brien(ph), m.ob.

- 2022-065. 7 June 2021. North Wildwood, Cape May Co. (2). M. McSherry(ph).

The appearance of three different Magnificent Frigatebirds in lower Cape May County in early June was unprecedented. A sub-adult frigatebird was photographed by a non-birder on the morning of June 6 in Avalon. What was presumably the same bird later flew along the Cape May Canal, then headed north into Villas. It remained in the area for three more days, venturing as far north as Reeds Beach before departing west over West Cape May on the 9th. Remarkably, a pair of adult Magnificent Frigatebirds, male and female, were photographed over North Wildwood on the morning of June 7.



Female Magnificent Frigatebird over North Wildwood, June 7, 2001, accompanied by a male. Photo/M. McSherry.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* (57)

- 2022-037. 27 May 2021. Elizabeth, Union Co. D. Bernstein*(ph), C. Takacs(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-055. 3 May 2021. West Deptford, Gloucester Co. M. Henry*(ph).
- 2022-068. 22 June 2021. Pelagic off Ocean Co. A. Black*.
- 2022-071. 27 June – 2 July 2021. Surf City, Ocean Co. B. Sullivan*(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-091. 9 July 2021. Paulsboro, Gloucester Co. M. Henry*(ph), J. Horn*(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-093. 16 August 2021. Pelagic off Ocean Co. T. Johnson*(ph).
- 2022-098. 21 – 24 August 2021. Hudson, Union, Bergen Cos. (1 – 3). A. Bernzweig*, L. Sheldon*(ph), S. Lane*, C. Gabel, D. Bernstein, C. Takacs(ph), M. Collins*(ph), R. Duffy.
- 2022-099. 11 – 15 September 2021. Sewaren, Middlesex Co. D. Barbato, D. Brill*, L. Bizzarro(ph), G. Price(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-106. 6 October 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. J. Reb*.

- 2022-116. 21 October 2021. Avalon, Cape May Co. M. Giordano*.

For the third year in a row there were numerous sightings of Brown Booby, most of them documented by photographs. All were of single birds, some adult, some immature, except for the three that visited Union, Hudson, and Bergen counties for four days in August. Thirty-three of the fifty-seven records have occurred in just the past three years (2019 (11), 2020 (12), and 2021 (10)) and all but ten have been within the past decade.



Adult Brown Booby at Surf City, Ocean Co. Photo/B. Sullivan.

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* (22)

- 2022-122. 21 – 23 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. G. Eschenbach*, A. Lamolereaux*(ph), M. O'Brien*(ph), M. Turso(ph), m.ob.



The first “chaseable” Anhinga in New Jersey in more than ten years over the Rea Farm, Cape May. Photo/A. Lamoureux.

New Jersey’s first “chaseable” Anhinga in more than a decade was spotted over the Rea farm in West Cape May on the morning of October 21, almost a month later than the latest previous state record. Most occurrences of this species have been from April to June. This individual, apparently an immature, spent much time soaring over the area then going to roost on the farm for three days, before departing on the afternoon of October 23.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* (15)

- 2022-086. 30 July 2021. Brick Twp., Ocean Co. Y. Laskaris*.
- 2022-087. 2 August 2021. Manahawkin WMA, Ocean Co. A. Davis*(ph), D. Crawford, C. Thomas(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-088. 3 August – 6 October 2021. Forsythe NWR, Atlantic Co. (1 - 2). S. Priebe*(ph), B. Elrick(ph), N. Giordano(ph), M. Ratcliffe*, m.ob.
- 2022-090. 9 August 2021. Waretown, Ocean Co. J. Gant*, B. Vernachio*.
- 2022-094. 3 – 7 September 2021. Island Beach SP, Ocean Co. M. Heatherington*(ph), G. Prelich*, J. Apgar(ph), S. Weiss(ph).
- 2022-112. 18 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. (2). J. Amesbury*(ph), K. Thompson(ph), m.ob.

(The exact number of spoonbills present in the state in 2021 is difficult to ascertain)



This visiting Roseate Spoonbill was at Island Beach SP for five days in September. Photo/M. Heatherington.

A major invasion of Roseate Spoonbills into the Northeast, with some individuals reaching Michigan, upstate New York, and New Hampshire, produced a flurry of reports in New Jersey from late July to mid-October, exceeding the four occurrences in 2018. Although it is not possible to determine the exact number of individuals involved, it was probably about a half-dozen.

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni* (50)

- 2022-129. 1 – 3 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. S. Bauer, J. Amesbury*(ph), T. Johnson*(ph), B. Bassett(ph), K. Horn*, m.ob.

After going missing for three years, Swainson's Hawk has now appeared at Cape May for the third year in a row. This year's bird, a heavily marked intermediate morph, was seen around Cape Island for three days, departing on the morning of November 3. The species occurred much more frequently from 2006 to 2015 (24 records in the state), but has been seen only four times since then.

Ash-throated Flycatcher *Myiarchus cinerascens* (97)

- 2022-148. 20 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. T. Johnson*(ph), J. Grudens*, V. Elia, C. Busch.
- 2022-149. 20 November – 21 December 2021. Cox Hall Creek WMA, Cape May Co. G. Prelich*(ph), J. Gant*(ph), V. McErlean(ph), J. Apgar(ph), J. Nargiz, m.ob.
- 2022-150. 20 – 21 November 2021. Lincoln Park, Hudson Co. R. Arrigo, C. Takacs*(ph), D. Kotler*(ph), T. Smith(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-157, 18 December 2021. Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth & Ocean Cos. P. Misseldine*, S. Barnes(ph), D. Stewart, A. Bernzweig(ph), A. Morrison.



This Ash-throated Flycatcher at Lincoln Park was a first for Hudson County, November 20 – 21, 2021. Photo/T. Smith.

2021 produced “only” four records of Ash-throated Flycatcher after two very busy years in 2019 (10 records) and 2020 (9 records). Three out of the four records occurred over a two-day period in late November, possibly part of the same migration event. Ash-throated Flycatcher has become a regular

rarity in NJ during the late fall and winter months since the early 2000's.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* (72)

- 2022-143. 18 – 19 November 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. C. Paci*(ph), S. Podulka(ph), M. Sabatine*(ph), L. Mack(ph), m.ob.

The single record in 2021 of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was found in late November at Sandy Hook. The bird stayed for a second day giving multiple observers a chance to enjoy this beautiful species with its long tail streamers. The timing was atypical as most of NJ records are from the late spring or early fall.



The only Scissor-tailed Flycatcher in 2021 was this adult at Sandy Hook, November 18 – 19. Photo/S. Podulka.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* (26)

- 2022-102. 24 September 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. M. Lanzone(ph), T. Miller, A. Lamoreaux(ph).



This young Say's Phoebe was present briefly at the South Cape May Meadows, September 24, 2021. Photo/M. Lanzone.

Say's Phoebe has been a sporadic visitor to NJ over the last couple of decades and is most likely to be

found in the late September/early October time period. This juvenile was observed flycatching near a research station in the South Cape May Meadows and disappeared after being flushed by a Cooper's Hawk.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (6)

- 2022-119. 23 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. R. Mandelbaum*(ph), J. Reb*, m.ob.

The observers at the Higbee Beach Morning Songbird Flight Count were treated to a stunning young male Vermilion Flycatcher that flew in and perched atop a nearby shrub. The bird was actively flycatching and gradually worked its way north where it was relocated on the beach. This is only the sixth record for NJ and the fourth record for Cape May County.



A brief visitor to the Morning Songbird Count at Cape May, October 23, was this young male Vermilion Flycatcher. Photo/R. Mandelbaum.

Brown-headed Nuthatch *Sitta pusilla* (15)

- 2022-043 - 045. 8 – 10 June 2021. Higbee Beach and Cape May, Cape May Co. J. Horn*, R. Wiltraut, V. Elia*, D. Weber*(ph), J. Schlickerieder*.
- 2022-077. 20 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. T. Reed, M. and L. McLaughlin*.

Brown-headed Nuthatches are often heard before they are seen with their distinctive "squeaky toy" sound. Virtually all the NJ records are from Cape May with one exception in 2020 on an offshore pelagic. The species breeds along the southern coast of Delaware and is non-migratory. Is this another species that may expand its range further north in future years?

Hoary Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni* (7)

- 2022-021. 10 February – 2 March 2021. Wantage, Sussex Co. M. Ofenloch*(ph), B. White*(ph), M. Loukeris*(ph), T. Sudol*, D. Briede*.

Only the seventh record for NJ, this bird probably lingered from the influx of redpolls in late December of 2020. The fifth and sixth records were part of that event and were found in flocks of Common Redpolls, as was this bird. The two species are difficult to tell apart, but several observers were able to get definitive photos to clinch the ID.

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* (not Slate-colored) (20)

- 2022-023. 31 January – 16 March 2021. Mercer Co. L. Eaton*(ph).

There is a wide range of variation in Dark-eyed Junco populations. There are 15 different races that can be grouped into six forms. The plumage characteristics vary so much that it can be challenging to assign an individual to a specific form or subspecies. This is often the subject of lively debate on internet ID forums. While the Committee determined this record is not a Slate-colored, it could not be confidently identified to the subspecies level.

Golden-crowned Sparrow *Zonotrichia atricapilla* (8)

- 2022-038. 8 May 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. M. Roszel, C. Hughes*, J. Denesevich(ph), T. Boyle(ph), m.ob.



A one-day highlight of the World Series of Birding was this Golden-crowned Sparrow, just the ninth record for New Jersey. Photo/T. Boyle

Only the second record of Golden-crowned Sparrow since 2006, this individual was initially found by a couple during the World Series of Birding Day at Sandy Hook. They notified the Sandy Hook Century Run Team which relocated the bird and obtained documentation photos. The last record was an immature bird in 2019 in Cape May. This individual appeared to be going into breeding plumage showing a thick black stripe between the golden crown and the eye. The bird lingered throughout the day.

LeConte's Sparrow *Ammospiza leconteii* (54)

- 2022-127. 1 November 2021. Duke Farms, Somerset Co. J. Ellerbusch*(ph).

While LeConte's Sparrow has become an increasingly frequent stray to NJ over recent years, there was only one record in 2021. LeConte's Sparrows can be difficult to observe as they are far more likely to scurry off through the underbrush than fly when disturbed. Like most NJ records, this one occurred in late fall. This individual was found on private, access restricted property and is only the second record for Somerset County.



LeConte's Sparrow at Duke Farms. Photo/J. Ellerbusch.

Swainson's Warbler *Lymnolthypis swainsonii* (27)

- 2022-032. 15 April – 24 June 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. J. Grudens*(au), P. Shen(ph), B. Fogg(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-079. 23 April 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. W. Whitehead(audio).

2021 marks the sixth year in a row that a male Swainson's Warbler was observed singing on territory in Cape May. This individual has a distinctive variation in its' song and audio recordings demonstrate it is the same bird as that in 2020, 2019, 2018 and most likely 2017. No evidence of the

presence of a female has been found. The second 2021 record was an audio recording captured by an observer who was making multiple recordings around Sandy Hook. It was identified after the fact as a Swainson's Warbler.



The returning Swainson's Warbler at Cape May sand for at least two months. Photo/P. Shen.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler *Setophaga coronata auduboni* (7)

- 2022-158. 19 December 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. L. Zemaitis, P. Domm, T. Johnson(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-169. 22 February 2021. Wall Twp., Ocean Co. C. O'Connell*(ph).
- 2022-170. 15 October 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co. B. Diebold*(ph).



Wintering Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler at Wall Twp., February 22, 2021. Photo/C. O'Connell.

2021 was a remarkable year in NJ for the subspecies *auduboni* of the Yellow-rumped Warbler, with three accepted records. Between 1996 and 2020, only three other records have been recognized. The *auduboni* (Audubon's) subspecies is distinguished from our eastern *coronata* (Myrtle) subspecies by the yellow throat, Myrtle has a white throat. The 2021 records were accompanied by photo documentation clearly showing this characteristic.

Black-throated Gray Warbler *Setophaga nigrescens* (32)

2022-132. 4 November 2021. Manahawkin, Ocean Co. V. McErlean*(video).

A birder in Ocean County caught a brief glimpse of an unusual warbler outside her window but was unable to identify it from the quick look. She later checked her Nest security camera and discovered it had captured a blurry but still identifiable video of a Black-throated Gray Warbler visiting the bird bath.

Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi* (22)

- 2022-009. 16 January – 15 February 2021. Teaneck, Bergen Co. J. Macaluso(ph), N. Sweatlock, m.ob.
- 2022-103. 1 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. D. Wilcove*, M. O'Brien*(ph), R. Horn(ph), m.ob.

Northeast NJ got its' first record of Townsend's Warbler when an immature or female type individual lingered for almost a month by a small creek in Teaneck. Many delighted birders were able to get good, close photos and observations. Multiple observers saw a second Townsend's Warbler working the cedars around Cape May Point for one day in early October.



The long-staying Townsend's Warbler at Teaneck, a first for Bergen County. Photo/J. Macaluso.

Western Tanager *Piranga ludoviciana* (60)

- 2022-014. 2 – 27 February 2021. Monroe Twp., Monmouth Co. W. Cromwell(ph), R. Douglas(ph), C. Daly(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-111. 17 October 2021. Barnegat, Ocean Co. V. McErlean*(ph).
- 2022-161. 24 December 2021. Barnegat Light, Ocean Co. M. Rehman*(ph).

- 2022-163. 26 December 2021. Lumberton, Burlington Co. W. Dasey*.

Western Tanagers are a fairly regular stray to NJ with records occurring almost every year in the last two decades. Most NJ records are concentrated in late fall through winter and this year followed that pattern. A long staying individual came to a feeder regularly in Monroe Twp. early in the year. A female was photographed at a county park in Barnegat mid-October. Another female was photographed at Barnegat Light in late December. The third ever record for Burlington County was also seen in late December; the last records for Burlington were in 1971 and 1973.



This male Western Tanager was present in Monroe Twp., Monmouth County for almost a month. Photo/R. Douglas.

Painted Bunting *Passerina ciris* (87)

- 2022-007. 8 January 2021. Winslow, Camden Co. D. Woodell(ph).
- 2022-022. 16 April 2021. Upper Freehold Twp., Monmouth Co. E. Knudsen*(ph).
- 2022-025. 25 January – 21 March 2021. Springfield Twp., Burlington Co. T. Lodge(ph), S. Culman(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-039. 6 May 2021. Higbee Beach WMA, Cape May Co. M. O’Leary, C. Ehlinger(ph), m.ob.
- 2022-117. 25 September 2021. Stone Harbor, Cape May Co. T. Baxter(ph).
- 2022-146. 15 – 17 November 2021. Long Branch, Monmouth Co. B. Murray(ph), D. Kotler, M. Sabatine(ph), D. Annunziata(ph), L. Mack(ph).
- 2022-156. 17 – 19 December 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co. K. Parker, J. Parker, M. O’Brien(ph), R. Horn(ph), m.ob.

- 2022-162. 26 December 2021. Middlesex Co. B. Lynch, L. Kroop*(ph), J. Parham(ph), P. Axelrod, C. Friedman, J. Whitehead.

Eight records in 2021 represent a new high for this species in NJ, the previous high was seven records in 2019. Six records were noted in 2020. These increasingly common visitors are most frequently observed in winter when they are attracted to feeders. However, there were two sightings this spring, one an apparent first year male in Upper Freehold and an immature/female type in Cape May. Two records were adult males visiting feeders in Camden and Burlington Counties, both in January. The balance of the records for 2021 were of immature/female types.



Apparent first year male Painted Bunting in Upper Freehold Twp., Monmouth Co., April 16, 2021. Photo/E. Knudsen.

Reports Not Accepted

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

- 2022-024. 6 February 2021. Nummy Island, Cape May Co.
- 2022-082. 13 December 2020. Union Co. (2).

Photos of the Nummy Island bird do not appear to rule out Pied-billed Grebe or Horned Grebe. The presence of two Eared Grebes would be unusual although not unprecedented, but the description lacked adequate details.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

- 2022-064. 11 May 2022. Cape May, Cape May Co.

The bird was heard only once by an experience observer, but a divided Committee did not vote to accept.

Lesser Nighthawk *Chordeiles minor*

- 2022-121. 28 October 2021. Jersey City, Hudson Co.

The photos of this *Chordeiles* nighthawk created much discussion. Ultimately, the Committee, with help from outside experts, concluded that the bird could not be confidently identified as either Common or Lesser.

Wilson's Plover *Charadrius wilsonia*

- 2022-062. 6 June 2021. Shark River, Monmouth Co.

This report lacked a photo and adequate details.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

- 2022-066. 16 June 2021. Galloway, Atlantic Co.

The detailed description does not appear to rule out other godwits. Unfortunately, no photo was available.

Sabine's Gull *Xema sabini*

- 2022-123. 29 October 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co.

Given the considerable distance at which the bird was seen, the description does not rule out immature Black-legged Kittiwake.

Franklin's Gull *Leucophaeus pipixcan*

- 2023-113. 19 October 2021. DeKorte Park, Bergen Co.

The description of this bird was not deemed sufficient to rule out Laughing Gull.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisica*

- 2023-050. 26 May 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co.
- 2022-051. 24 May 2021. Stone Harbor, Cape May Co.
- 2022-052. 26 May 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co.
- 2022-057. 29 May 2021. Long Beach Twp., Ocean Co.

- 2022-058. 29 May 2021. Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth & Ocean Cos.
- 2022-072. 28 May 2021. Barnegat Light, Ocean Co.

Although there were an equal number of well-documented sightings of this species, which is not usually seen from shore, the Committee was evenly divided on most of the reports that were not accepted. This was because of a lack of photographs and unconvincing descriptions.

Pacific Loon *Gavia pacifica*

- 2022-004. January 2021. Deal, Monmouth Co.
- 2022-026. 23 February 2021. Bordentown, Burlington Co.
- 2022-013. 2 February 2021. Sandy Hook, Monmouth Co.
- 2022-142. 12 November 2021. Cape May, Cape May Co.

The Committee was divided on accepting the Deal bird due to conflicting reports from other observers and a lack of photographs. Single observer reports of birds at Bordentown and Cape May were of birds seen at considerable distance with unconvincing details. The details on the Sandy Hook bird were not deemed sufficient for positive identification.

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga*

- 2022-115. 3 August. 2021. Medford, Burlington Co.
- 2022-124. 28 October 2021. Monmouth Co.

Details on the Medford report were not considered sufficient to rule out a cormorant. The Committee was divided on acceptance of the Monmouth County sighting, but several members were concerned that the great height and lack of a photograph left room for doubt for such a regionally rare species.

Brown-headed Nuthatch *Sitta pusilla*

- 2022-076. 30 June 2021. West Cape May, Cape May Co.

This report of a calling bird by an experienced observer was not considered sufficient.

Swainson's Warbler *Lymnothlypis swainsonii*

- 2022-063. 9 June 2021. Higbee Beach WMA, Cape May Co.

The observers heard a male Swainson's Warbler singing at two spots about 400 yards apart while searching the area for birds and butterflies. They believed that there were two different birds involved. However, experience has shown that the Swainson's Warbler at Higbee Beach, which has returned for at least five years, wanders widely around the Wildlife Management Area. Recordings made from widely separated sites at the WMA show them to be the same individual.

Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler *Setophaga coronata auduboni*

- 2020-159. 19 December 2021. Belford, Monmouth Co.

While a possibly correct identification, the briefness of the sighting and lack of further details do not rule out a hybrid.

Provenance Uncertain

European Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* (12)

- 2022-020. 6 March 2021. Pemberton, Burlington Co.
- 2022-027. 6 April 2021. North Brunswick, Middlesex Co.
- 2022-029. 14 March 2021. Montclair, Essex Co.
- 2022-069. 9 April 2021. Monmouth Co.
- 2022-070. 17 April 2021. Union Co.

All of these reports were supported by identifiable photographs. However, this species is widely available at pet stores and online bird vendors and there is no evidence that these individuals arrived in the country on their own.

European Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* (2)

- 2022-018. 24 December 2021 – 15 April 2012. Alloway, Salem Co.

