

## 1989 FALL AND WINTER SIGHTINGS

Greg D. Jackson

Some incredible birds passed through Alabama and northwest Florida during the fall and winter of 1988-89. Last autumn was the best in years, perhaps ever, in terms of "super rarities" on the Alabama coast. These included three first and one second Alabama records. Together with the birds seen last spring (i.e. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and Fork-tailed Flycatcher), 1988 should take the prize for "Year of the Rarities" in Alabama. I hope in the pages below I can convey some of the excitement rippling at times through our area because of these exotic wanderers. I'll try to not gloss over the less bizarre, though still quite important, records of the many other species recorded from August 1988 through February 1989.

If you turned in a really noteworthy sighting during this period that didn't make it to these pages, chances are that it just didn't get to me for evaluation. I am trying to provide data on significant sightings to you in this column, when this information is available to me. I appreciate the effort made by various local and regional editors in submitting records to me for this purpose. As in the last "Sightings" column, I must state that the appearance of a report on these pages does not constitute verification or acceptance of a record of a rare species. These reports still have to be formally evaluated in the appropriate forum.

The big drought of 1988 began to alleviate in August, which was hot and only mildly dry. September was cool, especially early, and due in part to storms from the tropics, the month was rather wet. On 10 September, Tropical Storm Florence crossed the shore west of our coast, and seven days later northeast Mexico was hit by the powerful Hurricane Gilbert. October was cool and had fairly normal precipitation, whereas November was warm and wet. The winter months had their debut with a cold snap in early December; there was a change to warmer than normal temperatures by late in the month which continued through January. February, in contrast, was cold. The winter was moderately dry, except for a wet spell in January.

County names are underscored. "WP" refers to the western Panhandle of Florida (Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties). Records not specifying "FL" or "WP" are in Alabama. "CBC" = Christmas Bird Count, "WMA" = Wildlife Management Area, "NWR" = National Wildlife Refuge, "mob" = many observers.

**Loons - Grebes:** The fifth northwest Florida record of Pacific Loon was of a single bird on 12 December in Santa Rosa Sound, *Santa Rosa* (JP, DR, JB, CF, MS). Another of this rare species was seen in Bon Secour Bay, *Baldwin*, on 19 January (TAI). Late October seemed to be the peak of migration for Common Loons in north Alabama. Thirty-one birds on the 26th at Lake Purdy near Birmingham (GDJ, DGJ) represented a Mountain Region Maximum, and 75 were spotted on 30 October at Guntersville (GDJ). An incredible 1490 Pied-billed Grebes were on the Tennessee River in *Limestone* on 22 January for a state maximum (GDJ). Eared Grebes were well-represented in our area this period. Blakely Island (the regular site for this species) came through again, starting with an early record for the Gulf Coast of two birds on 28 August (GDJ), and reaching a peak of 10 birds on 19 November (RAD). Other coastal records of this species included: one on 5 November at Gulf Shores (MBC), three on 27 January near Navarre Beach, FL (*Okaloosa*) (BS,MS); and one to two on Santa Rosa Island, FL (*Escambia*) on 29 January (GDJ,mob) and 12 February (RAD). More unexpected were single birds on 24 December near Decatur (*Limestone*) (ML) on 21 February at Lake Porter, *Jefferson* (TAI,FD'A).

**Shearwaters - Sulids:** A Greater Shearwater was spotted from the Dauphin Island ferry in the mouth of Mobile Bay on 3 October (MVH). Two separate observations of small, unidentified shearwaters were made from shore during the Gulf Shores CBC on 31 December (GDJ,PT). It is likely that both of these birds were Audubon's Shearwaters, and amazingly this is the third consecutive year for such a sighting on that count! Two deepwater pelagic trips from *Baldwin* were attempted this year on 27 August and 22 October (AOS). Unfortunately, no tubenoses were found which may have been related to calm seas on both trips. High on the "you should have been here yesterday" scale were a pair of adult **WHITE-TAILED TROPICBIRDS** seen from shore at Navarre Beach, FL, on 27 January (BS,MS)! This sighting was not associated with unusual storm activity, though the birds were near a large feeding flock of gannets, gulls, and terns. Such assemblages of birds should always be examined carefully, for rarities frequently have been found lurking in the vicinity. The tropicbird sighting was the first of northwest Florida and the third report for the AOS area. An adult **Masked Booby** was spotted on 21 February at Dauphin Island (ALM,ADM). A new Alabama maximum for Northern Gannet was set on 31 December on the Gulf Shores CBC when 687 were counted. On that date, 550 were seen in just two hours flying east by the Perdido Pass west jetty (GDJ). On 19 January, 258 of these high-diving specialists were noted at Ft. Morgan (TAI,GMI).

**Pelicans - Frigatebirds:** Inland reports of American White Pelican are always fun, and this year included single birds on 18 September at Guntersville (RRR,EGR,mob) and 29 October to 6 November at Town Creek, *Colbert* (GNP,TMH). Fourteen were noted at Eufaula NWR 18-25 February (BAS). The first Alabama record of **OLIVACEOUS CORMORANT** was of a bird seen for approximately 30 minutes with Double-crested Cormorants at Ft. Morgan on 23 October (BCG, HHK, GNP,AR). This bird could unfortunately not be relocated on subsequent days. Olivaceous Cormorant has been a species sought frequently in the past in our area, as it breeds in Louisiana and there are two records from the Mississippi coast. Anhinga is an uncommon bird in the winter in the Coastal Plain, so one to two individuals at Eufaula NWR on 19 January (CKe) and 18-19 February (BAS) were interesting discoveries. A late Magnificent Frigatebird was seen on Dauphin Island on 26 November (JH).

**Hérons - Storks:** Least Bitterns are uncommon in winter, so one on the Gulf Shores CBC on 31 December (PF) was interesting. Tricolored Herons were reported at two inland locations this year. One bird was seen on 10 August at Marion (HHK,GA), with perhaps the same bird noted at that location on 12 September (BS, MS). Another sighting of this usually coastal species was at Montevallo in *Shelby* on 18 August (ALM, HHF, MMc, AS). Reddish Egrets are not difficult to find on the outer coast in the warmer months, but the white phased bird reported on 18 August from Dauphin Island (G&AB) was unusual. A strange buffy-gray individual was on Blakely Island on 24 September (GDJ). The three birds seen on the Dauphin Island CBC on 26 December were good for that season. Green-backed Heron is uncommon in winter, so six in *Okaloosa*, FL, 14-20 December were nice (CAS). Seventeen Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Eufaula NWR on 19 January (CKe, GS) were surprising for the winter. Dark ibis (most often unidentified) are uncommon in the AOS area. Autumn is usually the best time to find them, and this year singles were spotted at Ft. Morgan on 4 October and on the Mobile Causeway on 12 November. One of the big ticket items from the summer of 1988 was the presence of three **Roseate Spoonbills** on the Mobile Causeway. An immature bird was seen in nearby Polecat Bay on 24 September and 13 October (GDJ); was this a lingerer from the original group, or a new bird? To round out the large waders, the Wood Stork flocks that invaded Alabama's Black Belt last summer increased in numbers in the early autumn. Lake Land Farms near Marion held the largest population, beginning with 16 birds on 3 August (GDJ) and increasing to 80+ birds on 15 September (RRR,EGR).

**Whistling-Ducks - Surface-feeding Ducks:** Waterfowl numbers were rather low at most locations this winter, with decreased species diversity as well. However, several species arrived earlier than usual this fall. Three **Fulvous Whistling-Ducks** certainly spiced up the day's birding for RAD at the Moma Rosa ponds at Ft. Walton Beach, FL, on 11 September. This species is usually found at least once in our area each year, usually in the late summer or fall on the coast. This was a good year for the uncommon Greater White-fronted Goose. An early Tennessee Valley record was set with a bird at Wheeler NWR on 25 October (ALM). The first January WP record was a lone goose on 5 January at the Ft. Walton Beach sewage ponds (RAD). Four of these birds were in south Baldwin on 14 January (CF, RAD, mob); two were at Wheeler NWR 28 January to 4 February (HHK, GDJ, GDJ, A&BJ). A bright star of the winter was the third confirmed Alabama record of ROSS'S GOOSE at Eufaula from 17 January to 2 April (HHK, GA, mob). There were several records of this petite goose in the Southeast this winter. Three Green-winged Teal on 5 September at Marion (GDJ, DGJ) established an early record for the Coastal Plain. An early Gulf Coast record was of three American Black Ducks on Blakely Island on 13 October (GDJ). Care must be taken on the coast to separate this bird from the more common Mottled Duck. Mottled Ducks are hard to find on the outer coast in winter, so a bird on the Gulf Shores CBC on 31 December (RRR, EGR) and two on the Dauphin Island Causeway on 21 February (ALM, ADM) were nice.. An early Northern Pintail was at Wheeler NWR on 15 August (GDJ, DGJ). The six Northern Shovelers found in *Hale* and *Perry* on 5 September tied the previous early record for the Coastal Plain (GDJ, DGJ). An early record for Alabama was set by the observation of a Gadwall on Blakely Island on 28 August (GDJ).

**Diving Ducks:** Moving to the diving, ducks, an early Mountain Region date for Greater Scaup was established by two birds at Lake Purdy near Birmingham on 26 October (GDJ, DGJ). Ten of this species were found at Brown's Creek in Guntersville on 2 January (GDJ, DGJ). The east shore of this arm of Lake Guntersville (near the Rotary Cabin) is usually reliable in the winter for good looks at this species, which can be difficult to find at inland locations. I received only one Oldsquaw report: one female in the Tennessee River near Decatur on 27 December (MSG). An injured Black Scoter was an early record for the Tennessee Valley on 6 November at Town Creek (*Colbert*) (TMH). Four of this species were located in Bon Secour Bay (*Baldwin*) on 19 January (TAI). Surf Scoter is usually our most common scoter, and there were two reports this season: one on 29 November at Ft. Morgan (RAD), and four

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on 26 February in Bon Secour Bay (GDJ, DGJ). A solitary White-winged Scoter record was submitted, of a bird remaining at Lake Porter in *Jefferson* 2-28 February (LNT, TAI, FD'A). The 250 Common Goldeneyes at Guntersville on 2 January (GDJ, DGJ) were impressive, but this was topped on 22 January by 370 birds at Wade's Landing in *Limestone* (GDJ, DGJ). The first Common Mergansers of the season were at Lake Purdy near Birmingham on 30-31 October (ALM). One was discovered at Guntersville on 18 December (PF, LR), and five were near Waterloo (*Lauderdale*) on February (GDJ, DGJ). The latter birds were with 175 Red-breasted Mergansers in the Tennessee River.

**Osprey - Harriers:** Osprey is a regular wintering bird on the coast, but ten "fish hawks" on the Mobile Delta CBC on 17 December were impressive for that season. Wintering Ospreys are much less usual inland; a single bird was feeding at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, on 22 January (GDJ). The fifth and sixth Alabama records for **Black-shouldered Kite** were set this winter. One was near Bellingrath Gardens on the Dauphin Island CBC on 26 December (JTW). The second inland Alabama record was established by an individual feeding near I-65 in *Escambia* on 15 January (BS,MS). This species is still found regularly in coastal Mississippi, and we should be on the lookout for further records in the AOS area. Bald Eagles were well represented in the region this fall and winter. Several were reported away from the main concentrations on the Tennessee River, with one to two birds seen from early October to late February in *Baldwin*, *Jefferson*, and *Shelby* in Alabama, and in *Okaloosa* in Florida. An early Northern Harrier was at Ft. Morgan on 28 August (BCG, RRR, PB), and 20 were noted there on 13 October (GDJ).

**Accipiters - Falcons:** The best hawkwatching spot in the area may turn out to be the eastern shore of Mobile Bay. Large numbers of raptors, including three immature Bald Eagles, were noted flying north this fall at Montrose in *Baldwin*. These birds were probably traveling west along the Gulf Coast and were following the shore of the bay. The peaks for Sharp-shinned Hawks at this site were on 30 September (103 birds) and 5 October (93 birds). On the latter date there were 250 Broad-winged Hawks, and an additional 106 Broad-wingeds were spotted on 8 October. The peak for Red-tailed Hawks was much latter, with 72 seen at Montrose on 12 November, rising to an impressive 199 on 18 November (all VBF). An early Tennessee Valley record for Rough-legged Hawk was obtained at the dependable "hawk farm" near the Guntersville Dam on 5 November (ALM). An adult **Golden Eagle** was a surprise as it flew over Ft. Morgan on 21 November (RAD). I received three reports of six

Merlins in later September and early October from Ft. Morgan. Three wintering Merlins were noted in the Mobile Bay area. Four coastal Alabama Peregrine Falcons were identified; inland reports were of a surprising three birds on the Birmingham area fall count on 1 October, and a bird in Lauderdale on 30 October (PK). Finally, the **Prairie Falcon** returned again this year to the Guntersville "hawk farm" on 15 November (ALM).

**Cranes - Plovers:** An early Sandhill Crane was noticed at Ft. Morgan on 21 September (PB0). One to three birds were reported wintering at Wheeler NWR (ML, TS, TAB, mob); this species is quite rare inland in Alabama, especially when not in passage. The regular wintering flock at Gulf Shores comprised 16 birds on 6 January (PB). There was a good movement of shorebirds through our area last fall. Black-bellied Plover is always a nice find at an inland locality, and one was seen at Decatur on 2 August (CB), tying the previous early record for the Tennessee Valley. An early Mountain Region date was set for Lesser Golden-plover on 7 September at Harpersville (*Shelby*) (GDJ, DGJ); five were seen there on 1 October (GDJ, DGJ). Numbers of Snowy Plovers from northwest Florida this winter were encouraging. Twenty-two were at Big Sabine on Santa Rosa Island, FL, on 19 December (RSD); 27 birds were found on the same island on 28 January (AOS); and 36 individuals were discovered on the Perdido Bay CBC on 28 December (RSD, JIF). From 2 January through February two Wilson's Plovers were at Big Sabine, *Escambia*, FL (RAD, mob); this species is rare at this time of year. Two Piping Plovers, rare inland, were located at Guntersville on 13 September (TAI, FD'A). Eight Piping Plovers were found on the Perdido Bay CBC on 28 December (RSD, JIF).

**Oystercatchers - Calidrids:** An impressive 15 American Oystercatchers were a first WP January record on the 24th at Shalimar (*Okaloosa*) (JFI). The high for the year for Black-necked Stilts at Blakely Island was 600 on 28 August (GDJ). A few birds remained at that site into the winter, with five on the Mobile Delta CBC on 17 December, and one bird on 21 January for the first Alabama record for that month (TAI, GMI). This bird is harder to find in northwest Florida, and one seen on 1 September at the Okaloosa County sewage plant (RAD) was only a second WP record for that month. The graceful cousin of the stilt, the American Avocet, made a strong showing this year on the Alabama coast. A new state maximum was set at, of course, Blakely Island, with 281 birds on 24 September (GDJ). A lone bird was seen at Eufaula NWR on 18-19 November (TAI, JD, mob). Eight Spotted Sandpipers wintering at Greenville (CKe) represented an inland maximum for that season.

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Upland Sandpiper is a species that we should watch closely due to a decline in recent years. A reliable spot on the Alabama coast is the Baldwin County #4 sod farms, where "many" were seen on 14 August (MFF, MN), and 15 were spotted on 27 August (GDJ, MFF, MSK). The regular Mobile Causeway Long-billed Curlews were seen again this year, with one to two birds through at least 1 January (GDJ, DGJ). Red Knot is a tough bird to find inland, and thus one picked out on 13 September at Guntersville was of interest (TAI, FD'A). Western Sandpipers were present in good numbers at Blakely Island on 28 August, with 2420 birds counted (GDJ). White-rumped Sandpipers are rare throughout our area in the fall. Two were seen at Decatur on 13 September (CB), and one was at Blakely Island on 24 September (GDJ). A Pectoral Sandpiper 16-23 December at the Ft. Walton Beach sewage ponds (RAD, DMW, JP) was the first WP record for that month.

**Stilt Sandpiper - Phalaropes:** The 12 Stilt Sandpipers on 19 November at Blakely Island (RAD) were rather late, but they were overshadowed by the 91 birds seen there on 15 January (RAD, RDS, PT). This was both Alabama's first January record and a new maximum for the winter. Only a few Buff-breasted Sandpipers were reported. Four were in south Baldwin on 27 August (GDJ, MFF, MSK). One Buff-breasted was seen in Shelby on 31 August (GDJ, DGJ), and another bird was present on 11 September at Decatur (HHK, BCG). The first WP December and January records for Short-billed Dowitcher were of three in Pensacola 15 December to 4 January (RAD, PT). Another WP report of this species was of 11 birds found 16-23 December at the Ft. Walton Beach sewage ponds (Okaloosa). The first WP record of Long-billed Dowitcher for September was on the 15th, when a calling bird was discovered at the Okaloosa County sewage ponds (RAD). In autumn, the Long-billed Dowitcher reaches a migratory peak later than its Short-billed cousin. There were 250 birds, many calling, at Blakely Island on 13 October (GDJ). The first Wilson's Phalaropes of the season were three on the Mobile Causeway on 9 August (MFF, MN). One to two birds were seen at Decatur 15-21 August (HHK, GDJ). The usual Blakely Island contingent of this sleek bird included 48 seen on 28 August (GDJ).

**Jaegers - Skimmers:** An immature, light-phased Pomarine Jaeger was studied with gulls on Lake Shelby at Gulf Shores on 30 December (PT, BT, RAD, LD RSD). This is a rare species in our area, though if we made frequent pelagic trips we would probably have more records. The first inland record for Alabama of a Parasitic Jaeger was of an immature bird seen at close range at Guntersville on 5 September (MH). Also at Guntersville, a Laughing Gull, rare inland, was seen on

18 September (RRR,EGR). The two adult Franklin's Gulls seen at Guntersville in mid-summer stayed to at least 27 September, when they were joined by two additional birds (ALM). One bird was seen at that site on 6 and 11 November (ALM). A first-winter plumaged bird was spotted at the Moma Rosa ponds at Ft. Walton Beach, FL, on 2 December (DB); another winter report was of an adult at Ft Morgan 19 January (TAI,GMI). The 1200 Bonaparte's Gulls at Wilson Dam on the Tennessee River on 19 February (GDJ, DGJ) were quite a sight, especially since they were with 5000 Ring-billed Gulls. The rare but regular **Glaucous Gull** was found again this year in our area, this time at Guntersville on 26 December on the CBC (MSG, JG). This was a good winter for **Great Black-backed Gulls** in and near north Alabama. An immature was on the Waterloo CBC in *Lauderdale* on 17 December (DJS party), and two to three first-winter plumaged birds were at Guntersville from 12 January to 4 February (ALM, AS, BSu, mob). Common Tern, a species not usually living up to its name in our region, was plentiful at Ft. Morgan this fall. On 25 September, 180 birds were found, and there were 75 there on 13 October (both GDJ, DGJ). Ten Forster's Terns were nice at Swan Creek WMA (*Limestone*) on 7 January (GDJ). The AOS pelagic trip participants, who ventured into the Gulf from *Baldwin* on 27 August, had fantastic views of nine **Bridled Terns** of varying ages. The birds were associated with tidelines from 45 to 60 miles offshore. The second WP January record of Black Tern was on the 28th at Navarre Beach (LG, JTP, CBl). To finish the waterbirds with an oddly placed individual, there was a Black Skimmer in Decatur on 13 September (CB) for a first Tennessee Valley record. This occurrence was likely related to Tropical Storm Florence.

**Doves - Nightjars:** This was good year for **White-winged Doves** along the coast. An individual seen on 1 August at Ft. Morgan (PB) may have been the same bird seen earlier in July. One to three birds were regular at that location throughout the fall. A single bird was at Gulf Breeze, FL, on 27 October (LD). Wintering White-winged Doves are uncommon, so the lone birds on the Gulf Shores CBC on 31 December (DMW party), and at Perdido Pass, *Baldwin*, on 26 February (GDJ), were interesting. **Groove-billed Anis**, with their prehistoric appearance, are always a treat. Two were located on 31 December on the Gulf Shores CBC and were seen again the following day (CLK, mob). The comical **Burrowing Owl** was good find at Ft. Morgan on 26 September, where it was noted again on 8 October (both PB). On the latter date, and early Short-eared Owl was also discovered at Ft. Morgan (BCG). The last Common Nighthawks reported were six birds on 4 December in Birming-

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ham (BTa). The Chuck-will's-widow on 21 January at Ft. Morgan was unusual (GF).

**Hummingbirds:** A subadult male **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was at a Pensacola feeder 17-18 December (JP, CLK), for a sixth WP record. The species undoubtedly occurs annually in our region, though there are few positively identified records. Any *Archilochus* hummingbird in the winter should be examined carefully, for Black-chinned is more likely than Ruby-throated at this season. Any winter hummingbird should be reported to Bob and Martha Sargent (205-681-2888); they are the hummingbird banders in our area, and make frequent trips to safely capture and identify unusual birds. This was a banner year for Rufous Hummingbirds throughout the Southeast, and the AOS area was certainly included. The Sargent's banding log in our area this season included the following Rufous Hummingbirds:

- adult male in Birmingham July-November;
- adult female in Mobile 12 October-4 April;
- adult female in Decatur November-December;
- immature female in Birmingham 6 November-14 April;
- adult female in Destin, FL, November-January  
(also and unbanded *Selasphorus* sp.);
- immature male near Mobile in December;
- immature female in Mobile 21 December-27 February;
- immature male in Pensacola, FL, 26 January.

**Tyrant Flycatchers:** The flycatchers put on an exciting show this fall on the coast. A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was closely studied at Ft. Morgan on 25 September (GDJ, DGJ); caution is urged with identification of this species, as Acadian Flycatchers can have yellow throats in the autumn. Eastern Phoebes arrived in good numbers in mid-October, with 20 found on the 13th at Ft. Morgan (GDJ). An immature male **Vermilion Flycatcher** was a good find at Ft. Morgan on 5 October and again three days later (PB). Also on 5 October, a male of this species was discovered at Ft. Pickens, FL (JTP). Alabama's second record of **SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** really got the adrenalin flowing. This bird was found at Ft. Morgan on 27 September (HHF, JF) and remained for many observers to study until 3 October. On 4 October, a calling **COUCH'S KINGBIRD** was another big surprise at Ft. Morgan (KW, RAD,JP,mob). This was the third record for the Tropical/Couch's Kingbird complex in the state, but was the first assigned to species. Oddly, in view of the other Western vagrants this fall, there weren't many Western Kingbirds around. The only reports that I have are of two birds at Ft. Morgan on 28 August (BCG, RRR, PB), and one bird at the

same locale on 2 October ( GDJ, DGJ, mob). A few more Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were located than Western Kingbirds, but it was still not a prominent year for this species. Reports ranged from early October to early November, all at Dauphin Island, Ft. Morgan, or Pensacola, FL (BS, MS BT, GDJ, DGJ, MFF, FF).

**Swallows - Kinglets:** Four thousand Tree Swallow were at Blakely Island on 13 October (GDJ). One bird found on 17 February near Birmingham at Lake Purdy was an early record for the Mountain Region (ALM). Barn Swallows are rare on the coast in winter; this year one was seen on 23 December at Ft. Walton Beach, FL sewage ponds (JP), and another birds was on Blakely Island on 15 January (PT, RAD). I had only one record of coastal Red-breasted Nuthatches this season: a single bird was at Ft. Morgan on 15 October (GDJ). Even inland, records of this species were sparse. Brown Creepers are generally uncommon on the outer coast, so three on 15 October at Ft. Morgan (GDJ), and six banded at the same locality on 25 October (BS, MS), were interesting. The difficult to find Bewick's Wren was spotted at Ft. Morgan on 8 October (BCG). Nine Winter Wrens were a good number for the coast 14-20 December in *Okaloosa*, FL (CAS). Two Golden-crowned Kinglets on Blakely Island on 13 October (GDJ) were early.

**Wheatears - Vireos:** I realize that there is a little bias in this statement, but the "Bird of the Season" had to be the **NORTHERN WHEATEAR** at Ft. Morgan on 2 October (GDJ, DGJ, mob)! I'm still not quite back to earth from that one. Who needs drugs?! This immature bird was believed to be of the eastern Canada/Greenland race. This was a first Alabama record and one of only a handful of occurrences in the lower Southeast. Many people from surrounding states enjoyed the bird on 3 October, but I fear that its sudden disappearance following that date may have had something to do with a not too savvy habit of sitting in the open on posts during a raptor flight. A Veery was early at Montrose on 5 September (VBF). On the other end of the spectrum, a Swainson's Thrush was late on 29 November at Ft. Morgan (RAD). Two flocks of Cedar Waxwings were early on 8 October in south *Okaloosa*, FL (JP, KW, RAD). Four White-eyed Vireos were noteworthy on 17 December on the Mobile Delta CBC. The inland Alabama maximum, for Solitary Vireo was broken with the sighting of 12 birds on 19 January at Eufaula NWR (CKe, GS). The **Warbling Vireo** located at Ft. Pickens on 3 October (RAD) was the sixth fall WP record.

**Wood Warblers - Lark Sparrow:** The hybrid "Brewster's" Warbler (Blue-winged X Golden-winged) is always fun to observe, and two separate birds were in Birmingham on 23 and 25 September (HHF,

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JF, BCG). Magnolia Warblers arrived earlier than usual this year, with three birds on 5 September in *Greene* (GDJ, DGJ), and one on 6 September at Dauphin Island (MFF). Over 200 Palm Warblers were at Eufaula NWR on 19 January (Cke, GS) for an inland Alabama maximum. The Northern Waterthrush seen on 3 August at Dauphin Island (G&AB) was earlier than usual. Wilson's Warbler had been recorded only twice previously on the Alabama coast in winter, so the bird at Ft. Morgan on 21 January (TAI, GF) was quite unusual. Also good for the winter was a young male Rose-breasted Grosbeak on 27 February in Fairhope (MN). **Clay-colored Sparrow** is rare but regular on the coast in mid-autumn. This season, two birds were found at Ft. Morgan 24-25 September, and one bird was seen at that site on 13 October (both GDJ, DGJ). Lark Sparrow is usually easier to find; one was at Ft. Morgan 24-25 September, and another was seen on Dauphin Island on 14 October (both GDJ, DGJ).

**Henslow's Sparrow - Cardueline Finches:** Henslow's Sparrow is rare inland, and the two that were discovered at Waterloo on the CBC on 17 December (DJS party) were of interest. The same party found a Le Conte's Sparrow and a Lincoln's Sparrow at that same locale on the count. On 1 January, a Henslow's Sparrow was located in south *Baldwin* (BCG). An early Le Conte's Sparrow was at Ft. Morgan on 8 October (BCG). A Lincoln's Sparrow at Scottsboro on 25 February (JPT) was a nice find. **Six White-crowned Sparrows** were noted at Ft. Morgan on 23 October (GDJ, DGJ, BS, MS). Both the "Oregon" and the "Pink-sided" forms of Dark-eyed Junco were present from 9 January to 4 February at a Birmingham feeder (LA, mob). I received three reports of **Yellow headed Blackbirds** this fall. The first was an unusual inland record of an immature male in *Calhoun* from 30 August to 5 September (RR, BSu, mob). A female was located at Ft. Morgan on 6 September (RAD), and a male was seen there on 17 September (PB). Winter finches were few and far between this season. The low number of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins contrasted significantly with the hordes of birds, particularly siskins, that we hosted at our feeders during the winter of 1987-88. House Finch has spread to the Florida and Alabama coasts in the past few years, and five were seen in *Okaloosa*, FL 14-20 December (CAS). A great bird was a **Common Redpoll** studied in a large flock of American Goldfinches at Clay in east *Jefferson* on 7 February (BS). American Goldfinch numbers were above average in some localities, particularly in *Jefferson*. I received no details on sightings of **Evening Grosbeaks** this winter.

**Observers:** Alabama Ornithological Society, Lois Albright, Gussie Arnett, Dick Ballman, Jane Ballman, George & Awilda Bennett, Birmingham Audubon Society, Paul Blevins, Clyd Blum (CBl), Thomas A. Brindley, Craig Brown, Choctawhatchee Audubon Society, Frank D'Allessandro, Lucy Duncan, Robert A. Duncan, R. Scot Duncan, Julian Dusi, Harriett H. Findlay, John Findlay, Gene Fleming, Carolyn Fleury, Fred Floyd, Jinny Floyd (JF1), Mary F. Floyd, Paul Franklin, Venetia B. Friend, John T. Fulton, Lawrence Gardella, Ben C. Garmon, Janice Gravette, M. Scott Gravette, Thomas M. Haggerty, Milton Harris, Gina M. Imhof, Thomas A. Imhof, Debra G. Jackson, Greg D. Jackson, Albert & Betty Johnson, Charles Kennedy (CKe), Curtis L. Kingsbery, Helen H. Kittinger, Paul Kittle, Merrill Lynch, Mabel McDonald, Al D. Miller, Ann L. Miller, Mobile Bird Club, Minnie Nonkes, Johnny T. Parks, James Pfeiffer, G. Ned Piper, Elberta G. Reid, Robert R. Reid, Linda Reynolds, Renee Roper, Ari Rutkoff, Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Damien J. Simbeck, Maud Skiba (MSk), Mary Star, Alice Stevens, Tuck Stone, Gerald Stough, Bill Summerour (BSu), Bob Taylor (BTa), Betsy Tetlow, Phil Tetlow, Lynne N. Thompson, Mark VanHoose, Donald M. Ware, John T. Winn, Kenny Wright.

**Corrigenda:** Double-crested Cormorant 14 (not four), 4/11/89, Birmingham (ALM, MMc). Pectoral Sandpiper six, 3/1/88, Wade's Landing (not Weiss Lake) (ALM, MMc), thus not a new early record for the Mountain Region. *Greg D. Jackson, 2220 Baneberry Drive, Birmingham, AL 35244*

