

Fox Sparrow: Sep. 25, Oct. 1 & 4, Wheeler Ref. (DCH), earliest Ala.

Swamp Sparrow: Sep. 3, Swan Cr. (DMB), earliest Ala.

Song Sparrow: May 2 & 8, Aug. 15, Stevenson Bridge, 1 (FH), new probable breeding site.

Deadlines require the temporary setting aside of some perfectly good records. If you have such, remember that it is never too late to amend the state list. So, if you have forgotten details on a record you feel is good, please write me about it. Even though it may be too late for American Birds or Alabama Birdlife, we never want to eliminate perfectly good Alabama Distributional or Migration Information. We are always considering the next edition or supplement of Alabama Birds.

Observers: Alabama Ornithological Society, Thomas Z. Atkeson, Birmingham Audubon Society, Kate Beck, Charlotte D. Blackshear, Charles W. Brasfield, D. Mark Brown, Thomas A. Brindley, P. Fairly Chandler, C. Dwight Cooley, W. Cecil Davis, J. L. Dorn, Robert A. Duncan, Sherlie Gade, Mary A. Gaillard, Scott Gravette, Don Hale, J. Milton Harris, Richard E. Hayward, Kenneth Hensley, Frank Hixon, Thomas R. Horne, Verda D. Horne, Ruth G. Howell, Thomas A. Imhof, Greg D. Jackson, Kenneth T. Knapp, Helen H. Kittinger, Mildred Linder, Mobile Bird Club, Mary Lou Mattis, Ann L. Miller, Albert & Mini Nonkes, Dave Patick, James V. Peavy, Eugene N. Prestriedge, Elberta G. Reid, Robert R. Reid, Rick J. Remy, Bob Simonson, Robert D. Sloman, Peggy Smith, C. William Summerour, Steve & Barbara Stedman, James C. Thompson, Lib R. Toenes, J. Arthur Tyson, Wayne C. Weber, Ted L. Weems, Fred Wicke, Beverly A. Winn, John T. Winn.

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NESTING OF THE EASTERN
PHOEBE AND BARN SWALLOW IN WESTERN ALABAMA

Jerome A. Jackson and Ray E. Weeks

The southern limit of the breeding range of the Eastern Phoebe (Sayornis phoebe) in Alabama has been reported to be roughly coincident with the Fall Line, though there are sight records of the species between May and August from several areas south of the Fall Line (Imhof, Alabama Birds, Univ. Alabama Press, University 1976). The Barn Swallow (Hirundo rustica) is now known to breed in most parts of Alabama, but has only recently expanded its breeding range southward (Imhof 1976). We present here data documenting the breeding of phoebes south of the Fall Line in Marion, Lamar, and Pickens counties. We also include breeding records of Barn Swallows from these localities.

On 12 October 1973 Weeks discovered an old phoebe nest on a rock ledge under an overhang in the southwest corner of Marion County along Marion County

highway 35. The nest site was on the west side of a roadcut through sandstone. This nest is in the ornithological collection at Mississippi State University (MSU #816).

On 16 October 1975 we discovered an old phoebe nest under a bridge on Alabama highway 17 one mile north of Sulligent in Lamar County. This was the only bridge that we checked on that date.

On 12 June 1976 we searched for phoebe and swallow nests under ten bridges in Lamar and Pickens counties and discovered evidence of Eastern Phoebes nesting under nine and Barn Swallows under seven. The bridges ranged from 6.5 to 6.8 m wide and from 34 to 149 m long. All had some water under them, and the floor of each bridge was from 1.5 to 3 m above the water or ground. The location of these bridges and the status of the nests found are as follows:

Along Alabama highway 18, one mile east of the Mississippi-Alabama state line, we inspected a bridge supported by wooden pilings topped by concrete and spanned by four metal I-beams. Four young phoebes fledged from a nest on the ledge of a metal beam as we approached. There were also three old phoebe nests on other beams. One of these had an active Barn Swallow nest built over the top of it. We banded four nestling Barn Swallows in this and four in another nest that was also on a metal beam. Elderberries (Sambucus canadensis) were growing along the stream partially blocking the approach to the underside of the bridge.

A second bridge along Alabama highway 18 just west of Vernon was of similar construction. This bridge had three Barn Swallow nests of unknown status located over deep water (2 nests on I-beams, 1 attached to the nest of a pipe-organ wasp, Trypoxylon politum). We saw neither phoebes nor swallows at this locality.

Just south of the city limits of Vernon on Alabama highway 17 we inspected a bridge supported by wooden pilings and 11 longitudinal wooden beams. Here we found one active phoebe nest attached to a wood beam and observed two adult phoebes. The nest was inaccessible because of deep water. We also found one old phoebe nest attached to a large bolt and one old phoebe nest resting atop one of the pilings. Two Barn Swallow nests under this bridge were attached to the nests of pipe-organ wasps.

One mile south of Vernon on highway 17 we found one active phoebe nest and one active Barn Swallow nest under a similar bridge. The phoebe nest was attached to the nest of a black-and-yellow mud dauber (Sceliphron caementarium) and contained five young which we banded. The swallow nest was attached to a pipe-organ wasp nest and contained four eggs. The phoebe nest was located over dry concrete, the swallow nest over standing water. A wooded area was only 5-10 m from either side of the bridge.

About a tenth of a mile south, under another bridge (149 m long) supported by wooden beams, we found two active phoebe nests attached to the nests of pipe-organ wasps. One nest contained 5 eggs, the other contained five young which we banded. In addition to these we found four old phoebe nests: one on a pipe-organ wasp nest, one on a black-and-yellow mud dauber nest, one on a metal ledge, and one on a wooden ledge.

Under a similar bridge ten miles south of Vernon on highway 17 we found an active phoebe nest attached to an old Barn Swallow nest which was attached to the nest of a pipe-organ wasp. We banded four well-feathered phoebe nestlings and collected one infertile egg from this nest. There were also two old phoebe nests and one active (?) Barn Swallow nest under this bridge. Each nest was attached to a pipe-organ wasp nest. The habitat on both sides of this bridge was wooded and there was permanent water under the bridge.

Two miles south of the Lamar-Pickens county line we banded three nestling phoebes (near fledging) and found two infertile eggs in a nest attached to a black-and-yellow mud dauber nest. We also banded four Barn Swallow nestlings that were near fledging from a nest attached to a pipe-organ wasp nest. There were two additional Barn Swallow nests under the bridge, but they were inaccessible due to deep water and we could determine neither their status nor mode of attachment. Wooded areas were within 20 m of each side of the bridge. A permanent stream passed under the bridge, but both active nests were over a shallow pool of stagnant water.

We inspected three bridges along U.S. highway 82 just west of Reform, Alabama. These bridges were in a wooded bottomland area, were close together, and each had some water under it. Five phoebes fledged as we approached a nest on a pipe-organ wasp nest under one bridge. Under a second bridge we found seven old phoebe nests: three on pipe-organ wasp nests, three on bolts, and one on a black-and-yellow mud dauber nest. Under the third bridge we found an inaccessible active Barn Swallow nest attached to an old phoebe nest.

In summary, the Eastern Phoebe and Barn Swallow both seem to be well-established breeding birds in Lamar and Pickens counties, Alabama. These species frequently nest under the same bridges and occasionally will use one another's old nests. Both bird species rely extensively on the mud nests of the pipe-organ wasp and the black-and-yellow mud dauber as sites for attachment of their own mud nests.

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!! NOTICE !!

WILSON MEETING
PLACE - NOXUBEE - STARKVILLE, MISSISSIPPI
DATE - MAY 19 - 22
FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: JEROME JACKSON
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