

AUTUMN SIGHTINGS (AUGUST - NOVEMBER 1998)*

EARED GREBE - One to three were present between 29 September-30 November, Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Don Ware, Robert A. Duncan, Phil C. Tetlow, Lucy Duncan).

CORY'S SHEARWATER - An individual was located 74 miles s. of Baldwin Co., AL, 4 October (Greg D. Jackson, Chris M. Dorgan).

MASKED BOOBY - A single was seen 74 miles s. of Baldwin Co., AL, 4 October (Greg D. Jackson, Chris M. Dorgan).

BROWN BOOBY - An immature was noted 30 August in Santa Rosa, Co., FL (Ann Forster, Dan Forster).

BROWN PELICAN - One was an oddity 29 September at Miller's Ferry Dam, Wilcox Co., AL, and was thought to have been displaced by Hurricane Georges (D. Bruce Crider).

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD - Following Hurricane Georges, six on 29 September in Wilcox Co. (D. Bruce Crider), and another the next day in Henry Co. (Geoff E. Hill, W. Doug Robinson), provided 2nd and 3rd far inland records for Alabama.

WHITE IBIS - An immature was seen in Colbert Co., AL, 9-13 August (Steve W. McConnell, Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

GLOSSY IBIS - This species is casual in fall, so one to five birds at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, 3 October-30 November were a notable find (Don Ware, Robert A. Duncan, Lucy Duncan et al.).

WHITE-FACED IBIS - Two created a stir on 27 October-2 November at Blakeley Island, Mobile Co. (Phil C. Tetlow et al.), providing Alabama's 10th record; another was at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, 5-7 November (Phil C. Tetlow et al.), only the 2nd for the Florida Panhandle.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL - Four were near Montgomery, Montgomery Co., AL, 16 September-18 October (Carolyn T. Snow et al.). Up to four set a new late date 25 September-24 November at Mobile, Mobile Co., AL (Steve W. McConnell et al.). Singles, possibly the same individual, were spotted 29 September at Gulf Shores, Baldwin Co, AL (Eric Soehren, Greg Lein et al.), 4 October at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson, Chris M. Dorgan), and 20-22 October near Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL. A lone bird on 30 October in Escambia Co., FL (Paula Perdue), established a 2nd Florida Panhandle record.

WOOD STORK - Three were at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, on 22 August (Bill Gericke, Don Ware et al.). A count of 504 on 23 August provided a state maximum in west central Alabama (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson). A late individual on 3 October was in Blount Co., AL (Paul H. Franklin).

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - Reports on 11 November of 200 near Mobile, Mobile Co. (Phil C. Tetlow et al.), and 103 at Fort Pickens, Escambia Co. (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan) provided new Alabama and Florida Panhandle maxima.

SNOW GOOSE - On 11 November, 2600 were at Fort Pickens, Escambia Co., FL (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan).

ROSS'S GOOSE - Of many reports, most notable were two birds at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, providing a first panhandle record, starting 18 November (Lucy R. Duncan et al.). Eight set a new Alabama maximum in Limestone Co., beginning 24 November (C. Dwight Cooley, Robert R. Reid et al.).

EURASIAN WIGEON - Very rare in our area, an adult graced Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge 13-14 November (Ken Allen et al.), providing the 7th Alabama record.

MOTTLED DUCK - Two to four birds were at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, between 30 October-24 November (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan, Phil C. Tetlow, Betsy Tetlow, Don Ware et al.).

CINNAMON TEAL - The second record for the area was an individual seen on 7 October at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER - A good count was 23 at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, 26 November (Jan Loyd, Paul Blevins).

OLDSQUAW - One seen on 19 September in Walton Co., FL, provided the first September record for the area (Steve Milum). Two were seen in Okaloosa Co., FL on 5 November (Don Ware, Lenny Fenimore).

COOPER'S HAWK - An Alabama maximum of 35 was noted at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, 23 October (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

GOLDEN EAGLE - Immatures were enjoyed 4 November at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL (David Cimprich, Michelle Davis, Stefan Woltmann) and 6 November at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Hud Huddleston, Don Ware).

SANDHILL CRANE - Reports included four on the early date of 22 September at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL (David Cimprich), and up to nine beginning 6 November at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Nancy Gobris et al.).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER - An individual seen between 11-18 November at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, was a good find (Don Ware et al., Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan, many observers).

AMERICAN AVOCET - Unexpected inland, sightings were at Guntersville, Marshall Co., AL, 17 August (Wally Brown, Bobby Brown, Linda B. Reynolds) and in Limestone Co., AL, 16 October (Harry Dean).

WILLET - A count of 120 at Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL, 3 November (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson) tied the previous Alabama maximum.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT - Particularly scarce in autumn, and with only a few Florida Panhandle records, one was a surprise find on 19 September in Walton Co. (Steve Milum).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - Singles seen 6 September in Montgomery, Montgomery Co., AL (Larry F. Gardella), and the next day in Gadsden, Etowah Co., AL (Karen White, Philip White), were notable.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER - Best tallies were of 85-100 birds 28 August-7 September, Baldwin Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson, Phil C. Tetlow et al.), and 21 in Lowndes Co., AL, 11 September (Eric Soehren), the last providing a new inland Alabama maximum.

COMMON SNIPE - Three were very early on 14 August in Escambia Co., FL (Will W. Duncan).

WILSON'S PHALAROPE - Locally very rare, one on 30 September in Henry Co., AL (Geoff E. Hill, W. Doug Robinson), was a good find.

POMARINE JAEGER - Hard to find onshore, an adult was studied leisurely at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, 12 September (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson, Stefan Waltmann et al.). A distant jaeger, thought probably a Pomarine, was a rare find 20 miles inland in Mobile Co., AL, 29 September after Hurricane Georges (Greg D. Jackson).

FRANKLIN'S GULL - Alabama sightings occurred on 30 October in Henry Co. (Giff R. Beaton), 1 November in Lauderdale Co. (Steve W. McConnell), and 21 November at Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson). Six on 19 and 23 November at Guntersville, Marshall Co., (Richard A. Reynolds) set a new inland maximum for Alabama.

CALIFORNIA GULL - A thrill and Alabama's 3rd record was one seen on 30 November in Guntersville, Marshall Co. (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - One was seen on 28 November in Lauderdale Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson et al.).

GULL-BILLED TERN - A new Florida Panhandle maximum was 37 on 7 October at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan). One lingered to 18 November (Robert A. Duncan et al.), far past previous dates.

ROYAL TERN - Lone refugees from Hurricane Georges set 5th and 6th inland Alabama records in Barbour and Lee counties 30 September (Geoff E. Hill, W. Doug Robinson).

COMMON TERN - A congregation of 350 at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., 23 September (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson) was the largest in decades in Alabama.

BRIDLED TERN - Two reports were secondary to Hurricane Georges; one was at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, 28-29 September (Don Ware, Hud Huddleston), and another appeared in Henry Co., AL, 30 September (Geoff E. Hill, W. Doug Robinson) for a 1st inland Alabama occurrence. The 17 that were 48-74 miles s. of Baldwin Co., AL, 4 October (Greg D. Jackson, Chris M. Dorgan), provided a new late date.

SOOTY TERN - Two occurred in the Florida Panhandle with Hurricane Georges; an immature was at Pensacola, Escambia Co., FL, 28 September (Peggy Baker, Pam Beasley) and an adult appeared at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, the following day (Don Ware). Two offshore 4 October (Greg D. Jackson, Chris M. Dorgan) were the latest for Alabama.

BLACK SKIMMER - A storm-displaced individual was in Henry Co., AL, on 30 September, providing the 4th inland record (Geoff E. Hill, W. Doug Robinson).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE - A count of 15 at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, on 3 November, broke the previous Alabama maximum (Stefan Woltmann).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI - Appeared in small numbers beginning 1 October in n.w. Florida, an area where the species is rare but regular in autumn .

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD - One set a new Florida Panhandle record arrival date on 4 September, when a banded bird returned for the 4th winter to Pensacola, Escambia Co., FL (Bev Kenny); another was in nearby Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co., FL, 18 September (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan, Johnny Beardon, video taped).

YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - It was a good year for this species, with 16 well-documented reports coming from Alabama between 6-27 September (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson, David Cimprich, Michelle Davis, Steve W. McConnell).

ALDER FLYCATCHER - Vocalizing birds appeared between 22-24 September in Birmingham, Jefferson Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson et al.), 23 September at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson), and 9-10 October at Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL (Jon L. Dunn, Kenny Nichols, LaDonna Nichols et al., photograph).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER - Locally casual, a female was seen at the Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, on 13 October (Robert A. Duncan et al.) and one or two immatures were seen in the same area between 22 October-30 November (Don Ware, Alan Knothe et al.)

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER - Rare in the area, two were detailed in the Florida Panhandle; one appeared 8 November at Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co., FL (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan et al., video taped, photographed) and another returned for the 3rd year to Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL, on 10 November (Lenny Fenimore, Robert A. Duncan, Phil C. Tetlow).

SULPHUR-BELLIED FLYCATCHER - An extraordinary find was one described 8 August at Fort Pickens (Peggy Baker), Escambia Co., FL, setting a first Florida Panhandle record.

WESTERN KINGBIRD - One in Barbour Co., on 29 November, was rare and the latest on record for inland Alabama (Howard Horne).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER - Rare, but increasing, discoveries of breeding birds occurred in early August at Huntsville, Madison Co., AL (Bill Hackbarth) and Decatur, Morgan Co., AL (Steve W. McConnell). Also significant were eight at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, 3 November, tying the state maximum (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

BELL'S VIREO - Rare finds at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., occurred on 1 October (David Cimprich), 10 October (David Cimprich, Michelle Davis, photograph), and 10-23 October (Duane Berger, Robert R. Sargent, many observers), the last setting a new departure date for Alabama.

WARBLING VIREO - This species is scarce in Alabama, so the two observed 20 September in Limestone Co. (Greg D. Jackson, Steve W. McConnell), and another seen 27 September in Colbert Co. (Greg D. Jackson), were significant records.

TREE SWALLOW - A count of over 2000 set a new inland Alabama maximum in Limestone Co., AL, on 18 October (Steve W. McConnell).

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH - One seen on 21 September in Montgomery, Montgomery Co., AL, set an early local arrival record (Phil Snow, Carolyn T. Snow).

BROWN CREEPER - An early local arrival record was set when one was seen on 10 October at Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL (Steve W. McConnell).

BEWICK'S WREN - This species is noticeably scarce in the East, so it was encouraging to have reports on 10 October at Dauphin Island, Mobile, Co., AL (Helen H. Kittinger, Gussie Arnett, Peggy King) and beginning 17 November in Perry Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson et al.).

HOUSE WREN - A first for Alabama's coastal plain in summer, one was spotted 1 August in Sumter Co. (Robert R. Reid et al.).

AMERICAN ROBIN - A flock of 30 in Pensacola, Escambia Co., FL, on 10 September was the first September record for the area (Phil C. Tetlow, Betsy Tetlow).

"BREWSTER'S" WARBLER - Singles were discovered 9 September in Macon Co., AL (Barry Fleming) and 13 September at Dauphin Island, Mobile Co., AL (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

TENNESSEE WARBLER - One on 13 September in Montgomery Co., AL, was very early (Larry F. Gardella).

NASHVILLE WARBLER - A total of five or six was atypically high 19-21 September in n. Alabama (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson, Damien J. Simbeck) and one 11 November at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., set a new Alabama departure date (Dan Svingen).

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

MAGNOLIA WARBLER - One was early in Birmingham, Jefferson Co., AL, 26 August (Greg D. Jackson, Debra G. Jackson).

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER - One on 24 October in Limestone Co. (Dean R. Cutten, Raelene Cutten) was a good find in northern Alabama.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER - Very rare in autumn, a single was identified 20 October at Fort Walton Beach spray fields, Okaloosa Co., FL (Nancy Gobris).

MOURNING WARBLERS - Six reports involving seven individuals between 23 August-30 September in n.w. Florida, was an unprecedented number for any season (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan, Pam Beasley, Don Ware).

WESTERN Tanager - Both rare and early, a male was observed at Gulf Breeze, Santa Rosa Co., FL, on 4 August (Robert A. Duncan, Lucy R. Duncan).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW - One at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, on 22-23 September was noteworthy (Stefan Woltmann, Greg D. Jackson).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW - One at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, on 1 October was very early (David Cimprich et al.).

SWAMP SPARROW - This species was unusually plentiful at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, in late October (David Cimprich, Robert R. Sargent, Greg D. Jackson).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD - A male was at a feeder in Okaloosa Co., FL, between 24 August-2 September (Arno Lutz, Mary Lutz).

RUSTY BLACKBIRD - This is a rare coastal species, so singles on 6 and 30 November in Okaloosa Co., FL, is noteworthy (Don Ware, Lenny Fenimore, Hud Hudleston, Charlie Parkell).

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE - This species is rare in extreme northwest Florida, so the 11 seen in Santa Rosa Co. on 10 November was a good find (Phil C. Tetlow).

RED CROSSBILL - At least 22 at two sites were exciting in n. Cleburne Co., AL, beginning 27 October (Bill Summerour et al.).

PINE SISKIN - One was early at Fort Morgan, Baldwin Co., AL, on 25 October (Michelle Davis, David Cimprich).

* Records and annotations provided by Greg D. Jackson and Robert A. Duncan

WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 1998 - FEBRUARY 1999)*

RED-THROATED LOON - Three were observed on the Perdido Christmas Bird Count (CBC), Escambia Co., FL, 26 December (Phil C. Tetlow).