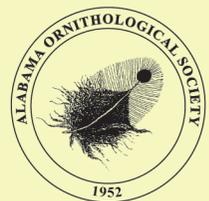


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Layout by Tom Haggerty

COVER: Least Bittern nestlings, 12 June 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; John A. Trent

SUMMARY OF BREEDING DATA FOR MARSH BIRDS IN THE LOWER MOBILE-TENSAW RIVER DELTA IN ALABAMA

John A. Trent and Monika K. Lapinski

INTRODUCTION

Nesting data for marsh birds can be challenging to obtain given their secretive nature in difficult to access habitats. Data regarding nesting behavior and ecology help fill important gaps in our understanding of the breeding biology and natural history of these species. Breeding information for marsh birds in coastal Alabama is largely limited to observations of dependent young (Greg D. Jackson, pers. comm.), and data from nests monitored throughout a single nesting season are generally lacking. In this article we summarize breeding data and natural history observations collected during the 2015 nesting season on select marsh bird species at a study site in coastal Alabama.

METHODS

Our nest data were collected in conjunction with a larger scale project focused on the status and distribution of marsh birds in the Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta (LMTRD) in Mobile and Baldwin counties. Focal species included Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), King Rail (*Rallus elegans*), Common Gallinule (*Gallinula galeata*), and Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinicus*). Field work took place 1 April–16 July 2015. The study site encompassed an area approximately 15 km (north to south) by 10 km (east to west). The general boundary included Chuckfee Bay southwest to Spanish River, south to Polecat Bay, east to Blakeley River and Bay Minette, and north to the Apalachee/Tensaw River confluence (Fig. 1). The habitat within the study area consisted of tidally-influenced emergent marsh amid shallow bays, narrow creeks, and major river channels. The area is predominantly influenced by an influx of freshwater from major rivers during spring and early summer, while areas in late summer (especially to the south) experience an influx of brackish water from Mobile Bay during dry weather patterns (Bault 1972). However, the degree of salt water interchange even during the driest of periods in the LMTRD has been anthropogenically reduced by the U.S. Hwy 98/90 causeway to the south (Fig. 1; Orlando et al. 1993 and references therein).

Nest searching took place in conjunction with call-broadcast surveys following the National Marsh Bird Monitoring Protocol (Conway 2011). After the comple-

tion of a survey route in the morning we spent time typically along that same route searching for nests. Search effort increased later in the season as the first active nests of the target species were found. The vast majority of search time was via a surface-drive boat (SeaArk Boats, Monticello, AR; Gator-Tail Outboards, Loreauville, LA) slowly working along the edges of the marsh. Limited time was spent walking transects through the marsh interior. The former was our preferred method as we were able to cover a much larger area and detect more nests in a shorter amount of time. Each nest was georeferenced using a GPS unit. Nests were considered active once the first egg was laid. In addition to recording contents, the observed activity of the adults (if any) around the nest was noted. We used a pre-marked PVC pole to measure water depth, nest height above water, and maximum vegetation height above the water. We also noted the dominant plant species supporting each nest (nest substrate). Photographs were taken during initial and most follow-up visits. Nest visits were conducted on average every 11 days, and visits continued until a nest fate could be determined. Nests were considered successful by evidence of hatched chicks and eggshell fragments or observed adults with young in close proximity to the nest. We spent as little time as possible at each nest to record measurements and observations and left promptly in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance.

Inclusive dates for eggs and young were determined by observed data and backdating when necessary. Backdating was used if we had limited nest check information from a particular nest, but critical periods in the nesting cycle were observed such as total clutch size, egg laying dates, or exact hatching dates. This allowed us to use known nesting cycle durations for that particular species to fill in the missing information. Observations of juvenile birds seen away from nests were incorporated into the overall inclusive date range.

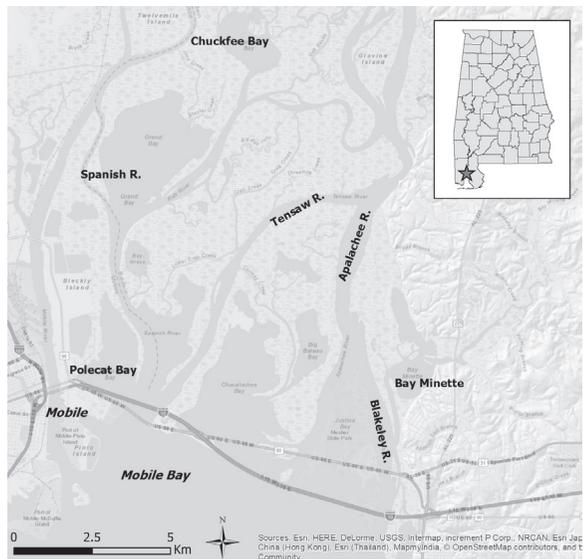


FIGURE 1. Study area for marsh bird survey project, 1 April–16 July 2015, Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, Mobile and Baldwin Co., Alabama.

RESULTS

A total of 20 active nests of Least Bittern, Common Gallinule, and Purple Gallinule was monitored during the survey period (Table 1). No King Rail nests were found. Table 1 summarizes the nesting data for each species.

TABLE 1. Breeding data summary for marsh birds in the Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, 1 April–16 July 2015, Mobile and Baldwin Co., Alabama

Species	Number of Nests	Avg. Clutch Size (range)	Inclusive Dates		Nest Site Measurements (cm)		
			Eggs	Young	Avg. Water Depth (range)	Avg. Nest Height Above Water (range)	Avg. Plant Height Above Water (range)
Least Bittern	3	3.3 (2-4)	15 May–8 June	9 June +	27 (0-50)	68 (60-75)	250 (230-270)
King Rail				6 May +			
Common Gallinule	4	7.0 (6-8)	11 May–28 June	28 May +	32 (10-80)	43 (20-65)	121 (100-130)
Purple Gallinule	13	6.2 (5-7)	12 May–14 July	5 June +	43 (10-110)	51 (10-80)	118 (50-230)

Least Bittern.— The first detection of Least Bittern in the study area was 31 March. A total of three active nests was found during the study period. Nests with eggs were documented 15 May–8 June. The only nest documented with young hatched 9 June with the young lingering in the nest through at least 16 June. The average clutch size was 3.3 (range 2–4). The average water depth at each nest was 27 cm (range 0–50 cm). The average nest height above water was 68 cm (range 60–75 cm) and average vegetation height above water was 250 cm (range 230–270 cm). The nest substrate was unique for each nest and included Giant Cutgrass (*Zizaniopsis miliacea*; Fig. 2), Giant Cordgrass (*Spartina*



FIGURE 2. Least Bittern nest in Giant Cutgrass (*Zizaniopsis miliacea*), Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, Baldwin Co., AL; Photograph by J. Trent on 15 May 2015.

cynosuroides), and Southern Cattail (*Typha domingensis*; see Cover photo). Success was confirmed at one nest while the remaining two had unknown fates.

All nests were < 10 m from the water-marsh interface. Since each nest was in a different plant substrate, nest placement and concealment varied. The first nest was found in a large patch of Giant Cutgrass with a fairly exposed platform built among the leaves (Fig. 2). The second nest was well concealed in Giant Cordgrass and was supported by a sturdily constructed base worked in among the cordgrass stalks. The third nest was in Southern Cattail and was placed near the base where the leaves were most compact, providing support and concealment. All nests were lined with dead leaves from their respective substrate, and there was a heavy preference for incorporating the more rigid central stalk of the dead leaves to construct the nest platform. There were leaves above each nest being arched over for concealment but they were not prominent.

King Rail. — While no nest of King Rail was found, we did encounter hatch-year birds on two occasions. A family group with recently hatched dependent young was observed 6 May and consisted of one adult with several small downy chicks. They were found in habitat dominated by Bulltongue Arrowhead (*Sagittaria lancifolia*) and Cattail (*Typha* sp.). Chicks are capable of leaving the nest and following the adult within 24 hours of hatching (Pickens and Meanley 2015); therefore, given their small size, we conservatively estimated they were only 2-4 days old. Using published nesting data for King Rail and assuming a 21-day incubation period, an egg laid per day, and a clutch size of 10-11 eggs (Pickens and Meanley 2015), the nest would have likely been initiated during the first week of April.

The second encounter with hatch-year birds was a pair of independent individuals observed on 22 June. Both had molted out of their natal down and into juvenile plumage (Pickens and Meanley 2015, Pyle 2008).

Common Gallinule. — Four active Common Gallinule nests were found. Nests with eggs were documented 11 May–28 June (Fig. 3). Young, including broods observed away from known nests, were observed from 28 May through the end of the survey period (16 July). Average clutch size was 7.0 (range 6–8). The average water depth for nests was 32 cm (range 10–80 cm). The average nest height above water was 43 cm (range 20–65 cm). The average total vegetation height above water was 121 cm (range 100–130 cm). The primary substrate for nests included Alligatorweed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*; n=2), Bulltongue Arrowhead (n=1), and Green Arrow-Arum (*Peltandra virginica*; n=1). We were able to confirm fledging at two of the four nests.

One Common Gallinule nest represented the only interior nest (> 10 m from water-marsh interface) of all species, at approximately 16 m from the edge. All nests consisted of sturdy platforms lined with leaves and plant stalks. Of the four nests, two were well concealed from above, while the remaining two had minimal overhead cover. Vegetation providing overhead concealment of nests appeared to be primarily due to the thickness of the surrounding vegetation rather than from material being arched over by the adults.



FIGURE 3. Common Gallinule nest with eggs in Alligatorweed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, Baldwin Co., Alabama. Photograph by J. Trent on 12 June 2015.

Purple Gallinule.— The first detection of Purple Gallinule in the study area was 10 April. Thirteen active nests were found, the most of any target species. Nests with eggs were observed 12 May–14 July. Young were documented from 5 June through the end of the survey period (16 July). Average clutch size was 6.2 (range 5–7). The average water depth for nests was 43 cm (range 10–110 cm). The average nest height above water was 51 cm (range 10–80 cm). The average total vegetation height above water was 118 cm (range 50–230 cm). The primary nest substrate species were Giant Cutgrass (n=6), Cattail (n=3), Alligatorweed (n=2), Green Arrow-Arum (n=1), and Bulltongue Arrowhead (n=1). Ten of the thirteen nests were successful, two failed, and one nest outcome was unknown.



FIGURE 4. Purple Gallinule nest site in Broadleaf Cattail (*Typha latifolia*) showing characteristic domed appearance, Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, Baldwin Co., Alabama. Photograph by J. Trent on 8 June 2015.

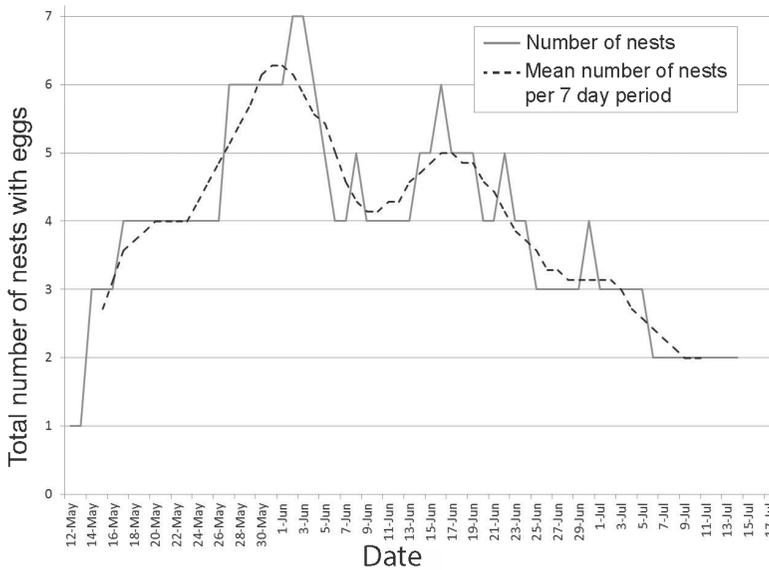


FIGURE 5. Nesting phenology of Purple Gallinule, 1 April–16 July 2015, Lower Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, Mobile and Baldwin Co., Alabama.

All nests were < 10 m from the water-marsh interface. Nine nests had well developed domes of vegetation presumably for additional shade and concealment (Fig. 4). Nest base structure and lining were similar to Common Gallinules consisting of a sturdy platform lined with thin strips of plant material.

Purple Gallinule was the only species with enough nesting data to identify the nesting phenology from the start of the breeding season to the end of the project period. Figure 5 illustrates the total active nests per day with eggs plotted against a seven-day averaged curve. This information was derived from our nest check observations and backdating using published nesting stage durations to fill in missing gaps. We assumed a minimum incubation duration of 18 days and incubation beginning with the penultimate egg (West and Hess 2002). The results indicate two primary peaks of nests with eggs beginning 31 May and 16 June. A third period of activity (albeit decreased from earlier in the season) occurred in July with the last eggs hatching near the end of the survey period in mid-July.

DISCUSSION

King Rails were the first to initiate breeding in early April. Least Bittern, Common Gallinule, and Purple Gallinule initiated in early May. We were unable

to backdate more precise initiation dates for Least Bittern and Common Gallinule since the first nesting attempts were found with full clutches, and young were never documented from those nests.

All of our focal species are believed to have at least two broods in a season (Poole et al. 2009, Bannor and Kiviat 2002, West and Hess 2002), especially in the southern United States where the growing season is longer (Pickens and Meanley 2015). Distinguishing between second broods and re-nests after failed attempts is difficult given our limited dataset, but the timing of later nests in relation to fledged young from earlier nest attempts provides support for possible second brood initiation dates. Based on this assumption, Common Gallinule second broods may have initiated in late May or early June, and Purple Gallinule second broods may have initiated during the second week of June. Multiple broods are likely for both gallinules in coastal Alabama since historical nesting records indicate a long nesting season, with Common Gallinule fledged young observed as late as 30 August and Purple Gallinule young as late as 6 September (Greg D. Jackson, pers. comm.). Our nesting data for Least Bittern are insufficient to make estimates on potential second broods as all of our nests were initiated throughout May. However, one historical record of a nest with eggs found within our study area on 14 July 2004 supports the likelihood of multiple broods in coastal Alabama (Greg D. Jackson, Eric C. Soehren, pers. comm.).

Least Bitterns typically prefer taller emergent marsh vegetation (Poole et al. 2009), and our data corroborate this since the average total substrate height above water was the greatest among all species at 250 cm (Table 1). Average water depth and nest height above water were similar among Common and Purple Gallinules. All nest substrates used by Common Gallinule were also used by Purple Gallinule. Unique nest substrates used by Purple Gallinule not shared with Common Gallinule were Giant Cutgrass and Cattail, representing nine of the thirteen total Purple Gallinule nests. Nests in these substrates had extensive domes constructed above the nest which is typical for the species (West and Hess 2002). This proved to be an important factor in finding Purple Gallinule nests since the dome of vegetation was often readily visible from a distance. Giant Cutgrass was the overall preferred substrate of Purple Gallinule containing six of the thirteen nests. In one instance, a nest was placed in the only clump of this species within an otherwise continuous stand of Cattail.

Adult behavior and vocalizations at nests varied among individuals. Behavior at one Least Bittern nest was notable. The nest was found with two eggs and with the male in attendance. He was in a defensive posture with wings spread over the nest, beak pointing straight up, and body swaying side-to-side. He would

periodically thrust his neck forward, jabbing with his beak, and emitting a single “gack” call, similar to the interaction described by Weller (1961). Common Gallinules have an extremely complex and diverse vocal repertoire that is still in need of further study (Bannor and Kiviat 2002). One uncommon call we heard only when Common Gallinules were flushed from nests was a long, harsh grating call. Purple Gallinule sounds are similarly complex and poorly studied (West and Hess 2002). We encountered one very defensive individual at a nest with eggs that remained within two meters of us for the entire duration of our visit. The vocalization emitted was distinctive with short high-pitched clucking notes followed with a shrieking call (recording: <http://www.xeno-canto.org/277317>). West and Hess (2002) described this call as part of the “reedy cry” complex. We heard this call at other times throughout the season and we presume it may be related to anxiety or defense.

The only extended observation at a nest was of Purple Gallinule chicks leaving the nest presumably for the first time (Bill Summerour, pers. comm.). Early in the afternoon on 24 June, an adult was sitting on the nest brooding several chicks. A second adult approached the nest and coaxed three chicks out and away by emitting soft call notes. The chicks climbed out of the nest and through the tangles of vegetation, tumbling and falling at times. The adult coaxing them out was highly attentive during this period. The chicks then disappeared with the adult into thick vegetation. The brooding adult and several other chicks were still in the nest at the end of the two-hour observation period.

Areas for future study on nesting marsh birds in coastal Alabama include determining the full breadth of inclusive breeding dates for these species, which aside from King Rail are known to extend beyond our survey period (Imhof 1976, Greg D. Jackson, pers. comm.). More intensive nest searching should be undertaken, particularly in the interior marsh away from the edge, which would provide a more standardized approach and potentially increase the number of nests found (especially for King Rail). There is also a need for thorough documentation of call-type varieties among the focal species, especially among both gallinule species. If call-types can be reliably linked to different sexes or are indicative of nesting stages or nest success, surveyors could account for potential detection biases when conducting call-broadcast surveys (Robertson and Olsen 2014).

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FALL SIGHTINGS (AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2014)

Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan

This report covers the period from August through November 2014 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. “b” = banded; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NF” = National Forest; “NP” = Nature Preserve; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “OCWSTF” = Okaloosa County Water and Sewage Treatment Facility; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK – Two adults and 15 juveniles at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 4 August (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Furrow) established the first breeding record for the WP. One-two were reported from the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 1-26 August (Wendi Greene, Malcolm Swan, Bruce Purdy). Odis Johnson reported two at Hacoma, *Geneva*, 8 September, a site where this species is becoming regular (rare inland; first fall record for the Inland Coastal Plain). This species is rare but increasing on the Gulf Coast of Alabama. Karen Chiasson noted

five adults at Belforest, *Baldwin*, 6 August (not a regular site). The sewage lagoons at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, are a regular breeding site, as evidenced by these observations: a pair and five small young, 6 October (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson); a pair and seven large young, 4 November (Karen Chiasson); and a pair, seven large young, and six adults 11 November (Karen Chiasson). Jimmy Stephenson reported 12 from Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 29 November, a regular site for this species (late departure record for the Gulf Coast).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – Rare in the WP, 55 were counted at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 2 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

ROSS'S GOOSE – A single was observed north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 21-25 November (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo *et al.*) (rare but regular on the Gulf Coast). Three were west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 25 November (Damien Simbeck) (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley).

TUNDRA SWAN – Reports of this species, rare and erratic in Alabama, came from two sites: Stevenson, *Jackson*, six adults and one immature, 18-20 November (Joseph Knoll, Beth Knoll *et al.*), and Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, four adults and one immature 26 November (Ashley Peters; ph.).

GADWALL – A single was at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 6 August (Sue Moske, Milton Harris) (early fall record for the Tennessee Valley vs. a rare summering record). Seven were found on the Birmingham area fall count, *Shelby*, 27 September (John Imhof *et al.*) (early). A count of 500 at Whitsitt, *Hale*, 15 November (Don Self, Judy Self) established a fall maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain.

CANVASBACK – Damien Simbeck reported 500 on the Tennessee River east of Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 25 November (maximum fall count for Alabama).

REDHEAD – A male was at Opelika, *Lee*, 8-29 September (Rodney McCollum *et al.*; ph.) (an early arrival record for Alabama unless a locally summering bird).

GREATER SCAUP – Geoff Hill reported one from Opelika, *Lee*, 23 November (rare in the Mountain Region).

LESSER SCAUP – A single female-type seen by Sue Moske at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 28 August, was probably a rare summering individual.

SURF SCOTER – Rare but regular on the Gulf Coast, records came from three sites in *Baldwin*: two at the Gulf Shores sewage lagoons, 3-4 November (Karen Chiasson; ph.); a single on Lake Shelby in Gulf SP, 16 November (Karen Chiasson); and 13 at Gulf Shores, 25 November (Keith McMullen).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – A single female-type was on Lake Shelby in Gulf SP, *Baldwin*, 10 November (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare but regular on the Gulf Coast).

LONG-TAILED DUCK – Larry Gardella reported one female-type from Lake Cameron east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 9 November (rare, third fall record for the Inland Coastal Plain).

RUDDY DUCK – This species rarely summers in Alabama, but is becoming more frequent in summer in Hale County in recent years. Several males were noted on multiple ponds in *Hale*, 2+ August (Greg Harber, m.ob.). Several counts were made by Larry

Gardella at Montgomery, *Montgomery*: 98 (9 November), 152 (11 November), and 250 (15-22 November), the latter number marking a maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain.

RED-THROATED LOON – A single was reported from Guntersville, *Marshall*, 11 November (Sue Moske) (rare though regular at this site).

PACIFIC LOON – A single was reported from Guntersville, *Marshall*, 8-26 November (Greg Jackson *et al.*; ph.) (rare though regular at this site).

COMMON LOON – Jon King sighted a single at Pelican Peninsula on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 15 August (rare but regular summering species).

PIED-BILLED GREBE – Nesting of this uncommon breeder was documented by the observation of a pair and four juveniles at the Marion fish hatchery, *Perry*, 2 August (Greg Harber, Birmingham Audubon Society).

EARED GREBE – Reports of singles of this species, rare and erratic on the Gulf Coast, came from Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob.), and north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 20-21 November (Howard Horne *et al.*; ph.).

WOOD STORK – Seven were in *Holmes* on 3 August (Charlie Saleeby), and a single was in *Escambia* 7 August (Brenda Callaway) (rare in the WP). Two late birds were at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 4 November (Patsy Russo *et al.*).

NORTHERN GANNET – An immature bird was seen offshore on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 22 August (Patsy Russo, David Dortch *et al.*; ph.) (rare but summering regularly on the Gulf Coast).

ANHINGA – A single was reported from southern *Lee* on 7 September (Jim Holmes, Rodney McCollum) (locally rare).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – One was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2 August (Sue Moske, Joan Allen, Milton Harris) (uncommon in August in the Tennessee Valley). This species is uncommon but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, and records came from four sites: 100+ in *Hale*, 2+ August (Greg Harber, Birmingham Audubon Society *et al.*) (becoming regular in this area); 13 north of Atmore, *Escambia*, 11 August (John Cole, Margaret Cole); 26 at Demopolis, *Marengo*, 27 September (Don Self, Judy Self); and one at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 2 November (Larry Gardella).

AMERICAN BITTERN – One was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 27 November (Sue Moske; ph.). This species is an uncommon but regular transient in the Tennessee Valley, and this sighting marked a late fall date for the region (casual in winter).

CATTLE EGRET – Jon King reported 1,500 from the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 8 August (maximum fall count for the Gulf Coast). Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, hosted 1,000 on 21 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (good number).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON – Jon King reported 128 from the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 8 August (maximum fall count for the Gulf Coast).

WHITE-FACED IBIS – A single was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 20-21 October (Bruce Purdy, Wendi Greene) (very rare in the WP). One was found at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15-16 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob.; ph.) (rare but becoming

regular on the Gulf Coast).

- PLEGADIS SP.** – A single probable Glossy Ibis was reported from Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 16+ September (Thomas Ress *et al.*) (rare inland).
- ROSEATE SPOONBILL** – Two were at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 7 September (Riley Kilpatrick, Keith Floyd, Jimmie McNairy, Jacob McNairy; ph.) (sixth record for the Tennessee Valley). A single immature lingered at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 21 September – 29 November (Steve Hambalek, m.ob.) (rare but becoming regular on the Gulf Coast).
- OSPREY** – Five were noted at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 3+ August (John Trent *et al.*) to mark a maximum count for the Inland Coastal Plain.
- SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** – Charles Grisham spotted a single at Geraldine, *DeKalb*, 18 August (rare in the Mountain Region, especially this far north).
- MISSISSIPPI KITE** – Uncommon but increasing in the Mountain Region, reports were received from four sites: good numbers were seen near Danway, *Chambers*, a regular concentration site – 45 on 23 July, 33 on 25 July, and 49 on 13 August (Lorna West); a juvenile was at McCalla, *Jefferson*, 15 August (Zach Loman); an immature was south of Centre, *Cherokee*, 20 August (John Imhof); and three were reported from Gaylesville, *Cherokee*, 21 August (John Imhof). Michael Jordan counted 11 at Malbis, *Baldwin*, 24 August (maximum fall number for the Gulf Coast).
- COOPER'S HAWK** – A fall count on Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 27 September, tallied 10 (maximum fall number for the Tennessee Valley).
- BROAD-WINGED HAWK** – A late adult was found at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob.).
- SWAINSON'S HAWK** – A single was found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 18 October (Bruce Purdy, Alan Knothe, Lenny Fenimore) (very rare fall migrant in the WP). One immature was recorded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 23 October (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo, Michelle Steber) (rare but regular in late fall on the Gulf Coast).
- GOLDEN EAGLE** – Rare in Alabama, reports of singles came from Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 24 November (Sue Moske), and Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 27 November (Geoff Hill).
- SORA** – At the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 75 were counted on 2 November (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway) (high number for the WP).
- PURPLE GALLINULE** – A late juvenile was at Meaher SP, *Baldwin*, 27-30 October (Karen Chiasson; ph.).
- COMMON GALLINULE** – A single was at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 27 September (Jane Allen, Dick Bruer *et al.*), and four immatures were at Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 8 October (Jane Allen, Sue Moske; ph.) (rare in the Tennessee Valley).
- AMERICAN COOT** – Rare but regularly summering in Alabama, four reports, all of singles, were received: Cullman, *Cullman*, 3 August (Geoffrey Tucker); Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin*, 7 August (Jon King); Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 20 August (James White); and Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 30 August (Sue Moske).
- SANDHILL CRANE** – Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, hosted three birds on 28 October (Teresa

Adams) and 4,000 on 22+ November (Anne Miller, Dwight Cooley, m.ob.), the latter a maximum fall number for Alabama. At Stevenson, *Jackson*, Sue Moske reported 17 on 3 November, while 60 were there 20 November (Joseph Knoll, Beth Knoll *et al.*) (locally rare).

BLACK-NECKED STILT – Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, harbored 130 on 3 October (John Trent, m.ob.) (good number this late).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER – A single was west of Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 31 August (Jim Holmes, James F. Holmes) (rare but regular in fall on the Inland Coastal Plain).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS – A count of 28 at Whitsitt, *Hale*, 15 November (Don Self, Judy Self) established a maximum fall number for the Inland Coastal Plain.

UPLAND SANDPIPER – Late singles were at Laceys Spring, *Morgan*, 25 September (Sue Moske), and at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 4 October (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

DUNLIN – An early arrival was at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 27 September (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton, Rick Remy).

BAIRD’S SANDPIPER – This species was found near Leighton, *Colbert*, 11 August – 2 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*), with a maximum of five on 14 August (rare but regular in fall in northwest Alabama). A single was west of Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 31 August (Jim Holmes, James F. Holmes) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER – One was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 5 August (Malcolm Swan) (rare in fall in the WP). At Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 200 (good number) were found 16 November (Howard Horne, Andrew Haffenden).

WILSON’S PHALAROPE – At Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, one-six were reported on multiple dates from 1 October – 15 November (John Trent, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, m.ob.) (rare, with the 15 November record marking a late departure date for the Gulf Coast).

BONAPARTE’S GULL – A single seen on the Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin*, 8 August (Jon King) was probably a summering bird and, if so, the first for Alabama; otherwise, an early arrival record for Alabama.

LAUGHING GULL – A single first cycle bird was at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 21 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*; ph.) where this species is rare but regular. Two were at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 14+ October (Sue Moske *et al.*; ph.) (rare but regular at this site).

FRANKLIN’S GULL – Rare but regular in fall in the Tennessee Valley, five



Franklin’s Gull, 24 Oct 2014, Marshall Co., AL; C. H. Grisham.

records were received from this area: an adult was at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 21 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*; ph.); another adult was at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 8-13 October (Damien Simbeck *et al.*); a first cycle bird was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 22-27 October (Greg Jackson, Sue Moske, Jane Allen *et al.*; ph.); an adult was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 8-11 November (Greg Jackson *et al.*; ph.); and a first cycle individual was at Wheeler Dam, *Lawrence*, 14-24 November (Greg Jackson *et al.*; ph.). Four birds were at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 14 November (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast).

RING-BILLED GULL – At Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale*, Damien Simbeck reported 11 on 6 August and 162 on 12 August, the latter a good number for so early in the season.

HERRING GULL – Damien Simbeck reported six from Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale*, 12 August, a good number for so early in the season.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley, reports from three sites were received: Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale*, three on 14 August (early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley) and four on 21+ September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*; ph.); Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, one on 9 September, two on 2 October, five on 8 October, and eight on 13 October, the latter a maximum count for Alabama (Damien Simbeck, Greg Miller *et al.*); and Guntersville, *Marshall*, one on 31 October (Linda Reynolds) and three on 1 November (Greg Jackson, Charles Grisham *et al.*; ph.).



Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1 November 2014, Marshall Co., AL; C. H. Grisham.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – An early adult was seen on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 1 September (Andrew Haffenden; ph.), and an adult was seen on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 23 November (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway) (rare but regular in these areas).

BRIDLED TERN – Three were noted 50 miles south of Pensacola, *Escambia*, 1 September (James Pfeiffer) (very rare in the WP).

COMMON TERN – Damien Simbeck found two at Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, 9 October (rare but regular in fall in the Tennessee Valley).

SANDWICH TERN – Andrew Haffenden counted 402 (good number) on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 16 August.

ROCK PIGEON – A fall survey on Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 27 September, tallied 631, a maximum fall count for the Tennessee Valley.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – Rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain, two were at a feeder in Ashford, *Houston*, 1 November (Renea Todd *et al.*; ph.) (not a regular site), and a single was at a feeder in Excel, *Monroe*, 29 November (Andrew Arnold *et al.*) (regular site).

INCA DOVE – The sixth record for Alabama was marked by one-two on the Fort Morgan

Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 12 October – 11 November (Janice Neitzel; ph.; under review by Alabama Bird Records Committee). Seven continued at a regular site south of



Inca Dove, 11 November 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; J. Neitzel.

Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 26 October (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo).

COMMON GROUND-DOVE – Counts of eight (maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain) came from each of two sites, Point A Lake, *Covington*, 1 September (Lucy Wilder), and Seho, *Bullock*, 1 October (Geoff Hill).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO – Scot Duncan reported a late single from Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 2 November.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO – Damien Simbeck found one at Mountain Star, *Franklin*, 9 October (rare in fall, especially inland).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI – Singles were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 1-22 October (Larry Goodman, Alan Gurney), and at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 27 October (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Furlow, Peggy Baker) (rare in the WP in fall). One was at Pilot Town on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 17 October (Karen Chiasson; ph.), and two calling birds were at Gulf SP, *Baldwin*, 22 October (Geoff White; ph.) (rare and erratic in Alabama).

SHORT-EARED OWL – A single was noted on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 2 November (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway) (rare and erratic on the Gulf Coast). Sue Moske found one near Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 30 November (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley).

CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW – Two late birds were reported from Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 27 September (Duane Brown, Lynn Brown).

EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL – Bob Duncan reported a single at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 28 October (rare in the WP).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD – Fifty (28 b.) was a good number at Antioch, *Lauderdale*, 16 August (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).

ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD – The third record for Florida was marked by an adult female at the home of Patricia Ann Rutherford in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 22-28 November (Fred Bassett; b.).

RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD – Rare but regular in Alabama, three reports were received: an adult male that had been banded 25 November 2013 in Hartford, *Geneva*, AL, was recaptured in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 14 August (Fred Moore); an adult male was at Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 16+ August (Duane Miller *et al.*; ph.); and two adult males and a probable immature male were at Enterprise, *Coffee*, 10 September (Rick Ingram).

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD – A second year male was recaptured (return to site) at

Hartford, *Geneva*, 22 November (Fred Bassett, Dick Mowbray).

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD – Vaughan Hedrick reported a single from Pensacola, *Escambia*, 8 November (rare in the WP).

PEREGRINE FALCON – Reports of early arrivals, all of singles, came from Whitsitt, *Hale*, 9 August (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo); Chastang, *Mobile*, 9 August (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo); and Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 2 September (Greg Harber, M. Reynolds, David Cousins).

OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER – Singles were at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 7 and 15 September and 5 October (Bob Duncan), and another single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 13 September (Ron Sinclair, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (rare but regular fall migrant in the WP). A single at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 2 August (Sue Moske, Jane Allen, Milton Harris) established an early arrival record for Alabama (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley). Another record of an early Tennessee Valley bird came from Harvest, *Madison*, 4 September (Mike Stahl, Angela Stahl; ph.). Rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast, reports of early singles came from Dauphin Island (Goat Trees), *Mobile*, 5 September (Andrew Haffenden, Sue Moske), and Dauphin Island (Shell Mounds) 13 September (Andrew Haffenden, Howard Horne). The Birmingham area count (Greg Harber), *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, reported one on 27 September (rare in the Mountain Region).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE – A late single was in Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 30 October (Larry Gardella).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER – Rare but regular in fall, numerous reports were received. A minimum of seven birds were reported from the Tennessee Valley, 29 August – 22 September; five were found in the Mountain Region, 31 August – 27 September; a single was seen on the Inland Coastal Plain, 1 September; and a minimum of 13 was reported from the Gulf Coast, 14 September – 18 October, with a maximum of five on 23 September. On the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, two were noted 29 August, two on 20 September, and a single on 25 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*). Sue Moske reported a single from Green Mountain, *Madison*, 29 August. Sightings of singles were made at Ruffner Mountain NP, *Jefferson*, 31 August (Rick Remy, Susan Remy) and 22 September (Stan Hamilton). Larry Gardella saw one at Powder Magazine Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 1 September. Sue Moske spotted one at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 1 September. Andrew Haffenden reported singles from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 4-5 September and 27 September. At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, singles were banded on 9, 10, and 13 September and 18 October (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*). Scot Duncan found a single at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson*, 13 September. Sue Moske located one at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 22 September. Blakeley SP, *Baldwin*, hosted good numbers this fall: five (ties maximum for Alabama) on 23 September (Karen Chiasson; one ph.); two on 25 September (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo); and four on 27 September (Karen Chiasson). A single was at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 27 September (Brian Naylor, Charlotte Naylor). Two were sighted during the Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 27 September (Greg Jackson,

Pelham Rowan). One was on the Clearwater Tract north of Stockton, *Baldwin*, 6 October (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo).

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER – Michael Jordan counted 23 (good number) on the Clearwater Tract north of Stockton, *Baldwin*, 14 September.

ALDER FLYCATCHER – Rare but regular in fall, two calling birds were noted at the Forever Wild Field Trial Area, Cedarville, *Hale*, 23 August (John Trent, Ashley Peters).

WILLOW FLYCATCHER – A calling single was at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 4 October (Andrew Haffenden; ph.) (rare but regular in fall).

EASTERN PHOEBE – Geoff Hill counted 15 at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 30 November (maximum fall number for the Inland Coastal Plain).

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER

– Rare but regular in fall along the coast, records of singles came from Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 15 and 21 October (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway), and Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 10 November (Lucy Duncan). At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, one was banded 15 October (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*; ph.).



SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER – Ash-throated Flycatcher, 15 October 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; T. J. Zenzal.

Three were reported from *Escambia* 30 September – 22 October (Lucy Duncan, Larry Goodman, Robert Ludlow) (rare but regular in the WP).

WHITE-EYED VIREO – Forty was a good number on the fall count at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 27 September.

BELL'S VIREO – Singles were at Okaloosa County Veterans Park, *Okaloosa*, 17 September (Malcolm Swan), and at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 10 October (Lucy Duncan) (very rare in the WP).

WARBLING VIREO – Lucy Duncan found one at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 6 September (first September record for the WP). Reports of singles came from four sites in Alabama: Ruffner Mountain NP, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 21 September (Scot Duncan, Elizabeth Conn *et al.*) (rare in the Mountain Region); Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 4 October (Larry Gardella) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain); Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 4 October (Brian Henderson) (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley); and Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 5 October (Greg Jackson) (rare on the Gulf Coast).

HORNED LARK – A single was found west of Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 31 August (Jim Holmes, James F. Holmes) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, especially this early).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW – One thousand in *Hale*, 9 August (Ben Garmon) was a good number. Two north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 14 November (Randy White) marked a late departure date for the Inland Coastal Plain. A late single

was at the airport on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 24 November (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway).

CLIFF SWALLOW – A very late bird was at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 17 November (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Peggy Baker, Bruce Furlow).

CAVE SWALLOW – A single seen at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 26 October (Sue Moske), marked several records: fourth record for inland Alabama, fourth fall record for Alabama, and second record for the Tennessee Valley.

BARN SWALLOW – An immature bird north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 14 November (Randy White) marked a late record for the Inland Coastal Plain.

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – Geoff Hill found a single at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 31 August (rare this far south). Larry Gardella reported a single from Oak Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 3 September (rare this far south, though a frequent site). A fall count on Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 27 September, tallied 48 (good number).

HOUSE WREN – Sue Moske found late singles at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, and at Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, 30 November. Another late single was east of Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 30 November (Scot Duncan).

BEWICK'S WREN – One was identified at Zion City, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 27-28 September (Scot Duncan *et al.*) (occasional in Alabama in recent years).

VEERY – Two early birds were on the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, 29 August (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH – Eric Soehren reported a single from Shorter, *Macon*, 25 October (late departure record for the Inland Coastal Plain).

SWAINSON'S THRUSH – One was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 5 September (Bob Duncan) (very early in the WP).

SPRAGUE'S PIPIT – Two were located south of Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 28 November (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare but regular in this area).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH – Early singles were on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 11 August (Jon King), and at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 14 August (Larry Gardella *et al.*).

“LAWRENCE'S” WARBLER – A female was at Bayou Sara, *Mobile*, 27 September (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*; b.; ph.) (sixth record for the Gulf Coast, 12th for Alabama).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER – A late bird was at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 30 November (Geoff Hill).

NASHVILLE WARBLER – One seen at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 30 August (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway) marked an early fall arrival date for Alabama. Rare but regular in fall in the Mountain Region, several records were



Sprague's Pipit, 28 November 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

received: singles were found at Ruffner Mountain NP, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 7 September (Scot Duncan, Rick Remy, Susan Remy, Will Hustwit) and 30 September (Greg Jackson); a single was at Mentone, *DeKalb*, 9-11 October (Scot Duncan); one was found at Ruffner Mountain NP and two at Zion City, *Jefferson*, 18 October (Scot Duncan, Will Hustwit); and a single was at Opelika, *Lee*, 26 October (Rodney McCollum). Rare but regular on the Inland Coastal Plain in fall, reports of singles came from three locations: Pine Level, *Autauga*, 15 September (Ashley Peters), and two sites near Andalusia, *Covington*, 29 September and 4 October (Thomas Savage). A late bird was on the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, 24 October (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).



Lawrence's Warbler, 27 September 2014, Mobile Co., AL; T. J. Zenzal.

MOURNING WARBLER – One was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 7 September (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (casual in fall in the WP). At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, singles were banded on 26 and 28 August and on 8 and 30 September (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*) (rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast). Rare in fall inland, one was sighted at Ruffner Mountain NP, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 21 September (Rick Remy, Susan Remy, Todd Devore).

CAPE MAY WARBLER – Rare in fall, reports of singles came from Green Mountain, *Madison*, 15 September (Sue Moske), and Anniston, *Calhoun*, 8 October (Debbie McKenzie; ph.).

NORTHERN PARULA – Counts of 12 were made at Dale County Lake, *Dale*, 23 September (Randy White) and at Old Cahaba SP, *Dallas*, 6 October (Don Self, Judy Self), these numbers marking a tie for the maximum fall count on the Inland Coastal Plain. A maximum fall count (11) for the Tennessee Valley came from the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, 25 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).

MAGNOLIA WARBLER – A bird found by Geoff Hill at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 31 August, marked an early arrival date for the Inland Coastal Plain.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER – An early arrival date for the Tennessee Valley was marked by a single on the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, 5 September (Damien Simbeck).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER – A late single was at the Wehle Nature Center southeast of Midway, *Bullock*, 25 October (John Trent; ph.).

YELLOW WARBLER – An adult male was late at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 20 October (Sue Moske, Jane Allen).

BLACKPOLL WARBLER – Bob Duncan found one at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 19 September (very rare in fall in the WP).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER – A very late bird was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa*

Rosa, 8 November (Bob Duncan). Sue Moske found a male on Green Mountain, *Madison*, 16 September (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley). Damien Simbeck reported a female from Anderson, *Lauderdale*, 26 September (rare in northwest Alabama).

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER – Damien Simbeck counted 64 at Marbut Bend, *Limestone*, 14 November, to mark a fall maximum for the Tennessee Valley. A new fall maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain was established by a count of 70 at Old Cahaba SP, *Dallas*, 16 November (Don Self, Judy Self).

WILSON'S WARBLER – Rare but regular in fall for inland Alabama, reports of singles from three sites were received: Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson*, 13 September (Scot Duncan); Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, 20 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*; and Ruffner Mountain NP, *Jefferson*, 10 October (Greg Jackson). A late bird was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 8 November (Karen Chiasson *et al.*).

CHIPPING SPARROW – Eric Soehren counted 130 southeast of Midway, *Bullock*, 25 November (maximum fall number for Alabama).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW – One was at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 13 October (Damien Simbeck, Greg Miller, Matt Crunk; ph.) (occasional inland). A single was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 15-19 October (Patsy Russo *et al.*) (rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast).

LARK SPARROW – One was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 19 November (Bob Duncan) (casual in fall in the WP).

HENSLow'S SPARROW – Sue Moske reported a single from Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 24 November (rare in north Alabama).

NELSON'S SPARROW – Two were at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 19 October (Larry Gardella) (seventh record for inland Alabama, second for the Inland Coastal Plain).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW – Rare but regular in fall in Alabama, reports of singles came from five sites: southeast of Midway, *Bullock*, 14 October (John Trent); Zion City, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 18 October (Scot Duncan, Will Hustwit); Saginaw, *Shelby*, 20 October (Damien Simbeck); Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 2 November (Scot Duncan); and west of Milstead, *Macon*, 8 November (Geoff Hill).

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW – One observed in Huntsville, *Madison*, 30 August (Herbert Lewis; ph.) was probably a rare summering bird.

SUMMER TANAGER – A very late bird was at Valparaiso, *Okaloosa*, 3 November (Wendi Greene).

WESTERN TANAGER – Very rare in the WP, a single was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 19 August (Bob Duncan).

BLUE GROSBEAK – The Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, tallied 24 on 27 September to mark a new maximum for fall in the Mountain Region.

BOBOLINK – Very rare in fall in the WP, 14 early birds were at OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 14 September (Elliott Shunke).

WESTERN MEADOWLARK – Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, hosted singles on two dates, 15

October (Janice Neitzel; ph.), and 25 October (Howard Horne, Andrew Haffenden, Don McKee; ph.) (rare in Alabama but becoming regular).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD – Rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast, a female was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 4-9 October (Greg Jackson *et al.*).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD – A maximum of three birds was reported from the bird sanctuary on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25-28 November (Alison Fox *et al.*) (occasional on the outer coast).

BRONZED COWBIRD – A single was in western Pensacola, *Escambia*, 29 November (Ann Forster, Dan Forster) (casual in the WP). Rare on the Gulf Coast, a male was found on the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 26 September (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Linda Carpenter), and another male was at the school on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 8 November (Andrew Haffenden; ph.).



Bronzed Cowbird, 8 November 2014, Mobile Co., AL; A. Haffenden.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – A single was in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 16-17 November (Vaughan Hedrick) (casual in November in the WP).

RED CROSSBILL – A maximum of three was reported from the Coleman Lake area of Talladega NF, *Cleburne*, 8 and 27 November (John Trent *et al.*), a continuation at the only known breeding site in Alabama.

PINES SISKIN – Dwight Cooley reported three from Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 22 October, to establish a new early arrival date for Alabama. The record of a single in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 23 October (Scot Duncan) ties the early arrival date for the Mountain Region. Sixty at the Coleman Lake area of Talladega NF, *Cleburne*, 8 November (John Trent) was a large number for so early in the season. A count of 34 southeast of Midway, *Bullock*, 25 November (Eric Soehren) established a new fall maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain. A count of 20 on Green Mountain, *Madison*, 30 November (Sue Moske) established a new fall maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA – This exotic continues to increase on the Gulf Coast of Alabama. Two were found at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 27 September (Brian Naylor, Charlotte Naylor) (not a regular site). Fifteen+ were counted at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 23 October (Janice Neitzel, ph.) (regular site).

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WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 2014 – FEBRUARY 2015)

Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan

This report covers the period from December 2014 through February 2015 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 *Bay*, *Escambia*, *Gulf*, *Holmes*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa*, are in Alabama. “@” = under review by; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “CBC” = Christmas Bird Count; “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 – Karen Chiasson found two at the sewage lagoons in Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 8 December (first winter record for the Gulf Coast, second winter record for Alabama).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – Rare but regular in winter on the Gulf Coast, reports were received from three sites: an adult was at Belforest, *Baldwin*, 7 December (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson; ph.); four were found during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (William Bremser, Greta Bremser; ph.); and a maximum of three

was noted north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 7 January – 28 February (Patsy Russo *et al.*). At a site southwest of Athens, *Limestone*, Damien Simbeck counted 11 on 16 December and 40 on 10 February (locally good number, not a regular site). Rare but regular in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, reports were received from six sites: a maximum of four was noted in the Prairie Eden area, *Hale*, 4 January – 8 February (Don Self, Judy Self) (unusual site); five were found at Ashford, *Houston*, 11 January (Renea Todd, Bob Kornegay) (unusual site); a single was at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 11 January (Larry Gardella); six were observed at Lake Land Farms near Marion, *Perry*, 23 January (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo); four were at Lakepoint SP, *Barbour*, 11 February (John Cole, Sam Pate); and 16 were counted at Marvin, *Lee*, 22 February (Barry Fleming) (unusual site). At Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 195 (good number at a regular site) were counted 24 January (Patsy Russo, Ben Garmon).

ROSS'S GOOSE – Rare but becoming regular on the Gulf Coast, reports of singles came

from four sites: landfill at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin* (unusual site), 6 December (Greg Jackson; ph.); Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (William Bremser, Greta Bremser; ph.); Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 6 February (Kathy Hicks, Bill Summerour; ph.); and Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 18 February (Janice Neitzel *et al.*; ph.). Reports were received from three sites where this species is locally rare: two at Research Park, Huntsville, *Madison*, 10 December (Charles Grisham; ph.); a single in the Key Cave NWR area, *Lauderdale*, 10 January (Greg Jackson); and one at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 14 February (Ken Wills). A single was seen at Anniston,



Ross's Goose, 6 December 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; G. D. Jackson.

Calhoun, 28 December (Karen Allen, Laura Meads; ph.) (rare in the Mountain Region). Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, two were found at Lake Land Farms near Marion, *Perry*, 23 January (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo), and a single was at Society Hill, *Lee*, 18 February (Rodney McCollum; ph.) (return to site).

CACKLING GOOSE – Two were observed at Research Park, Huntsville, *Madison*, 10 December – 11 January (Charles Grisham, m. ob.; ph.) (rare).

TUNDRA SWAN – Rare and erratic in Alabama, four were noted at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 2-3 December (*vide* Dwight Cooley; ph.). Reports from the Swan Creek WMA area, *Limestone*, included a single on 12 December, two-four on 14 December, and two 1+ January (Sue Moske, Milton Harris *et al.*; ph.).

MOTTLED DUCK – The Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, tallied 27 (good number) on 20 December.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL – This species is rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley. An adult male was spotted at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 17 December

(Dwight Cooley).

CANVASBACK – The Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December, reported 912 (maximum count for inland Alabama).

REDHEAD – A total of 520 on the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Greg Jackson *et al.*) was a good number.

GREATER SCAUP – A single was found at Opelika, *Lee*, 13 December (Barry Fleming) (rare in the Mountain Region). Another single was noted on the Auburn CBC, *Lee*, 13 December (Geoff Hill, *et al.*) (rare in the Mountain Region or on the Inland Coastal Plain). A maximum of four was reported from east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 27 December – 28 February (Larry Gardella) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain).



Tundra Swan, 16 January 2015, Limestone Co., AL; J. D. Green.

SURF SCOTER – Rare inland, three were at Lake Purdy, *Jefferson*, 31 December (Scot Duncan *et al.*; ph.), and a single was at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 19 January (John Cole, Windle McKenzie).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – Two were at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 27 December (Scot Duncan) (rare in the WP). Rare and erratic in Alabama, four reports were received: a single at Opelika, *Lee*, 13+ December (Barry Fleming); another single at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 24 January (Damien Simbeck *et al.*); seven north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 22 February (John Trent; ph.); and two at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 24+ February (Amber Hart; ph.).



White-winged Scoter, 15 December 2014, Lee Co., AL; L. Scharpf.

BLACK SCOTER – The 210 counted at Panama City Beach, *Bay*, 2 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, William Duncan) was a high number for the WP. Three records were received from the Gulf Coast of Alabama where this species is rare but regular: four along the Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, 1 January (Andrew Haffenden); one on 20 December (Howard Horne) and four on 1 January (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*) in the Dauphin Island area, *Mobile*; and 27 (good number) at the pier in Gulf SP, *Baldwin*, during the Gulf Shores CBC, 3 January (Greg Jackson *et al.*).

LONG-TAILED DUCK – Singles were reported from Perdido Bay, *Escambia*, 10-15 December (Sue Yates), and Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 31 December – 1 January (Carl Wernicke) (rare in the WP).

COMMON MERGANSER – Three birds were found at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 5 December (Damien Simbeck, Jack Paul) (rare), and a single was at Orange Beach, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Mike McMillan, Mike Hudson *et al.*) and 9 January (Andrew

Haffenden, Karen Chiasson) (occasional on the Gulf Coast).

RUDDY DUCK – A tally of 11,981 on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December, established a new maximum for Alabama. Larry Gardella counted 310 east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 31 January to mark a new maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain.

WILD TURKEY – Tallies of 49 on 14 December and again on 18 January south of Camden, *Wilcox* (Rodney Cassidy) were good numbers.

RED-THROATED LOON – Three was a good number on Bear Creek Embayment, *Colbert* (not a usual site), 20 December (Tom Haggerty, Jeff Garner; ph.) (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley).

PACIFIC LOON – Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley, a single was found at Waterloo, *Lauderdale* (not a usual site), 20 December (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk).

COMMON LOON – Bob Duncan counted 550 (high number) at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 29 December.

HORNED GREBE – A high count (394) for northwest Alabama was made during the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 20 December.

WOOD STORK – A single was at Bon Secour NWR, *Baldwin*, 18 December (Jan Osborne, Eva Barnett; ph.) (occasional in winter, rare on the Gulf Coast).

ANHINGA – Two were found during the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 3 January (David King *et al.*) (rare in winter this far north). Five were noted west of Mobile, *Mobile*, 10 January (Brian Naylor) (good number in winter). A single was at Old Cahaba, *Dallas*, 7 February (Don Self, Judy Self) (rare in winter this far north).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – Rare but increasing in the Mountain Region, Steve White found 200 (good number) on Weiss Lake, *Cherokee*, 22 January. Also rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain, 10 were noted at Lakepoint SP, *Barbour*, 11 February (John Cole, Sam Pate).

AMERICAN BITTERN – Occasionally detected in winter in the Tennessee Valley, singles were found at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 20 December (Bert Harris, Chuck Graham), and Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 19 January (Sue Moske).

WHITE IBIS – A count of 60 at Gee's Bend, *Wilcox*, on 1 January (Charles Kennedy, Anabel Markle, Peggy Baker *et al.*; ph.) provided a good winter number for inland Alabama. Two were found during the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 3 January (David King *et al.*) (locally rare in winter).

ROSEATE SPOONBILL – This species is rare but increasing in Alabama, and a single at Meaher SP, *Baldwin*, 1-18 January (Ned Coleman, m.ob.; ph.) furnished the first winter record for the state.



Roseate Spoonbill, 17 January 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; D. A. Miller

- OSPREY** – A single was observed at Lake Purdy, *Jefferson*, 7 December (Scot Duncan, Charles Yeager) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region). Rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley, one-two were found in the Wheeler NWR area, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 17 December (Dwight Cooley) and 20 December (Wheeler NWR CBC). A single at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 24-27 February (Sue Moske, Amber Hart) was probably an early migrant.
- BALD EAGLE** – A trip through the western Black Belt, *Dallas/Hale/Perry*, on 18 December (Charles Kennedy, Tommy Pratt) produced an estimate of 50 (ties maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain). Nineteen was a locally good number on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 20 December.
- COOPER'S HAWK** – A new winter maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain was established by a count of eight on the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 3 January.
- GOLDEN EAGLE** – A single was near Union Springs, *Bullock*, 10 February (John Trent; ph.) (rare but regular in winter).
- KING RAIL** – Occasionally detected in winter in the Mountain Region, one was heard at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 10 January (Scot Duncan). At the County Road 31 crossing of the Conecuh River south of Union Springs, *Bullock*, three were found on 11 February (Ashley Peters) and four on 12 February (John Trent, Eric Soehren), the latter number a winter maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain.
- VIRGINIA RAIL** – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, singles were at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert* (regular site), 6 December (Damien Simbeck), and at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 4 January (Sue Moske).
- PURPLE GALLINULE** – One was at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 22 December (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Furlow) (rare in winter in the WP).
- SANDHILL CRANE** – Paul Kittle saw two in flight east of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 4 December (locally rare). Still increasing at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 12,971 (good number) were tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, 20 December. Two were found north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 4-12 January (Peter Carter *et al.*) (locally rare).
- SOLITARY SANDPIPER** – Occasional in winter in Alabama, a single was at Foley during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Howard Horne, Emma Rhodes, Ellen Crotty).
- WHIMBREL** – Singles were noted at the airport on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 21 January and 15 February (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*) (rare in winter).
- PECTORAL SANDPIPER** – One along Timberlake Road, *Okaloosa*, 27 December (Bruce Purdy) marked the first December record for the WP. Six were found during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Dwight Cooley, Elberta Reid, Anne Miller *et al.*) (occasional in mid-winter).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Two were reported from Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 14-21 December (Larry Gardella; ph.) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain; at a frequent site).
- FRANKLIN'S GULL** – A maximum of four was noted at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*,

6+ December (Greg Jackson *et al.*; ph.) (rare in winter, a regular site).

ICELAND GULL – An immature was at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 23+ January (Bill Summerour, m. ob.; ph.) (rare).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – At Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, three were found 6 December (Greg Jackson; ph.) and four+ were there 7 January (Bill Summerour, m. ob.; ph.) (rare but regular at this site). Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley, singles were seen at



Franklin's Gull, 6 December 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; G. D. Jackson.

Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 6+ December (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) and at Mallard-Fox Creek WMA, *Lawrence*, 28 February (Greg Jackson; ph.).

GLAUCOUS GULL – A single at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 24 January (Andrew Holzinger) marked the 23rd record for the WP. An immature was seen at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 21 February (Andrew Haffenden) (rare).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – A single was seen on Dauphin/Pelican islands, *Mobile*, 3+ December (Brian Naylor, Charlotte Naylor *et al.*) (rare but regular in this area). A second-cycle bird was reported from Perdido Pass, *Baldwin*, 2 January (Dwight Cooley) (rare).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – Andrew Arnold observed five at Excel, *Monroe*, 28 December (rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain; regular and continuing at this site).

INCA DOVE – Michelle Bishop reported two from Loxley, *Baldwin*, 12 February, to mark the seventh independent record (and second independent winter record) for Alabama away from the resident site near Magnolia Springs (ph.; @ABRC).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI – A single was at Meaher SP, *Baldwin*, 26 December (Patsy Russo, Kathy Hicks, m. ob.; ph.) (rare and erratic).

BARN OWL – A single was at Floridatown, *Santa Rosa*, 9 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare).

BURROWING OWL – Four were noted at site B-70 on Eglin Air Force Base, *Okaloosa*, 7 December (Lenny Fenimore, Malcolm Swan) (very rare and local but persistent at this site).

LONG-EARED OWL – Danny Arnette found one dead in northern *Okaloosa*, 12 December. The specimen was examined by Bob Duncan and Lucy Duncan and sent to the Florida State Museum. This is the second record for the WP, with about 12 records/reports for Florida.

SHORT-EARED OWL – A single was seen at Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 26 December (Ken Ward, Rufina Ward *et al.*) (rare and erratic).

LESSER NIGHTHAWK – A single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 1 January (Perry Doggrell) (13th record for the WP and the first for January).

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD – A single was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 31 December – 10 January (Janice Neitzel; ph.) (rare).

ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRD – One was at Panama City Beach, *Bay*, 16 January (Odessa Kelley, Donald Kelley; banded by Fred Bassett) (sixth record for the WP).

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER – The Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, recorded a total of 104 on 3 January (maximum winter count for the Inland Coastal Plain).

MERLIN – Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley in winter, six reports (all of single birds) were received: Guntersville, *Marshall*, 1+ December (Sue Moske); Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3+ December (Dwight Cooley *et al.*); Oakland, *Lauderdale*, 24 December (Damien Simbeck); Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 4+ January (Sue Moske, Amber Hart); Athens, *Limestone*, 11 January (Damien Simbeck); and Wright, *Lauderdale*, 22 February (Jud Johnston; ph.).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – A male was found south of Browns, *Dallas*, 18 December (Charles Kennedy, Tommy Pratt) (occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain).

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER – A single was at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 19 January – 2 February (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Peggy Baker, Bruce Furlow) (rare but regular in winter in the WP). Another single was north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 19 January – 6 February (Randy White *et al.*; ph.) (occasional inland; fourth record for the Inland Coastal Plain).

WESTERN KINGBIRD – This species is rare but regular in winter on the Gulf Coast. At the golf course on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, Marybeth Lima had a single on 30 December and Andrew Haffenden found one-two on 1 January. One was at Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 17-25 January (Ann McLaurin, Karen Chiasson, Warren Boutreis; ph.) (unusual away from outer coast).

WHITE-EYED VIREO – Rare but regular in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, singles were south of Auburn, *Lee*, 14 December (Geoff Hill), and at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 22 February (John Trent).

WARBLING VIREO – On the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, a single occurred to 8 December (Janice Neitzel; ph.) (first winter record for Alabama).

HORNED LARK – Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain in recent years, two reports were notable: three on the Eufaula NWR CBC, *Barbour*, 30 December (Eric Soehren, John Trent, Geoff Hill, Carrie Johnson), and a single north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 21 February (John Trent; ph.).

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW – Geoff Hill observed a single at Lee County Public Lake, *Lee*, 14 December (first winter record for the Inland Coastal Plain). Two were at Opelika, *Lee*, 31 January (Barry Fleming, Gene Hunter) (second mid-winter record



Warbling Vireo, 8 December 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; J. Neitzel.

for the Mountain Region).

BARN SWALLOW – One was at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 23 December (Scot Duncan, Bob Duncan) (very rare in winter in the WP). Occasional in winter in Alabama, a single was noted on Dauphin Island, Mobile, 17 January (Andrew Haffenden; ph.).

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – A single was found during the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 3 January (rare but regular in this area).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, one was found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 20 December.

WOOD THRUSH – A single was found at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 1 December (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Furlow) (third December record for the WP).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR – Six were found at Foley, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton) (rare but becoming regular in winter on the Gulf Coast).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER – Jere French found one in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 21 January (very rare in winter in the WP). Rare in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, hosted singles as follows: Kennedy Unit, 7 December (John Trent), and Houston/Upland units, 30 December (Eric Soehren, John Trent, Geoff Hill *et al.*).

TENNESSEE WARBLER – A single was in Gulf SP, *Baldwin*, 22 December (Nick Siler *et al.*) (fifth winter record for Alabama, second winter record for the Gulf Coast).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – Rare but regular in winter in winter in the Tennessee Valley, five was a good number on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 20 December.

HOODED WARBLER – An adult male was observed in Linn Park, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 26+ January (Bianca Allen, m. ob.; ph.) (first winter record for Alabama).

PINE WARBLER – Tom Rogers observed two adults with a fledgling just out of the nest at Tuscaloosa, *Tuscaloosa*, 15 February (earliest nesting for Alabama).

PRAIRIE WARBLER – One was in *Okaloosa*, 18 January (Bruce Purdy) (very rare in winter in the WP).

WILSON'S WARBLER – A single was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 6 December - 28 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (very rare in winter in the WP).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT – One was at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 14 December (Malcolm Swan) (very rare in winter in the WP).

LARK SPARROW – A single was seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 24 January – 28 February (Jerry Callaway, Daniel Stangeland) (very rare in winter in the WP). Sightings of two on 11 January, five on 17 January, and six (good number) on 20+ January were made at Fairhope, *Baldwin* (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare in winter on the Gulf Coast).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, two were found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, 20 December, and a single was at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 18 January (Sue Moske). Larry Gardella sighted a single in Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 7 February (rare inland in winter).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW – At Bon Secour NWR, *Baldwin*, 25 were found during the Gulf Shores CBC, 3 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (maximum for the Gulf Coast).

SUMMER TANAGER – One was at Valparaiso, *Okaloosa*, 11-14 December (Wendi Greene), and another single was at Beulah, *Escambia*, 22-26 January (Cindy Coster, Steve Coster) (very rare in winter in the WP).

WESTERN TANAGER – Cathy Gray reported an adult male from Spanish Fort, *Baldwin*, 3 February (ph.; rare on the Gulf Coast).



Western Tanager, 3 February 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; C. Gray.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK – A single male was at Fort Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, 10-13 February (Melinda Rogers) (very rare in winter in the WP). A male was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 27 December (Lynne Wornall, *vide* Janice Neitzel; ph.) (occasional in winter).

INDIGO BUNTING – A male was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 25-27 December (Janice Neitzel) (rare in winter).

PAINTED BUNTING – Shari Smith reported a male at Fish River, *Baldwin*, 20 December – 5 January (occasional in winter on the Gulf Coast). Lynne Jones reported another male from Ozark, *Dale*, 27 February (casual inland in winter; return to site).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD

– Scot Gravette spotted a female at Decatur, *Morgan*, 5 December (occasional inland, sixth record for the Tennessee Valley).

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE – Two males were found north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 22 February (John Trent; ph.; videotaped) (second record for inland Alabama).

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE – An adult male was at Montevallo, *Shelby*, 29 December – 9 April (Mary Maxwell, m. ob.; ph.; @ABRC) (12th record for Alabama).



Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 17 January 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; D. A. Miller.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – A single was found during the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 3 January (rare but regular in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain). Two were counted during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 3 January (Dwight Cooley, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (rare but regular in winter on the Gulf Coast). Rare in winter in the Mountain Region, three reports were received: a single at Auburn, *Lee*, 18 January (Lewis Scharpf *et al.*); one at Montevallo, *Shelby*, 7 February (Mary Maxwell, Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson; ph.); and three at Auburn, *Lee*, 19 February (Janet Rogers; ph.).

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA – At nine sites in *Escambia* and *Santa Rosa*, 145-201 were tallied 30 January – 2 February (m. ob.).



Bullock's Oriole, 17 January 2015, Shelby Co., AL; G. E. Hill.

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GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Manuscripts submitted for publication in Alabama Birdlife should conform to the guidelines listed below. Articles should include some facet of bird ecology, natural history, behavior, management/conservation, identification or other related topics. Refer to this issue or to recent past issues for examples. Alabama Birdlife is published twice a year. If you have access to an IBM compatible or Macintosh computer, it saves time and money if you submit your manuscript on a 3 1/2 inch floppy disk along with a hard copy (Word or WordPerfect preferred). A manuscript may also be submitted over the Internet as a file attached to an e-mail addressed to: tmhaggerty@una.edu.

Manuscripts should be typed and double spaced. A 8 1/2 x 11 inch page format should be used.

Digital images submitted over the Internet, black and white prints, color prints, and slides are acceptable.

The title should be in CAPS. If the name of a species is used in the title, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. CONNECTICUT WARBLER (*OPORORNIS AGILIS*).

The author's full name should be in lower case and centered under the title.

If the article is coauthored by a married couple bearing the same last name, the names should be kept separate, e.g. John B. Brown and Sarah D. Brown.

Whenever a species name is used for the first time in the body of an article, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*).

When using dates, the day should be placed before the month, e.g. 13 April 1992.

Spell out numbers ten and under and use numerals for numbers 11 and above.

Distances should be expressed in English units followed by the metric equivalent in parentheses, e.g. 6.2 miles (10 km). Use only the metric system for scientific measurements, e.g. wing 10.3 cm; tail 15.6 cm.

Table titles should be in CAPS and placed above the tables.

Figure legends should be in lower case and placed beneath the figure.

Refer to the Literature Cited in past issues for the correct format.

Three or fewer references should be incorporated into the text of the article rather than listed separately at the end, e.g. Imhof (1976, Alabama Birds).

The author's name and full address should be line typed at the end of the article. The name used should match the name given under the title.

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