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**Cover:** Loggerhead Shrike; photograph by Richard Ditch.

# DECADAL DECLINE (1992-2002) OF LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES ON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS IN ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, AND TENNESSEE

Stephen J. Stedman and Michael R. Allen

## INTRODUCTION

Most major works discussing the population status of the Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) in North America indicate that this predatory songbird has declined in population numbers at a rate of  $>2\%$ /year since at least the mid-1960s (Root 1988, Price *et al.* 1995, Yosef 1996, Lefranc 1997, Pardieck and Sauer 2000). The most recent major works discussing the status of the shrike in Alabama (Imhof 1976) and Tennessee (Robinson 1990, Nicholson 1997) also refer to its declining population numbers. The major work for Mississippi (Toups and Jackson 1987) does not deal with the species' population status as a focal point and so does not mention this matter. Nearly all of the aforementioned works offering discussions about the population status of this species base comments on various population data, mainly from Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) and Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), acquired no later than the mid-1990s. Only one source (Pardieck and Sauer 2000) provides commentary based on data acquired during the late 1990s, and in this case the data are derived from the BBS. Therefore, an update of the shrike's status in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee based on the most recent CBC data appears warranted, especially in light of the continuing decline in the shrike's population numbers.

## METHODS

To provide a basis for statistical analysis, CBC data from Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee were obtained from the "Historical Results of CBCs" section of the National Audubon Society (2002) website. Data from counts that were conducted every year from 1992 to 2002 resulted in a dataset derived from 11 sites in Alabama, 11 in Mississippi, and 15 in Tennessee for a total of 407 observation sites for the 11 year time period. The number of shrikes per count and the number of shrikes per party hour per count declined about the same in the three states over the study period, so the number of shrikes per count was used in our analysis.

The statistical objective of this study was to determine if there was a significant downward trend in Loggerhead Shrike population counts on CBCs for the years

1992 through 2002. Although the yearly counts per site resemble a time series both graphically (Figure 1) and intuitively, this time dependent structure was weak enough to avoid the use of a more complicated time series model. Hence, multiple regression analysis was the method of choice because of its simplicity and robustness. Also, combining all the sites from the three states into one dataset increased the power of the resultant hypothesis test, and the diagnostics showed that the assumptions of normality and independence were only slightly violated, if at all. Second, the original count data  $Y$  were transformed using the natural log to alleviate the problem of exploding variance and non-normality (Neter *et al.* 1996).

Finally, the multiple regression model used in this study to test for the possible downward trend in Loggerhead Shrike populations is given as

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{1i} X_{2i} + \beta_5 X_{1i} X_{3i} + \epsilon_i$$

where  $Y_i$  is the log of the number of shrikes recorded at each site,  $\beta_0$  is the  $y$  intercept,  $\beta_1$  is the change per year of the average of  $Y_i$ , called  $E(Y_i)$ ,  $\beta_2$  is the change in  $\beta_0$  for sites in Tennessee,  $\beta_3$  is the change in  $\beta_0$  for sites in Mississippi,  $\beta_4$  is the change in  $E(Y_i)$  for sites in Tennessee,  $\beta_5$  is the change in  $E(Y_i)$  for sites in Mississippi,  $X_{1i}$  is the year,  $X_{2i}$  is 1 if a Tennessee site, 0 otherwise,  $X_{3i}$  is 1 if a Mississippi site, 0 otherwise,  $\epsilon_i$  is the error term for the  $i^{\text{th}}$  data point, and  $i = 1, \dots, 407$ .

In the above model it appears that no parameters seem associated with Alabama. This is not the case. If any of the extra parameters ( $\beta_2 - \beta_5$ ) are found to be significant, then  $\beta_0$  and  $\beta_1$  would represent the intercept and slope for Alabama. Conversely, if all of the extra parameters are not found to be significant, then  $\beta_0$  and  $\beta_1$  simply represent the overall intercept and slope.

## RESULTS

The total number of shrikes counted during each year for each state and for the three states combined is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Total Loggerhead Shrike counts recorded from Christmas Bird Counts in Alabama (11 counts), Mississippi (11 counts), and Tennessee (15 counts) 1992-2002.

State	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Alabama	314	288	268	207	249	156	135	207	134	195	173
Mississippi	283	262	250	213	249	237	211	214	173	183	246
Tennessee	144	78	97	81	53	49	57	72	51	52	56
Total	741	628	615	501	551	442	403	493	358	430	475

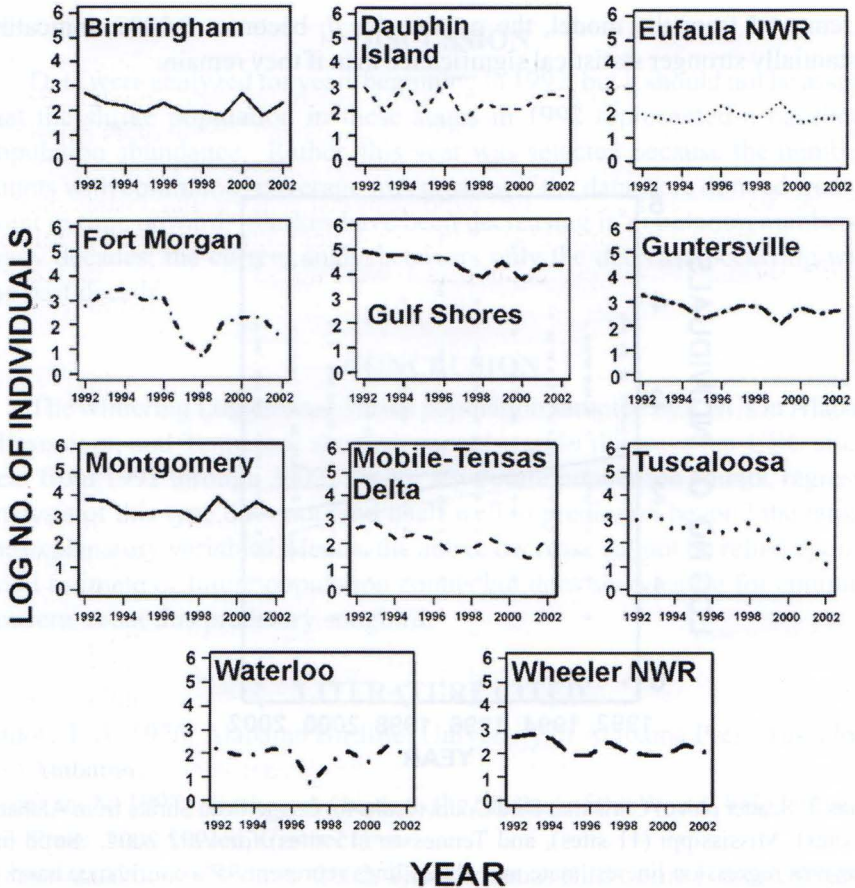


FIGURE 1. Annual Christmas Bird Count results for 11 sites in Alabama for 1992-2002.

Graphically, the data indicate a downward trend in the shrike population sampled by Alabama CBCs (Figure 1). Although similar trends were realized in the graphs for the Tennessee data and slightly less so for the Mississippi data, those figures are not presented here because the Alabama set was a good representative. Data from all three states are plotted along with the line of best fit and a 95% confidence band (Figure 2).

Results from the multiple regression model indicate that for the years 1992 through 2002 there is no significant difference in the population trend among the three states (Table 2). Second, and most importantly, there appears to be a slight downward trend in the average population count, giving an estimated decrease of 6% per year after untransforming the data. In fact, when parameters  $\beta_2 - \beta_5$

are removed from the model, the p-value for  $\beta_1$  becomes 0.0007, indicating substantially stronger statistical significance than if they remain.

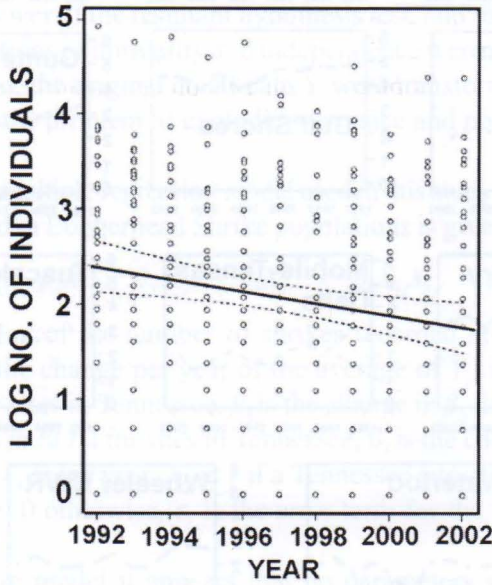


FIGURE 2. Scatter plot of Christmas Bird Count results for Loggerhead Shrike from Alabama (11 sites), Mississippi (11 sites), and Tennessee (15 sites) for 1992-2002. Solid line represents regression line estimate and dotted lines represent 95% confidence band.

TABLE 2. Results of multiple regression model that tested for downward trend in Loggerhead Shrike populations using Christmas Bird Count data from Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee for 1992-2002.

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	p-value	Dropped from model
$\beta_0$	128.46	51.96	0.014	No
$\beta_1$	-0.06	0.03	0.016	No
$\beta_2$	-41.15	73.48	0.576	Yes
$\beta_3$	25.08	68.40	0.714	Yes
$\beta_4$	-0.01	0.03	0.700	Yes
$\beta_5$	0.02	0.04	0.573	Yes

## DISCUSSION

Data were analyzed for years beginning in 1992, but it should not be assumed that the shrike population in these states in 1992 represented a baseline of population abundance. Rather, this year was selected because the number of counts with continuous coverage was greatest if the data were derived from that point in time onward. Shrikes have been decreasing in population numbers for many decades; the current analysis covers only the decrease occurring within the past decade.

## CONCLUSION

The wintering Loggerhead Shrike population sampled by CBCs in Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee showed, roughly, a 6% decrease per CBC site per year from 1992 through 2002. As for any future population counts, regression analysis of this type does not lend itself well to prediction beyond the range of the explanatory variables. Hence, the above decrease cannot be relied upon as a good estimate of future population counts but does show cause for continuing concern about this predatory songbird.

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**SOOTY TERN FROM OPELIKA, ALABAMA****Julian L. Dusi**

Tropical Storm Bill added a bird record of interest for eastern Alabama. On 3 July 2003, following Bill's delivery of large amounts of rain, especially in northern and eastern Alabama, a Sooty Tern, *Sterna fuscata*, was found dead in the parking lot of the Jeffcoat-Trant Mortuary, in Opelika, Lee County, Alabama. Jerome Couch, a former member of the Alabama Ornithological Society, discovered the bird, recognized the importance of the specimen, and saved it for the record.

The author photographed (Fig. 1) and prepared a museum skin of the tern and it has been placed in the Auburn University Museum as specimen A-353. The tern was an adult female, with a total length of 360 mm, a wing length of 290 mm, and a tarsus length of 29 mm.

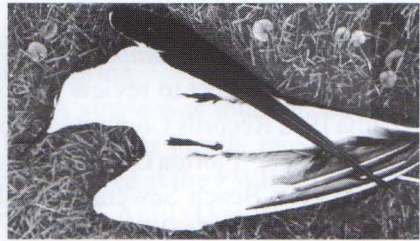


FIGURE 1. Photographs of dorsal and ventral sides of a Sooty Tern, *Sterna fuscata*, that was found in Opelika, Lee County, Alabama, on 3 July 2003 (photos by author).

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**SPRING SIGHTINGS (MARCH - MAY 2003)**

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

This report covers the period from March through May 2003 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (west of the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this article does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species; these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. All submissions of birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, must be accompanied by adequate details of the observation. The extent of this documentation depends on the rarity of the species and the difficulty of identification. For guidance, observers are encouraged to consult the Alabama Ornithological Society checklist. Reports should note conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

**Abbreviations and italics:** County names are in italics and, except for the Florida counties of *Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, *Santa Rosa*, and *Walton*, are in Alabama. “@” = subject to review by appropriate records committee; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “b.” = banded; “BBS” = Breeding Bird Survey; “FOSRC” = Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee; “FWBSF” = Fort Walton Beach Sewerage Facility; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NF” = National Forest; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “v.t.” = videotaped; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, *Santa Rosa*, and *Walton* counties); “WTF” = Woerner Turf Farm.

**PACIFIC LOON** – Rare along the Gulf Coast, one was found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 2 April (Merilu Rose, Jan Osborn *et al.*), while three were at the same site 23 May (Bob Duncan).

**COMMON LOON** – A new maximum for the Mountain Region was set by the observation of 124 in *Jefferson/Shelby*, 29 April, with 105 at Lake Purdy and 19 at Oak Mountain SP Fishing Lake (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, Harriett Wright, Alice Stevenson).

**PIED-BILLED GREBE** – This species is an erratic and localized breeder in Alabama, so a pair with three young in Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 29 May (Tyler Hicks) and the three broods found on a sinkhole pond near Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 30 May (Paul Kittle) were noteworthy.

**BAND-RUMPED STORM-PETREL** – Casual in the WP, a bird found offshore from Pensacola, *Escambia*, 13 April by Joe Mills was taken to Wildlife Sanctuary of Northwest Florida and identified by Dorothy Kaufmann and Andy Kratter (specimen to Florida State Museum).

**AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN** – Up to four were seen at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 28 February-7 March (Andrew Haffenden, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner) where the species is locally rare. Two were locally rare so late at Orange Beach, *Baldwin*, 31 May (Ross Primrose, Love Primrose; ph.).

**BROWN PELICAN** – One was spotted at Floral, *Covington*, 17 April (Jeff Garner) (occasional inland).

**AMERICAN BITTERN** – This species is rarely recorded on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, so one south of Prattville, *Autauga*, 17-30 March (Tommy Pratt *et al.*) was noteworthy.

**GREAT EGRET** – Near Leighton, *Colbert*, 28 were counted 20 May, a high number for a species that is locally rare in spring (Paul Kittle).

**SNOWY EGRET** – One was found near Leighton, *Colbert*, 20 May (Paul Kittle) where the species is locally rare in spring.

**BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON** – A single was found at Bellwood, *Geneva*, 30 May (Don Ware) where the species is locally rare.

**GLOSSY IBIS** – Six dark-eyed birds were observed at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 11 April (Bob Duncan), with a single there 15 April (Don Ware) (casual in the WP).

**PLEGADIS SP.** – At least 10 probable Glossy Ibises were at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 18 April (Jody Brown; ph.), a good number.

**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** – Except for Eufaula NWR, this species is rare on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, so two spotted north of Opelika, *Lee*, 27 March (Tyler Hicks) were noteworthy.

**ROSS'S GOOSE** – Still rare but becoming regular in Alabama, a single was noted near Leighton, *Colbert*, 21 March (Shirley Wayland)- 2 April (Damien Simbeck *et al.*).

**TRUMPETER SWAN** – The four swans that wintered in Rocky Bayou, Niceville, *Okaloosa*, departed on 2 March (*fide* Don Ware). These birds represent a potential first state record (@FOSRC).

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** – Twelve discovered on the Alabama River in *Elmore*, 7 March (Tasha McLain) were early.

**REDHEAD** – Steve McConnell counted 378 on Wilson Reservoir above Wil-

son Dam, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 11 March, a good number.

**SURF SCOTER** – One immature established the first record for the Inland Coastal Plain at Lee County Public Lake, *Lee*, 22 March (Tyler Hicks, m.ob.).

**WHITE-WINGED SCOTER** – The first April WP record for this duck was set by two birds found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 25 April (Lucy Duncan, Stuart Strahl).

**LONG-TAILED DUCK** – One female at Lee County Public Lake, *Lee*, 22 March (Tyler Hicks, m.ob.) was rare for the Inland Coastal Plain.

**HOODED MERGANSER** – This duck is a rare and localized breeder in Alabama, so the following reports of nesting activity were significant: a nest found 27 April and three pairs observed 29 May in Tuskegee NF, *Macon* (Tyler Hicks), and a female with four young seen at Bethsaida, *Franklin*, 30 May (Paul Kittle).

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** – One was observed carrying nesting material along the Tensaw River between Globe and Little Bear creeks, *Baldwin*, 21 March (Keith Gauldin) (nesting activity rarely documented).

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** – A single on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 19 March (Carolyn Henning) set a new early arrival record for Alabama. Occasional in the Mountain Region, one was at Cahaba Heights, *Jefferson*, 13 May (Helen Kittinger, m.ob.).

**BALD EAGLE** – Continued nesting at two sites was documented: one young was in a nest near Big Nance Creek at Red Bank, *Lawrence*, and a pair was seen at a nest at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, both records 7 March (Keith Hudson, aerial survey). Pairs of adults seen at two sites, north of Auburn, *Lee*, 27 March – 27 June (Tyler Hicks) and on the Autaugaville BBS, *Autauga*, 29 May (Carolyn Snow), were locally rare if breeding.

**BROAD-WINGED HAWK** – One at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 9 March (Betsy Tetlow) was very early.

**KING RAIL** – Rare in the Tennessee Valley, a single was heard at Oakland Marsh, *Lauderdale*, 5 May (Steve McConnell, Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner), a site where it is regular in spring.

**SANDHILL CRANE** – Ginger Duncan observed two at Irondale, *Jefferson*, 8 March (rare in Mountain Region).

**AMERICAN GOLDEN- PLOVER** – Twenty-five were at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 2 April (Harriett Wright, Edith Hunt, Alice Stevenson), a good number for the Mountain Region.

**AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER** – Three were at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 20 April (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton *et*

*al.*), a good number for this side of Mobile Bay.

**AMERICAN AVOCET** – A maximum inland count (33) for Alabama was made at the Alabama A&M Farms, *Madison*, 21 April (Ken Ward).

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** – A new maximum count for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama was made 11 March along the Alabama River north of Montgomery, *Elmore/Montgomery*, where Michael Jordan recorded 71.

**UPLAND SANDPIPER** – Twenty was a good number for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama at the WTF, *Lowndes*, 13 April (Larry Gardella).

**MARbled GODWIT** – This shorebird is casual in the WP, so eight birds seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 25 April were notable (Lucy Duncan, Stuart Strahl).

**WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** – It was determined that a bird seen at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 26 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow) had been banded in Argentina in fall 2001.

**BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** – Casual in the WP, five birds were counted at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 28 April (Don Ware). A single was rare in spring and early at Pinto Pass, *Mobile*, 1 April (Mike Resch).

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER** – The WTF, *Lowndes*, was a good spot for this species this season, with 150 being a good number so early on 9 March (Larry Gardella). Barry Fleming found 195 on 22 March and Larry Gardella estimated 200+ on 23 March, the latter a maximum spring number for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama.

**STILT SANDPIPER** – Rarely seen in spring in the Mountain Region, a single was noted at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 10 May (Helen Kittinger, Elouise Rafferty).

**BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER** – Casual in spring in the WP, singles were noted at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 26 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow, Cheryl Jones) and Pensacola, *Escambia*, 2 May (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan). This shorebird was early at the WTF, *Lowndes*, with three there on 22 March (Barry Fleming) and two on 23 March (Larry Gardella).

**WILSON'S PHALAROPE** – A single was recorded at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 14 May (Don Ware) (casual in the WP). Five represented a good number for the Tennessee Valley near Leighton, *Colbert*, 7 May (Damien Simbeck).

**JAEGER SP.** – J. Stowe sighted one bird at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 29 April (rare).

**LAUGHING GULL** – Rare inland but regular at Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 1-3 were present 5-16 May (Steve McConnell, Jeff Garner, Damien Simbeck).

**HEERMANN'S GULL** – One was seen from a fishing boat in Choctawhatchee

Bay, *Okaloosa*, 18 May (Charlie Saleebe; ph.; @FOSRC) and relocated in Destin Harbor 19 May (Lenny Fenimore) and 20 May (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Sam Tagatz, Cecil Brown, Chris Cameron). This was the first record for the WP and the second for Florida.

**SANDWICH TERN** – Two were early at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow).

**COMMON TERN** – Eight were at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow). Bill Summerour found 25 at the same site 27 March, a good number for the season.

**LEAST TERN** – Carolyn Henning found an early bird at Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 19 March.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** – A nest with two young was observed 2-16 April in west Pensacola, *Escambia* (Mary Jones). This was the first breeding record for the WP, and other possible breeding pairs were reported in *Okaloosa* and *Santa Rosa* throughout April into May (*fide* Bob Duncan). This species also continues to increase in Alabama. Twelve were noted on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 March (Chris Price), and one was at a feeder in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 7 May (Fred Bassett) (sixth record for Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama).

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** – A new maximum spring count (9) for the Gulf Coast of Alabama was made at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 1 April (Larry Gardella).

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** – Rare in the WP, three were found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 25 April (Lucy Duncan, Bob Duncan, Stuart Strahl *et al.*).

**CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW** – One was early at Vestavia, *Jefferson*, 8 April (Paul Franklin).

**WHIP-POOR-WILL** – Five were heard calling 25 March near Old Nauvoo, *Franklin*, establishing a new early record for the Tennessee Valley (Paul Kittle). One heard at Autaugaville, *Autauga*, 29 May (Carolyn Snow) was at the southernmost possible breeding site in Alabama.

**CHIMNEY SWIFT** – One was early at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 13 March (Carolyn Henning).

**BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD** – A single at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 9 March was the 15th for Alabama (Fred Bassett, Kate Wheate, David Dortch; b., ph., v.t., @ABRC).

**OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** – Rare in spring, one was observed north of Courtland, *Lawrence*, 3 May (Paul Kittle, m.ob.), and another single was

spotted at Florence, *Lauderdale*, 6 May (Tom Haggerty).

**WILLOW FLYCATCHER** – One singing at St. Florian, *Lauderdale*, 4 May was the 18th Alabama record (Damien Simbeck; @ABRC).

**“TRAILL’S” FLYCATCHER** – Rare in spring, one was noted at Colbert Ferry Park, *Colbert*, 5 May (Steve McConnell, Jeff Garner, Damien Simbeck).

**WESTERN KINGBIRD** – Casual in the WP in spring, singles were noted at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 21 March and 1 May (Bob Duncan) and at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 5 May (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow).

**EASTERN KINGBIRD** – One was early at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 17 March (Carolyn Henning).

**GRAY KINGBIRD** – This species is now rare on the Gulf Coast. A record of a single came from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 April (David Dortch *et al.*; ph.).

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** – A pair at the Alabama A&M Farms, *Madison*, 15 April+ (Ken Ward *et al.*) was at a known nesting site.

**WHITE-EYED VIREO** – Six at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) was a good number so early in the season.

**BLUE-HEADED VIREO** – One singing near Wolfpen Camp in Bankhead NF, *Winston*, 29 May (Scott Gravette) set the second possible breeding record for northwest Alabama.

**RED-EYED VIREO** – Two arrived early at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*), and another was early at Lee County Public Lake, *Lee*, 29 March (Tyler Hicks).

**BLACK-WHISKERED VIREO** – Two early individuals were banded 4 April and 7 April at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*).

**CAVE SWALLOW** – Casual in the WP, singles were found at two sites: FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 11 April (Bob Duncan) and 10 May (Don Ware), and Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 12 April (Lucy Duncan *et al.*). The 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> records for Alabama were set, respectively, by a single seen at Bayou La Batre, *Mobile*, 8 and 11 April (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*; @ABRC), and by another single at the Dauphin Island Airport, *Mobile*, 18-22 April (Larry Gardella, Alison Glascock, Charles Glascock, m.ob.; @ABRC).

**BARN SWALLOW** – Larry Gardella’s observation of singles at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* and the Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, both 1 March, set a new early arrival date for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

**SEDGE WREN** – Two seen north of Auburn, *Lee*, 27 May (Tyler Hicks) were

the latest for Alabama except for one June record.

**BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** – Early for the Tennessee Valley, singles were noted at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 23 March (Paul Kittle) and Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 25 March (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

**SWAINSON'S THRUSH** – One banded at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 29 May (Fred Bassett) set a late record for inland Alabama.

**HERMIT THRUSH** – One spotted at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 4 May (Michael Jordan) set a late record for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

**AMERICAN PIPIT** – A single was late at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 5 May (Steve McConnell, Jeff Garner, Damien Simbeck).

**SPRAGUE'S PIPIT** – An individual seen and heard at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 29 March (Barry Fleming; @ABRC) set the 17<sup>th</sup> record for Alabama.

**“BREWSTER'S WARBLER”** – Rare in Alabama, one was recorded on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 13 April (Jud Johnston, Jared Caudle *et al.*; v.t.).

**ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER** – Tyler Hicks found two late birds in Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 23 April.

**NASHVILLE WARBLER** – The first spring record for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama was set 23 April when Tyler Hicks observed a single male in Tuskegee NF, *Macon*.

**NORTHERN PARULA** – A male at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 2 March (Lorna West) set an early arrival date for inland Alabama, while two singing males at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 10 March (Larry Gardella) were also early.

**YELLOW WARBLER** – One at Florence, *Lauderdale*, 8 April (Bill Rogers) was early.

**CAPE MAY WARBLER** – Uncommon on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, the following records were received: one at Auburn, *Lee*, 21 April (Geoff Hill, Tyler Hicks); one at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 26 April (Larry Gardella); and three in Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 8 May (Tyler Hicks).

**BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** – Rare for inland Alabama, reports of singles came from the following locations: Auburn, *Lee*, 24 April (Geoff Hill, Tyler Hicks); Opelika, *Lee*, 29 April (Paul Milotis) and 7 May (Lorna West); Monte Sano SP, *Madison*, 29 April (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson); and Tuskegee NF, *Macon*, 8 May (Jeff Stratford) and 9 May (Tyler Hicks) (fourth record for Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama).

**BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER** – One seen north of Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 25 March (Karen White, Phillip White) was early.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** – Carolyn Snow observed a late bird at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 12 May.



- YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER** – An early arrival was in the Oakmulgee Unit of Talladega NF, *Tuscaloosa*, 12 March (Harriett Wright, Alice Stevenson, Edith Hunt).
- PRAIRIE WARBLER** – One at Perry Lake, *Marion*, 29 March (Richard Reynolds, Helen Kittinger, m.ob.) was early.
- BLACKPOLL WARBLER** – Early singles were found at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 17 April (Larry Gardella) and the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson*, 22 April (Greg Harber, Jessica Germany), while 11 at Opelika, *Lee*, 28 April (Lorna West) was a good number locally.
- BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** – The observation of a single at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 3 March (Lorna West) set an early record for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, while a pair found at Dozier, *Crenshaw*, 25 May (Carolyn Snow, Phil Snow) indicated probable breeding (unusual this far south in the state).
- PROTHONOTARY WARBLER** – Larry Gardella observed an early bird at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 25 March.
- WORM-EATING WARBLER** – The 157 banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 4-18 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) was a good number, with 52 on 13 April and 38 on 14 April.
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER** – One was found at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 26 April - 5 May (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (rare breeder in Tennessee Valley but regular at this site for a few years).
- OVENBIRD** – The 37 banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 9 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) was a maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.
- KENTUCKY WARBLER** - The 55 banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 13 April (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) was a maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast of Alabama.
- MOURNING WARBLER** – A single of this rare migrant was spotted at Florence, *Lauderdale*, 25 May (Tom Haggerty).
- HOODED WARBLER** – Banding activities at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin* (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*), produced good numbers on 14 April (97) and 18 April (94).
- LARK SPARROW** – Rare but increasing in Alabama, the following records were received: one at the Alabama A&M Farms, *Madison*, 29 April (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson); one at Autaugaville, *Autauga*, 26 May (Shawn Reed); and one at Oakville Indian Mounds, *Lawrence*, 27 May, a site where they have been seen before (Helen Kittinger, m.ob.).

**LINCOLN'S SPARROW** – Casual in the WP, singles were found at two sites: Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 12 April (Lucy Duncan *et al.*), and Molino, *Escambia*, 14 April (Gene Fleming). This species is rare in spring in Alabama, so one at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 26 April (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) was notable.

**DICKCISSEL** – At the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 12-16 singing males were observed 5 May in a field with tall grass, giving every indication of intent to breed (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Betsy Tetlow). This field was completely mowed within a few days and the birds departed. There are no breeding records for Florida,

**PAINTED BUNTING** – Only occasional in the Mountain Region, one was found 15 miles north of Auburn, *Lee*, 21 April (Tyler Hicks). Rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, a single was found at Bear Creek Swamp, *Autauga*, 26 May (Shawn Reed).

**YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD** – An adult male was photographed at Madison, *Madison*, 29 March (Greg Thomas). One at a feeder in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 13 April+ (Debbie Sellers; ph.) returned to this site for the third year (occasional for inland Alabama).

**BREWER'S BLACKBIRD** – Five seen at Greenbrier, *Limestone*, 25 March (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) were late.

**SHINY COWBIRD** – Casual in the WP, one was at a feeder in Niceville, *Okaloosa*, 3 April (Alan Knothe, Jesse Knothe), another was seen in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 12 May (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and a third was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 20 May (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Sam Tagatz, Cecil Brown, Chris Cameron). A male and a female found on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 10 May (Ben Garmon; @ABRC) set the 21<sup>st</sup> record for Alabama.

**BULLOCK'S ORIOLE** – A bird that appeared at a feeder in Pensacola, *Escambia*, in late February departed 5 March (Jack Powell) (casual in the WP).

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**SUMMER SIGHTINGS (JUNE - JULY 2003)****Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan**

This report covers the period from June through July 2003 in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle (west of the Apalachicola River). The appearance of observations in this article does not suggest verification or acceptance of records for very rare species; these must be considered by the appropriate state records committees. All submissions of birds that are rare, either in general or for a particular season or region, must be accompanied by adequate details of the observation. The extent of this documentation depends on the rarity of the species and the difficulty of identification. For guidance, observers are encouraged to consult the Alabama Ornithological Society checklist. Reports should note conditions of observation and the diagnostic characters observed. Your help in this matter is appreciated.

**Abbreviations and italics:** County names are in italics and, except for the Florida counties of *Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, *Santa Rosa*, and *Walton*, are in Alabama. “BBS” = Breeding Bird Survey; “CE” = central east block of topographic quadrangle; “FOSRC” = Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee; “FWBSF” = Fort Walton Beach Sewerage Facility; “NF” = National Forest; “ph.” = photographed; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Santa Rosa*, *Okaloosa*, and *Walton* counties); “WTF” = Woerner Turf Farm.

**COMMON LOON** – Singles were seen at Auburn, *Lee*, 8 June (Shelley Ducharme) and at the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 9 July (Eric Soehren) (rare in summer).

**PIED-BILLED GREBE** – This species is an erratic breeder in Alabama. Two broods were observed near Leighton, Colbert, 7 July (Damien Simbeck).

**YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS** – Two amazing reports of this species, both well described and convincing, were received but written details are pending for submission to FOSRC. The first bird was seen at leisure feeding on chum from a fishing boat nine miles south of the Alabama-Florida border, in Florida waters, 6 June (James Pfeiffer). The other report of a probable Yellow-nosed Albatross came from Blackwater Bay, an arm of Pensacola Bay, *Santa Rosa*, 2 July during or right after Tropical Storm Bill (Michael Wilson).

**SOOTY SHEARWATER** – Casual in the WP, five were reported from Ft.

Pickens, *Escambia*, 18 May (Jan Lloyd).

**WILSON'S STORM-PETREL** – A bird brought in to the Wildlife Sanctuary of Northwest Florida in Fort Walton Beach 1 July (following Tropical Storm Bill) expired 3 July (Mary Coerver, Don Ware, Lenny Fennimore) (rare in WP).

**BROWN BOOBY** – Casual in the WP, a single sub-adult bird was at the mouth of Bayou Grande, Pensacola, *Escambia*, 5 July (Dan Forster).

**NORTHERN GANNET** – One found dead at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 6 July (Homer Singleton) and another single at the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 9 July (Eric Soehren) represented rare summer records.

**DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT** – Rare in summer on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, one was found at Coffee Springs, *Geneva*, 29 May (Don Ware). An indication of the expanding population of this species in the eastern U.S. was the discovery of a large breeding aggregation in Alabama, with only one prior nesting (1990) in the state. Multiple nesting colonies were at North Sauty and South Sauty creeks, *Marshall/Jackson* in June (*vide* Keith Hudson), with 281 nests counted on Conner's Island alone.

**GREAT BLUE HERON** – A white morph individual, rarely seen in the WP, was noted at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 8-13 June (Charley Saleebe).

**WHITE IBIS** – Reports of two singles came from the Mountain region, where the species is rare: Alexander City, *Talladega*, 29 June (Linda Baker, Winston Baker), and north of Auburn, *Lee*, 5 July (Shelley Ducharme). Also rare in the Tennessee Valley, one was found near Leighton, *Colbert*, 6 July (Ned Piper *et al.*).

**WOOD STORK** – It was a banner season for this species in Alabama, beginning with a single early bird at Old Spring Hill, *Marengo*, 26 May (Don Self, Judy Self) and 40+ (good number so early) along Ala. Hwy. 183 northeast of Uniontown, *Perry*, 9 June (Duane Berger). Barry Fleming counted a state record 700 on 17 June between Marion and Prairie Eden, *Perry/Hale*, a number later exceeded (see below). Reports of singles came from: Waverly, *Lee*, 22 June (Shelley Ducharme) (rare in Mountain Region); east of Elberta, *Baldwin*, 3 July (*vide* Howard Horne), a bird that was found ill, died, and is now the first specimen from Alabama (University of South Alabama collection) (rare on Gulf Coast of Alabama); and Meltonsville, *Marshall*, 17 July (Dick Reynolds) (occasional in the Tennessee Valley). At the Williamson Cattle Co. ponds at Prairie Eden, *Hale*, 20 July, 750 were tallied (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) to establish a new maximum high for Alabama, replac-

ing the record set on 17 June (as described above).

**BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK** – The Gulf Breeze Zoo has had free flying individuals of this species present since 1998, so the origin of the birds in the following records (first possible WP records) is questionable. One was at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 12 June (Perry Ping), and two flew by at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 26 June (Bob Duncan),

**GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** – Phil Berry found one at Tiger Point, *Santa Rosa*, 3 July to establish the first summer record for the WP.

**SNOW GOOSE** – Rare in summer in Alabama, one was seen on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 June (Howard Horne, Ben Garmon).

**BLUE-WINGED TEAL** – One was at Prattville, *Autauga*, 6 June (Shawn Reed) (rare in summer).

**RING-NECKED DUCK** – Rare in summer in Alabama, single adult males were spotted at Casemore, *Hale*, 5 July (Don Self, Judy Self) as well as near Leighton, *Colbert*, 15 July (Damien Simbeck).

**HOODED MERGANSER** – This duck is an erratic breeder in Alabama, so the following records are noteworthy: a female with four young at Bethsaida, *Franklin*, 30 May (Paul Kittle), and a female with eight young at Wende, *Russell*, 1 June (Barry Fleming).

**RUDDY DUCK** – A male in alternate plumage near Leighton, *Colbert*, 9 July furnished a rare summer record (Damien Simbeck).

**SWALLOW-TAILED KITE** – Twenty-five was a good number for this species at the northern locale of Prattville, *Autauga*, 25 July (Tommy Pratt).

**MISSISSIPPI KITE** – Two immatures were noted at Brierfield, *Bibb*, 23 July (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) (rare in Mountain Region).

**BALD EAGLE** – Single adults were noted at two sites on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, where the species is rare in summer: Old Spring Hill, *Marengo*, 26 May (Don Self, Judy Self), and Andalusia, *Covington*, 19 June (James Talbot). An adult and two immatures were recorded from the Mountain Region at Lake Martin, *Elmore/Tallapoosa*, 25 June (Linda Baker, Winston Baker) where the species is a rare breeder.

**AMERICAN COOT** – Rare in summer in Alabama, one was seen at Prairie Eden, *Hale*, 17 June (Barry Fleming), and two were spotted at Gallion, *Marengo*, 6 July (Don Self, Judy Self).

**AMERICAN AVOCET** – Two in alternate plumage were on Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 26 June (David Dortch, Carrie Dortch; ph.) (occasional in June).

**GREATER YELLOWLEGS** – One at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 2 July (Don Ware) was very early. A single was also early near Leighton, *Colbert*, 6

July (Ned Piper).

**LESSER YELLOWLEGS** – Ned Piper found an early migrant near Leighton, *Colbert*, 6 July.

**SOLITARY SANDPIPER** - One was early near Leighton, *Colbert*, 7 July (Damien Simbeck).

**WILLET** – One was found at Eufaula Dam, *Barbour*, 1 July (Tyler Hicks), after Tropical Storm Bill (early if not displaced from the Florida coast; occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama).

**UPLAND SANDPIPER** – Four early birds were found at the WTF, *Lowndes*, 20 July (Larry Gardella).

**WHIMBREL** – Two were photographed at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 5 June (Cheryl Bunch) (very rare in June in the WP). A single was early at Isle Aux Herbes, *Mobile*, 11 July (Eric Soehren).

**MARbled GODWIT** – One was found at Ft. Pickens, *Escambia*, 30 June – 1 July (Bob Duncan, Peggy Baker) (casual in WP).

**SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER** – Very rare in June in the WP, an estimated 25 birds were found 3 June at Pensacola, *Escambia* (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

**LEAST SANDPIPER** - One was early near Leighton, *Colbert*, 6 July (Ned Piper). Eleven were found at Heiberger, *Perry*, 9 July (Harriett Wright, Alice Stevenson, Edith Hunt) (early record for the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama).

**WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER** – Very rare in June in the WP, an estimated 25 birds were found 3 June at Pensacola, *Escambia* (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan).

**STILT SANDPIPER** – A single in alternate plumage on Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 25 June (David Dortch, Carrie Dortch; ph.) set the first June record for Alabama. Another was early near Leighton, *Colbert*, 15 July (Damien Simbeck).

**SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Two were early near Leighton, *Colbert*, 7 July (Damien Simbeck).

**LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Ten on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 9 July (Eric Soehren) set an early record for Alabama.

**PARASITIC JAEGER** – One was at Pelican Island, *Mobile*, 26 June (David Dortch, Carrie Dortch; ph.) (occasional in summer).

**RING-BILLED GULL** – Uncommon in summer in Alabama, a single was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 10 June (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

**CASPIAN TERN** – The single found at Heiberger, *Perry*, 9 July (Harriett

Wright, Alice Stevenson, Edith Hunt) set an early record for inland Alabama. One near Leighton, *Colbert*, 17 July (Damien Simbeck) was also early.

**COMMON TERN** – Rare to occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama, Tropical Storm Bill brought one to Eufaula, *Barbour*, 1 July (Tyler Hicks), while one was an early migrant at Walter F. George Dam, *Henry*, 26 July (Walt Chambers).

**FORSTER'S TERN** – Tropical Storm Bill preceded the appearance of two birds at Eufaula, *Barbour*, 1 July (Tyler Hicks) (occasional in summer on the Inland Coastal Plain of Alabama).

**BRIDLED TERN** – Casual in the WP, five were at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 1 July, associated with Tropical Storm Bill (Bob Duncan).

**SOOTY TERN** – Six were seen flying during Tropical Storm Bill over Pensacola Bay at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 1 July (Lucy Duncan). The seventh inland record for Alabama and the first record for the Mountain Region were set by an adult bird found dead at Auburn, *Lee*, 3 July after Tropical Storm Bill (Julian Dusi; ph.; specimen to Auburn University; see p. 7 of this issue).

**BLACK TERN** – One at Lee County Public Lake, *Lee*, 1 July (Tyler Hicks) appeared after Tropical Storm Bill. A single at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 1 July (Larry Gardella) was early. One near Leighton, *Colbert*, 6 July (Ned Piper) set an early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley. Twenty-five at Guin, *Marion*, 31 July (Jud Johnston) was a good number for the Mountain Region.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE** – Bob and Lucy Duncan hosted this species at their feeder in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 1 June – 31 July. The occurrence of three adults and two juveniles on 26 July confirmed breeding at this locale. White-winged Dove was confirmed breeding earlier in the year in Pensacola, *Escambia*. A pair at Mobile, *Mobile*, 1 July (*vide* Howard Horne) was probably nesting (one previous Alabama nesting).

**COMMON GROUND-DOVE** – A single bird observed on 26 July at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, was considered a migrant (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan). A pair at Harpersville, *Shelby*, 14-15 June (Jessica Germany, Mary Roll *et al.*) indicated probable nesting (occasional breeder this far north).

**BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO** – This species is a casual breeder in Alabama, so one calling at Hulaco, *Marshall*, 28 June (Steve McConnell) was notable.

**WHIP-POOR-WILL** – One at Opelika, *Lee*, 1 June (Lorna West) was just south of its usual range, while two singing at Hatchechubbee, *Russell*, 1

June (Barry Fleming) represented the southernmost possible nesting in Alabama.

**RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD** – An adult male was early at a feeder in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 27 July (*vide* Bob Sargent).

**RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER** – Shawn Reed found a pair at a new site in Talladega NF (Harrisburg CE block), *Perry*, 14 June, while two birds were located at another new site in Talladega NF (Forest Road 708 NW of Payne Lake), *Hale*, 5 July (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton).

**SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** – The first July record for the WP was established by one found at the FWBSF, *Okaloosa*, 15 July (Joni Ellis, Julie Brashears). A rare but increasing breeder in Alabama, three records were received: one at Priceville, *Morgan*, 15 June (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton *et al.*), a return to this site; a single at a new site near Paint Rock, *Jackson*, 27 June (Paul Kittle); and up to three not far from a previous nesting site along Ala. Hwy. 183 southwest of Marion, *Perry*, in early June (two birds) (Shawn Reed, Harriett Wright *et al.*) and 9 July (three birds) (Harriett Wright *et al.*).

**WARBLING VIREO** – A single was noted near Brantley, *Crenshaw*, 2 June (Don Ware) in the same general area where the species was discovered last year (and which established the first summer record for south Alabama).

**HORNED LARK** – Two singing in southwest *Pickens*, 31 May (Rick West) documented the second Inland Coastal Plain summer site.

**TREE SWALLOW** – A rare but increasing breeder in Alabama, the following records document its spread. At Pinedale Shores, *St. Clair*, a pair was nesting in a Wood Duck box 9 June (Fred Moore, Brandee Moore). This site is at the southern edge of the range for the species in Alabama and hosted the species for the second straight year. Single pairs were observed on the *Walker/Winston* line and at Cullman, *Cullman*, June-July (Paul Lollar). The former is a new site, while the latter also hosted the species last year.

**BANK SWALLOW** – The fourth July record for the WP was established by a single seen at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 26 July (Bob Duncan).

**CEDAR WAXWING** – A rare but increasing breeder in Alabama, a number of the many records received were related to Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas activity (Table 1).

TABLE 1. Cedar Waxwing records for summer season 2003.

Site	County	Number	Date	Observer	Notes
Marion	<i>Perry</i>	1	2 June	Shawn Reed	Late or possibly nesting
Sprott	<i>Perry</i>	1	4 June	Shawn Reed	Late or possibly nesting
New Market CE	<i>Madison</i>	1	5 June	Steve McConnell	Late or possibly nesting



TABLE 1. continued

Site	County	Number	Date	Observer	Notes
S. of Double Springs	<i>Winston</i>	pair	8 June	Paul Kittle	At nest
Vina BBS	<i>Franklin</i>	1	13 June	Steve McConnell	Possibly nesting
Harpersville	<i>Shelby</i>	pair	14 June	Jessica Germany, Mary Roll <i>et al.</i>	Probably nesting; south of usual range
Newsome Sinks CE	<i>Marshall</i>	1	14 June	Steve McConnell	Possibly nesting
Hulaco CE	<i>Marshall</i>	1	14 June	Steve McConnell	Possibly nesting
Talladega	<i>Talladega</i>	2 pairs	21 June	Greg Harber	Probably nesting
Carter Grove BBS	<i>Madison</i>	pair	27 June	Steve McConnell	Probably nesting
Loackle Ford	<i>Bibb</i>	pair	28 June	Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson	Probably nesting; southernmost site in Alabama
Maysville CE	<i>Madison</i>	1	29 June	Steve McConnell	Possibly nesting
County Line	<i>Walker/Winston</i>	pair	June- July	Paul Lollar	Nesting

**BLUE-WINGED WARBLER** – A singing male at Bellville, *Conecuh*, 19 and 22 June (Don Ware) set the first recent summer record for south Alabama and was at the farthest south site in the state for summer.

**BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** – A female at Old Spring Hill, *Marengo*, 26 May (Don Self, Judy Self) set a late departure record for south Alabama.

**CERULEAN WARBLER** – An immature female was early at Opelika, *Lee*, 20 July (Lorna West).

**FIELD SPARROW** – Several were singing along Ala. Hwy. 112 in the Dogwood quad, *Baldwin*, 25 May – 4 July (Claire Krusko), representing the first possible breeding on the Gulf Coast of Alabama.

**LARK SPARROW** – This sparrow is a rare but increasing breeder in Alabama. One was singing in southwest *Pickens*, 31 May (Rick West), another single was found in the New Market CE block, *Madison*, 5 June (Steve McConnell), up to three were found at Prattville, *Autauga*, 6 June (Shawn Reed *et al.*), and one was observed at Gainesville Lock and Dam, *Greene*, 26 July (possible a transient at this date) (Bob Reid *et al.*).

**WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** – A partial albino was noted at Clay, *Jefferson*, 13 July (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent) (casual in summer in Alabama).

**PAINTED BUNTING** – Increasing as a breeder in Alabama, an adult male was recorded from Gallion, *Marengo*, 26 May and 15 June (Don Self, Judy Self).

**BALTIMORE ORIOLE** – At Demopolis WMA, *Sumter*, a female carrying food documented a rare nesting this far south in Alabama (Don Self, Judy Self).

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## ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Below is a brief summary of a recent publication from the scientific literature. This summary is intended to bring the findings of ornithological research that deals with the birds that occur in Alabama and northwest Florida to a larger audience.

**Recovery from the northeastern Gulf of Mexico of a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel banded in the Azores.** G. E. Woolfenden, L. R. Monteiro, and R. A. Duncan. *Journal of Field Ornithology* 72:62-65.

In the spring of 1998, a dead bird was given to Robert and Lucy Duncan for their examination. The bird had been captured by a fisherman off the coast of Pensacola, Florida, on 27 April 1998, and later died after release attempts failed. The Duncan's identified the bird as a Band-rumped Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma castro* and because the bird was banded, they contacted the Portugal banding organization that was inscribed on the band. They learned that the storm-petrel had been banded on Graciosa Island, Azores, Portugal, on 25 September 1993. At the time of banding the bird was an adult (i.e., at least 1 year old) and had a fully developed brood patch. As the specimen was prepared for a study skin, it was found to be a male.

Interestingly, there are two genetically distinct breeding forms of Band-rumped Storm-Petrels in the Azores, one that breeds from August to January (cool season) and another that breeds from April to September (hot season). The two forms that breed at different times of the year (i.e., are temporally segregated) may represent two distinct species. Different molting schedules and differences in body mass and wing length between the two forms allow them to usually be distinguished when an individual is in the hand. The bird recovered in this report was of the cool season form.

It is only relatively recently that Band-rumped Storm-Petrels have been recognized as being uncommon but regular off the Atlantic Coast of North America. Further, sightings from recent pelagic trips and specimen records from the Gulf of Mexico indicate that Band-rumped Storm-Petrels may be the most abundant of the three storm-petrels (i.e., Wilson's Storm-Petrel, Leach's Storm-Petrel, and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel) in the Gulf. Do both forms of Band-rumped Storm-Petrel occur in the Gulf of Mexico (and off the East Coast) and can the forms be separated in the field? These questions present a challenge to the pelagic birder, but also call for careful note taking and cooperation among people that find dead and dying storm-petrels, personnel of rehabilitation facilities, and museum curators. [Archbold Biological Station, Lake Placid, Florida 33862] — TMH

## 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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