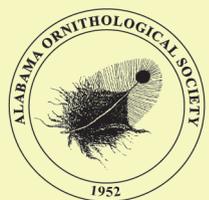


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Layout by Tom Haggerty

COVER: Cave Swallows, 27 March 2015, Mobile Co., AL; Photograph by A. Carn.

WINSTON COUNTY SUMMER BIRD COUNT - 2013**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 12 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2007, Kittle 2011, Haggerty and Jackson 2012, Kittle 2013, Kittle 2014), and results for several counties remain unpublished.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 Winston County in June 2013.

STUDY AREA AND METHODS

Physiographically, Winston County lies within four Level IV ecoregions (Figure 1; Griffin et al. 2001), as follows (percentage cover approximate): Southwestern Appalachians-Dissected Plateau, 88%; Southwestern Appalachians-Southern Table Plateaus, 6%; Southwestern Appalachians-Shale Hills- 3%; and Southeastern Plains-Fall Line Hills, 3%. The Dissected Plateaus region is deeply dissected, with steep slopes, cliffs, and ravines. This region is mostly forested and includes a large portion of Bankhead National Forest. The Southern Table Plateaus region is less forested and more agricultural, with pastures and small areas of row crops. The Shale Hills region is characterized by extensive hills and, while mostly forested, has been altered by open-pit coal mining. The Fall Line Hills region consists of dissected open hills with rounded tops and gently to strongly sloping side slopes. Land cover and use includes mixed (oak-hickory-pine) forest and pine plantations, with areas of pasture and minor areas of cultivated cropland (Griffith et al. 2001). Winston County encompasses 1,588 km² (613 mi²) and has a population density of 15 people/km² (40 people/mi²) (USCB 2011).

The count area was based on U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute quadrangle

(“quad”) maps. Nine quads with coverage entirely or partially in Winston County were surveyed: Addison, Arley, Black Pond, Double Springs, Haleyville East, Houston, Kinlock Spring, Lynn, and Poplar Springs. Eight observers in nine parties surveyed quads on various single mornings during the period 11-21 June, 2013, 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). A total of 49.5 party hours was expended counting diurnal species, and 1.25 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.

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 94 species (90 diurnal) and 5665 individuals (5635 diurnal) was recorded during 49.5 diurnal party hours and 1.25 nocturnal party hours. This resulted in a total of 114 individuals per party hour (excluding nocturnal species), with a mean of 1.3 birds per party hour per diurnal species. Seventeen species (18%) were confirmed as breeders, 47 (50%) were probable breeders, 28 (30%) were possible breeders, and 2 (2%) were noted as only “observed” species (Table 1).

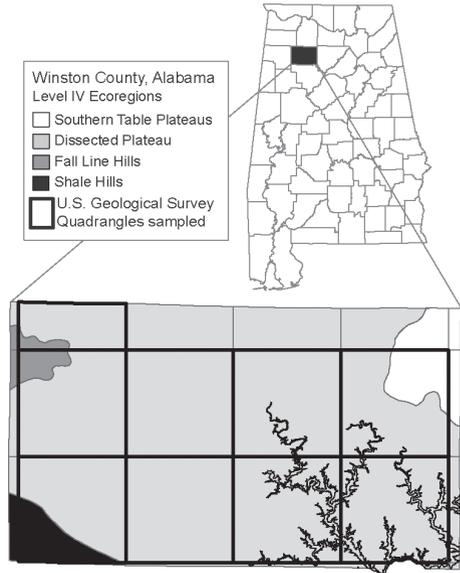


Fig. 1. Winston County ecoregions and quadrangles surveyed during Summer Bird Count, June 2013.

TABLE 1. Winston County, Alabama, Summer Bird Count, June 2013

Species	Total	Total/party hour	No. Quads	Breeding Status
Canada Goose	8	0.16	3	Possible
Wood Duck	3	0.06	2	Probable
Mallard	1	0.02	1	Possible
Northern Bobwhite	24	0.48	5	Probable
Wild Turkey	1	0.02	1	Possible
Double-crested Cormorant	1	0.02	1	Observed
Great Blue Heron	7	0.14	4	Observed
Green Heron	8	0.16	4	Possible
Black Vulture	7	0.14	5	Probable
Turkey Vulture	74	1.49	9	Probable
Cooper's Hawk	2	0.04	2	Possible
Red-shouldered Hawk	12	0.24	7	Probable
Broad-winged Hawk	4	0.08	3	Possible
Red-tailed Hawk	14	0.28	9	Probable
Killdeer	22	0.44	7	Confirmed
Rock Pigeon	20	0.40	2	Possible
Mourning Dove	218	4.40	9	Probable
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	15	0.30	7	Possible
Eastern Screech-Owl	1		1	Possible
Barred Owl	1		1	Possible
Chuck-will's-widow	19		6	Possible
Eastern Whip-poor-will	9		4	Possible
Chimney Swift	28	0.57	9	Possible
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	8	0.16	6	Possible
Belted Kingfisher	3	0.06	3	Possible
Red-headed Woodpecker	16	0.32	6	Confirmed
Red-bellied Woodpecker	48	0.97	9	Probable
Downy Woodpecker	15	0.30	7	Probable
Hairy Woodpecker	3	0.06	2	Possible
Northern Flicker	1	0.02	1	Possible
Pileated Woodpecker	14	0.28	6	Possible
American Kestrel	1	0.02	1	Possible
Eastern Wood-Pewee	28	0.57	8	Probable
Acadian Flycatcher	20	0.40	8	Possible
Eastern Phoebe	36	0.73	8	Confirmed
Great Crested Flycatcher	45	0.91	9	Probable
Eastern Kingbird	62	1.25	9	Probable
White-eyed Vireo	163	3.29	9	Probable
Yellow-throated Vireo	47	0.95	9	Probable
Red-eyed Vireo	173	3.49	9	Probable
Blue Jay	83	1.68	9	Probable
American Crow	345	6.97	9	Confirmed
Purple Martin	85	1.72	8	Confirmed
Tree Swallow	3	0.06	1	Possible
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	57	1.15	7	Confirmed
Cliff Swallow	315	6.36	4	Confirmed
Barn Swallow	133	2.69	9	Confirmed
Carolina Chickadee	81	1.64	9	Probable
Tufted Titmouse	183	3.70	9	Probable
White-breasted Nuthatch	12	0.24	5	Probable
Brown-headed Nuthatch	10	0.20	4	Confirmed

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TABLE 1. cont.

Species	Total	Total/party hour	No. Quads	Breeding Status
Carolina Wren	133	2.69	9	Probable
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	45	0.91	9	Probable
Eastern Bluebird	211	4.26	9	Confirmed
Wood Thrush	28	0.57	8	Probable
American Robin	43	0.87	9	Probable
Gray Catbird	4	0.08	3	Probable
Northern Mockingbird	229	4.63	9	Confirmed
Brown Thrasher	64	1.29	8	Confirmed
European Starling	189	3.82	8	Confirmed
Ovenbird	14	0.28	6	Probable
Worm-eating Warbler	17	0.34	8	Possible
Louisiana Waterthrush	7	0.14	4	Probable
Blue-winged Warbler	1	0.02	1	Possible
Black-and-white Warbler	17	0.34	7	Probable
Prothonotary Warbler	1	0.02	1	Possible
Swainson's Warbler	1	0.02	1	Possible
Kentucky Warbler	35	0.71	7	Possible
Common Yellowthroat	68	1.37	9	Probable
Hooded Warbler	58	1.17	9	Probable
Northern Parula	25	0.51	6	Probable
Pine Warbler	128	2.59	9	Probable
Yellow-throated Warbler	1	0.02	1	Possible
Prairie Warbler	102	2.06	9	Probable
Black-throated Green Warbler	3	0.06	2	Possible
Yellow-breasted Chat	232	4.69	9	Probable
Eastern Towhee	152	3.07	9	Probable
Chipping Sparrow	85	1.72	9	Probable
Field Sparrow	39	0.79	7	Probable
Lark Sparrow	3	0.06	2	Possible
Summer Tanager	66	1.33	9	Confirmed
Scarlet Tanager	29	0.59	7	Probable
Northern Cardinal	238	4.81	9	Confirmed
Blue Grosbeak	86	1.74	9	Confirmed
Indigo Bunting	402	8.12	9	Probable
Dickcissel	13	0.26	2	Probable
Red-winged Blackbird	51	1.03	8	Probable
Eastern Meadowlark	90	1.82	9	Probable
Common Grackle	51	1.03	8	Confirmed
Brown-headed Cowbird	63	1.27	9	Probable
Orchard Oriole	71	1.43	9	Probable
House Finch	17	0.34	4	Confirmed
American Goldfinch	26	0.53	7	Probable
House Sparrow	38	0.77	7	Confirmed

In descending order, the most numerous species (> 4.0 individuals/party hour) were Indigo Bunting, American Crow, Cliff Swallow, Northern Cardinal, Yellow-breasted Chat, Northern Mockingbird, Mourning Dove, and Eastern Bluebird.

Many species had wide distributions, with 35 species (37%) found in all nine surveyed quads and 9 species (10%) found in eight quads. Species with a very limited distribution (seen in only one quad) included Mallard, Wild Turkey, Double-crested Cormorant, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Tree Swallow, Blue-winged Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, and Yellow-throated Warbler.

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" or "Priority II" species were found during this study.

Based on distribution status documented in the 2000-2006 Alabama Breeding Bird Atlas (Haggerty 2009), records of the following species were notable. Tree Swallow, though still an uncommon nesting species, continues to increase and expand its breeding range in the north and central portions of Alabama and was found in the Kinlock Spring quad. Black-throated Green Warbler, a species with a localized distribution in Alabama, was found in two quads. Lark Sparrow, uncommon in Alabama outside of the Tennessee Valley and Black Belt, was found in clear-cuts in two quads. Dickcissel is another species that is uncommon in Alabama outside of the Tennessee Valley and Black Belt, and was found in two quads.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following count participants made this study possible: Keith Fraser, Jeff Garner, Tom Haggerty, Paul Kittle, Dee Patterson, Damien Simbeck, Susanne Wadsworth, and Shirley Wayland.

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SPRING SIGHTINGS (MARCH - MAY 2015)

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

This report covers the period from March through May 2015 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*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa*, are in Alabama. “m.ob.” = many observers; “NF” = National Forest; “NP” = Nature Preserve; “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SP” = State Park; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK – This species continues to be reported with increasing frequency in the WP, with a total of 35 reported from five locations 5-31 May (m.ob.). This species is increasing in general and as a breeder on the Gulf Coast of Alabama. Four records were received from regular sites: sewage lagoons at Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 12 on 11 March (Jim Morris), 19 on 17 March (Bill Summerour; ph.), and 25 on 23 March



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, 29 May 2015, Colbert Co., AL; D. Simbeck.

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(Jim Morris), with four nests containing 52, 48, 28, and 27 eggs reported 23 March – 29 May (Jim Morris); Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 207+ (a maximum for Alabama) on 23 March (Bill Summerour; ph.) and 184 on 29 March (Craig Litteken); Chickasaw, *Mobile*, 19 on 22 May (Jimmy Stephenson); and four north of Gulf Shores, *Baldwin*, 23 May (Karen Chiasson). Two other Gulf Coast records came from sites where this species is not regular: Coden, *Mobile*, two on 14 April (John Trent), and Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, six on 19 April (Janice Neitzel). Rare on the Inland Coastal Plain, Bob Kornegay reported 13 from Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 16 April, and Odis Johnson reported a maximum of four from Hacoma, *Geneva*, 17 April – 18 May. Near Leighton, *Colbert*, a single was noted 29 May (Damien Simbeck; ph.) and five were found 1 June (Damien Simbeck, Matt Crunk) (fifth record for the Tennessee Valley).

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE – North of Grand Bay, *Mobile*, Patsy Russo found two on 3 March and four on 21 March (rare in spring on the Gulf Coast). At Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, Steven Glynn reported 100 on 4 March and 63 on 6 March, the former number a maximum spring count for Alabama.

SNOW GOOSE – Two were found at the Walnut Hill catfish farms, *Escambia*, 4 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (uncommon in winter or spring in the WP).

ROSS'S GOOSE – A single was at the Walnut Hill catfish farms, *Escambia*, 4 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (very rare in the WP). Another single was at Gnat Pond near Muscle Shoals, *Colbert*, 21 March – 14 April (Damien Simbeck) (rare but regular in early spring).

GADWALL – At Hope Hull, *Montgomery*, Larry Gardella reported 82 on 15 March and James White found 65 on 23 March, the former number a maximum spring count for the Inland Coastal Plain.

AMERICAN WIGEON – A tally of 1,105 at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 4 March (Dwight Cooley) marked a maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley. A late single was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 29 May (Damien Simbeck).

NORTHERN SHOVELER – Four late birds were at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 20 May (Karen Chiasson *et al.*; ph.).

CANVASBACK – A count of 130 at Uniontown, *Perry*, 4 March (John Trent, Eric Soehren) marked a maximum spring count for the Inland Coastal Plain.

REDHEAD – Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, hosted 146 on 3 March (Peter Osenton, Chuck Freerick) to set a maximum spring number for the Inland Coastal Plain. Four birds lingered near Leighton, *Colbert*, 18-31 May (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) to mark a late departure date for the Tennessee Valley.

RING-NECKED DUCK – Three males lingered near Leighton, *Colbert*, to 22 May (Damien Simbeck) (late departure). A late adult male was at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 30 May (Geoff Hill).

GREATER SCAUP – Damien Simbeck estimated 500 on the Tennessee River at Town Creek Point, *Colbert*, 21 March (maximum spring number for Alabama). During the 25 April Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson*, Sharon Hudgins and David George found a single (occasional in spring in the Mountain Region).

SURF SCOTER – Twenty were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 7 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in spring in the WP).

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER – A single was found in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 1 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan), and three were at Naval Live Oaks, Gulf Islands National Seashore, *Santa Rosa*, 9 March (Cindy Coster, Steve Coster) (very rare in the WP). Rare in spring in Alabama, five reports were received. A maximum of four was noted at Cedar Point and Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 7-22 March (Andrew Haffenden, m.ob.). At Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, two were found on 8 March and seven on 9 March (Brian Johnson; ph.). The second spring record for the Mountain Region was marked by a single at Opelika, *Lee*, 14-28 March (Rodney McCollum *et al.*; ph.). Dave Miller reported three males at Orange Beach, *Baldwin*, 16 March. During the 25 April Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson*, Sharon Hudgins and David George found a single female (third spring record for the Mountain Region).

BLACK SCOTER – Twelve were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 7 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in spring in the WP). Two males and 11 females constituted a good number at Cedar Point, *Mobile*, 7 March (Andrew Haffenden) (rare in spring).

COMMON GOLDENEYE – Andrew Haffenden counted 15 at Cedar Point, *Mobile*, 7 March to establish a spring maximum for the Gulf Coast.

RED-THROATED LOON – Two were at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 13 April (Amber Hart; ph.) (rare in spring).

PACIFIC LOON – Singles were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 9 March (Bob Duncan) and 18 March (Merilu Rose *et al.*), as well as at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 17 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in the WP).

HORNED GREBE – A single flock of 65 was reported by Ben Garmon from Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 14 March to establish a maximum spring count for the Gulf Coast.

EARED GREBE – Rare in Alabama, two were noted at Town Creek Point, *Colbert*, 21-22 March (Damien Simbeck *et al.*), and a single was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 22 March (Sue Moske).

GREAT SHEARWATER – Daniel Stangeland found eight at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 19 April (casual in April in the WP).

SOOTY SHEARWATER – The 15th Alabama record was marked by single birds seen from the Dauphin Island – Fort Morgan ferry, *Mobile/Baldwin*, 24 April (Karen Chiasson, Andrew Haffenden) and 26 April (Andrew Haffenden), and two birds seen at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 26 April (Karen Chiasson).

WOOD STORK – Large numbers for so early in the season were reported from the Autaugaville area,



Red-throated Loon, 13 April 2015, Marshall Co., AL; A. Hart.



Sooty Shearwater, 25 April 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

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Autauga: 40+ on 11 March (*vide* Tommy Pratt) and 100 on 12 March (Tommy Pratt *et al.*).

MASKED BOOBY – Rare in the state, a single was found injured on the beach in southern coastal *Baldwin*, 23 April, and taken to rehabilitation (*vide* Roger Clay; ph.).

RED-FOOTED BOOBY – A white-tailed brown morph adult was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 11 May (Bob Duncan), to mark the second record for the WP.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – Weiss Lake, *Cherokee*, hosted 300 on 13 March (Jude Vickery, Levi Vickery) to mark a spring maximum for the Mountain Region.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – An estimate of 200 on Lay Lake, *Shelby*, 3 March (Cindy Payne) established a spring maximum for the Mountain Region. Mary-Ellen Cross (ph.) reported 200 on 4 March and 400 on 5 March from Lakepoint SP, *Barbour*, the latter count a spring maximum for the Inland Coastal Plain. Uncommon but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain, reports were received from four sites: 20 at Claiborne Dam, *Monroe*, 6 March (Matthew Rouse); 32 at Beville Dam, *Pickens*, 17 March (Rick Houlk); 150+ (good number) at Florala SP, *Covington*, 19 March (Odis Johnson); and 43 in flight at Evergreen, *Conecuh*, 6 April (James White). Uncommon but increasing in the Mountain Region, reports came from three sites: one on 11 March and seven on 12 March at Cropwell, *St. Clair* (Deborah Diehl); 50+ on Weiss Lake, *Cherokee*, 13 March (Jude Vickery, Levi Vickery); and two seen during the 25 April Birmingham area count, *St. Clair* (Cheryl Horncastle, Sallie Brice). Ashley Peters reported 350 from Wilson Dam, *Colbert/Lauderdale*, 21 March (good spring number). Twenty late birds were at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 28 May (Dee Gertler).

AMERICAN BITTERN – One was at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 3-25 April (Rick Kittinger *et al.*) (rarely seen in the Mountain Region). Three sightings were made at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*: a single on 7 March (John Trent), another single on 16 April (Bob Kornegay), and four (good number) on 26 April (Geoff Hill *et al.*).

GREAT BLUE HERON – At Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, Geoff Hill counted 25 on 7 March and John Trent reported 35 on 9 May (maximum spring number for the Inland Coastal Plain).

GREAT EGRET – John Trent counted 150 (maximum spring number for the Inland Coastal Plain) at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 9 May. A count of 65 on Cat Island, *Mobile*, 21 May (Mark Woodrey, m.ob.) established a spring maximum for the Gulf Coast.

SNOWY EGRET – Near Leighton, *Colbert*, 19 were seen on 3 May (maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley) and eight on 14 May (Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner).

LITTLE BLUE HERON – A count of 90 on Isle aux Herbes, *Mobile*, 21 May (Mark Woodrey *et al.*) established a spring maximum for the Gulf Coast.

TRICOLORED HERON – Occasional on the Inland Coastal Plain in spring, a single was in Conecuh NF, *Covington*, 17-19 April (Liam Waters; ph.), and two were at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 25 April (Geoff Hill, David Carr). One was in Center Star, *Lauderdale*, 20 May (Damien Simbeck, Regina Simbeck) (occasional in the Tennessee Valley).

CATTLE EGRET – Four+ were found at Wheeler NWR and vicinity, *Morgan*, 14 March

(Rick Kittinger, Ron Kittinger) (ties early arrival date for the Tennessee Valley). Damien Simbeck reported 200 from Elgin, *Lauderdale*, 22 May (ties maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley).

GLOSSY IBIS – Four were at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 18 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan, Cecil Brown) (very rare in the WP). Amber Hart found seven adults in alternate plumage (ph.) at Guntersville Dam, *Marshall*, 10 April (maximum spring number for Tennessee Valley). Along the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 20 (good number) were found 17 April (Stephen Bru) and 18 were counted 18 April (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson). Up to eight birds were reported from Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 25 April – 8 May (Geoff Hill *et al.*) (maximum spring count for the Inland Coastal Plain).

PLEGADIS SP. – Four were north of Hartford, *Geneva*, 4 March (Rodney White) (rare inland).

OSPREY – The Birmingham area spring count, held on 25 April in *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, reported six (ties maximum spring count for the Mountain Region).

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE – Reports of good numbers came from Pensacola, *Escambia*, 5 March (23 birds) Betsy Tetlow, Jim Brady), and Grassy Point, *Santa Rosa*, 14 March (42 birds) (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*).

MISSISSIPPI KITE – A single at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 10 March (Vicky Parker) was somewhat early. Uncommon and local in the Mountain Region, singles were noted at Shelby, *Shelby*, 15 May (Scot Duncan) and south of Burnwell, *Walker*, 30 May (Chris Welsh).

COOPER'S HAWK – The Wheeler NWR spring count, held on 2 May in *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, reported six (ties maximum spring count for the Tennessee Valley).

KING RAIL – Uncommon and local in the Tennessee Valley, one heard at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 14 March (Rick Kittinger, Ron Kittinger) established an early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley, and a single was heard 14 April and 3 May at Oakland, *Lauderdale* (Damien Simbeck *et al.*). A single was at Limestone Park, *Saginaw, Shelby*, 21 April (Ken Wills *et al.*), and two were reported from this site on 12 May (Greg Jackson, Debra Jackson) and 31 May (Shane Coombs) (rare in Mountain Region). John Trent counted 10 (good number) in the lower Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 13 May.

SORA – A single at *Saginaw, Shelby*, 20 March (Scot Duncan) was early if not a rare Mountain Region wintering bird.

PURPLE GALLINULE – John Trent counted eight (good number) in the lower Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 13 May. A single was reported from *Saginaw, Shelby*, 21-24 May (Ken Wills *et al.*) (occasional in the Mountain Region, same site as last spring).

COMMON GALLINULE – One was at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 14 March (Rick Kittinger, Ron Kittinger) (occasional in the Tennessee Valley). Glenda Merrill counted 12 at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 12 April (maximum spring number for inland Alabama). A maximum spring count for Alabama was established by the 20 counted in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 2 May (Cathie Marx) and 4 May (John Trent).

AMERICAN COOT – James White reported 600 (ties maximum spring number for the

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Gulf Coast) from the Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin*, 24 March. The Birmingham area spring count, held on 25 April in *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, reported 266 (maximum spring count for the Mountain Region).

SANDHILL CRANE – An estimate of 1,000 at Wheeler NWR, *Morgan*, 4 March (Glynn Morgan) marked a spring maximum for Alabama. Damien Simbeck reported 300 in flight at Elk River, *Limestone*, 7 March (good spring number). Singles seen at two sites 2 May marked a late departure date for the Tennessee Valley: near Leighton, *Colbert* (Paul Kittle, m.ob.) and Wheeler NWR area count, *Morgan* (Harry Dean, Dick Bruer, Neill Cowles, Beth Wood).

AMERICAN AVOCET – A single was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 3 May (Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner) (rare inland).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER – Up to five were seen near Leighton, *Colbert*, 18-22 May (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (uncommon in spring in the Tennessee Valley).

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER – A late bird was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 2 May (Paul Kittle, m.ob.).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER – One at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 7 March (Geoff Hill) marked an early arrival date for the Inland Coastal Plain (if not a rare wintering bird).

WILLET – A total of 14 was observed on the Birmingham area spring count, *Jefferson*, 25 April (Sharon Hudgins, Greg Harber *et al.*) (rare in Mountain Region). The Wheeler NWR spring count, *Morgan*, reported 16 on 2 May (Harry Dean, Dick Bruer, Neill Cowles, Beth Wood) (rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER – Damien Simbeck found six near Leighton, *Colbert*, 18 May, and other reports of this species from this area were made on 22 May (Milton Harris, Sue Moske) and 29 May (Damien Simbeck) (rare in spring, but more regular in northwest Alabama).

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER – A late single was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 13 May (Bill Summerour, Kathy Hicks).

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER – Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley in spring, five were found during the 2 May Wheeler NWR spring count, *Limestone* (Ken Ward, David Pylant, Sue Moske, Jane Allen), and Sue Moske *et al.* found five+ at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 3 May.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE – David George found one during the Birmingham area count, *Jefferson*, 25 April (rare inland), and another single was on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 4 May (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare in spring).



Wilson's Phalarope, 4 May 2015, Mobile Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

BONAPARTE'S GULL – Two birds at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 17-20 May (Karen Chiasson; ph.) established a late record for the Gulf Coast.

ICELAND GULL – An immature bird was seen at Magnolia Springs, *Baldwin*, 23 January (Bill Summerour) – 6 May (Karen Chiasson) (continuation from winter, late departure date for Alabama).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL – Ten at the Walnut Hill catfish farms, *Escambia*, 4 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) marked a record number for the WP; a single was there 9 March (Peggy Baker, Pam Beasley). Three were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 12 March, and a single was there 21 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare but increasing in recent years).

GLAUCOUS GULL – A single was reported from Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 28 March (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway, Peggy Baker, Pam Beasley) (24th record for the WP).



Glaucous Gull, 28 March 2015, Escambia Co., FL; B. Callaway.

INCA DOVE – A single was at Big Lagoon State Park, *Escambia*, 1 May (Joe Thomasson; ph.), and five (one pair copulating) were at Jay, *Santa Rosa*, 26 May (Don Ware, Carol Ware) (third and fourth records, respectively, for Florida).

COMMON GROUND-DOVE – A single was found during the 25 April Birmingham area count, *Jefferson* (Sharon Hudgins, David George) (rare in the Mountain Region, not a regular site).

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO – Singles were reported from Monte Sano SP, *Madison*, 26-28 April (Scott Gravette, Janice Gravette *et al.*), and Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 2 May (Greg Jackson, Scot Duncan) (rare inland).

GREAT HORNED OWL – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied six on 2 May (maximum spring number for the Tennessee Valley).

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD – Singles were at Pensacola, *Escambia*, 7 March (Vaughan Hedrick) and in Pace, *Santa Rosa*, 8-9 March (Bridget DeArman) (very rare in the WP).

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER – The 2 May Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 16 (ties maximum spring number for the Tennessee Valley).

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER – A late bird was at Mentone, *DeKalb*, 9 May (Scot Duncan).

PEREGRINE FALCON – A single was at Pensacola Beach, *Escambia*, 19 May (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) (late migrant for the WP).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 72 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 10 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

EASTERN PHOEBE – The Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, tallied 89 on 25 April (maximum spring count for the Mountain Region).

VERMILION FLYCATCHER – One was seen at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 16 March (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (rare in the WP). An adult male was at the airport on Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 16 April (Slavica Harper) and 18-19 April (Louise Zematis

et al.) (occasional in spring).

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 78 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

WESTERN KINGBIRD – Singles were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 12 April (Larry Tilley) and at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 27 April (Bob Duncan) (rare in spring in the WP).

EASTERN KINGBIRD – An early arrival was at Prairie Eden, *Hale*, 22 March (Don Self, Judy Self). The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 160 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER – One was at Lake Land Farms near Marion, *Perry*, 17 May (Jesse Holifield; ph.) (nesting at this site for 10 years, *vide* Thomas Wilson).

WHITE-EYED VIREO – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 130 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO – An early arrival was at Sprague, *Montgomery*, 15 March (Larry Gardella). The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 28 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

WARBLING VIREO – One was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 29 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (rare in spring in the WP). Rare but regular in spring in the Tennessee Valley, one was on Green Mountain, *Madison*, 26 April (Sue Moske), and two were found during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan*, 2 May (Stan Hamilton, Rick Remy, Harry Dean, Dick Bruer *et al.*). Two were at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 2 May (Ken Wills, Dick Mills *et al.*) (rare in the Mountain Region).

YELLOW-GREEN VIREO – A single was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 26-27 May (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) (seventh record for the WP).

TREE SWALLOW – Seven were at the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 31 May Jerry Callaway (very late for the WP).

BANK SWALLOW – The Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby/St. Clair*, tallied 60 on 25 April to mark a new spring maximum for the Mountain Region. John Trent counted 100 at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 29 April (maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast).

CAVE SWALLOW – Singles were at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 2 March (Bob Duncan) and 12-13 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan *et al.*) (very rare in WP). Rare but regular in spring on the Gulf Coast, sightings were made at two sites on Dauphin Island: a single at airport, 11 March (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*; ph.) (early spring arrival for the Gulf Coast), and two at sanctuary, 27 March (Angie Carn; ph.).

SEDGE WREN – Three were found during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Madison*, 2 May



Cave Swallows, 27 March 2015, Mobile Co., AL; A. Carn.

(Dwight Cooley, Scott Gravette, Janice Gravette) (ties maximum spring number for the Tennessee Valley).

MARSH WREN – Rare but regular in spring in the Mountain Region, singles were noted at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 20 March, and Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 17 May (late record for the Mountain Region) (Scot Duncan).

VEERY – A single of the western subspecies *salicicola* was at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 26 April (Bob Duncan).

AMERICAN ROBIN – Two were at an unusual location in Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 31 May (Dana Timmons) (very rare in late spring in the WP).

AMERICAN PIPIT – A late bird was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 3 May (Damien Simbeck, Jeff Garner).

CEDAR WAXWING – At Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 500 were counted 21 April (Karen Chiasson, Mac Chiasson), and John Trent counted 1,000 there 29 April (maximum spring number for the Gulf Coast).

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH – Bob Duncan found a single at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 25 May (latest departure for the WP by three days).

“LAWRENCE’S” WARBLER – A single was reported from Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 18 April (Scot Duncan, Will Hustwit) (occasional in Alabama).

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER – An early arrival was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 4 March (Janice Neitzel).

TENNESSEE WARBLER – A single was at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 28 March (Peggy Baker, Pam Beasley) (earliest arrival for the WP by two days). Two early birds were reported from Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 4 April (Scot Duncan).

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER – Greg Jackson counted four at Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 11 April (maximum spring number for Alabama).

NASHVILLE WARBLER – Greg Jackson found one at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 17 April (rare in spring on the Gulf Coast). Two were at Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 27 April (Greg Jackson, Stan Hamilton), and a single was noted at a different site on 28 April (Greg Jackson) (rare but regular in the Mountain Region).

CONNECTICUT WARBLER – A single at Veterans Memorial Park, *Okaloosa*, 6 May (Paul Pruitt) provided the ninth record for the WP. Rare in Alabama, a single was found dead in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 7 May (Scot Duncan; ph.) (rare in Alabama).

MOURNING WARBLER – Lucy Duncan found one at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 19 April (very rare in the WP). A single was at Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 13 May (Stan Hamilton) (rare but regular in spring in north Alabama).

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 111 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for Alabama.

CAPE MAY WARBLER – An adult male was on the Fort Morgan Peninsula, *Baldwin*, 14 March (Janice Neitzel; ph.) (earliest arrival record for Alabama). Another adult male was in Killen, *Lauderdale*, 31 March (Jack Paul; ph.) (early record for inland Alabama).

NORTHERN PARULA – A single was in Homewood, *Jefferson*, 9 March (Rick Remy,

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Susan Remy) (early record for north Alabama).

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER – An early single was at Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 3 April (Scot Duncan).

YELLOW WARBLER – Singles at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 19 May (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway) and at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 20 May (Lucy Duncan) were late migrants for the WP. The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 105 on 2 May to mark a new spring maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 25 on 2 May to mark a new maximum for the Tennessee Valley.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER – A single was in *Chambers* 17 April (Lorna West, Kevin Jackson) (rare but regular in the Mountain Region in spring). Rare but regular in the Tennessee Valley in spring, one was at Monte Sano SP (regular site), *Madison*, 30 April (Milton Harris *et al.*).

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER – An early single was at Florence, *Lauderdale*, 26 March (Tom Haggerty).

LARK SPARROW – One was at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 27 March and 16 April (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare in spring on the Gulf Coast).

LINCOLN'S SPARROW – Scot Duncan reported a single from Avondale, Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 27 April (rare in spring in the Mountain Region).

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW – Seven (good number so late) were found during the Birmingham area count, *Jefferson/Shelby*, 25 April (Rick Kittinger, John Imhof *et al.*).

DARK-EYED JUNCO – One at Gulf Breeze, *Santa Rosa*, 24 April (Bob Duncan, Lucy Duncan) marked a very late departure.

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK – A late single was at Ruffner Mountain NP in Birmingham, *Jefferson*, 23 May (Scot Duncan).

INDIGO BUNTING – The Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone/Morgan/Madison*, tallied 1,070 (good number) on 2 May.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD – A single was in northern *Okaloosa*, 1 May (Peggy Baker, Carol Tebay) (very rare in the WP in spring). An adult male was seen at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 3-6 May (Franklin Chalk *et al.*; ph.) (rare on the Gulf Coast in spring).

BALTIMORE ORIOLE – An estimate of 50 (good number) was made at Decatur,



Lark Sparrow, 27 March 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.



Yellow-headed Blackbird, 6 May 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

Morgan, 29 April (Charles Grisham).

PINE SISKIN – The 240 counted at Cantonment, *Escambia*, 15 March (Brenda Callaway, Jerry Callaway) established a new maximum for the WP. A single found during the Wheeler NWR area count, *Limestone*, 2 May (Milton Harris, Chuck Graham, Nick Sharp) was late.

AMERICAN GOLDFINCH – A single at Pace, *Santa Rosa*, 23 May (Daniel Stangeland, Bridget DeArman) was very late.

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SUMMER SIGHTINGS (JUNE - JULY 2015)

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

This report covers the period from June through July 2015 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 *Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa*, are in Alabama. “NWR” = National Wildlife Refuge; “ph.” = photographed; “SBC” = Summer Bird Count; “WP” = Western Panhandle of Florida (*Escambia*, *Okaloosa*, and *Santa Rosa* counties).

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK – This species continues to expand in the WP, as witnessed by nine birds at the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 8 June (Jerry Callaway); 13 adults and 17 juveniles at Taminco/Eastman Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 22 June (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Furlow); and 10 adults and 25 juveniles at Escambia County Utilities Authority, *Escambia*, 22 July (Jerry Callaway). On the Gulf Coast of Alabama, this species is a local and increasing breeder. Three reports came from sites where the species is not usually found: Justin’s Bay in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, a male incubating 11 eggs in a nest on 17 June and 11 birds on 15 July (John Trent, Eric Soehren, Monika Lapinski); Bayou La Batre, *Mobile*, two

birds on 28 June (Marybeth Lima, Lynn Hathaway); and Belforest, *Baldwin*, nine birds on 5 July (Karen Chiasson; ph.). Rare but increasing on the Inland Coastal Plain, two reports were received: Odis Johnson observed three on 4 July and two on 22 July at Hacoda, *Geneva* (becoming a regular site), and two were sighted at Eufaula NWR, *Barbour*, 8 July (John Cole, Margaret Cole; ph.) (new site).



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, 5 July 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

GADWALL – This species is occasional in summer in Alabama. One male was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 11 June (Damien Simbeck), and a single incapable of flight was at Justin's Bay in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 17 June (John Trent, Monika Lapinski; ph.).

AMERICAN BLACK DUCK – A single was at Saginaw (Limestone Park), *Shelby*, 28 June (Greg Jackson) (occasional in summer in the Mountain Region).

MALLARD – A count of 79 south of Browns, *Dallas*, 9 July (Larry Gardella) established a maximum summer number for the Inland Coastal Plain.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL – This species is a rare breeder in Alabama and reports came from four sites. Two (possibly late migrants) were near Leighton, *Colbert*, 2 June (Damien Simbeck). A male in alternate plumage was at Pintlala, *Montgomery*, 7 June (Larry Gardella; ph.) (possibly a late migrant). Larry Gardella observed five at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 June. Two were found in the Pondville quad during the Bibb County SBC, *Bibb*, 17 June (Maureen Shaffer, Anne Miller).

NORTHERN SHOVELER – This species occurs rarely in summer in Alabama. A male in alternate plumage was noted at Pintlala, *Montgomery*, 7 June (Larry Gardella; ph.). Larry Gardella observed one male at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 June. A single male was seen at Wheeler NWR, *Limestone*, 24 June (Dee Chancy *et al.*) (occasional breeder in the Tennessee Valley). Ashley Peters reported a male from west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 27 June (occasional breeder in the Tennessee Valley).



Northern Shoveler (left), 7 June 2015, Montgomery Co., AL; L. Gardella.

REDHEAD – Near Leighton, *Colbert*, four were seen on 18 May and two on 11 June (Damien Simbeck *et al.*) (occasional in summer in Alabama, first summer record for the Tennessee Valley).

LESSER SCAUP – One female was reported from the Mobile Causeway, *Baldwin*, 1 July (Scot Duncan), and a male was at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 31 July (Amber Hart; ph.) (rare summering species).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER – A single was found at Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 16 June (Larry Gardella) (rare but regular summering species on the Gulf Coast).

WILD TURKEY – Damien Simbeck reported 11 small and large young from near Oakland, *Lauderdale*, 23 July (maximum summer count for the Tennessee Valley).

COMMON LOON – Rare but regular in summer on the Gulf Coast, a single in basic plumage was at Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 5 June (Thomas Blevins; ph.).

PIED-BILLED GREBE – Twelve adults and many young were seen at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 30 July (Scot Duncan, Bob Duncan) (uncommon and local breeder, maximum summer number for the Gulf Coast).

AUDUBON'S SHEARWATER – A single was seen one mile south of Destin Pass, *Okaloosa*, 26 June (Eric Plage) (very rare in the WP and first June record).

BROWN BOOBY – Two adults and one immature were noted at Destin Pass, *Okaloosa*, 8-29 June (Bruce Purdy, Malcolm Swan, Wendi Greene, Larry Goodman, Scot Duncan) (very rare in the WP).

NORTHERN GANNET – Rare but regular in summer on the Gulf Coast, a first-year single was at Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 2 July (Andrew Haffenden; ph.), four were reported from Bon Secour NWR, *Baldwin*, 4 July (Michael Jordan), and two were at Fort Morgan, *Baldwin*, 5 July (Bill Blackburn).

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT – Ronald Kittinger reported a single from Lake Purdy, *Jefferson*, 28 July (rare in summer in the Mountain Region).

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN – Local but increasing in summer on the Inland Coastal Plain, counts of 120 on 22 June and 69 on 24 June came from Demopolis Lock and Dam, *Marengo/Sumter* (Don Self, Judy Self).

AMERICAN BITTERN – A single was at the Taminco/Eastman Sanctuary, *Santa Rosa*, 20 July (Les Kelly, Larry Goodman, Bruce Purdy) (first July record for the WP).

LEAST BITTERN – A count of nine on 22 June in the Lower Mobile Delta, *Baldwin* (John Trent, Monika Lapinski) established a new summer maximum for Alabama.

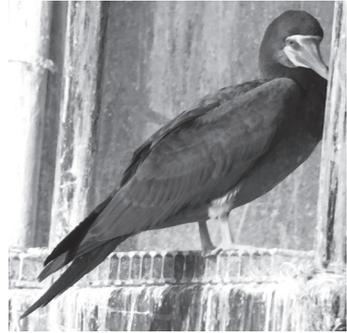
GREAT BLUE HERON – A count of 60 on Isle aux Herbes, *Mobile*, 22 July (Mark Woodrey *et al.*) marked a maximum summer number for the Gulf Coast.

CATTLE EGRET – Damien Simbeck reported 159 from near Leighton, *Colbert*, 19 June (a maximum summer number in recent decades in north Alabama).

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON – Fifteen were at the fish hatchery in Marion, *Perry*, 18 July (Ronald Kittinger, Rick Kittinger) (maximum summer number in recent decades on the Inland Coastal Plain).

WHITE IBIS – At Polecat Bay in the Mobile Delta, *Mobile*, a count of 1,430 on 15 June (John Trent, Monika Lapinski) established a maximum summer number for the Gulf Coast.

SWALLOW-TAILED KITE – The observation of a nest with two juveniles at Pace,



Brown Booby, June 2015, Okaloosa Co., FL; B. Purdy.



Northern Gannet, 9 July 2015, Mobile Co., AL; A. Haffenden.

Santa Rosa, 20 June (Daniel Stangeland, Larry Goodman; ph.) provided the first documentation of breeding in the WP. Rodney McCollum reported two on 24 July and a single on 29 July from along County Road 157 south of Auburn, *Lee* (locally rare).

MISSISSIPPI KITE – Rare but increasing in the Mountain Region, one was at Bessemer, *Jefferson*, 5 June (Carl DeFavero) (not a regular site).

PURPLE GALLINULE – A count of 12, including a nest with two newly hatched young, from the Lower Mobile Delta (Bay Minette/Mudhole Creek), *Baldwin*, 5 June (John Trent, Monika Lapinski *et al.*) marked a summer maximum for Alabama.

COMMON GALLINULE – A count of 46 from the Lower Mobile Delta (Justin’s Bay), *Baldwin*, 15 July (John Trent, Eric Soehren, Monika Lapinski) marked a summer maximum for Alabama. Amber Hart found a single at Guntersville, *Marshall*, 17 July (rare in the Tennessee Valley).

AMERICAN COOT – This species is uncommon and local in summer and a rare breeder. A total of 10 (good number for the season) was reported from the Lower Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 8 June – 15 July (John Trent, Eric Soehren, Monika Lapinski, Scot Duncan).

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER – Two were at Fort Pickens, *Escambia*, 15 June (Ron Sinclair) (very rare in the WP).

AMERICAN AVOCET – Larry Gardella found a single at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 June (rare in Alabama in “mid” summer).

SPOTTED SANDPIPER – At Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, a count of 10 on 30 July (Scot Duncan, Bob Duncan) marked a maximum summer number for south Alabama.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS – Larry Gardella found two at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 15 June (rare “mid” summer on the Gulf Coast).

LESSER YELLOWLEGS – Scot Duncan reported six early arrivals from Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, 1 July.

WHIMBREL – This species was seen at Pelican Peninsula, Dauphin Island, and Little Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 6 June – 30 July (Andrew Haffenden, Mark Woodrey *et al.*) (occasional in Alabama in June) (? same bird summering or several).

MARbled GODWIT – An early individual was at Bon Secour NWR, *Baldwin*, 4 July (Michael Jordan) (uncommon).

RUDDY TURNSTONE – Andrew Haffenden counted 13 on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 27 June to mark a summer maximum for Alabama.

RED KNOT – A single was on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 12 June (Andrew Haffenden) (casual in mid-June).

STILT SANDPIPER – A molting adult was reported from the Mobile Causeway, *Mobile*, 7 July (Karen Chiasson; ph.) (rare for early July on the Gulf Coast).

SANDERLING – Damien Simbeck found a single in near alternate plumage near Leighton, *Colbert*, 10



Stilt Sandpiper, 7 July 2015, Mobile Co., AL; K. Chiasson.

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July (early arrival record for the Tennessee Valley).

DUNLIN – Andrew Haffenden noted three birds on 3 June and a single on 14 June on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile* (late).

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER – Damien Simbeck reported eight birds (maximum summer number for Alabama) on 5 June, three birds on 11 June, and a single adult on 10 July (early arrival record for Alabama) near Leighton, *Colbert* (rare but regular in northwest Alabama).

LEAST SANDPIPER – Four were on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 5 July (Lynn Hathaway, Marybeth Lima) (early arrival record for the Gulf Coast).

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER – An early adult was near Leighton, *Colbert*, 10 July (Damien Simbeck).

WESTERN SANDPIPER – A single in alternate plumage was on Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*, 5 July (Lynn Hathaway, Marybeth Lima) (early).

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER – Two notable reports came from Pelican Peninsula, *Mobile*: 26 birds on 5 July (Lynn Hathaway, Marybeth Lima) (good number so early), and 53 birds on 21 July (Andrew Haffenden) (maximum summer count for Alabama).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL – One immature was at Dauphin Island, *Mobile*, 14 June – 21 July (Andrew Haffenden *et al.*; ph.), where this species is rare but regular (second summer record for Alabama).

BRIDLED TERN – Eric Plage reported four birds one mile south of Destin Pass, *Okaloosa*, 26 June (very rare in the WP).

CASPIAN TERN – David George found two in the Centreville West quad on 7 June during the *Bibb* SBC (occasional in June on the Inland Coastal Plain).

FORSTER'S TERN – In the Mobile Causeway area, *Baldwin*, numbers were reported as follows: 11 on June 24 (John Trent), 40 on 1 July (John Trent), and 45 (maximum summer count for Alabama) on 30 July (Scot Duncan).

ROCK PIGEON – At Ducker Bay in the Mobile Delta, *Baldwin*, 90 were seen in flight (John Trent, Monika Lapinski) (maximum summer number for the Gulf Coast).

WHITE-WINGED DOVE – This species is a local but increasing breeder on the Gulf Coast. A single was noted at Bayou La Batre, *Mobile*, not a regular site, on 4 July (Bill Blackburn). John Thornton reported 14 (good summer number) from a regular site in Mobile, *Mobile*, 10 July.

BARN OWL – This owl is a rare and local breeder in Alabama. An adult with three+ young in a nest were observed at Lexington, *Lauderdale*, 16 June+ (Jack Paul, Damien Simbeck) (return to site).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD – Twenty-five observed at Center Star, *Lauderdale*, 25 July (Damien Simbeck) established a maximum summer count for the



Great Black-backed Gull, 14 June 2015, Mobile Co., AL; A. Haffenden.

Tennessee Valley.

- BLUE-HEADED VIREO** – This vireo is a rare breeder at the southern edge of its range. Greg Jackson found three singing males, one paired with a female, in the upper reaches of Oak Mountain SP, *Shelby*, 18 July (likely nesting).
- PURPLE MARTIN** – An estimate of 3,000 at Spanish Fort, *Baldwin*, 7 July (John Trent) was a good number.
- TREE SWALLOW** – Three were found in the Halfmile Shoals quad north of County Road 13 during the *Bibb* SBC, 21 June (not a regular site), and four, including a juvenile, were at Saginaw, *Shelby*, 28 June (regular site) (Greg Jackson) (rare but increasing breeder).
- NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW** – Ben Garmon provided an estimate of 500 at Lake Land Farms, Marion, *Perry*, 22 July, to mark a new summer maximum for Alabama. Damien Simbeck counted 271 west of Florence and near Oakland, *Lauderdale*, 23 July (maximum summer number for the Tennessee Valley).
- HOUSE WREN** – This species is a rare breeder, especially in northwest Alabama. Jeff Garner *et al.* reported one bird and a nest with five eggs at Petersville, *Lauderdale*, 21 June.
- AMERICAN ROBIN** – Two birds were seen at Gulf Breeze, *Escambia*, 16 June (Dana Timmons) (very rare in summer in the WP).
- GRAY CATBIRD** – Three were noted at a regular site in west Mobile, *Mobile*, 14 June (Brian Naylor, Charlotte Naylor) (rare in summer on the Gulf Coast).
- OVENBIRD** – A single was found in the Pearson quad, *Bibb/Tuscaloosa*, during the *Bibb* County SBC, 16 June (Stan Hamilton, Dana Hamilton) (rare at the southern edge of its range).
- SWAINSON'S WARBLER** – Nine were found in the Aldrich quad, *Bibb/Shelby*, during the *Bibb* County SBC, 6 June (Pelham Rowan, Lisa Bailey) (maximum summer count for north Alabama). Rare in the Tennessee Valley, three reports were received: singles at two different but regular sites on the Muscle Shoals TVA Reservation, *Colbert*, 13 June and 30 June (Damien Simbeck), and another single at Wheeler NWR, *Madison*, 5 July (Sue Moske).
- CERULEAN WARBLER** – A single at Fort Walton Beach, *Okaloosa*, 16 July (Kelly Jones) was the earliest ever fall arrival for the WP by five days. A singing male was seen on Kogers Island, *Lauderdale*, 28 June (Brent Ortego), where the species was not known to occur (rare and local breeder in Alabama).
- YELLOW WARBLER** – Two were found west of Florence, *Lauderdale*, 27 June (Brent Ortego) (rare and declining breeder).
- SONG SPARROW** – Damien Simbeck reported singles from Florence, *Lauderdale*, 19 June and 11 July (rare breeder in northwest Alabama).
- BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE** – A roost site at Blakeley Island, *Mobile*, hosted 165 on 10 June (maximum summer number for Alabama) and 105 on 7 July (John Trent, Monika Lapinski).
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH** – Brent Ortego counted 55 at Mallard-Fox Creek Wildlife

Management Area, *Lawrence*, 27 June (maximum summer number for Alabama).

SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA – Six were seen at a new location, the International Paper Wetlands, *Escambia*, 12 July (Jerry Callaway, Brenda Callaway). Daniel Stangeland reported 29 from Pace, *Santa Rosa*, 31 July. This species continues its presence in the Pensacola, *Escambia*, metropolitan area. Although this exotic species is not yet fully established in Alabama, nest building by two pairs was observed 22-24 June, and two nests with seven+ eggs each were noted 30 June at Lillian, *Baldwin* (Jim Dickerson, Bill Summerour; ph.) (first confirmed nesting for Alabama).



Scaly-breasted Munia nest, 30 June 2015, Baldwin Co., AL; B. Summerour.

PIN-TAILED WHYDAH – This species continues to be reported from the WP: a pair was in east Pensacola, *Escambia*, 6-7 July (Bernice Gilley, Larry Tilley, Larry Goodman; ph.), and a single was in west Pensacola, *Escambia*, 7 July (Gary Money).



Pin-tailed Whydah, 7 July 2015, Escambia Co., FL; L. Goodman.

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GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

Manuscripts submitted for publication in Alabama Birdlife should conform to the guidelines listed below. Articles should include some facet of bird ecology, natural history, behavior, management/conservation, identification or other related topics. Refer to this issue or to recent past issues for examples. Alabama Birdlife is published twice a year. If you have access to an IBM compatible or Macintosh computer, it saves time and money if you submit your manuscript on a 3 1/2 inch floppy disk along with a hard copy (Word or WordPerfect preferred). A manuscript may also be submitted over the Internet as a file attached to an e-mail addressed to: tmhaggerty@una.edu.

Manuscripts should be typed and double spaced. A 8 1/2 x 11 inch page format should be used.

Digital images submitted over the Internet, black and white prints, color prints, and slides are acceptable.

The title should be in CAPS. If the name of a species is used in the title, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. CONNECTICUT WARBLER (*OPORORNIS AGILIS*).

The author's full name should be in lower case and centered under the title.

If the article is coauthored by a married couple bearing the same last name, the names should be kept separate, e.g. John B. Brown and Sarah D. Brown.

Whenever a species name is used for the first time in the body of an article, it should be followed by the scientific name in parentheses, e.g. Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*).

When using dates, the day should be placed before the month, e.g. 13 April 1992.

Spell out numbers ten and under and use numerals for numbers 11 and above.

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

Table titles should be in CAPS and placed above the tables.

Figure legends should be in lower case and placed beneath the figure.

Refer to the Literature Cited in past issues for the correct format.

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

The author's name and full address should be line typed at the end of the article. The name used should match the name given under the title.

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