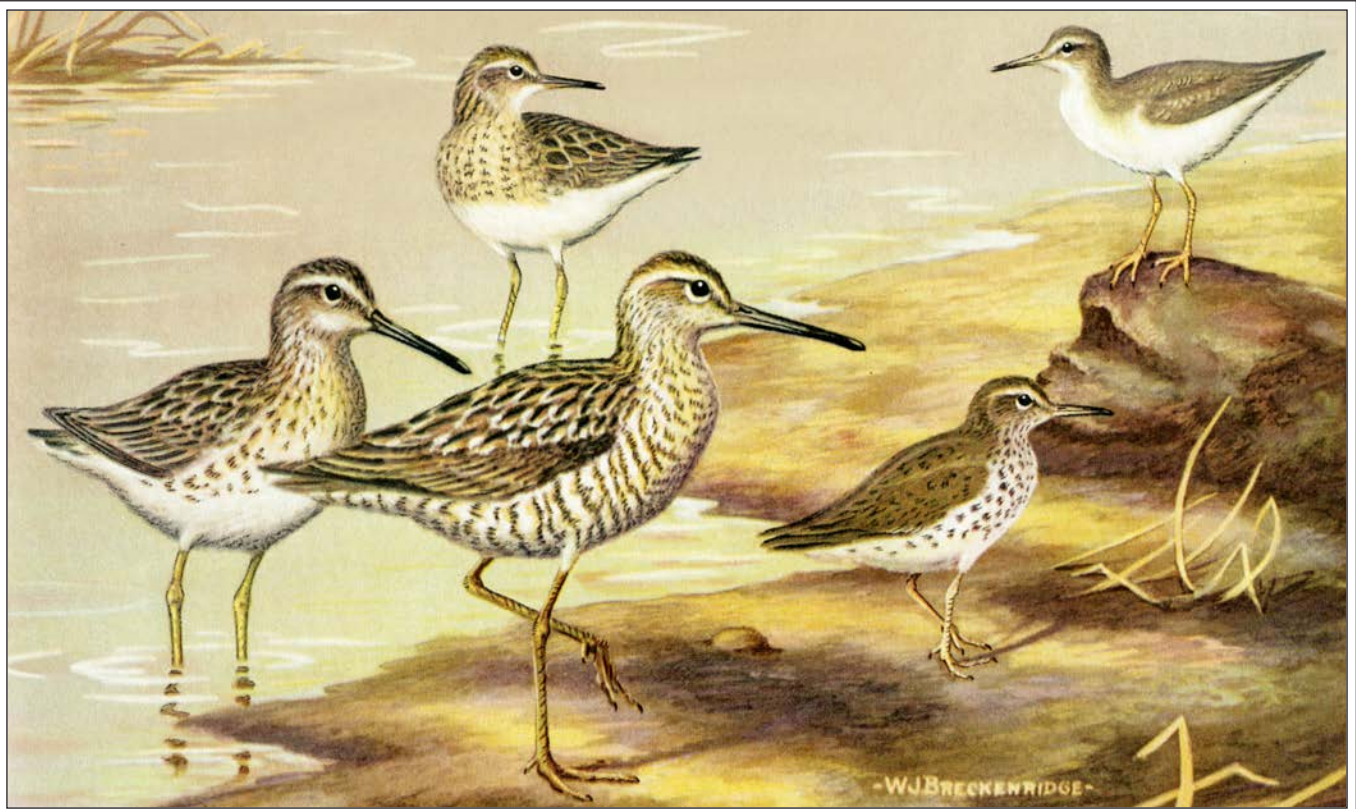


THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 37, NO. 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUMMER 2017

...to foster a greater knowledge of birds and to promote conservation of all natural resources

FOUNDED 1952



3
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
BIRDING GOES ONLINE

by Anne G. Miller

6
AOS SPRING MEETING
SPRING MEETING REPORT

by Greg Harber

IN THIS ISSUE

7
AOS SPRING MEETING
ACTIONS OF THE SPRING
AOS BOARD MEETING

by Ken Ward

8
eBIRD IN UNDER-REPORTED
COUNTIES AND WIN PRIZES!

by Ken Hare & Greg Harber

11
AOS SPRING MEETING
WHY WAS THE BIRDING SO BAD?

by Bob Duncan

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KEEP A COPY OF THE *SIBLEY Guide* in my birding bag that goes with me everywhere, in case I have one of those serious identification problems that sometimes arise on a birding trip. But books are cumbersome, and my iPhone is always in my pocket, so most of the time I use an app called iBird Pro when I'm out birding. iBird Pro is like an electronic field guide, but it has some very helpful features that a printed field guide can't offer. For example, if I hear a bird song I'm not sure of, I can quickly look up a likely species, and listen to recordings of its songs, song variants, and even call notes. The app provides a list of birds with similar songs, so I can jump back and forth between species comparing each bird's songs with the song I heard. For each species, the app also shows the bird's field marks, as well as a gallery of photographs and a list of similar-looking birds. Click on any name to jump instantly to that bird for visual comparison. Range maps are also provided, as well as basic information about each bird's behavior.

Andrew Haffenden, AOS field trip leader, shares my preference for iBird Pro. Huntsville's Kenneth Ward, president of the North Alabama Birdwatchers Society, also prefers iBird Pro. Both birders report that they mainly use the app for the recordings of the birds' songs. However, Greg Harber, leader of Birmingham Audubon's field trip committee, prefers the magnificent drawings of birds on the Sibley app, in addition to its bird song feature. Greg also likes the app from National Geographic. Most of the field guide apps have the same general features, and nearly all of them are available for Android phones as well as iPhones.

Birding by ear is essential for finding birds, and if you're like me, you're still learning the songs. Greg Harber prefers *Birding by Ear*, from the Peterson Series, which is a set of CDs and a book. Greg points out that *Birding by Ear* actually teaches you how to distinguish between different but similar songs, instead of just playing similar songs and identifying them. There are, however, a number of apps available that are also designed to help you learn bird songs. Some, like Larkwire's Master Birder, allow you to test yourself with game-like



quizzes. Sunbird's Birdsong ID allows you to record a singing bird, and then offers three options for the bird's identity. The technology is not yet capable of providing complete certainty, since bird songs vary by region with local 'dialects'.

If you can see the bird, rather than just hear it, Cornell Lab of Ornithology has an app, Merlin Bird ID, which helps you identify the bird by answering five basic questions about its size, color, location, etc. The app then provides photographs of three of the most likely birds for the region and time of year, which usually narrows the choices enough to allow you to identify the bird. This is a great help for

beginning birders who don't always have an opportunity to bird with more experienced birders.

There are many other apps for birders, and more are being developed all the time. If you're shopping for a birding app, be sure you read the reviews before you purchase. The reviews give you a pretty good idea of how well the app is designed, and will save you unnecessary headaches.

For those who are also interested in bird behavior, there are a number of outstanding resources available on the internet. Cornell Lab of Ornithology offers the most comprehensive array of resources for learning about birds and bird behavior. At Cornell's website (allaboutbirds.org), you can access many different resources, including a bird guide that provides basic information about North American birds. Cornell's Bird Academy offers online webinars on a variety of topics that allow you to improve your birding skills with a live instructor. Jean Folsom, Susan Barrow and I are taking a Cornell Webinar right now on warblers. This particular webinar is offered on Thursday nights for six weeks.

Another Cornell resource, Birds of North America Online (birdsna.org), offers the most comprehensive source of information on over 760 species of birds that breed in the U.S. and Canada. This digital reference library summarizes the current scientific knowledge of each species, based on peer-reviewed publications which are cited within the text. Each species account is written by an ornithologist with expert knowledge of the species. For example, Alabama's own Bob and Martha Sargent authored the account for Ruby-throated

Hummingbirds, recently updated by Scott Weidensaul. Birds of North America Online, known to users as "BNA," requires an annual subscription fee of \$40. I've been a subscriber for at least ten years, and I consult it frequently. Where else can you discover that male American Redstarts occupy rich woodlands on their wintering grounds in Central and South America, while females and immature males occupy second-growth scrub? Or that 70% of the Dark-eyed Juncos wintering in Alabama are females? You can explore the site as a guest before deciding whether or not you want to subscribe.

Cornell's eBird (ebird.org) is also becoming an indispensable birding tool. eBird is a database of bird sightings contributed by birders and ornithologists around the world, a joint project of Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. AOS strongly encourages Alabama birders to contribute their sightings to eBird, because there are serious gaps in the database for our state. (See related article on page 8.) But eBird is also a very useful tool for finding birds, as well. On the eBird home page, click on the link Explore Data. You can type in the name of a particular region, such as Alabama, and see the bird occurrences for the entire state. You can then click on the link for Counties, and explore Alabama county-by-county. At either the state or county level, you will find recent sightings and who reported them. eBird also ranks the top eBirders for that location. Also, be sure to click on the link for bar charts, which shows the seasonal occurrence of each bird. The county bar charts have become one of my favorite birding tools. If you prefer, you can go straight to the species maps, enlarge the map until you can see details, and see every location where a particular species has been reported. Click on the little colored flag marking a particular sighting, and it will tell you who saw it, and when. I know there are a lot of eBird features I haven't even discovered yet, and new features are constantly being added.

All of this wealth of scientific information that is available to birders through the internet enhances our experience of the birds we observe in the field. But I agree with Andrew Haffenden, who warns that there is no substitute for the learning that comes from direct observation. So get out there and spend time in the field, whether it's at a birding hotspot, or in your own back yard. And be sure to take along your smart phone, equipped with a few good apps.

By the way, AOS has a new website: aosbirds.org. Be sure to check it out for information about our fall meeting, and

other birding news. If you'd like to receive daily notice about any unusual bird sightings around the state, go to www.yahoo.com and join ALBirds, the AOS Yahoo Group. To find out what's going on in the rest of the birding community in Alabama, including field trips, birding festivals, etc., here are some key websites and Facebook groups and pages:

Top websites about Alabama birds:

Alabama Birding Trails (alabamabirdingtrails.com)
Alabama Ornithological Society (aosbirds.org)
Birmingham Audubon (birminghamaudubon.org)
North Alabama Birdwatchers Society (northalbirding.com)

Alabama Facebook groups and pages about birds and birding:

Alabama Ornithological Society
Alabama Birding Trails
Alabama Coastal BirdFest
Alabama Wildlife Center
Birmingham Audubon
Birding Alabama
Mobile Bay Audubon Society
North Alabama Birdwatchers Society
Tennessee Valley Audubon Society

New Members

John Cole • Molly Evert • Tim Freeman • Linda Henckell
Kathleen Hill • Mary Holycross • Debra Lucas
Dr. Jackie Mize • Karen Moise • Cynthia Palmer
Bruce & Olive Parsons • Carol Roberson • Janet Salmon
Jessica Searcy • Terrance Shaneyfelt • Tash Simon
Harold Smith • Renee Taylor

Stay Connected with AOS!

VISIT WWW.AOSBIRDS.ORG OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE (scannable code on back cover). Are you moving? Are you changing Internet Service Providers? **Don't forget to send us your updated contact information.** E-mail treasurer@aosbirds.org with your new mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.

AOS Meetings Committee Report

By RUFINA WARD, *Chair*



THE PAST SPRING MEETING WAS THE MOST WELL attended since I became actively involved with AOS in 2014, first as treasurer and, of late, as meetings committee chair. With more than fifty percent increase in attendance from the previous meeting (fortunately, the United Methodist Church fellowship hall has enough room to accommodate all attendees), the committee had more stuff to attend to than was originally anticipated. Kudos to our indefatigable and highly reliable members who stepped up and even took on other tasks outside the committee to make the event a resounding success. I would like to especially mention Susan Barrow, Jean Folsom, and Kathleen Dunlap for procuring much needed supplies, making flower arrangements, providing a ride to our guest speaker from the airport, and helping with so many other committee tasks. As always, we could count on Priscilla and Allen Tubbs, and Joan and Tom Siegwald for anything that needed attention during the preparation and restoration of the hall; Priscilla also assisted Shirley Farrell in setting up items for the fundraising silent auction.

Our heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation go to Andrew Haffenden who, without complaint, continues to store and haul our supply boxes; Annabel Markle for tending to and refurbishing our stash of items for door prizes and giveaways; Sue Moske who has generously donated her colorful, reversible, handmade fabric grocery bags every meeting over several years now; and Harry and Pam Dean, David and Berta Pylant, and Pat and Bob Reed for giving their time in assisting the committee in every way they can. (Pat and Bob also carried the speaker to the airport on Sunday.)

But I am most grateful to Ken Ward for his unwavering support whenever and wherever it is needed; he is my constant and reliable partner in everything I do. However, any meeting cannot be successful without our supportive members who participated and generously shared so many deli-

cious dishes and munchies for the Friday potluck. We also very much appreciate those who helped with the restoration of the hall after the event; cleaning up after dinner can be a real task. Wilton Catering Service outdid itself this time with, I think, their best menu yet. We also thank strong-bodied members who hauled 30 folding chairs from and back to the fellowship hall behind the church sanctuary across the street; we needed some muscles to do it in record time. We are also very grateful to Rev. Cecil Jackson for letting us use their church hall; the church is very accommodating and welcoming. If I forgot to acknowledge other individuals, my apologies. I will make it up next time.

In the Nick of Time

WE HAVE A WREN HOUSE BESIDE THE BACK DOOR, AND IT has housed several broods of Carolina Wrens over the last few years. The most recent fledging was yesterday. The adults were noisily trying to coax the three youngsters out of the nest as we ate breakfast. One finally flew down to a planter, with all the grace of a first flight, but it was undeniably flight. He ventured a couple of more sorties, gaining confidence at each try.

The other two hung tough, and by lunch they were clearly hungry, as they had only been fed a few morsels all morning. We missed their maiden flights, which took place early afternoon. We haven't seen them since.

However, Pat had to run an errand just after dark, and when she returned, I heard her calling to me. Investigating, I found a four-and-a-half-foot Gray Rat Snake halfway up the wall, clearly making for the recently vacated nest. I relocated him to the other end of our property a quarter mile away. Even if he'd made the nest, thankfully the family had left. However, when I was capturing him, he was clearly trying to get away from me by getting into the door, which was particularly off-putting to Pat, to whom the only good snake is a dead one. If he returns, which they are known to do, it may be fatal for him.

This afternoon Pat spotted another snake, a little shorter, trying for one of the bluebird houses. I was unable to catch him, so we ringed the post with Snake-Away, in hopes that will deter him.

— Bob Reed

AOS SPRING MEETING, APRIL 21-23, 2017

Spring 2017 Meeting Report

By GREG HARBER



WE BIRDERS LOVE TO WATCH BIRDS, AND SOME years the birding at the AOS spring meeting is remarkable. But this was not one of those years. Given the generally pleasant weather conditions—with sunny skies and prevailing southerly breezes—in the weeks leading up to the meeting, it came as no surprise that birding on Dauphin Island was fairly unremarkable in terms of overall numbers and total species observed (182).

Still, the meeting weekend had its highlights, and among them was the number of people attending the meeting. Our field trip leader Andrew Haffenden and speaker Kevin Karlson led a large group to Splinter Hill Bog Preserve Friday morning with hopes of seeing or hearing a Bachman's Sparrow, but none was to be found. But others birds were in abundance—a Veery, Pine and Palm Warblers, Eastern Towhees, Brown-headed Nuthatches, and Indigo Buntings, among others. From there, the group headed to lunch at the Original Oyster House on the causeway, with views looking out over Mobile Bay that allowed birding to continue throughout lunch. While enjoying excellent seafood, birders were able to see a Bald Eagle, Ospreys, Gull-billed Terns, and many others. Following lunch, the group returned to Dauphin Island for birding there, but on the way stopped to see a different variety of pitcher plant from those seen at Splinter Hill Bog.

It was so encouraging to see the faces of several new members at the meeting—we welcome them aboard! As Andrew commented at the Friday night potluck dinner, "More eyes equals more birds seen," and that bodes well for future meetings. For me, personally, I was happy to have with me a friend who had not been to a meeting in several years—and other friends I had not seen in many years.

The Friday night potluck was a well-attended affair, and this year, along with the delicious offerings, we had the distinct pleasure of having our guest speaker for the weekend, Kevin Karlson, deliver a workshop on "Identifying Shorebirds by Impression." Kevin's insights, combined with his

superb photographic skills, proved to be most helpful as he guided us through multiple species of shorebirds, highlighting their various field marks, overall body shape, posture, and behavior. Thank you, Kevin, for a job well done, and for the comprehensive handout on shorebird silhouettes.

Saturday morning's field trips offered members the chance to bird Dauphin Island proper, or head to the sugar white sands of Pelican Peninsula with Andrew and Kevin—which many folks wisely opted to do. As is often the case, when land birding is slow the shorebirding is at least a little more reliable, allowing the latter group to employ their newfound identification skills!

Lunch for everyone was at the home of Jennie Stowers and her coterie of dear friends, who so generously hosted the whole group! Members and guests brought side dishes and desserts, while Jennie and crew tended to the scrumptious fixins' and refreshing drinks. Truly, the camaraderie among the group has to make AOS one of the most unusual state ornithological societies in the nation, yes?

Kevin continued to showcase his birding and photography skills during Saturday night's keynote address, "Birds on the Wind: The Miracle of Migration." Kevin's multimedia presentation, complete with sights and sounds, highlighted the splendor and awe-inspiring migrations of our feathered friends, whose avian journeys span the continents and the oceans. One could not help but be impressed, and maybe a little bit overwhelmed, by the wonder of it all.

Saturday night and into Sunday morning, a squall line of storms moved across Dauphin Island, dropping some rains while raising hopes for more birds! While their arrival was too late to be included in the noontime compilation, a small subset of the "Yucatan Express" did materialize and the area behind Fort Gaines did experience an uptick in birding activity with the recent arrivals forced to earth by the now breezy northwest winds. The field trip to the USS *Alabama* and Blakely Mud Lakes led by Larry Gardella produced a few nice shorebirds as a result of the storms, too.

At compilation, however, numbers confirmed what we all knew from our weekend of birding together: few individuals of a widespread suite of birds, with no particular rarities noted during the weekend. A few of the individual highlights: the brilliantly colored Cape May Warblers in the bottlebrush by the Stowers home, the Bald Eagle nest and nestlings on Dauphin Island (first ever recorded on the island, and they have now fledged!), and the dapper Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at the Audubon Sanctuary.

As my companion and I drove north across the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, one of the last birds we saw was a magnificent Swallow-tailed Kite, its striking black and white plumage and svelte form gliding effortlessly above the treetops. "Not to worry my friend," I thought to myself as I exchanged a high-five with Ron, "I will see you again later this summer." As for the rest of you, let's plan to swap tales of our summer birding trips at the fall meeting on Dauphin Island, shall we?

Actions of the Spring AOS Board Meeting, April 22, 2017

By KEN WARD, *Secretary*



THE AOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MET APRIL 22, 2017 at Dauphin Island United Methodist Church. President Anne G. Miller called the board to order at 2:30 pm.

The Board approved the following actions:

1. Winter 2016 AOS board meeting minutes (Ken Ward)
2. Treasurer's report (Elberta Reid)
3. To authorize up to \$250 for prizes associated with eBird project

Other Items:

1. Ad hoc committees were established for the next photo contest, to review AOS field trip protocol, and to oversee the new eBird project.
2. Strong attendance at the current meeting—consensus that speaker, quality field trips, ease of registration (online now) and efforts of the public relations committee (more Facebook posts, Ken Hare's articles, etc.) were all important. Further discussion needed on how to build on this success, taking into consideration the limited space we currently have at our meeting place.
3. AOS photo contest scheduled for the fall 2017 meeting; need to revisit prizes offered and photo categories for consideration; committee to make recommendations soon.
4. AOS/eBird Project—Going well, three activities planned: bird blitz to increase eBird reporting in Fayette County

scheduled for May, checklist competition (prizes approved), and initiative to recruit birders for adoption of under-reported counties for eBird.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Board Meeting Minutes and Financial Statements

DETAILED APPROVED MINUTES AND A CURRENT FINANCIAL statement will be posted on the website.

Upcoming Meetings

SECOND FRIDAY—October 13–15, 2017
Fall Meeting, Dauphin Island

FOURTH FRIDAY—January 26–28, 2018
Winter Meeting, Location TBA

Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions

Fall 2017 August 10, 2017

Winter 2017 November 10, 2017

eBird in Under-reported Counties and Win Prizes!

By KEN HARE & GREG HARBER



AFTER THE AOS BOARD DECIDED IN JANUARY TO partner with eBird to increase reporting of bird species from counties in Alabama with drastically low species counts, it didn't take long for AOS members to start making a difference. Reports from these counties by individual AOS members, reacting to the need, quickly started to show up on eBird, even while a formal strategy to improve reporting was being developed.

Then on May 20, the first new tactic to improve reporting kicked off with a field trip to Fayette County led by Greg Harber. Called Birds and Barbecue Blitz, this is the first of several trips that AOS will sponsor to counties that have fewer than 150 species reported on eBird. These trips will focus on finding new species and hot spots for birding, as well as a stop at a good barbecue joint in the targeted county. A report on the Fayette trip will appear on the AOS Facebook page and in *The Yellowhammer*.

At the spring AOS meeting on Dauphin Island, the board approved two new tactics—a partnership with eBird to offer prizes to birders who file complete eBird reports from these counties, and the recruitment of AOS members and others to “adopt” a county and to bird it regularly.

AOS president Anne Miller has written articles in past issues of *The Yellowhammer* on the need to increase reporting from these counties to improve the eBird data, upon which scientific research based.

THE CONTEST

Every complete checklist entered from one of the targeted counties (*see list at end of article*) would provide a chance for the eBirder filing it to win a prize. The more complete checklists, the more chances to win. eBird will monitor the lists and randomly select the winners.

The contest is open to everyone; anyone who files a complete checklist beginning May 1 through December 31, 2017

will be eligible (even if they don't know about the contest). eBird will inform winners.

There will be five winners. First prize will be two nights lodging on Dauphin Island during April or October 2018 when bird migration on the island is at its height. In addition, all five winners will receive a free year's subscription to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's highly respected Birds of North America website. Second and third place finishers will also receive gifts from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Again, please note that only a “complete” checklist from these counties will qualify as an entry. Complete checklists are those in which the birder attempts to identify all species seen or heard in a given area. See eBird for details.

THE ADOPTION

AOS will be asking its members and other birders to adopt one of the under-reported counties and to bird there regularly and file brief reports on the birding.

Those who adopt a county and file complete checklists from them would be eligible for the contest, of course, but the prime motivation will be the satisfaction of knowing they are helping to improve future ornithological research on Alabama.

Adopters would be asked to:

- Agree to bird in their adopted county or counties on at least two different occasions in 2017, filing at least a total of eight complete checklists on eBird. The more birding in the adopted county, the better, of course.
- Agree to email a list of the species, dates and locations of the checklists for each visit soon after the visits to Greg Harber or Ken Hare. That way we can monitor the impact the adoption program is having, and use that impact to get publicity for more reporting from these areas.
- Agree to provide a short narrative (with directions) to promising birding locations in their respective counties. That way we could begin building an online report that

we can use to promote birding in these counties on our Facebook and web pages. We hope that these reports will help us to identify new eBird hot Spots in those counties and allow us to write a description of the best places to bird in these counties that we can post on the AOS website.

If you are interested in adopting a county, please email Ken Hare at khare@wsfa.com and Greg Harber at gharber@mindspring.com.

Current AOS eBird committee members are: Ken Hare and Greg Harber, co-chairs; Anne Miller; Sue Moske; and Ken Ward. If you would like to help with the work of the committee, contact any of the committee members.

THE COUNTIES

The AOS eBird project originally found 17 counties with fewer than 150 species identified on eBird. Thanks in part to AOS members who on their own have increased reports from these areas, one county—Clay—has already topped 150 species.

So the list of targeted counties, and species in them as of 2-17-17, are:

Bibb, 140; Blount, 144; Chilton, 129; Choctaw, 122; Coffee, 133; Conecuh, 131; Crenshaw, 104; Fayette, 111; Greene, 133; Lamar, 96; Marion, 118; Pickens, 137; Pike, 125; Randolph, 139; Walker, 139; and Washington, 147

Please consider adopting a county. But if you can't do that, then try birding there on your own and file eBird checklists, or join AOS on future field trips to under-reported counties. We thank those who have already started to bird in these counties, and ask you to continue to do so.

Electronic Yellowhammer?

IT COSTS WELL OVER A DOLLAR AND A HALF TO PRINT AND MAIL *The Yellowhammer*. We are delivering, on a totally voluntary basis, *The Yellowhammer* via the Internet.

If you would like to receive your *Yellowhammer* in color, electronically, as a PDF file, please email the editor at BobReed1987@gmail.com.

Second Annual AOS Photography Contest

THE SECOND ANNUAL AOS PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WILL be held this year with the winners announced at the fall 2017 meeting. The contest is open to all AOS members in good standing. The official rules and submission information will be found on the AOS website and Facebook page. The categories have changed from last year and are simple: backyard, flight, and habitat. Photographs taken in Alabama and the Florida Panhandle within the last year (September 2016–August 2017) are eligible as long as the pictured bird is alive and living in the wild.

By submitting an entry, you agree to allow AOS to use the photographs on the AOS website, Facebook page, and publications without compensation to promote the contest.

So, we have some rules, we have an entry form, we will have some judges, and we will have some nominal prizes (as if the honor of participating and winning wouldn't be enough). Now what we need are your photographs in jpeg format only. Submission information will be forthcoming and posted to the website and Facebook page. Note that an entry form must accompany each submission. Now this next sentence is really important. All entries must be received on or before September 1, 2017.

—Harry Dean

Membership Committee

THANKS TO SOME GREAT PUBLICITY IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING and a speaker with national renown, a good number of new people came to the spring AOS meeting, and a bunch of them have joined AOS.

It's a great time to build on the momentum and continue attracting new members to AOS. Do you know someone who likes birds who might enjoy AOS? If so, please tell them about AOS and invite them to join. If you want to know whether the person is already an AOS member, please get in touch with me at lfgardella@gmail.com or 334-450-9790. If you wish, I would be happy to get in touch with any potential member.

Let's share our love of birds.

— Larry Gardella, Chair, AOS Membership Committee

2017 AOS Spring Meeting Compilation List,
Dauphin Island, Alabama, April 21–23

THE NOTEWORTHY BIRD OF THE WEEKEND WAS A GLAUCOUS Gull. Count total was 182 species.

Black-bellied Whistling Duck	Willet	Pileated Woodpecker	American Redstart
Canada Goose	Lesser Yellowlegs	American Kestrel	Cape May Warbler
Mallard	Upland Sandpiper	Peregrine Falcon	Northern Parula
Mottled Duck	Ruddy Turnstone	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Yellow Warbler
Blue-winged Teal	Red Knot	Eastern Phoebe	Blackpoll Warbler
Northern Shoveler	Stilt Sandpiper	Great Crested Flycatcher	Black-throated Blue Warbler
Northern Bobwhite	Sanderling	Eastern Kingbird	Palm Warbler
Common Loon	Dunlin	Gray Kingbird	Pine Warbler
Pied-billed Grebe	Least Sandpiper	Loggerhead Shrike	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Magnificent Frigatebird	Pectoral Sandpiper	White-eyed Vireo	Yellow-throated Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Yellow-throated Vireo	Prairie Warbler
Anhinga	Western Sandpiper	Blue-headed Vireo	Black-throated Green Warbler
American White Pelican	Short-billed Dowitcher	Red-eyed Vireo	Eastern Towhee
Brown Pelican	Bonaparte's Gull	Blue Jay	Savannah Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	Laughing Gull	American Crow	Seaside Sparrow
Great Egret	Ring-billed Gull	Fish Crow	Swamp Sparrow
Snowy Egret	Herring Gull	Purple Martin	Summer Tanager
Little Blue Heron	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Tree Swallow	Scarlet Tanager
Tricolored Heron	<i>Glaucous Gull</i>	N. Rough-winged Swallow	Northern Cardinal
Reddish Egret	Least Tern	Bank Swallow	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Cattle Egret	Gull-billed Tern	Cliff Swallow	Blue Grosbeak
Green Heron	Caspian Tern	Cave Swallow	Indigo Bunting
Black-crowned Night Heron	Common Tern	Barn Swallow	Painted Bunting
White Ibis	Forster's Tern	Carolina Chickadee	Dickcissel
Turkey Vulture	Royal Tern	Tufted Titmouse	Bobolink
Osprey	Sandwich Tern	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Red-winged Blackbird
Swallow-tailed Kite	Black Skimmer	Brown-headed Nuthatch	Common Grackle
Bald Eagle	Rock Pigeon	House Wren	Boat-tailed Grackle
Cooper's Hawk	Eurasian Collared-Dove	Sedge Wren	Brown-headed Cowbird
Red-shouldered Hawk	White-winged Dove	Marsh Wren	Orchard Oriole
Red-tailed Hawk	Mourning Dove	Carolina Wren	Baltimore Oriole
Clapper Rail	Common Ground-Dove	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	House Finch
Virginia Rail	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Golden-crowned Kinglet	American Goldfinch
Sora	Barn Owl	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	House Sparrow
Common Gallinule	Eastern Screech Owl	Eastern Bluebird	
American Coot	Great Horned Owl	Veery	
Black-necked Stilt	Barred Owl	Swainson's Thrush	
American Avocet	Common Nighthawk	Hermit Thrush	
American Oystercatcher	Chuck-will's-widow	Wood Thrush	
Black-bellied Plover	Chimney Swift	American Robin	
Snowy Plover	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Gray Catbird	
Semipalmated Plover	Belted Kingfisher	Brown Thrasher	
Piping Plover	Red-headed Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird	
Killdeer	Red-bellied Woodpecker	European Starling	
Spotted Sandpiper	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Cedar Waxwing	
Solitary Sandpiper	Downy Woodpecker	Ovenbird	
Greater Yellowlegs	Hairy Woodpecker	Worm-eating Warbler	
		Louisiana Waterthrush	
		Northern Waterthrush	
		Black-and-white Warbler	
		Prothonotary Warbler	
		Swainson's Warbler	
		Common Yellowthroat	
		Hooded Warbler	

All reported sightings will be accepted and published in *The Yellowhammer*. However, the meeting compilation list in *The Yellowhammer* is not an official record. Species that are **boldfaced**, or listed in the Hypothetical section of the AOS Field Card, must be supported by complete written details and submitted to, and accepted by, the Records Committee to become an official AOS record. *Italicized* species usually need written details but these may be brief. Out of season and locally rare birds should also be documented. Refer to the front page of the AOS Field Card for additional details.

Why Was the Birding So Bad?

By BOB DUNCAN

BIRDING DAUPHIN ISLAND FOR THE AOS SPRING meeting of April 21–23, 2017, was very poor. In fact, passerine migrants were almost totally absent, a sorry state of affairs for late April! For several weeks, easterly winds prevailed from a stable high pressure cell that settled off the Atlantic coast and what birds were moving north were headed generally to the Texas/southwest Louisiana coast and had no reason to stop along the coast. Prior to the meeting, unsettled weather prevailed in the southern Gulf, very likely inhibiting movements of migrants north. Compounding the situation, winds were generally light and variable in the southern and central Gulf. So a great impetus for birds to

move north on the usual prevailing tail winds was absent. That changed somewhat the night of the banquet when the Gulf cleared. A front entered the Gulf that Sunday and birds encountered north and northwest winds on their approach to the coast. A few birds were reported arriving Sunday afternoon after everyone had gone home.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Birding at Monte Sano State Park, on the other hand, has been superb this spring, as the birds eventually came down to preen and refuel. Pat and I spent the first week of May at Cheaha State Park where the birding was also great. We saw three times as many warblers as we saw on Dauphin Island.

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