

**OBSERVATIONS ON A PROMISCUOUS RED-BELLIED
WOODPECKER (*MELANERPES CAROLINUS*)**

Michael Owens and Suzanne Owens

In late May 1991, several pairs of woodpeckers visited our suet basket located on the front porch of our home in Pinson. Rather than feed rendered beef suet, my wife and I use a blend of peanut butter, cornmeal, and other ingredients that birds seem to enjoy. Three species of woodpeckers regularly visit this suet basket – Red-bellied (*Melanerpes carolinus*), Hairy (*Picoides villosus*), and Downy (*Picoides pubescens*).

On 28 May, a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers established a nesting site within approximately 100 ft. (30 meters) of our front porch. Though both birds fed regularly at the suet basket, the female became the most frequent visitor.

Several weeks later the parents began to visit the suet basket between 25 and 30 times a day. Each bird would carry large amounts of the peanut butter mixture to the young. The female tended to remain at the suet basket longer and worked harder to maximize the amount of peanut butter obtained with each visit.

Approximately five days after the parents began feeding the young, we noticed that the male would visit the suet basket, fill his beak with mixture, then fly in the **opposite** direction of the nest cavity. On this same day we discovered, as well, that we had two females visiting the suet basket.

After observing the male for several days and watching him fly with food in the opposite direction many times a day, we decided to follow him closely. We then discovered that he was tending not one nest of young, but another as well! This second nest cavity was approximately 215 ft. (65 meters) from our porch.

On several occasions we witnessed both females at the first nest sight. One bird remained several feet from the nest cavity at all times and only visited when the first female was in the cavity. Conflict was never noted between the two females and to the best of our knowledge both nests were successful. – **Michael Owens and Suzanne Owens**, Pinson, AL 35126

ALABAMA BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Robert A. Duncan

This is the second report of the Alabama Bird Records Committee covering the years 1990 and 1991. A total of 57 records were appraised and finalized. Nine records are still in the process of review. There were no records to be reviewed at the formal meeting of the ABRC held at Dauphin Island in October 1991. However, a quorum was not present which resulted in the Secretary continuing as Acting Secretary until a new Secretary could be elected. A revised Review List will be considered by the ABRC at a future meeting with a proposal that some now regular species such as Clay-colored Sparrow and Great Black-backed Gull be “delisted”. The ABRC currently consists of the following members: Bill Bremser (Pensacola); Ben Garmon (Birmingham); Paul Kittle (Florence); Tom Haggerty (Florence); Ann Miller (Birmingham); Bob Reid (Birmingham); and Bill Summerour (Jacksonville).

The committee consists of a Secretary and six members, all of whom vote on each