

December, 1968

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ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Would you like to see a Nature Center in Alabama? A fresh green island in the ever increasing sea of concrete. A place where children and adults could go to observe and learn about the wonders of nature. Where children could learn first-hand how a bird builds its nest or feeds its young; how a chipmunk or squirrel stores up nuts, or how plants grow and reproduce. Sound great? Well, the Birmingham Audubon Society is working toward this goal.

Oak Mountain State Park is the area they have chosen as the best possible location for such a Center. It is centrally located in the state, and has 9,000 acres of woodland which would be very suitable. They plan to establish educational facilities for the study of natural history and conservation by all levels of society...from elementary school through college; also for adults and teachers.

Senator Aubrey Carr has announced that Oak Mountain is one of three pilot projects which will be opened first with the \$43,000,000 bond issue voted for park development and acquisition. Contracts will be let very soon for park development, so there is no time to lose.

I would like to see A.O.S. join with other conservation organizations in the state to support this effort in any way it can.

Talk to your friends! Write to your schools and colleges or universities. Let your legislators know how vital it is to give the children of Alabama this wonderful opportunity. Call Dr. Dan Holliman or any B.A.S. officer and let them know what you would like to do. Anything worth having is worth working for. So let us all work together to make this undertaking a reality. This would be a very real asset to everyone interested in birds, plants, nature in general, or conservation.

Helen Kittinger

TELEVISION TOWER CASUALTIES AT BIRMINGHAM IN 1967

Michael Lee Bierly

In the fall of 1967, daily records were kept of dead birds found at television towers, WAPI and WBRC, in Birmingham.

Both towers are located one-eighth mile apart south of Birmingham on top of Red Mountain. Both are of the needle construction and reach an altitude of 1802 feet above sea level (including the antenna), which is the maximum that F.A.A. regulation will allow on Red Mountain in Birmingham. The WAPI tower is 825 feet tall and is supported by fifteen cables; the WBRC tower is 795.2 feet tall and has nine cables.

Two random spring collections were made at WBRC by Raymond Bates on May 1 and Andrew Bates on May 7. Collected on May 1 were Acadian Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo (6), Blackpoll Warbler, and Indigo Bunting. May 7 yielded Red-eyed Vireo, Blackpoll Warbler, and Baltimore Oriole.

Fall collections were begun on September 13 and terminated on November 15. During this period 64 individuals of 26 species were recorded. Table 1 shows the species list, total numbers of birds and the collection dates. Since it cannot be determined whether a bird fell before or after midnight, the morning date is used.

The Yellow-breasted Chat spanned the longest period from September 13 to November 2 with six individuals. Next was the Tennessee Warbler from September 15 to October 29 with seven birds. The Red-eyed Vireo was evident from September 13 to October 12 with fourteen individuals. The last mentioned composed the largest number of specimens of one species recorded.

Late records were established in the Mountain Region of Alabama for four species: An Acadian Flycatcher on October 10 was sixteen days late; a Wood Thrush on October 23 was one day late; a Philadelphia Vireo on October 20 was seven days late and tied the late record for the state; and a Yellow-breasted Chat on November 2 was ten days late, excluding a wintering date in Gadsden, 1956.

Bats also were victims of the television towers. Two red bats, *Lasiurus borealis*, were found, one each on September 20 and 23, and one hoary bat, *Lasiurus cinereus*, on October 10. No explanation can be offered as to why they hit the towers, since the bats have a type of "radar" system that would seem to protect them.

Specimens collected were aged, sexed, and then used for plumage study and skeletons. This type of project provides birds for study that would not have previously been available and eliminates the need for the so called "field collections."

Whether future years produce similar results only time will tell. This year did show that these Birmingham towers reflect both the migration through the area and late records that might have been missed in the field.

I wish to extend my thanks and gratification to Elberta and Robert Reid for their untiring effort and desire in providing transportation for the author and assisting in the collections. Also I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Andrew Bates and Raymond Bates in collections, Thomas Imhof for record data, and the Samford University Biology Department for the use of its facilities.

TABLE 1

Species list. Total numbers and collection dates. Each number in parenthesis indicates total on a given date.

SPECIES	NUMBER	DATES COLLECTED
Virginia Rail	1	Sept. 26.
Acadian Flycatcher	1	Oct. 10.
House Wren	1	Oct. 4.
Wood Thrush	1	Oct. 23.
Hermit Thrush	2	Oct. 29, 30.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2	Nov. 4, 12.
White-eyed Vireo	2	Sept. 23(2).
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	Sept. 13.
Red-eyed Vireo	14	Sept. 13(4), 14(3), 15(1), 16(2), 17(1), 24(1), 26(1), Oct. 12(1).
Philadelphia Vireo	1	Oct. 20.
Tennessee Warbler	7	Sept. 15(1), Oct. 3(1), 8(1), 10(1), 11(1), 26(1), 29(1).
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	Nov. 3.
Magnolia Warbler	1	Oct. 19.
Myrtle Warbler	1	Oct. 30.
Black-thr. Green Warbler	2	Oct. 31, 26.
Prairie Warbler	1	Sept. 18.
Ovenbird	1	Oct. 18.
Northern Waterthrush	1	Sept. 13.
Kentucky Warbler	4	Sept. 13(2), 14(1), 15(1).
Yellowthroat	1	Sept. 23.
Yellow-breasted Chat	6	Sept. 13(2), 14(1), 15(1), Nov. 2(1).
Indigo Bunting	1	Oct. 26.
Purple Finch	1	Nov. 5.
Savannah Sparrow	1	Nov. 11.
Grasshopper Sparrow	1	Oct. 30.
White-throated Sparrow	3	Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6.
Unidentifiable	5	

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ORNITHOLOGY IN ALABAMA

Joanne Stringfellow Jordan

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GENERAL NOTES

Evening Grosbeaks at Montgomery

While the Evening Grosbeak (Hesperiphona vespertina) is fairly numerous in some years in the Mountain Region of Alabama, it has been recorded very few times on the Upper Coastal Plain. Imhof (Alabama Birds, 1962) mentions only one such record and it is in the spring (April). Mr. R. W. Skinner has informed me that there is a specimen in the State Department of Conservation collection that was taken at Selma. So far as I know it has never been recorded at Montgomery before.

On November 26, I received word that a small flock of Evening Grosbeaks had been seen at the bird bath and feeder of Dr. and Mrs. Maurer Maurer, 3560 Pelzer Ave., Montgomery. The birds were first seen on November 24 by Mr. D. W. Koons. Mr. Koons was unsure of the identity of the birds, but was quite sure that they were something unusual. Later that same day, the Maurers also saw the birds and while they too were unfamiliar with the species, they were able to determine that the birds were Evening Grosbeaks by using a field guide. One or two birds were seen again by the above observers on the 25th and 26th of November.

I tried to confirm their identification on November 27 but was unsuccessful. I did succeed in seeing the birds on November 28 and they were indeed Evening Grosbeaks. Further confirmation was provided by Mrs. A. C. Loftin of Montgomery who also saw the birds at this time. There was a

flock of seven birds, two brightly colored males and five relatively dull females or immatures. The dusky yellow color, very large pale greenish bills, and prominent white wing patches left no doubt as to the identity of the birds. They have not been seen again since November 28.

Robert W. Loftin
1717 Pepper Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

(Ed. Note. This is apparently a year of Evening Grosbeak abundance. Columbus, Georgia had them in November; Auburn, abundantly in December; and many areas to the north have large populations of them.)

Christmas Bird Count, Auburn, 1968

Made in the usual area with the Auburn Post Office as the center of the circle. Composition was: mixed woods, 50%; pastures and open fields, 30%; and ponds and mud flats, 20%. Weather was overcast with some drizzle in the morning and hard rain in the afternoon. Temperature at 8:00 a.m. was 43°; and 47° at dark. Wind was light and variable. Seven observers and two helpers, made three parties, which spent 10½ party hours in the field, drove 96 party miles and walked 3 party miles.

Species seen were: Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Great Blue Heron, 4; Black Vulture, 3; Marsh Hawk, 1; Bobwhite, 13; Killdeer, 11; Common Snipe, 6; Mourning Dove, 10; Belted Kingfisher, 4; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 7; Pileated Woodpecker, 2; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 3; Downey Woodpecker, 5; E. Phoebe, 3; Blue Jay, 64; Common Crow, 17; Carolina Chickadee, 40; Tufted Titmouse, 61; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 16; Brownheaded Nuthatch, 25; Brown Creeper, 1; Winter Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 32; Mockingbird, 33; Brown Thrasher, 15; Robin, 350; Hermit Thrush, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 9; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 26; Water Pipit, 1; Cedar Waxwing, 50; Loggerhead Shrike, 6; Starling, 55,000; Myrtle Warbler, 21; Pine Warbler, 6; House Sparrow, 22; Meadowlark, 64; Red-winged Blackbird, 185,000; Rusty Blackbird, 1,000; Common Grackle, 50,000; Brown-headed Cowbird, 210,000; Cardinal, 51; Evening Grosbeak, 100; Purple Finch, 17; Pine Siskin, 12; Goldfinch, 85; Rufous-sided Towhee, 28; Savannah Sparrow, 8; Slate-colored Junco, 72; Chipping Sparrow, 16; Field Sparrow, 1; White-throated Sparrow, 95; Fox Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 4; and Song Sparrow 7. Total Species seen, 56. Total Individuals, 502,432.

Species seen during the count period but not on count day were: Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Barred Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, and White-breasted Nuthatch. Participants were: D. L. Bateman, R. T. Dusi, J. L. Dusi (Compiler), M. C. Lyons, J. Stuart (helped by sons Brian and Tim), Z. Taylor and B. F. Young. P. O. Box 742, Auburn, Alabama 36830.

MINUTES OF FALL MEETING ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY NOVEMBER 8-10, 1968

The regular fall meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society was held at Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge near Decatur, Alabama, on November 8-10, 1968. Headquarters Motel was Holiday Inn on U.S. Highway 31, south of Decatur near the refuge headquarters. A total of 50 members and guests registered for the meeting including those from Tennessee and Georgia.

Friday Evening Program

The program Friday evening featured Dr. and Mrs. Harold Simon, who have two stars in photography and other recognitions. They showed us slides of their five-week safari in Africa where there is the largest concentration of wildlife on earth. "East Africa From A Land Rover" covered Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania including not only the unusual animals of many kinds but also the magnificent scenery of the country. Just as delightful as the pictures, was the informal discussion with Dr. and Mrs. Simon afterwards.

Field Trips

Mr. Thomas Atkeson and his able staff members took us to all the "good spots" in the refuge where there was no hunting. These included Garth Slough, Flint Creek Island, Cain's Landing, Beaver Dam Peninsula and Rock House Slough.

Executive Council Meeting

The Executive Council met at twelve o'clock for lunch at the Holiday Inn on November 9, 1968. Those present were: Mrs. Helen Kittinger, President; Mrs. Clara Caffey, Vice President; Mrs. Louise McKinstry, immediate past Treasurer; Mrs. Idalene F. Snead, Secretary; and Mr. Tom Imhof, Director of State-at-Large, and Mr. Jim Keeler, Director. Other officers and Directors expressed regrets at not being able to attend. Mr. Tom Imhof suggested that the given names of all married women be used in the reports in the future. The Executive Committee agreed.

The minutes of the Executive Council meeting of April 20, 1968 were read by the Secretary and approved.

The Treasurer's report was read, stating that the balance in the checking account on November 1, 1968 was \$750.38, and was approved.

Helen Kittinger read a letter from Dr. Julian L. Dusi stating that the cost of reprinting the exhausted issues of "Alabama Birdlife" would be approximately \$60-\$70 per sixteen page issue. He also stated that the cost of 350 copies of Vol. 16; 2-3, including postage and secretarial fee, was about \$190.68.

A tentative date, Saturday, December 7, 1968, was set for the Slide Committee to meet for the selection of slides for the collection.

Mr. Tom Imhof reported that the invitation extended by the Alabama Ornithological Society to the Wilson Ornithological Society to have a meeting at Dauphin Island the last week in April, 1971, with the A.O.S. as host, was accepted with much pleasure and enthusiasm.

It was decided to refer to the Conservation Committee further discussion of a letter written about long range plans for public recreation areas in Wheeler Wildlife Refuge.

The time and place for the winter meeting was set. It shall be on Saturday and Sunday, February 1-2, 1969 at College Inn Motel, Marion, Alabama.

Mr. Tom Imhof introduced a motion concerning the "editorial policy" of "Alabama Birdlife." It was passed and will be presented to the general meeting Saturday evening.

There was some discussion about the possibility of amending the constitution to extend the term of office for the President and Vice President to two years. No specific action was taken on this matter.

After this a motion was made and passed that we adjourn.

Business Meeting

The business meeting was held November 9, 1968 at 6:30 p.m. at Holiday Inn Motel with about 50 members and visitors present. After dinner Mrs. Helen Kittinger, the President, called the meeting to order and introduced the officers and guests. The minutes of the spring meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer's report was read by Mrs. Clara Caffey in the absence of the treasurer, and approved. After these reports, Mr. Tom Imhof introduced his motion on the "editorial policy" of "Alabama Birdlife," which was passed after a little discussion. A motion was made and passed that the meeting be adjourned.

(Ed. Note: The following is copied exactly as submitted by Thomas A. Imhof.)

EDITORIAL POLICY OF ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

"The following statement of editorial policy for ALABAMA BIRDLIFE proposed by Thomas A Imhof, Director, State-at-large and Member, Editorial Board, has been adopted unanimously by the members of the Alabama Ornithological Society at their regular fall meeting at Decatur, Ala. on 9 November 1968.

1. Season Summaries.--Every issue of ALABAMA BIRDLIFE shall contain a summary of the birdlife of the immediate past season for as many localities in Alabama as possible.

a. These summaries shall be similar to those appearing in many current ornithological journals. For example, they should be brief without being difficult to read, and should include noteworthy records, changes in abundance of birds, and the weather as it affects them.

b. The Regional Directors shall be responsible for--but not necessarily the actual authors of--a report for their regions

for each of the four seasons. Members of AOS who do not live near a Regional Director shall be encouraged to submit a separate summary of their own areas.

c. Alabama records of national interest submitted to ALABAMA BIRDLIFE shall be made available for publication in Audubon Field Notes, revisions of the AOU checklist, and other national publications and projects as follows:

(1) Deadlines for the receipt of season copy shall be April 10, June 10, August 25, and December 10. ALABAMA BIRDLIFE shall be printed, if at all possible, within a month of these dates, except that, for financial reasons only, the summer issue may be combined with the fall.

(2) Season material shall be submitted directly to the Season Editor who will be responsible for reporting appropriate material to Audubon Field Notes.

(3) Two copies of each issue of ALABAMA BIRDLIFE shall be sent to Chandler S. Robbins, or his successor, at Migratory Bird Populations Station, Laurel, Maryland 20810 for inclusion in the bird distribution files of the U S Fish and Wildlife Service.

2. Banding.--Each issue shall contain a banders' corner to include the activities of banders that are of general interest to the membership.

3. General Notes and Other Features.--The Editor shall encourage the entire membership to contribute short informal notes, similar to the "General Notes" of most journals, on observations of interest that cannot be elaborated upon in the Season reports. These notes may be used to fill out pages at the end of more formal articles so that no blank spaces larger than one-quarter page be permitted anywhere in the journal. The Editor shall establish other features, especially those of a regularly - occurring nature and those that will encourage contributions from a large number of members.

4. Papers Requiring Special Permission.--The Editor shall be permitted to publish articles of more than three pages or articles by non-members only upon consent of the executive board.

5. Editorial Board.--Certain members of the Editorial Board shall be responsible for the publication in ALABAMA BIRDLIFE OF SPECIFIC MATERIAL. The Season Editor (Imhof appointed) shall have responsibilities as in paragraph 1 above, and the Banding Editor as in paragraph 2 above."

Program

A real treat was in store for us for the rest of the evening. Mr. B. B. Coffey, Mr. Bird Man, of Memphis, Tennessee, played his tape recordings of "Night Bird Calls of Mexico." These included many kinds of Night Hawks, Whip-poorwills and a Nightjar.

Mr. James E. Keeler very kindly gave a report for Mr. W. Walter Beshears, Jr. who could not attend, about "Banding and Recovery of Waterfowl in Alabama." He explained about habitat management and species management. Also, Mr. Keeler listed the ducks which have been banded and recovered in Alabama.

Compilation

Sunday morning at eleven o'clock the group met at Refuge Headquarters for the final compilation conducted by Mr. Mike Bierly. Eighty-eight species were counted. The most exciting birds on the list were the five Evening Grosbeaks which had not been recorded previously at Refuge Headquarters.

Respectfully submitted,
Idalene F. Snead
Secretary

ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded May 17, 1952

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