

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*)

Nov. 30, 1961 (One Female or Immature., Magnolia Springs, P. F. C.).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*)

Out of season Aug. 5, 1961 (one bird, Magnolia Springs)
Five days late Nov. 6, 1961 (one bird, Foley, P. F. C.).

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*)

New for Baldwin Co. and first Alabama specimen.
Jan. 8, 1964 - Feb. 25, 1964 (seen almost daily at feeder in Magnolia Springs until collected Feb. 25. Bird in collection of Florida State University. Imm. M., P. F. C.).

Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*)

May 31, 1961 (one bird Magnolia Grove, P. F. C.). (Male)
March 22, 1964 (one M changing plumage, Foley, P. F. C.).
April 21, 1964 (one M, Foley, P. F. C.).

Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*)

Common from Dec. 19, 1963 - April 7, 1964. P. F. C.

Pine Siskin (*Spinus pinus*)

Common from Dec. 10, 1963 - April 16, 1964, P. F. C.
April 16, 1964 about 10% of flock of 300-400 Goldfinch and Siskin. P. F. C.

Vesper Sparrow (*Poocetes gramineus*)

Ten days early Oct. 29, 1963 (ten birds Magnolia Springs)

Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*)

Nov. 13, 1962 (one bird Magnolia Springs, P. F. C.).
Sept. 9, 1963 (two birds Bon Secour and Foley, P. F. C.).
Sept. 15, 1963 (two birds Foley and Summerdale, P. F. C.).

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*)

Common Oct. 10, 1963 - April 24, 1964. P. F. C.
Birds singing April 4, 1964 (H. M. S. and P. F. C.) -
April 24 (P. F. C.).

Fox Sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*)

Early, late and more numerous.
Dec. 10, 1963 (one bird Foley, P. F. C.). March 11, 1964
(two birds Magnolia Springs, P. F. C.).
Most seen: eight on Dec. 19, Feb. 18 and March 3. P. F. C.

Magnolia Springs
Alabama

READING BIRD BANDS WITH BINOCULARS

Julian L. Dusi

Many studies of resident birds require frequent checks of the continued presence of the birds. The usual means for making these determinations is trapping or netting the birds and banding them with numbered bands. They are then released and periodically retrapped or netted in order to read their band numbers. An alternative has been a color banding system, in addition to the numbered bands. The color banding system is excellent for visual identification, if only a few individuals are concerned. Any elaborate banding system adds sufficient weight to small birds to require a much greater expenditure of energy in flight. This is not desirable because of possible increased mortality among banded birds.

The use of nets and traps is excellent, except that it sometimes is not possible to have nets and traps in operation during the periods of arrival and departure, and it sometimes is several days after arrival that a bird is captured.

An alternative method for reading the bands of birds that will come to feeding stations is to use binoculars to read the band numbers while the birds feed. The writer found that a number of birds would use a window ledge feeder or large pine cones loaded with peanut butter and suspended near the window from the rain gutter. The bird list includes: most of the woodpeckers, Blue Jay, chickadees, Tufted Titmouse, nuthatches, wrens, Mockingbird, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Starling, Orange-crowned Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Pine Warbler, House Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Baltimore Oriole, Common Grackle, Cowbird, Summer Tanager, Cardinal, Purple Finch, Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow.

Under conditions described above, large bands, size 2 or greater, can be read with the unaided eye. Smaller bands require some visual assistance. Ordinarily, binoculars will not focus at less than 10 to 15 feet. Experimentation showed that by attaching a plus 1 portra lens (in a camera accessory lens and filter holder) with masking tape in front of the objective lens of a binocular, it could be focused to between two and three feet. This provided monocular vision only, but by its use bands of the smallest size could be easily read. Usually, only two or three numbers would be in view at any given time, but as the bird fed, the band would revolve and the entire number sequence was quickly obtained.

The portra lenses are usually obtainable at camera stores for a relatively small amount. They are usually stocked in several sizes and strengths from plus 1 to plus 3. In the writer's experience, only the plus 1 is suitable for use with binoculars. The others provide too short of a working distance from lens to object.

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