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## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

JULIAN L. DUSI

At the end of a second term of office, your President has gotten a good knowledge of the problems of the A. O. S. Through questionnaires, discussions with the members and trying to make the society function for two years, certain facts have come to mind many times. Rather than to let these be forgotten, I point them out by putting them on record here.

Your President feels that the A. O. S. has arrived at a crossroads situation. One road is to follow along the same route and remain a small, inconspicuous, malfunctioning club. The other road will lead to better organization, growth and to new heights of achievement.

The A. O. S. started on the first road and has for a long time been slowly approaching the crossroad. Its first Constitution and By-Laws were arrived at by copying the constitutions of neighboring "bird clubs," not following a recognized successful system of organization as given in Roberts Rules of Order. Your President was guilty of having helped organize the first Constitution. The revised present Constitution has only more befuddled the functioning of the present organization. Looking for a new "Messiah" hasn't solved the problems and won't because he will be beat before he starts. The turn to the right cannot be made until a completely reworked Constitution and By-Laws is drafted.

A. O. S. has been an autocracy for the greater part of its existence. This was partially necessary because of a small membership and few people who were willing to lend a hand. The membership has changed little. A few join each year and a few drop out. Many have dropped out because there has been little to interest them and no activity or job to do. Some of the offices of A. O. S. have functioned erratically because there was too much for one person to do. By the creation of a number of committees, the officers could be relieved of some stress and those members who need more activity could have a job to do. An editorial committee to help the Editor of Alabama Birdlife would be a big help and interesting work for several people. An editorial committee to write a monthly newsletter would be quite useful and solve a great interest problem. A membership committee to aid the

Treasurer send out membership cards, keep an up-to-date roster of members and to mail out dues statements, would be valuable. Several activities committees could function helpfully and do much to reduce the need of an autocracy.

The need for a President Elect is great. Only one of our Vice Presidents has been elected to the Presidency. Therefore the elected President has had little idea that he would be elected once or even twice. He could plan little in advance and knew little of the actual functioning of the society before he took office. A President Elect would have a year to plan a program and learn the intricacies of the society. Then he could immediately become an effective President and could carry out an effective program. He would serve more effectively because he would definitely know the length of his term of office.

The fiscal year has always been a problem and should be changed to begin on January 1. That way there would be no complications with memberships, dues and all that goes with our indefinite "year." Accompanying this fiscal year should be an annual business meeting dedicated to the business and elections of the society. Thus business would not be sandwiched into a busy spring or fall field meeting, but would be the main interest of the meeting.

Permanent records of the society are practically nil. The only records are a single set of notes recorded by the successive Secretaries. If this one set were lost we would have no records of past business and activities. Therefore, we need at least, duplicate records. Part of the records trouble is that A. O. S. has no permanent headquarters. If it had a permanent headquarters room or office, this would serve as a place where records could be permanently filed and back issues of Alabama Birdlife, newsletters and other records could be stored there. The least we can do, if this isn't attainable, is to microfilm our records and keep them in a safety deposit box, which the society could afford to rent. A secretarial records committee could certainly function to bring such records together and see that they are properly filed or filmed.

So goes the A. O. S. situation. It's a one-man organization now at a crossroads of no return. It can go on or take the turn to the right. What the membership **demand**s, it can do.

## A WILD TURKEY POPULATION ON AN AREA TREATED WITH HEPTACHLOR AND DIELDRIN\*

STERLING G. CLAWSON

Studies were begun early in 1958 on a 3,600-acre area in Wilcox County, Alabama, to determine the effects of aerial applications of granular formulations of the insecticides heptachlor and dieldrin on certain species of wildlife. These studies by biologists from the Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute are still in progress.

The insecticides were applied by a team representing the Plant Pest Control Division, United States Department of Agriculture and the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries. The application was a part of the fire-ant eradication program in which these latter two agencies are cooperating.

The wild turkey was not included in the planned studies on wildlife, but the presence of a resident wild turkey population on the area allowed ample opportunity for observations. While not conclusive, as to cause and degree, the observations made thus far indicate a drastic change in the turkey population during the year following the application of 2 pounds per acre of dieldrin or heptachlor.

Approximately 2,000 acres of the research area is a part of the Lower Coastal Plains Substation, a research unit of the Agricultural Experiment Station of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute. The remaining 1,600 acres making up the test area is owned partly by Presley Bryant and Clarence Smith. The entire area has been known to support a good wild turkey population. Much of the land in Wilcox County is similar in this respect.

Information as to the abundance of the species on the area prior to the treatment in March of 1958 has been obtained chiefly by interviewing landowners and members of the Substation residing on the area. Only summer and fall observations were considered in these interviews, since it is at these times of the year that wild turkeys are most concentrated, and in flocks that can be most accurately counted. A population estimate

\*A contribution from the Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit; jointly sponsored by the Alabama Department of Conservation, Alabama Polytechnic Institute Agricultural Experiment Station, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wildlife Management Institute.

was obtained for the year 1957, which was the latest reproductive season preceding the treatment of the area.

The Substation superintendent, Lavern Brown, stated that he knew of at least four distinct flocks of wild turkeys residing on the Substation during the summer and fall of 1957. These were frequently seen by Mr. Brown and other station personnel, especially in the pastures and old-fields to which turkeys are prone to come at these seasons to feed on abundant insects and grass seed. Mr. Brown estimated that together these four flocks totaled 50 to 65 turkeys.

Mr. Bryant, who takes particular interest in his turkeys and takes every opportunity to observe them and their sign, knew of an additional three flocks using his land during that period. He estimated at least 30 individuals in these groups. Mr. Smith and his laborers also encountered turkeys on his land at that time, but, since his property extends between Mr. Bryant's and that of the Substation in one part and along Mr. Bryant's in another, it was difficult to determine if those they reported were additional flocks. For that reason they are not included here.

It was concluded from the above that there were at least seven flocks of wild turkeys residing on the 3,600 acre test area in summer and fall of 1957. A minimum of 80 individuals is believed to have made up these flocks. Hunting was reportedly good on the area during the 1957-58 season, with at least eight gobblers bagged. Poaching was kept at a minimum and hunting was strictly regulated through a long-standing agreement between landowners and the Substation.

By the time the writer and other researchers arrived on the area in February of 1958, the flocks had begun their customary breaking up (prior to the breeding season), and had in general deserted the pastures and open areas. They were still very much in evidence, however, and the author frequently encountered turkeys and their sign along logging roads and ravines in the woods. During February and early March, 1958, two different flocks were seen as well as assemblage of smaller groups and individuals. Together these personal sightings numbered 25. Other researchers and residents also encountered turkeys during this period of late winter and they were frequently asked for such information. Over this 1½ month period,

sightings averaged about five turkeys per week. All such encounters could be considered accidental as they occurred during the performance of other duties and without an organized effort to locate turkeys.

The area was treated in portions, as weather permitted, with either 2 pounds of heptachlor or dieldrin per acre between March 17 and April 1, 1958. Shortly after this treatment an unusual scarcity of turkeys or their sign prevailed over the whole area. Sightings during April and May averaged only about one turkey every week even though some effort was being made to locate them. Sign, in the form of tracks and droppings, became almost impossible to find. It was the opinion of most of those on the area that some drastic alteration of the wild turkey population had occurred. As the summer of 1958 approached, the appearance of broods (normally prominent at that time in the pastures and fields) was awaited as a means of judging the permanence of this change. Evidence collected during this summer of 1958 indicated that, though some hatching did take place on the test area, the young did not survive beyond the age of about three weeks. On the Substation portion the evidence of hatching was in the form of a dead turkey poult about two weeks of age found by research personnel. However, live turkey broods were not seen by anyone on the substation throughout the summer of 1958. Live broods were seen during this period on parts of the test area other than the Substation.

Two such broods, containing 21 poults about 2 weeks of age, were seen at close range by Mr. Bryant on his land. After the first encounter in early summer, these two broods suddenly disappeared and neither they nor their sign were seen again. About the same time a helper working on the land of Mr. Smith reported seeing a young brood in a pasture. These too were never seen again. The sign of this or another brood was located by researchers, but the source was never found, and the sign itself soon disappeared. As the fall of 1958 arrived, it appeared that none of these broods or any others hatched on the test area had survived to produce fall and winter family flocks. Survival of young of the year appeared to be 0%.

The apparent seriousness of the situation prompted the writer during the fall of 1958 to make a concentrated effort to find the composition of the population. Beginning in October of 1958 a series of blinds

and baited areas were used in an attempt to concentrate the population for viewing. Frequent visits during October, November, and part of December to check sign at the baits, combined with approximately 50 hours of blind work during this period, substantiated the low reproduction for the year. A total of five adult gobblers, 6 mature hens and one young of the year were actually viewed from these positions. How many of these had been on the area at the time of treatment is not known. The distribution of bait might have caused infrequent visitors from non-treated land to spend more time on the test area during the period of baiting. Nevertheless, the turkeys seen represented a ratio of one young to eleven adults. Concurrently with the above observations Lovett E. Williams from the Wildlife Research Unit at Auburn was conducting a separate study on a wild turkey population in another part of the same county. Mr. Williams concluded that young of the year represented 50 to 60 per cent of the fall population on that area. This is considered normal for wild turkey populations. The test area, however, contrasted greatly with this as it also contrasted with itself in former years. Indications of this poor reproduction on the treated area have continued up to March, 1959.

That the changes in the turkey population on the test area were due to the application of the insecticides is not definitely known. But, several things point to it as the cause. First, there were no similar conditions in evidence in the turkey populations over the remainder of the same county. Second, the changes on the test area followed very closely the insecticide application. Third, it is known definitely that other wild animals, including quail, suffered heavy mortality on the test area as a result of the poisons. Fourth, it is known that applications of the same insecticides in other areas have resulted in the death of domestic turkeys and chickens in farmyards.

On the test area itself, there was a complete failure of reproduction in a domestic turkey flock owned by Mr. Smith. Three hens laid a total of 50 eggs of which only seven hatched. All seven of these poults died soon after birth. In addition, most of the chickens on Mr. Smith's land died. The reproductive failure in both domestic and wild turkeys on the Wilcox County area was not a complete surprise to biologists concerned. Results from laboratory experiments have shown

that penned quail and chickens fed sublethal doses of these insecticides in their diets suffered high reproductive failure. Both hatchability and survival of young were low as a result of the insecticides being transferred through the egg and to the young birds. The presence of large numbers of dead and dying insects on the treated area also presented an opportunity for turkeys to obtain the poison in a secondary manner. Both young and old wild turkeys feed heavily upon insects during the spring and summer. Conceivably they could have eaten enough of these contaminated insects to have produced secondary poisoning.

Though there is evidence that some adult turkeys survived the period of the insecticide treatment, the scarcity of turkeys of all ages following the treatment indicates that some adults succumbed also. Recently (March, 1959), skeletons of some mature birds have been found on the area. It is believed, however, that a reproductive failure of almost 100% did occur in the wild turkey population of the test area in the spring and summer following the treatments.

Though this report is not intended as final or conclusive, it is hoped that it will aid in suggesting possible avenues of approach in research on similar areas.

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Auburn, Alabama  
April 1, 1959

## DISPERSION OF LITTLE BLUE HERONS FROM A POND IN MACON COUNTY, ALABAMA

JULIAN L. DUSI

The Little Blue Heron, *Florida caerulea*, nests in a number of colonies in Alabama. One located about three miles south of Tuskegee, in Macon County, has been of interest to the writer since the summer of 1952.

The colony located its nests in the alder and willow trees growing in the upper end of one of two adjacent ponds known locally as the "Hog Wallow Ponds." The adults dispersed quite widely each day hunting food, so the effects of the colony were widespread.

It was almost a pure colony of Little Blue Herons. A few Great Blue Herons, Common Egrets, and Wood Ibises were occasionally seen, but did not nest there. A few Green Herons did nest there and a Black-crowned Night Heron nested nearby. Besides the herons, Red-winged Blackbirds were abundant; Mourning Doves and Orchard Orioles nested in the trees among the herons.

Nests of the Little Blue Herons varied greatly in number during the period of study and their position changed as ecological succession took place in the community. At the beginning of the study a long peninsula of alder bushes extended into the pond for several hundred feet. As the study progressed, the alders in the water died and became undesirable nesting sites. At the base of the peninsula the alders spread out along the shore and became merged with larger willow trees. The shore trees and bushes gradually became the more choice nesting places. As ecological succession removed the alders from the more choice nesting position, the population of herons became reduced. No nesting was done in the spring of 1958 because a so-called sporting club got the idea that they were damaging the fishing and shot and scared away the birds.

One of the outstanding parts of the study of this community was the dispersion of young. In order to study dispersion, it was necessary to band the young birds so that they could be identified when later recovered. Number six bands, obtained from the USDI, Fish and Wildlife Service, were used. They were placed on the legs of the nestlings varying from the age of about three weeks until after they had just left the nest.

The very young birds were easy to band but the older birds were hard to catch. Use of a large wire hook on a pole, a method learned from James E. Keeler, made possible the catching of the birds by the neck and easily retrieving them, without harming them.

The nesting season started with the arrival of the birds in March. By May the young were old enough to be banded. Nesting continued so that frequently there were birds that could be banded until late July. The peak of nesting was early and mid-May and early June was the best period for banding. After that the number of birds of banding size was so reduced and the weather became so hot that it was not worthwhile to band.

It was necessary to band as many young as possible, because the percentage of returns from banding is small. Table 1 shows the number that were banded during the study.

Since these herons are moderately large birds and slow fliers, they are tempting, though illegal, targets. Fortunately, for this sort of a study only, a number is shot each year. When the gunman sees a band on the leg of the bird he curiously removes it, and fortunately many bands are returned to the Fish and Wildlife Service. The F. W. S. informs both collector and bander the banding and collection data. Thus the bander is able to study dispersion.

From the 1162 birds banded, there were 16 returns, about 1.4 per cent of those banded. Of these 16 herons, 11 were returned before the following nesting season, 2 were returned from the first year after nesting, 2 from the second year after, and 1 from the third year. The laws of probability act strangely in banding as in other endeavors, 11 of the 16 recoveries were from the 394 birds banded on May 27, 1955, and from the other 768 birds banded at other times only 5 returns resulted.

The dispersion of the Little Blue Herons was in all directions from the nesting site. As soon as the young can fly well, they start wandering first to nearby ponds and fields to feed, and then frequently wander quite far northward before their fall migration south.

Table 2, shows the dispersion of this colony in a clockwise pattern around Tuskegee, Alabama. The young heron which traveled the 2050 miles to Trinidad made the longest journey. The one going to Bahia Honda, Cuba, showed the greatest longevity. Whether

any of the banded birds returned to this pond to nest is not known. The writer examined many of the adults, by using binoculars, but never saw any banded birds.

The dispersion of the Little Blue Herons from this nesting site was an interesting study. The results became quite impressive when it was realized how widely the birds disperse and how great an area receives birds from one nesting site. It also makes one wonder how the destruction of such a nesting site will effect the population of herons over a large area.

Auburn, Alabama  
March 10, 1959

Table 1. The banding dates, numbers banded, and numbers of returns.

Banding Date	Number Banded	Total Banded Per Year	Number of Returns
June 4, '53	25	----	0
June 12	59	84	1
May 20, '55	221	----	2
May 27	394	615	11
May 14, '56	266	----	2
June 23, '56	57	323	0
May 16, '57	140	140	0
Totals	1162	1162	16

Table 2. Dispersion of the Little Blue Herons from their Macon County nesting site.

Locality of Collection	Miles Distant	Banding Date	Collection Date
Rising Fawn, Ga.	180	June 12, '53	Aug. 17, '53
Etowah, Tenn.	240	May 27, '55	July 2, '55
Auburn, Ala.	30	May 20, '55	Aug. 10, '55
Columbus, Ga.	60	May 14, '56	Aug. 25, '56
Eastman, Ga.	160	May 14, '56	June 19, '56
San Juan, P. R.	1500	May 27, '55	Oct. 31, '55
Trinidad, B.W.I.	2050	May 27, '55	Oct. 23, '55
Great Inagua	1070	May 27, '55	Mar. 9, '56
Pregonero, Venezuela	1750	May 27, '55	Dec. 16, '55
Bahia Honda, Cuba	700	May 27, '55	Feb. 13, '58
Comayagua, Honduras	1275	May 27, '55	Jan. 29, '56
Summit, Miss.	300	May 20, '55	Mar. 24, '57
Harpersville, Miss.	230	May 27, '55	July 7, '55
Philadelphia, Miss.	210	May 27, '55	Aug. 12, '55
Selma, Ala.	80	May 27, '55	June 30, '57

# THE EVENING GROSBEAK IN ALABAMA

EDITH CLARK

The Evening Grosbeak, *Hesperiphona vespertina vespertina*, has either ignored Alabama during its past winter travels, or it has been very secretive, because it has remained in obscurity until January 20, 1958, when it appeared in Gadsden, Alabama. The first bird was seen in the yard of Mrs. William Bates, who called the writer to identify the grosbeak.

Following the first record, Mr. and Mrs. Bates and the writer kept careful records of the appearance of the birds. They also banded, photographed the birds and saved the dropped tail feathers of one bird. These feathers were sent to Dr. Ralph Chermock for deposit in the University of Alabama bird collection. In Table 1, the numbers of birds observed, trapped and banded, are listed.

The first banding was done on March 2. The writer caught two males that day in a small two-cell trap. The first male dropped his tail feathers. These were those sent Dr. Chermock. Before the birds left Gadsden, the writer had trapped and banded a total of five males and one female. Of these, three males and one female were trapped again as repeats.

The largest flock of grosbeaks in Gadsden, 1958, was seen on February 25. This flock was on a newly seeded lawn, across the street from the Bates' home. It was a mixed flock of about 50 birds. Both Mr. and Mrs. Bates observed the grosbeaks.

The ratio of males to females observed showed an interesting variation. The flocks seen throughout most of the period were predominately males. Toward the end of the bird's winter residence, more and more females appeared in the flocks until they finally equaled the males and then became more numerous than the males. The size of the flocks did not change radically so that the varying ratio of males to females represented either the movement of other groups of grosbeaks into and out of Gadsden or the females tended to remain in a slightly different habitat until late in the season.

The movements of the birds into and out of the Bates' yard presents a uniform pattern. They appeared only in the mornings. Never were they seen in the yard after one o'clock in the afternoon.

Evening Grosbeaks must have been at a number of

additional places in Alabama also. Mr. Bates observed a male near Wedowee, Randolph County, on April 10. An article in the newspaper from Livingston, Sumter County, reported that Mr. Jenkins Jackson saw a flock of 15 on his farm.

The last grosbeak to be seen in Gadsden in 1958, was a male observed on April 23. Interestingly enough, the first grosbeak for 1959 has appeared in Gadsden on January 6. Let's hope visiting Alabama will get to be a habit with them.

Table I. Record of Evening Grosbeaks Observed, Trapped and Banded at Gadsden, Alabama, 1958.

Date	Observed			Banded		Repeats		Remarks
	Males	Fem.	Mixed	Males	Fem.	Males	Fem.	
Jan. 20	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	First Record.
Jan. 26	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	2-3 seen each day for the next 10 days.
Feb. 24	3	2	---	---	---	---	---	
Feb. 25	---	---	50	---	---	---	---	Seen in yard across the street.
Mar. 2	5	2	---	2	---	---	---	Tail feathers sent to Chermock
Mar. 3	11	4	---	2	1	---	---	
Mar. 4	---	---	18	---	---	---	---	
Mar. 5	---	---	---	---	---	1	1	Small flocks seen daily next two weeks.
Mar. 23	---	---	---	1	---	2	---	
Mar. 25	3	8	---	---	---	---	---	
Mar. 26	6	5	---	---	---	---	---	
Mar. 27	3	8	---	---	---	---	---	
Mar. 31	8	8	---	---	---	---	---	
Apr. 1	4	5	---	---	---	---	---	
Apr. 2	2	3	---	---	---	---	---	Many more in tree tops.
Apr. 4	3	4	---	---	---	---	---	
Apr. 23	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	Last bird seen.
Totals	---	---	---	5	1	3	1	

## WHITE-WINGED SCOTER RECORDS FROM WHEELER RESERVOIR

THOMAS Z. ATKESON

When A. H. Howell's *BIRDS OF ALABAMA* was written, over 30 years ago, only the Surf Scoter was known in Alabama. More recently there have been good coastal sight records for all three scoter species, the Common or American Scoter, the Surf Scoter and the White-winged Scoter, but the only interior scoter records come from Wheeler reservoir. The permanent bird files of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, kept for 20 years, show three records of the White-winged Scoter in the Decatur locality.

On December 21, 1942, John H. Steenis, a Research Biologist of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Paul Bryan, of TVA's Fish and Game Division, were making hunter bag checks near Harris Station. This lies a short distance west of U. S. highway 31 and is now a part of the Swan Creek Public Hunting Area. The two came upon a hunter who had just shot a duck that he was unable to identify. Steenis and Bryan examined the bird carefully and checked it against reference books. They pronounced it a female White-winged Scoter.

On the same date, Ernest Holland, then Assistant Manager of the Wheeler Refuge and now Manager of the Kentucky Woodlands Refuge, Golden Pond, Kentucky, saw a single White-winged Scoter in the Flint Creek embayment. Holland had worked along the Atlantic Coast and was familiar with the species.

On November 2, 1954, David C. Hulse, the waterfowl artist, found a lone female White-winged Scoter swimming in the Decatur Boat Harbor. He watched the bird for some time through good 8 x 40 binoculars, part of the time at a distance of no more than 30 yards.

The birds seen by Steenis, Bryan, and Hulse were in the southern edge of Limestone County, the one seen by Holland in the northern edge of Morgan County.

So far as is known, these are the only three non-coastal scoter records for the State, but the White-winged Scoter nests in the Canadian Northwest, migrates overland to salt water and can be expected to occur occasionally on the larger bodies of fresh water throughout Alabama.

Decatur, Alabama  
April 2, 1958

## GOLDENEYE, OLD SQUAW, AND GREATER SCAUP RECORDS FROM WHEELER RESERVOIR

THOMAS Z. ATKESON

Those familiar with the Tennessee Valley Authority impoundments of northern Alabama have little doubt that the creation of this 150,000 surface acres of water has had a marked effect on bird life. These reservoirs were completed in the mid 1930's and have attracted many water-loving birds that either never occurred previously in this part of the State or were rare. The establishment of the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in 1938 certainly added to the attractiveness that these acres of open water and mudflat and miles of shoreline have for the various water birds. The bulk of the information in Howell's *BIRDS OF ALABAMA* was gathered prior to 1920, and the book does not list goldeneyes, old squaws, and greater scaups as occurring in any section of the State except the Gulf Coast. While never common, all three are found at least occasionally, in the Tennessee River reservoirs.

A few goldeneyes visit Wheeler Reservoir each fall and winter. Wheeler Refuge employees have recorded these as early as November 18 and as late as April 24, although they are most common in late fall and in winter. Specimens have never been collected, but these birds are occasionally shot by hunters in the open backwater west of the refuge.

A few old squaws may occur each winter but, if so, are lost to observation in the mass of other waterfowl. Wheeler Refuge records list only six occurrences, ranging from single birds to a flock of five. The earliest date noted in October 24 and the latest January 29.

On January 15, 1957, David Hulse, the waterfowl artist, hunting near Finley Island, shot a male old squaw. A study skin was prepared and is now in the University of Alabama collection.

Lesser scaup, in fair numbers, are found in the Tennessee River backwaters each fall and winter. A few greater scaup are probably mixed regularly in these flocks, but escape notice. Sight identification cannot be trusted, and records have come on those rare occasions when dead or trapped birds fell into the hands of qualified observers. The refuge files list only five greater scaup occurrences. The first came on November 30, 1944, when John Steenis, a research biologist



of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, examined one that had been caught in the refuge banding trap. The second record came on November 17, 1954, when State Biologist Francis X. Leuth examined one that had been shot by a hunter in the Swan Creek Public Hunting Area. Shortly afterwards, on November 22, Hulse shot another near the same locality. The latest records came in 1958, when Hulse again shot one of the birds in the backwater west of the refuge on December 2, and again on December 9, when he examined two males shot in the same vicinity by Ross Williams, of Decatur.

No greater scaup study skins have been prepared, but wings are preserved at the refuge office. Identifications have been based not only on size, but also on length of wing stripes, head color, and measurements of nails of bills.

Decatur, Alabama  
March 2, 1959

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS, ALABAMA, 1958

THOMAS A. IMHOF

December 20, Birmingham (B). Partly cloudy, temp. 40-50, wind W. 8 m.p.h. then N.W. 0-12, 18 observers in 6 parties, 56½ party-hours, 80 species, 11,556 individuals.

December 27, Dauphin Island (D). Heavy overcast, foggy at times, rain to drizzle in early morning and late afternoon, sun shone about 5 minutes around 2 P.M., temp. 40-50, wind N.E. 0-20 m.p.h., 11 observers in 4 parties, 39 party-hours, 120 species, 11,144 individuals.

Species	B	D	Species	B	D
Common Loon	4	34	Turkey	1	---
Horned Grebe	3	62	Clapper Rail	---	44
Pied-billed Grebe	134	15	Virginia Rail	---	4
White Pelican	---	2	Sora	---	12
Brown Pelican	---	14	Am. Coot	675	---
Double-cr. Cormorant	---	1100	Am. Oystercatcher	---	1
Great Blue Heron	1	24	Semipalmated Plover	---	45
Little Blue Heron	---	14	Piping Plover	---	75
Reddish Egret	---	2	Killdeer	341	12
Snowy Egret	---	2	Black-bellied Plover	---	68
Louisiana Heron	---	19	Ruddy Turnstone	---	52
Black-cr. Night Heron	---	1	Common Snipe	94	1
Blue Goose	---	21	Willet	---	10
Mallard	12	---	Greater Yellowlegs	---	19
Black Duck	6	3	Knot	---	1
Gadwall	---	1	Dunlin	---	375
Pintail	---	1	Short-b. Dowitcher	---	85
Am. Widgeon	1	---	Semipalmated Sandpiper	---	20
Wood Duck	2	---	Western Sandpiper	---	150
Redhead	6	---	Sanderling	---	20
Ring-necked Duck	135	125	Herring Gull	---	500
Canvasback	78	---	Ring-billed Gull	1	330
Greater Scaup	---	45	Laughing Gull	---	157
Lesser Scaup	27	241	Forster's Tern	---	73
Am. Goldeneye	---	274	Royal Tern	---	155
Bufflehead	---	1	Caspian Tern	---	212
Oldsquaw	---	1	Unidentified gulls and terns	---	400
Common Scoter	---	1	Mourning Dove	174	27
Common Merganser	---	8	Ground Dove	---	1
Red-breasted Merganser	---	55	Barn Owl	---	2
Unidentified Ducks	200	1000	Screech Owl	1	---
Turkey Vulture	1	3	Chuck-will's-widow	---	1
Black Vulture	---	63	Belted Kingfisher	11	44
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	---	Yellow-s. Flicker	71	10
Cooper's Hawk	3	---	Pileated Woodpecker	11	---
Red-tailed Hawk	4	1	Red-bellied Woodpecker	23	33
Red-shouldered Hawk	7	4	Red-headed Woodpecker	17	1
Marsh Hawk	---	3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	16	11
Osprey	---	1	Hairy Woodpecker	7	---
Sparrow Hawk	3	17	Downy Woodpecker	26	3
Bob-white	35	10	Red Cockaded Woodpecker	7	---

Species	B	D	Species	B	D
Eastern Phoebe	1	4	Solitary Vireo	---	5
Tree Swallow	---	1320	Black-and-white Warbler	---	2
Rough-winged Swallow	---	20	Orange-cr. Warbler	---	17
Blue Jay	135	244	Parula Warbler	---	2
Common Crow	146	307	Myrtle Warbler	80	339
Fish Crow	---	75	Pine Warbler	58	86
Carolina Chickadee	122	20	Palm Warbler	---	4
Tufted Titmouse	99	24	Yellowthroat	4	8
White-breasted Nuthatch	19	2	House Sparrow	212	60
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	---	Eastern Meadowlark	398	272
Brown-headed Nuthatch	21	24	Redwinged Blackbird	1012	650
Brown Creeper	1	3	Rusty Blackbird	445	25
House Wren	---	3	Common Grackle	251	200
Winter Wren	9	1	Brown-headed Cowbird	570	20
Bewick's Wren	1	2	Cardinal	345	32
Carolina Wren	86	26	Purple Finch	248	---
Long-billed Marsh Wren	---	28	Pine Siskin	1	---
Short-billed Marsh Wren	---	43	Am. Goldfinch	231	106
Mockingbird	107	56	Rufous-s. Towhee	216	105
Brown Thrasher	47	11	Savannah Sparrow	72	3
Robin	75	390	Sharp-tailed Sparrow	---	34
Hermit Thrush	8	3	Seaside Sparrow	---	33
Eastern Bluebird	94	98	Slate-colored Junco	529	---
Golden-cr. Kinglet	10	4	Chipping Sparrow	89	8
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	41	18	Field Sparrow	248	4
Water Pipit	77	1	White-throated Sparrow	613	72
Cedar Waxwing	574	39	Fox Sparrow	41	---
Loggerhead Shrike	20	32	Swamp Sparrow	25	69
Starling	1784	55	Song Sparrow	204	13

Observers: Ruth Brunson, B; Frederick T. Carney, B; Fairly Chandler, D; Blanche H. Chapman, B, D; Ruth Copeland, B; F. Bozeman Daniel, B; Blanche E. Dean, D; Mildred Ferris, B; M. Wilson Gaillard, D; Emmie Lou Grimley, B, D; Dan C. Holliman, B, D; Thomas A. Imhof, compiler B, D; Amy Mason, B; James H. Mason, B; James Mason, B; Clustie McTyeire, D; Rachel Merrill, B; Morton H. Perry, B; Robert Perry, B; Dorothy Roberts, B; Robert W. Skinner, D; Idalene F. Snead, B, D; Thomas S. Snead, D; Harriett H. Wright, B.

Comment: Wood Duck is new to the Birmingham count, the 118th species recorded in 23 years. At Dauphin the following species are recorded for the first time in winter in Alabama: Reddish Egret, Chuck-will's-widow, Knot, and Parula Warbler; and the following have been recorded in Alabama in winter on the coast less than 8 times: Common Scoter, Common Merganser, Osprey, Rough-winged Swallow, and Black-and-white Warbler. These two counts constitute the 85th and 86th Alabama Christmas Counts that have been published in Bird-Lore and its successors.

## NOTES OF INTEREST

### NASAL MITES IN ALABAMA MOURNING DOVES

This is a report of parasites of the Mourning Dove as reported by Dr. B. L. Owen, of the USDA, Florence, South Carolina, in collaboration with the writer as reported in the Texas Journal of Science, Vol. X:4, 1958.

It is to be recognized that birds have many kinds of parasites. The particular kind of parasite reported here is a type of mite that lives in the nasal cavity. This mite is especially found in the Mourning Dove and has been named, *Neonyssus zenaidurae* Crossley.

The doves in this study were collected by the writer from sportsmen. Ten were collected near Comer in Barbour County, Alabama, and 34 from near Bay Minette and Foley, Baldwin County, Alabama, through the help of Mr. Charles Kelley of the Alabama Department of Conservation. All of these were collected in October, 1957.

Dr. Owen examined the doves for mites by opening the nasal cavity with a scalpel and then, by use of a microscope, locating the mites and removing them with dissecting needles. He recorded 40 per cent of the doves from near Comer infested with a mean of 1.5 mites per dove and that 29.4 per cent of the doves from Baldwin County, were infested with a mean of 2.6 mites per dove. These are the first mites taken from the doves in Alabama.

Julian L. Dusi