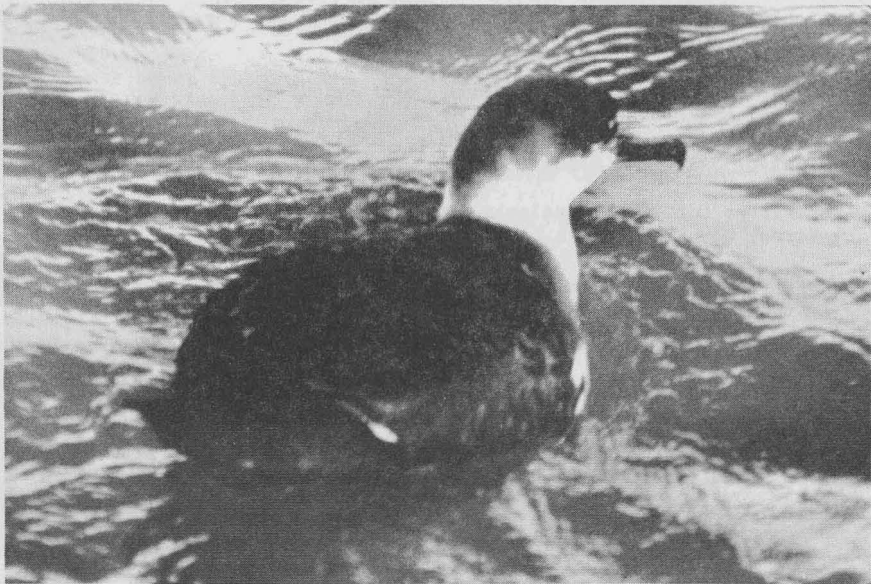


Observers: Thomas Z. Atkeson, Lois P. Archer, Birmingham Audubon Society, J. R. Bailey, Katherine & Millicent Beck, Michael L. Bierly, William J. Galvert, P. Fairly Chandler, Joseph Lambert Dorn, Mike Fuller, Mary A. Gaillard, Wylie Gammon, Sherlie Gade, EmmyLou Grimley, K. W. Grimley, R. E. & Sharon B. Hayward, Bob & Heather Huntley, Verda D. Horne, David C. Hulse, Donald J. & Billie Sue Hulsey, Thomas A. Imhof, John M. Imhof, Helen H. Kittinger, K. R. Kittinger, Richard J. Kittinger, William Matheny, Mary Lou Mattis, Margaret E. Miller, Ann L. Miller, Bob G. Meadows, Harriett & Tom Meadows, Albert & Mini Nonkes, James V. Peavy, Lee N. Peavy, Robert R. Reid, Jo L. Susenbach, Genevieve & Jim Spafford, Pat Stallings, Lib R. Toenes, Helen B. Thigpen, James C. Thompson, L. A. Wells, W. Roger Maner, Tom Walker (TWa), Ted Weems, Emmett N. Waldrep, Harriett H. Wright, Joseph D. Wetzel, Joe E. Wright, J. Ross Williams, Iva C. Young.

Abbreviations: TV-Tennessee Valley, MtR-Mountain Region, Pied-Piedmont, UCP-Upper Coastal Plain, LCP-Lower Coastal Plain, GC-Gulf Coast, mob-many other birders, rec-record, L-Lake.

1036 Pike Road, Birmingham 35218



Photograph by Helen H. Kittinger;  
courtesy of AOS slide collection committee

#### OFFSHORE TRIP INTO GULF OF MEXICO

September 10, 1973

Thomas A. Imhof

Through the courtesy of the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium on Dauphin Island and specifically Drs. William W. Schroeder and Dan C. Holliman and Boat Capt. Thomas Walker, six of us - Helen H. and Ricky Kittinger, Ann L. Miller, W. Roger Maner, James V. Peavy and Thomas A. Imhof - birded from the RV Pisces to at least 10 miles south of Dauphin Island on September 10, 1973.

We left Bayou La Batre about dawn, 6:00 a.m., passed just west of Dauphin, went at least ten miles south, turned east to the Ship Channel, followed it north into Mobile Bay, then into Mississippi Sound, and reached Bayou La Batre about 5:00 p.m. The sky was partly cloudy with occasional rain squalls and the

5-10 knot SW wind produced 4-foot swells. Use of binoculars and cameras was often difficult due to the choppiness, but this same wind brought some sea birds closer to shore, even into Mississippi Sound.

The best bird seen was CORY'S SHEARWATER, *Puffinus diomedea*, first record for Alabama and probably the entire Gulf of Mexico. This bird, in Mississippi Sound about 7:00 a.m., flew toward the boat and passed less than 10 yards to starboard (right). Field marks noted were its large size (larger than Greater Shearwater or Laughing Gull), uniformly dark brown upperparts including head, gradual shading on sides of head to white throat and white below, and large pale yellow bill. Walker discovered the bird, Maner and Peavy in the bow saw it well, the rest of us saw mostly the upperparts.

This species breeds in the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic (Canaries, Azores), migrates west in fall to become common offshore from Newfoundland to the Carolinas August to November, and winters south to Brazil. To our knowledge it had not been recorded in the Gulf of Mexico, but it is certainly to be expected there.

Other marine species seen were: Greater Shearwater, 5 (photo, seen at least 4 times this August and September); unidentified shearwater, 1; Magnificent Frigatebird, 23 (photo); Northern Phalarope, 6 (earliest for state); unidentified phalarope, 2; Pomarine Jaeger, 5 (flock with 2 adults attacked Sandwich Terns - 3rd record for state); unidentified immature jaegers, 3; Herring Gull, 4; Ring-billed Gull, 20; Laughing Gull, 500; Royal Tern, 150; Sandwich Tern, 20; Least Tern, 2; Black Tern, 1000; hummingbird, 1 (halfway between Fort Morgan and Dauphin Island going west).

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#### FIELD NOTE: CLIFF SWALLOW NESTING IN COLBERT COUNTY, ALABAMA 1972-1973

James V. Peavy, Jr.

In July of 1972, Bob and Elberta Reid checked Cliff Swallows nesting in Colbert County. The results of their search indicated at least three different localities with active nests and one additional site with a probable nest. Localities and counts are as follows:

1. Natchez Trace Parkway bridge over the Tennessee River - 200+ nests, 110 birds counted.
2. Colbert Steam Plant bridge over Cane Creek - 28 nests with 22 birds.
3. Little Bear Creek at U.S. 72 - 3 nests with 26 birds.
4. Town Creek at Ala. 184 - 2 birds, nest not seen.

In July of 1973, Roger Maner and I surveyed this same general area; we found Cliff Swallow nests at six sites and birds at one additional site. Localities and counts are as follows:

1. Natchez Trace Parkway bridge - no significant change from 1972.
2. Colbert Steam Plant bridge at Cane Creek - 57 nests with 40 birds.
3. Spring Creek at U.S. 72 - 2 nests with 4 birds.
4. Town Creek at Ala. 184 - 1 nest, no birds.
5. Big Bear Creek at U.S. 72 - 5 nests with 10 birds.
6. Unnamed Creek on Colbert Co. Rt. 40 - 5 nests with 30 birds.
7. Colbert Co. Rt. 40 at Town Creek - 4 birds, no nests.

These surveys indicate at least five well-established Cliff Swallow colonies in Colbert County. The extreme difficulty in getting under many of the bridges results in many nests not being counted. It is interesting to note that Barn and Cliff Swallows are able to utilize the same habitat without obvious conflict. At the site no. 6 of '73, I banded 9 Cliff and 6 Barn Swallows on 7-29-73. Both species use this small bridge as a nest site. Also, Bob Reid pointed out that Cliff and Barn Swallows both use the Natchez Trace bridge (Cliff Swallows nest outside the main bridge supports; Barn Swallows nest inside these supports.).

5205 Beacon Drive, Birmingham 35210

BREEDING BIRD SURVEY, ALABAMA 1966-1972

Thomas A. Imhof

During the seven years, 1966-1972, of 42 established routes, an average of 36 Breeding Bird Surveys have been accepted from Alabama (high - 40 in 1966, low - 31 in 1968). Usually, failure to run a route has been due to shortage of qualified observers in remote parts of the state, but most aggravating are those people who fail to run a route and fail to say anything about it. A few routes have been run and rejected due to late or early start, late finish or a late date.

Below is a listing in order of abundance of the breeding birds of Alabama as determined by seven years of Breeding Bird Surveys. The numbers are average birds per 24.5-mile route. The highest of each family is underscored. \* denotes those species not known to breed in Alabama.

A. 1 or more birds per route - 61 species:

1. <u>House Sparrow</u>	55.7	Blue Grosbeak	6.34
<u>Common Grackle</u>	52.6	Great Crested Flycatcher	5.63
<u>Cardinal</u>	52.1	<u>Summer Tanager</u>	5.61
<u>Bobwhite</u>	49.5	35. Barn Swallow	5.51
5. <u>Mockingbird</u>	49.2	<u>Cattle Egret</u>	5.21
Red-winged Blackbird	45.1	Eastern Wood Pewee	5.14
<u>Blue Jay</u>	38.5	Red-eyed Vireo	5.13
<u>Starling</u>	32.9	Eastern Bluebird	4.26
<u>Mourning Dove</u>	32.2	40. Chipping Sparrow	4.16
10. Eastern Meadowlark	29.5	Rock Dove	3.56
Common Crow	28.5	<u>Loggerhead Shrike</u>	3.14
Rufous-sided Towhee	27.6	<u>Chuck-will's-widow</u>	3.10
Indigo Bunting	27.0	Common Flicker (sub-sp. Y.Sh.)	3.09
<u>Purple Martin</u>	22.0	45. Downy Woodpecker	2.81
15. <u>Chimney Swift</u>	18.7	Rough-winged Swallow	2.53
<u>Yellow-breasted Chat</u>	18.6	<u>Blue-gray Gnatcatcher</u>	2.27
<u>Carolina Wren</u>	14.8	<u>Brown-headed Nuthatch</u>	2.26
<u>Wood Thrush</u>	13.0	Gray Catbird	2.04
Orchard Oriole	11.0	50. <u>Killdeer</u>	1.91
20. Field Sparrow	10.9	Red-headed Woodpecker	1.77
<u>Tufted Titmouse</u>	9.37	Kentucky Warbler	1.61
<u>Red-bellied Woodpecker</u>	9.16	Prothonotary Warbler	1.44
<u>Eastern Kingbird</u>	8.66	Black Vulture	1.36
Common Yellowthroat	8.27	55. Little Blue Heron	1.23
25. Carolina Chickadee	8.24	Eastern Phoebe	1.21
<u>White-eyed Vireo</u>	8.00	Hooded Warbler	1.21
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7.69	Pileated Woodpecker	1.14
Brown-headed Cowbird	7.64	Common Nighthawk	1.11
American Robin	7.59	60. Yellow-throated Vireo	1.09
30. Brown Thrasher	7.06	Acadian Flycatcher	1.06
Fish Crow	6.57		

B. Between .1 and .9 bird per route - 43 species:

American Goldfinch	.89	Yellow Warbler	.23
Green Heron	.81	85. Red-shouldered Hawk	.21
<u>Turkey Vulture</u>	.79	Bachman's Sparrow	.21
65. <u>Least Tern</u>	.79	Snowy Egret	.20
American Redstart	.74	<u>White Ibis</u>	.20
Northern Parula Warbler	.69	<u>Wood Duck</u>	.20
Yellow-throated Warbler	.66	90. <u>Clapper Rail</u>	.20
<u>Belted Kingfisher</u>	.60	Louisiana Waterthrush	.20
70. Ovenbird	.56	Blue-winged Warbler	.19
Black-and-White Warbler	.51	*Laughing Gull	.18
Great Blue Heron	.46	<u>Barred Owl</u>	.17
Boat-tailed Grackle	.39	95. White-breasted Nuthatch	.16
Seaside Sparrow	.37	Louisiana Heron	.15
75. Black-throated Green Warbler	.36	Mallard	.15
Grasshopper Sparrow	.36	*Brown Pelican	.14
Hairy Woodpecker	.31	American Kestrel	.13
Great Egret	.29	100. Willet	.13
Ground Dove	.29	Black Skimmer	.13
80. <u>Ruby-throated Hummingbird</u>	.27	Whip-poor-will	.13
Dickcissel	.26	Red-tailed Hawk	.12
Scarlet Tanager	.24	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	.10
<u>Broad-winged Hawk</u>	.23		

C. Less than .1 bird per route - 53 species in AOU order:

105. Pied-billed Grebe, Anhinga, Black-crowned Night Heron, Least Bittern, Canada Goose; 110. \*Blue Goose, Blue-winged Teal, \*Ring-necked Duck, \*American Wigeon, \*Red-breasted Merganser; 115. Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Osprey; 120. Turkey, King Rail, Sora, Purple Gallinule, Common Gallinule; 125. American Coot, Wilson's Plover, \*Black-bellied Plover, \*Ruddy Turnstone, American Woodcock; 130. \*Upland Sandpiper, \*Spotted Sandpiper, \*Semipalmated Sandpiper, \*Herring Gull, \*Ring-billed Gull; 135. Forster's Tern, Royal Tern, \*Caspian Tern, \*Black Tern, Black-billed Cuckoo; 140. Screech Owl, Great Horned Owl, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Gray Kingbird, Horned Lark; 145. \*Tree Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Cedar Waxwing; 150. \*Solitary Vireo, Swainson's Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, \*Blackburnian Warbler; 155. \*Bobolink, Northern Oriole (sub-sp. Baltimore), Painted Bunting, Song Sparrow.

D. Breeders and probable breeders not recorded on the Breeding Bird Survey:

Double-crested Cormorant, Reddish Egret, Wood Stork, Glossy Ibis, Mute Swan, Fulvous Tree Duck, Mottled Duck, Ruddy Duck, Hooded Merganser, Sandhill Crane, Virginia Rail, Black Rail, Snowy Plover, Gull-billed Tern, Common Tern, Sandwich Tern, Bank Swallow, House Wren, Short-billed Marsh Wren, Veery, Warbling Vireo, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Lark Sparrow.

E. Breeding Bird Totals Increase In Alabama.

The results, as shown below from a statistically acceptable sample, indicate that as a whole, our breeding bird populations are in good shape. Indications are that the gain shown is in our common and abundant birds.