

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON ALABAMA'S BREEDING BIRDS

By HENRY M. STEVENSON

The highly informative article on the distribution of breeding birds in Alabama by Tom Imhof got a new journal off to a good start. So far as I am aware, this account left little to be desired, but after a thorough reading a few added comments seemed in order. The responsibility for these short-comings, if they be so considered, is assumed entirely by the present writer, who had opportunity to transmit all of his records and ideas to Imhof at an earlier date, but overlooked a few points in doing so. It is with the hope of setting the record straight on these few points that I comment on Imhof's account of the following species:

**RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER.** Among the few records in extreme northern Alabama is one of a bird seen just west of Guntersville, June 22, 1945. It seems odd that this southern species extends its range northward into Tennessee and Kentucky at fairly high altitudes, but usually only where pines are present. Its continued presence on Sand Mountain is a point which should be checked, as the top of this plateau is largely deforested today.

**PRAIRIE HORNED LARK.** To the stated habitat preference for "open, short-grass areas" should be added one for cotton fields, in which environment the Red Bay record was made, as well as some Tennessee records.

**AMERICAN ROBIN.** The statement that "in 1943 it could not be found in southeast Alabama below Auburn," if it has reference to a trip I made at that time, should be qualified, as I am by no means certain that the species was absent there at the time. The trip was made in August, at which time Robins may be less conspicuous than in early summer; furthermore, any search for birds was incidental to the chief purpose of this trip. Certainly the species should be searched for now in Troy, Ozark, and many other towns in south Alabama.

**BLUE GROSBEAK:** In addition to the most northern localities mentioned in connection with this species (Sand Mountain and Decatur) should be added Guntersville, Florence, and Red Bay, where the species occurs in June. Small numbers were recorded at the first two of these localities but at Red Bay Grosbeaks were actually common.

Literature cited: IMHOFF, T. A., 1953, Our Present Knowledge of Alabama's Breeding Birds. Alabama Bird-Life, 1(1-2):2-9.

Department of Zoology, Florida State University,  
Tallahassee, Florida.

## FLORIDA GALLINULES NEST NEAR AUBURN

On June 4, 1953, a friend and I found the nest of a Florida gallinule, *Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*, near the Beauregard Community, Lee County, in a cove of Lynch Whatley's lake. The water was about one foot deep, and we were poling a boat near some grass when I happened to see an egg lying in the weeds. There seemed to be no nest there, but on closer examination I made out the rough outline of the nest.

The nest was revisited on June 7, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18. On June 10, there were six eggs in the nest and this was the full clutch. Some work had been done on the nest, and it was a cup-shaped affair about 8 inches in diameter and about 3 inches above the water. The eggs measured an average of 44 by 32 millimeters and were buff colored with various sizes of brown dots. The nest was built entirely of dead weeds and grasses and built in a clump of grass surrounded by small willow trees.

The female was seen only once and the male was never seen. The water level was lowered in the lake, and the female evidently abandoned the nest because, on the last three times I checked the nest, the eggs were cold and the female was not seen.

Discussions with local ornithologists and biologists indicated that this bird is an extremely rare breeder and that this constitutes the first breeding record for Lee County.—William Helms.

## BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS

On May 11, 1952, four male black-bellied plovers, *Squatarola squatarola*, in their black breeding plumage were seen resting on some pilings in the edge of Guntersville Lake about 4 p. m. in the afternoon. These were carefully observed for several minutes with binoculars. Peterson lists this species as migrants in eastern North America. Howell mentions it as common on the coast but rarely found inland. Alabama has been changed so much internally by the impounding of water ways and construction of ponds that variations are to be looked for in the bird population and also in the migration routes.—Blanche Chapman, Ruth Schumacher, Blanche Dean, Kathleen Landes, Birmingham, Alabama.