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**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 Brazier 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.