

THE FALL AOS MEETING

The Fall Meeting of the Alabama Ornithological Society was held October 23-24 at Livingston, in conjunction with the Birmingham Audubon Society camp-out at Epes. Members and guests had a choice of staying at the headquarters motel, the Livingston Inn, or camping at the site of old Fort Tombeckee.

Birding on The Tombigbee River Friday afternoon was done the relaxing, easy way---from a boat! As we quietly cruised along the river past chalk cliffs and tree-lined banks carpeted with ferns, we were observed by a great horned owl, a great blue heron, common egrets, turkey vultures, black vultures, and kingfishers. Our hostesses Annie Bestor Mitchell and Suddie Rogers provided an excellent dinner on board the boat. After the cruise, birders drove to Livingston and heard an interesting talk by Tom Imhof.

Saturday Annie Bestor and Dr. Wayne Canis of Livingston University led a field trip to the site of Bluff Port on high white cliffs overlooking the Tombigbee. Keen senses were needed in order to spot birds in the trees and sky and at the same time keep eyes to the ground looking at deer tracks and fossil seashells. Dr. Canis showed us numerous shells of salt water mollusks left by receding waters of Cretaceous seas that covered the area some 85 million years ago.

Jenkins Jackson of Livingston welcomed birders to his home to see his collection of bird nests. We were able to examine closely nests of the Baltimore oriole, the orchard oriole, and the blue-gray gnat-catcher. Mr. Jackson thoughtfully furnished reprints of his 1960 compilation of birds of Sumter County.

A dinner was held Saturday night at Livingston University, after which a lucky few won door prizes such as Dr. Gaillard's *Moving the Earth for a Song* and a sculptured feeder made and donated by Mr. Paul Childers. The sculpture is of John James Audubon sketching a peregrine falcon and is placed against the back of the wooden feeder. Such a feeder, 17½ inches high, 18 inches wide, and 6 inches deep and finished in a deep brown and antique greyish green, may be obtained from Mr. Childers of 504 Whitesburg Drive S.E., Huntsville, Ala. 35802 for \$7 plus a small shipping charge.

Dr. Canis gave an excellent talk on geology and paleontology. Members and their families listened intently as he described the geologic regions of the Southeast and the rise of the Appalachians in the Permian and Pennsylvanian periods.

Field trips to pasturelands and ponds near Livingston and to the fascinating Smith Lake near Gainesville provided many species of birds to bring a total number of 71 species recorded for the three-day meeting. Participants of an impromptu post-meeting side-trip to the Marion Fish Hatchery and the Wedgeworth artesian well ponds noted an additional 5 species of ducks and shore birds. Among birds recorded in the Livingston-Gainesville area were: Cooper's red-tailed, red-shouldered, marsh and sparrow hawks, turkeys, American coot, barred owl, yellow-bellied sapsucker, brown creeper, hermit thrush, ruby and golden-crowned kinglets, Tennessee, magnolia, myrtle, black-throated green, and bay-breasted warblers, Savannah, vesper, white-throat, swamp and song sparrows.

Forty of the 63 participants in the three-day meeting comprised AOS members and families. Out-of-state members and guests were: Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd W. Clayton, Gulf Breeze, Fla.; Mr. and Mrs. Curtis L. Kingsbery, Pensacola, Fla.; Mr. and Mrs. George W. Matthews, Steve Schley, of Columbus, Ga.; Mr. and Mrs. T. McRae Williams, Atlanta, Ga.

Gussie Arnett