

Alabama Birdlife

Volume 60, Number 1, June 2014



*Journal of the Alabama
Ornithological Society*



ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Published by the Alabama Ornithological Society to Record and Further the Study of
Birds in Alabama and Northwest Florida

Vol. 60

No. 1

2014

Editor: Tom Haggerty, Department of Biology, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL 35632-0001

Assistant Editors: Paul Kittle, Department of Biology, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL, and Jeff Garner, Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, 350 County Rd. 275, Florence, AL 35633.

ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded 17 May 1952

OFFICERS

<i>President:</i>	Ken Ward 1689 Longleaf Drive NW Huntsville, AL 35806
<i>Immediate Past President:</i>	Bianca (BJ) Allen 908 Chalkville School Rd. Birmingham, AL 35215
<i>Secretary:</i>	Pat Reed 88838 Tallasse Hwy Tallasse, AL 36078
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Rufina Ward 1689 Longleaf Drive NW Huntsville, AL 35806
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	COL (R) Robert E. Reed, 88838 Tallasse Highway, Tallasse, AL 36078

A.O.S. MEMBERSHIPS

Alabama Birdlife is a publication of the Alabama Ornithological Society.
Membership in the society includes a subscription to Alabama Birdlife.

Individual	\$25.00
Student	\$10.00
Family	\$40.00
Sustaining	\$50.00
Life Individual	\$350.00
Life Family	\$500.00

Dues are payable on 1 January of each year and should be mailed to the treasurer.

Layout by Tom Haggerty

COVER: Inca Dove, 22 August 2013, Baldwin Co., AL.; Bill Summerour

COLBERT COUNTY SUMMER BIRD COUNT - 2012**Paul D. Kittle****INTRODUCTION**

While the Breeding Bird Survey program of the U.S. Geological Survey provides valuable quantitative data about summer birdlife in Alabama, it is limited in its coverage. The Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas (Haggerty 2009) provided excellent information on the breeding status and distribution of Alabama birds, but provided very limited quantitative data and concentrated on only a portion (one-sixth) of U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute quadrangles. Jackson (2000) and Haggerty and Jackson (2005) provided a good introduction to the purpose and value of doing a series of summer bird counts in Alabama. The results for 11 other counties have been published (Jackson 2000, Gardella 2003, Gardella 2004, Haggerty and Jackson 2005, Jackson and Haggerty 2007, Kittle 2011, Haggerty and Jackson 2012, Kittle 2013), and results for several counties remain unpublished. The objective of this paper is to report the results of a Summer Bird Count that was conducted in Colbert County in June 2012.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Physiographically, Colbert County lies within three Level IV ecoregions (Figure 1; Griffith et al. 2001), as follows (percentage cover approximate): Interior Plateau-Eastern Highland Rim, 40%; Interior Plateau-Little Mountain, 22%; and Southeastern Plains-Transition Hills, 38%. The Interior Plateau (Eastern Highland Rim region) is weakly to moderately dissected, with nearly level to moderately steep topography. Land cover and use includes mixed (oak-hickory-pine) and deciduous (oak-hickory) forest, extensive cropland (cotton, soybeans, corn, hay) and pasture, and the urban areas of Sheffield, Tuscumbia, and Muscle Shoals. The Interior Plateau (Little Mountain region) is a narrow (five to ten miles wide) plateau and includes dissected, hilly topography that is heavily forested, as well as flatter, broad uplands that are used for pasture or cropland. The Southeastern Plains (Transition Hills region) consists of dissected open hills with rounded tops and steep side slopes. Land cover and use includes mostly mixed (oak-hickory-pine) forest with some pine plantations and some cropland and pasture in narrow valley bottoms and on gently sloping uplands (Griffith et al. 2001). Colbert County encompasses 1,536 km² (593 mi²) and has a population density of 36 people/km²

(92 people/mi²) (USCB 2011).

The count area was based on U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute quadrangle (“quad”) maps. All seven quads with 50% or greater coverage in Colbert County were surveyed: Barton, Bishop, Cherokee, Leighton, Margerum, Pride, and Tuscumbia (Figure 1).

Five observers in seven parties surveyed quads on various single mornings during the period 8-22 June, 2012, by automobile and on foot. The quantitative period of the survey began at dawn (ca. 0500 hrs) and extended until late morning (no later than 1100 hrs). Additional species records and breeding status data were collected after 1100 hours and during pre-count scouting. A total of 39.5 party hours was expended counting diurnal species, and 1.75 party hours were expended counting nocturnal species. All individuals seen or heard were counted. Relative abundances for diurnal species were calculated by dividing the total number of individuals by the total number of diurnal party hours. Relative abundances for nocturnal species (owls and nightjars) were not calculated.

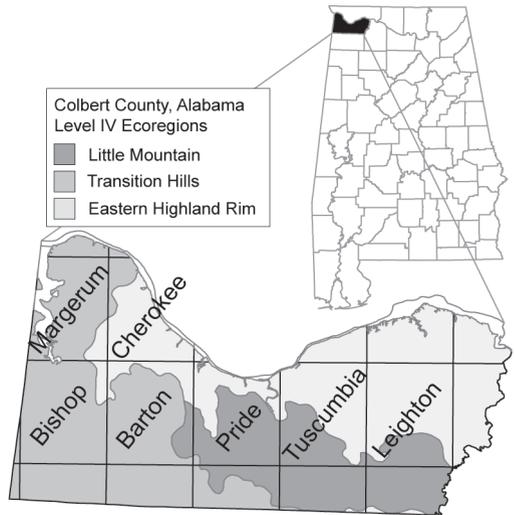


FIGURE 1. Colbert County showing the Level IV physiographic ecoregions and the seven U.S. geological survey quadrangles that were surveyed during the Colbert County Summer Bird Count, June 2012.

In addition to counting individuals, participants looked for evidence of breeding. Breeding designation codes used in this survey were the same as those used for the Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas (Haggerty 2009) and for previous Alabama Summer Bird Counts (Jackson and Haggerty 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 102 species (97 diurnal) and 6426 individuals (6404 diurnal) was recorded during 39.5 diurnal party hours and 1.75 nocturnal party hours. This

resulted in a total of 162 individuals per party hour (excluding nocturnal species), with a mean of 1.62 birds per party hour per diurnal species. Twenty-two species (22%) were confirmed as breeders, 32 (32%) were probable breeders, 38 (37%) were possible breeders, and 9 (9%) were noted as only “observed” species (Table 1).

In descending order, the most numerous species (> 4.0 individuals/party hour) were Cliff Swallow, European Starling, Indigo Bunting, Northern Mockingbird, Mourning Dove, American Crow, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Bluebird, Purple Martin, Canada Goose, Barn Swallow, and Tufted Titmouse. Many species had wide distributions, with 33 species (32%) found in all seven surveyed quads and 19 species (19%) found in six quads. Species with a very limited distribution (seen in only one quad) included Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Snowy Egret, Cattle Egret, Osprey, Bald Eagle, American Coot, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Tree Swallow, Ovenbird, American Redstart, and Grasshopper Sparrow.

TABLE 1. Colbert County Summer Bird Count Totals, June 2012.

Species	Total	Total/party hour	No. Quads	Breeding Status
Canada Goose	186	4.71	4	Possible
Wood Duck	7	0.18	3	Possible
Mallard	6	0.15	1	Confirmed
Northern Bobwhite	11	0.28	6	Possible
Wild Turkey	6	0.15	2	Possible
Pied-billed Grebe	1	0.03	1	Possible
Double-crested Cormorant	6	0.15	1	Observed
Great Blue Heron	17	0.43	5	Observed
Great Egret	4	0.10	3	Observed
Snowy Egret	3	0.08	1	Observed
Cattle Egret	1	0.03	1	Observed
Green Heron	6	0.15	4	Possible
Black Vulture	41	1.04	4	Possible
Turkey Vulture	64	1.62	7	Observed
Osprey	1	0.03	1	Observed
Bald Eagle	3	0.08	1	Observed
Cooper's Hawk	5	0.13	2	Probable
Red-shouldered Hawk	15	0.38	6	Possible
Broad-winged Hawk	2	0.05	2	Possible
Red-tailed Hawk	12	0.30	4	Confirmed
American Coot	4	0.10	1	Observed
Killdeer	55	1.39	6	Confirmed
Rock Pigeon	47	1.19	2	Possible

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

TABLE 1. cont.

Species	Total	Total/party hour	No. Quads	Breeding Status
Eurasian Collared-Dove	17	0.43	2	Possible
Mourning Dove	311	7.87	7	Probable
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	36	0.91	6	Probable
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	-	1	Possible
Barred Owl	2	-	1	Possible
Common Nighthawk	3	-	1	Possible
Chuck-will's-widow	6	-	4	Possible
Eastern Whip-poor-will	10	-	4	Possible
Chimney Swift	21	0.53	5	Possible
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	9	0.23	4	Possible
Belted Kingfisher	3	0.08	2	Possible
Red-headed Woodpecker	12	0.30	4	Possible
Red-bellied Woodpecker	70	1.77	7	Probable
Downy Woodpecker	28	0.71	7	Possible
Hairy Woodpecker	2	0.05	1	Possible
Pileated Woodpecker	11	0.28	4	Possible
American Kestrel	13	0.33	4	Confirmed
Eastern Wood-Pewee	75	1.90	7	Probable
Acadian Flycatcher	32	0.81	6	Probable
Eastern Phoebe	40	1.01	7	Confirmed
Great Crested Flycatcher	23	0.58	7	Probable
Eastern Kingbird	66	1.67	7	Probable
Loggerhead Shrike	1	0.03	1	Possible
White-eyed Vireo	118	2.99	7	Probable
Yellow-throated Vireo	21	0.53	6	Probable
Red-eyed Vireo	102	2.58	7	Probable
Blue Jay	57	1.44	7	Confirmed
American Crow	246	6.23	7	Confirmed
Horned Lark	9	0.23	3	Possible
Purple Martin	217	5.49	7	Confirmed
Tree Swallow	2	0.05	1	Possible
N. Rough-winged Swallow	41	1.04	6	Confirmed
Cliff Swallow	728	18.43	6	Confirmed
Barn Swallow	178	4.51	7	Confirmed
Carolina Chickadee	76	1.92	7	Confirmed
Tufted Titmouse	165	4.18	7	Probable
White-breasted Nuthatch	22	0.56	4	Possible
Carolina Wren	104	2.63	7	Probable
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	77	1.95	7	Probable
Eastern Bluebird	229	5.80	7	Confirmed
Wood Thrush	28	0.71	6	Probable
American Robin	72	1.82	6	Probable

TABLE 1. cont.

Species	Total	Total/party hour	No. Quads	Breeding Status
Northern Mockingbird	319	8.08	7	Confirmed
Brown Thrasher	34	0.86	7	Probable
European Starling	387	9.80	7	Confirmed
Ovenbird	1	0.03	1	Possible
Worm-eating Warbler	5	0.13	3	Possible
Louisiana Waterthrush	9	0.23	6	Possible
Black-and-white Warbler	10	0.25	3	Possible
Prothonotary Warbler	22	0.56	7	Possible
Kentucky Warbler	20	0.51	5	Possible
Common Yellowthroat	77	1.95	6	Probable
Hooded Warbler	10	0.25	7	Probable
American Redstart	1	0.03	1	Possible
Northern Parula	22	0.56	6	Probable
Pine Warbler	21	0.53	6	Confirmed
Yellow-throated Warbler	10	0.25	4	Possible
Prairie Warbler	31	0.78	6	Confirmed
Black-throated Green Warbler	2	0.05	2	Possible
Yellow-breasted Chat	106	2.68	7	Probable
Eastern Towhee	68	1.72	7	Probable
Chipping Sparrow	79	2.00	7	Probable
Field Sparrow	34	0.86	5	Probable
Lark Sparrow	13	0.33	3	Probable
Grasshopper Sparrow	1	0.03	1	Possible
Summer Tanager	82	2.08	7	Probable
Scarlet Tanager	16	0.41	5	Possible
Northern Cardinal	231	5.85	7	Probable
Blue Grosbeak	52	1.32	7	Confirmed
Indigo Bunting	348	8.81	7	Confirmed
Dickcissel	31	0.78	5	Probable
Red-winged Blackbird	108	2.73	6	Probable
Eastern Meadowlark	86	2.18	6	Probable
Common Grackle	113	2.86	6	Confirmed
Brown-headed Cowbird	81	2.05	7	Probable
Orchard Oriole	49	1.24	5	Probable
House Finch	44	1.11	6	Confirmed
American Goldfinch	18	0.46	5	Probable
House Sparrow	98	2.48	7	Confirmed

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has classified Alabama birds with regard to conservation status, with “Priority I” species being of highest conservation concern and “Priority II” species being of high conservation concern (Eric Soehren, personal communication). No “Priority I” species were

observed, but Loggerhead Shrike, a “Priority II” species, was found in the Leighton Quad.

Based on distribution status documented in the 2000-2006 Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas (Haggerty 2009), records of the following species were notable. Pied-billed Grebe and American Coot are rare summer residents in Alabama which occasionally breed. Tree Swallow, though still an uncommon nesting species, continues to increase and expand its breeding range in the north and central portions of Alabama. Black-throated Green Warbler, a species with a localized distribution in Alabama, was found at two sites on Little Mountain.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following count participants made this study possible: Jeff Garner, Paul Kittle, Dee Patterson, Damien Simbeck, and Shirley Wayland.

LITERATURE CITED

- GARDELLA, L. F. 2003. Monroe Summer Bird Count – 2001. *Alabama Birdlife* 49: 1-9.
- GARDELLA, L. F. 2004. Perry County Summer Bird Count – 2003. *Alabama Birdlife* 50: 3-11.
- GRIFFITH, G. E., J. M. OMERNIK, J. A. COMSTOCK, S. LAWRENCE, G. MARTIN, A. GODDARD, V. J. HULCHER, AND T. FOSTER. 2001. *Ecoregions of Alabama and Georgia*. Reston, Virginia, U.S. Geological Survey. Available from http://www.epa.gov/wed/pages/ecoregions/alga_eco.htm.
- HAGGERTY, T. M., ed. 2009. *Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas 2000-2006*. Available from: <http://buildingthepride.com/faculty/tmhaggerty/BBA%20Homepage.htm>.
- HAGGERTY, T. M., AND G. D. JACKSON. 2005. Cullman County Summer Bird Count – 2004. *Alabama Birdlife* 51: 14-21.
- HAGGERTY, T. M., AND G. D. JACKSON. 2012. Lawrence County Summer Bird Count-2008. *Alabama Birdlife* 58: 1-8.
- JACKSON, G. D. 2000. Chilton County, Alabama – Summer Bird Count. *Alabama Birdlife* 46: 21-32.
- JACKSON, G. D., and T. M. HAGGERTY. 2007. Summer Bird Count in Southern Piedmont Ecoregions of Alabama – 2005. *Alabama Birdlife* 53: 4-11.
- KITTLE, P. D. 2011. Lauderdale County Summer Bird Count- 2010. *Alabama*

Birdlife 57: 29-35.

KITTLE, P. D. 2013. Franklin County Summer Bird Count- 2011. Alabama Birdlife 59: 33-40.

USCB. 2013. U.S. Census Bureau, State and County Quick Facts <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states.html>. June 27, 2013.

Paul D. Kittle, Department of Biology, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL 35632 (e-mail: pdkittle@una.edu).

FALL SIGHTINGS (AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2013)

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

This report covers the period from August through November 2013 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*, and *Santa Rosa* are in Alabama. “b” = banded; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NC” = Nature Center; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “OCWSTF” = Okaloosa County Water and Sewage Treatment Facility; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).



Regions of Alabama and Florida Panhandle for Bird Distribution Data

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK—Two were at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 13 August (Les Kelly, Bruce Furlow) to mark the 14th record for the WP. This species is local and increasing in Alabama. Karen Chiasson *et al.* reported 40 from Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 2 October (maximum fall count for Alabama). Nesting was documented at a new site, the Mariculture Center in Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, by the observation of a pair and 11 young 22 October (Cecil Brown, Pam Brown). This species was also reported



Black-bellied Whistling-duck, 4 November 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

from this site 20 November (Karen Chiasson).

TUNDRA SWAN – Reports of this species, rare in Alabama, came from four sites: a single at Eufaula, *Barbour*, 27 October (Rodney McCollum; ph.); two at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 24 November+ (William Conn, m.ob.); eight at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 25 November (Kenley Austin, Bradley Hubbard), and 23 (good number) there 26 November (Damien Simbeck *et al.*; ph.); and one at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 30 November (Bert Harris, Milton Harris *et al.*; ph.).



Tundra Swan, 27 Oct 2013, Barbour Co., AL; R. McCollum.

MALLARD – Tommy Pratt *et al.* reported 200+ from *Perry*, 2 August (maximum fall count for the Inland Coastal Plain).

NORTHERN PINTAIL – A single early arrival was seen near Leighton, *Colbert*, 10 August (Greg Jackson).

REDHEAD – A single at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 4 August (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) marked the second August record for the WP.

GREATER SCAUP – John Trent reported two from Eufaula, *Barbour*, 17 November (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain), and Jim Holmes found two at Opelika, *Lee*, 29 November (rare in the Mountain Region).

SURF SCOTER – Five were on Lake Wedowee, *Randolph*, 26 November (Michael Guffey; ph.) (rare inland).

HOODED MERGANSER – Elizabeth Conn reported 60 from the Mariculture Center in Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 26 November (maximum fall count for the Gulf Coast).

RUDDY DUCK – Two records of this rare summering species were received. Twenty-two were seen near Sledge, *Hale*, 3 August (Greg Harber, m.ob.) (high number for the season), and a single was noted near Leighton, *Colbert*, 11 August (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk).

WILD TURKEY – Rodney Cassidy counted 29 at O’Lea, *Wilcox*, 30 November (maximum fall count for the Inland Coastal Plain).

PIED-BILLED GREBE – Nesting of this uncommon breeder was documented by the observation of two pairs plus young at the fish hatchery at Marion, *Perry*, 3 August (Greg Harber, m.ob.) (regular site).

WOOD STORK – Seven were seen along the Tennessee River at Seven Mile Island, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 8 August (Jeff Garner, Jessie Holifield) (rare in the Tennessee Valley).

MAGNIFICENT FRIGATEBIRD – On the Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, Howard Horne counted 42 (good number for recent years) on 18 August.

BROWN BOOBY – James Simmons reported three from Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 8 August (casual in the WP in summer).

GREAT CORMORANT – A single immature at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 30 October – 3 November, marked the 18th record for Alabama (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel; ph.).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, hosted 38 on 1 August

(Damien Simbeck) and 40 on 10 August (Greg Jackson) (good numbers so early). An estimated 3,000 on the Elk River, *Limestone*, 28 October (Kenley Austin, Bradley Hubbard; ph.) set a maximum for inland Alabama and tied the maximum for the state. Dwight Cooley counted 1,085 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 19 November (good number). Twelve+ were noted south of Greensboro, *Hale*, 26 November (Don Self, Judy Self) (uncommon on the Inland Coastal Plain).



Great Cormorant (on left) and Double-crested Cormorant, 31 October 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; J. Neitzel.

Anne Miller saw 30+ on the Coosa River north of Riverside, *Talladega*, 28 November (rare but increasing in the Mountain Region; regular area).

SNOWY EGRET – A maximum fall count (50) for inland Alabama was made in *Hale*, 3 August (Andrew Haffenden, Patsy Russo, Kathy Hicks). In the Muscle Shoals-Leighton area of *Colbert*, Damien Simbeck noted 11 on 1 August and Greg Jackson counted 16 on 10 August (maximum fall number for the Tennessee Valley).

LITTLE BLUE HERON – A count of 15 adults and 93 immatures near Leighton, *Colbert*, 2 September (Ashley Peters, Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk; ph.) established a new fall maximum for inland Alabama. Two were late at Lakepoint SP, Eufaula, *Barbour*, 17 November (John Trent).

REDDISH EGRET – A white morph (rare but regular) was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 12 October (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).

CATTLE EGRET – An estimate of 1,000+ going to roost at Wheeler Dam, *Lawrence*, 16 September (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk, Christina Crunk) established a maximum count for north Alabama.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON – Jim Sherrill tallied 13 in *St. Clair* during the Birmingham area fall count, 28 September (maximum fall count for the Mountain Region).

WHITE-FACED IBIS – Eight were found north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 15-16 October (Howard Horne, Andrew Haffenden *et al.*; ph.) (rare; maximum count for Alabama). A single was at the Mariculture Center in Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 8 November (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel; ph.) (rare).

GLOSSY IBIS/PLEGADIS SP. – Three birds, with at least one identified to Glossy Ibis, were studied at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 22 September (Chuck Graham; ph.) (rare inland).

ROSEATE SPOONBILL – Two were south of Newburn, *Hale*, 13 August (Tommy Pratt, Ed Oliver; ph.) (rare). Michael Smith reported two from Childersburg, *Talladega*, 13 August (ph.; rare; ninth record for the Mountain Region).

OSPREY – The Wheeler NWR fall count in *Limestone/Morgan* on 28 September tallied eight, to tie the maximum count for inland Alabama.

MISSISSIPPI KITE – Rare but increasing in the Mountain Region, a single was at Graysville, *Jefferson*, 1 August (Ken Wills; continuation at site), and another single was at Wiginton, *Marion*, 21 August (Scott Gravette).

SWAINSON'S HAWK – Three were reported from the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 21 November (Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown) (casual in fall in the WP).

VIRGINIA RAIL – A single was heard at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 29 November (Jane Allen, Sue Moske) (rare so late in north Alabama).

AMERICAN COOT – Rare but regularly summering in Alabama, eight were noted at Whitsitt, *Hale*, 3 August (Greg Harber *et al.*), and a single was reported from the Forever Wild Field Trial Area, Cedarville, *Hale*, 17 August (John Trent, Ashley Peters).

AMERICAN AVOCET – Two were found near Leighton, *Colbert*, 1 August (Damien Simbeck, Jack Paul) (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley), and a single was at Oak Mountain SP, *Shelby*, 19 August (Jay Eubanks, Kelly Breland; videotaped) (occasional in the Mountain Region).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER – This species is rare in fall in the WP, but a single was at OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 1 September – 28 October (Malcolm Swan). Uncommon

in fall in Alabama, numerous reports were received as follows: 14 (good number) were west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 2 September (Jeff Garner, Ashley Peters); southwest of Midway, *Bullock*, five were present on 4 September and two on 26 September (John Trent, Eric Soehren, Walker Price; ph.); near Leighton, *Colbert*, nine were found 4 September (Damien Simbeck), and a single was present 15 September (Jud Johnston); Randy White reported four from Hartford, *Geneva*, 11 September; Ken Wills noted a single at Wilsonville, *Shelby*, 14 September; five were west of Huntsville, *Madison*, 15-17 September (Jane Allen, Chuck Graham *et al.*); east of Tanner, *Limestone*, five were seen on 15 September and six on 16 September (Jane Allen, Chuck Graham *et al.*); and at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, three were found on 23 September and four on 24 September (Greg Jackson, Larry Goodman *et al.*; ph.).



American Golden-Plover, 24 September 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; G. Jackson.

KILLDEER – Dwight Cooley counted 420 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 19 November (maximum fall number for north Alabama).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER – Two were at Gulf Islands National Seashore, *Escambia*, 4 August (Ann Forster, Dan Forster) (very rare in the WP).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER – A maximum fall count (10) for the Tennessee Valley was made at Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 14 August (Amber Hart).

WILLET – Damien Simbeck found two near Leighton, *Colbert*, 19 August (rare but

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

regular inland).

UPLAND SANDPIPER – A single was spotted by Milton Harris near Leighton, *Colbert*, 8 September (rare in the Tennessee Valley).

DUNLIN – An early arrival was on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 1-16 September (Andrew Haffenden, Michelle Steber *et al.*).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER – A single appeared at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 24 October (Brenda Callaway, Bridget D'Armand) (very rare in fall in the WP). Ashley Peters spotted a single west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 2 September (rare but regular in fall in northwest Alabama). Andrew Haffenden found one on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 5 September (rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast). In the Muscle Shoals-Leighton area of *Colbert*, one to nine were seen 9-22 September (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk *et al.*), with the nine on 9 September marking a fall maximum for north Alabama.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER – A single was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 24-25 September (Reinhard Geisler) (third September record for the WP). Rare in fall in Alabama, a single was reported from the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 23 August (James White).

WILSON'S SNIPE – Jerry Callaway saw a single at the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 25 August (very rare in August in the WP). An early bird was on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 30 August (Andrew Haffenden).

WILSON'S PHALAROPE – Rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast, three were on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 2 September (Andrew Haffenden).

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE – Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, hosted a single 24-29 November (Tom Haggerty *et al.*) (20th record for Alabama).

LAUGHING GULL – Reports from Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, where this species is rare but regular, included one to three birds on six dates between 11 August – 22 September (four+ individuals based on plumages) (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk, Christina Crunk *et al.*; ph.). A juvenile was at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale*, 18 September (Damien Simbeck) (rare but regular at this site).

FRANKLIN'S GULL – Malcolm Swan *et al.* reported one from the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 6 September – 22 October (first September record for the WP; rare in October). Rare but regular in fall in the Tennessee Valley, three records were received from this area: a second cycle bird was at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, 16 September (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk, Christina Crunk; ph.) (early fall record for inland Alabama, although there are three prior summer records for the Tennessee Valley); a first winter bird was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 2 November (Greg Jackson; ph.); and a single was at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 16 November (Sue Moske). One to three birds were at Magnolia Springs,



Franklin's Gull (in foreground) with Laughing Gull, 27 November 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

Baldwin, 13-27 November (Kathy Hicks, Karen Chiasson *et al.*; ph.) (rare but regular at this site). Elizabeth Conn reported one from Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 26 November (rare).

RING-BILLED GULL – Damien Simbeck *et al.* reported 438 on 16 September at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale/Lawrence*, a large number for so early in the season.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – One at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 9-11 November (Malcolm Swan), marked a rare record for the WP. Rare but increasing in both the Tennessee Valley and on the Gulf Coast, several records were received: Wheeler Dam/Wheeler Reservoir, *Lawrence/Lauderdale*, four on 16 September and five (good number) on 22 September+ (Damien Simbeck, Matthew Crunk, Christina Crunk *et al.*; ph.); Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale*, six birds on 5 October (maximum for inland Alabama and ties high count for Alabama), two on 21 October, a third cycle single on 25 November, and a second cycle single on 30 November (Damien Simbeck); Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, one on 19 October (Ryan Steiner); Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, one on 20 October (Patsy Russo, Andrew Haffenden, Kathy Hicks); Guntersville, *Marshall*, one from 2-10 November Greg Jackson *et al.*; ph.); and Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, one on 14 November (Karen Chiasson; ph.).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – An adult was seen on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 13-18 October (Greg Jackson, Stan Hamilton, Eric Soehren *et al.*; ph. Bala Chennupati) (rare but regular in this area).

BLACK TERN – A late single was found north of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, 16 October (Ben Garmon, Andrew Haffenden, Patsy Russo *et al.*).

INCA DOVE – This species, casual in Alabama, continued at the only known nesting site, south of Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*. A nest with two just-hatched young was found 22 August and the young were still present 3 September (Bill Summerour; ph; see cover of this issue). This was the second brood this year at this site and the second brood for Alabama.

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO – Renea Todd reported a late single from Ashford, *Houston*, 31 October.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO – Rare inland, one was found during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Madison*, 28 September (Dwight Cooley, Scott Gravette). Another report of a single came from Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 6 October (Malcolm Swan, Wendi Greene; ph.) (rare in fall on the Gulf Coast).

GROOVE-BILLED ANI – One-two were seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 29 October – 21 November (Daniel Stangland, Jerry Callaway, A. Meagher) where the species is rare but regular in fall.

BURROWING OWL – A single was found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 28 October (Bridget DeArman, Daniel Stangland, Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) (rare in the WP).



Great Black-backed Gull, 13 October 2013, Mobile County, AL; B. Chennupati.

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

- BARRED OWL** – Fourteen were heard in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 15 August (Jeff Garner *et al.*) to set a new fall maximum for the Gulf Coast. Eight were tallied during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 28 September (ties fall maximum for the Tennessee Valley).
- SHORT-EARED OWL** – A single was noted at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 26 October (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (occasional on the Gulf Coast).
- NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** – Bob and Martha Sargent banded 14 at Clay, *Jefferson*, 2-30 November, and Mary and Don Wilson banded two at Hollins, *Clay*, 10 November. This species is rare but regular and now expected at these sites.
- CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW** – One was banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 29 October (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*) to mark a late fall record for Alabama (although occasional on the Gulf Coast in winter).
- RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** – Larry Gardella counted 22 at Fort Toulouse, *Elmore*, 6 October to establish a maximum fall count for the Inland Coastal Plain.
- OLIVE-SIDED FLYCATCHER** – A single was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 2 September (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, William Duncan) (rare but regular in fall in the WP). Sue Moske reported singles from Green Mountain, *Madison*, 18 August and 5 September (rare). Reports of singles came from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 12 September (Andrew Haffenden) (rare but regular in early fall on the Gulf Coast), and the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Madison*, 28 September (Dwight Cooley, Scott Gravette) (late record for the Tennessee Valley).
- EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE** – A late bird was seen at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 2 November (Elizabeth Conn).
- YELLOW-BELLIED FLYCATCHER** – Rare but regular in fall, numerous reports were received. At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, singles were banded 30 August, 9 and 22 September (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*), and 9 October (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*). One was on the TVA Reservation, Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 30 August (Damien Simbeck *et al.*). Greg Jackson found a single at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, *Jefferson*, 4 September. Multiple records came from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*: one on 6 September (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo); two on 22 September, one on 24 September, three on 25 September, and three on 27 September (Andrew Haffenden, Greg Jackson, Ben Garmon *et al.*); and two on 5 October and one on 7 October (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo). Ben Garmon observed one at Blakeley SP, *Baldwin*, 9 September. A single was at Auburn, *Lee*, 14 September (Jim Holmes). Larry Gardella saw one at Powder Magazine Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 13 September. Four (good number) were found by three parties during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 28 September. Ruffner Mountain NC in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, hosted two on 22 September (Scot Duncan, Rick Remy). John Trent found one along the Pea River southwest of Midway, *Bullock*, 26 September. Sue Moske reported a single from Green Mountain, *Madison*, 29 September. Four (large number so late) were counted on the Clearwater Tract north of Stoddard, *Baldwin*, 17 October (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo). One was at Lanark west of Millbrook, *Elmore*, 20 October (Larry Gardella),

to mark a late departure date for the Inland Coastal Plain.

ALDER FLYCATCHER – Rare in Alabama, three records of vocalizing birds were received: two at the Forever Wild Field Trial Area, Cedarville, *Hale*, 17 August (John Trent, Ashley Peters); one was at Lanark west of Millbrook, *Elmore*, 15 September (Larry Gardella); and another single was at Powder Magazine Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 7 October (Larry Gardella).

WILLOW FLYCATCHER – A calling single was at Powder Magazine Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 28 September (Larry Gardella) (rare but regular).

LEAST FLYCATCHER – Greg Jackson found one at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 5 August (early fall arrival record for Alabama). Four (maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain) were at Lanark west of Millbrook, *Elmore*, 15 September (Larry Gardella).

EASTERN PHOEBE – Ten (a number that ties the fall maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain) were tallied at each of two sites: Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 18 October (Stephen Messer), and Fort Rucker, *Dale*, 20 October (Rick Ingram).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – One was at the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 3 November (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) (rare in fall). An adult male was observed south of Malbis, *Baldwin*, 6 November+ (Karen Chiasson, m.ob.; ph.; return to site) (rare but increasing recently in Alabama).

ASH-THROATED FLYCATCHER – Rare but regular in fall in the WP, records of singles came from three sites: Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 18 October (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan); International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 10 November (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway); and OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 30 November (Bruce Purdy). The golf course on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, hosted one-two on 22 October (Patsy Russo, Kathy Hicks), two on 23 October, and one on 24 October (Andrew Haffenden, Howard Horne) (rare but becoming regular).



Ash-throated Flycatcher, 23 October 2013, Mobile Co., AL; K. Hicks.

WESTERN KINGBIRD – Rare but regular in fall in the WP, five were counted at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 21 November (Bob Duncan, Cecil Brown).

EASTERN KINGBIRD – Michael Jordan counted 250 east of Summerdale, *Baldwin*, 1 September, a number that ties the maximum fall count for Alabama and marks a new fall maximum for the Gulf Coast. At the same site on 8 September, this same observer counted 100.

GRAY KINGBIRD – Two adults and two dependent fledglings were at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 21 September (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare; very late breeding record).

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER – A count of 27 (good number) was made at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 18 October (Merilu Rose, Jan Osborn, Roberta Bonwit, Sam Tagatz).

WHITE-EYED VIREO – Forty-seven was a good number at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 21 October (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*; b.). A late bird was at Shorter, *Macon*, 23-24 November (Eric Soehren).

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

- BELL'S VIREO** – A single was at Ruffner Mountain NC, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 14 September (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, Scot Duncan) and marked the 13th inland record and fifth fall inland record. Another was at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 25 September (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson, Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo *et al.*; ph.) (rare but nearly regular in fall on the Gulf Coast).
- BLUE-HEADED VIREO** – Two late birds were at Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 30 November (Tom Haggerty).
- WARBLING VIREO** – Malcolm Swan observed one at Fort Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, 5 October (casual in fall in the WP). Reports of singles from four Alabama sites were received: Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 2 September (Marybeth Lima) (rare); Green Mountain, *Madison*, 25 September and 10 October (Sue Moske) (rare but regular in fall in the Tennessee Valley); TVA Reservation in Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 28 September (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (rare but regular in fall in the Tennessee Valley); and Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 26 October (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare; late departure date for Alabama).
- RED-EYED VIREO** – Records of late birds came from Shorter, *Macon*, 23 October (a single) and 25 October (two) (Eric Soehren).
- FISH CROW** – This species is rare but increasing in the Tennessee Valley, and numerous reports were received: three at the mouth of Town Creek, *Colbert*, 1 August (Damien Simbeck); a single at Wilson Dam, *Lauderdale*, 5 August (Damien Simbeck); five at Wheeler Dam, *Lauderdale*, 2 September (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk, Ashley Peters); one along the Tennessee River at Ditto Landing south of Huntsville, *Madison*, 17 September (Sue Moske); five along Wheeler Reservoir, *Lawrence/Lauderdale*, 22 September (Damien Simbeck, m.ob.); and eight (good number) at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3 November (Chuck Graham *et al.*).
- HORNED LARK** – Chuck Graham counted 240 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3 November (maximum fall count for the Tennessee Valley). A single was noted at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 19-20 November (Janice Neitzel, m.ob.; ph.) to mark the third record for the Gulf Coast and the first since 1940!
- CLIFF SWALLOW** – Greg Jackson counted 2075+ at two sites near Leighton, *Colbert*, 10 August to establish a maximum count for Alabama.
- TUFTED TITMOUSE** – The Wheeler NWR area count in *Limestone/Morgan* tallied 290 on 28 September to mark a maximum fall count for the Tennessee Valley.
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH** – This species is rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, but is becoming regular southeast of Midway, *Bullock*, where John Trent found a single 18 November.
- MARSH WREN** – Singles were at Ruffner Mountain NC, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 22 September (Scot Duncan, Rick Remy) and 2 November (Rick Remy, S. Remy) (rare but regular in the Mountain Region). Five (good number) were tallied on the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Madison*, 28 September (Dwight Cooley, Ken Ward *et al.*) (uncommon in fall in the Tennessee Valley).
- BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER** – Forty were seen at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 1

September (Chuck Graham, Jane Allen) (maximum fall count for inland Alabama).

HERMIT THRUSH – Eight were tallied on the Birmingham area fall count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, 28 September (Matt Hunter, Cheryl Horncastle *et al.*) (maximum fall count for the Mountain Region and a large number so early).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR – Rare on the Gulf Coast, a single was noted on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 14 November (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*; ph.).



Lapland Longspur, 14 November 2013, Mobile Co., AL; A. Haffenden.

WORM-EATING WARBLER – Six was a good number on the TVA Reservation, Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 16 August (Damien Simbeck).

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH – A late bird was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 8 October (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*; b.).

“LAWRENCE’S” WARBLER – A single was at Lanark west of Millbrook, *Elmore*, 15 September (Larry Gardella) (second record for the Inland Coastal Plain, 11th record for Alabama, and third fall record for Alabama).

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER – Jeff Garner counted 12 in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 15 August (good number). Fifteen were found at the Shell Mounds on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 31 August (Andrew Haffenden, Michelle Steber) (maximum fall count for Alabama). Two late birds were at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 7 October (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*; b.).

SWAINSON’S WARBLER – A single was reported from the TVA Reservation, Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 16 and 30 August (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (rare in the Tennessee Valley, but regular at this site).

TENNESSEE WARBLER – Early arrivals included a single at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone* (Chuck Graham), and two on Green Mountain, *Madison* (Sue Moske), both records on 25 August.

NASHVILLE WARBLER – Rare but regular in fall in the Mountain Region, a single was found at Ruffner Mountain NC, *Jefferson*, 14 September (Scot Duncan, Greg Jackson). Larry Gardella found singles at Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 28 September and 7 October (ph.) (rare in fall on the Inland Coastal Plain).

MOURNING WARBLER – A single was at Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 28 August, to mark the fifth record for the Inland Coastal Plain. Rare but regular on the Gulf Coast in fall, one was banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 27 September (T. J. Zenzal *et al.*).

CAPE MAY WARBLER – The second September record for the WP was established by a single at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 22 September (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway). Singles were banded at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 7 and 8 October (Bob Sargent, Martha Sargent, Fred Bassett *et al.*) (rare in fall).

CERULEAN WARBLER – Six were discovered at Chewacla SP, *Lee*, 28 August (Jim Holmes) (maximum fall number for inland Alabama).

- BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** – An estimated 55 (very high number) were seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 22 September (Reinhard Geisler, Jutta Geisler). Six were seen at Chewacla SP, *Lee*, 15 September (Jim Holmes, Rodney McCollum) (maximum count for the Inland Coastal Plain).
- CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER** – An estimated 35 (very high number) were seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 22 September (Reinhard Geisler, Jutta Geisler). An early single was found on Green Mountain, *Madison*, 24 August (Sue Moske). Eighteen was a good number at Chewacla SP, *Lee*, 15 September (Jim Holmes).
- BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER** – Barry Fleming noted one at Opelika, *Lee*, 1 October (rare inland).
- WILSON'S WARBLER** – One was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 19-21 November (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (very rare in the WP in November). Rare but regular in fall in the Mountain Region, a single was northwest of Auburn along Saugahatchee Creek, *Lee*, 29 August (Jim Holmes). Eric Soehren spotted one at Shorter, *Macon*, 10 October (rare in fall on the Inland Coastal Plain).
- CHIPPING SPARROW** – At Blakeley SP, *Mobile*, 20 were counted 11 November (Ben Garmon, Patsy Russo) (maximum fall count for the Gulf Coast).
- CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** – One was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 22 September (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) (very rare in the WP in September). Rare but regular in fall on the Gulf Coast, Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, hosted one on 25 September (Greg Jackson).
- LARK SPARROW** – One was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 28 October (Jerry Callaway) (very rare in fall in the WP). A single was seen south of Newbern, *Hale*, 3 August (Greg Harber, m.ob.) (rare but increasing as a breeder on the Inland Coastal Plain).
- LE CONTE'S SPARROW** – Four records, all of singles, came from the Tennessee Valley where this species is rare: Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 24 October – 11 November (Sue Moske *et al.*) (becoming regular at this site); Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 9 November (Elizabeth Conn); west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 27 November (Ashley Peters); and Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 29 November (Tom Haggerty).
- WHITE-THROATED SPARROW** – Dwight Cooley tallied 60 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 5 November to establish a maximum fall count for the Tennessee Valley.
- WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** – An early immature was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 23 September (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson).
- WESTERN TANAGER** – Very rare in the WP in fall, a female was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 26-29 October (Bernice Gilley, Larry Tilley, Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway *et al.*).
- ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** – One was at Lanark west of Millbrook, *Elmore*, 15 September (Larry Gardella) (early fall arrival date for the Inland Coastal Plain).
- BLACK-HEADED GROSBEAK** – Lucy Duncan found a male at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 18 October (third October record for the WP).
- INDIGO BUNTING** – Jeff Garner documented a late nesting with his observation of a nest with young on 19 August near Florence, *Lauderdale*.

PAINTED BUNTING – One was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 5 September (Bruce Purdy) (very rare in fall in the WP). Lynne Jones reported one from a feeder at Ozark, *Dale*, 24-30 November, where this species has recently and regularly been wintering (second fall record for the Inland Coastal Plain).

DICKCISSEL – Observations of singles were made at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 15 August (Scot Duncan), 18 August (Bob Duncan), and 19 September (Lucy Duncan) (very rare in fall in the WP).

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD – Very rare in fall in the WP, a single was reported from the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 31 August – 8 September (Malcolm Swan). Rare but recently increasing in fall on the Gulf Coast, several reports came from Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*: three on 19 September (Cecil Brown, Pam Brown); six on 20 September and seven on 22 September (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel; ph.); eight (maximum fall count for Alabama) on 23 September and four on 24 September (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel, Greg Jackson; ph.); a single on 8 October (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel); and another single on 3 November (Karen Chiasson, Janice Neitzel, m.ob., ph.). Three were at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 23 October (Janice Neitzel; ph.).



Yellow-headed Blackbird, 24 September 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; G. Jackson

ORCHARD ORIOLE – Two late birds were noted at Powder Magazine Park, Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 5 September (Larry Gardella).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – Barry Fleming observed one at Opelika, *Lee*, 25 August (ties early fall arrival date for the Mountain Region).

NUTMEG MANNIKIN – This exotic continues to increase in Alabama. The first inland record for the species came from Atmore, *Escambia*, 21-22 November where Jon Yoder observed two at a feeder. Twelve+ were counted on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 24 November (Janice Neitzel) (continuation in this area).

Paul D. Kittle, Department of Biology, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL 35632 (Email: pdkittle@una.edu). **Greg D. Jackson** [Alabama compiler], 2220 Baneberry Drive, Birmingham, AL 35244 (Email: g_d_jackson@bellsouth.net). **Robert A. Duncan** [NW Florida compiler], 614 Fairpoint Drive, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561 (Email: town_point@bellsouth.net).

WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 2013 – FEBRUARY 2014)

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

This report covers the period from December 2013 through February 2014 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.



Regions of Alabama and Florida Panhandle for Bird Distribution Data

Abbreviations and italics: County names are in italics and, except for the Florida counties of *Bay*, *Escambia*, *Gulf*, *Holmes*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa*, are in Alabama. “@” = under review by; “ABRC” = Alabama Bird Records Committee; “b.” = banded; “CBC” = Christmas Bird Count; “FOSRC” = Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee; “m.ob.” = many observers; “NF” = National Forest; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “OCWSTF” = Okaloosa County Water and Sewage Treatment Facility; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WMA” = Wildlife Management Area; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – Rare in the WP, two were seen at Walnut Hill, *Escambia*, 20 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and a single was at Niceville, *Okaloosa*, 8 February (Malcolm Swan). Good numbers were seen at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan*, with 174 on the CBC, 14 December (m.ob.), and 200+ on 23 December (Damien Simbeck). Thirteen were west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 31

December (Paul Kittle) (good number locally). Larry Gardella reported a single from northeast of Montgomery, *Elmore*, 22 February (locally rare). Three were present at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 23 February (Larry Gardella, Keith Brink; ph.) (locally rare).

ROSS'S GOOSE – A single was at Tiger Point, *Santa Rosa*, 14-16 February (Bill Bremser) (casual in February in the WP). This species is rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain, and reports from five sites were received: at Lakepoint SP, *Barbour*, a single was noted 24-26 January (John Cole, Sam Pate *et al*; ph.); Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, hosted one on 25 January (Geoff Hill, Wendy Hood *et al*.); Rick Ingram counted nine (maximum number for the Inland Coastal Plain) north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 9 February; one was at Gallion, *Marengo*, 17-18 February (Don Self, Judy Self); and a single was at Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, 23 February (Larry Gardella, Keith Brink; ph.). This species is also rare but increasing on the Gulf Coast, with records coming from two sites: three were at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 7-8 February (Duane Miller; ph.), and one to two were spotted on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 8 February (Andrew Haffenden).

TUNDRA SWAN – Rare in Alabama, two were found at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 12 December (Jane Allen; ph.), and five adults and two immatures were counted near Leighton, *Colbert*, 12 January (Amber Hart; ph.).

EURASIAN WIGEON – A male visited Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 22 January – 1 February (Scot Duncan, m.ob.) (return to site; occasional in Alabama).

REDHEAD – For the second winter in a row, unprecedented numbers of Redheads have wintered in extreme northwest Florida (*vide* Bob Duncan). Dwight Cooley made good counts at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*: 1,090 on 4 February (maximum count for inland Alabama) and 1,000 on 18 February.

GREATER SCAUP – A single was reported from Speigner, *Elmore*, 24 December, and two were at Mt. Meigs, *Montgomery*, 11 January (Larry Gardella) (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain). A count of 312 (good number) was made at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 25 February (Larry Gardella).

SURF SCOTER – A rare inland occurrence was marked by a single on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale*, 14 December (Damien Simbeck, Warren Massey). Along the Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, four were found on 12 January, nine on 13 February, and one on 17 February (Andrew Haffenden, m.ob.) (rare but regular on the Gulf Coast).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – At Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, two to 14 were observed 13 January – 2 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and three to four were seen at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 14-30 January (Charlie Saleeby) (very rare in the WP). This species is rare in Alabama, but numerous reports were received this season: Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, a single on 15 December (Marybeth Lima, Lynne



White-winged Scoter, 2 February 2014, Lauderdale Co., AL; J. Johnson.

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Hathaway), 15 (good number) on 7 February and a single on 17 February (Andrew Haffenden); Guntersville, *Marshall*, 10 (good number) on 17 December (Amber Hart; ph.); Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, two on 26 December (Christopher Burney *et al.*) (fifth record for the Inland Coastal Plain); Mobile Bay north of the mouth of Dog River, *Mobile*, a single on 4 January (Michael Wallis; ph.); Gulf SP Pier, Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, eight on 5 January (Greg Jackson); Mt. Meigs, *Montgomery*, one 11 January – 7 February (Larry Gardella *et al.*) (sixth record for the Inland Coastal Plain); Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, a single 11 January+ (Dwight Cooley, m.ob.); Walter F. George Dam, *Henry*, a single on 14 January (Bob Kornegay) (seventh record for the Inland Coastal Plain); Tennessee River at Redstone Arsenal, *Madison*, one on 1 February (Kevin Lade); Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, a single 2-6 February (Jud Johnston *et al.*; ph.); Lake Guntersville SP, *Marshall*, 37 (maximum count for Alabama) on 3 February (Sue Moske *et al.*; ph.); and Mallard-Fox Creek WMA, *Lawrence*, one on 8 February (Sue Moske).

BLACK SCOTER – This species is rare in Alabama, and four records were received from the coast. A single was at Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 14 December – 6 January (Michael Wallis, m.ob.). Another single was along the Dauphin Island Causeway, *Mobile*, 11-13 January (Michele Steber, Patsy Russo *et al.*). One was on the west end of Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 19 January (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway). Three were seen at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 16 February (Sue Moske).

SCOTER SP. – A flock of 27 (good number) Black/Surf scoters was seen in flight from the Gulf SP Pier, Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 5 January (Greg Jackson).

LONG-TAILED DUCK – Christopher Burney reported one from Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 26 December (ph.; occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain). Sue Moske found another single at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 2 and 31 January (rare).

BUFFLEHEAD – At Opelika, *Lee*, 20 were counted 28 December and 30 were found 31 December, the latter number a winter maximum for the Mountain Region (William Deutsch, John Seymour; ph.).

COMMON GOLDENEYE – A single was observed during the Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery*, 4 January (Brayden Paulk). Larry Gardella reported a different individual from Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 18 January (rare on the Inland Coastal Plain).

COMMON MERGANSER – The 12th and 13th records for the WP were marked, respectively, by singles at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 8-18 December (Bill Bremser, Greta Bremser *et al.*), and Walnut Hill, *Escambia*, 30 December (Gallus Quigley). Rare in Alabama, two were reported from each of the following sites: Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December (CBC); Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 5 January (Sue Moske); and Guntersville, *Marshall*, 14 January (Scot Duncan *et al.*).

RUDDY DUCK – Up to 150 were counted east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 11 January – 15 February (Eric Soehren, Larry Gardella *et al.*) (ties maximum number for the Inland Coastal Plain).

WILD TURKEY – A tally of 55 on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 14 December

set a new maximum for Alabama.

RED-THROATED LOON – This species is very rare in winter in the WP. Singles were noted at Mexico Beach, *Gulf*, 12 December (Neil Lamb *et al.*) and Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 29 December – 1 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*), while two were found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 30 December (Gallus Quigley). James White found a single at Anderson Park on West Point Lake, *Chambers*, 9 December (ph.; occasional in the Mountain Region). Another single was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 26 December (CBC), 5 January (Sue Moske), and 2 February (Elizabeth Conn) (rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley).

PACIFIC LOON – Reports of singles of this rare species came from Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 7 December (Bob Duncan), 29 December (Lucy Duncan), 30 December (Gallus Quigley), and 8 January (David Simpson). Another single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 24 February (Bob Duncan, Ron Sinclair). Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley, observations of singles were made at three sites: mouth of Town Creek, *Lawrence*, 10 December (Damien Simbeck) and 18 January (Sue Moske); Guntersville, *Marshall*, 18-29 December (Sue Moske *et al.*); and Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 1 January (Jud Johnston) and 5 January (Sue Moske). One was at Perdido Pass, *Baldwin*, 5 January (Greg Jackson) (rare but regular on the Gulf Coast of Alabama).

EARED GREBE – A single lingered at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 27 December – 27 January (Les Kelly, Bruce Furlow, Peggy Baker, Larry Goodman) (rare in the WP). Damien Simbeck found one at Town Creek Point, *Colbert*, 10 December (rare inland).

CLARK'S/WESTERN GREBE – Singles were reported from three sites and represented, respectively, the fifth, sixth, and seventh records for the WP: Perdido Key, *Escambia*, 11 December (James Pfeiffer); Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 29 December (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway); and Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 31 December (Brenda Tekin).

BROWN BOOBY – An adult bird was noted on Mobile Bay, *Mobile*, 5 January (Monica Wolters; ph.; @ABRC) (occasional in Alabama).

ANHINGA – Seven (maximum winter count for the Gulf Coast) were noted in Mobile, *Mobile*, 22 January (Brian Naylor, Christopher Naylor).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – The Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, tallied 315 (good number locally) on 14 December. Rare but increasing in the Mountain Region, sightings were made at three locations: Riverside, *St. Clair*, 100+ on 29 January (Julie Pounders); north of Harpersville, *Shelby*, 75+ on 19 February (Harriett Wright, Alice Christenson); and Bullocks Island on the Coosa River, *Shelby*, 100 on 22 February (Robin Griffin). A report of 75 came from Ashford, *Houston*, 20 February (Renea Todd) (locally rare).

LEAST BITTERN – A single at Big Lagoon SP, *Escambia*, 25 January (Brenda Callaway, Bridgette DeArman) marked the first January record for the WP.

GREAT EGRET – Julie Pounders counted 42 at Riverside, *St. Clair*, 27 January (maximum winter count for the Mountain Region).

SNOWY EGRET – A single at Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, 2 December, provided the second



Brown Booby,
5 January 2014,
Mobile Co., AL;
M. Wolters.

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

winter record for inland Alabama and the first winter record for north Alabama (Damien Simbeck).

CATTLE EGRET – Thirteen were north of Pensacola, *Escambia*, 20 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in winter).

WHITE IBIS – Northeast of Vredenburgh, *Wilcox*, Rodney Cassidy found 62 on 23 December and 20 on 9 February (good winter numbers for inland Alabama).

PLEGADIS SP. – Rodney Cassidy reported a single from northeast of Vredenburgh, *Wilcox*, 23 December (rare inland).

OSPREY – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, reports came from three sites: one at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 14 December (Chuck Graham); one on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December; and two at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 28 February (Amber Hart), the last perhaps early migrants.

MISSISSIPPI KITE – One in Cantonment, *Escambia*, 15 January (Brenda Callaway) marked the first winter record for the WP.

BALD EAGLE – A trip through the western Black Belt, *Perry/Dallas/Marengo/Hale*, on 4 December (Rod Douglas, Tommy Pratt, Ed Oliver, John Law) produced a count of 50, a maximum winter number for the Inland Coastal Plain.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK – A single was seen at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 16 December (Bruce Purdy) (very rare in winter in the WP).

SWAINSON'S HAWK – At the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, one to three were observed 5 December – 24 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Malcolm Swan) (first January and February records for the WP).

GOLDEN EAGLE – A baiting and trapping program conducted by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources continues to produce results for this species which is rare in winter in the state. An adult female was on Rattlesnake Mountain in Talladega NF, *Cleburne*, 6 December+ (Jonathan Stober, *vide* Eric Soehren) and was captured and photographed on 31 January (return to site). One adult was noted at Freedom Hills WMA, *Colbert*, 22 January (Nicholas Sharp, John Trent, Eric Soehren). Three visited Skyline WMA, *Jackson*, 29 January – 5 February (Scott Somershoe), and two were trapped and banded.

YELLOW RAIL – A single was caught 9 January at Grand Bay NWR, *Mobile* (Eric Soehren, John Trent, Mark Woodrey, Howard Horne; b.; ph.) (rare but regular in winter at this site).

VIRGINIA RAIL – A single was heard at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 8-18 January (Sue Moske *et al.*) (occasional in winter in the Tennessee Valley).

SANDHILL CRANE – Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan*, is now the winter home for significant numbers of this species, as evidenced by the 9,433 tallied on the Wheeler NWR CBC, 14 December, and the 11,000 (maximum for Alabama) counted on the 19 December waterfowl survey (*vide* Dwight Cooley). A single was noted during the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December (locally rare). Kathy Hicks reported 21 from Fairhope, *Baldwin*, 16 January (locally rare).

WHOOPING CRANE – The Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, tallied 17 captive-

reared birds on 14 December (maximum for Alabama).

- AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER** – Two were seen at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 11 January (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) and 17 January (Ann Forster, Dan Forster) (first and second January records for the WP).
- AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER** – A single was in *Bay* 16 December (Tony Menart *et al.*) (very rare in the WP in December).
- SPOTTED SANDPIPER** – Rare but regular inland in winter, numerous reports (all of singles unless otherwise noted) were received: Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, 2 December (a single) and 3 December (two birds) (Damien Simbeck); two west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 5 December (Damien Simbeck); Point A Lake, *Covington*, 1 January (Lucie Wilder); Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 10 February (Sue Moske); east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 14-15 February (Larry Gardella *et al.*, ph.); and Enterprise, *Coffee*, 15 February (Randy White).
- SOLITARY SANDPIPER** – The fourth mid-winter record for Alabama was marked by one at Foley during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 4 January (Howard Horne *et al.*). Two early arrivals were at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 27 February (Willie D'Anna, Betsy Porter, Cal Pomarius, Carolyn Pomarius).
- SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER** – A single was seen and heard 4 January at Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, to mark the second winter record for Alabama (Jane Allen, Sue Moske).
- LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER** – Three were reported from Bon Secour during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 4 January (Smoot Major *et al.*) (locally rare in winter).
- FRANKLIN'S GULL** – One was reported from Mobile, *Mobile*, 17-26 December (Patsy Russo; ph.) (rare). Another single was at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 12 February (Karen Chiasson) (rare but regular at this site).
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** – Rare in the WP, reports of adults of this species came from three sites: one at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 23 December (Malcolm Swan); two at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 25 January – 1 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Tom King, Sally King); and a single at Fort McRae, *Escambia*, 4 February (David Vander Pluym, Lauren Harter). At Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, Damien Simbeck found two on 2 December and a single on 3 December (rare but regular at this site). At Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, one first cycle bird was seen 3 January (Greg Jackson; ph.) (rare but regular at this site). Two adults were at Wheeler Dam and Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert/Lawrence*, 4-25 February (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (rare but regular in this area).
- GLAUCOUS GULL** – An immature was seen at Perdido Pass, *Baldwin*, during the Gulf Shores CBC, 4 January (Greg Jackson; ph.) (rare). Another immature was at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 25 January (Andrew Haffenden) and 12 and 18 February (Karen Chiasson) (rare).
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** – First cycle singles were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 14 January – 14 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 24 January – 6 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Tom King, Sally King) (rare in

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

the WP).

- BLACK TERN** – A single at mile three on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 23 February (Willie D’Anna) marked the third winter record for Alabama.
- WHITE-WINGED DOVE** – Andrew Arnold reported two on 28 December and four on 30 December at Excel, *Monroe* (rare but regular recently at this site). A single was at Atmore, *Escambia* (AL), 31 December – 1 January (Casey Wright; ph.) (rare inland). The Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, tallied eight on 4 January (ph.; rare inland; continuation in this area). Kim Upper saw one at a feeder in Harvest, *Madison*, 15 January, to mark the fifth Tennessee Valley record.
- INCA DOVE** – Up to three were reported from south of Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 13 December – 16 February (Ken Wills, m.ob.) (continuation at only known regular Alabama site).
- GROOVE-BILLED ANI** – Two were found at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 2-30 December (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway *et al.*) (rare vagrant to the WP).
- NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL** – One was heard and seen north of Oneonta, *Blount*, 21-22 December and 19 January (William Conn, Elizabeth Conn *et al.*) (rare).
- CHUCK-WILL’S-WIDOW** – A single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 27 December (Jerry Callaway) (very rare in winter in the WP).
- ALLEN’S HUMMINGBIRD** – An adult male was at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 12 January (Fred Bassett, Ronnye Jackson, Jo Jackson; b.; ph.) (rare).
- RED-HEADED WOODPECKER** – The Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, recorded a total of 100 on 14 December (maximum winter count for Alabama).
- MERLIN** – Five reports of this falcon (rare in north Alabama in winter) were received: one at Elmwood Cemetery in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 5 December (Ken Archambault); one at Homewood, *Jefferson*, 7 December (Rick Remy, Susan Remy); two on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 14 December; one at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December (CBC) and 4-16 January (Jane Allen, Sue Moske); and a single west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 16 January (Harry Roach, David Pylant).
- PEREGRINE FALCON** – Rare in north Alabama in winter, two were at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 10 December (Damien Simbeck); a single was found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December; and two were recorded during the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December.
- WESTERN KINGBIRD** – Rare in winter on the Gulf Coast, a single was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 15 December (Susan Epps), and four were tallied on the Dauphin Island CBC, 21 December. One was west of Lillian, *Baldwin*, 4 February (Karen Chiasson; ph.).
- EASTERN KINGBIRD** – A single was at Big Creek Lake, *Mobile*, 11 December (Debra Whitecotton; ph.) (second winter record for Alabama).
- SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER** – One was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 4 January (Malcolm Swan) (very rare in winter in the WP). Randy White reported one from north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 21-24 December (ph.; rare in winter, especially inland).
- WHITE-EYED VIREO** – Rare in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, reports of singles

from three sites were received: Shorter, *Macon*, 1 December (Eric Soehren); Montgomery CBC, *Montgomery/Autauga/Elmore*, 4 January (Frank Farrell, Shirley Farrell; ph.); and Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 8 February (Larry Gardella).

BLUE-HEADED VIREO – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, a single was at Waterloo, *Lauderdale*, 7 December and two were there 14 December (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk). Another single was found during the Gunterville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December.

FISH CROW – Rare but increasing in the Tennessee Valley, four reports from this area were received: eight on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 14 December; Wilson Dam, *Colbert*, one on 12 January (Amber Hart) and two on 18 January (Sue Moske); one at Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, 4 February (Damien Simbeck); and one at Mallard-Fox Creek WMA, *Lawrence*, 8 February (Sue Moske) and three there on 27 February (Amber Hart).

TREE SWALLOW – Early arrivals were noted at three sites: three east of Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 14 February (Larry Gardella); seven at Clay, *Jefferson*, visiting nest boxes and probably nesting, 23 February (Bob Sargent, Mary Gustafson) (uncommon but increasing breeder in the Mountain Region); 39 (good number so early) at Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 26 February (Sue Moske).

CAVE SWALLOW – A single was at Destin, *Okaloosa*, 16 December (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway) (third December record for the WP).

BARN SWALLOW – One was in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 4 December (Karen Chiasson, m.ob.) (occasional in winter on the Gulf Coast). Two early birds were at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 27 February (Cal Pomarius, Carolyn Pomarius, Willie D'Anna, Betsy Porter).

WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH – A single was found east of Bon Secour during the Gulf Shores CBC, *Baldwin*, 4 January (William Bremser, Greta Gremser) (seventh record for the Gulf Coast). Another single was in Oak Park in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 4 January (Larry Gardella; ph.) (rare but regular in this area). This species is rare on most of the Inland Coastal Plain, but Rodney Cassidy noted one north of Vredenburgh, *Wilcox*, 25 January and 9 February, and one was at Demopolis, *Marengo*, 16 February (Don Self, Judy Self). Another single was along Woodley Road in Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 23 February (Larry Gardella, Keith Brink) (rare but regular in this area).

HOUSE WREN – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley and the Mountain Region, reports of singles came from five sites: near Oakland, *Lauderdale*, 7 December (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk); Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 14 December; Birmingham (Zion City), *Jefferson*, 31 December (Scot Duncan); Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 22 January (Sue Moske); and Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 26 January (Ben Garmon, Howard Horne, Andrew Haffenden *et al.*).

WINTER WREN – Four were counted at Ponce de Leon, *Holmes*, 10 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in the WP).

SEDGE WREN – Rare in the Tennessee Valley in winter, Amber Hart reported a single

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

from Swan Creek WMA, *Limestone*, 22 December.

MARSH WREN – Two were found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December (rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley). A single was noted at Opelika, *Lee*, 22 December (Geoff Hill, Rodney McCollum) (rare in winter in the Mountain Region).

BEWICK'S WREN – A single was observed at Forest Home, *Butler*, 26 December (Rosemary Kramer; ph.) (now occasional in Alabama).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER – Rare in winter in the Tennessee Valley, singles were found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December, and at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 11 January (Sue Moske).

WOOD THRUSH – Les Kelly found one at Taminco Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 30 December (third December record for the WP).

AMERICAN ROBIN – A tally of 17,415 on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December, established a maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

GRAY CATBIRD – A single was in Birmingham (*Zion City*), *Jefferson*, 1 January (Scot Duncan) (rare in winter north Alabama). Rare but regular in winter on the Inland Coastal Plain, records (all of singles unless otherwise noted) came from five sites: Eufaula NWR (Houston Unit) and Lakepoint SP, *Barbour*, 1 January (John Trent); Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 4 January (Larry Gardella); Shorter, *Macon*, 29 January (Eric Soehren); and Eufaula NWR (Kennedy Unit), *Barbour*, two on 1 February and a single on 16 February (John Trent).

LAPLAND LONGSPUR – The eighth, ninth, and 10th records for the WP were marked, respectively, by one to two at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 5 December – 5 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Bob Wallace *et al.*); a single at the Wright Compost Facility, *Okaloosa*, 5 December (Sam Tagatz); and another single at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 26 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown). James White noted one east of Excel, *Monroe*, 26 December (rare in south Alabama). A count of 175 east of Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 31 January (Greg Jackson; ph.) marked a good number locally.

SMITH'S LONGSPUR – A single male at the Alabama A&M Farm in Hazel Green, *Madison*, 27 February (Amber Hart; ph.; @ABRC) marked the eighth record for Alabama and the first since 1992.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER – Cheryl Bunch found one at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 13 February (rare in winter in the WP). John Trent observed singles at Walter F. George Dam, *Henry*, 8 December and 8 February. Another single was seen at Emerald Mountain northeast of Montgomery, *Elmore*, 22 February (Larry Gardella; ph.) (occasional in winter inland).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – Rare but regular in winter in north Alabama, multiple records were received. One was in Elmwood Cemetery, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 4 December (Ken Archambault). Three were tallied on the Waterloo CBC, *Lauderdale/Colbert*, 14 December. Four were



Smith's Longspur, 27 February 2014, Madison Co., AL; A. Hart.

found during the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December. Three records of singles came from Opelika, *Lee*: 15 December and 19 January (Rodney McCollum), and 23 January (Lorna West). Two were noted during the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December. A single was at Joe Wheeler SP, *Lawrence*, 4 February (Damien Simbeck; ph.).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT – Rare but regular in winter in north Alabama, several records were received. One was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 11 January (Sue Moske). Elizabeth Conn found two to three at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 19 January. A single was at Mallard-Fox Creek WMA, *Lawrence*, 24-27 February (Sue Moske *et al.*). Still another single was at Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 26 February (Sue Moske).

PALM WARBLER – Rare but regular in winter in north Alabama, eight were on the Wheeler NWR CBC, *Limestone/Morgan*, 14 December, and a single was on the Guntersville CBC, *Marshall*, 26 December.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER – A single frequented a feeder in Enterprise, *Dale*, 7 December – 23 February (Rick Ingram; ph.) (fourth winter record for the Inland Coastal Plain). Another bird was seen at Montgomery, *Montgomery*, 16 February (Larry Gardella; ph.) (fifth winter record for the Inland Coastal Plain [or an extremely early migrant]).

PRAIRIE WARBLER – One was in northern *Escambia*, 22 February (Daniel Stangland) (very rare in winter in the WP). A single was found during the Dauphin Island CBC, *Mobile*, 21 December (Andrew Haffenden) (occasional in winter on the Gulf Coast).

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW – Two were found east of Key Cave NWR, *Lauderdale*, 2 February (Sue Moske; @ABRC) (17th Alabama record).

CLAY-COLORED SPARROW – A single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 26 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown (very rare in winter). One was found during the Waterloo CBC, *Colbert*, 14 December (Tom Haggerty, Jeff Garner) (occasional inland, third record for the Tennessee Valley).

LARK SPARROW – Peggy Baker noted one at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 14 December (rare in the WP).

HENSLOW'S SPARROW – Three+ were near the Alabama River in *Autauga*, 2 December (Tommy Pratt, Ed Oliver) (rare and local but regular on the Inland Coastal Plain).

FOX SPARROW – Thirty+ were counted near Florence, *Lauderdale*, 27 December (Jeff Garner) (good number for a single site).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW – Lucy Duncan reported one from Avalon Beach, *Santa Rosa*, 14 December (very rare in the WP).

SUMMER TANAGER – One was in Pace, *Santa Rosa*, 15 December – 16 February (Daniel Stangland), and another single was in Pensacola, *Escambia*, 14-18 February (James Brinson) (very rare in winter in the WP).



Summer Tanager, 16 February 2014, Baldwin Co., AL; J. Neitzel.

WESTERN TANAGER – Howard Horne reported a male from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 16 February (rare).

BLUE GROSBEAK – A single was at the OCWSTF, *Okaloosa*, 16 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (very rare in winter in the WP).

INDIGO BUNTING – One was noted at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 5 January (Vaughan Hedrick) (very rare in winter in the WP). An adult male in basic plumage was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 20 December (Janice Neitzel; ph.) (rare in winter on the Gulf Coast).



Indigo Bunting, 20 December 2013, Baldwin Co., AL; J. Neitzel.

PAINTED BUNTING – A first winter male was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 9 January – 1 February (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (second January record for the WP).

DICKCISSEL – A single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 26 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (very rare in winter).

WESTERN MEADOWLARK – One at Walnut Hill, *Escambia*, 9 December (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown; @FOSRC) marked the sixth WP record since 2007.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD – Thirty were reported from Baker, *Okaloosa*, 8-10 February (Bruce Purdy, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan). At Mobile, *Mobile*, 60 were found on 12 January (Brian Naylor, Christopher Naylor) and 75 on 16 February (Howard Horne *et al.*) (good numbers in recent years for the Gulf Coast). McKiernan Creek and Town Creek Marsh, *Colbert*, hosted 350 and 125, respectively, on 31 January (Greg Jackson), and Damien Simbeck reported 500 from Town Creek Marsh on 4 February (good numbers in recent years for the Tennessee Valley).

BREWER'S BLACKBIRD – Forty-five were reported from Baker, *Okaloosa*, 8-10 February (Bruce Purdy, Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan). Rare but regular in winter in the Tennessee Valley, 49 were found near Oakland, *Lauderdale*, 7 December (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk), and 80 were at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 8 January (Dwight Cooley). Several were reported from Harpersville, *Shelby*, 18 December and 19 February (Harriett Wright, Alison Christenson) (rare in the Mountain Region).

BULLOCK'S ORIOLE – An adult male was at Walnut Hill, *Escambia*, 20 January (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (accidental in the WP).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – Rare in winter in Alabama, an adult male was at Gantt Lake, *Covington*, 27 January and 12 February (Lucie Wilder), and a female was at a feeder in Vestavia Hills, *Jefferson*, 31 January (Lisa Churchill; ph.).

NORTHERN ORIOLE SP. – A male and two female-type (probably Baltimore) were seen at Hayneville, *Lowndes*, 14 December (Brayden Paulk) (rare in winter).

RED CROSSBILL – This species continues in the Coleman Lake area of Talladega NF, *Cleburne*, the only known site for the species in Alabama. John Trent obtained a voice recording on 12 December that was confirmed as Type I (Appalachian) by Matthew Young (first recording of this vocal type for Alabama). Elizabeth Conn counted 12 at this site on 1 February.

NUTMEG MANNIKIN – Three reports of this exotic were received. Forty were reported from Lillian, *Baldwin*, 15 December (Ken Wills, Jim Dickerson) (continuation at this site). A single was at Brewton, *Escambia (AL)*, 9-15 January (Stephen Irons, Susan Irons) (second record for inland Alabama). Six were at the golf course on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 15 January (Andrew Haffenden) (continuation at site).

Paul D. Kittle, Department of Biology, University of North Alabama, Florence, AL 35632 (e-mail: pdkittle@una.edu). **Greg D. Jackson** [Alabama compiler], 2220 Baneberry Drive, Birmingham, AL 35244 (e-mail: g_d_jackson@bellsouth.net). **Robert A. Duncan** [NW Florida compiler], 614 Fairpoint Drive, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561 (e-mail: town_point@bellsouth.net).

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

Risky edges: temporal variation in brood parasitism of Northern Cardinal. Stoklosa, S. K., L. J. Kearns, and A. D. Rodewald, 2014. *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 126: 94-97.

This study examines Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism of Northern Cardinal nests as it relates to the distance to the forest edge and time of the breeding season. Three hundred and forty-seven nests were studied in 19 mature riparian forest patches in central Ohio from 2008-2010. The date of clutch initiation and the distance to the nearest forest edge, which was bordered by roads, residential areas, mowed recreational fields, agriculture, and/or natural areas such as grasslands or early successional habitats, were determined for each nest. Cowbirds parasitized 40% of the monitored cardinal nests. The researchers found that early in the breeding season the rate of cowbird parasitism decreased as the nesting distance from the forest edge increased. However, as breeding season progressed, nests farther from the forest edge had higher rates of parasitism. The authors attributed their findings to a possible increase in food resources and the number potential host nests in more interior habitats later in the season.—TMH

Range expansion and the breakdown of Bergman's Rule in Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Melanerpes carolinus*). Kerchman, J. J. and K. J. Schneider. 2014. *The Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 126: 236-248.

In species of birds and mammals that are geographically widespread, larger individuals tend to be found in colder regions. This observation has led to a principle known as Bergman's Rule and is thought to occur because larger individuals have a smaller surface area to volume ratio, and therefore lose less heat from their surface. Winter temperatures are thought to drive the latitudinal gradient of body size in bird populations. Since there appears to be a link between climate and body size in birds, researchers are now investigating population expansions that have occurred in recent decades during a period of climate warming. The Red-bellied Woodpecker is a species that has expanded its range northward, but has been shown to be strongly limited by the average minimum temperature throughout the winter.

This study used National Audubon Society North American Christmas Counts, United States Geological Survey Breeding Bird Surveys, and specimen data from North American natural history museums to examine range dynamics and morphological evolution of the Red-bellied Woodpecker. Christmas Bird Count data indicated a northward expansion beginning in the early 1900s, and all the data showed a rapid expansion north and west since the 1950s. Geographic variation in measurements made before the 1950s followed Bergman's Rule, but measurements made during the rapid expansion and climate warming period since the 1950s did not. The authors hypothesize that recent warmer winter temperatures have allowed a range expansion in a species that was previously limited by cold. Their hypothesis is supported by the fact that Red-bellied Woodpeckers collected at the northern boundary of their range before 1940 were larger than the individuals collected in recent decades. —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.

Journal of the Alabama Ornithological Society

Volume 60

No. 1

2014

CONTENTS

COLBERT COUNTY SUMMER BIRD COUNT – 2012

Paul D. Kittle.....1

FALL SIGHTINGS (AUGUST – NOVEMBER 2013)

Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan.....8

WINTER SIGHTINGS (DECEMBER 2013 – FEBRUARY 2014)

Paul D. Kittle, Greg D. Jackson, and Robert A. Duncan.....20

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.....32

Tom Haggerty, Editor
Alabama Birdlife
Department of Biology
University of North Alabama
Florence, Alabama 35632-0001