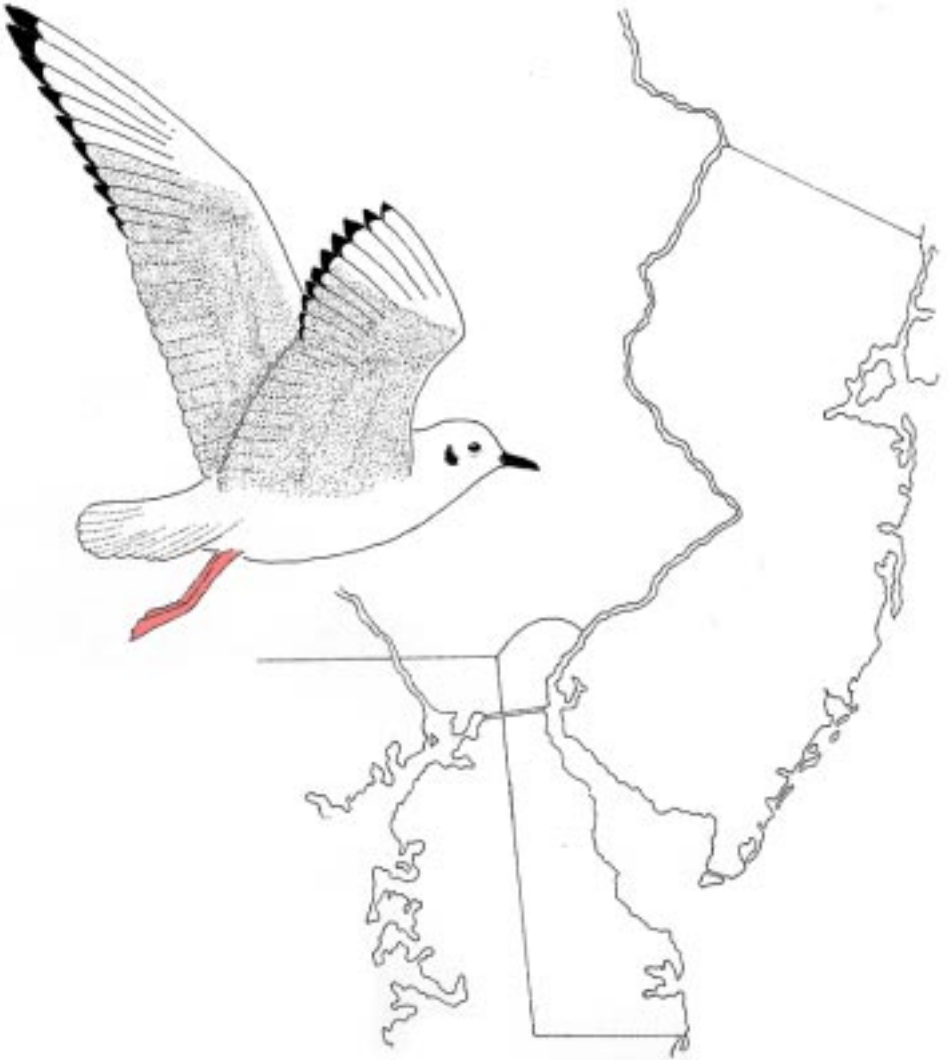


Delaware Valley Birds



Delaware Valley Ornithological Club
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Delaware Valley Birds

A Publication of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club

www.dvoc.org

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THE DELAWARE VALLEY ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB by Emmerson Bowes

The Delaware Valley Ornithological Club (DVOC) was founded on February 3, 1890 in Philadelphia at William L. Baily's family home at 1624 Arch Street, not far from its present home since 1891, the Academy of Natural Sciences at Nineteenth and the Parkway, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The mission of this club is the advancement and diffusion of ornithological knowledge.

The members of this club shall be persons who are interested in ornithology considered in its widest sense.

Meetings

The Club meetings are held on the first and third Thursday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of the Academy of Natural Sciences unless otherwise arranged. In summer, informal meetings are held in smaller rooms. Meetings are generally well attended and are lively proceedings, featuring a speaker or special forum, time for general field notes and announcements or reports from the various committees.

Membership

Persons interested in joining the DVOC are invited to attend some meetings to determine whether they would like to join. A member at the meetings should introduce them. The President will make them welcome.

The membership is made up of birding enthusiasts, some may be distinguished, some are beginners and most are in between but we are all learning and share the bond of enthusiasm for bird-life and related aspects.

We particularly welcome young people, beginners and anyone who is seriously interested in birding. The club is an excellent organization in which to grow in this field with the wealth of information and expertise that is available to members.

Bylaws require that two Fellows or Active Members in good standing shall make nominations to Active Membership in writing. They shall state the qualifications and mailing address of their candidates, the genuineness of the candidate's interest in ornithology and the probability of active participation in the Club.

An affirmative vote of at least two thirds of Council and of the members of all voting classes present at the balloting is required for election to Active Member.

Fees are currently \$25.00 / annum.

Field Trips

Field trips are regular features throughout the year. Historically the first recorded trip was to Tinicum in 1890, followed by more adventurous sea trips from Atlantic City. Since 1950's as many as a dozen field trips have been organized annually. See the calendar of events on our home page (www.dvoc.org) for current and recent field trips.

Publications

The club's principal publication is *Cassinia*, which made its debut in 1901 with Witmer Stone as editor. Currently, *Cassinia* is published for members every other year. *Cassinia* features lead articles and other notes, abstracts of proceedings and membership lists. Photographic records, especially of rare birds in the region of NJ, PA, and DE, are important features.

Philadelphia Larus is the newsletter of the DVOC.

The DVOC Collection.

An extensive collection of birds of Pennsylvania and New Jersey with their nests and eggs was started by the club in 1891 and displayed in the museum of the Academy of Natural Sciences. In addition the club maintained a very fine collection of skins which were kept separate from the Academy's collection and used extensively by members to illustrate talks or for study. This collection was always on hand for meetings that were held until early 1970s when the bird department moved to new quarters and it became necessary to incorporate the DVOC collection with that of the ornithology department for space considerations. Although the skins are used less as a consequence of the reorganization, they are available for DVOC use and are generously augmented by the Academy's broader collection on occasion.

Conservation

Members of the Club were active in conservation from the earliest of times but the first formal committee devoted to Conservation was formed in 1931 in response to the slaughter of hawks taking place at Cape May and on Pennsylvania Ridges. This committee had the purpose of pursuing the matter of hawks at Cape May in particular and for keeping members posted as to legislative bills aiding or harming conservation. It remains active to this day. The histories of the wildlife refuges around the New Jersey shore and Eastern Pennsylvania are replete with the names of DVOC members, past and present, and the work of conservation goes on.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS, LINES, SYMBOLS AND GRAPHS

Geographic Limits

The geographic area includes the entire state of Delaware, then north from the Lancaster/Chester County line at the Maryland Border to Pottsville. Then northeast to Lake Wallenpuapack and east to The Delaware River, south along the river to the Delaware Water Gap and southeast to Sandy Hook. The 200 mile limit provides the eastern boundary.

Chart Dates

This checklist covers a vast geographic area. In northbound migration it must be expected that birds will appear in the southernmost part of this area before they appear in the northern areas. The reverse will be true during southbound migration. These charts express the midrange of occurrence in the area covered by this checklist.

Habitat Definitions

Tidal - Areas of salt or brackish water and areas immediately adjacent, including non-tidal and fresh water, artificial impoundments, and upland fields and forest. This habitat type extends north along the Delaware River to the Delaware Memorial Bridge.

Pine Barrens - Low nutrient, intensely acidic sandy or organic soil habitats of pine, oak, Atlantic White Cedar or Red Maple, plus associated blueberry and cranberry agricultural areas.

Coastal Plain - The remaining non-tidal, fresh water tidal and non-Pine Barrens coastal plain areas.

Piedmont - From the Fall Line to the Allegheny Plateau.

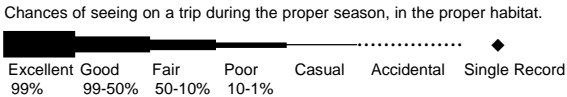
Mountains - Allegheny Plateau.

Species List

The order and names of the species in this checklist follows that of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds, 7th Edition, including the 42nd (2000) and 43rd (2002) Supplements. All species in this checklist have been accepted in the DVOC area by the relevant state rarities committee.

Abundance Key

The species' abundance reflects the observer's probability of locating the specific bird in the appropriate habitat, as described in the text, at the appropriate time and location. For example, Wilson's Storm-petrel is abundant during the summer as a pelagic species, out of sight of land, while being much less common close to shore. Similarly, Lincoln's Sparrow may be more common in the fall than is suggested by the graph, yet they appear to be rather local in their distribution and are easily overlooked. Therefore, this publication tries to present what the advanced intermediate birder might expect to find. Each classification is defined in the graphs, except for accidental, which means less than five records and casual which is more than five records and less than one percent chance of finding the bird.



Breeding

Breeding dates are noted in the graphs by brackets.



Breeding records are noted in the Habitat Graphs

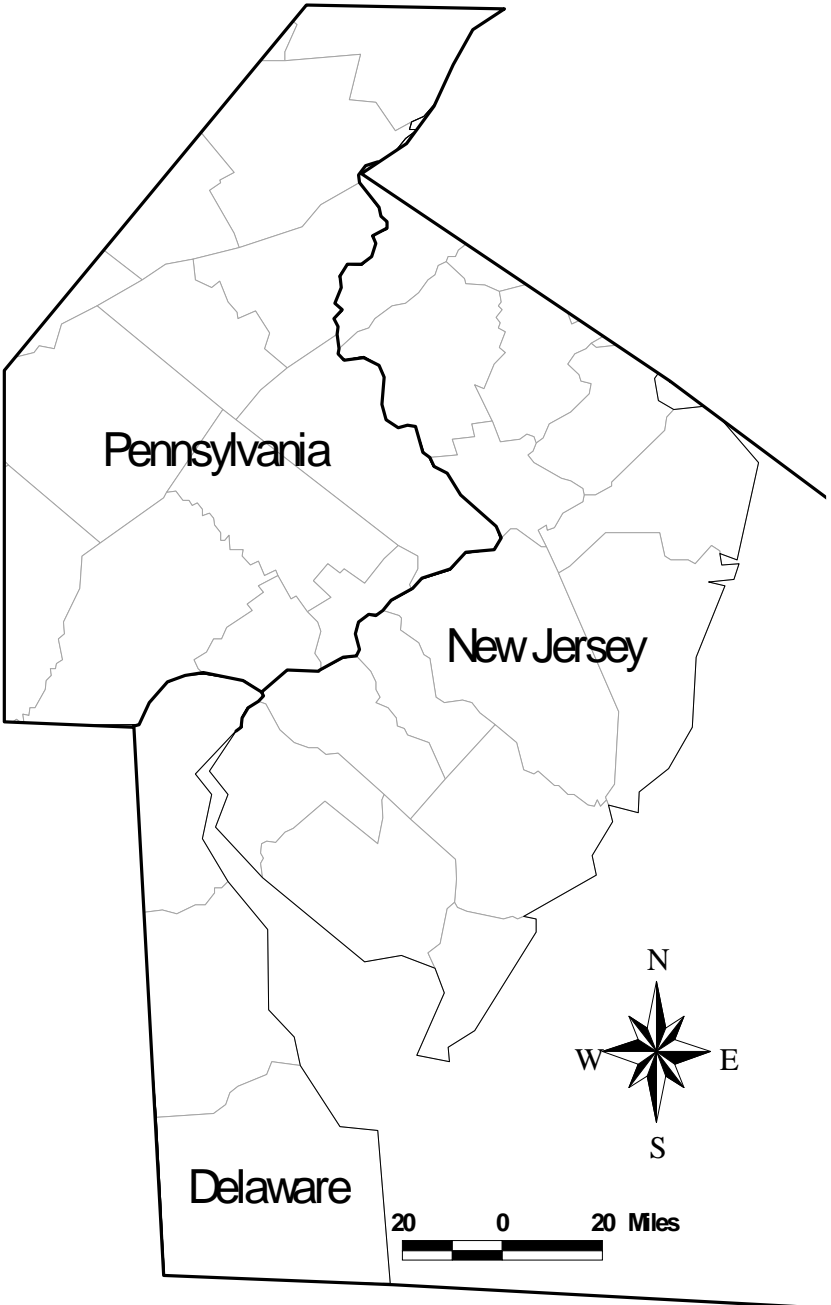
- B - Regular breeder
- b - Irregular Breeder

Area Sensitive Species

Signified by an asterisk (*) next to the species name. Many species of birds are typically found in extensive areas of their preferred habitat, rather than in small fragmented segments of the same habitat. Barren agricultural fields over 200 acres in size are ideal Vesper Sparrow and Horned Lark habitats, yet these species are rare in the same habitat fragmented into five acre blocks. This designation refers to breeding birds, not their migratory or wintering habitats.

The editor welcomes comments and/or corrections.
E-mail Rick Mellon at rmellon@voicenet.com

Study Area



| | | | | | Common Name | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tidal | Pine Barrens | Coastal Plain | Piedmont | Mountain | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
| | | | | | ___ Red-throated Loon | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Pacific Loon | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | b | ___ Common Loon | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | B | B | b | B | ___ Pied-billed Grebe | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ___ Horned Grebe | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ___ Red-necked Grebe | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ___ Eared Grebe | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Western Grebe | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Yellow-nosed Albatross | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Black-browed Albatross | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ___ Northern Fulmar | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | .... | ___ Kermadec Petrel | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Black-capped Petrel | | | | | | | | | | | |
| .... |  |  |  |  | ___ Fea's Petrel | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ___ Cory's Shearwater | | | | | | | | | | | |

Chances of seeing on a trip during the proper season, in the proper habitat.

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|------------|
| Excellent 99% | Good 99-50% | Fair 50-10% | Poor 10-1% | Casual | Accidental |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|------------|

Refer to Page 4 for a complete explanation of all keys.

Red-throated Loon - Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. An uncommon migrant and winter visitor inland. Thousands gather at the mouth of Delaware Bay in early April. Freeze limited.

Pacific Loon - Ocean, bays, and large lakes. One inland record at Green Lane Reservoir, PA 1996

Common Loon - Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Seen in great numbers at inland hawk watch sites during migration. Freeze limited.

Pied-billed Grebe - Localized scarce breeder in non-tidal, deep water, emergent marshes, and ponds. Non-breeding inhabitant of ponds, lakes, rivers, and marshes. Freeze limited.

Horned Grebe - Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Primarily a migrant inland. Freeze limited.

Red-necked Grebe - Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers. Primarily a migrant inland. Irruptive. Freeze limited.

Eared Grebe - Ocean, bays, large lakes, and rivers.

Western Grebe - Ocean and bays.

Yellow-nosed Albatross - Pelagic.

Black-browed Albatross - Pelagic.

Northern Fulmar - Pelagic. Cold water species.

Kermadec Petrel - One record: Hawk Mountain, PA 1959.

Black-capped Petrel - Pelagic. Warm water species.

Fea's Petrel - Pelagic. Warm water species. One record: 1999

Cory's Shearwater - Pelagic. Warm water species.

| | | | | | Common Name | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|-------|---|---|---|---|
| ■ | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Greater Shearwater | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
|  | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Buller's Shearwater | | | | | | | | | | ◆ | | |
| ■ | | | | | __ Sooty Shearwater | | | | ■ | ■ | | ◆ | — | | | | |
| ■ | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Manx Shearwater | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ■ | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Audubon's Shearwater | | | | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | | |
| ■ | | | | | __ Wilson's Storm-Petrel | | | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ White-faced Storm-Petrel |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | ..... |  |  |  |  |
| ■ | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Leach's Storm-Petrel | | | | ■ | | | | | | | | |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ Band-rumped Storm-Petrel |  |  |  |  |  |  | ..... | ..... |  |  |  |  |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ White-tailed Tropicbird | | | | | | | | | | | ◆ | |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ Red-billed Tropicbird | | | | | ◆ | | | | | | | |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ Masked Booby | | | | | | | | ◆ | | | | |
| ..... |  |  |  |  | __ Brown Booby | | | | | ◆ | | | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| ■ | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ Northern Gannet | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | __ American White Pelican | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Greater Shearwater – Pelagic.

Buller's Shearwater – Pelagic. 31 Miles east of Barnegat Inlet, NJ – the only North Atlantic record - 1984.

Sooty Shearwater – Pelagic.

Manx Shearwater – Pelagic. Cold water species.

Audubon's Shearwater – Pelagic. Warm water species.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel – Pelagic. Occasional in lower Delaware Bay.

White-faced Storm-Petrel – Pelagic. Warm water species.

Leach's Storm-Petrel – Pelagic. Cold water species.

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel – Pelagic. Warm water species.

White-tailed Tropicbird – Pelagic. Warm water species. One record – Barnegat Inlet, NJ 1985.

Red-billed Tropicbird – Pelagic. Warm water species. One record – Seaside Heights, NJ 1983.

Masked Booby - One record: off New Jersey 2001.

Brown Booby – Pelagic. Warm water species. All regional records from shore.

Northern Gannet – Ocean and lower Delaware Bay, often seen from land.

American White Pelican – Large protected bodies of water. On Delaware River to Philadelphia, PA.

| | | | | | Common Name | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------------|----------|----------|-------------|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| Tidal | Pine Barrens | Coastal Plain | Piedmont | Mountain | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | | |
| | | | | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ————— | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | ◆ | | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ◆ | | | ◆ | | ◆ | ◆ | | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| B | B | B | B | B | ————— | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | B | B | B | | ————— | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | B | B | B | B | ————— | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Chances of seeing on a trip during the proper season, in the proper habitat.

| | | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|------------|
| Excellent 99% | Good 99-50% | Fair 50-10% | Poor 10-1% | Casual | Accidental |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|------------|

Refer to Page 4 for a complete explanation of all keys.

- Brown Pelican** – Ocean, beaches, bays, and inlets. More common southward, but expanding northward.
- Double-crested Cormorant** – Ocean and large bodies of water. Migrates in huge flocks in April and October.
- Great Cormorant** – Ocean and large bodies of water. Coastal plain, primarily on Delaware River from Tacony Palmyra Bridge to Trenton, NJ.
- Anhinga** – Most records of soaring birds. Beware of soaring Double-crested Cormorants.
- Magnificent Frigatebird** – Coastal. All records from shore.
- American Bittern** – Nests in fresh water marshes. Winters in small numbers in salt marshes.
- Least Bittern** – Nests in fresh and brackish marshes. Likes Giant Reedgrass (*Phragmites australis*).
- Great Blue Heron** – Marshes, ponds, lakes, rivers, and streams. Increasing, although uncommon nester in widely scattered colonies - chiefly inland. Freeze limited.
- Great Egret** – Coastal, wandering inland (common) in late summer. Marshes and shallow water. Nests north on Delaware River to Petty Island, Camden, NJ. Freeze limited.
- Little Egret** - Marshes and shallow water. Two records: Little Creek WMA/ Bombay Hook NWR, DE. 1999 and 2001.
- Snowy Egret** – Coastal, wandering inland (uncommon) in late summer. Marshes and shallow water. Freeze limited.

| | | | | | Common Name | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------------|---------------|----------|----------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| Tidal | Pine Barrens | Coastal Plain | Piedmont | Mountain | J | F | M | A | M | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | |
| B | B | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| B | B | B | B | B | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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Little Blue Heron – Coastal, uncommon wanderer inland and rather common wanderer in tidal portions of the Delaware River in late summer. Marshes and shallow water. Freeze limited.

Tricolored Heron – Marshes and shallow water. Freeze limited.

Reddish Egret – Marshes and shallow water. Three records: Little Creek WMA, DE 1991, Ted Harvey Wildlife Area, DE 1993, and Brigantine, NJ 1998.

Cattle Egret – Drastically declining. Still common near Delaware City, DE and Salem County, NJ. Overshoots inland in late March and April.

Green Heron – Primarily fresh water streams, ponds, and swamps, although also found in marshes.

Black-crowned Night-Heron – Marshes, swamps, and shallow water. Freeze limited.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron – Marshes, swamps, and shallow water.

White Ibis – Marshes, impoundments, and wet stubble fields.

Glossy Ibis – Marshes, impoundments, and wet fields. Much more common on Delaware coastal plain. Overshoots inland in March and April. Freeze limited.

White-faced Ibis – Marshes and impoundments. Increasingly reported.

Wood Stork – Marshes and swamps.

Black Vulture – Locally common and spreading rapidly. Concentrations in upper Bucks and Montgomery Counties, PA, along the Delaware from New Hope, NJ north, in southwest New Jersey and common in southern Delaware.

Turkey Vulture – The northern extent of winter range fluctuates in the piedmont section depending on the severity of winter.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck - Marshes and impoundments. Lancaster County, PA 1993 and Oceanview, DE 2000.