

WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 2008 – FEBRUARY 2009)

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This report covers the period from December 2008 through February 2009 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (west of the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this article does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species; these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. All submissions of birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, must be accompanied by adequate details of the observation. The extent of this documentation depends on the rarity of the species and the difficulty of identification. For guidance, observers are encouraged to consult the Alabama Ornithological Society checklist. Reports should note conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

Abbreviations and italics: County names are in italics and, except for the Florida counties of *Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa*, are in Alabama. “@” = under review by; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “AFB” = Air Force Base; “b.” = banded; “CBC” = Christmas Bird Count; “FWBSF” = Fort Walton Beach Spray Fields; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NABS” = North Alabama Birdwatcher’s Society; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – Two were at the fish hatchery in Marion, *Perry*, 24 December (Ben Garmon), and a single was at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 1 January (Larry Gardella, Carolyn Snow) (locally rare at both sites). It was a good year for this species in the Tennessee Valley where it is uncommon. Damien Simbeck located a single at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 4 December (locally uncommon). At Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, observations included: 25 on 8 November (NABS), 6 on 20 December (CBC), 82 on 4 January (David Trently *et al.*), and 152 (maximum for the Tennessee Valley) on 9 January (Steve McConnell). West of Florence, *Lauderdale*, counts were made as follows: four from 7-13 February (Damien Simbeck *et al.*), 61 on 20 February (Paul Kittle), 74 on 25 February (Damien Simbeck), 84 (maximum for northwest Alabama) on 27 February (Damien Simbeck), 77 on 3 March (Jud Johnston), and 20 on 5 March (Damien Simbeck).

ROSS’S GOOSE – Rare but increasing in Alabama, numerous reports were received. At Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan* (regular at this site), Steve McConnell found three on 16 November, 10 (good number) were recorded on the CBC on 20 December (Dwight Cooley *et al.*), and Damien Simbeck *et al.* reported four on 7 February. A single was noted near Cherokee, *Colbert*, 20 December (Floyd Sherrod; ph.). At Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, a lone bird was observed 23 December (Tom Ress, Sarah

Wittenberg *et al.*). A single was in the vicinity of Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 26 December – 3 January (Ken Ward, Rufina Ward, Milton Harris, Neill Cowles, m.ob.). Another single was at the fish hatchery in Marion, *Perry*, 27 December and 30 January (Ben Garmon). At Montgomery, *Montgomery*, one was seen 1-3 January (Larry Gardella, Carolyn Snow), two were found 11 January (Larry Gardella), and a single was present 21 February (Larry Gardella). West of Florence, *Lauderdale*, three were seen 11 January (Steve McConnell) and 7 February (Damien Simbeck), with two there 22 February (Steve McConnell).

ACKLING GOOSE – Two were seen at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 16 January (Steve McConnell; @ ABRC), to mark the eighth record for Alabama.

CANADA GOOSE – The 86 recorded 3 January on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, was a good number for the Gulf Coast in recent years.

TUNDRA SWAN – A single was seen northwest of Stevenson, *Jackson*, 28 February (Steve McConnell; ph.) (rare and erratic in Alabama).

MOTTLED DUCK – Twenty-two was a locally good number on the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 31 January (Steve McConnell).

BLUE-WINGED TEAL – Three records were received of this species that is rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley: several at Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall*, 19+ December (Linda Reynolds *et al.*); one at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 22 December (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner); and three on Brown’s Creek, Guntersville Reservoir, *Marshall*, 8 February (Anne Miller, Maureen Shaffer). Uncommon in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, six were noted at Pintlala, *Montgomery*, 28 February (Larry Gardella).

NORTHERN PINTAIL – On the 20 December Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 5,006 was a good number.

REDHEAD – A good count of 290 birds was made at Big Sabine, *Santa Rosa*, 9 February (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan).

RING-NECKED DUCK – A new maximum count for Alabama was established by the 10,000 tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December.

GREATER SCAUP – Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, six were observed at Speigner, *Elmore*, 16 February (Larry Gardella).

SURF SCOTER – Rare in the WP, singles were on Pensacola Bay, *Santa Rosa*, 28 December (Scot Duncan), and at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 23-24 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Alex Harper). Rare inland in Alabama, one was seen on the Tennessee River at Waites Cemetery, *Lauderdale*, 22 February (Steve McConnell; ph.).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – Very rare in winter in the WP, three birds were at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 23-24 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Alex Harper, Peggy Baker). Rare in Alabama, a single



White-winged Scoter, 21 January 2009, Dauphin Island, AL; G. Jackson.

was observed 21+ January on the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile* (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, m.ob.; ph.). One was at Brown's Creek, Guntersville Reservoir, *Marshall*, 26 January (Greg Jackson; ph.). Three birds were found at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 30 January (Greg Jackson). On the Tennessee River at the mouth of Bear Creek, 19 was a good number on 6 February (Damien Simbeck; ph.).

BLACK SCOTER – Rare in the WP, one was tallied on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December. Uncommon to rare on the Gulf Coast of Alabama, on Bon Secour Bay, *Baldwin*, a single was seen 3 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) and four were seen 4 January (Steve McConnell, Andrew Haffenden). Four were observed on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Dwight Cooley, Maureen Shaffer *et al.*).

LONG-TAILED DUCK – A single was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 7-8 February (Steve McConnell; ph.) (rare in Alabama).

COMMON GOLDENEYE – The Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, tallied 262 (locally good number) 20 December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER – Rare in winter on most of the Inland Coastal Plain away from the Chattahoochee River, a single was recorded on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

RED-THROATED LOON – Rare in Alabama, one juvenile was at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 16-17 December (Dwight Cooley *et al.*). An adult was on Bon Secour Bay, *Baldwin*, 4 January (Steve McConnell, Andrew Haffenden; ph.).

PACIFIC LOON – Rare but regular in winter in the WP, one-five birds were seen 22-23 December at Gulf Breeze and on Pensacola Bay, *Santa Rosa* (Scot Duncan, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Ashlin Duncan). Rare but regular in winter at Guntersville, *Marshall*, an adult was recorded 13 December (Steve McConnell), 26 December (Guntersville CBC), 10 and 17 January (Steve McConnell), and 6 February (Greg Jackson). Rare in winter on the Gulf Coast of Alabama, singles were noted at Orange Beach, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson), and on Bon Secour Bay, *Baldwin*, 17 January (Larry Gardella).

COMMON LOON – The 26 December Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, recorded 543, a new maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

PIED-BILLED GREBE – On the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December, 998 marked a new maximum for northwest Alabama. .

HORNED GREBE – The 20 December Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, recorded 184, a new maximum for northwest Alabama. At Guntersville, *Marshall*, 688 were counted on the 26 December Guntersville CBC, while Greg Jackson counted 775 (good number) 26 January.

EARED GREBE – Rare inland in Alabama, a single was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 6+ December (Steve McConnell *et al.*; ph.). Uncommon to rare in winter on the Alabama Gulf Coast, a single was seen on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – This species is increasing and becoming regular inland in winter, as evidenced by the 100 counted on the Tennessee River at Key

Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 5 December (Damien Simbeck), and the 594 (414 at Wheeler Dam, 180 at the mouth of Town Creek, *Lauderdale/Lawrence/Colbert*; maximum for northwest Alabama) counted by Steve McConnell on 11 January.

BROWN PELICAN – Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain (except *Henry*), an immature was on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January (Ashley Peters; ph.).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – Increasing in Alabama, a maximum count for the Inland Coastal Plain was established by the 5,226 tallied on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

ANHINGA – A single was sighted at the sewage lagoons in Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 22+ January (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson *et al.*) (locally rare in winter). Two were reported from Moundville, *Tuscaloosa*, 13 February (Esker Harrison) (rare in central Alabama in winter).

AMERICAN BITTERN – Locally uncommon, a single was recorded on the Eufaula NWR CBC, *Barbour*, 19 December (Geoff Hill, Bailey McKay, Brian Rolex *et al.*).

LITTLE BLUE HERON – Uncommon to rare in winter for inland Alabama, a single was recorded on the Eufaula NWR CBC, *Barbour*, 19 December (Geoff Hill, Bailey McKay, Brian Rolex *et al.*; ph.).

REDDISH EGRET – Nine was a good number on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December.

CATTLE EGRET – Powers McLeod noted 8-21 birds 12-23 December at Pensacola, *Escambia* (very late for the WP).

GREEN HERON – Rare in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, a single was found on the Tuscaloosa CBC, *Tuscaloosa*, 20 December. The third winter record for the Tennessee Valley was marked by two seen at Stevenson, *Jackson*, 13 January (Harold Birch). Rare in winter in the Mountain Region, one was at the Birmingham Zoo, *Jefferson*, in late January (Jamie Nobles).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON – One injured bird was found for the fourth year in Fairfield during the Birmingham CBC, *Jefferson*, 27 December (Sharon Hudgins *et al.*) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region).

BLACK VULTURE – Good numbers (302 and 153, respectively) were tallied on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December, and the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

TURKEY VULTURE – The 156 flying west at Clay, *Jefferson*, 7 January (Bob Sargent) was a good number for a single site.

OSPREY – On the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January, 44 were recorded to set a new maximum for Alabama. Rare but regular in the Montgomery area in winter, two were found during the Montgomery CBC, *Elmore*, 3 January (Eric Soehren *et al.*).

BALD EAGLE – A new maximum for the WP was marked by the 17 found at the catfish farms in northwest *Escambia*, 11 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Alex Harper), continuing an upward trend.

RED-TAILED HAWK (HARLAN'S) – A dark morph bird was recorded on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Don Ware).

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK – Seven on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January, marked a new maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain.

ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK – An immature dark morph bird was seen 19-27 December north of Town Creek, *Lawrence* (Craig Brown *et al.*; ph.) (rare in Alabama).

GOLDEN EAGLE – Rare in Alabama, records of three singles were received: an immature at Hampton Cove, *Madison*, 7 December (Charles Grisham; ph.); another immature at Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall*, 22 December (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner); and an adult along the Tennessee River near Waite Cemetery, *Lauderdale*, 6-22 February (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).



Golden Eagle, 7 December 2008, Hampton Cove, AL; C. Grisham.

MERLIN – A single was at Lake Purdy, *Shelby*, 2 December (Greg Jackson) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region).

Another single was north of Belle Mina, *Limestone*, 20 December (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) (rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley). The four counted on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January, tied the maximum winter count for Alabama.

PEREGRINE FALCON – The seven counted on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December, marked a new winter maximum for Alabama. Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, one was reported from Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 11 January (Steve McConnell), where the species has been regular in recent years.

SORA – Rare in winter in most inland areas, one was found on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

SANDHILL CRANE – Casual in winter in the WP, 11 were in north *Santa Rosa*, 22 November (Carol Tebay) and 28 December (Laura Catterton). Three were on Eglin AFB, *Okaloosa*, 2 December (Kelly Jones). Increasing in Alabama, a new maximum for Alabama was established by the 4,130 tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December. Three other records came from areas where the species is locally rare: two at Fitzpatrick, *Bullock*, 29 January (John Trent); north of Atmore, *Escambia*, 40 in late January and 12 on 17 February (Ben Garmon *et al.*); and 108 at Crow Creek, *Jackson*, 28 February (Steve McConnell).

SNOWY PLOVER – A new winter maximum for Alabama was marked by the 16 on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 14 February (Tom Siegwald, Joan Siegwald, Howard Horne).

WILSON'S PLOVER – One at Pointe aux Pins, *Mobile*, 7 February (Lucy Duncan, m.ob.) marked the third winter record for Alabama.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER – On the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 120 (good number) were counted 14 February (Tom Siegwald, Joan Siegwald, Howard Horne).

PIPING PLOVER – A bird observed in November at Navarre Beach Park, *Santa Rosa*, had been banded at Vermillion, South Dakota, on 28 June 2007 (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan). Twenty-nine was a good recent number on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 14 February (Tom Siegwald, Joan Siegwald, Howard Horne).

- KILLDEER** – An unusual winter nesting event was documented by the sighting of two downy young at Inverness, *Shelby*, 27 December (Helen Kittinger *et al.*). Andrew Haffenden counted 260 (good number for a single site) at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 14 February.
- AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER** – Seven were counted on the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 20 January (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) (casual away from the outer coast).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER** – Five were found on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December, and six were seen on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (good numbers for winter on the Gulf Coast).
- GREATER YELLOWLEGS** – On the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, the 32 counted on 3 January was a good winter number for the Inland Coastal Plain.
- LESSER YELLOWLEGS** – The 56 tallied on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January, marked a maximum winter count for inland Alabama.
- WHIMBREL** – The first winter record for the WP was marked by a bird at Garcon Point, *Santa Rosa*, 20 December (Morris Clark *et al.*).
- MARbled GODWIT** – A single was found during the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December (rare in winter)
- RED KNOT** – Forty-six was a good recent number on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December.
- STILT SANDPIPER** – This species is rare/erratic in winter in Alabama. At Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, three were found 20 December (Howard Horne) and 16 were seen 17 and 24 January (Chazz Hesselein *et al.*).
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Four were counted on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January (Larry Gardella, Carolyn Snow), to mark the first documented winter record for the Inland Coastal Plain.
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Three were tallied on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January (Larry Gardella) (rare in winter in inland Alabama).
- WILSON'S PHALAROPE** – The first January record for the WP was established by a single at Big Lagoon State Park, *Escambia*, 21 January (Jan Osborne, Carolyn Henning *et al.*).
- LITTLE GULL** – The 10th record for Alabama was marked by one on the Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 20 December (Damien Simbeck, Raymond Moore; ph.; @ABRC).
- LAUGHING GULL** – Rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley, numerous records were received: a single at Trinity, *Morgan*, 19 December (Steve McConnell); two on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December; two on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December; a single at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 11 January (Steve McConnell); two on 11 January (Steve McConnell) and a single on 17 January (Greg Jackson) at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*; and two on 8 February (Maureen Shaffer, Anne Miller), two on 15 February (Steve McConnell), and a single on 17 February (Raymond Moore) at Guntersville, *Marshall*.

FRANKLIN'S GULL – Present since October, a single was seen at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 29 November (Steve McConnell).

RING-BILLED GULL – An estimated 15,000 (ties maximum for Alabama) were at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 6 February (Greg Jackson).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – Now rare but regular at landfills in the WP, an adult was in northern *Escambia*, 11 January (Alex Harper, Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan). This species is rare but expected at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, and increasing. A single was observed 17 December (Bill Summerour) and five were there 2 January (Greg Jackson, Steve McConnell, Bill Summerour *et al.*; ph.); eight individuals were seen and photographed (allowing differentiation) at Magnolia Springs during the winter period.

GLAUCOUS GULL – Very rare in the WP, a first winter bird was in northern *Escambia*, 11-18 January (Lucy Duncan, Alex Harper, Bob Duncan, Carl Edwards). Rare in Alabama, numerous records were received this season: one immature at Alabama Port, *Mobile*, 14 December (Bill Summerour; ph.); one immature at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 2-9 January (Greg Jackson, Bill Summerour, Steve McConnell *et al.*; ph.); one immature (different individual than above) at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 3-9 January (Sharon Milligan *et al.*; ph.); one immature at Perdido Pass, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) and 14 March (Lucy Duncan *et al.*); one first cycle at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 10 January (Steve McConnell; ph.); one immature on Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 1 February (Howard Horne); and one immature on Lake Shelby, Gulf SP, *Baldwin*, 14 January (John Trent) – 28 March (Lucy Duncan *et al.*).



Glaucous Gull, 3 January 2009, Magnolia Springs, AL; S. Milligan.

SANDWICH TERN – Very rare locally in winter, two to seven birds were seen by two parties on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Bill Bremser, Greta Bremser, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – Rare but increasing inland, seven were noted south of Atmore, *Escambia*, 13 December (Jon Yoder, Dawn Yoder). Also increasing along the Gulf Coast, 370 was a good number on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January. Lisa Jones counted 33 at Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 14 February.

MOURNING DOVE – A maximum count for the Tennessee Valley was set by the 1,639 tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December. A maximum count for the Gulf Coast and the second highest count for Alabama was set by the 2,103 observed on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January.

COMMON GROUND-DOVE – Twelve was a good number at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 14 February (Steve McConnell). This species is rare in the Mountain Region, but is becoming regular in the Harpersville, *Shelby* area, where two were noted 19 February (Louise Tommie).

GREAT HORNED OWL – A maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain was set by the 12 on

the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

BURROWING OWL – The only colony in the Florida Panhandle is at Site B-70 on Eglin AFB, *Okaloosa*, where Lenny Fenimore counted 12 on 7 December.

SHORT-EARED OWL – Three were in the Guntersville Dam area, *Marshall*, 26 December and 3 January (Ken Ward, NABS), and a single was at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 11 January (Steve McConnell) (rare but regular at these sites).

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL – Bob and Martha Sargent banded and photographed three birds at Clay, *Jefferson*, on 2 and 5 December and 26 January to mark the 30th, 31st, and 33rd Alabama records. Bob Sargent also observed a single at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 19 December to mark the 32nd record for Alabama.

COMMON NIGHTHAWK – Rick Remy found one in Irondale, *Jefferson*, 7 December (rare in winter).

WHIP-POOR-WILL – One was found on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Don Ware) (rare in WP).

BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD – An adult male was at Montrose, *Baldwin*, 23 January – 24 February (Venetia Friend, m.ob.; b., ph. Fred Bassett, Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent; @ABRC) (fifth record for Alabama).

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD – This species is rare but expected in winter in Alabama. Fred Bassett photographed and banded three singles as follows: Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 14 December (Eleanor Livaudais); Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 14 December (Mary Gibson); and Montrose, *Baldwin*, 20 February (Nancy Moore).

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD – Casual in the WP, an adult female was at the home of Jan Lloyd, Pensacola, *Escambia*, 13 December (b. Fred Bassett).

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD – One was at Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 1 December (Fred Bassett, David Dortch, Carrie Dortch; b.; ph.) (13th record for Alabama).

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD – Rare in winter in Alabama, one was in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 5 February (Trip Etheridge, Fred Bassett; b.; ph.).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER – The 3 January Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, recorded 196, a maximum for the Gulf Coast.

SAPSUCKER SP. – A possible hybrid individual (Red-naped Sapsucker X Yellow-bellied Sapsucker) was in Huntsville, *Madison*, 15-26 December (Scott Rose, Howard Horne; ph.) (first record for Alabama).

DOWNY WOODPECKER – Sixty-eight was a good number on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January.

HAIRY WOODPECKER – One was found on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Don Ware) (rare in WP). A new maximum count for Alabama was established by the 32 tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December.

SAY'S PHOEBE – Damien Simbeck reported one from northwest of Hazel Green, *Madison*, 26 February (fourth record for Alabama; ph.; @ABRC).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – A male was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Don Ware *et al.*) and 12 February (Bob Duncan).

- WESTERN KINGBIRD** – Rare in winter in the WP, two were recorded on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December. One was at the FWBSF 15 December (Don Ware *et al.*), and another was in east Destin (Dwayne Brown, Lynn Brown). Also rare in winter in Alabama, a single was reported from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 7 December (Howard Horne, Leslie Marcus, Tom Siegwald, Joan Siegwald).
- WHITE-EYED VIREO** – This species is rare in winter in inland Alabama, and three reports of singles were received: Eufaula NWR CBC, *Barbour*, 19 December (Geoff Hill, Bailey McKay, Brian Rolex *et al.*); Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January; and Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 8 February (Larry Gardella). The 13 tallied on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January, ties the maximum winter count for Alabama.
- BLUE-HEADED VIREO** – Rare but regular in winter in both the Tennessee Valley and Mountain Region, five records were received: one at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 13 December (Ken Ward, NABS); five (maximum winter count for north Alabama) on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December; one on the Birmingham CBC, *Jefferson/Shelby*, 27 December; one at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 18 January (Steve McConnell); and one on Rebecca Mountain in Talladega National Forest, *Talladega*, 15 February (Greg Harber) (likely an early migrant).
- FISH CROW** – This species has been increasing in north Alabama in recent years. Rare but regular in winter in the Mountain Region, four were counted on the Birmingham CBC, *Jefferson/Shelby*, 27 December. At Guntersville, *Marshall*, eight (maximum winter count for Tennessee Valley, ties maximum count for Tennessee Valley) were noted 6 February (Greg Jackson) and seven were seen 15 February (Steve McConnell).
- PURPLE MARTIN** – Eight males arrived at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 12 February (Damien Simbeck) to tie the early arrival date for the Tennessee Valley.
- TREE SWALLOW** – Several were early at Lake Purdy, *Jefferson*, 21 February (Greg Harber, Louise Tommie, Birmingham Audubon Society).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** – The second December record for the WP was marked by three birds at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 1 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).
- BARN SWALLOW** – Occasional in winter in Alabama, a single was spotted at Orange Beach during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Don Ware).
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** – Two+ were reported from Demopolis, *Marengo*, 23 January (Ricky Ault; ph.) (rare so far south).
- HOUSE WREN** – Rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley, one was noted on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December. The 28 tallied on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January, established a maximum winter count for inland Alabama.
- SEDGE WREN** – Singles were reported from Irondale, *Jefferson*, 7 January (Rick Remy), and Saginaw, *Shelby*, 18 January (Andrew Haffenden) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region).
- MARSH WREN** – Rare in the Tennessee Valley in winter, one was seen (Milton Harris) on Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, during the Wheeler NWR CBC, 20 December.
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** – A single was recorded for the Eufaula NWR CBC,

Barbour, 19 December (Geoff Hill, Bailey McKay, Brian Rolex *et al.*) (uncommon in the winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, but regular in this area). Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, records of singles came from the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December, and the boat harbor in Decatur, *Limestone*, 10 January (Ken Ward, NABS).

GRAY CATBIRD – One was noted on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December (rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley).

SPRAGUE’S PIPIT – Rare but regular at Site B-70 on Eglin AFB, *Okaloosa*, Lenny Fenimore found one on 8 February. Rare in Alabama, six+ was a good number south of Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 21 January (David Plumb, Bill Summerour; ph.), while two were noted 22-23 January (Bill Summerour *et al.*).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – Rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley and the Mountain Region, three reports were received: one on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December; four on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December; and one in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 30 December (Derek Lovitch).

NORTHERN PARULA – This species is occasional in winter in Alabama, but one on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January (Annabel Markle, Carolyn Snow) marked the first such record for inland Alabama.

YELLOW WARBLER – The second December record for the WP was marked by a single at Solutia Sanctuary, *Escambia*, 13 December (Ann Ziccardi, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob.).

PRAIRIE WARBLER – The second January record for the WP was marked by a single at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 21 January (Bob Duncan).

PALM WARBLER – Seven was a good number on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December; four were tallied on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December; and 10 was a good number at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 31 January (Ken Ward, NABS) (uncommon in winter in the Tennessee Valley).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER – Occasional in winter for inland Alabama, singles were noted at Andalusia, *Covington*, 6 December (Thomas Savage), and in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 3 January (Robert Reed) and 6 January (Larry Gardella).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT – A single was seen at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 22 December (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner), and two were noted at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 31 January (Ken Ward, NABS) (rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley). Twenty (good winter number for the Inland Coastal Plain) were counted on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 3 January.

WILSON’S WARBLER – Casual in winter in the WP, singles were recorded on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Kathy Gault), and on the Pensacola CBC, *Escambia*, 20 December (Powers McLeod, Sam Tagatz, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

SUMMER TANAGER – Singles were found on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Bob McKenney), and at a feeder in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 9 January (Morris Clark) (rare in winter in the WP). Rare but regular in winter on the Gulf Coast,

one was at Bon Secour, *Baldwin*, 29 January (John Dillon, Kay Dillon). Occasional in winter for inland Alabama, a single was seen at Dothan, *Houston*, 20 February (Glenn Walbek).

WESTERN Tanager – Rare in Alabama, one was observed at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 13-14 December (Howard Horne, John Stowers, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC).

CHIPPING SPARROW – A new maximum for Alabama was established by the count of 1,605 on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January.

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW – The second and third December records for the WP were marked, respectively, by two birds at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 1 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and one at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 24 December (Merilu Rose, Rufus Rose). Rare in winter in Alabama, a single was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 7 December (Howard Horne, Leslie Marcus, Joan Siegwald, Tom Siegwald).



Western Tanager, 13 December, 2008, Dauphin Island, AL; B. Summerour.

LARK SPARROW – Very rare in winter in the WP, one was found on the Pensacola CBC, *Escambia*, 20 December (James Pfeiffer *et al.*). Rare in winter on the Gulf Coast of Alabama, one was noted on the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 14 December (Mark Van Hoose, Ralph Havard). Occasional in winter for inland Alabama, singles were seen on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Morgan*, 20 December (Linda Reynolds), and at Lake Land Farms, Marion, *Perry*, 8 February (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton).

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW – One was seen north of Belle Mina, *Limestone*, 20 December (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) and 24 December (Dwight Cooley) (rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley).

SALTMARSH SPARROW – Bob Duncan and Sam Tagatz observed one in a *Spartina alterniflora* mitigation marsh while participating in the Pensacola CBC, *Escambia*, 20 December. This is the third sighting of this species by the Duncans in the WP (@ Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW – Rare in winter in for inland Alabama, three were tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 20 December (Dwight Cooley, Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton *et al.*).

DARK-EYED JUNCO – Rare in the WP, one was seen on the University of West Florida campus, *Escambia*, 24 January (Alex Harper).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR – Twenty were seen southwest of Foley, *Baldwin*, during the Gulf Shores CBC, 3 January (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton) (rare but becoming regular on the Gulf Coast).



Snow Bunting, 2 January 2009, Magnolia Springs, AL; D. Dortch.

SNOW BUNTING – An adult male was discovered at

Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 2 January (Steve McConnell, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC) to mark only the second record for Alabama.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK – Two well-described males were reported from Milton, *Santa Rosa*, 18 February (Les Kelly) (first February record for the WP). Occasional in winter for inland Alabama, a male visited a feeder in Auburn, *Lee*, 27 January – 1 February (Sharon Roberts; ph.). Rare in winter on the Alabama Gulf Coast, one was noted at a feeder in Mobile, *Mobile*, 28 February – 28 January (Brian Naylor; ph.).

BLUE GROSBEAK – The eighth winter record for the WP was marked by one on the Choctawhatchee CBC, *Okaloosa*, 15 December (Don Ware). A male was spotted on the east end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 January (Ricky Kittinger, Jo Kittinger, Helen Kittinger *et al.*; ph.) (fifth winter record for Alabama).

INDIGO BUNTING – Very rare in winter in the WP, one was found during the Pensacola CBC, *Escambia*, 20 December (James Pfeiffer *et al.*). Rare in winter in Alabama, especially inland, a male was reported from near Walter F. George Dam, *Henry*, 14 February (Steve McConnell). A report of another single came from Mobile, *Mobile*, 28 February (Betsy Eager).

PAINTED BUNTING – Very rare in winter in the WP, a male visited a feeder in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 20 January – 12 February (Gary Money).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD – In the WP, Laura Catterton reported 80 (excellent number) from northern *Escambia*, 23 December. An estimated 500 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 9 February (Dwight Coley) was a good number for recent years.

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD – In the WP, an estimated 100 birds in several mixed flocks were reported from northern *Escambia*, 11 and 18 January (Alex Harper, Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Carl Edwards). Sixty+ was a good number so far east on the Eufaula NWR CBC, *Barbour*, 19 December (Geoff Hill, Bailey McKay, Brian Rolex *et al.*).

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE – This species is inexplicably rare in the WP, but fairly common just to the east and west. Forty birds were reported from the Escambia River marsh, *Escambia*, 18 January (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan).

HOODED ORIOLE – The first record for Alabama (but see oriole sp. below) was established by an adult male at Barnwell, *Baldwin*, 27 January – 24 March (Kathy Hicks, m.ob.; ph.; found dead 24 March, specimen to Auburn University; @ABRC).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – Casual in winter in the WP, a single was at a feeder in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 17 December – 6 February (Betsy Tetlow, Peggy Baker *et al.*), and another bird occurred in the Escambia River swamp, *Escambia*, 18 January (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan). A single was reported from Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 1 January (Larry Gardella,



Hooded Oriole, 20 February 2009, Barnwell, AL; K. Hicks.

Carolyn Snow) (rare but regular in winter in this area). Rare but regular in winter on the Gulf Coast, three records were received: two at feeders in Lillian, *Baldwin*, winter season 2008-2009 (Jim Dickerson, m.ob.; ph.); two-three at Barnwell, *Baldwin*, 28+ January (Kathy Hicks, Bill Summerour, m.ob.); and one at Tanner Williams, *Mobile*, 2 February (Ruth Wilcoxson, Greg Wilcoxson). Rare in winter in the Mountain Region, one was noted at Homewood, *Jefferson*, 3-4 January (Ann Miller).

ORIOLE SP. – An immature male bird was seen at Lillian, *Baldwin*, 20+ January (Jim Dickerson, Bill Summerour, m.ob.; ph.; @ABRC). This bird was probably a Hooded Oriole, but the sighting is controversial and still under review. If deemed a Hooded Oriole, it would be the first for Alabama (preceding the Barnwell Hooded Oriole noted above).

PINE SISKIN – This species was reported at several feeders in the WP, highlighted by about 120 at the feeder of Morris Clark in north Pensacola, *Escambia*, 12 January.

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