

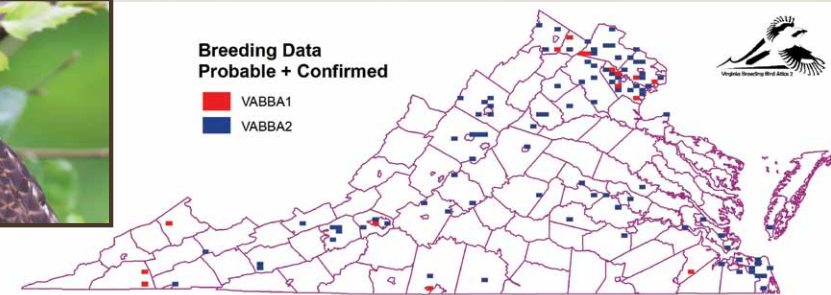


# Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas 2 2018 SUMMARY

## Seasonal Highlights...

Swainson's Warbler and Chuck-Will's-Widow were confirmed breeding in southwest Virginia

- A female Chuck was flushed off of her nest in Lee county, while multiple Swainson's Warblers were confirmed in Buchanan, Dickenson, and Washington counties.
- The latter were found by an Atlas field technician, who conducted point counts in western VA where this species was historically widespread.

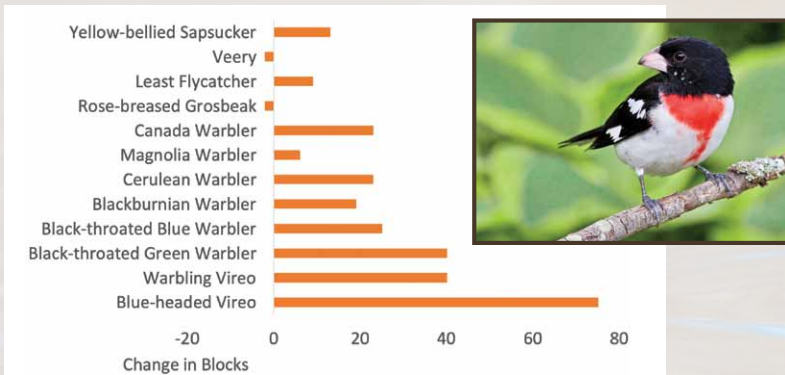


### Cooper's Hawk - Raptor on the Rise

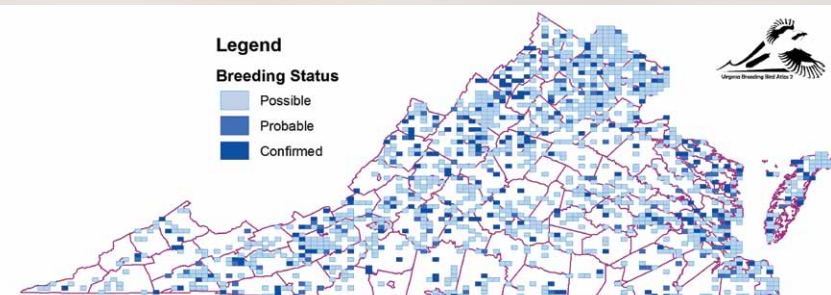
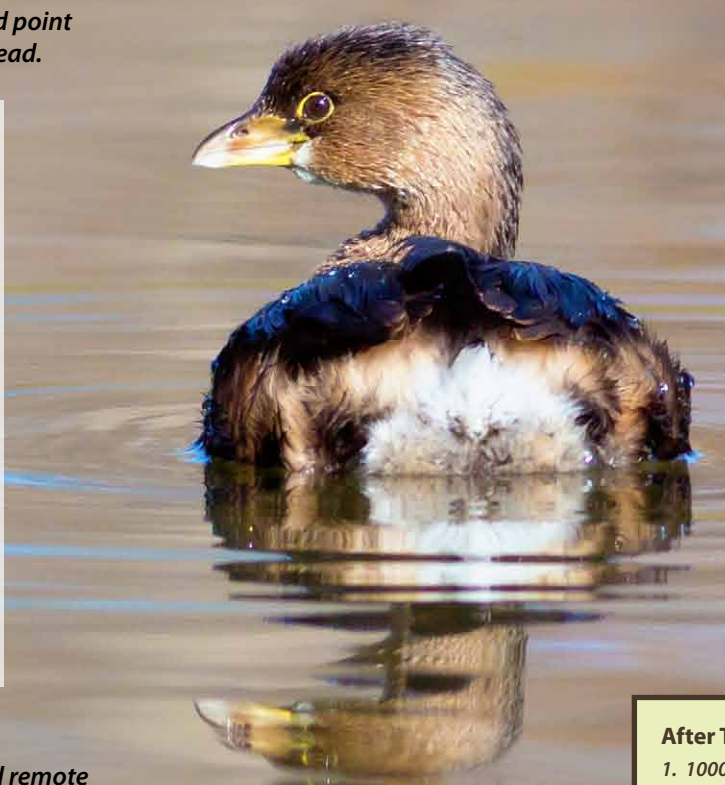
Few longtime Virginia birders may be surprised to hear that one of the species whose distribution has dramatically expanded since the late 1980s is the Cooper's Hawk!

This mid-sized raptor has become a familiar sight to suburban and urban dwellers throughout Virginia. The Cooper's Hawk has grown from a handful of statewide breeding confirmations in the first VA BBA (shown in red) to being the second-most commonly reported hawk species in VABBA2 (shown in blue). Well done, Coops!

### Mountain Songbirds



Preliminary trends in the VABBA2 dataset suggest that a number of montane breeding songbirds have expanded their range in the western mountain-valley region of Virginia. Comparison of blocks with probable and/or confirmed breeding reports in the first and second Atlas reveals increased reporting of all but two of these montane songbird species, despite relatively lower coverage of mountain-valley blocks in the current Atlas. Although we can not draw conclusions until the Atlas wraps up in 2020, these data suggest range expansions for this subset of VA's breeding birds.



### Barn Swallow - Missing Species of the Piedmont

Achieving even effort across the entire state is the greatest challenge for a breeding bird Atlas, but it is also crucial for accurately mapping species' distributions. In the VABBA2, many regions of the south and central Piedmont need help from traveling birders. Barn Swallow paints a clear picture...

Did Barn Swallows stop breeding in Charlotte, Lunenburg, or Greensville counties? Did all the old barns disappear in Fluvanna and Cumberland? No way! Many species await birders to document their presence and breeding activity in the southern Piedmont. Help us fill in the blanks spots in 2019!



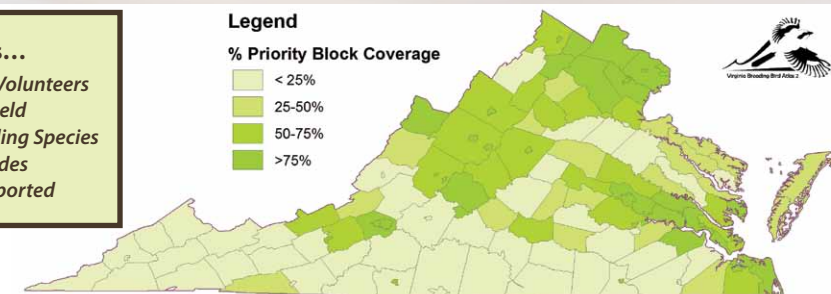
### Likely Species for Breeding Confirmation in 2019

- Winter Wrens continue to sing from their haunts in the steep and remote valleys of southwest Virginia, where birders are needed to confirm these and other high mountain species.
- While nesting Pied-billed Grebes are vulnerable to changing habitat conditions, probable breeding reports in southeastern VA suggest nesting pairs remain in the state. Keep your ears tuned for the grebes call when near pond or wetland areas! Reports of Alder Flycatchers continue to toy with birders' hearts in Highland, Bath, and Augusta counties. Persistence and a little luck should net a confirmation for this species.

### After Three Seasons...

1. 1000+ Contributing Volunteers
2. 47,000 hours in the field
3. 192 Confirmed Breeding Species
4. 341,000 Breeding Codes
5. >3.2 Million Birds Reported

[www.vabba2.org](http://www.vabba2.org)



### Priority Block Coverage - Regional Spotlight 2019

The latest Atlas effort map shows VA counties in greatest need of volunteer effort in 2019. The southern swath stretching from Southampton to Lee county may have fewer human occupants these days, but is still full of birds! Remember the Barn Swallow map above? Many additional species are under-represented in the VABBA2 dataset, including Red-headed Woodpeckers, Yellow Warblers, and Brown-headed Nuthatches. Season four is the year to begin filling in southern VA! (\*Note: Priority block coverage is defined as blocks with more than 10 hours of effort.)

This is a project of the VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, the VA Society of Ornithology, and the Conservation Management Institute at VA Tech, as well as many partner organizations that contribute website hosting (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture), funding support and volunteers (state bird clubs and Audubon societies), which allow this project to grow and thrive. Thanks to all and especially to all the volunteers whose time, energy, and expertise are what make this whole endeavor possible.

