

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am sure all AOS members are delighted with the passage by the State Legislature of the bill protecting all Alabama birds of prey. I would like to urge all of the membership to express appreciation to Representative Jim Wood of Mobile who sponsored this needed piece of legislation. We should all make every effort to give this new conservation law the best possible publicity in order to make it effective and to protect these beleaguered species from wanton shooting.

The dedication efforts of conservation-minded Alabamians are having good results in the area of anti-pollution legislation. The Legislature is obviously receptive to new ideas concerning conservation and we will all benefit from strong bills to protect our environment.

Let us all strive for a realistic approach to pollution problems so that our state can achieve good economic growth without sacrificing any of the abundant natural beauty and wildlife that we are so fortunate to have and want future generations to enjoy. We do not blindly oppose progress, but we do oppose blind progress.



Eugene B. Sledge, President

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Season, Spring 1971	1
Thomas A. Imhof	
Birds of Prey Now Protected by Law	6
First Annual Bankhead Forest Spring Count	7
Thomas A. Imhof	
Trans-Gulf Migrants over Gulf of Mexico	8
Dan C. Holliman	

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE STAFF

Papers, Reviews Editor -
Dr. Dan C. Holliman, Biology Dept.
Birmingham-Southern College
Birmingham, 35204

Counts Editor - Robert R. Reid, Jr.
2616 Mountain Brook Parkway,
Birmingham, 35223

Production - Walter F. Cox
P. O. Box 1448, Birmingham, 35201

Seasonal Editor - Thomas A. Imhof
1036 Pike Road, Birmingham 35218

THE SEASON, SPRING 1971

Compiler and Editor — Thomas A. Imhof

The weather continues, for 10 years now, colder than normal. By comparison, March was warmer than April or May. For bird migration, this means more and stronger cold fronts and so more records of rarer species that usually completely overfly our state, such as many shorebirds, Black-billed Cuckoo, Wilson's Warbler. It also means that the advance of spring, the development of vegetation, emergence of insects, and the progress of the birds inland was at least 2 weeks late. In March many birds arrived from across the Gulf about on time, but they then encountered unfavorable flying weather, and, with vegetation and insects behind schedule, the birds found it difficult to replenish their fat reserves to continue their journey.

Precipitation was often sporadic and, while most places inland by virtue of pre-cold-front rains came out nearly normal, coastal areas were definitely dry. It seems that most of this frontal activity kept the wind westerly much of the time, and this probably explains our records of Baird's and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Hudsonian Godwit and others. The usual low in mid-Gulf seldom materialized and so we had few eastern birds like Cape May and Black-throated Blue Warblers and no Black-whiskered Vireos. It may also explain why we could not find many Gray Kingbirds.

The first half of April was universally considered dull for migrants. It seems the bad weather was so extensive and food scarce in the dry and backward coastal woods that the birds were not even in position to be precipitated by the next storm. By the 17th things looked much better, and from 23 Apr to 15 May the birding was everywhere excellent, and it was good for migrants even into the first week of June.

Cooperative activities produced good results in spite of the lateness of the season. In an attempt to record all 19 breeding warblers of Jefferson County on 17 Apr, the missing Parula and Ovenbird were easily explained by their irregular breeding, but failure to record the Yellow-breasted Chat can only be attributed to the lateness of the season. At the joint W.O.S.—A.O.S. meeting on Dauphin I. 22-25 Apr a total list of 204 species was compiled by Mary Gaillard, and it included 3 species new to Alabama: Blue-faced Booby, Hudsonian Godwit, and Glaucous Gull. A symposium on trans-Gulf migration was the Sat. morning feature of this meeting. When participants left the meeting hall they found birds as if by cue, coming down from the sky and landing in the trees by the hundreds! By virtue of variety, closeness, intricate timing, and brilliant plumage, Gulf-coast spring precipitations rival the best of avian displays.

Birmingham's 7th Annual Spring Bird Count on 8 May produced 130 species, slightly below average due to strong winds all day, but 11,907 individuals for 108.2 birds per party-hour is a record high. The First Annual Bankhead Forest Count had nothing really for comparison except the Birmingham Spring Counts. See the report in this issue and note those species marked with an asterisk (*) which are substantially higher than Birmingham. The Bankhead Forest supports high populations of these woodland birds, notably Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, many warblers, and the tanagers; and this Proposed Wilderness Area will play a more and more decisive role in maintaining their numbers as more and more woodlands are exploited.

An Official List of the Birds of Alabama dated 1 April, 1971 appeared in Alabama Birdlife (19: 7-14). Any species additional to that list or having a

record beyond the statewide extremes listed will be printed in this column in capitals. Thus readers can keep their Alabama List current. To begin, in Canada Goose change the A for accidental to C for current, and under Stilt Sandpiper after Apr change ; to -. In the account below, "& mob" means "and many other birders."

Pelicanlike Birds -- Near Mobile Causeway, 50 White Pelicans remained on 31 May (LPA). The few Brown Pelican reports are of 9, 5 imm., on Dauphin I. on 10 May (LRT) and of 2, both imm., on 21 May at Fort Morgan (TAI). News from Louisiana is that they bred unsuccessfully in Barataria Bay, 125 miles west and beyond commuting distance (RJN). On 23 Apr with strong SW pre-cold-front winds, 6 BLUE-FACED BOOBIES joined the Gannets feeding off Dauphin I. (TAI & mob). The boobies, 1 ad., 1 changing, 4 imm., were closer to shore and fed more actively, constantly undulating low and high above the water; they circled the island going eastward in the Gulf, returning westward in Mississippi Sound. This habit of appearing near shore during strong onshore winds is probably more prevalent among Pelecaniformes than we suspect. At least 1500 Double-crested Cormorants were in Mississippi Sound through March (LRT, CTT); probably connected is the record of an imm. at East Lake, B'ham, on 21 Mar (JRB), first locally in many years. An Anhinga at Marion Fish Hatchery on 21 Apr (RRR, EGR, HHW) is another unusual local record. About 100 Magnificent Frigatebirds were on Dauphin I. on stormy 12 May (BB) and 85 there on 22 May (CTT & TAI).

Hérons, Ibis -- Green Herons at Gulf Shores on 9 Jan (CLK & AFW) and Magnolia Springs on 27 Feb (PFC) bring this year's wintering total to 4. Cattle Egrets north of the Fall Line include 24 at Decatur on 9 Apr (PLT) and 6 in Birmingham on 7 May (RRH), latest for Mt Region. Early LEAST BITTERNs were 1 on 27 Mar on Dauphin (TAI), earliest for state by 1 day; and 1 at Lakeland Farm, Marion on 12 Apr (RMA & mob) earliest for Upper Coastal Plain. The Glossy Ibis was first noted in its Mobile County herony on 9 Apr, 6 birds, photographed (CTT & FCT); they later produced young (CTT).

Ducks -- A FULVOUS TREE DUCK was seen at Cedar Point 22-25 Apr (W.O.S.); this species appears to be a transient along the coast, changing slowly into a rare and local breeder with an unknown amount of help from man. On 16 Apr, 16 Green-winged Teal are by 9 days latest for Tennessee Valley (MLB). A Canvasback at East Lake (RRR) is by 1 day latest for the Mt Region. A late Com Goldeneye remained at Cedar Point at least to 25 Apr (MLB, HHK & many). Most coastal OLDSQUAWS use Bon Secour Bay, but with this winter's flight, 18 were on west Dauphin I. on 27 Mar (TAI & CTT) and 30 there on 7 Apr (CTT), latest coast; and a female on 21 Apr at Wheeler Refuge (MLB) is by 10 days latest for state.

Hawks -- Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites arrived a bit late but in usual numbers; some interesting Swallow-tailed records are: 3 at Leroy from US 43 on 26 Mar (TAI & WFC); 1 at Bon Secour on 29 Mar, first in S. Baldwin Co. in several years (PFC); 1 at Weiss Lake, Cherokee Co. (JRD & many), first record north of the Fall Line. The second SWAINSON'S HAWK this year, 7th for the state and first in spring was 1 seen well on the Bibb-Perry Co. line near Marion on 3 Apr (JRB, JWS, RRR). A few Bald Eagles were noted at Wheeler Refuge this March and April (TZA). Breeding Ospreys in Alabama are reduced to a pitiful few, possibly as many as 4 pairs, all on the coast, but judging by reports it is still a reasonably common spring migrant.

Rails -- At least 30 Soras were at Cedar Point the first week in April (CTT). The Am Coot summers commonly, yet we have little proof of breeding even though

many are obviously paired. At Marion there were still 20 on 9 May (MLB) and at Cedar Point 8 through the end of May (CTT).

Shorebirds -- The weather was most likely responsible for more and later shorebirds both inland and on the coast. Among many GOLDEN PLOVER reports were the first 2 spring records for the Tennessee Valley, Wheeler Refuge, 16 & 21 Apr (MLB); and the latest ever for state by 4 days, 1 at Mobile on 2 May (JLD, B, L & JD). A Solitary Sandpiper at Magnolia Springs on 2 Mar (PFC) is very early, but we have 2 February records. Willets still make a brave attempt to hold onto their nesting territories in the face of widespread beach development.

If man would manage his land with less greed and waste, he would have enough room for all his wants and all the beauty God put there. Lesser Yellowlegs peaked at 62 at Marion on 9 May (MLB). Highs for the Knots wintering on Dauphin were 70 on 4 Mar (LRT) and 64 on 27 Mar (TAI & CTT). Earliest for state by 1 day were 4 WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPERS on Dauphin on 23 April (TAI, BLM & mob); next day 8; in Birmingham 6 were at the west end of the airport on 13 May (TAI) & 17 May (RRR), 2nd & 3rd Mt Region spring records; last noted, 7 at Marion on 6 June, (RRR & EGR). A BAIRD'S SANDPIPER photographed on Dauphin on 22 May (TAI & CTT) is the first spring record for the coast and 6th for the state. Latest for the coast were 17 scattered Least Sandpipers on 22 May on Dauphin (TAI & CTT). Stilt Sandpipers tied earliest for state, 2 on 4 Apr on Dauphin (LRT); peaked there at 32 on 12 May (LRT & DDN); and were noted inland, 2nd time ever in spring, at Marion on 9 May (MLB). On 8 May in Birmingham, west end of airport, 7 Semipalmated Sandpipers (TAI) are earliest for Mt. Region; 7 more at Marion on 6 Jun (RRR & EGR) are latest for inland coastal plain. First Western Sandpipers in spring in the Mt. Region were 1 on 11 May and 6 on 13 May in Birmingham (TAI); 2 at Marion on 9 May (MLB) are 3rd on spring in inland coastal plain. A BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER on Dauphin on 23 Apr (BLM & TAI) is the 4th spring record for the state. Long overdue on the state list is the HUDSONIAN GODWIT; 1 was finally seen well in winter plumage on Sand I, near Dauphin, on 25 Apr (WMD)! An AVOCET on Dauphin on stormy 13 May (CCT) is by 16 days latest ever state. BLACK-NECKED STILTS were common in April on the coast; 1 was photographed on 22 Apr at Alabama Point (MLM); they peaked at 9 on 22 & 23 Apr (LRT, RDG & many); and were last seen, 3 on stormy 12 May on Dauphin (LRT & DDN), 1 day latest ever state.

Jaegers, Gulls, Terns -- A rather dark imm. POMARINE JAEGER with dark bars on its chest forced a Herring Gull of the same size to drop its fish, on 7 Apr on west Dauphin (CTT), 2nd state record! On Sand I on 9 Mar a Parasitic Jaeger is the 5th Alabama record, 2nd in March. On 19 Apr at Fort Morgan a white-winged gull (sp.) (TAI & RDG) was probably 1 of the 2 GLAUCOUS GULLS at Cedar Point on 23-25 Apr (W.O.S.); 1 later seen there on 5 May (LRT); and at Piney Point, 11 miles west, on 13 May (CTT); these are the first for Alabama. The first GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL outside of winter and 5th for the state was 1 on west Dauphin on 24 Apr (RSA). At Lake Purdy, 8 Bonaparte's Gulls on 10 Apr (JRB) are the 4th Mt. Region record, 2nd in spring. An adult SABINE'S GULL in winter plumage at Fort Morgan on 19 Apr (TAI & RDG) is the 2nd for the state. The winter range of this little ternlike arctic gull is virtually unknown, yet small numbers have been recorded all over the Northern Hemisphere and south to Peru. Last fall the bird was seen in Arapahoe Co., Colo., Tulsa, Okla., & Lubbock, Tex. 10-25 Oct (Frances Williams, Am-Birds, 25:76) and it is conceivable that some winter in the Gulf unknown to man just like so many other pelagic species that we have noted in the past 25

years; and just like other gulls, a few may summer in the winter range like the first Sabine's Gull for Alabama noted by Fr. Dorn on 24 Jul, 1965. Nesting in the dunes of west Dauphin I with Least Terns and Black Skimmers on 22 May (TAI & CTT) were at least 19 Gull-billed Terns, all of whom seem to share the ability to tolerate massive human disturbance, a feature of great survival value.

Cuckoo, Gootsuckers, Sopsucker -- Black-billed Cuckoos were much in evidence: 1 on 8 May at Choctaw Bluff, Clarke Co. (CLK & AFW) is the first record for the Lower Coastal Plain; 1 was banded in Birmingham the same day (RDK); 13 were counted in the Bankhead Forest on 15 May (A.O.S.); 1 was at Vance on 29 May (TAI & DJI) and another in Birmingham on 2 June (TAI & GMI). The Bankhead Forest count of 15 May showed 48 Chuck-wills-widows and 80 Whip-poor-wills, the latter a record high (A.O.S.) Late Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were in Birmingham on 8 May (CGI) and on Dauphin on 15 May (M.B.C.)

Flycatchers, Swallows -- Are Gray Kingbirds scarce this year? Only 1 22-24 April on Dauphin (W.O.S. & mob) is known. A WESTERN KINGBIRD at Alabama Point 13-17 May (MLM) is latest for state by 1 day. An Olive-sided Flycatcher on Dauphin on 24 Apr (W.O.S.) is the second spring record for the coast. Early Tree Swallows were at Scottsboro on 8 Mar (BLW) and Birmingham on 19 Mar (HHK); and a late 1 at Marion on 9 May (MLB). A Rough-winged Swallow on 12 Mar at Magnolia Springs (PFC) is 1 day earlier than other coast dates. First noted Barn Swallows were on 20 Mar on Dauphin (JLD, L, J. & BD); 21 Mar in Birmingham (JRB); 22 Mar at Tuscaloosa (JCT); 26 Mar at Madison Co. Public Lake (RRR); and 31 Mar at Decatur (PLT). On the Natchez Trace Bridge over the Tennessee River, a new locality for the species, 35 Cliff Swallows and 220 nests, reported to be in use 3 years, were counted on 16 Apr (BBC & LCC).

Creeper, Wren, Thrushes, Kinglet, Pipit -- A Brown Creeper in Birmingham on 8 May (BCr) is, with a 1934 record 22 days later than any other state records. On Dauphin on 13 May, 2 Short-billed Marsh Wrens are latest by 10 days for the coast (JLD). A female Robin at Fort Morgan on 19 Apr (TAI & RDG) may mean a local breeding attempt. A Swainson's Thrush on Dauphin on 22 May (TAI & CTT) is by 4 days latest for the coast; and a Gray-cheeked in Birmingham on 27 Mar (JRB) is so early, almost a month, as to raise the possibility that the bird may be the 5th local winter record. On 8 May just 4 days before the latest departure date, 5 Ruby-crowned Kinglets were listed in Birmingham by 3 parties (B.A.S.) At Wheeler Refuge on 16 Apr, the noting of 14 Water Pipits (MLB) establishes a departure date for that Region.

Starling, Vireos -- In the 7 Birmingham Spring Counts, Starlings have just about doubled; a rise from 15.8 to 26.2 birds per party-hour (B.A.S.) Of all late vireo arrivals, the nearest to normal was a Red-eyed near Birmingham on 3 Apr (TAI); 269 of this species were counted in the Bankhead Forest of 15 May (A.O.S.), a measure of the potential value of the Proposed Wilderness Area. A PHILADELPHIA VIREO on Dauphin on 16 May (LPA & LRT) is latest ever for the state by 1 day.

Warblers -- Birmingham and Mobile birders showed their ability to locate and identify Swainson's Warblers this spring: 5 were banded on Dauphin, earliest 26 Mar (REH & MEM); at least 4 were found around Birmingham, earliest 17 Apr (TAI & 40), and including 2 on the Spring Count on 8 May (RRR, EGR, JHB); 2 more were in the Sipsey Proposed Wilderness Area on 15 May (HHK, RDK, WFC); and on 28 May 1 was in heavy kudzu near Cordova (TAI). On 8 May, 67 TENNESSEE WARBLERS were still in Birmingham (B.A.S.); on 15 May,

9 still in the Bankhead (A.O.S.); on 23 May, 1 in Jacksonville (WJC) is latest ever for state. An Orange-crowned Warbler at Ft. Morgan on 1 May (JLD) is latest for the coast by 16 days and the only May date for the coastal plain. Parulas were first noted on Dauphin on 7 Mar (LPA, AMI, LRT); flooded the island on 24 Mar (LRT); 26 Mar, 50 banded (REH), & 3 Apr, hordes (RDP). In W. Blocton on 29 May a singing Blackburnian Warbler (TAI & DJI) is 2nd latest date for state. Farther south than usual breeding birds were 5 singing Prairie Warblers on 22 May in Grand Bay Swamp (TAI & CTT) a substrate strongly reminiscent of the mangroves of the Florida-breeding race. Palm Warblers were also late: 13 on the Birmingham Count of 8 May (B.A.S.); 1 in Birmingham on 11 May (TAI); and 3 in the Bankhead Forest on 15 May (TAI), latest for state in 50 years. An Ovenbird on Dauphin on 22 May (TAI) is by 3 days latest anywhere south of the breeding range. The first Yellow-breasted Chat in Birmingham on 18 Apr (RDK) is 10 days later than usual. The Hooded Warbler tied its earliest date for the state, 13 Mar on Dauphin (J & GS) and flooded the island on 15 Apr (LRT). Wilson's Warbler, rare in the state, especially in spring in the coastal plain, was recorded quite often: twice on Dauphin, 24 April (W.O.S.) ties earliest state, and 5 May (MAG & AWP); 1 at Decatur, caught in the hand and present 26-29 Apr (Mrs WGS & Mrs SS), earliest ever north of the coast; 1 at Tuscaloosa on 22 May (JCT) is not only late but the 2nd in spring in inland coastal plain. Late CANADA WARBLERS were 1 in Decatur on 30 May (CRG) and 1 in Birmingham on 4 Jun (ALM), latest ever for state by 3 days.

Blackbirds, Tanagers -- On 8 May, 102 Bobolinks were counted in Birmingham (TAI) and on 22 May a male and female on west Dauphin (TAI & CTT) are latest by 5 days for the coast. A Yellow-headed Blackbird on 18 Apr on Dauphin (J & GS) is latest for state. The continued increase of the Com Grackle around non-agricultural Birmingham is documented by its increase on the Spring Count from 1.6 birds per party-hour in 1965 to this year's 7.78! The latest Brewer's Blackbird for the state is 1 at Lakeland Farm, Marion on 12 Apr (HHK & mob). Western Tanagers were noted on Dauphin I. on 3 May (LRT) and 13 May (JDL). On 15 May in the Bankhead Forest a count of 50 Scarlet Tanagers, nearly all local breeders (A.O.S.), is exceeded inland only by 55 ceilometer casualties in Oct, 1954; yet a migrant was still on Dauphin on 18 May (JLD), latest for coast by 1 day.

Finches -- Late Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were 6 on 15 May in the Bankhead Forest (A.O.S.) and 1 latest by 1 day for the coastal plain on Dauphin on 18 May (JLD). The Black-headed Grosbeak was at the Smyer Lake feeder (see winter report) on 12 & 13 Mar (LOD, CC & mob). A Blue Grosbeak on Dauphin on 20 Mar (JLD, L, B & JD) is very early. A Henslow's Sparrow at Wheeler Refuge on 16 Apr (MLB) is the 3rd for the Tennessee Valley, first in spring. A Slate-colored Junco at Goodwater on 18 Apr (BED & mob) is very late. A late Fox Sparrow was in Birmingham on 31 Mar (HHW). Two Lincoln's Sparrows near Kinlock Springs in the Bankhead Forest on 15 May (HHK & RDK) are 5 days later than any record outside the Tennessee Valley. On 8 May in Birmingham 48 Whitethroats were still present (B.A.S.). One Song Sparrow was also in Birmingham, at SUNA same day (RDK); another on 6 June singing on 10th Ave N. and 35th St. in a vacant weedy lot between 2 foundries (JMI & TAI) may well be attempting to breed, if so, it would be a range extension of 60 miles southwest.

Observers (reporters in capitals) -- Alabama Ornithological Society, Robert S. Arbib, Lois P. Archer, THOMAS Z. ATKESON, Birmingham Audubon Society, J. RUSSELL BAILEY, MICHAEL L. BIERLY, Jane H. Brock, Ben Buerger,

Claudia Caldwell, P. FAIRLY CHANDLER, BEN B. COFFEY, Lula C. Coffey, W. F. Coxe, Bruce Crider, JAMES R. DAVIS, W. MARVIN DAVIS, Blanche E. Dean, Leo, Bill, & Joe Denton, Lee Ola Dewberry, Rev. J. L. Dorn SJ, MARY A. GAILLARD, Carolyn R. Garrett, Rosemary D. Gaymer, Corinne Glaze, R. E. (Tuck) Hayward, Ruth R. Horsley, Dorothy J. Imhof, Gina M. Imhof, John M. Imhof, Thomas A. Imhof, CURTIS L. KINGSBERY, HELEN H. KITTINGER, Ronald D. Kittinger, Mobile Bird Club, Roger Maner, Mary Lou Mattis, Eddie B. Mays, Ann L. Miller, Margaret E. Miller, Alwilda Mitchell, Burt L. Monroe, Dorothy D. Newburn, ROBERT J. NEWMAN, Alice W. Patterson, ROBERT J. NEWMAN, Alice W. Patterson, ROBERT D. PURRINGTON, Elberta G. Reid, ROBERT R. REID, SUNA-Samford University Nature Area, James W. Shepherd, Mrs. Sam Smith, Jim & Genevieve Spafford, Mrs. W. G. Stone, PERCY L. THIGPEN, JAMES C. THOMPSON, Lib R. Toenes, C. TIM TRAYLOR, Faith C. Traylor, Wilson Ornithological Society, A. Fred Wicke, BETTY L. WORLEY, Harriett H. Wright, WILLIAM J. CALVERT.

1036 Pike Road
Birmingham, Alabama



**ALL BIRDS OF PREY NOW PROTECTED
BY ALABAMA LAW**

Under the sponsorship and skillful handling of Mobile's Representative Jim Wood, Alabama has recently enacted a law extending protection to all hawks, owls and vultures. By current count, we thus joined 40 other states, including our sister states of Georgia, Florida, Mississippi and Tennessee, in protecting all birds of prey.

This is very beneficial legislation since hawks and owls preserve the balance of nature by keeping species such as rats and mice under control, many eat harmful insects and, as is well known, vultures are the "garbage collectors" of the countryside. Our congratulations to Representative Wood for a job well done on this fine and needed conservation measure!

It is now an offense under the laws of Alabama (Title 8, Sections 83, 85 and 87 of the 1958 Recompiled Code of Alabama, as now amended) to kill any wild bird except crows, starlings and house or English sparrows (but all other sparrows are protected). It is also a federal offense to kill any bird that is considered a migratory bird under federal law (Title 16, Sections 703-11 of the U. S. Code, as amended). The only exceptions are for certain limited purposes such as hunting of game birds in season. In addition, it is an offense to hunt within 100 yards of a public road (Title 8, Section 105 of the above Code of Alabama).

FIRST ANNUAL BANKHEAD FOREST SPRING COUNT

May 15, 1971; partly cloudy, 48° to 72°; wind mostly southerly, light. Observers, 26 in 9 parties, spent 68 party-hours afield from 4:30 to 12:30 CDT and traveled 160 miles, 43 of them on foot. Area covered: the Proposed Wilderness Area except for Kinlock Springs, plus Braziel Creek Rd., Gum Pond Motorway, Mountain Springs Rd., and Brushy Lake. Total Wilderness Area and woodland species: 98; total individuals, 3845 (56.5 birds per party hour).

Birds observed: (Birds marked with * were recorded in substantially higher numbers--on a per party-hour basis--than on any of the 7 Birmingham Spring Counts. Except for the 3 thrushes which are transient, these are the birds whose abundance as local breeders depends on the continued existence of the forest in substantially the same condition.) Turkey Vulture, 28; Black Vulture, 12; Sharp-sh Hawk, 1 (Imhof); Red-tl Hawk, 3; Red-shld Hawk, 2; Broad-w Hawk, 5; hawk (sp?), 5; Bobwhite, 45; *Turkey, 4; Am Woodcock, 1 (Wright); Mourning Dove, 49; Yellow-b Cuckoo, 37; Black-b Cuckoo, 13; Screech Owl, 1 (Glaze); Gt Horned Owl, 3; Barred Owl, 7; Chuck-wills-widow, 49; *Whippoor-will, 80; Com Nighthawk, 1 (Bierly); Chimney Swift, 82; Ruby-th Hummingbird, 4; Belted Kingfisher, 7; Yel-s Flicker, 30; *Pileated Woodpecker, 55; *Red-bellied Woodpecker, 65; Red-headed Woodpecker, 19; Hairy Woodpecker, 7; Downy Woodpecker, 26.

E Kingbird, 2; *Gt Crested Flycatcher, 102; E Phoebe, 11; *Acadian Flycatcher, 49; empidonax (sp?), 1; *E Wood Pewee, 65; Rough-w Swallow, 5; Barn Swallow, 1 (Bierly); Purple Martin, 12; swallow (sp?), 5; Blue Jay, 123; Com Crow, 53; *Car Chickadee, 157; *Tufted Titmouse, 140; *White-br Nut-hatch, 19; Brown-hd Nuthatch, 3; Car Wren, 111; Mockingbird, 2; Catbird, 10; Brown Thrasher, 14; Wood Thrush, 109; *Swainson's Thrush, 34; *Gray-chk Thrush, 7; *Veery, 12; E Bluebird, 1 (Bierly); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 69; Cedar Waxwing, 66; *White-e Vireo, 110; *Yellow-thr Vireo, 53; *Red-e Vireo, 269.

Warblers--*black & wh, 95; Prothonotary, 1 (Coxe); Swainson's, 2 (Coxe, Kittinger); *Worm-eating, 36; Blue-winged, 19; Tennessee, 9; *Parula, 32; Yellow, 1 (J. Imhof); Magnolia, 5; *Black-thr Green, 29; *Cerulean, 28; Black-burnian, 1 (Kittinger); Yellow-thr, 19; Chestnut-s, 4; Bay-br, 5; *Pine, 136; *Prairie, 165; Palm, 3 (latest for Mt. Region--Imhof); *Ovenbird, 28; *Louisiana Waterthrush, 31; *Kentucky, 62; Yellowthroat, 16; *Yel-br Chat, 102; *Hooded, 46; Canada, 1 (Imhof); Am Redstart, 26; warbler (sp?), 46; E Meadow-lark, 7; Red-w Blackbird, 2; Baltimore Oriole, 1 (Bierly); Com Grackle, 14; Brown-hd Cowbird, 78; *Scarlet Tanager, 50; *Summer Tanager, 65; Cardinal, 160; Rose-br Grosbeak, 6; Blue Grosbeak, 8; *Indigo Bunting, 145; Am Gold-finch, 43; Rufous-s Towhee, 113; Chipping Sparrow, 15; Field Sparrow, 32; Whitethroat, 1 (Kittinger); Lincoln's Sparrow, 2 (latest, Mt. Region -Kittinger).

Birds observed in other than woodland habitats outside the Proposed Wilderness Area: Killdeer, 1; Mockingbird, 5; Robin, 1; Loggerhead Shrike, 1; House Sp, 3; Red-w Blackbird, 45; Orchard Oriole, 1; 5 additional species, 57 individuals (Grand Total: 103 species and 3902 individuals; 57.4 birds per party-hour.)

Mammals observed: Gray Squirrel, 13; E Cottontail, 11; E Chipmunk, 9; Bat (Red?), 2; Raccoon, 1; Whitetail Deer, 1; 6 species, 37 individuals.

Some of the species marked with * above were seen in higher numbers than ever before in the state because a large amount of birding effort was concentrated in woodland.

Thomas A. Imhof, Compiler

NOTES ON TRANS-GULF MIGRANTS OVER THE OPEN NORTH GULF OF MEXICO

The study of migrating birds during the spring is spectacular whenever weather conditions precipitate locally heavy concentrations. Generally, observations of this type are made from off shore islands or along the immediate coastal area. Most bird students do not have the opportunity to study this phenomenon in the open Gulf. However, personnel aboard vessels operating in the northern Gulf of Mexico have long been aware of this spring activity during inclement weather. On two separate occasions Bullis and Lincoln (1952) and Bullis (1954) again recorded sizeable trans-Gulf migrations from a ship. Additional data has already been summarized by Lowery and Newman (1954). The purpose of this note is to place on record several observations made from a vessel in the north Gulf of Mexico.

On April 6, 1971 the National Fisheries Service Exploratory vessel, the R/V OREGON II, was engaged in research operations in the Gulf of Mexico approximately 11 miles west of Panama City, Florida. Its position was Lat. 29 47' N., Long. 85 37' W. The weather conditions described in the captain's Log were as follows: 0000-0400 hrs.; NW 12-14 Knots; sea choppy, sky clear. Between the hours of 0400 and 0713 the winds had increased to 18-20 Knots out of the NW with moderate seas and the sky heavily overcast by mist. By 1200 hrs. the wind was out of the west at 20-25 Knots with rough seas and clear sky. Information from the U. S. Weather Bureau indicated that a front had passed through the Panama City area during the early morning. Pre-dawn light was reduced by a blanket of mist and the only other illumination came from the fire lights of the vessel. The following notes were taken on the morning of April 6, 1971:

- 0515 Many (100)? Orchard Orioles were on deck. Light poor. Unable to get an accurate count or to identify other possible species. Birds quickly departed when disturbed. Unable to determine direction of flight.
- 0725 Female Blue Grosbeak flushed from super structure of boat (did not see this bird approach vessel). Departed in northerly direction.
- 0915 Male Orchard Oriole approached vessel from south flying low (less than 20 ft.) above water. Bird attempted to land on boat, but continued flight in a northeastern direction.
- 0946 Prothonotary Warbler landed on cable of super structure and began looking for food. Remained on cable for 5-6 minutes then departed in northeasterly direction.
- 0955 Prothonotary Warbler landed on deck but quickly departed.
- 1005 One Reddish Egret flying in a northerly direction passed within 100 yards of boat.

1015 Single Reddish Egret flying in from south attempted a landing but due to pitching of vessel inadvertently flew into a cable and was knocked into the water. After floating in the wash for several 100 yards it feebly lifted itself from the water, circled the vessel once and continued in a northerly direction.

It is hoped that these few observations will add to our ornithological knowledge of trans-Gulf migrants. Special thanks are due to the National Marine Fisheries Service of the U. S. Department of Commerce and to the crew of the R/V OREGON II - Cruise 24 for making these observations possible.

References Cited

- Bullis, Harvey R., Jr. and Frederick C. Lincoln 1952. A trans-Gulf migration. *Auk*, 69(1) : 34-39.
- Bullis, Harvey R., Jr. 1954. Trans-Gulf migration, spring 1952. *Auk*, 71 : 298-305.
- Lowery, George H., Jr. and Robert J. Newman 1954. The birds of the Gulf of Mexico. Gulf of Mexico its origin, waters, and marine life. Fishery Bulletin of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Vol. 55, Fishery Bulletin 89 : 519-540.

Dan C. Holliman
Associate Professor
Department of Biology
Birmingham-Southern College
Birmingham, Alabama 35204

ANNOUNCING ---

OPERATION GULF COAST BANDING

Simultaneous Fall Netting on the Alabama Gulf Coast

This project is inspired by Chan Robbins' Operation Recovery which has been forced to terminate because of lack of funds.

In order to investigate the most interesting aspects of fall landbird migration on the coast, we plan to operate at the same time for about a week as many coastal netting stations as possible. For 1971 we plan to operate from Friday 17 Sep to Sun 26 Sep in the area south of the Intracoastal Waterway.

Tentative Station Assignments are as follows:

- 301 0881 Dauphin Island West --- Open
301 0880 Dauphin Island Pig Pen --- Margaret E. Miller, Ethel B. Floyd, A. G. Tait
301 0880 Dauphin Island Shell Mounds --- Richard E. (Tuck) Hayward
301 0880 Fort Morgan State Park --- Thomas A. Imhof, John M. Imhof
301 0875 Little Point Clear --- Harriett H. Wright, Richard J. Kittinger, Helen H. Kittinger, Michael L. Bierly
301 0874 Gulf Shores --- Andrew K. Bates, Raymond D. Bates, Dan C. Holliman, P. Fairly Chandler
301 0873 Orange Beach

The first bander named above is in charge of each area (usually a ten-minute block). Banders are asked to operate somewhere in the 10' block during the whole period, but if this is not possible, at least for the 2 weekends, 17-19 & 24-26 Sep. A.O.S. members and their friends are invited to help out so long as they remember not to go near the nets without permission of the bander in charge. Nets with people too close to them are apt to get torn and of course

they do not catch birds. There are many ways in which non-banders can help out; help in the actual banding and recording phases, just watch, take pictures of the birds or the birders or the net-sites, or go birding anywhere south of the Intracoastal Waterway and keep a list for final compiling. We hope that a great many people besides those above will take part.

Banders are requested to report on a standard Operation Recovery form the number of each species banded each day, the number of net-hours of operation, any remarks (i.e. about weather), and list the names of helpers. Non-banders are asked to keep a bird list for the area south of the Intracoastal Waterway so that we can compile a total species list.

On Sunday 26 Sep at 5:00 p.m. we will meet for supper on Cochrane Causeway (Battleship Parkway) where US 31-90-98 crosses the upper end of Mobile Bay. After we eat we will compile a total list of species of birds banded and of species of birds seen or heard. Also banders may find out the owners of any banded birds they may have caught. This should be the most exciting part of the project and may help us to prove which way some species migrate when they reach the coast. If enough banders are able to operate the full time--and with sufficient help we believe they can--we should make some exciting discoveries about our fall coastal migrants.

Thomas A. Imhof, Head Bander

Published periodically by the Alabama Ornithological Society at Birmingham, Alabama 35204. It is sent to all members, or it may be obtained by subscription in the United States for \$4.00 per year.