



Volume 50

No. 1

June 2004



ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Journal of the Alabama Ornithological Society

ALABAMA BIRD LIFE

Published by the Alabama Ornithological Society to Record and
Further the Study of Birds in Alabama and Northwest Florida

Vol. 50

No. I

2004

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Founded 17 May 1952

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Typeset by Tom Haggerty

Cover: Calliope Hummingbird, photograph by G. Harber

REPORT OF THE ALABAMA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE 2001

Lawrence F. Gardella

The Alabama Bird Records Committee (ABRC) was created to validate documentation of unusual birds in Alabama using a method that allows the records to be more universally accepted and scientifically valuable. A committee of seven experienced Alabama Ornithological Society (AOS) members reviews reports of species that generally have fewer than 20 accepted records for the state. Records for species on the ABRC review list, which currently includes approximately 90 species, are voted on by all committee members. If the first vote is indecisive, the committee members vote a second time. Vote totals with no more than one "not accepted" vote result in the record being accepted. Totals with four or more "not accepted" votes result in the record not being accepted. Records without decisions following two votes are reviewed and voted upon a final time at the annual meeting of the ABRC.

Fifty records from 25 observers were evaluated between 2001 and 2004 (Table 1). During this evaluation period, three species were added to the Alabama state list: Limpkin, Crested Caracara, and Brown-crested Flycatcher. An additional species, Great-tailed Grackle, was listed as hypothetical since the submitted photograph was not diagnostic. As of this writing the AOS recognized state bird list stands at 422. Of these, three are considered extinct (Passenger Pigeon, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, and Carolina Parakeet) and two extirpated from Alabama (Common Raven and Bachman's Warbler). Fourteen additional species are included in the hypothetical category due to the absence of a conclusive photograph or specimen or written documentation of visual observations by at least three experienced observers.

TABLE 1. Evaluations by the Alabama Bird Records Committee of 50 records from 25 observers.

Record No.	Species	Date	County	How Noted ^a	Decision ^b	AL Status ^c
01-1	Sooty Shearwater	3/9/00	Baldwin	V	A	11
01-2	Sooty Shearwater	4/24/00	Baldwin	V	A	12
01-3	Red Phalarope	11/21/91	Limestone	V	A	13
01-4	Red Phalarope	12/18/99	Lauderdale	P	A	18
01-5	Red Phalarope	3/17/00	Shelby	P	A	19
01-6	Vaux's Swift	4/22/00	Mobile	V	NI	—
01-7	Willow Flycatcher	3/9/00	St. Clair	V	NI	—
01-8	Cave Swallow	4/4/00	Baldwin	V	A	6
01-9	Cave Swallow	4/4/00	Mobile	V	A	7
01-10	Cave Swallow	4/16/00	Mobile	V	A	8

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TABLE I. Continued

Record		Date	County	How		AL Status ^c
No.	Species			Noted ^a	Decision ^b	
01-11	Kirtland's Warbler	5/13/00	Montgomery	V	NI	—
01-12	Shiny Cowbird	4/21/00	Mobile	P	A	19
01-13	Ash-throated Flycatcher	10/20/00	Baldwin	P	A	24
01-14	Brown Booby	1/2/99	Baldwin	V	NI	—
01-15	Brown Booby	12/30/00	Baldwin	V	NI	—
01-16	Great Cormorant	4/22/00	Mobile	V	NI	—
01-17	Roseate Spoonbill	10/26/00	Mobile	V	A	18
01-18	Roseate Spoonbill	8/9/00	Montgomery	P	A	17
01-19	Say's Phoebe	10/15/00	Baldwin	V	A	3
01-20	Willow Flycatcher	9/12/00	Montgomery	V	A	13
01-21	Alder Flycatcher	9/24/00	Mobile	V	A	10
01-22	Alder Flycatcher	8/24/00	Shelby	V	A	9
01-23	Burrowing Owl	8/5/00	Baldwin	V	P	—
01-24	Black-legged Kittiwake	2/17/01	Baldwin	V	A	15
01-25	Sabine's Gull	10/28/00	Mobile	V	NI	—
01-26	Red Phalarope	10/29/00	Marshall	V	A	20
01-27	Ruff	8/6/00	Lowndes	V	A	4
01-28	Limpkin	9/30/00	Cullman	P	A	1
01-29	Prairie Falcon	1/6/01	Marshall	V	A	3
01-30	Crested Caracara	2/19/01	Baldwin	VT	A	1
01-31	Short-tailed Hawk	2/4/01	Elmore	V	NI	—
01-32	Great-tailed Grackle	9/24/00	Pelagic ^d	P	A	1H
01-33	American Tree Sparrow	12/25/00	Lauderdale	P	A	16
01-34	Harris's Sparrow	11/26/00	Lauderdale	P	A	12
01-35	Audubon's Shearwater	9/14/00	Pelagic	V	A	8
01-36	Audubon's Shearwater	10/16/00	Pelagic	V	A	9
01-37	Calliope Hummingbird	11/21/00	Montgomery	B/P	A	10
01-38	Calliope Hummingbird	12/27/00	Mobile	B/P	A	11
01-39	Calliope Hummingbird	1/12/01	Baldwin	B/P	A	12
01-40	Calliope Hummingbird	11/19/00	Jefferson	B/P	A	9
01-41	Buff-bellied Hummingbird	12/27/00	Mobile	B/P	A	11
01-42	Broad-tailed Hummingbird	11/29/00	Mobile	B/P	A	5
01-43	Allen's Hummingbird	11/16/00	Dale	B/P	A	15
01-44	Cory's Shearwater	9/13/00	Pelagic	V	A	11
01-45	Cory's Shearwater	10/14/00	Pelagic	V	A	12
01-46	Cory's Shearwater	10/16/00	Pelagic	V	A	13
01-47	Cory's Shearwater	10/20/00	Pelagic	P	A	14
01-48	Cory's Shearwater	10/24/00	Pelagic	V	A	15
01-49	Brown-crested Flycatcher	10/13/00	Mobile	P	A	1
01-50	Shiny Cowbird	6/15/01	Mobile	V	A	21

^a V = visual, P = photograph, B = banded, VT = videotape

^b A = accepted, NI = not accepted due to identification questions, P = pending and under review

^c = Number of accepted Alabama records, H = hypothetical

^d = Pelagic = Gulf of Mexico waters out to 200 nautical miles from Mobile and/or Baldwin counties

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PERRY COUNTY SUMMER BIRD COUNT – 2003**Lawrence F. Gardella****INTRODUCTION**

Perry County is located in west-central Alabama. Although some sites in the county have received the attention of birders seeking wintering sparrows, and Wood Storks and kites during post-breeding dispersal in July, there is relatively little information about the breeding birds of Perry County. Therefore, a quantitative study of the breeding birds of Perry County was undertaken in June 2003 in conjunction with Breeding Bird Atlas surveying efforts. This study is a continuation of the work that began in 2000 to gain a better understanding of the breeding birds in Alabama, especially in counties that have received very little attention in the past (Jackson 2000, Gardella 2003).

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Physiographically, Perry County (Fig. 1) is in the Upper Coastal Plain of Alabama and the southern part of the county is within the natural prairie region of the Black Belt (Lacefield 2000). Four level IV ecoregions (Fall Line Hills, Southeastern Flood Plains and Low Terraces, Blackland Prairie, and Flatwoods/Blackland Prairie Margins) and three major river systems (Cahaba, Black Warrior, and Alabama) (Mirarchi 2004) are located within its borders. The county is considered part of the Inland Coastal Plain bird recording region (Haggerty et al. 2004). Predominant habitats within the county include agricultural fields, pond complexes, pine woods, clearcuts, bottomland hardwoods and wooded swamps. Elevations rise to about 376 feet in Marion.

To conduct the count, 25 km² Breeding Bird Atlas blocks were surveyed in June 2003. This method was employed so that the results of the count could be used for the Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas project that officially began in 2002. Nine blocks were surveyed thoroughly. Observers typically surveyed from pre-dawn or dawn until late morning (ca. 1100 hrs). A total of 49 hours of daytime surveying was conducted for diurnal species and 3.1 hours were spent surveying for nocturnal species. All individuals were identified and counted. In addition, any indication of breeding was noted.

The breeding designation codes used in this study are the same as those currently being used by the Alabama BBA project and that have been used

previously on similar counts (Gardella 2003). “Confirmed” breeding was designated if a species was observed carrying nest material or food, constructing a nest, performing a distraction display, or incubating. Further, the discovery of a nest with eggs or young, a used nest, or dependent short-tailed young also confirmed breeding. “Probable breeding” for a species was indicated when at least seven singing males were noted on the same date in the same block, or by birds recorded on five Breeding Bird Survey route or mini-route stops within safe dates (i.e., when migrants are extremely unlikely to occur). This designation also was used for the detection of a pair in suitable habitat, for individuals showing courtship behaviors or agitated behaviors that are associated with nest disturbance, and for species of wrens and woodpeckers that were nest building. “Possible breeding” was noted if a species was found in suitable habitat within the safe dates. An “observed” status was used for species that were seen or male song heard in suitable habitat outside safe dates. This designation was also used for independent juveniles, for species not in suitable habitat, and for soaring vultures and colonial species away from their colony.



FIGURE 1. County map of Alabama showing location of Perry County (darkened).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The count. — Totals of 97 species and 6299 individuals were recorded during 52.1 hrs of surveying for a total of 120.9 individuals per party hour (Table 1). The most frequently encountered species (i.e., > 200 individuals) found on the count were Purple Martin, Barn Swallow, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Cardinal, Indigo Bunting, and Red-winged Blackbird (Table 1). The most widely distributed species (i.e., discovered in 9 blocks) were Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Great Crested Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow-breasted Chat, Summer Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Northern Cardinal, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, and Orchard Oriole (Table 1). Thirty-three species (34%) were confirmed breeders, 35 (36%) were probable breeders, 22 (23%) were possible breeders, and 7 (7%) were noted only as observed species (Table 1). An additional species (Scissor-tailed Flycatcher) was not recorded during the official count time period (i.e., before 1100 hr), but is included on the total count list of 98 species.

TABLE 1. Perry County Summer Bird Count Totals, June 2003.

Species	No. Individuals	No. Blocks	Breeding Status
Canada Goose	150	1	Observed
Wood Duck	17	4	Confirmed
Mallard	18	3	Probable
Wild Turkey	4	1	Possible
Northern Bobwhite	24	7	Probable
Pied-billed Grebe	1	1	Possible
Great Blue Heron	61	8	Observed
Great Egret	95	7	Observed
Little Blue Heron	3	2	Observed
Cattle Egret	3	2	Observed
Green Heron	12	5	Probable
Wood Stork	3	2	Observed
Black Vulture	49	8	Observed
Turkey Vulture	83	8	Possible
Bald Eagle	1	1	Confirmed

TABLE 1. Continued

Species	No. Individuals	No. Blocks	Breeding Status
Mississippi Kite	3	2	Possible
Red-shouldered Hawk	7	5	Probable
Broad-winged Hawk	1	1	Possible
Red-tailed Hawk	9	6	Probable
Killdeer	10	4	Confirmed
American Woodcock	2	1	Probable
Rock Pigeon	5	1	Possible
Eurasian Collared-Dove	17	4	Probable
Mourning Dove	165	9	Probable
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	74	9	Confirmed
Eastern Screech-Owl	8	4	Possible
Great Horned Owl	2	2	Possible
Barred Owl	6	2	Possible
Chuck-will's-widow	15	3	Probable
Chimney Swift	30	5	Probable
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	10	5	Probable
Belted Kingfisher	4	3	Possible
Red-headed Woodpecker	9	4	Possible
Red-bellied Woodpecker	62	9	Probable
Downy Woodpecker	29	8	Probable
Hairy Woodpecker	2	1	Possible
Red-cockaded Woodpecker	2	1	Probable
Northern Flicker	2	2	Possible
Pileated Woodpecker	11	3	Probable
Eastern Wood-Pewee	23	7	Probable
Acadian Flycatcher	33	6	Probable
Eastern Phoebe	12	6	Confirmed
Great Crested Flycatcher	52	9	Confirmed
Eastern Kingbird	95	8	Confirmed
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher			
Loggerhead Shrike	19	5	Probable
White-eyed Vireo	119	9	Confirmed
Yellow-throated Vireo	18	3	Probable

TABLE 1. Continued

Species	No. Individuals	No. Blocks	Breeding Status
Red-eyed Vireo	93	8	Probable
Blue Jay	157	9	Confirmed
American Crow	182	8	Confirmed
Fish Crow	19	5	Possible
Purple Martin	278	7	Confirmed
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	152	7	Confirmed
Cliff Swallow	74	1	Confirmed
Barn Swallow	237	7	Confirmed
Carolina Chickadee	78	8	Probable
Tufted Titmouse	141	9	Confirmed
Brown-headed Nuthatch	2	1	Possible
Carolina Wren	142	9	Probable
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	144	9	Confirmed
Eastern Bluebird	33	5	Probable
Wood Thrush	39	7	Probable
American Robin	4	1	Possible
Gray Catbird	4	4	Possible
Northern Mockingbird	242	9	Confirmed
Brown Thrasher	26	6	Probable
European Starling	82	5	Confirmed
Northern Parula	15	3	Probable
Yellow-throated Warbler	4	3	Possible
Pine Warbler	86	8	Confirmed
Prairie Warbler	74	6	Confirmed
Black-and-white Warbler	5	2	Possible
American Redstart	21	7	Confirmed
Prothonotary Warbler	16	7	Confirmed
Worm-eating Warbler	2	1	Possible
Swainson's Warbler	18	3	Probable
Louisiana Waterthrush	9	4	Confirmed
Kentucky Warbler	27	6	Confirmed
Common Yellowthroat	71	8	Probable
Hooded Warbler	73	7	Confirmed
Yellow-breasted Chat	245	9	Confirmed

TABLE 1. Continued

Species	No. Individuals	No. Blocks	Breeding Status
Summer Tanager	79	9	Probable
Eastern Towhee	218	9	Probable
Chipping Sparrow	5	3	Probable
Field Sparrow	29	5	Probable
Lark Sparrow	2	1	Probable
Northern Cardinal	425	9	Confirmed
Blue Grosbeak	127	9	Confirmed
Indigo Bunting	394	9	Confirmed
Dickcissel	89	6	Confirmed
Red-winged Blackbird	238	7	Confirmed
Eastern Meadowlark	183	6	Probable
Orchard Oriole	94	9	Confirmed
Common Grackle	73	7	Confirmed
Brown-headed Cowbird	137	8	Probable
House Finch	3	2	Possible
House Sparrow	28	3	Possible

Species Accounts. — Several species were targeted based on significant questions about their distribution. Below are brief accounts of those species and unexpected species.

Pied-billed Grebe — An individual was discovered by one observer. This species is considered a rare and erratic breeder in Alabama away from the Tennessee Valley (G.D. Jackson, pers. comm.).

Wood Stork — This species is considered a possible breeder in the state (Haggerty et al. 2004) and is listed as a species of high conservation concern (Major 2004). In this study, three were sighted in appropriate habitat. Were they dispersing early after breeding elsewhere? Wood Storks are common in south central and southwest Alabama in July, but reports from early June always bring speculation about possible breeding in the state.

Bald Eagle — Even before Bald Eagles became endangered in the lower 48

states, there were not many inland summer records south of the Tennessee River (Imhof 1976). Nesting now occurs at numerous sites in Alabama (Hudson 2002), and the bird seen near a nest was in a known breeding area.

American Woodcock — This species is considered rare in summer in most of Alabama and is a Priority II (i.e., high conservation concern) species (Haggerty et al. 2004, Mirarchi and Shelton 2004). A pair was found in the Buck Creek CW block.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker — This federally listed endangered species is considered rare and local in the Inland Coastal Plain (Haggerty et al. 2004). Several colonies are in the Talladega National Forest in Hale and Bibb counties, which border Perry County. A pair of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers was observed in the Harrisburg CE block. This species is considered a Priority I species (i.e., highest conservation concern) in Alabama (Tucker and Robinson 2004), so data on its occurrence are significant.

Cliff Swallow — This species is considered uncommon in the Inland Coastal Plain region (Haggerty et al. 2004), so the discovery of 74 individuals and used nests in the Heiberger CE block is worth noting.

Wood Thrush — This is a Priority II species (Kittle 2004a) in Alabama, so the 39 individuals in seven blocks reported from our study are important to note.

Black-and-white Warbler — This species is considered rare in the Inland Coastal Plain (Haggerty et al. 2004), so the two found in two northern blocks were a surprise.

Worm-eating Warbler — In the Inland Coastal Plain this species is considered rare in summer (Haggerty et al. 2004) and is currently listed in Alabama as a Priority II species (Kittle 2004b). Two were found in the Buck Creek CW block near the Bibb and Dallas County lines.

Swainson's Warbler — In Alabama, this is a Priority II species (Soehren 2004), therefore it should be noted that in the northern part of the county three were found in the Heiberger quadrangle, and one in the Harrisburg CE block. In addition, an amazing 14 were found in the Buck Creek CW block.

Kentucky Warbler — In Alabama, this is a Priority II species (Hill 2004), so the 73 individuals from six blocks are of interest.

Lark Sparrow — This species is a rare-but-regular breeder in the Black Belt region (Imhof 1976) and is considered rare in summer in the Inland Coastal Plain (Haggerty et al. 2004). Further, there is recent evidence of a possible range expansion (Gardella and Reed 2001). In this study, a pair was found in the Scott Station CE block.

Dickcissel — This species is uncommon to locally fairly common in the Inland Coastal Plain (Haggerty et al. 2004), especially in the Black Belt (Imhof 1976). All three blocks where Dickcissels were found in this study were in the Black Belt region. Breeding was documented in the Scott Station CE block, where 65 individuals were counted.

Species not found.— Blue-winged Teal, Hooded Merganser, Anhinga, Least Bittern (Priority II), Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel (Priority II), Purple Gallinule, Common Moorhen, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow Warbler, Bachman's Sparrow (Priority II), Grasshopper Sparrow, Painted Bunting and Baltimore Oriole have all been found in nearby areas during the summer, but were not found in this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to Fred Bassett, Barry Fleming, Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton, Tommy Pratt, and Shawn Reed for their help in collecting the data used in this report.

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LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*LANIUS MINOR*) WITH SALAMANDER PREY

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At approximately 0905 hr on 16 May 2004, just south of Dannelly Field, Montgomery, Alabama, a Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius minor*) was observed perched on a post with a three-inch-long (7.6 cm) vertebrate in its bill. The shape of the legs and feet were sufficient to identify the vertebrate as a salamander, but the species could not be determined. After remaining in view at the perch for approximately two minutes, the bird flew off to the southwest carrying the salamander in its bill. Although salamanders have been found in the larders of shrikes in Kentucky and Minnesota (F. Lyne and T. Bormann, pers. comm., respectively), I could find no published records of salamanders being used for food by the Loggerhead Shrike, and therefore, this observation is worthy of note.

Shrikes often prey on small vertebrates and although most salamanders are similar in size to lizard species on which shrikes are known to prey, they are found in different habitats. Some species of lizards inhabit relatively dry, open areas where shrikes typically forage (Yosef 1996, Imhof 1976), whereas salamanders typically occur in water or moist habitats, usually under logs, rocks or debris.

Shrikes have been found to take fish, but only fish left on land (Bent 1950). They also have been known to feed on frogs, but typically on species that can be found in open habitats [e.g., Plains Leopard Frog (*Rana blairi*) and Blanchard's Cricket Frog (*Acris crepitans*), Tyler 1991] and that venture out of the water. In Oklahoma, half of the snakes preyed upon by Loggerhead Shrikes were water snakes (Tyler 1991), but again, there are water snake species that inhabit open areas and that sun and forage out of the water. It should be noted, however, that the Loggerhead Shrike has been observed catching an insect from the water (Siegel 1980).

Loggerhead Shrikes are known as opportunistic feeders that adjust their diet to the availability of prey (Yosef 1996). A small stream was located near the site where I observed the Loggerhead Shrike with the captured salamander. Apparently, the salamander presented the shrike with an opportunity that the shrike seized.

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FALL SIGHTINGS (AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2003)

Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan

This report covers the period from August through November 2003 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (west of the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this article does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species; these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. All submissions of birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, must be accompanied by adequate details of the observation. The extent of this documentation depends on the rarity of the species and the difficulty of identification. For guidance, observers are encouraged to consult the Alabama Ornithological Society checklist. Reports should note conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

Abbreviations and italics: County names are in italics and, except for the Western Panhandle counties of Florida, are in Alabama. “@” = under review by; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “b.” = banded; “FOSRC” = Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee; “FWBSF” = Fort Walton Beach Spray Fields; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NF” = National Forest; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “vt.” = videotaped; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (Bay, Gulf, Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties); “WTF” = Woerner Turf Farm.

PACIFIC LOON – Rare but regular on Guntersville Reservoir (*Marshall*), one was noted 21-22 November (Dick Reynolds, Steve McConnell et al.).

RED-NECKED GREBE – Dick and Linda Reynolds found a single on Guntersville Reservoir, *Marshall* 21 November that established the 12th record for Alabama (@ABRC).

EARED GREBE – At the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 1-3 birds were present 4 October – 30 November (Alan Knothe, Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown et al.) (rare but regular in WP). Some attendees of the fall meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society meeting on Dauphin Island were treated to the sighting of a single at Bayou La Batre, *Mobile* 12-14 October (uncommon in Alabama).

MASKED BOOBY – The second September record for the WP was set by a bird found on Choctawhatchee Bay, *Okaloosa* 12 September (Bev Goode).

A sub-adult was spotted by Ben Garmon and Howard Horne on the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 16 September. This species is rare in Alabama, especially onshore.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – This species is locally rare in inland Alabama, but there has been a recent increase in records, some of large numbers of birds. Linda and Winston Baker reported 200 from Weiss Lake, *Cherokee* 22 October. Because of the close proximity of Wheeler NWR and Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, there may be some overlap of birds in the following records, but numbers were impressive nevertheless: Wheeler NWR, 409 on 27 October (CDC, m.ob.) (maximum count for both Tennessee Valley and inland Alabama), 18 on 8 November (Bob Reid), 11 on 13 November (Damien Simbeck), and 135 on 29 November (Barry Fleming); Swan Creek WMA, 89 on 25 October (Dick Bruer, Bob Reid), and 168 on 1 November (Steve McConnell, Dick Bruer, Dick Reynolds). An additional Tennessee Valley record came from Town Creek Marsh, Colbert, 8 birds 4 November (Helen Kittinger, Martha Dagg) and 7 November (Shirley Wayland et al.). Much farther south than the above records was a single at Speigner, *Elmore*, 23 November (Larry Gardella).

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD – A late bird was spotted at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* 30 November (Rack Cross).

ARDEIDS – Unusually high numbers of herons and egrets were present August – mid-September throughout the WP (Bob Duncan).

AMERICAN BITTERN – Rarely seen in the Mountain Region, a single was found at Porter Lake, *Jefferson* 27 September (Sharon Hudgins, David George). Probably uncommon on the Inland Coastal Plain and rarely reported, one was noted at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour* 13 November (Carolyn Snow, Lorna West).

SNOWY EGRET – One was in *Jefferson* 27 September (Helen Kittinger, R. D. Kittinger) (rare in Mountain Region).

REDDISH EGRET – An immature white morph individual was seen on Little Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 24 August (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson). This morph is rarely seen in Alabama.

CATTLE EGRET – The 50 counted at Montgomery, *Montgomery* 18 November (Carolyn Snow, Phil Snow), were late.

GLOSSY IBIS – Ten at Blakeley Island, *Mobile* 24 August (Greg Jackson) was a good number.

WHITE-FACED IBIS – One at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 2 October was the 15th for Alabama (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan; @ABRC).

- PLEGADIS SP.** – An estimated 30 on the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile* 24 August (Greg Jackson) was the second highest count of any *Plegadis* in Alabama.
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL** – Presumably the same individual was seen on two dates at Bayou La Batre, *Mobile* 4 September (Andrew Haffenden) and 10 September (David Dortch) (26th Alabama record).
- WOOD STORK** – This species is rare on the Gulf Coast, so the two seen at Bottle Creek in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin* 28 September (Patrick Bolton) were notable.
- GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** – Jean Williams found 65 at Niceville, *Okaloosa* 22 October, perhaps part of a large flight that occurred along the Gulf Coast that day (see Fort Morgan record below). Two birds were noted at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 15 November (Don Ware, m.ob.). Record numbers occurred in Alabama this fall. An estimated 510 in four skeins were seen flying west at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 22 October, a new maximum for Alabama (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown). A maximum for inland Alabama (65) occurred at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* 29 November (Barry Fleming), with 7-64 being counted at the same site on various dates between 13-22 November (Damien Simbeck, Harry Dean, Birmingham Audubon Society, m.ob.). Two adults and one immature were found at Styx River, *Baldwin* 30 November (Claire Krusko) where the species is locally rare.
- ROSS'S GOOSE** – At the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, three-five birds occurred 15-28 November (Don Ware, Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Alan Sheppard, Cecil Brown, ph. by Jean Williams) (@FOSRC). This goose is rare but expected at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, and three were spotted there 13 November (Damien Simbeck) and six on 15 November (Harry Dean, m.ob.). Rare on the Gulf Coast, two were found at Blakeley Island, *Mobile* 16 November (Howard Horne, Ben Garmon).
- EURASIAN WIGEON** – An adult male was found at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour* 13 November (Carolyn Snow, Lorna West) to set the seventh record for Alabama (@ABRC).
- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** – A new maximum for the WP, over 150 in two kettles were noted during rainy conditions at Molino, *Escambia* 7 August (Gene Fleming, Frank Logan).
- SHORT-TAILED HAWK** – The first record of this species for Alabama was set by the sighting of an immature dark morph individual at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 15-16 October (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Betsy Tetlow, Cecil Brown, Ann Miller, Bill Summerour et al.; ph. Lucy Duncan, Ann Miller;

@ARBC).

GOLDEN EAGLE – The earliest fall migrant ever for the WP, an adult bird spotted by Bob and Lucy Duncan, was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 28 September. An adult also occurred at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 7 October (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown). A single immature was in Bay 31 October (Bob Landry). This raptor is casual in the WP. Rare and early for the Tennessee Valley, one adult was found at Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall* 27 October (Dick Reynolds).

BLACK RAIL – One was flushed from short grass at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 17 November (Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown, Bob Duncan) to establish the 12th record for the WP.

SORA – During a fall Birmingham area bird count on 27 September, Sharon Hudgins et al. managed to tally seven, with six at Porter Lake and a single at the Birmingham Airport, both *Jefferson* (maximum count for Mountain Region). Two were late at Porter Lake, *Jefferson* 30 November (Sharon Hudgins, David George) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region).

SANDHILL CRANE – Robert Reed found 11 at Tallassee, *Elmore* 20 November, where the species is locally rare. Good numbers of 85 and 160 were counted at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* 22 November (Dwight Cooley, Birmingham Audubon Society) and 29 November (Barry Fleming), respectively.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER – A single was early for the Tennessee Valley near Leighton, *Colbert* 17 August (Steve McConnell et al.), while another single was early for the Mountain Region at Harpersville, *Shelby* 20 August (Harriett Wright, Alice Christenson).

KILLDEER – Good numbers of this plover, an actual count of 250 and an estimated 500, respectively, were recorded near Leighton, *Colbert* 15 August (Damien Simbeck) and at the WTF, *Lowndes* 24 August (Larry Gardella).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER – One was at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* 11 October (Ann Miller) where the species is locally rare. Thirty were at Coden, *Mobile* 30 November (Rack Cross), a good number for this location.

AMERICAN AVOCET – Damien Simbeck noted a single near Leighton, *Colbert* 27 August – 4 September. This shorebird is rare in inland Alabama.

MARbled GODWIT – Rare in the WP, three were noted at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 5 August (Bob Duncan) and five were found at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia* 23 August (Carol Ascherfeld, Ray Ascherfeld). One was photographed at Seven Mile Island in the Tennessee River near Florence, *Lauderdale* 19 September (Steve Hacker) (occasional for inland Alabama).

- SANDERLING** – Rare in the Mountain Region, one was spotted at Porter Lake, *Jefferson* 27 September (Sharon Hudgins, David George).
- WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** – Rarely seen in fall, a single was at Blakeley Island, *Mobile* 15 August (Larry Gardella).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** – Bob Reid had two at the WTF, *Lowndes* 18 August (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain). This species is rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley in fall, and singles were recorded at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* 21 September (Dick Reynolds, Dick Bruer, Harry Dean) and at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone* 31 October (Steve McConnell).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER** – A new maximum count (700+) for Alabama was made at the WTF, *Lowndes* 24 August (Larry Gardella).
- RUFF** – A single male was observed at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone* 25 October (Dick Reynolds, Dick Bruer) to establish the sixth record for Alabama (@ABRC).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Rare inland in fall, one was near Leighton, *Colbert* 15 August (Damien Simbeck), while another single was at the WTF, *Lowndes* 24 August (Larry Gardella) (occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain).
- POMARINE JAEGER** – A single was on Pelican Island, *Mobile* 14 October (David Dortch; ph.). This species is rare onshore in Alabama.
- PARASITIC JAEGER** – Bob Duncan established the third fall and 12th overall record for the WP with a juvenile at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 22 September.
- LAUGHING GULL** – An adult was at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale* 26 November (Damien Simbeck) where the species is rare but regular.
- FRANKLIN'S GULL** – Seventeen, a maximum for inland Alabama, were seen at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale* 21 October, with singles 23 October and 25 November, and seven 31 October (Damien Simbeck et al.). This species is rare but regular at this site. Franklin's Gull is rare on the Gulf Coast, so a first-year bird at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* 23 October (Ann Miller, Al Miller), an adult at the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 23 October (Ben Garmon), and another first-year bird at Destin, *Okaloosa* 23 October (Alan Knothe, Larry Marler) were noteworthy.
- CALIFORNIA GULL** – A first-year bird at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale* set the fourth Alabama record (Damien Simbeck et al.; ph.; @ABRC). It was seen 8 and 17 October, 14 November, and 6 and 9 February (2004).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** – Rare but increasing in Alabama, a first-year single was seen at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale* 29 October, 16 November, and 6 February (2004), with two present on 9 February (Damien Simbeck et al.). A single adult was present at this same site 4

November (Damien Simbeck). Another adult was on Pelican Island, *Mobile* 7 November (David Dortch, Bill Summerour, Betty Summerour).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – An adult was on Pelican Island, *Mobile* 5 November (David Dortch) and 7 November (David Dortch, Bill Summerour, Betty Summerour) (ph.). This species is still rare in Alabama.

SOOTY TERN – Bob Duncan found a single adult at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 5 August where the species is casual. Rare onshore in Alabama, but regular near Dauphin Island in recent years, an immature was seen from the Dauphin Island Ferry, *Mobile* 18 August (Steve Walker).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – Bob and Lucy Duncan had up to 12 adults and four juveniles at their feeder in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 20 August – 18 September, further evidence of breeding activity in the WP.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO – One was found at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert* 3 October (Damien Simbeck et al.) (rare inland).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI – Rare but regular in the WP, singles were at Destin, *Okaloosa* 4 October (Lenny Fenimore, Don Ware et al.); Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 6 October – 5 November (Alan Sheppard, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob., ph. by Jean Williams); and Cantonment, *Escambia* 30 November (Cheryl Greene). Rare and erratic on the coast of Alabama, one was spotted at the Goat Tree on Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 15 October (Ben Garmon).

FLAMMULATED OWL – A bird found injured but alive in Mobile, *Mobile* 31 October (Julie Perez) was rehabilitated and later flown to California for release. This is the first record of the species for Alabama (ph.; @ABRC).

LESSER NIGHTHAWK – The fifth record for Alabama was set by a single on Pelican Island, *Mobile* 6 November (David Dortch) (@ABRC).

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD – One was at Niceville, *Okaloosa* 23 November (Fred Bassett). A single first noted 24 November at Fairhope, *Baldwin* (David Dortch) was banded 4 December (Fred Bassett) (vt.; @ABRC) to mark the 15th Alabama record.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD – An immature male was first noted at a residence in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, during the last week in October and remained until mid-February, 2004 (Bob Sargent et al.; @ABRC) to set the 20th Alabama record.

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD – One was banded at Crestview, *Okaloosa* 24 November (Fred Bassett).

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER – Rare but regular in fall, two were seen at Russellville, *Franklin* 4 September (Damien Simbeck). A single was noted

at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 9 September (Bill Summerour).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER – At Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, where this species is rare but regular, a single was present 5 September while two were noted on both 18 and 26 September (Damien Simbeck et al.). Also rare but regular in the Mountain Region, one was found at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson* 23 September (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson). Singles were banded in the Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, on 17, 23, and 24 September (Ashley King, Christopher Burney), and another single was recorded at Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery* 3 October (Larry Gardella) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain). On the Gulf Coast of Alabama, where this *Empidonax* is rare but regular, the following records were received: singles at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 4 October (Bob Sargent, et al.; b.) and 11 October (Greg Jackson, Steve McConnell, Jeff Wilson et al.); Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, one on 11 October (Greg Jackson, Stan Hamilton) and three on 12 October (Ben Garmon).

“TRAILL’S FLYCATCHER” – A late bird was at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert* 7 October (Damien Simbeck).

SAY’S PHOEBE – The first WP record was established by one found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 13-15 October (Barry Fleming, m.ob.; ph.; @FOSRC).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – Casual in the WP, an adult male was found at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 22 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow, Dawn John). Another adult male was on the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile* 10 October (Larry Gardella).

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER – One was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 5 September (Bob Duncan), another was found at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 23 October (Alan Knothe, Larry Marler), and a third individual was recorded at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 29 October (Cecil Brown, Sam Tagatz, Bob Duncan et al.) (over 20 WP records). One was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 15 October (Bob Sargent, et al.; b.; ph.) where the species is rare.

WESTERN KINGBIRD – An early arrival was at Dauphin Island Airport, *Mobile* 10 August (Ben Garmon).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER – Rare but increasing as a breeder, an adult was at Lake Land Farms, *Marion* 17 August (Ben Garmon), and a new maximum (10) for Alabama was established on Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 14 October (Dick Reynolds, Linda Reynolds).

BELL’S VIREO – Rare in Alabama, one was seen at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 11 October (Jeff Wilson).

WARBLING VIREO – Two were banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 6 October

(Bob Sargent et al.) (rare in Alabama).

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO – The first Alabama record for the species was established by a bird at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 10 October (Duane Berger, Fred Bassett, Bob Sargent et al.; b.; ph.; @ABRC).

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – Three were noted at Oak Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery* 26 September (Larry Gardella) (rare for Inland Coastal Plain).

BROWN CREEPER – Rare in the WP, one was found at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 8 November (Bob Duncan).

HOUSE WREN – A singing bird that was recorded at Irondale, *Jefferson* 4 August (Helen Kittinger), may indicate nesting.

WOOD THRUSH – A maximum fall count for Alabama was made 16 October when Larry Gardella heard 147 nocturnal migrants at Montgomery, *Montgomery*.

SAGE THRASHER – One was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 23 October (Alan Knothe, Larry Marler) to establish the fifth WP record.

YELLOW WAGTAIL – Another first state record for Alabama was established by an immature found at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 29 September (Bob Duncan, David Dortch, Cecil Brown, m.ob.; @ABRC).

CEDAR WAXWING – A rare but increasing breeder, one was found at Decatur, *Morgan* 11 August (Steve McConnell). Eleven were noted at Russell Cave National Monument, *Jackson* 6 August (Barbara Stedman).

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER – Good numbers of this species were seen at Opelika, *Lee*, with a total of 16 between 6 September and 14 October and with a maximum of three on 25 September (Lorna West).

“BREWSTER’S” WARBLER – Singles were seen at Opelika, *Lee* 8 and 16 September (Lorna West) (rare in Alabama).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – Early birds were at Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 15 September (David Dortch) and Opelika, *Lee* 17 September (Lorna West).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER – This warbler is rare in inland Alabama, but two reports were received: one female, Trussville, *Jefferson* 27 September (Greg Harber), and one male at Coleman Lake, Talladega NF, *Cleburne* 25 October (Greg Harber, Edith Hunt).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER – A new maximum fall count (five) for the Inland Coastal Plain was made at Fort Toulouse, *Montgomery* 3 October (Larry Gardella).

KIRTLAND’S WARBLER – The second WP record, and the first since 1953,

WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 2003 – FEBRUARY 2004)**Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan**

This report covers the period from December 2003 through February 2004 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (west of the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this article does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species; these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. All submissions of birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, must be accompanied by adequate details of the observation. The extent of this documentation depends on the rarity of the species and the difficulty of identification. For guidance, observers are encouraged to consult the Alabama Ornithological Society checklist. Reports should note conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

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RED-THROATED LOON – Casual in the WP, singles were found on Choctawhatchee Bay, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Jean Williams, Susan Tiesciero); Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 25 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan); and at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 29 January (Bob Wallace, Debbie Wallace). Rare but regular in winter at Guntersville, *Marshall*, an immature was found there 11 February (Dick Reynolds, Linda Reynolds).

PACIFIC LOON – Now rare but regular on the Gulf Coast, three singles were noted in the WP on Choctawhatchee Bay, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Jean Williams, Susan Tiesciero), and at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 7-11 January (Alan Knothe, Lyn Atherton, Jill Gaetzi *et al.*; ph.) and 29 January (Bob Wallace, Debbie Wallace). Reports of four singles were received from Alabama: upper Perdido Bay, *Baldwin* 28 December (Bob Duncan, Jim Dickerson) (rare but regular); Mallard Creek Recreation Area, *Lawrence*

30 December (Steve McConnell; ph.) (rare); Perdido Key area, *Baldwin* 3 January (Bob Reid) and 10 January (Greg Jackson) (rare but regular); and Guntersville, *Marshall* 6 February (Bailey McKay) and 13-15 February (Dick Reynolds, Linda Reynolds, m.ob.) (rare but regular).

COMMON LOON – An unusually large flock of 520+ was found at Perdido Key, *Baldwin* 10 January (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

HORNED GREBE – At Brown's Creek on Lake Guntersville, *Marshall*, David George counted 235 on 1 February, a good number for one spot in inland Alabama.

RED-NECKED GREBE – A single adult, seen from 20 December through the end of February at Spring Creek on Lake Guntersville, *Marshall*, established the 14th record for Alabama (Dick Reynolds, Steve McConnell, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC).

EARED GREBE – Rare in the WP, two were at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 2 December – 22 January (present since October) (Jean Williams, Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown, Terry Neumyer, m.ob.). At Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, Steve McConnell found a single 30 December (ph.), and at Guntersville, *Marshall*, Bailey McKay recorded another single 6 February (rare inland).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – Rare for the Mountain Region, 50 were found on Weiss Lake, *Cherokee* 2 December (Linda Baker, Winston Baker). Good numbers were at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* 22 December (53, Wheeler NWR CBC) and 29 December (71, Steve McConnell) where the species is rare but regular. At Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert* Ned Piper counted 35 on 25 February and 27 on 27 February (locally rare).

LITTLE BLUE HERON – A single was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 13-15 December (Bob Duncan *et al.*) (rare in winter in the WP).

CATTLE EGRET – Rare in winter in the WP, 15-80 birds visited the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 2-15 December (Jean Williams, Bob Duncan *et al.*). Cattle Egret is erratic in winter on the Alabama Gulf Coast, so 15 was a noteworthy number in *Baldwin* 28 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow).

GREEN HERON – Rare in north Alabama in winter, two reports were received: one at Smith Lake, *Cullman*, on the Cullman CBC 21 December (Vince Meleski), and another single at Blountsville, *Blount* 11 February (Harriett Wright, Edith Hunt). Five was a good total on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin* 3 January.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – Locally rare in Alabama except at Wheeler NWR, where it is regular, several reports were received for this species: three at Montgomery, *Montgomery* 17 December (Larry Gardella);

two at Russellville, *Franklin* 15 January (Damien Simbeck); 80 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* 17 January (Larry Gardella) (maximum for inland Alabama and maximum for winter in Alabama); three at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin* 27 January (Alan Knothe *et al.*); a single at Linden, *Marengo* 21 February (Don Self, Judy Self); and five near Florence, *Lauderdale* 22 February (Jud Johnston, Jared Caudle, Ned Piper).

ROSS'S GOOSE – Accidental in the WP, one was found with a flock of Snow Geese at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 2 December (Jean Williams, Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown, Terry Neumyer; ph.), and another single was at Niceville, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Bob McKenney, Jan Fabozzi). Locally rare in Alabama except at Wheeler NWR, where it is regular, several reports were received for this species: a single at Waterloo, *Lauderdale* 9 December (Damien Simbeck); 16 on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone* 20 December (maximum for Alabama); one at Russellville, *Franklin* 15 January (Damien Simbeck); two at Guntersville, *Marshall* 18 February (Dick Reynolds, Harriett Wright, Edith Hunt); and three at the WTF, *Lowndes* 29 February (Larry Gardella).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL – Five at Guin, *Marion* 23 February (Jud Johnston) set an early arrival date for the Mountain Region.

HARLEQUIN DUCK – An immature male found on the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile* 8 February (Geoff Hill *et al.*) established the fifth Alabama and second Gulf Coast record (ph. Mark Liu; @ABRC).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – One was spotted on Little Bear Creek Reservoir, *Franklin* 15 January (Damien Simbeck) (rare in inland Alabama).

BLACK SCOTER – Five individuals of this rare and erratic species were found at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* 31 January (Steve McConnell) and 10 February (Eric Soehren).

LONG-TAILED DUCK – One was tallied on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile* 20 December (rare and erratic at this locale). Rare but regular at Lake Guntersville, *Marshall*, up to seven were found 11 January through the end of February (Bill McAllister, Linda Reynolds, m.ob.). Rare for the Inland Coastal Plain, a single was found at the Montgomery Zoo, *Montgomery* 31 January (Larry Gardella) and 1 March (Lynne Williams).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE – Early arrival for Alabama was marked by singles 24 February at both Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin* (Darrin LeBlanc) and Dauphin Island, *Mobile* (Paul Milotis). Also early was one at Gulf Shores SP, *Baldwin* 26 February (Ron Garmon).

NORTHERN HARRIER – Twenty+ was a good number for one site, Key

Cave NWR, *Lauderdale* 5 February (Dwight Cooley).

GOLDEN EAGLE – Rare in Alabama, one was found on Dugger Mountain, Talladega NF, *Cleburne* 6 February (Ryan Shurette *et al.*).

MERLIN – Rare in north Alabama in winter, two were recorded on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone* 20 December, and a single was spotted along County Road 9 in *DeKalb* 27 February (Barbara Stedman).

PRAIRIE FALCON – One below Guntersville Dam, *Marshall* 19 February (Dick Reynolds, Linda Reynolds) established the fourth record for Alabama (@ABRC).

SANDHILL CRANE – Casual in the WP, three were at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 26 February (Don Ware, Brian Monk). A large flock spent the winter at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* with counts of 257 on 8 December (Jimmy Wells, m.ob.) and 407 on the Wheeler NWR CBC 20 December, the latter a new record count for Alabama.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER – A single at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 27 February (Alan Knothe, Jean Williams; ph.) set the first February record for the WP.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER – Rare in winter for inland Alabama, one bird was along the Coosa River below Jordan Dam, *Elmore* 16-17 December (Jeff Garner).

POMARINE JAEGER – An adult seen from the Dauphin Island-Fort Morgan ferry, *Baldwin* 8 February (Greg Jackson) was rare, especially near shore.

LITTLE GULL – One observed at the Mallard Creek Recreation Area, *Lawrence* 28-30 December (Jeff Wilson *et al.*) established the eighth Alabama record (ph.; @ABRC).

BONAPARTE'S GULL – A good number for the Inland Coastal Plain (200+) was recorded at Speigner, *Elmore* 9 December (Helen Kittinger *et al.*).

CALIFORNIA GULL – A first-year bird was noted at Summerdale, *Baldwin* 12 January (Greg Jackson) to set the fifth record for Alabama (@ABRC).

THAYER'S/ICELAND GULL – A single, probably Thayer's Gull, was at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert* 9 February (Damien Simbeck; @ABRC). There are three prior Thayer's Gull records for Alabama.

ICELAND GULL – An immature at Foley, *Baldwin* 25 January (Bill Summerour, Ann Miller) established the third record for Alabama (@ABRC).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – A third-winter bird at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 20 December (Bill Bremser *et al.*) was rare for the WP. Up to six (a new maximum for Alabama) were counted at different sites (Foley, Summerdale, Magnolia Springs) in *Baldwin* 2-30 January (Steve McConnell,

Greg Jackson, Bill Summerour *et al.*) (rare but increasing).

GLAUCOUS GULL – Singles, probably the same individual, were noted at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence* 28 December (Jeff Wilson) and at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert* 9 February (Damien Simbeck) where the species is rare (ph.). Also rare at Guntersville, *Marshall*, a first-year bird was found 19 January through the end of February (Judy Newsome, Daniel Jacobson, John Henderson *et al.*).

GLAUCOUS X HERRING (“NELSON’S”) GULL – The first definite record for this form for Alabama was set by a first-year bird seen at Foley and Summerdale, *Baldwin* 25 January – 7 February (Bill Summerour, Steve McConnell *et al.*) (ph.).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – A first-year bird was found at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 4 January (Jim Haw, Sandy Haw) (rare on Gulf Coast).

CASPIAN TERN – One was on Okaloosa Island, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Bill Bremser) to set the second December record for the WP.

SANDWICH TERN – Two were at Destin, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown, Bill Bremser).

FORSTER’S TERN – One at Guin, *Marion* 23 February (Jud Johnston) was rare in winter for the Mountain Region.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE – A new maximum for Alabama was established with the count of 403 on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin* 3 January.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – At Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 6-22 birds were present 6 December – 30 January (Bob Duncan). A maximum for Alabama was established 3 January on the Gulf Shores CBC (Foley area), *Baldwin*, with a tally of 160 (Howard Horne *et al.*).

SHORT-EARED OWL – Dwight Cooley found two at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale* 5 February where the species is rare but regular.

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL – A single was heard at Little River Canyon National Park, *Cherokee* 30 December (Barbara Stedman; @ABRC) to set the seventh record for Alabama.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK – A single in Birmingham, *Jefferson* 1 December (Greg Harber) was late.

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD – The third and fourth records for Alabama were set by the following singles (both b., ph., @ABRC): adult female at Frisco City, *Monroe* 20 December (Fred Bassett, Susie Byrd), and an adult male, present since late summer, in Mobile, *Mobile* 6 January (Fred Bassett, Carl Wolcott).

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD – An adult male at Fairhope, *Baldwin*,

present since November, was banded 4 December (Fred Bassett, David Dortch; ph.; @ABRC) and established the 15th record for Alabama. Another adult male at East Brewton, *Escambia* 31 December established the 16th record for Alabama (Fred Bassett, Pat McArthur; b.; ph.; @ABRC)

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD – One present for the winter season in east Birmingham, *Jefferson* (Bob Sargent) was rare in winter, especially for north Alabama.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD – Casual in the WP, one was banded in Niceville, *Okaloosa* 11 February (Fred Bassett, Beth McDonald). The 20th-23rd records for Alabama, all single immature males, b., ph. and @ABRC, were established by the following birds: Birmingham, *Jefferson* 31 October (and present through 4 February) (Bob Sargent *et al.*); Mobile, *Mobile* 11 December (Fred Bassett, Glenda Huff); Mobile, *Mobile* 17 December (Fred Bassett, Laurie Bailey); and Heatherwood, *Shelby* 6 January (and lingering until 28 March) (Bob Sargent, Margaret Jameson).

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD – An adult male at Pensacola, *Escambia*, was banded 30 December and lingered until 30 January (b. Fred Bassett, ph. David Dortch and Lyn Atherton; m.ob.).

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD – Accidental in Florida, the fourth WP record of this species came from Pensacola, *Escambia* 1-16 February where one was banded (Fred Bassett, Glenda Bowman). The 18th record for Alabama was marked by an immature male at Fairhope, *Baldwin* 31 January (Fred Bassett, David Dortch; b.; ph.; @ABRC).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – Casual in the WP, an adult male was noted at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 16 December (Lenny Fenimore *et al.*). Rare in Alabama, an adult male was observed at Foley (Glen Lakes), *Baldwin* 28 December – 4 February (Carolyn Henning, Eva Barnett, m.ob.; ph.). An immature male was recorded on the Gulf Shores CBC (west of Foley), *Baldwin* 3 January (Bill Summerour, m.ob.) and lingered through 4 February.

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER – Still casual in the WP, but now almost regular, a single was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Don Ware).

WESTERN KINGBIRD – Casual in winter in the WP, singles were noted 2-23 January at Pensacola, *Escambia* (Morris Clark) and 6 January at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* (Bob Duncan).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER – The second January record for the WP was set by a single at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 3-15 January (Alan Knothe *et al.*). Rare in winter in Alabama, Stan and Dana Hamilton had one immature and one adult on 2 January and one adult on 3 January in the Gulf Shores

CBC area, *Baldwin*.

WHITE-EYED VIREO – Two were found at Lake Land Farms, *Marion* 20 January (Helen Kittinger, Lela Anne Brewer) (rare in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain).

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO – One at Niceville, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Jean Williams) set the third winter record for the WP.

BARN SWALLOW – A single at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 16 February (Brian Monk) marked the first February record for the WP.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – At Montgomery, *Montgomery*, two found 3 January (Larry Gardella, Andrea Menyhert) were rare for the Inland Coastal Plain.

SEDGE WREN – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, a single was noted during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan* 20 December.

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER – This species is rare in winter for inland Alabama, so the following singles were notable: Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan* 20 December, and Hope Hull, *Montgomery* 30 December (Larry Gardella).

GRAY CATBIRD – One was found on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan* 20 December (rare in winter in north Alabama).

TENNESSEE WARBLER – One photographed at Pensacola, *Escambia* 6 January (Lyn Atherton) established the second winter record for the WP. The first mid- to late winter record for Alabama was set by a single at a feeder in Hollins, *Clay*, during February (Mary Wilson; b. 14 February; ph.).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – This species is rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, so the following records were noteworthy: a single was found on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan* 20 December, and one was at Guntersville, *Marshall* 1 January (Damien Simbeck).

NASHVILLE WARBLER – A single found on Ono Island, *Baldwin* 3 January during the Gulf Shores CBC (Bob Reid *et al.*) marked the fourth winter record for Alabama.

YELLOW WARBLER – One at Valparaiso, *Okaloosa* 15 December (Carole Goodyear, Phil Goodyear) and another at Pensacola, *Escambia* 20 December (Cecil brown) established the second and third December records for the WP, respectively. Another single at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 24 January (Brian Monk *et al.*) marked the first January record for the WP.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER – An adult male found at Pensacola, *Escambia* 6 December (Morris Clark) provided the second December record for the WP.

- PRAIRIE WARBLER** – One found 15 December at Niceville, *Okaloosa* (Jean Williams, Susan Tiesciero) and another at Pensacola, *Escambia* 20 December (Powers McLeod, Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown *et al.*) marked the fifth and sixth December records for the WP, respectively.
- PALM WARBLER** – Uncommon to rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, two were spotted at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale* 23 January (Damien Simbeck).
- WILSON'S WARBLER** – Casual in winter in the WP, an adult male was found at Pensacola, *Escambia* 20 December (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Powers McLeod, Cecil Brown *et al.*).
- YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT** – Very rare in winter in the WP, one was found 15 December at Niceville, *Okaloosa* (Jean Williams).
- SUMMER TANAGER** – A female was tallied on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin* 3 January (Betsy Tetlow, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown) (rare in winter in Alabama).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** – One at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 4 December – 6 February (Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown, Terry Neumeyer, Lyn Atherton, Jill Gaetzi) set the second December and winter record for the WP.
- BREWER'S SPARROW** – One at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 26 December (Bob Duncan) and present since 24 September (Lucy Duncan) possibly established the first record for Florida (@FOSRC).
- LARK SPARROW** – Casual in winter in the WP, one was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 8 December – 22 January (Bob Duncan, m.ob.), and another was at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia* 20 December (Will Duncan, Joe John, Ann Forster, Dan Forster). One was noted on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin* 3 January (Bill Summerour, Eric Soehren, Jennifer Soehren) (rare in winter in Alabama).
- SAVANNAH SPARROW** – An estimated 500 at Bishop, *Colbert* 6 February (Damien Simbeck) established a maximum count for the Tennessee Valley.
- GRASSHOPPER SPARROW** – This species is rare in north Alabama in winter, so a single at Bishop, *Colbert* 6 February (Damien Simbeck) was notable.
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW** – Four on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan* 20 December was a good number for this locally rare species.
- LINCOLN'S SPARROW** – Two were found at Speigner, *Elmore* 1 February (Larry Gardella) (rare in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain).
- LAPLAND LONGSPUR** – Several were noted at the WTF, *Lowndes* 7 December (Larry Gardella) (rare but regular at this site), and six were recorded on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin* 3 January (Stan Hamilton, Dana

Hamilton) (rare but becoming regular at this site).

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK – A male and a female visited the feeders of Jim Dickerson in Lillian, *Baldwin* 28 December. A feeder in Underwood, *Lauderdale*, hosted a female 11-15 February (Paul Kittle, Donna Kittle) (occasional in winter).

BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK – A female was at a feeder in Pensacola, *Escambia* 20 December – 7 February (Bill Bremser, Lyn Atherton, m.ob.; ph.) (casual in winter for the WP).

INDIGO BUNTING – Rare, but becoming regular in winter in the WP, three reports were received: winter male, Fort Pickens, *Escambia* 6 December (Bill Bremser, Greta Bremser); male and immature, Pensacola, *Escambia* 20 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown *et al.*); and immature male, Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa* 26 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

SHINY COWBIRD – Casual in winter in the WP, one male and one female were noted at Pensacola, *Escambia* 28 December (Morris Clark *et al.*).

BRONZED COWBIRD – The eighth record for the WP was established by a single seen at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa* 30 January (Alan Knothe *et al.*). The seventh-ninth records for Alabama were established by the following three sightings: an adult male at Perdido Key, *Baldwin* 8 January+ (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC); two adult males at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* 10 January+ (Greg Jackson, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC); and one adult male at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* 8 February (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson; ph.; @ABRC).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – Rare in winter in Alabama, five reports, all of single birds, were received: male at feeder, Killen, *Lauderdale* 31 December (Shirley Wayland, Jim Wayland); immature female at feeder, Providence, *Marengo*, early January (Don Self, Judy Self); immature male, Montgomery, *Montgomery* 3 January (Larry Gardella); immature male at feeder, Florence, *Lauderdale* 5 and 28 January (Phyllis Nofzinger); and immature male, Muscle Shoals, *Colbert* 31 January (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).

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ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Below is a brief summary of a recent publication from the scientific literature. This summary is intended to bring the findings of ornithological research that deals with the birds that occur in Alabama and northwest Florida to a larger audience.

Early onset of incubation by Wood Ducks. G. R. Hepp. 2004. *Condor* 106:182-186.

Many species of birds begin incubating their eggs before the clutch is completed. This behavior can lead to asynchronous development and in some species asynchronous hatching. In species that produce precocial young, however, asynchronous hatching typically does not occur because eggs laid late in sequence develop faster than eggs laid early. This paper investigates the possible advantages that might accrue to Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*), a species that produces precocial young and incubates its clutch before it is completed. It examines three hypotheses concerning early onset of incubation: (1) it maintains the viability of eggs laid early in sequence, that often become less viable if they remain unincubated, especially when exposed to high ambient temperatures, (2) it reduces the likelihood of intraspecific brood parasitism, which is common in Wood Ducks, and (3) it improves nesting success by reducing the time the nest is exposed to predators.

The egg viability hypothesis was not supported by the data collected. Females did not begin incubating earlier in the egg-laying sequence as the season progressed and ambient temperatures increased as predicted by the egg viability hypothesis. Results also did not support the brood parasitism reduction hypothesis. If the early onset of incubation prevented brood parasites from laying their eggs in nests, then those nests where females initiated incubation the earliest should have had fewer parasitic eggs when compared to females that spent less time on their eggs. Hepp found no relationship between the number of nights egg-laying females incubated and the number of parasitic eggs that were present in the nests. Further, females that had been incubating eggs at night often left their nests during the egg-laying time and so were not present at the nest to protect it from brood parasites.

Although sample sizes were small, Hepp did find evidence to support the shortened incubation period hypothesis. There was an inverse relationship between the number of nights females incubated and the length of the incubation period. That is, those females that initiated incubation early tended to have shorter incubation periods than those females that spent fewer nights on their incomplete clutches. The possible advantage of a shorter incubation period is that the nestlings are exposed to predators for a shorter period of time. However, research is now needed to examine whether developmental maturity and post hatching survival is lower in those hatchlings that undergo an accelerated (i.e., shorter) development period because of early onset incubation. In other words, are there tradeoffs associated with early onset of incubation behavior, accelerated development, and hatching synchronization in precocial birds? [Department of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 108 M. White Smith Hall, Auburn University, Auburn, AL 36849]—TMH.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Manuscripts submitted for publication in *Alabama Birdlife* should conform to the guidelines listed below. Articles should include some facet of bird ecology, natural history, behavior, management/conservation, identification or other related topics. Refer to this issue or to recent past issues for examples. *Alabama Birdlife* is published twice a year. If you have access to an IBM compatible or Macintosh computer, it saves time and money if you submit your manuscript on a 3 1/2 inch floppy disk along with a hard copy (Word or WordPerfect preferred). A manuscript may also be submitted over the Internet as a file attached to an e-mail addressed to: tmhaggerty@una.edu.

Manuscripts should be typed and double spaced. A 8 1/2 x 11 inch page format should be used.

Digital images submitted over the Internet, black and white prints, color prints, and slides are acceptable.

The title should be in CAPS. If the name of a species is used in the title, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. CONNECTICUT WARBLER (*OPORORNIS AGILIS*).

The author's full name should be in lower case and centered under the title.

If the article is coauthored by a married couple bearing the same last name, the names should be kept separate, e.g. John B. Brown and Sarah D. Brown.

Whenever a species name is used for the first time in the body of an article, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*).

When using dates, the day should be placed before the month, e.g. 13 April 1992.

Spell out numbers ten and under and use numerals for numbers 11 and above.

Distances should be expressed in English units followed by the metric equivalent in parentheses, e.g. 6.2 miles (10 km). Use only the metric system for scientific measurements, e.g. wing 10.3 cm; tail 15.6 cm.

Table titles should be in CAPS and placed above the tables.

Figure legends should be in lower case and placed beneath the figure.

Refer to the Literature Cited in past issues for the correct format.

Three or fewer references should be incorporated into the text of the article rather than listed separately at the end, e.g. Imhof (1976, Alabama Birds).

The author's name and full address should be line typed at the end of the article. The name used should match the name given under the title.

Journal of the Alabama Ornithological Society

Volume 50

No. 1

2004

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