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- Editor:* Dr. Bill Summerour, 2012 Cedar Springs Drive,
Jacksonville, AL 36265
- Seasons Editor:* Dr. Greg D. Jackson, 2220 Baneberry Drive,
Birmingham, AL 35244
- Counts Editor:* Dr. Thomas A. Imhof, 1036 Pike Road,
Birmingham, AL 35218

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- Newsletter Editors:* Dr. John F. Porter and Jackie H. Porter, 7490 Gulf Blvd.,
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**FIRST DOCUMENTED RECORD OF EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE
(*STREPTOPELIA DECAOCTO*) FOR ALABAMA**

Jim Holmes

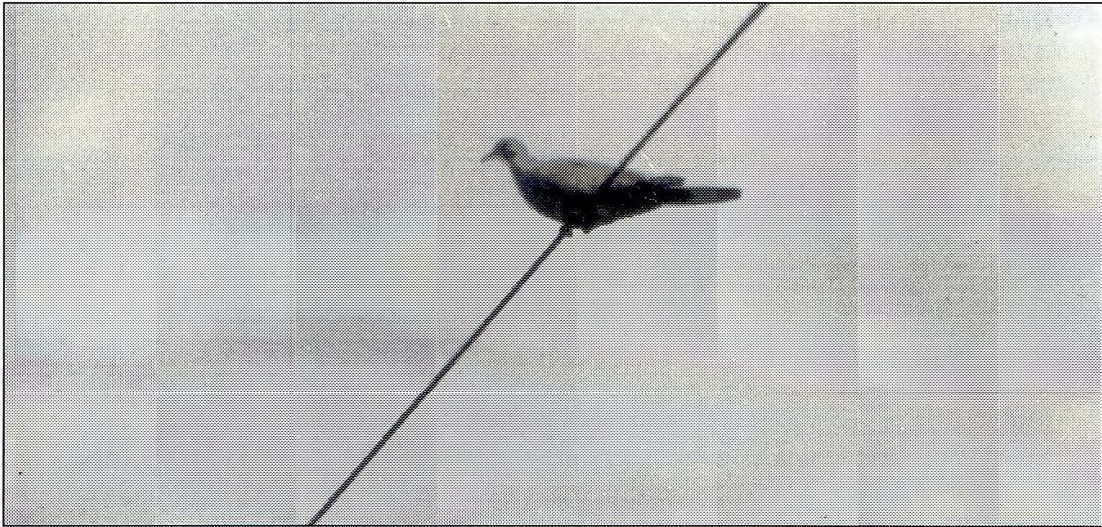


Figure 1. Eurasian Collared-Dove at Ft. Morgan, 7 May 1991. (Photo by Jim Holmes)

During the morning of 12 April 1991 the author flushed a group of four doves along the runway at Ft. Morgan, Alabama. Three were Mourning Doves (*Zenaida macroura*), but the other bird was noticeably larger than the Mourning Doves and had dark primaries. Realizing it was likely to be a Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), two photographs were quickly taken as it sat in short grass. It flushed upon an attempt at taking closer photographs and could not be immediately relocated. Later that day the bird was relocated and studied by Horton Smith, Brenda Smith, and the author.

The bird was again discovered by the author and various other observers, including those attending the spring AOS meeting on 14 April. On 20 April, the bird was observed in flight by the author and others. Finally, on 7 May two Eurasian Collared-Doves were photographed by the author while they sat on wires at Ft. Morgan (Figure 1).

The following characteristics were noted during the various observations. The bird was noticeably larger than a Mourning Dove. The head and underparts were grayish while the back and upper rectrices were pale brown. There was a thin semicircular black collar around the back of the neck with the upper edge of the collar outlined by a very faint line of white feathers. In flight, the outer primaries stood out as much darker than the rest of the wing. The undertail coverts were a slate gray that did not contrast with the bird's underparts. The tail was long and squared at the end and when seen from underneath, the base of each tail feather was dark and did not contrast with the dark undertail coverts. There was a sharp line between the dark proximal portion of the tail feathers and the light distal portion. The bird was silent during all observations and was quite wary, allowing close approach only by car.

There are two species of *Streptopelia* that resemble the above description. The Eurasian Collared-Dove and the Ringed Turtle-Dove (*Streptopelia risoria*) are very similar in many details and may be separated only by careful observations. Smith (1987) provides an excellent description of the two species and the means by which they may be separated. The two species'

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calls and notes are significantly distinct enough to allow differentiation. The Eurasian Collared-Dove has a loud “coo-coó-coo” while the Ringed Turtle-Dove has a soft “coo-hrrrrroo”. There is also a difference in the undertail patterns of the two species (Figure 2). The Eurasian Collared-Dove has grayish undertail coverts and the outer web, or vane, of the outer tail feathers are mostly dark, whereas the Ringed Turtle-Dove has white undertail coverts and the web of the outer rectrices are white. Both birds seen at Ft. Morgan during April and May had gray undertail coverts and dark outer tail feathers, identifying them both as Eurasian Collared-Doves.

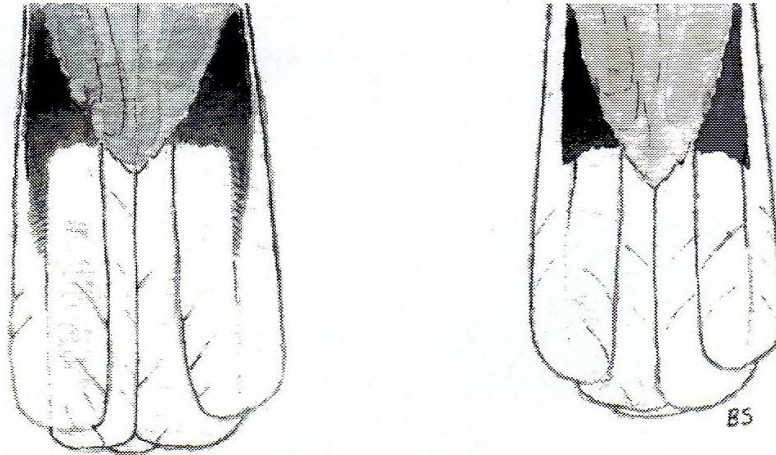


Figure 2. Comparison of ventral tail patterns of Eurasian Collared-Dove (left) and Ringed Turtle-Dove.

The Eurasian Collared-Dove population in Florida, which is now established and spreading, most likely originated from the Bahama Islands (Smith 1987). The occurrence of the species in Alabama was expected as the birds have been seen regularly in the Florida panhandle, only 75 miles east of Ft. Morgan. The species has also been observed at other locations on the gulf coast, including multiple birds residing at Ft. Pike, Louisiana, since 24 April 1988. The LOS Bird Records Committee has rejected the Ft. Pike sightings due to questionable origin (Dittman 1991). More recent sightings in Louisiana as far west as Jefferson Davis Parish has sparked the notion that the LOS Bird Records Committee needs to re-evaluate their prior decision (Cardiff 1991). Finally, with the establishment and expansion of the species, the ABA Checklist Committee is expected to rule on the status of the species in the ABA area in their 1991 report (DeBenedictis 1991).

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Jim Holmes, P.O. Box 745DB, Birmingham, AL 35394

**EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVES (*STREPTOPELIA DECAOCTO*)
OBSERVED IN MONTGOMERY**

Lawrence F. Gardella

In 1986 and 1987, a few writers noted that Eurasian Collared-Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*) had arrived in the United States and speculated that the birds would spread rapidly, first along the coast, and then throughout the southeastern United States (Smith 1987; White 1986). During the past five years, birders have recorded Eurasian Collared-Doves progressively farther west along the Gulf Coast (Jackson 1992; Purrington 1990, 1991; Stedman 1991; Langridge 1988, 1989; Ogden 1989; Atherton 1989; Imhof 1988; Muth 1988). Until this year, however, there was only one possible record north of the coast, one bird reported in Jackson, Mississippi (Purrington 1991).

1992 may mark the beginning of a northern invasion. A group of more than 40 Eurasian Collared-Doves appears to have become established in Montgomery, approximately 150 miles (240 km) from the coast.

In addition to Mourning Doves (*Zenaida macroura*), Rock Doves (*Columba livia*), and Common Ground-Doves (*Columbigallina passerina*) recorded on the 1991-92 Christmas bird count (Imhof 1992), the city has had a self-sustaining population of Ringed Turtle-Doves (*Streptopelia risoria*) since the mid 1950's (pers. comm. Doug McGinty). That population never expanded its range and the birds were never found more than a block from the neighborhood (Gay Meadows) in which they were released (pers. comm. Doug McGinty). By the time I arrived in Montgomery in 1978, the numbers of Ringed Turtle-Doves had apparently diminished. I never saw more than six or seven birds at any one time, always within a block of Gay Meadows. Around 1980, a second group of Ringed Turtle-Doves was released in the Normandale neighborhood, about two miles west of Gay Meadows. The doves spread west about one mile (1.6 km) (pers. comm. Louis Greene).

About 9 a.m. on 1 March 1992, I was returning from an early birding outing when I noticed two stocky "collared" doves feeding in the pebbled parking lot of a restaurant in Normandale on Edgemont Drive, just east of Norman Bridge Road. They immediately struck me as being larger and thicker-necked than Ringed Turtle-Doves, but they flew off when I approached to get a closer look.

On 3 March, I spotted a group of approximately a dozen "collared" doves in a field across from Floyd School on Augusta Road in Normandale. When this group took flight, I followed the bird heading to the nearest tree. It was not particularly stocky, and as it alit, it called out "heh-heh-heh-heh," thereby declaring itself a Ringed Turtle-Dove. At this point, I started to question my identification of the two birds I had seen earlier. I also questioned whether the "collared" doves I had observed on telephone poles and wires were actually dark-vented, or whether this effect was an artifact of early morning light. At the suggestion of Greg Jackson, a birder who has studied the doves in some detail, I decided to wait until I had heard distinctive vocalizations.

During early morning jogs in March and April, I heard several stocky "collared" doves calling from telephone poles. Each phrase ended emphatically, and there was only a brief pause before the next phrase. Finally, in May, I heard one bird give its drawn-out "mew" call as it flew off, clinching the identification as a Eurasian Collared-Dove.

Doug McGinty, Phil Snow, Carolyn Snow and I went out on 18 June to investigate the situation. We heard five different Eurasian Collared-Doves calling, and one bird give the

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“mew” note. One of the doves we saw had scalloped feathers, indicating that it was a young bird.

Throughout June, July and August, whenever I jogged at approximately 6:30 a.m., I encountered Eurasian Collared-Doves, usually about six to eight birds, but on one occasion 20. On 26 October, I encountered 34. On almost every occasion, at least one bird was giving the series of phrases typical of the species, and at least once every two weeks I would hear the “mew” note. Most of the records came from the Normandale/Edgewood area, but in early August, I encountered about ten near Woodley Baptist Church on Antoinette Drive, approximately a block west of Gay Meadows. They were accompanied by about six smaller, much whiter birds which I presumed were Ringed Turtle-Doves. In early August, I saw two Eurasian Collared-Doves flying across the Southern Bypass. On 28 October, I saw four about two blocks east of Norman Bridge Road. At this time, it is still unclear to what extent the doves have become established in the Montgomery area.

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Lawrence F. Gardella, 3549 Audubon Road, Montgomery, Alabama 36111

HERONS USE OF FORMER COLONY SITES

Julian L. Dusi and Rosemary D. Dusi

There is little in the literature regarding the return of heron colonies to previously occupied sites that have not been used for a number of years. We have been studying the heron colonies in Alabama, since 1952, and have good data on many of the sites that have been occupied (Dusi and Dusi 1988).

The first heron colony we observed was at the Hog Wallow Ponds Site, 10 km south of Tuskegee, Macon Co., in 1952 (Dusi 1958). It was a Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) colony and this colony site was actively used until 1958, when the birds were shot and dispersed.

The same year that the herons of the Hog Wallow Ponds were shot, a new Little Blue Heron colony appeared on a pond site about one km south of Marvyn, Lee Co. and was there for 1958 and 1959.

A new colony was found in the pine woods, adjacent to the Tuskegee Holiday Inn, on 9 June 1970 (Dusi 1977). It started as a Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*), and Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) colony and gradually changed into mostly Cattle Egrets. This colony grew until most of the trees in the site were killed, then it finally moved in 1978. It is believed that this same group of Cattle Egrets moved to several sites in Tuskegee because they were all upland colony sites. In 1977 a group was found at a site on Motley Road in northwest Tuskegee. In 1979, the colony site was on Colbert Road. It returned there in 1980, but was harassed and caused to move. A group occupied the Seigrist Site, about 16 km southwest of Tuskegee, in 1980. In 1981, a group attempted to nest at the Judkins Site, about one km west of the Colbert Road Site, in Tuskegee, but it was harassed and caused to leave.

After this eviction, no colony was found in the Tuskegee area until 1991. Then, a swamp-colony containing mostly Cattle Egrets appeared at the Hog Wallow Ponds Site. This return to the Hog Wallow Ponds Site was 33 years after the Little Blue Heron colony was caused to move in 1958.

Our other records of a colony returning to the same site was the colony site (South Uniontown Site) about three km south of Uniontown, on the Marengo-Perry county line. The colony first appeared on this site in 1964 and was active until 1970. It left and appeared here again from 1976 to 1978, then moved. Its last appearance here was from 1983 to 1986, when it moved to Faunsdale. In this case the colony shifted sites from around Faunsdale to Uniontown, but a colony was always at some site, within 20 km of the South Uniontown Colony Site, from 1959 to 1992.

The Hog Wallow Pond Colony return represents an entirely different population returning to the site. Little Blue Herons initially occupied the site, before Cattle Egrets were in Alabama. The current colony may have been started by Little Blue Herons but is now mostly Cattle Egrets. There is little chance that any of these Little Blue Herons would be old enough to be from the initial Little Blue Heron group that was at the Hog Wallow Ponds. The number of suitable sites in the Tuskegee area is almost unlimited, so the herons had many sites from which to choose.

The Uniontown Colony group was a mixed species group which has, through the years, moved among the available sites in the Uniontown-Faunsdale areas. The number of suitable sites is limited and so rotation through the available sites would result in periodic returns to each site.

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Julian L. Dusi, Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Zoology and Wildlife Science, Auburn University, AL 36849, and **Rosemary D. Dusi**, 560 Sherwood Dr., Auburn, AL 36830

BLACK SKIMMER (*RYNCHOPS NIGRA*) IN AUBURN

Julian L. Dusi

An immature Black Skimmer, *Rynchops nigra*, was found in a yard at Auburn, Lee Co., Alabama, on 28 August 1992. It had a broken wing and was taken to the Opelika Animal Hospital where it died. Veterinarian assistant, Kim Rasmussen, brought it to me for museum preparation. The specimen will be placed in the Auburn University Vertebrate Museum.

Apparently the bird was misplaced this far inland by Hurricane Andrew and flew into an object, breaking its wing. – **Julian L. Dusi**, Professor Emeritus, Department of Zoology and Wildlife Science, Auburn University, AL 36849

1991-92 FALL AND WINTER SIGHTINGS

Greg D. Jackson

Birders in our area had plenty of excitement last fall and winter. Birding was generally good through the autumn migration, and winter birding inland was excellent. Many rarities were discovered, including two first and two second Alabama records. Mild temperatures prevailed through most of the period, and precipitation was slightly lower than expected. An unusual event was the seven inches of snow that fell at Birmingham 18 January! Cold fronts passed through this autumn on 19 and 25 September; 5, 15, and 20 October; and 1, 18, 20-21, and 23 November.

This report covers the period from August 1991 through February 1992 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (east to the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this column does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species, as these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. It is important that all submissions for birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, 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. Reports should always describe the conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in

this matter is appreciated.

County names are in italics. "GC" = Gulf Coast (Alabama), "ICP" = Inland Coastal Plain, "MR" = Mountain Region, "TV" = Tennessee Valley, "WP" = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Santa Rosa*, and *Okaloosa*). Records not specifying Florida are in Alabama. "mob" = many observers, "NWR" = National Wildlife Refuge, "p.a." = pending acceptance by the Alabama Bird Records Committee, "ph." = photographed, "SP" = State Park, "WMA" = Wildlife Management Area.

LOONS - WATERFOWL: The scarce **Red-throated Loon** was recorded twice at the coast. One was spotted 28 Dec at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin* (GDJ,p.a.), and another was seen 30 Dec on the St. Joseph Peninsula, *Gulf*, FL (SJS). **Pacific Loons** are more rare than Red-throateds, though the incidence of reports has increased in the last few years. One was observed 26-27 Oct at Ft. Pickens, *Escambia*, FL (RLB,JWB,mob). At Guntersville, *Marshall*, 1 Dec, one provided the third record for inland Alabama, and only the second for the TV (BCG,p.a.). Good numbers of Horned Grebes were seen in the TV this winter, with a peak in n.w. Alabama 9 Feb of 60 birds (GNP). A **Red-necked Grebe** was observed 9-11 Dec at Guntersville (BS, mob, p.a.). This represents the first TV record and only the seventh Alabama. Eared Grebes are uncommon visitors to the Alabama coast and are rare inland and in n.w. Florida. The fourth ICP record was of a single bird near Marion, *Perry*, 18 Sep (ALM,ASC). Up to three Eareds were noted 9 Oct to 21 Nov at Ft. Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, FL (RAD).

An astounding **1147** N. Gannets were counted in a few hours flying E at Gulf Shores 28 Dec (LRD). This represented a new maximum for the area. Large flocks of Am. White Pelicans are sometimes encountered in autumn migration; 400 were seen moving SE in central *Baldwin* 9 Oct (GDJ). Three were interesting 3 Nov at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* (SWM); nine birds at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 26 Jan (PCT,BT) represented the first WP records for January. A **Great Cormorant** was located for the second consecutive autumn at Ft. Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 Oct (ALM,ADM,p.a.); this represented the 10th record for the state. An impressive 11,000+ Double-crested Cormorants were seen 31 Dec on the Ft. Morgan CBC.

Locally rare was an Am. Bittern 26 Jan at St. Andrews SP, *Bay*, FL (ACM,HL,EF). The 120 Great Egrets 4 Sep in *Colbert* (GDJ,HHK) was a significant number for n.w. Alabama. Five unidentified dark ibis provided a second September WP record at Gulf Breeze 29 Sep (LRD). Moderate numbers of Wood Storks were present this summer and early fall in the Alabama Black Belt region. The 475 storks at the M&K Ranch, *Gulf*, FL, 30 July (HMS,JS) were highly unusual for the Panhandle. Single Wood Storks in *Shelby* 2 Sep (ALM) and at Ft. Pickens, FL, 20 Sep (RAD) were locally rare.

Waterfowl numbers were generally decreased this winter, likely due to the warm conditions. Up to three Fulvous Whistling-Ducks put in a rare appearance 14-21 Sep at Blakely I., *Mobile* (MN,mob). Three very cooperative immature Tundra Swans, rare in the MR, were in e. *Jefferson* 13 Dec to the end of the period (RRS,MBS,mob). A WP maximum for Blue-winged Teal was set by the count of 258 birds in *Okaloosa*, FL, 10 Sep (RAD). Greater Scaup are difficult to find inland; the maximum reported this year was eight birds 4 Jan at Guntersville (GDJ). A Lesser Scaup was seasonally rare 17 Aug at Blakely I. (GDJ). Bufflehead were considered "unusually abundant" in n.w. Alabama this winter (*vide* GNP). Oldsquaws are uncommon along the coast, and individuals were seen 28 Dec at Gulf Shores (RAD,RSD) and 30 Dec at Cape San Blas, *Gulf*, FL (SJS,BHS). Black Scoters are also uncommon, and I had four reports this year of six birds 26 Nov to 27 Feb along the coast. The eight White-winged Scoters 26 Nov on the Tennessee R. in *Limestone* (ALM,ASC) were rare; seven were

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noteworthy 28 Dec at Gulf Shores (LRD).

RAPTORS - CRANES: Ospreys were unusually numerous this winter on the coast, with nine discovered on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec. A rare inland winter sighting was of a single bird near Montgomery 1 Jan (LG). Alabama's seventh **Black-shouldered Kite** was at Ft. Morgan 6 Oct (MS,mob,p.a.); probably the same bird was spotted 13 Oct on nearby Little Dauphin I., *Mobile* (JRW,ph.,mob). Encouraging numbers of Bald Eagles were found in n.w. Alabama this year. Near Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 21 were counted Nov. 24 (WCB,GNP), and the Waterloo CBC 14 Dec had a record 86 eagles. The eight Cooper's Hawks at Ft. Morgan 7 Oct (GDJ,RAD,mob) tied the previous GC maximum.

Swainson's Hawk is most often recorded on the coast in late October and early November; recent years have produced several records. An immature was in s. *Baldwin* 15 Oct (ALM,p.a.). The "Harlan's" form of the Red-tailed Hawk is rare in our area, so it was interesting that two were identified this winter. One was near the Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, for several weeks beginning 4 Jan (GDJ,DGJ,mob); another was spotted near Marion 19 Feb (ALM,HHF,ASC,MM). Rough-legged Hawks are rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley, and are annual near the Guntersville Dam. A light-phased bird was near Decatur, *Limestone*, 3 Nov (SWM), and a very rare dark-phased Rough-legged was near Athens, *Limestone*, 8 Dec (GDJ,DGJ).

An impressive movement of an estimated 175 Am. Kestrels occurred at Ft. Morgan 6 Oct (GDJ,RAD,LRD,WWD). Normal numbers of Merlins were recorded, mostly at the coast; one seen 25 Aug at Ft. Morgan (PB,JL,GF) set a new GC early date. Peregrine Falcons are expected, though always exciting, transients in the autumn; most are found at the coast. Wintering birds are less common, especially inland. I had four reports of as many birds this winter in s. *Baldwin*; much more unusual were single birds at Wheeler Dam, *Lawrence*, 10 Nov to 30 Dec (GNP,mob) and at Hog Hollow, *Colbert*, 14 Dec to 9 Feb (GNP,mob).

Soras were plentiful this year. A new WP maximum was set by the 26 Soras at Ft. Walton Beach 24 Aug (RAD). The 31 birds recorded on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec set a new GC high. American Coots are very rare breeders in the WP, so the discovery of several adults with downy young at Ft. Walton Beach 10 Aug (RAD) was notable. Sandhill Cranes are regular in small numbers in winter near Gulf Shores, but they were recorded several times this year at unusual sites. A single bird was at the M&K Ranch in Gulf, FL, as early as 13 Sep (HMS,JS); 18 were present there 18 Jan (RH,HL,mob). Up to seven cranes were at Ft. Morgan 9-11 Nov (PB,GF,FL,PCT,RAD). A rare inland record was of three Sandhills at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 29 Dec into January (SWM,mob).

SHOREBIRDS: Black-bellied Plovers are uncommon inland transients in the autumn; as many as six were at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 20 Oct (GDJ,RRS,SWM). This was a fantastic year for Lesser Golden-Plovers in our area. Usually a scarce fall migrant, the species was recorded frequently and in good numbers at a variety of locations. Peak counts were of 14 birds 3 Oct at Swan Creek WMA (SWM) and eight at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 7 Oct (ALM). Late golden-plovers included three at Gulf Shores 22 Nov (PB,GF), and one at L. Purdy, *Shelby*, 5-21 Dec (HHF,JF,mob). The latter bird established a new late date for Alabama. At Big Sabine, *Santa Rosa*, FL, 28 Snowy Plovers were counted 7 Dec (RAD), an excellent total for this beleaguered species. Another small plover in trouble is the Piping Plover, so it was encouraging to learn of 30 at Cape San Blas, *Gulf*, FL, 28 Dec (SJS,BHS). The first WP breeding record for Black-necked Stilt came 10 Aug, when adults with young were found at Ft. Walton Beach (RAD). A local maximum was set there 10 Sep by the observation of 30 stilts (RAD). The stilt

at Decatur, *Morgan*, 6-25 Sep (SWM) provided only the fourth TV record. Three Am. Avocets were rarities at nearby Swan Creek WMA 26 Sep (SWM). The 131 Lesser Yellowlegs at Ft. Walton Beach 10 Sep (RAD) set a new WP maximum. Five Lessers were unusual for winter at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 9 Feb (GDJ, DGJ). A Willet 18 Aug at L. Purdy, *Shelby* (HHK, PP) was a rare find in the MR.

The peak count this year for Upland Sandpiper came at the usual site near Gulf Shores 10 Aug, when 34 were tallied (PB, GF). A new autumn MR maximum was provided by five birds at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 28 Aug (ALM, HHF, ASC). The single Upland Sandpiper at Dauphin I., *Mobile*, 12 Oct (AOS) was late. Two Whimbrels were seasonally rare 30 Dec on the Port St. Joe CBC, *Gulf*, FL (RLW). One to two Long-billed Curlews on the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, beginning 17 Aug (GDJ) were expected at that site. This stately bird is rare elsewhere, so single birds near Gulf Shores 12-22 Sep (GF, PB, GDJ) and 30 Dec on the Port St. Joe CBC (RLW) were interesting. The similarly-patterned Marbled Godwit occurs on the coast uncommonly as a migrant, but is very difficult to locate in the winter. The first December WP record was of a single bird at Big Sabine, *Santa Rosa*, 7 Dec into January (RAD). Three godwits were on the Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin*, 29 Dec (GDJ), and five appeared 30 Dec on the Port St. Joe CBC, FL.

Sanderlings are uncommon inland in autumn. Of several reports, the latest was of an individual 11 Nov in *Limestone* (SWM) that established a new TV late date. Another late Sanderling was at Guntersville 10 Nov (LBR). Blakely I. produced an impressive 2320 Western Sandpipers 5 Oct (GDJ). Baird's Sandpiper is uncommon in the fall, and is widely distributed inland and on the coast. One was at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 14-25 Aug (ALM, mob), and another appeared 4 Sep near Muscle Shoals, *Colbert* (GDJ, HHK).

This was a great fall for Pectoral Sandpipers. A new WP maximum was set by the 248 birds 7 Aug at Ft. Walton Beach (RAD). The 220 Pectorals 25 Aug at Harpersville (GDJ) provided a new high count for the MR. Another 300 near Muscle Shoals 4 Sep (GDJ, HHK) broke the previous TV record. A late Pectoral was in *Limestone* 11 Nov (SWM). Two were located on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec (WJB, mob) for only the third winter record for the state. An early Dunlin was at Ft. Morgan 14 Sep (PB); a new inland Alabama maximum for this species was set by the 450 birds 4 Nov at Swan Creek WMA (GDJ, HHK). A TV maximum for Stilt Sandpiper was superseded by the count of 32 at Swan Creek WMA 6 Oct (SWM). Two of these slender birds in Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 4 Nov (GDJ, HHK) were the latest ever recorded in the TV.

Buff-breasted Sandpipers were present in good numbers this fall. Three birds 18 Aug in Muscle Shoals (SWM) set a new early TV record. An individual 29 Sep at Swan Creek WMA (SWM) established a new late date for that region. Two spotted at L. Porter, *Jefferson*, 21 Sep (TAI) were also late. Five Buff-breasteds at Harpersville 7 Aug (GDJ) matched the previous MR high count. The largest number reported was seven at Gulf Shores 12 Sep (PB, GF, FL). A Long-billed Dowitcher 24 Aug at Ft. Walton Beach (RAD) was only the third identified in August in the WP. Wilson's Phalaropes are expected in small numbers in the autumn, especially on the Alabama coast. One was at Decatur, *Morgan*, 18 Aug (SWM); the individual 21 Aug to 10 Sep at Ft. Walton Beach (RAD) was unusual for the WP. High count this season was of seven birds 21 Sep at Blakely I. (GDJ).

JAEGERS - HUMMINGBIRDS: Two unidentified jaegers were seen this winter. Single birds were at Gulf Shores 28 Dec (RRS, MBS) and on Dauphin I. 15 Feb (BCG). Franklin's Gulls are rare but regular visitors to our region, especially in the fall and winter. The

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earliest sighting this year was of two at Ft. Morgan 6 Oct (GDJ). Coastal reports of single Franklin's Gulls were 16 Oct in Gulf Shores (JH,JFH), 4 Nov at Ft. Morgan (RAD), 15-21 Nov at Mary Ester, *Okaloosa*, FL (RAD,WF), and 27 Nov in Pensacola, FL (RAD). More unusual was the lone bird at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale*, 8 Dec (GDJ). Alabama's second **Little Gull**, an elusive immature, was on the Elk R. on the *Limestone/Lauderdale* boundary 20-21 Nov (DJS,mob,p.a.).

Unprecedented numbers of Bonaparte's Gulls, almost all adults, were seen in the TV in early winter. The 10,500 Bonaparte's 8 Dec at the Wilson and Wheeler dams on the Tennessee R. (GDJ) set a new maximum for inland Alabama. The same day at these sites, 14,500 Ring-billed Gulls were noted (GDJ). The view from Wilson Dam that day was reminiscent of a Christmas snow globe! A rare immature **Great Black-backed Gull** was seen at Ft. Morgan 4 Nov (RAD,p.a.). The high tally this fall for Common Tern was of 150 at Ft. Morgan 21 Sep (GDJ,DGJ). This species is difficult to find in winter. Of a few coastal reports, the most noteworthy was one at St. Andrews SP, Bay, FL, 4-12 Jan (EF,ACM,mob), which provided a first local winter record. A Forster's Tern at Millbrook, *Elmore*, 1 Jan (LG) was seasonally rare for the ICP. Ten Forster's were unusual 22 Jan at Waterloo, *Lauderdale* (GDJ).

Single Eurasian Collared-Doves were at Gulf Breeze, FL, 25 Aug and 18 Sep (RAD,WWD); there was only one previous *Santa Rosa* record. I received five reports of single White-winged Doves 14 Oct to 22 Nov from Ft. Morgan east to Gulf Breeze. This species is an uncommon fall transient on the coast. Less easily found is the Groove-billed Ani, though in fall and winter at least one is usually seen. A new early WP record was established by the bird at Ft. Pickens 20 Sep (RAD). Two more were discovered at Dauphin I. 11 Oct (T&JS,mob). The scarce and comical **Burrowing Owl** was enjoyable at Ft. Morgan 8 Oct (GDJ). Short-eared Owls are always exciting finds in our area. One was near Town Creek, *Lawrence*, beginning 26 Feb (GDJ,DGJ,mob).

A late Ruby-throated Hummingbird with a deformed bill was banded in Birmingham 5 Nov (HHK,RRS,GDJ). A rare Black-chinned Hummingbird was banded 2 Nov in Montgomery (RRS), and a male was observed in Mobile from late November into January (EM,RRS,p.a.). Rufous Hummingbirds are expected in small numbers each year. The Sargents banded six in our area from 30 Aug into January. One bird that had been banded by the Sargents in *Shelby* 6 March 1991, was recaptured over 100 miles to the north at Madison 19 Nov! A Rufous in *Bay*, FL, 28 Dec to January was only the second local record. **Allen's Hummingbird** was added to the Alabama list this year, with not one but two birds! The first state record was a female present in w. Mobile from November to late December. This bird was banded 3 Dec (RRS,MBS,p.a.) (see Sargent (1992, *Al. Birdlife* 39(1):2-3)). The second bird spent much of the winter in Prattville, *Autauga*, and was banded 26 Jan (RRS,p.a.). Fortunately for the many listers who made the trek, the latter bird was an identifiable male. Four unidentified *Selasphorus* hummingbirds were reported inland and at the coast from 19 Aug to 20 Dec.

WOODPECKERS - WOOD-WARBLERS: The 20 Red-headed Woodpeckers 19 Oct at Seven Mile Island WMA, *Lauderdale* (WCB,GNP) were unusual for a single site. Olive-sided Flycatchers are uncommon migrants in the fall; I received reports of three separate birds 16 Aug to 2 Oct from Gulf Breeze, FL, and Ft. Morgan (RAD,PB,JFu,CLK,mob). Much easier to find on the outer coast is the Western Kingbird, though numbers this fall seemed low compared to those in most years. I had only four reports of five birds 7 Oct to 22 Nov (GDJ,RAD,TLs,PB,mob); more unusual was the one on the Dauphin Island CBC 21 Dec. Five records were submitted of seven Scissor-tailed Flycatchers from s. *Baldwin* 12 Oct to 22 Nov

(PB,GF,JH,JFH,FL). The single birds on the Pensacola CBC, FL, 21 Dec, and at Port St. Joe, FL, 29 Dec (SJS) were unusual for that season.

Two immature Horned Larks were unusually early 20-28 Aug at Harpersville, *Shelby* (ALM,HHF,ASC). A flock of 200 larks was locally significant 19 Jan in *Lauderdale* (GNP). I had a report of six very late Purple Martins 15 Nov in *Bay*, FL (R&AI). Late Tree Swallows were recorded 3 Nov at Guntersville (ALM) and the following day in *Limestone* (GDJ,HHK). Bewick's Wrens have become very difficult to find in the region, so it was good to learn of one in *Lauderdale* 14-22 Dec (GNP,mob). The House Wren 24 Sep in *Montgomery* (LG) set a new ICP early date. Another House Wren was seasonally rare 14 Dec at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone* (HHK). Seventy Marsh Wrens on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec surpassed the previous state maximum.

Large numbers of kinglets were present this winter in n.w. Alabama. On the Waterloo CBC 14 Dec, 226 Golden-crowneds and 228 Ruby-crowneds were recorded, the latter a new TV maximum. An impressive 342 E. Bluebirds on the same count exceeded the previous state high. The Swainson's Thrush 31 Aug in Birmingham (HHK,PHF,PP) was early. A good flight of Wood Thrushes transpired 7 Oct, with 50 estimated at Ft. Pickens (RLB,JHS). Alabama finally recorded the **Varied Thrush** this winter. An immature delighted birders 20 Feb to 7 Apr in Birmingham (JBr,ALM,mob,ph.,p.a.) (see Miller (1992, *Al. Birdlife* 39(1):1-2)). This northwestern species has visited many eastern states, including Tennessee and Georgia; the only previous record in the AOS area was at Ft. Pickens in November 1984. Many thanks are due to the Bruce's, who graciously allowed the hoards of observers into their home.

The 73 Gray Catbirds reported at Ft. Pickens 6 Oct (RLB,JHS) indicated a good migration day for this species. Two Am. Pipits were early 13 Oct at Waterloo, *Lauderdale* (GNP). Unusual for n. Alabama in winter were single Solitary Vireos 25 Dec at Birmingham (HHK,PP) and 4 Jan in *Marshall* (HHK). Also locally rare in winter was the Orange-crowned Warbler 14 Dec in *Limestone* (HHK). The Nashville Warbler 12 Sep at Ft. Morgan (PB) was early. Locally early was a N. Parula 25 Feb in *Bay*, FL (EF). Conversely, the Black-throated Green Warbler 30 Nov at Guntersville (HHK,BJ,PP) established a new departure date for inland Alabama. A Cerulean Warbler 6 Oct at Ft. Morgan (GDJ,mob) eclipsed the previous GC late date. Ft. Pickens yielded an impressive 170 Am. Redstarts 6 Oct (RLB,JHS). One Am. Redstart 28 Dec in *Bay*, FL (BC) was a locally late sighting. Alabama's fifth winter Ovenbird record occurred 28 Dec on the Gulf Shores CBC (RRS). Mourning Warblers are rare in autumn in our area. Single birds were noted 7 Sep at Pensacola, FL (PCT,BT), and 21 Sep in Birmingham (RRR,p.a.).

TANAGERS - FINCHES: The Summer Tanager 4 Jan in Gulf Breeze (RAD) provided the second January record for the WP. A **Black-headed Grosbeak** was a rare find 12 Oct at Dauphin I. (SH,p.a.). I received two rare winter reports of Indigo Buntings. Lone birds were found 28 Dec on the Gulf Shores CBC (JH) and 4 Jan at Gulf Breeze (WWD,*fide* RAD). The latter Indigo was only the second ever noted in that month in the WP. Clay-colored Sparrows are regular on the outer coast in fall, but the flock of up to 14 seen 13-17 Oct at Ft. Morgan (ALM,mob) greatly exceeded the previous state maximum. Unusual Lark Sparrow reports included three birds 24 Sep in e. *Jefferson* (RRS) and another on the Ft. Morgan CBC 31 Dec. This species, which breeds rarely in w. Alabama, is an uncommon autumn visitor on the outer coast.

Sharp-tailed Sparrows are rare inland; the single bird near Harpersville 23-25 Sep (ALM,mob) was the second for the MR. Many were at Ft. Morgan in early October, with a peak

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of 12 noted 7 Oct (GDJ,PB,RAD,GF,mob). The Lincoln's Sparrow on that day at Ft. Morgan (GDJ) was early. A good count of six Lincoln's was produced by the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec. This species is regular in small numbers throughout the state from mid-October to mid-November, but it is scarce in n. Alabama in winter. One was seen 10-11 Feb in s.e. *Jefferson* (BCG).

This was an excellent year for longspurs in the TV. Over 250 Lapland Longspurs in a single flock were seen in s. *Limestone* from late December into February, but total numbers in this area were likely much higher. The species is rare in n.w. Alabama, so the three in *Lauderdale* 11 Jan (GNP), and the 75 birds 16 Feb in e. *Colbert* (GNP), were noteworthy. A **Smith's Longspur** was discovered in the s. *Limestone* flocks 1 Jan (GDJ,ph,p.a.) and continued to be seen into February by many persistent observers. This was the seventh state record, and the first in 23 years; there were no previous TV sightings. What appeared to be two different Smith's were noted at this site 23 Jan (DJS).

Bobolinks are unusual in the autumn, and this year I received two reports. One was near Harpersville 1-2 Sep (ALM,ADM) and another was at Ft. Morgan 7 Oct (GDJ,RAD,mob). The Yellow-headed Blackbird is a rare species that is found most fall seasons along the outer coast. One was at Ft. Morgan 12 Sep (PB,GF,FL) and two more were there 7 Oct (GDJ,mob). A single bird was in Gulf, FL, 12 Oct (HL). More unusual was the lone Yellow-headed on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec (RRS,MBS). The 300 Brewer's Blackbirds 6 Feb near Town Creek, *Lawrence* (GDJ,JH) established a new TV maximum.

The first fall record of **Shiny Cowbird** for Alabama came 29 Nov, when a male was seen at Ft. Morgan (JH,JFH,JB). Alabama's fifth record of **Bronzed Cowbird** was of a lone bird at Ft. Morgan 18 Aug (GDJ,DGJ,p.a.). Another was seen at this site 12 Oct (TLS,p.a.). There was a repeat visit this winter of N. Orioles in Montgomery; this species is casual inland at that season. One to two birds were seen 29 Nov (RAD) to 28 Dec (LG). The 28 House Finches on the Gulf Shores CBC 28 Dec tied the previous GC maximum. Only a few Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were reported this year, mostly from e. *Jefferson* (RRS,MBS).

ADDENDUM: Omitted from the last "Sightings" column was a record of a female Chestnut-sided Warbler feeding a dependent young bird 24 July in n.e. *Jefferson* (RRS,MBS,R&NC). This was the first confirmed breeding for the state, though there have been several summer records.

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Manuscripts submitted for publication in *Alabama Birdlife* should conform to the guidelines listed below. Refer to this issue or to recent past issues for examples. *Alabama Birdlife* is published twice a year: deadlines for submitting articles are **1 November** and **1 June**. 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 the hard copy (Word or WordPerfect preferred).

Submit manuscripts typed and double spaced on 8 1/2 x 11 inch typing paper.

Black and white photos are preferred, but color prints and slides are acceptable. Convert slides to prints before submitting article.

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 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.

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

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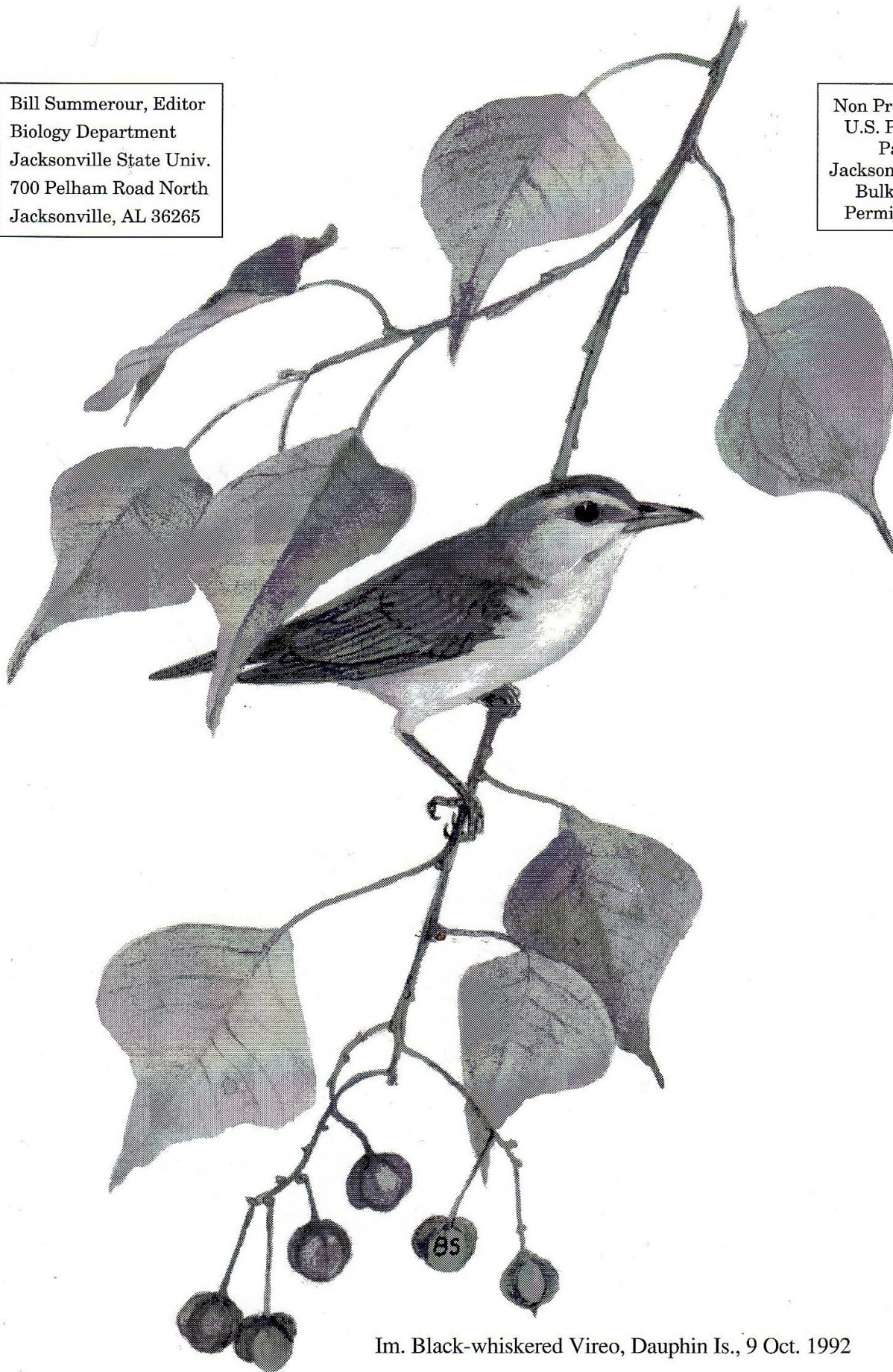
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Three or less references should be incorporated into the text of the article rather than listed separately at the end, e.g. Imhof (1976, *Alabama Birds*).

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.

Bill Summerour, Editor
Biology Department
Jacksonville State Univ.
700 Pelham Road North
Jacksonville, AL 36265

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Im. Black-whiskered Vireo, Dauphin Is., 9 Oct. 1992