

## SPRING SIGHTINGS (MARCH - MAY 2009)

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This report covers the period from March through May 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*, *Santa Rosa*, and *Walton*, are in Alabama. “@” = under review by; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “b.” = banded; “FWBSF” = Fort Walton Beach Spray Fields; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** – Geri

Bucheit and Carol Goodyear observed five in *Walton*, 23 May, to mark the fifth record for the WP. The eighth, ninth, and 10<sup>th</sup> records for Alabama were marked, respectively, by five birds at the Dauphin Island Airport marsh, *Mobile*, 19 March (earliest for Alabama) (Ken Marion *et al.*) (three were there 29 March; Ruth White); four birds at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 28 April+ (Bill Summerour, m.ob.; ph.); and eight birds on the Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin/Mobile*, 21 May (Keith Gauldin *et al.*) and 26 May – 9 June (*vide* Chazz Hesselein) (ph.) (all three records @ABRC).



Black-bellied Whistling Duck, 21 May 2009, Baldwin County, AL; B. Summerour.

**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** – A single found north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 18-24 April (Eric Soehren, Barry Fleming, m.ob.) was rare for the Gulf Coast.

**SNOW GOOSE** – This species is rare in the Mountain Region, so one at Clay, *Jefferson*, 17 April (Jan Bradley) was notable.

**ROSS’S GOOSE** – A single was seen west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 5 March (Damien Simbeck, Raymond Moore, Holly LeGrand, Heath King) (rare but regular in the

Tennessee Valley and increasing).

**CANADA GOOSE** – The Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May, recorded 254, a new spring maximum for the Mountain Region.

**WOOD DUCK** – The Wheeler NWR area spring count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, tallied 176, a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**LESSER SCAUP** – Two late birds were at the mouth of Town Creek, *Colbert*, 17 May (Steve McConnell).

**SURF SCOTER** – Six were at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 15 March (Steve McConnell; ph.) (rare inland); a single was on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 1 April (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Les Kelly) (rare but expected on the Gulf Coast); and an immature male was very late at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 30 May (Robert Leier).

**BLACK SCOTER** – Eleven were found on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 1 April (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Les Kelly) (rare); four males were on the Fort Morgan Peninsula three miles east of Point, *Baldwin*, 13-15 May (Shawn Hutchings) (rare and late); and a single male was noted on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 20-26 May (Eric Liffmann *et al.*) (rare and late).

**BUFFLEHEAD** – Damien Simbeck reported 150 from Florence, *Lauderdale*, 24 March, to set a new spring maximum for Alabama.

**COMMON GOLDENEYE** – A late female was at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 17 May (Steve McConnell).

**COMMON MERGANSER** – A single was seen on the Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 15 March (Steve McConnell) and 2 April (Jeff Wilson) (occasional in Alabama, few records this decade).

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** – A lone female was late at Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 29 May (Jay Huner).

**NORTHERN BOBWHITE** – David George found a single while participating on the Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May, and only five were tallied on the Wheeler NWR spring count, *Limestone Morgan*, 2 May, both numbers indicative of marked decreases.

**RED-THROATED LOON** – One was noted on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 22-29 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (rare in spring and late).

**PACIFIC LOON** – Two birds were found on the Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 4 May (Damien Simbeck, Steve McConnell, Jeff Garner) (rare in spring, latest for inland Alabama).

**COMMON LOON** – Twenty were seen on the Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner) (good number this late).

**PIED-BILLED GREBE** – One was heard on Marthaler Pond near Leighton, *Colbert*, 30 May (Steve McConnell) (uncommon breeder).

**SHEARWATER SP.** – Two shearwaters (probably Cory's) were seen off the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 13 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown) (rare).

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** – Larry Barkey spotted 34 in flight south of Houston, *Winston*, 20 March (locally rare). At Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 125 was a good number on 4 April (Paul Kittle) (uncommon but increasing in the Tennessee Valley).

**BROWN PELICAN** – The fifth and sixth records for the Tennessee Valley were marked, respectively, by an immature at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 17 May (Steve McConnell), and an adult on the Tennessee River at Decatur, *Limestone/Morgan*, 30 May (Harry Smith).

**ANHINGA** – Two sightings from *Perry* were received (uncommon this far north): a single at Heiberger, 4 March (Harriett Wright, Alice Christenson), and two males southwest of Marion, 28 March (Thomas Wilson, Greg Harber, Birmingham Audubon Society). Rare in the Mountain Region but now regular at this site, three reports were received from Saginaw, *Shelby*: two on 2 May (Harriett Wright, John Imhof); three on 6 May (Harriett Wright, Alice Christenson *et al.*), and a pair on 31 May (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson). This species is likely breeding at the latter site, and if so, this would be the only current breeding site in north Alabama.

**AMERICAN BITTERN** – Rarely detected inland, a single was at Oakland Marsh, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner).

**LEAST BITTERN** – Rare and local in the Tennessee Valley, one was heard 1 April (early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley) at the Intergraph Wetlands south of Lady Ann Lake, *Madison*, and two (one heard and one seen) were there 17 May (Dean Cutten). A single was found in *Limestone* during the Wheeler NWR spring count on 2 May (Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*).

**GREAT BLUE HERON** – The Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May, recorded 74, tying the spring maximum for the Mountain Region.

**SNOWY EGRET** – Rare in the Tennessee Valley, two records were received: a single west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 24 April (Damien Simbeck), and two birds at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2 May (Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*). Three birds at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 16 May was a good number (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) (rare in the Mountain Region).

**LITTLE BLUE HERON** – Rare in spring in the Tennessee Valley, two records came from Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*: a single on 14 April (Dean Cutten, Raelene Cutten), and two on 2 May (Linda Reynolds, Dick Reynolds, Harry Dean).

**TRICOLORED HERON** – A single was seen at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2-3 May (Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*; ph.) (occasional in the Tennessee Valley).

**REDDISH EGRET** – The white morph is rare in Alabama, so an adult white bird on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 April (Steve McConnell; ph.) was noteworthy.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** – A single was observed at Oneonta, *Blount*, 23-26 April (Duane Brown, Lynn Brown) where the species is locally rare. The Birmingham area spring



Reddish Egret, 25 April 2009, Dauphin Island, AL; Steve McConnell.

count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May, recorded five to set a new spring maximum for the Mountain Region (Greg Harber, Jessica Germany, B.J. Allen *et al.*).

**GLOSSY IBIS** – A single was tallied at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 28-29 April (Dwight Cooley *et al.*; ph.) to mark the seventh record for the Tennessee Valley.

**WOOD STORK** – At Hacoma, *Geneva*, Odis Johnson reported 20 on 16 March (early).

**OSPREY** – One at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 9 March (Matt Morrow) marked an early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley. Steve McConnell found early singles 15 March northwest of Moulton, *Lawrence*, and at a nest platform at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*.

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** – In the WP, higher than usual numbers of this species were reported, with over 55 individuals being reported from late March through early April. On two occasions, Bob Duncan observed birds flying west through Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, evidently part of the population that moves up the Florida Peninsula.

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** – One was at Montevallo, *Shelby*, 23 April (Mac Braid), and another was three miles north of Winfield, *Marion*, 13 May (Jud Johnston) (rare in the Mountain Region but regular at these sites). Another single was noted west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner) (rare in most of the Tennessee Valley; not at a regular site). Harriett Wright and Alice Christenson found a single at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 6 May (rare in Mountain Region).

**NORTHERN HARRIER** – Steve McConnell recorded a male near Leighton, *Colbert*, 17 May (a new late departure date for Alabama except for the occasional summer record).

**RED-TAILED HAWK** – The Wheeler NWR area spring count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, tallied 23, a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**RED-TAILED HAWK (HARLAN'S)** – Damien Simbeck observed one near Leighton, *Colbert*, 17 March (rare).

**PEREGRINE FALCON** – An adult tarried at Elberta, *Baldwin*, 30 May (Claire Krusko) to mark a late spring departure date for Alabama.

**KING RAIL** – Rare in the Tennessee Valley but regular at this site, single calling birds were heard and recorded at Oakland Marsh, *Lauderdale*, 15 March, 12 April, and 4 May (Steve McConnell *et al.*).

**COMMON MOORHEN** – One was recorded during the Wheeler NWR spring count, *Limestone*, 2 May (Dwight Cooley, Scott Gravette, Raymond Moore) (occasional in spring in the Tennessee Valley).

**AMERICAN COOT** – Late birds were at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 23 May (two birds; Chazz Hesselein), and at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 28 May (five birds; Katie Hanson).

**SANDHILL CRANE** – Sixty were at Blackwater State Forest, *Santa Rosa*, 19 March (Peggy Baker, Les Kelly), and an estimated 100 (maximum ever reported in the WP) were at Milton, *Santa Rosa*, 22 March (Les Kelly).

**BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER** – One was spotted at a sod farm in Pell City, *St. Clair*, 13 May (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) (occasional in spring in the Mountain Region).

**BLACK-NECKED STILT** – This species is occasional in spring in the Tennessee Valley, with more records being reported in recent years. Up to six were noted at Swan Creek

WMA, *Limestone*, 2-3 May (Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*). The sinkhole ponds on Marthaler Lane near Leighton, *Colbert*, produced the second record of breeding stilts for inland Alabama. Dean and Raelene Cutten reported two birds 6 May, Steve McConnell reported six birds and a nest with two eggs 30 May, while Milton Harris found two nests 31 May. At the “Sinks” northeast of Leighton, *Colbert*, Damien Simbeck found two birds 16 May.

**AMERICAN AVOCET** – Very rare in spring in the WP, six were reported from Gulf Islands National Seashore, *Santa Rosa*, 8 May (Bob Duncan). Two birds visited Lake Purdy, *Jefferson*, 7 May (Greg Jackson) (rare for inland Alabama, third spring record for the Mountain Region).

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER** – A small transient roadside pool on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, harbored 28 birds 15 April (Greg Jackson), a large number for a single site.

**WILLET** – Rare for inland Alabama, one was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 3 May (Steve McConnell; ph.).

**LESSER YELLOWLEGS** – Damien Simbeck reported a total of 490 (maximum for inland Alabama and maximum spring count for Alabama) 24 April: 486 near Leighton, *Colbert*, and four near Florence, *Lauderdale*.

**UPLAND SANDPIPER** – Good numbers for the Mountain Region were reported from Harpersville, *Shelby*: seven on 20 April (Greg Jackson), and eight on 23 April (Mac Braid, Andrew Haffenden).

**WHIMBREL** – High counts were made again this spring from the Grand Bay area (including Leroy’s Pond), *Mobile*: 258 on 18 April (Barry Fleming, Eric Soehren, Alabama Ornithological Society), and 372 (maximum count for Alabama) on 25 April (Maureen Shaffer, Anne Miller).

**MARBLED GODWIT** – Occasional for inland Alabama, a single was photographed at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2 May (Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*).

**RUDDY TURNSTONE** – A single was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 3 May (Steve McConnell; ph.) (rare inland).

**SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** – Eighty-eight was a good number for inland Alabama in the Leighton area, *Colbert*, 26 May (Damien Simbeck).

**WESTERN SANDPIPER** – Damien Simbeck tallied 38 in the Leighton/Florence area, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 26 May (new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley).

**LEAST SANDPIPER** – At Pell City, *St. Clair*, 70 on 6 May was a good number for the Mountain Region (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

**WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** – Early birds were on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 21 April (airport) (a single; Ron Morris) and 22 April (west end) (six; Christine Kelly). In the vicinity of Leighton, *Colbert*, Damien Simbeck counted 91 on 26 May, and Steve McConnell counted 159 on 30 May, the latter a maximum count for inland Alabama.

**BAIRD’S SANDPIPER** – Rare in the WP, one was noted at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 5 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan). Four records were received from the Gulf Coast of Alabama, where the species is rare in spring: one at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 29 March and 1 April (early) (Michael Jordan); another single at the golf course on Dauphin

Island, *Mobile*, 31 March - 5 April (early) (Howard Horne, Jacob Walker, Don McKee *et al.*); two at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 9 May (Larry Gardella), and three at this same site 22-23 May (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan *et al.*). The maximum count for Alabama was 12 until Damien Simbeck shattered this record with a count of 132 in a single flock west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 16 May. Damien Simbeck found a single near Leighton, *Colbert*, 26 May (rare but regular in the western Tennessee Valley).

**DUNLIN** – Two late birds were noted near Leighton, *Colbert*, 26 May (Damien Simbeck).

**STILT SANDPIPER** – Damien Simbeck observed two near Leighton, *Colbert*, 17 April, and a single was seen at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 2 May (Steve McConnell, Sue Moske) (rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley).

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** – A single was noted near Leighton, *Colbert*, 8 April (Damien Simbeck) (rare so early in the Tennessee Valley). Rare in spring in the Mountain Region, five were recorded 10 May and one on 13 May at a sod farm near Pell City, *St. Clair* (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Good numbers for inland Alabama came from the Leighton area, *Colbert*, 17 March (11 birds, good number so early; Damien Simbeck), and Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2-3 May (12 birds; Milton Harris, Matt Morrow *et al.*).

**WILSON'S SNIBE** – Counts at several sites in the Leighton area, *Colbert*, 24 March, resulted in a total of 208 birds, a maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley (Damien Simbeck).

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** – Rare in spring, especially inland, a single female was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 5 May (Steve McConnell).

**BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE** – The 18<sup>th</sup> record for Alabama, and the first for the Mountain Region, was marked by a first-cycle bird at Logan Martin Dam, *St. Clair/Talladega*, 28-30 March (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson *et al.*; ph.). Another first-cycle individual was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 20 May (Eric Liffmann; ph.), a late record by over one month and the 19<sup>th</sup> for Alabama



Black-legged Kittiwake, 28 March 2009, Logan Martin Dam, AL; Greg Jackson.

**BONAPARTE'S GULL** – At Logan Martin Dam, *St. Clair/Talladega*, 225 were counted 28 March (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson), and 350 (a spring maximum for the Mountain Region) were counted there 30 March (Steve McConnell *et al.*). A new maximum count (4,500+) for inland Alabama was made at Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 5 April (Linda Reynolds, Dick Reynolds).

**LAUGHING GULL** – At Logan Martin Dam, *St. Clair/Talladega*, two on 28 March (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) marked an early arrival record for the Mountain Region, where the species is occasional. Occasional in spring on the Inland Coastal Plain, a single was noted at Coosada, *Elmore*, 18 April (Michael Jordan). Rare in spring in the Tennessee Valley, three records were received: two at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 24 May (Steve McConnell); two at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 26 May (Damien

Simbeck); and one at the Alabama A&M Farms (unusual site), *Madison*, 29 May (Ken Ward *et al.*).

**FRANKLIN'S GULL** – Rare in spring in Alabama, two Tennessee Valley records were received: one at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 24 March (Dean Cutten, Raelene Cutten), and one on the Tennessee River near Waterloo, *Colbert*, 2 April (Jeff Wilson).

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** – Steve McConnell found one on the Tennessee River near Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 15 March, and two at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 20 March (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley).

**GLAUCOUS GULL** – A first-cycle bird was seen on Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 11 May (David Dortch), and at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 17 May (Bailey McKay) (rare in Alabama and late).



Glaucous Gull, 11 May 2009, Pelican Island, AL; David Dortch.

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** – Jacob Walker observed a first-cycle individual on Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 31 March (rare in Alabama).

**KELP-TYPE GULL** – Wayne Patterson photographed an unusual adult gull in Mobile Harbor, *Mobile*, 14 March, that may represent the first Kelp Gull (or Kelp Gull X Herring Gull hybrid) record for Alabama (@ABRC).

**LEAST TERN** – Rare in the Tennessee Valley, a single was noted at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 29 May (Neill Cowles).

**CASPIAN TERN** – Four birds were early at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 5 April (Linda Reynolds, Dick Reynolds). Steve McConnell tallied 79 (good number) at Wilson Dam (51), *Lauderdale/Colbert*, and at the mouth of Town Creek (28), *Colbert*, 12 April. Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, a single was spotted at Claiborne Lock and Dam, *Monroe*, 4 May (Terry Campbell).

**BLACK TERN** – One was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 31 May (Milton Harris) (rare in spring for inland Alabama).

**ROYAL TERN** – Rare away from the immediate coast, three were noted north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 25 April (Maureen Shaffer *et al.*).

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** – Rare for inland Alabama, a single was reported from east of Leroy, *Washington*, 27 March (Matthew Rouse), and two were noted at Coosada, *Elmore*, 18 April (Michael Jordan).

**YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO** – A total of five early birds was banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 27 March – 1 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*). The 63 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley. Eric Liffmann counted 100+ at the Dauphin Island Audubon Sanctuary, *Mobile*, 23 May, a good number so late.

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** – An early arrival was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 10 April (Jacob Walker). John Ehinger heard one in Monte Sano SP, *Madison*, 24 April (rare inland).

**BARRED OWL** – The 14 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May,

established a new maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**LONG-EARED OWL** – Scot Duncan heard one at Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall*, 18 March (17<sup>th</sup> record for Alabama, second for the Tennessee Valley).

**SHORT-EARED OWL** – Rare on the Gulf Coast of Alabama, one was found on the east end of Grand Batture Island, *Mobile*, 3 March (Jacob Walker).

**COMMON NIGHTHAWK** – Three at Trussville, *Jefferson*, 6 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) marked an early arrival date for Alabama, while four at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 5 April (Michael Jordan) marked an early arrival date for the Gulf Coast. A single at Coosada, *Elmore*, 18 April (Michael Jordan) was also early. Twenty-two on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW** – One in the Lock 17 area along the Warrior River, *Tuscaloosa*, 5 April (Jean Folsom) was early.

**BLACK SWIFT** – One seen near Leighton, *Colbert*, 7 April (Damien Simbeck), marked the second record for Alabama and the first inland (@ABRC).

**WHITE-THROATED SWIFT** – On 9 April, Clive Beattie found one on the balcony of a condominium at Navarre Beach, *Santa Rosa*. It was taken to Wildlife Rescue of Northwest Florida, where it was identified, photographed, and measured, and then released 26 May at Perdido Key, *Escambia*.

**BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRD** – One female was late at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 18 March (Fred Bassett; b.) (rare but regular).

**YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER** – Twenty-four were found at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 28-29 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*; b.), with the 13 banded on 28 March marking a spring maximum for Alabama. A late departure date for the Tennessee Valley was set by one at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 2 May (Linda Reynolds, Dick Reynolds, Harry Dean).

**EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE** – The 47 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**WILLOW FLYCATCHER** – A single was singing and calling west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner) (rare but regular).

**“TRAILL'S” FLYCATCHER** – Occasional in spring on the Gulf Coast, one was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 4 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*; b.), to mark an early arrival date in Alabama for the complex or species.

**LEAST FLYCATCHER** – Two records of singles were received from Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* (occasional in spring on the Gulf Coast): 4 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*; b.) (a new early arrival date for Alabama), and 24 April (Michael Jordan). Larry Gardella found a calling bird at Powder Magazine in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 18 May (rare in spring).

**VERMILION FLYCATCHER** – A male that wintered at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, was last reported on 11 March (Kelly Jones).

**GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER** – The 72 on the Wheeler NWR area count,



*Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**WESTERN KINGBIRD** – Rare in spring in the WP, one was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 30 April – 7 May (Bob Duncan, Patrick James).

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** – Rare in spring in the WP, one was spotted at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 17 April (Bob Duncan), and another was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 7 May (Patrick James). Singles at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 30 March (Fred Bassett, Mary Wilson; b.), and on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 31 March+ (Howard Horne *et al.*) were rare this early.

**FORK-TAILED FLYCATCHER** – An immature at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 21 May (Bailey McKay, Howard Horne *et al.*; ph.; @ABRC) was the fourth and latest record for Alabama.



Fork-tailed Flycatcher, 21 May 2009, Blakeley Island, AL; David Dortch.

**WHITE-EYED VIREO** – A new maximum for Alabama was marked by the 252 that were banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 1 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*).

**YELLOW-THROATED VIREO** – Good numbers were reported from Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 28 March (16 b.; Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*), and Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May (21 on Wheeler NWR spring count).

**WARBLING VIREO** – Rare but regular in the western Tennessee Valley, a single was reported from Lauderdale WMA north of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner), and 1-2 were singing at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 18 May (Damien Simbeck, David Chaffin).

**PHILADELPHIA VIREO** – Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley in spring, records of singles came from two sites: Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3 May (Steve McConnell), and Madison, *Madison*, 17 May (Steve McConnell, Andrew Haffenden). Rare in spring on the Gulf Coast, late birds were found on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*: a single at the Goat Trees, 20 May (Eric Liffmann), and two elsewhere on the island, 24 May (Chazz Hesselein), the latter a late departure record for the Gulf Coast.

**FISH CROW** – Rare but increasing in the Tennessee Valley, records were received from three sites: two at Mallard-Fox Creek WMA, *Lawrence/Morgan*, 13 March (Steve McConnell); one at the mouth of Town Creek, *Colbert*, 15 March (Steve McConnell); and a single at Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 24 April (Matt Morrow).

**HORNED LARK** – Forty were tallied on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, to establish a new spring maximum for Alabama.

**PURPLE MARTIN** – The 136 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**TREE SWALLOW** – Damien Simbeck reported 2,050 from the Leighton area, *Colbert*, 7 April, to mark a new maximum count for inland Alabama. This species is still rare but increasing as a breeder in Alabama. A pair was nest building at Oneonta, *Blount*, 25 April (Duane Brown, Lynn Brown). Larry Gardella documented breeding at White

Hall, *Montgomery*, with his observations of a pair visiting a nest hole 3 May and feeding young 25 May. A male was at Limestone Swamp, Saginaw, *Shelby*, 31 May (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) (new site if nesting). The 46 recorded on the Wheeler NWR area spring count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, was a good spring number so late.

**NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** – An early bird was at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 15 March (Steve McConnell).

**BANK SWALLOW** – Records of late birds came from three sites: three+ at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 22 May (Steve McConnell, Greg Jackson); one on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 24 May (late record for Gulf Coast) (Chazz Hesselein); and a single at White Hall, *Montgomery*, 25 May (Larry Gardella).

**CLIFF SWALLOW** – On the 2 May Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 290 was a good number. A maximum spring count (980) for Alabama was made on the Wheeler NWR area spring count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May.

**CAVE SWALLOW** – A rare but regular spring migrant on the Gulf Coast, one was found at the Dauphin Island Airport, *Mobile*, 31 March – 3 April (Howard Horne *et al.*).

**WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** – Ricky Ault reported two from Demopolis, *Marengo*, 23 March – 28 April (rare at the southern edge of its range). Jay Huner found one at Bon Secour NWR, *Baldwin*, 28 May (sixth and latest record for the Gulf Coast).

**HOUSE WREN** – A pair and a nest with young were reported from Anniston, *Calhoun*, 24 May (Debbie McKenzie), where it is a rare breeder.

**SEDGE WREN** – Three (maximum spring number for the Tennessee Valley) were reported from Oakland Marsh, *Lauderdale*, 12 April (Steve McConnell).

**MARSH WREN** – Rare but regular in both the Mountain Region and the Tennessee Valley, one was noted on the Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May (David George, Maureen Shaffer, Louise Tommie), and two were noted on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May (Ken Ward, Dwight Cooley *et al.*).

**RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET** – Three late birds were noted on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May (Steve McConnell, Linda Reynolds *et al.*).

**EASTERN BLUEBIRD** – The 97 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

**VEERY** – An early arrival was at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson*, 22 April (Ken Archambault). Late birds were noted at Madison, *Madison*, 16-17 May (Steve McConnell, Andrew Haffenden), and on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 May (Jacob Walker).

**AMERICAN ROBIN** – This species is a very local breeder in the WP, so reports of it from two locations in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 28 May (Lucy Duncan, Johnny Green) were notable.

**AMERICAN PIPIT** – One on the Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 2 May (Helen Kittinger, Ron Kittinger, Helen Kittinger) was late.

**SPRAGUE'S PIPIT** – Eleven birds were reported from Site B-70, Eglin Air Force Base, *Okaloosa*, 21 March (Lenny Fenimore) (found regularly at this location).

**“BREWSTER’S” WARBLER** – One was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 13 April (Peggy Baker *et al.*) (rare).

**NASHVILLE WARBLER** – The second March record for the WP was marked by an adult at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 15 March (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan). Rare in spring on the Gulf Coast, one was reported from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 4 April (Jacob Walker). Rare in the Mountain Region, two reports of singles came from Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 23 April: Ruffner Mountain (Greg Jackson), and Botanical Gardens (Ken Archambault). Rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley, three records were received: from the Wheeler NWR area, *Limestone*, three on 2 May (Dwight Cooley, Stan Hamilton *et al.*) and two on 3 May (Steve McConnell); one from Lauderdale WMA north of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner); and one from Monte Sano SP, *Madison*, 7 May (Matt Morrow).

**NORTHERN PARULA** – Five was a good number so early 8 March at Montgomery, *Montgomery* (Larry Gardella). An early arrival 10 March at Clay, *Jefferson* (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) tied the early record for the Mountain Region.

**YELLOW WARBLER** – The 11 on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 May (Jacob Walker) was a good number so late.

**CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** – Early singles were at Fort Toulouse, *Elmore*, 12 April (John Trent), and at Ruffner Mountain, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 18 April (Greg Jackson). Late birds included two at Madison, *Madison*, 16-17 May (Steve McConnell, Andrew Haffenden), and a single on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 31 May (late record for the Gulf Coast) (Carl Way, Brittany Way)

**MAGNOLIA WARBLER** – Nine on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley. Three records of late birds were received: two at Powder Magazine, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 14 May (Larry Gardella); two on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 23 May (Eric Liffmann *et al.*); and one at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 30 May (Steve McConnell).

**CAPE MAY WARBLER** – A late record for the Inland Coastal Plain was established by one at Powder Magazine, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 14 May (Larry Gardella), and the latest record for Alabama was marked by one on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 23 May (Eugenia Carey).

**BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** – Rare inland, three records were received: a female on Green Mountain, *Madison*, 21 April (Sue Moske); one at Monte Sano SP, *Madison*, 21 April (John Ehinger); and a singing male at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3 May (Steve McConnell).

**YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (AUDUBON’S)** – A male, marking the 12<sup>th</sup> record for Alabama, was seen on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 11-18 April (Howard Horne, m.ob.; ph.).

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** – One singing at Tyler, *Dallas*, 16 March (Frank Farrell, Shirley Farrell) established the earliest arrival record for inland

Alabama. A single on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 May (Jacob Walker) marked a new late departure date for the Gulf Coast.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** – Late birds were at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 24 May (Michael Jordan), and on Dauphin Island, *Mobile* (one on 23 May, Eugenia Carey; two on 24 May, Chazz Hesselein; and three on 25 May, Jacob Walker).

**YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** – One was early at Clay, *Jefferson*, 15 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent), and one at Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall*, 23 March (Matt Morrow) marked a new early arrival date for the Tennessee Valley.

**BLACKPOLL WARBLER** – Two were early at Powder Magazine, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 19 April (Larry Gardella).

**AMERICAN REDSTART** – Two birds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 23 May (Eric Liffmann *et al.*) were late.

**PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** – The 106 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a maximum count for inland Alabama.

**WORM-EATING WARBLER** – At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 72 were banded 28 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) to mark a spring maximum for Alabama.

**SWAINSON'S WARBLER** – One was singing on the Muscle Shoals Reservation of the Tennessee Valley Authority, *Colbert*, 30 May (Steve McConnell) (rare in the Tennessee Valley but regular in this area).

**OVENBIRD** – Two early birds were at Fort Toulouse, *Elmore*, 12 April (John Trent).

**LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH** – One at Clay, *Jefferson*, 10 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) was early.

**CONNECTICUT WARBLER** – An early bird was on Green Mountain at Huntsville, *Madison*, 30 April (Sue Moske) (rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley).

**MOURNING WARBLER** – A single was heard at Madison, *Madison*, 16 May (Steve McConnell, Dean Cutten) (rare but expected at this site in late spring).

**HOODED WARBLER** – The banding operation (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, netted 126 on 28 March (good number). Ten on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley.

**WILSON'S WARBLER** – Casual in spring on the Inland Coastal Plain, a single was noted at Shorter, *Macon*, 4 April (Eric Soehren). Rare on the Gulf Coast in spring, another single was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 3 May (Michael Jordan).

**CHIPPING SPARROW** – Thirty-one on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, established a maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley.

**LARK SPARROW** – Increasing as a breeder, 10 on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May was a good number locally. A pair was probably nesting at a new site, Rabbit Road in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 31 May (Larry Gardella).

**HENSLOW'S SPARROW** – Rare in spring, a single was spotted on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 18 April (Larry Gardella).

**SONG SPARROW** – A late bird was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 14 April (Greg Jackson).

- LINCOLN'S SPARROW** – Rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley, a single was noted at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 4 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner). Another single was seen at Madison, *Madison*, 29 May (Dean Cutten, Raelene Cutten) (latest record for Alabama).
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** – Ten+ north of Atmore, *Escambia*, 11 March (Chazz Hesselein) marked a maximum spring count for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama. Twelve counted at Oneonta, *Blount*, 11 March (Duane Brown, Lynn Brown) marked a new spring maximum for the Mountain Region.
- SCARLET TANAGER** – A single on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 23 May (Eric Liffmann *et al.*) marked a late record for the Gulf Coast.
- WESTERN TANAGER** – Casual in spring in the WP, a male was at a feeder in Niceville, *Okaloosa*, 9-10 March (Blake Hardison, Kelly Jones).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** – A male on Monte Sano Mountain, Huntsville, *Madison*, 14 April, tied the early arrival date for the Tennessee Valley (Jerry Green). A female at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 22 May (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan) was late.
- BLUE GROSBEAK** – Sixty-three on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, was a good number.
- INDIGO BUNTING** – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, tallied 937 (good number).
- PAINTED BUNTING** – A pair returned to Rabbit Road in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 3 May (Larry Gardella) (rare breeder inland).
- DICKCISSEL** – An early female was in Homewood, *Jefferson* (unusual site), 17 April (Ken Archambault).
- BOBOLINK** – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May, tallied 1,272, a maximum count for the Tennessee Valley.
- BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE** – Kelly Jones found a pair at Fort Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, 14 March, an unusual location for a species that is very rare in the WP.
- SHINY COWBIRD** – A male was at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 12-13 May (Ann Forster, Dan Forster) (very rare in the WP). Another male was at Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 20 April (David Dortch, Carrie Dortch) (rare).
- ORCHARD ORIOLE** – Two immature males were early south of Atmore, *Escambia*, 5 April (Jon Yoder, Dawn Yoder).
- BALTIMORE ORIOLE** – Casual in spring in the WP, a male that wintered at the feeder of Betsy Tetlow in Pensacola, *Escambia*, was last seen by her on 14 March.
- PINE SISKIN** – The estimates of 500+ at Clay, *Jefferson*, 1 March (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent), and a maximum of 500 in March at Loxley, *Baldwin* (Claire Krusko), tie for the maximum spring count for Alabama. One at Tallassee, *Elmore*, 31 May (Robert Reed, Pat Reed) was late.

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