

# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 39, NO. 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUMMER 2019

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

FOUNDED 1952



4

BACKYARD BIRDING  
CALLS OF A MORNING WALK  
*by Bob Reed*

5

AOS 2019 SPRING MEETING  
SPRING MEETING REPORT  
*by Ken Hare, Greg Harber & Geoff Hill*

## IN THIS ISSUE

6

AOS 2019 SPRING MEETING  
MINUTES OF THE AOS  
BOARD MEETING  
*by Jean Folsom*

*Cover: Cerulean Warbler by Greg Harber*

7

eBIRD TEAM SETS BIRDING  
RECORD FOR ALABAMA  
*by Ken Hare*

10

ON THE ROAD AGAIN  
BIRDING IN BALI  
*by Robin McDonald*

## ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1325, DAUPHIN ISLAND, AL 36528-1325

### OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....Harry Dean  
 VICE PRESIDENT.....Geoff Hill  
 TREASURER.....Joan Dixon  
 SECRETARY.....Jean Folsom  
 IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT.....Anne G. Miller

### REGIONAL DIRECTORS

TENNESSEE VALLEY.....Damien Simbeck, Ken Ward  
 MOUNTAIN REGION.....Alison Glascock, Stan Hamilton  
 COASTAL PLAIN.....Annabel Markle, Don Self  
 GULF COAST.....Mike Wilson  
 NORTHWEST FLORIDA.....Lucy Duncan

### EDITORS

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE.....Tom Haggerty  
 THE YELLOWHAMMER.....Robert Reed  
 ALABAMA BIRD RECORDS.....Greg Jackson  
 NORTHWEST FLORIDA BIRD RECORDS....Bob Duncan  
 AOS ARCHIVES CURATOR.....Scot Duncan

### COMMITTEES

#### CONSERVATION

Greg Harber  
 Scot Duncan, Damien Simbeck

#### MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Larry Gardella  
 Stan Hamilton, Floyd Sherrod,  
 Mike Wilson

#### SLIDES

Tom Haggerty

#### BIRD RECORDS

Steve McConnell, *Secretary*  
 Andrew Haffenden, Jim Holmes,  
 Howard Horne, Steve McConnell,  
 Damien Simbeck, Dr. Bill Summerour,  
 John Trent, Jake Walker

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Anne G. Miller  
 Annabel Markle, Ken Hare

#### ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Tom Haggerty

#### THE YELLOWHAMMER

Robert Reed  
 Robin McDonald

#### CENSUSING

Greg Jackson  
 Bob Duncan, Geoff Hill,  
 Steve McConnell, Eric Soehren,  
 Dr. Bill Summerour

#### EDUCATION

Dr. Shirley Farrell  
 Carol Alford,  
 Stan and Dana Hamilton,  
 Don Self

#### FIELD TRIPS

Andrew Haffenden

#### DAN C. HOLLIMAN RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Greg Harber  
 Scot Duncan, Eric Soehren

#### MEETINGS

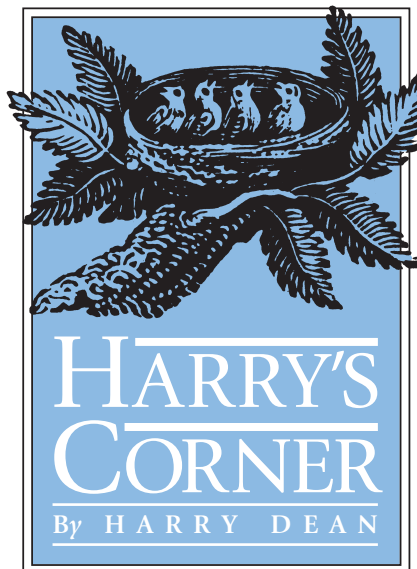
Kathryn Palmore  
 Susan Barrow, Priscilla Tubbs



AS THE WINTER BIRDS ARE DEPARTING, the summer birds are arriving. I saw my first Dickcissel of 2019 about two weeks ago (early May) at the Alabama A&M Farm. In addition to the Dickcissels, Grasshopper Sparrows, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Lark Sparrows, and Tree Swallows are making their presence known. The battles for nest boxes are over and some Eastern Bluebird young have already fledged. Perhaps their parents are thinking about a second brood. Summer birding is definitely coming to Alabama. Last summer proved to be a very rewarding birding time for me, and I am looking forward to a repeat this summer. I am glad I took my own advice about summer birding. I am still hearing talk of a summer count, and perhaps you have already participated in one.

In the Spring 2019 "Harry's Corner," I discussed setting individual birding goals. My simple goals were to be more diligent in maintaining a year list and to introduce three new people to birding. To date, I have been keeping up with bird sightings and recording them on my field card. I have six months remaining on that goal. I have introduced at least two new people to birding so far. Hopefully I have encouraged many more people to continue their birding activities through the field trips I have led as part of the North Alabama Birdwatchers Society. How are you doing on your goals? It is not too late to establish some.

I thought the spring meeting was a big success. We had great attendance, a great speaker, and great birds. There was some concern about attendance initially because it was Easter weekend. I think we had one of the highest registrations in a while. Our speaker, Dorian Anderson, delivered an inspiring talk on highlights from his big year on a bicycle. He discussed his motivation and planning for the trip as well as some adventures along the way. I would suggest that you read his blog and also look at some of his wonderful photographs. Despite the occasional rain and very windy conditions, the birds cooperated and the unofficial count at compilation was 191 species plus or minus one or two. There were two birds mentioned as having been seen although



there was no one at the compilation to verify them. It is important that when a bird is seen that is italicized or in bold on the checklist, details be provided and the sighting be well documented. This meeting was the first in several years to be held at the Shelby Center. While the logistics are more complicated (table rental, set up, tear down), we can accommodate 25-30 more people. Thanks to Kathryn Palmore, AOS event coordinator, and Lori Angelo from the Dauphin Island Sea Lab for helping to make this meeting a success. Also a big thanks to the folks who helped with the set up and tear down.

In the Winter 2018 *Yellowhammer*, I listed the specific purposes of AOS. It turns out that four of the eleven purposes are directly related to education. They are: (c) To engage in educational activities to advance knowledge of birds and their habitats; (d) To educate persons in schools and other organizations and groups about birds, natural resources, and conservation; (e) To encourage, and to engage in, activities directed toward the conservation of birds and protection of their habitats and to advance education about the need for, and means of, conservation of the same; (f) To acquire materials relating to birds and conservation for educational purposes. A silent auction was held at the spring meeting to aid the Education Committee in working to fulfill these purposes. Without your generous support and donations of auction items as well as your participation in the silent auction, the education outreach programs would not be as effective. One example of this work is the Flying Wild program. AOS received a note from Shelly Taliaferro, vice-president of the Environmental Education Association of Alabama, expressing appreciation for the AOS donation of Flying Wild curriculum guides for teachers. These guides are used in workshops for teachers around the state. In addition, Shirley Farrell, your Education Committee chair, has co-lead several of these workshops. Thanks to Shirley and her team for their work in this area.

As I close, I would like to take a few lines to thank Jean Folsom for her support and dedication to AOS. She served as the AOS secretary during my term, and I appreciate her taking the job in the first place. She has kept me out of

trouble and helped me make all those deadlines. She also did a great job of fielding email to AOS and making sure it got to the right person. If you didn't know, Jean is moving to Colorado, and by the time you read this she will probably

be unpacked and starting on her Colorado list. Hopefully, she will be able to make it back to Alabama and Dauphin Island occasionally for AOS meetings. Remember Jean, dues are due in January.

## Calls of a Morning Walk

**T**HE HOUSE IS QUIET; EVEN the cat is not asking to be fed yet. Dawn is still a few minutes away. The windows are closed against pollen. Looking out I do not see a bird, probably because it's still fairly dark. But when I step out, I am greeted with a jumble of bird songs. It's spring in Tallassee, and the birds are glad to see it. The air is crisp with a promise of spring warmth later.

The first bird I hear is an Eastern Phoebe, singing his name "phoebe, phoebe," rather monotonously but very musically; it is one of my favorite calls. The first birds I see are a pair of Eastern Bluebirds. They are quiet; perhaps they are still too sleepy to sing. The Northern Cardinals aren't too sleepy. A half dozen males, all in fresh bright red plumage, are singing "cheeer," or "cheer, right, right, right cheeer." They are all high in tall trees still mostly bare, but with buds bulging. Yesterday I watched a male feeding a female, so I know he has mating on his mind.

Walking down into the pasture, I hear the surprisingly loud "check" of the Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers. They have been everywhere for the past week as they pass through going north. A crow gives the alarmed "Ya'll come here quick!" call from out of sight over the hill. I see crows coming from two points of the compass, calling "I'm coming" as they fly in straight lines toward the caller, who has already been joined by others, judging from the sounds. I hear the



"kurr" or "durrellll" of a Red-bellied Woodpecker, and hear him drumming on a tree, but too many years as a field artilleryman have almost destroyed my ability to tell directions of sounds, so I never spotted him. I wonder how many other birds I miss because my ears aren't what they used to be.

A Pine Warbler gives his simple, yet beautiful trill.

As I round a copse of trees and come in sight of the pond, I see a Great Blue Heron with something huge in its mouth. Squatting down behind a bush, I watch as the heron tries to decide what to do with a fully grown bullfrog. He stands with his feet in the water and the frog dangling from either side of his mouth. Every few seconds he dips the frog in the water and resumes his posture of wondering. He had seen me when I rounded the corner, and not

entirely comfortable, he finally flies off with the frog. I hope he manages to get it down, but I have no idea how.

And always the "phoebe, phoebe" in the background.

An Eastern Towhee called "breee!" from dense undergrowth near the pond. American Robins flew overhead in a continuous stream. I don't know where they are going every morning. Some stop at our neighbor's house, but they almost never come to our yard. Mourning Doves coo from the trees and flush noisily when I approach.

The sun's up now and the sky is robin's egg blue; time for breakfast and some coffee before I get to work. What a delightful way to start a day. I'm richer for it.



AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 19–21, 2019

# AOS Spring Meeting Report

By GREG HARBER, KEN HARE, &amp; GEOFF HILL



STRONG STORMS, HIGH WINDS AND A SPECTACULAR lightning display heralded the onset of the spring meeting on Dauphin Island on Thursday night, but by the time the meeting officially commenced on Friday morning all that remained were cloudy skies and high winds from the northwest. Often, we birders hope that such conditions precipitate a fallout, and while we had good bird diversity during the weekend (191 species reported at Sunday's compilation) the number of individual birds for many species was low.

Following registration, Friday night we held our customary potluck supper and members photography show, featuring spectacular birds captured on camera by Bala Chennupati, Harry Dean, Dick Bruer, Bill McAllister, Geoff Hill, and guest speaker Dorian Anderson.

By Saturday the winds began to subside somewhat, making the birding a little more enjoyable and less of an endurance contest. Andrew Haffenden led a contingent to Pelican Bay Peninsula while Dorian Anderson and Geoff Hill shepherded the troops exploring the island including the airport, Audubon Sanctuary, Goat Trees Reserve, and the Shell Mounds Park. Certainly, the multiple Golden-winged (Shell Mound Park) and Cerulean Warblers (Goat Trees Reserve) were enjoyed by many people strolling the paths in those respective island hotspots while American Avocets adorned in breeding plumage were spotted on Pelican Island. Perhaps the best bird for the weekend, though, was a lone Glaucous Gull that was viewed by many people as it loafed on the jetty behind the Sea Lab Estuarium.

Jennie Stowers and her dedicated crew hosted our lunch on Saturday, with Jennie providing the main dishes and the rest of us providing the tasty side dishes and yummy desserts! Each year we enjoy this opportunity to visit with old friends and make new acquaintances while taking in the pleasant view of the adjoining Mississippi Sound. Even more special this year was the Painted Bunting feeding in the lot across the street!

The banquet on Saturday night was a well-attended affair, featuring a delicious seafood spread and my personal favorite—Bananas Foster. The silent auction benefitting the AOS Education Committee's outreach endeavors yielded well over \$1,000—a testament to the value AOS members attribute to educating our young people and training those who teach them. Thank you, Dr. Shirley Farrell, for all your efforts!

And speaking of youth, we wish to take a moment to acknowledge the college students who were in attendance at the meeting or visiting the island during the weekend. It was a reassuring sight to see you enjoying the birds with your classmates and friends. We hope you'll be back—we think you'll find that friendships forged while birding together will bring you a lifetime of good memories.

Saturday evening's keynote speaker, Dorian Anderson, proved to be entertaining and inspirational—for some, at least! Dorian's engaging presentation style and enthusiasm for the birds were guaranteed to please everyone, as he spoke about his 2014 Big Year adventure in which he observed 618 species while logging over 18,000 miles on his bicycle traveling across these United States. He endured the freezing temperatures of winter in the northeast, the swamps in the humid south, the desolation of the breadth of Texas and the southwest, the Pacific coast and the high Rockies—all in one amazing adventure! We're not sure we were inspired to make a similar journey, but keeping an eBird list for areas visited on biking adventures is an idea worth pursuing.

Easter sunrise services at Fort Gaines greeted those who were up early and wished to partake of this unique experience in a historic setting, while others extended the slow island pace to their birding—revisiting some island hotspots to view those aforementioned colorful warblers. The Sunday morning field trip visited Blakeley Mud Lakes, where members found 260 American Avocets, almost two-dozen Black-necked Stilts, and a threesome of Painted Buntings. But the highlight of the trip was a pair of Upland Sandpipers at Battleship Memorial Park that had been spotted earlier by Larry Gardella.

Compilation was held at the Goat Tree Reserve, and we were all pleasantly surprised when the figure of 191 species observed for the weekend was announced. Summer will soon be upon us, and while it will undoubtedly be hot, there is still a bounty of birds awaiting you.

AOS SPRING MEETING, APRIL 19–21, 2019

## *Minutes of the Spring 2019 Meeting of the AOS Board of Directors*

By JEAN FOLSOM, *Secretary*



HE AOS BOARD OF DIRECTORS MET ON APRIL 20, 2019 at the Shelby Center, Dauphin Island Sea Lab, 101 Bienville Boulevard, Dauphin Island, Alabama.

Call to order (1:45 p.m.) Meeting time moved from 3:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**ACTION:** Minutes of Winter 2019 meeting were approved unanimously.

### TREASURER'S REPORT—JOAN DIXON

- For the first three months of 2019 AOS net income is \$952.51.
- AOS has \$5,407.17 in unrestricted funds and \$13,701.29 in restricted funds in net assets.
- AOS has \$33,066.06 in cash at PNC checking and a \$28,472.82 CD with the maturation date of 1/27/2020.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT—HARRY DEAN

The fall meeting will be at the Church of the Island (old Methodist Fellowship Hall). Tables will be available.

Kathryn Palmore suggested we consider not having a pot luck dinner on future Friday nights and replace it with a catered mixer. She stated several reasons for this suggestion:

- Minimize the need for volunteers to set up for pot luck.

- Eliminate the inconvenience to out of town members bringing and preparing food.

- Minimize the amount of garbage and plastics.

**ACTION:** A motion was made by Andrew Haffenden and seconded by Bob Reed that AOS discontinue having pot luck suppers on Friday night of the Dauphin Island meetings (spring and fall) and replace them with catered events. Motion passed unanimously.

### MEMBERSHIP—LARRY GARDELLA

AOS has 20 new members, possibly as a result of the recent membership contest. Larry stated that a winner of the contest needs to be chosen. He also stated that ideally, we should get 10-12 new members each year.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS—KEN HARE

- Ken Hare reported that eBird featured our AOS project for three days as a lead item on their website.
- Pictures are needed for the rotating AOS featured photographer and need to be Alabama resident birds, not migrating birds.
- May 4 is Global Big Day, and eBird is sending a group of birders to bird all the Gulf coast on that day.

### MEETINGS—KATHRYN PALMORE

Kathryn suggested we keep the meeting at the Shelby Center of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab with the church as a backup. The Sea Lab gives a \$450 discount to non-profits for using the Shelby Center. They have their own caterer which would be convenient to use.

### FIELD TRIPS—ANDREW HAFFENDEN

Andrew stated that the new system of having field trip participants contact Andrew before attending the trip, is working and that about 80% of participants did so this meeting.

### DAN C. HOLLIMAN RESEARCH—GREG HARBER

\$2000 has been paid to this year's grant recipient.

### NEW BUSINESS

Damien Simbeck suggested that AOS consider combining our winter meeting with the Winter Bird Festival in Paris, Tennessee. Discussion was held.

**ACTION:** A motion was made and passed that we not combine the winter meeting with the Paris, Tennessee festival, mainly due to the travel distance involved for coastal members.

### FINANCIAL—JOAN DIXON

Joan reminded the board that the \$28,472 CD comes due in January, and that the board needs to decide what to do

with it. Suggestions included using it to help acquire property on Dauphin Island and to challenge AOS members to match this amount with donations.

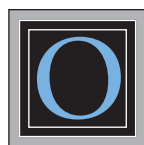
**ACTION:** A committee was formed to decide what to do with the CD funds. Members include Andrew Haffenden, Anne Miller, Greg Harber and Ken Hare.

**ACTION:** A motion was made by Andrew Haffenden for AOS to begin sending digital as well as paper copies of *The Yellowhammer* to all current AOS members who only receive the paper version, so that they will get used to receiving digital copies. The motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

## *eBird Team Sets Birding Record for Alabama*

By KEN HARE



ON GLOBAL BIG DAY (MAY 4), THE CORNELL LABORATORY of Ornithology dispatched teams of staff members to bird in three counties along the Gulf of Mexico—one in Florida, one in Texas, and one in Mobile County, Alabama.

The Cornell Lab's Team Sapsucker finished 24 hours of Big Day birding with a cumulative list of 242 species in the three states, exceeding its goal of 225 species.

Team Alabama consisted of four outstanding birders, led by Chris Wood. He was joined by Andrew Spencer, Kathi Borgmann, and Tayler Brooks. The team did an outstanding job on the Saturday Global Big Day, and I'll write more about it below. But first I want to write about another birding field trip three of the four members of Team Alabama took while in the state—in rural Washington County, just north of Mobile County.

On the Tuesday prior to Saturday's Global Big Day, three members of Team Alabama (Chris, Kathi and Andrew) joined seven members of the Alabama Ornithological Society for a morning of birding in

Washington County. The other Alabama birders were Larry Gardella, Sue Moske, Barry Fleming, Judy and Don Self, Frank Farrell, and me.

The joint birding effort was in recognition of the Alabama Ornithological Society's 20-month effort to increase eBird records in 16 rural Alabama counties that were dramatically under-reported on eBird. Washington County is one of the original 16 counties targeted by the AOS/eBird Project, which

managed to raise the number of species in each county to more than 150 and the number of complete eBird checklists to a minimum of 150 in each county.

The effort actually got under way the evening before when four of the AOS members heard a Barn Owl over a field near a marsh in northeast Washington County.

The Team Alabama members from eBird met the AOS birders at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, and the team split into three groups to cover more of the county. By the



*Larry Gardella on left, and Chris Wood, eBird staff member, on right, plan the morning's field trips. (Photo by Ken Hare)*

end of the morning, the group had raised the number of species reported on eBird from Washington County from 158 to 165, adding the Barn Owl, a Philadelphia Vireo, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Swainson's Warblers, an Ovenbird, a Northern Waterthrush, and a Solitary Sandpiper.

The group got together at Jake's in Chatom for lunch after the birding to share notes, get better acquainted and to enjoy down-home cooking, the highlight of which was breaded fried potatoes.

It was awesome to get to bird with these members of Team Alabama, each of whom was an outstanding birder. So I was not surprised when they had a record day the following Saturday for Global Big Day in Mobile County.

Team Alabama recorded a whopping 191 species in Mobile County on Global Big Day, despite—and partially because of—a line of thunderstorms that disrupted birding for all three of the eBird teams birding that day on the Gulf.

Cornell's All About Birds website explained the weather's impact this way: "At different points throughout the day, all three teams endured the same bad weather—a major front of ferocious thunderstorms and heavy downpours that turned out to be exactly what the teams needed. One key to big numbers on a Gulf Coast Big Day is migrant songbirds—but these species had been thin on the ground in the days leading up to the event. Typically, these birds take off from the Yucatán Peninsula in the evening and fly all night, some 600 miles, to reach the U.S. the next afternoon. Prevailing southerly winds in springtime often mean the birds can fly far inland before they land.

"But on Big Day itself, bad weather forced migrants to battle heavy rain and north winds, leading many of the birds to land exhausted on the first strip of coast they could see. Team Sapsucker was there to greet them, on St. George Island, Florida; Dauphin Island, Alabama; and High Island, Texas. All told, the three teams tallied more than 1,900 individual migrant songbirds during the day, helping to push their team species totals to 131 for Team Florida, 191 for Team Alabama, and 193 for Team Texas." See the full report at [www.allaboutbirds.org/bigday2019/](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/bigday2019/)

The first bird of the 24-hour span was an Eastern Screech-Owl at 2:22 a.m.; the last for the combined list was a Green-winged Teal at 4:56 p.m.

AOS member Larry Gardella said the 191 species recorded on Global Big Day by Team Alabama set a record for the state

for birds seen in one county in one day, and is the second highest one-day total ever recorded in the state.

"The team was lucky to have such a good fallout on Dauphin Island in the afternoon, but mainly they did a great and incredibly efficient job finding the birds in Mobile County," Gardella said. "I am very glad to have been able to meet three members of the team and bird with them in Washington County just north of Mobile a few days before the count."

So congratulations to Team Alabama, and thank you for allowing AOS members to be part of your visit to Alabama.

### *Welcome New Members!*

Charles Boley • Don Bowsher • Sue Buckingham  
Edlyn Burch • Ming Chang • Joe Copeland  
Tammy Devine • Dustin Dixon • Monet Gomes  
Rusty and Raye Gregory • Kenzy Hayes • Lianne Koczur  
Susan Ledlow • Patty Liddell • Joan Marie  
Macy McKinnon • Emma Mires • Brian Peters  
Daneen Postell • Hannah Powell • Ivory Russell  
Daniel Sellers • Mallory Warren • Helen Zagona

### *New Life Members*

Michelle and David M. Downs • Shirley Wayland

### *Upcoming Meetings*

**FALL MEETING**—October 11-13, 2019

Dauphin Island, Alabama

**WINTER MEETING**—January 24-26, 2020

Location TBA

**SPRING MEETING**—April 17-19, 2020

Dauphin Island, Alabama

### *Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions*

Fall 2019

August 10, 2019

Winter 2019

November 10, 2019



## 2019 AOS Spring Meeting Compilation List Dauphin Island, Alabama, April 19–21

**N**OTEWORTHY BIRDS OF THE WEEKEND INCLUDED GLAUCOUS Gull and Warbling Vireo. Count total was 191 species.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck  
Canada Goose  
Blue-winged Teal  
Northern Shoveler  
Gadwall  
Mallard  
Mottled Duck  
Redhead  
White-winged Scoter  
Red-breasted Merganser  
Rock Pigeon  
Eurasian Collared-Dove  
White-winged Dove  
Mourning Dove  
Yellow-billed Cuckoo  
Common Nighthawk  
Chimney Swift  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Clapper Rail  
Virginia Rail  
Sora  
Purple Gallinule  
Common Gallinule  
Black-necked Stilt  
American Avocet  
American Oystercatcher  
Black-bellied Plover  
American Golden-Plover  
Snowy Plover  
Wilson's Plover  
Semipalmated Plover  
Piping Plover  
Killdeer  
Upland Sandpiper  
Whimbrel  
Ruddy Turnstone  
Red Knot  
Stilt Sandpiper  
Sanderling  
Dunlin  
Least Sandpiper  
Semipalmated Sandpiper  
Short-billed Dowitcher  
Long-billed Dowitcher  
Spotted Sandpiper  
Lesser Yellowlegs  
Willet  
Greater Yellowlegs  
Laughing Gull

Ring-billed Gull  
Herring Gull  
*Glaucous Gull*  
Least Tern  
Gull-billed Tern  
Caspian Tern  
Common Tern  
Forster's Tern  
Royal Tern  
Sandwich Tern  
Black Skimmer  
Common Loon  
Magnificent Frigatebird  
Northern Gannet  
Double-crested Cormorant  
American White Pelican  
Brown Pelican  
Least Bittern  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Snowy Egret  
Little Blue Heron  
Tricolored Heron  
Reddish Egret  
Cattle Egret  
Green Heron  
Black-crowned Night-Heron  
White Ibis  
Glossy Ibis  
Black Vulture  
Turkey Vulture  
Osprey  
Swallow-tailed Kite  
Mississippi Kite  
Bald Eagle  
Northern Harrier  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Cooper's Hawk  
Red-shouldered Hawk  
Broad-winged Hawk  
Red-tailed Hawk  
Great-horned Owl  
Barred Owl  
Belted Kingfisher  
Red-headed Woodpecker  
Red-bellied Woodpecker  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  
Downy Woodpecker  
Pileated Woodpecker

American Kestrel  
Merlin  
Peregrine Falcon  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Acadian Flycatcher  
Great Crested Flycatcher  
Eastern Kingbird  
Loggerhead Shrike  
White-eyed Vireo  
Yellow-throated Vireo  
Blue-headed Vireo  
*Warbling Vireo*  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Fish Crow  
Purple Martin  
Tree Swallow  
N. Rough-winged Swallow  
Bank Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Barn Swallow  
Carolina Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown-headed Nuthatch  
House Wren  
Marsh Wren  
Carolina Wren  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Eastern Bluebird  
Veery  
Gray-cheeked Thrush  
Swainson's Thrush  
Hermit Thrush  
Wood Thrush  
American Robin  
Gray Catbird  
Brown Thrasher  
Northern Mockingbird  
European Starling  
Cedar Waxwing  
House Sparrow  
House Finch  
American Goldfinch  
Eastern Towhee  
Chipping Sparrow  
Nelson's Sparrow  
Seaside Sparrow  
Lincolns Sparrow  
White-throated Sparrow  
Yellow-breasted Chat  
Bobolink  
Orchard Oriole  
Baltimore Oriole  
Red-winged Blackbird

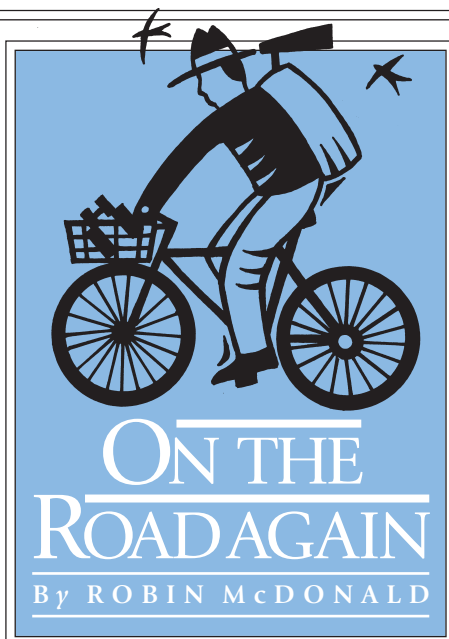
Brown-headed Cowbird  
Common Grackle  
Boat-tailed Grackle  
Ovenbird  
Worm-eating Warbler  
Northern Waterthrush  
Golden-winged Warbler  
Blue-winged Warbler  
Black and White Warbler  
Prothonotary Warbler  
Swainson's Warbler  
Tennessee Warbler  
Kentucky Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Hooded Warbler  
American Redstart  
Cerulean Warbler  
Northern Parula  
Bay-breasted Warbler  
Blackburnian Warbler  
Yellow Warbler  
Chestnut-sided Warbler  
Blackpoll Warbler  
Palm Warbler  
Pine Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Prairie Warbler  
Black-throated Green Warbler  
Summer Tanager  
Scarlet Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Blue Grosbeak  
Indigo Bunting  
Painted Bunting  
Dickcissel

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 **bold-faced**, 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.

## Birding in Bali

**I**N DECEMBER 2018, I WAS lucky enough to be invited to accompany my brother- and sister-in-law, Walter Bennett, and Susie Blandin, on a trip to the Indonesian island of Bali. Bali is famous for its artisans, and Walter and Susie, who live near Palmer, Alaska, employ a variety of Balinese carvers to create art works for the Alaska tourist and fine-art trades from raw materials Walter provides them, such as moose antler and fossil ivory. Twice a year they travel to Bali to meet with the carvers, and to pack and ship the finished pieces back to Alaska, so this was primarily a business trip rather than a wildlife viewing trip. Not being needed for business, I had a lot of free time during the two-week trip to explore the island and do a certain amount of birding, although on a somewhat limited basis.

Bali is an island of only 2,230 square miles, less than five percent the land area of Alabama, yet with a population of more than four million. It is located to the east of the much larger island of Java, and is unique in Indonesia in that it has a majority (87 percent) Hindu population. It has become a popular tourist destination since the 1980s due to its beauty, the friendliness of its people, and its relative affordability.



I began my trip on December 6, flying to meet Walter and Susie in Los Angeles, and flying with them from there, via Taipei, to Denpasar, the Balinese capital and largest city. We were met at the airport by I Nyoman Riyun, Walter's driver for the past 20 years. From Denpasar we drove to the city of Ubud, considered to be the cultural heart of Bali. Our destination was the Pura Asri Villa, in the village of Nyuh Kuning on the edge of Ubud, where we would stay.

Pura Asri Villa is not a traditional hotel. Instead of a single building with rooms, it is a large walled garden with paths leading to the individual guest houses. The garden features lush tropical vegetation and a variety of birds. The book I was using, *Birds of Bali* by Victor Mason, is not really a field guide, more a picture book with long descriptions, but it did the job. The most common bird at the hotel was the Yellow-vented Bulbul, a noisy, active bird with a dark stripe on its head that it raises as a slightly ragged crest when excited, and a sulphur yellow vent under its tail. Also common, and ubiquitous, was the Spotted Dove, very similar in size and color to the Mourning Dove, with a cluster of small black-edged white spots on the back of its neck. Present in the garden on several





OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: *The Yellow-vented Bulbul is one of the common birds of Bali.* OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: *A Javan Pond-Heron prowls the edge of a rice paddy.* TOP: *A Long-tailed Macaque in front of an ancient temple in the Ubud Monkey Forest.* ABOVE: *A Bali Starling at the Bali Bird Park in Ubud.* (Photos by Robin McDonald)

days was a pair of Olive-backed Sunbirds, the male with a bright yellow belly and a deep green-blue-indigo iridescent throat and face, feeding in the manner of a hummingbird. Other visitors included Javan and Scaly-breasted Munia, small finches also commonly seen around rice fields. The Scaly-breasted Munia has recently been spotted in the Gulf states including Alabama. Above the hotel, and everywhere in Bali, the sky is full of swallows and swifts, primarily Barn Swallows (slightly different from ours, with a white belly), Pacific Swallows, and White-bellied Swiftlets.

Our first two days were spent visiting the carvers, most of them in the town of Tampaksiring. The traffic in Bali takes

some getting used to even as a passenger. Small motorcycles and scooters, often with entire families aboard or towering loads of cargo, outnumber cars, vans, and trucks about 20 to one, and weave in and out, passing at will on the two-lane roads. Along the way we passed picturesque rice fields, attracting flocks of egrets and herons. The most striking was the Javan Pond-Heron, with a rusty head and neck, black back, and white wings. Lunch at an outdoor restaurant surrounded by rice fields produced a lovely rail, the White-breasted Waterhen, with snowy face and throat, grey belly, black back and wings and bright russet under its upturned tail.

The next morning, Walter and I visited one of Bali's best-known attractions, the Ubud Monkey Forest, located conveniently only about a 20-minute walk from the hotel. The forest is home to about 800 Long-tailed Macaques divided into several groups spread throughout the park. The monkeys are used to humans and can be quite bold if they think you have food, so it is advised not to bring food into the park. The forest provides an exotic tropical backdrop with winding paved paths, many stone carvings, and three ancient Hindu temples, believed to have been built around 1350.

One morning, I signed up for a field trip with Bali Bird Walks, led by a very knowledgeable birder named Su Sumadi. The walk lasted three hours, mostly through farmland on the edge of Ubud. Several interesting birds were seen, including a small warbler, the Zitting Cisticola; a Bar-winged Prinia, with a long, erect tail and white wing-bars; and a tantalizing distant glimpse of the large, spectacular Java Kingfisher in flight, dark brown, with iridescent blue wings and a bright red beak.

Also worthwhile was a trip to the Bali Bird Park, a mixed bag of birds wandering freely, walk-through aviaries, and cages of varying sizes. An aviary devoted to Balinese birds included several beautiful Bali Starlings, the only bird unique to the island. Snow-white with bright blue skin around its eyes, it became the target of exotic bird collectors and is now extinct in the wild. Also on view were some birds of paradise.

My final birding destination was a village named Petulu which has become a heronry, and a tourist destination, during the breeding season, attracting several species of egret and the Javan Pond-Heron, nesting and roosting by the hundreds in the large trees along the main street. I saw mainly Cattle Egrets, which are much more brightly and extensively colored in breeding plumage than the American variety. All in all, a satisfying end to a semi-birding trip!



ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
88838 TALLASSEE HIGHWAY  
TALLASSEE, ALABAMA 36078

AOS is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Federal EIN: 63-1229959

**THE YELLOWHAMMER**

VOLUME 39, NO. 2 • SUMMER 2019

EDITOR.....Bob Reed  
DESIGN.....Robin McDonald  
ILLUSTRATIONS.....Annabel Markle

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**

Greg Harber  
Ken Hare  
Greg Jackson  
Ken Ward

*The Yellowhammer*, the newsletter of the Alabama Ornithological Society, is published four times a year. Editorial Office: 88838 Tallassee Highway, Tallassee, AL 36078. Send articles to be considered for publication to: BobReed1987@gmail.com. Subscriptions to *The Yellowhammer* and *Alabama Birdlife* are included in the AOS annual membership dues. Single copies \$2.00. Complimentary copies available for review and promotional purposes.

Address correspondence concerning membership to:  
Joan Dixon, Treasurer  
1059 Palmetto Street,  
Mobile, AL 36604  
e-mail: joanwsdixon@gmail.com

Annual Membership:  
Student: \$10 • Individual: \$25 • Family: \$40  
Sustaining: \$50 • Life (individual): \$350  
Life (family): \$550



**AOS ONLINE**

<http://www.aosbirds.org>



**Join AOS on  
Facebook**

**ALABAMA WILDLIFE CENTER**

<http://www.awrc.org>

**BIRMINGHAM AUDUBON SOCIETY**

<http://www.birminghamaudubon.org>

**DAUPHIN ISLAND BIRD SANCTUARIES**

<http://www.coastalbirding.org>

**FRANCIS M. WESTON AUDUBON SOCIETY (PENSACOLA)**

<http://www.fmwaudubon.org>

**MOBILE BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY**

<http://www.mobilebayaudubon.org>

**ALABAMA WILDBIRD CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**

<http://www.bamabirds.com>

**SOUTHEASTERN RAPTOR REHAB CENTER**

<http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu/raptor>

**TENNESSEE VALLEY AUDUBON**

<http://www.tvas.org>