

Southern Appalachian Creature Feature Podcasts

Gulls

Greetings and welcome to the Southern Appalachian Creature Feature.

At the entrance to Isothermal Community College is a small reservoir with a resident group of ducks, often a few Canada geese, and on a recent day, a group of gulls.

Most of us are familiar with gulls as noisy beach dwellers, opportunistically searching for that next bit of stale bread or discarded potato chip. However, not all gulls are coast dwellers.

There are 20 species of gulls found in North America, many of which confine themselves to the coast lines – from Arctic waters to the Gulf of Mexico, but a few gulls can be found on inland waters. In fact, the California gull is the state bird of land-locked Utah. According to Mormon folklore, gulls helped save the settlers who were carving out a settlement on the banks of the Great Salt Lake by devouring hordes insects that were destroying their crops.

While we have no gulls that spend their winters or their summer nesting seasons here in the Southern Appalachians, we are on the migratory routes of the ring-billed, herring, and Bonaparte's gulls, so keep an eye out for these birds as they head north.

For WNCW and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, this is Gary Peeples.