

## OBSERVATIONS OF INTEREST FROM DAUPHIN ISLAND

Rev. Matthew Turk, S. J.

The following list includes one new record for the Alabama coast (the Phalarope), 10 extensions of the time of occurrence and several other records of interest.

<u>Northern Phalarope,</u>	2 birds in fall plumage,	8/27/64.
<u>Gray Kingbird,</u>	1 bird	, 6/30/64.
	2 birds	, 9/5/64.
<u>Western Kingbird,</u>	1 bird	, 8/29/64.
	2 birds	, 9/10/64.
<u>Olive-sided Flycatcher,</u>	1 bird	, 8/29/64.
	2 birds	, 9/5/64.
	6 birds	, 9/12/64.
	1 bird	, 9/19/64.
<u>Worm-eating Warbler,</u>	1 bird, (extension)	, 3/25/64.
<u>Blackburnian Warbler,</u>	1 bird, (extension)	, 3/21/64.
<u>Prairie Warbler,</u>	1 bird, (extension)	, 3/11/64.
<u>Palm Warbler,</u>	(error: no extension)	, 3/15/64.
	1 bird, (extension)	, 8/29/64.
<u>Northern Waterthrush,</u>	1 bird, (extension)	, 3/15/64.
<u>Orchard Oriole,</u>	2 birds, (extension)	, 3/21/64.
<u>Indigo Bunting,</u>	7 birds, (extension)	, 3/21/64.
	6 birds, (extension)	, 3/25/64.
<u>Rose-breasted Grosbeak,</u>	1 bird	, 8/27/64.
	1 bird	, 8/29/64.
<u>Blue Grosbeak</u>	1 bird	, 8/12/64.
	1 bird	, 8/27/64.
	1 bird	, 8/29/64.
	1 bird	, 9/5/64.
	1 bird	, 9/12/64.
	16 birds	, 9/19/64.
<u>Lark Sparrow,</u>	1 bird	, 8/29/64.

Other local observers have reported seeing Gray Kingbirds all summer and in numbers as many as six. The same is true, since August, of the Olive-sided Flycatcher. The Gray Kingbird is believed to have nested on the Island, as might have the Olive-sided Flycatcher since several of them were immature birds.

808 Springhill Ave.  
Mobile, Ala. 36602

NOTES ON YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERONS  
ON DOG RIVER

Kathleen Yerger Johnstone

Dog River is a brackish tidal stream which enters Mobile Bay from the west about 10 miles south of the harbor. Exploring the river by boat from our home near the mouth of the river, my husband and I discovered a secluded place where we found many Yellow-crowned Night Herons in various stages of development on July 10, 1965. Thereafter, we checked the spot twice or three times a day for seven weekends and several times during the week. The birds were there from the first trip until August 3rd. We always saw one or two, usually four or five herons each trip. None was seen on the weekend of August 7th nor that of August 14th.

The birds were seen on a "creek" or "canal", an arm of the river, which came to a dead end in a marsh. This canal was separated from the river by a long, narrow, crescent-shaped island which would be awash at high tide. The island was fringed with marsh grasses and had a few fairly large trees but most of the growth was not over twenty feet high.

On the mainland side of the canal there were huge trees such as pines, magnolias, maples and black gums; and under them dense underbrush with many palmettos. This wooded area bordered the inlet for three-fourths of the way. The remainder was bordered by a marsh, as large as a city block, surrounded by trees. It was cut by natural ditches. Some shrubs grew in it as did one large pine.

When found, the herons were always standing in trees overhanging the water or at its edge. The pine in the marsh was a favorite perch. Only once did we see a bird on the ground, an immature walking on the island. When disturbed by our arrival, it flew from its perch near the entrance to this open spot.

A sudden noise would frighten the birds from the trees and occasionally they would flap away even when we took care to enter the canal silently, poling our boat or Indian-paddling a canoe. More often, however, we were able to glide within twenty feet and stay there as long as we pleased, time enough to make detailed observations.

Sometimes the bird under observation would side-step down the limb, or jump to another. On two occasions, we watched immatures preen themselves. One gave himself a casual grooming; the other put on quite a show. This latter bird was perched on a limb of a dead, sun-silvered cedar. With the trunk as a background, the slate-gray bird with its light markings was perfectly camouflaged. When we first saw it, the wings were held akimbo, the neck stretched full length. Slowly, the neck shrank, the head fell back, the eyes closed. It came to with a jerk, folded its wings, and preened thoroughly; then, spreading its wings, again ducked its head into the shade of one, and dozed again. It jumped when our gas can expanded with a sudden, metallic noise, but did not fly. If the birds did fly, they didn't go far. We were often