

THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 42, NO. 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUMMER 2022

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

FOUNDED 1952



3
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN
by Barry Fleming

5
AOS 2022 SPRING MEETING
SPRING MEETING REPORT
*by Barry Fleming, Larry Gardella,
Geoff Hill, and Ken Hare*

IN THIS ISSUE

7
AOS 2022 SPRING MEETING
SPRING MEETING
COMPILATION LIST

Cover: Great Blue Heron, DI Airport by Robin McDonald

8
MINUTES OF THE SPRING
AOS BOARD MEETING
by Pat Reed

9
ON THE ROAD AGAIN
GULL FROLIC 2022
by Geoff Hill

ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....Barry Fleming
 VICE PRESIDENT.....Drew Haffenden
 SECRETARY.....Pat Reed
 TREASURER.....Shelly Taliaferro
 IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT.....Geoff Hill

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.....Eric Soehren
 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*
 Ben Garmon, Drew Haffenden,
 Howard Horne, Damien Simbeck,
 Collin Stempien, Bill Summerour

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dee Gertler
 Annabel Markle, Anne G. Miller, Ken Hare

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Eric Soehren

THE YELLOWHAMMER

Robert Reed
 Robin McDonald

CENSUSING

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

EDUCATION

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

FIELD TRIPS

Drew Haffenden

DAN C. HOLLIMAN RESEARCH FUND

Greg Harber
 Scot Duncan, Eric Soehren

MEETINGS

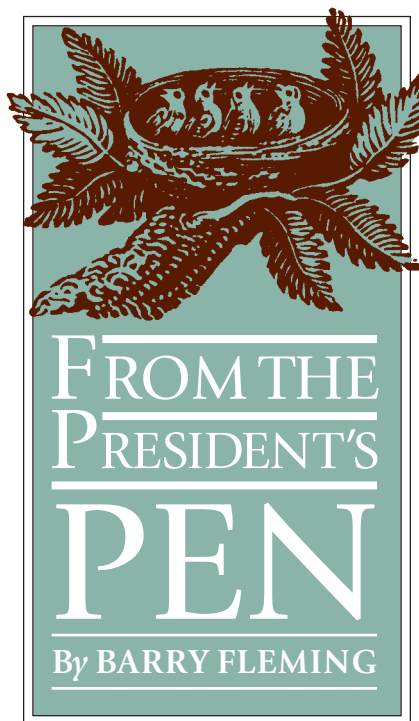
Patsy Russo
 Kathryn Palmore, Grace Sims

P AINTED BUNTING A HUNDRED feet to the left, a Cape May Warbler to the right, and Swallow-tailed Kites circling overhead made it difficult to establish order at the 2022 spring meeting's high noon compilation at the Goat Trees. After the pandemic interruption to in-person meetings, I was happy to see this disorder; old and new friends throwing time to the wind, still buzzing with "live" human interaction after three days on the island. The unpredictability of this pandemic has reminded me not to take for granted each opportunity to gather in person. The energy at the meeting was represented by many large smiles. Please make your plans now to join us on Dauphin Island this fall, October 14–16.

Our keynote speaker was Joseph Duff, co-founder and one of the lead pilots of Operation Migration, and now executive director of WildAid Canada, a conservation organization preserving wild areas internationally. His presentation was full of action videos of flying with the Whooping Cranes and stellar photographs of both the good and difficult parts of establishing the eastern flyway. The quality of projection and size of the screen at Shelby Center is a vast improvement and added much to Joe's illustrated presentation.

My takeaway is that Operation Migration was chock full of creativity and innovation, flexibility, and hope. At every juncture, no one had ever done anything like this before. It took a crazy sculptor to invent an ultralight plane that flies as slowly as cranes. It took humor to climb into a crane suit every day. Having to sleep in a pig barn for three days because of weather, and that's just where the cranes decided to land, was par for the course.

Most of the cranes flown down by Joe and his crew have over the years decided that, although Florida is nice, Alabama has all they need for a successful winter stay. Again, driving home the point that this project was indeed a collaboration between our species and that of the Whooping Crane. Joe coming to Alabama to tell the story in the state where the cranes have largely chosen to winter, in a way closes a circle. The



outcome of the eastern flyway is still uncertain. Like Joe, we will continue to hope.

The keynote talk was attended by nearly one hundred, so it was good to be back in the spacious Dauphin Island Sea Lab's Shelby Center. The renovations since our last visit were many. In addition to a large screen and state-of-the-art projection, we enjoyed padded chairs. If you attended meetings years back, you realize how significant of an improvement this is. Between the silent auction and the banquet, we used nearly all their new tables. Lori Angelo, of DISL, made our use of the space easy and efficient. Our fall meeting is scheduled here. We hope to use the Shelby Center for our fall and spring meetings in the future.

As always, thanks to Gulf Breeze Motel for offering accommodations to the key-

note speaker. Thanks go to Hal Smith of Wild Birds Unlimited Auburn for the door prize. Wilton's Catering once again prepared a delicious spread. Chef Wilton always knows the right time to square up behind the Bananas Foster table and start serving it himself. People often tap me on the shoulder and say, "Don't change a thing with the menu." And I, myself, would like to take credit for bringing back wine and beer, but it was all Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries (DIBS), who reported receiving many donations at the beverage table that will go to help preserve bird habitat on the island in perpetuity.

Shirley Farrell again did a masterful job organizing the Silent Auction, resulting in over \$1,300 for the many activities of the Education Committee. Nothing makes me happier than to see the friendliest bird group in the country become totally ruthless in outbidding each other in the minutes just before the Silent Auction ends. If you noticed how smooth the social and banquet went, it was due to the skills of Patsy Russo, who handled all aspects of organizing the meeting. Thanks to Patsy and Geoff Hill who presented great information and photographs at the social on Friday night. Folks seem to enjoy Skinner's large, steamed shrimp bowl and light sides at the social, and the donation jar covered the costs.

Jenny Stowers once again provided an outstanding lunch for all on Saturday at her beautiful home on the bay. Deli-



AOS president Barry Fleming (standing), conducts the spring meeting compilation under the Goat Trees. (Robin McDonald)

cious gumbo is central but many other food options and drinks were available. Her organizational management can be witnessed in how all of her helpers seem to be choreographed in their movements. The massive wrap around porch is a great spot to view the bay. Where else can one find a group of a hundred birders eating bowls of gumbo with the occasionally shout from the crowd, "Frigatebird!" or "Swallow-tailed Kite!" It was nice that she invited the Mississippi State University bird class to join us. We are a giving society.

This write-up was more meeting report than anything else, but rest assured we have committees working this summer and will have good things to report this fall. One initiative the membership committee is working on is placing our visibility out there in new ways that might attract young members and members of new communities. So, continue to think about inviting all that have a budding interest in birds.

This meeting did have a good number of new members, guests, and students who, with the help of the old guard, discovered many new things about birds and the island. Even after the compilation some Society members were still beating the bush to share birds. Drew Haffenden was patiently waiting to show a gentleman from Scotland a Painted Bunting. I met them later and the man was beaming, his accent rumbling about the experience. Chuck Estes and I were showing a young, bicycle-birding couple from Wisconsin their lifer Swainson's Warber, saying things like, "You usually

don't see one this close and in the open," and "Wait until you tell your new birding friends back home." The young man let us know how amazing it was to be shown these birds. Then someone else came up asking about another bird and Lola, like a good third-base coach, directed Chuck to peel off and take the newcomer to their destination.

It then hit me that our Society is largely about giving. Give to the auction and school children are educated about birds; give to DIBS and more land is purchased for the birds; give to AOS and we continue bringing guest speakers and other measures

to support birds, bird education and conservation. Some of us old timers may forget what it feels like to see a sought-after bird for the first time, but when you witness it, like I did at this meeting, it becomes clear it is better to give than to receive.

Membership Committee

AOS IS TEMPORARILY EXPANDING THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE to make a drive for new members. One part of the effort is focused on attracting new younger members, and the committee will include some young folks. Another part involves working with some different partners. One new partner is South Alabama Land Trust (SALT), which works with DIBS to buy property for conservation. SALT has moved its Birdfest fund-raising event so that it no longer can conflict with the AOS fall meeting, allowing interested birders to attend both events. This year, it will run from September 28 to October 1. Jon Dunn is their keynote speaker, and he will also be one of the leaders on several of the trips. A third part of the membership drive could be our personal efforts—each and every member of AOS—to talk up AOS and invite friends and acquaintances, especially those who are interested in birds. One easy way is to keep the email where you received your *eYellowhammer* in your phone. If someone shows interest, forward them the email. That way they have a *Yellowhammer*, and they have the membership information on the inside back cover.

—Larry Gardella, Membership Committee Chair

AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 15–17, 2022

AOS Spring Meeting Report

By BARRY FLEMING, LARRY GARDELLA, GEOFF HILL, KEN HARE



INETEEN OF US MET FRIDAY MORNING AT SPLINTER Hill Bog for the start of an AOS field trip. From the parking lot we quickly heard two Bachman's Sparrows singing. We walked out to the road to get a good look at the trees from which one of the songs seemed to be coming. It was approximately eight feet up from the ground. We all got to watch it kick back its head and sing. After enjoying the pitcher plants and one sundew, we walked into the woods a bit, and one of the participants said there was another sparrow up in a tree. This Bachman's was even closer than the first.

We then drove down to Meaher State Park where Anhingas soared overhead, a Great Blue Heron ate a frog, Common Gallinules hugged the shore, a Least Bittern flew long enough for everyone to see it, and three different terns flew overhead—including a group of Leasts. Near the end of our stay on the boardwalk, a flock of nine dowitchers flew by us. They were probably Long-billed, but we left them as dowitcher sp.

We ended the day looking at terns and gulls on what is usually an island off the northeast corner of 5 Rivers.

We had a beautiful day for a beach walk on Saturday morning. Attendees met Drew Haffenden at the Pier to Nowhere at 6:30 a.m. As we gathered at the start of the pier, we were treated to three American Avocets circling over the bay. Behind the avocets swooped a flock of Black Skimmers. A couple of Sedge Wrens sang persistently from the grassy vegetation under the pier, and Sora and Clapper Rails called. It was an auspicious start.

For the past decade or so, viewing most of the shorebirds on Pelican Island required a beach stroll east for a mile or more. Recent sand movement has pushed the birds to a small lagoon right off the end of the pier, so we were on birds almost immediately. A hundred feet from the gently breaking waves, we gathered to have Drew take us bird by bird down the flock of shore and wading birds. He explained not only the traditional field marks to study on the birds but also key elements to bird identification that are often not empha-

sized. What is the bird doing? How far has it progressed in spring molt? What is the habitat? During Drew's engaging lecture, we were treated to a nice mix of birds including Snowy and Piping Plovers, Reddish Egret, Gull-billed and Sandwich Terns plus many more Dauphin Island beach regulars. It was a fantastic morning of beach birding, and I think everyone learned a lot.

Barry Fleming led an island hop, touring the hotspots of Dauphin Island. The first stop was the airport. The birds seemed to take turns showing themselves, which was great for newer birders as almost everyone got to see each bird and hear about status, distribution, and identification characteristics.

Fly-overs observed in the sky included Belted Kingfisher, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and Mottled Duck. Below, on the water, we saw several phases of Common Loon, a lone, late Lesser Scaup and the visual prize of the morning, two Horned Grebes in breeding plumage of golden horns and carmine red eyes above a chestnut colored neck. Everyone got to see the birds at close range through the scope. Clapper Rails sounded off in the marsh, and one chick was visible from the Osprey nest. Nelson's Sparrow and Seaside Sparrows were unusually accommodating as several were observed through the scopes, but for only a few people at a time. They don't hold still long.

Later at the Shell Mounds, slow was a word some used, but again the birds seemed to show themselves one by one. Several species of vireo and warbler were seen, ending with good looks at an Ovenbird and Swainson's Warbler. A pair of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks loafed around the small pond behind the mounds.

Jenny Stowers' lunch gathering could be considered a field trip. It provided Magnificent Frigatebird, Swallow-tailed Kite, Bronzed Cowbird and seafood gumbo. Thank you, Jenny.

At the Saturday evening banquet, Joe Duff, a leader in the effort to get endangered Whooping Cranes to migrate from Wisconsin to Florida using ultralight aircraft, outlined how



A Reddish Egret strides purposefully through a flock of Short-billed Dowitchers on the edge of the small lagoon conveniently located near the end of the pier. (Robin McDonald)

he became involved with trying to save one of the most endangered bird species in the United States.

To get the cranes to follow the open-air ultralight aircraft, handlers dressed in suits designed to look like adult Whooping Cranes and then flew wearing those suits. Duff recalled once while wearing a suit having an adult crane mistake him for another adult. The crane started to display, and when Duff responded, he and the crane went through the elaborate process by which the birds establish dominance. See the President's article for more.

The field trip Sunday was to Blakeley Mud Lakes. As the group was in route, Larry Gardella was over at Battleship Park seeing if the Saturday evening rains had made enough big puddles in the fields to attract shorebirds. And they had. He called Geoff Hill and told him to get everybody to swing over to Battleship Park and delay the start of the walk on Mud Lakes.

We gathered briefly and then drove back to the main parking area, away from the people at a sunrise service being conducted near the battleship and the pier. There were at least 400 shorebirds. Most were Long-billed Dowitchers,

spectacular in alternate plumage, but there were also many Dunlin (some already sporting black bellies), Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Least, Western, Semipalmated, Stilt, White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers.

After spending almost an hour checking through the shorebirds and trying to make sure everyone got to see all the species, we left Battleship Park and headed over (back, for most) to Mud Lakes. We quickly spotted some Black-necked Stilts, and soon after that, a Bobcat. The ponds that had been most productive in recent weeks did not have much water, but while we were checking them 17 American Avocets flew overhead. We decided to look in the area just past the bend in the trail to the south to see if that's where the avocets had landed. They were there, along with Stilt Sandpipers, Dunlins and Northern Shovelers. A White-crowned Sparrow perched in a tree was a nice surprise. As we were returning to our cars, someone spotted our first raptor: an adult Peregrine Falcon.

A very productive and enjoyable morning.

The total number of species logged during the meeting, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday until noon compilation, was 187, which is in the middle of total numbers at spring meetings during the last ten years. Perhaps the birding was a little slow, but it was steady and the variety of species good.

2022 AOS Spring Meeting Compilation List Dauphin Island, Alabama, April 15–17

NOTEWORTHY BIRD OF THE WEEKEND WAS A BRONZED Cowbird. Count total was 187 species.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck
Canada Goose
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Gadwall
Mottled Duck
Redhead
Greater Scaup
Lesser Scaup
Red-breasted Merganser
Wild Turkey
Pied-billed Grebe
Horned Grebe
Rock Pigeon
Eurasian Collared-Dove
White-winged Dove
Mourning Dove
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo
Common Nighthawk
Chuck-will's-widow
Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
Clapper Rail
Virginia Rail
Sora
Common Gallinule
American Coot
Black-necked Stilt
American Avocet
American Oystercatcher
Black-bellied Plover
Killdeer
Snowy Plover
Semipalmated Plover
Piping Plover
Whimbrel
Marbled Godwit
Ruddy Turnstone
Stilt Sandpiper
Sanderling
Dunlin
Baird's Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
White-rumped Sandpiper
Semipalmated Sandpiper
Western Sandpiper
Short-billed Dowitcher
Long-billed Dowitcher
Spotted Sandpiper
Solitary Sandpiper

Lesser Yellowlegs
Willet
Greater Yellowlegs
Laughing Gull
Ring-billed Gull
Herring Gull
Least Tern
Gull-billed Tern
Caspian Tern
Forster's Tern
Royal Tern
Black Skimmer
Common Loon
Magnificent Frigatebird
Anhinga
Double-crested Cormorant
American White Pelican
Brown Pelican
American Bittern
Least Bittern
Great Blue Heron
Great Egret
Snowy Egret
Little Blue Heron
Tricolored Egret
Reddish Egret
Cattle Egret
Green Heron
Black-crowned Night-Heron
White Ibis
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Swallow-tailed Kite
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Bald Eagle
Mississippi Kite
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
Northern Flicker
Pileated Woodpecker
Merlin

Peregrine Falcon
Great Crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
White-eyed Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Blue-headed Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Loggerhead Shrike
Blue Jay
American Crow
Fish Crow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Bank Swallow
Tree Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Purple Martin
Barn Swallow
Cliff Swallow
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Cedar Waxwing
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
House Wren
Sedge Wren
Marsh Wren
Carolina Wren
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Northern Mockingbird
European Starling
Bluebird
Veery
Swainson's Thrush
Wood Thrush
American Robin
House Sparrow
House Finch
American Goldfinch
Bachman's Sparrow
Grasshopper Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Seaside Sparrow
Nelson's Sparrow
Eastern Towhee
Eastern Meadowlark
Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
Red-winged Blackbird
Bronzed Cowbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Common Grackle
Boat-tailed Grackle
Ovenbird
Worm-eating Warbler

Louisiana Waterthrush
Northern Waterthrush
Blue-winged Warbler
Black and White Warbler
Prothonotary Warbler
Swainson's Warbler
Kentucky Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Hooded Warbler
American Redstart
Cape May Warbler
Northern Parula
Magnolia Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Palm Warbler
Pine Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Summer Tanager
Scarlet Tanager
Northern Cardinal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Painted Bunting
Dickcissel

Of interest are the following birds seen during count week, which had not been previously included in the official spring meeting compilation:

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
American Kestrel
Gray Kingbird
Black-whiskered Vireo

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.

AOS VIRTUAL MEETING, APRIL 8, 2022

Minutes of the AOS Board Meeting

By PAT REED, Secretary



RESIDENT BARRY FLEMING CALLED THE ALABAMA Ornithological Society spring board meeting to order via Zoom, April 8, 2022. The winter minutes had been furnished prior to the meeting. Upon motion of Bob Reed and seconded by Stan Hamilton, the minutes were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Fleming stated Jenny Stowers would supply all the food for Saturday and asked that no outside food be brought in. He reported that DIBS would be providing the beer and wine and would be accepting donations. The question was raised as to students assisting and what compensation they might be given. After discussion Geoff Hill stated he would get four students and would send Shelly their names. Bob Reed suggested they be provided the meal Friday and Saturday. It was agreed the students would pay a \$10 registration fee and eat free. President Fleming inquired as to how the guest speaker should be paid. After discussion it was agreed to offer an honorarium.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Shelly Taliaferro reported the checking account balance is \$26,964.04, the CD Balance is \$29,305.15, and the present PayPal account balance is \$1,431.05. All bills have been paid and \$1,745.00 has been donated for DIBS. She reported the organization has two tax ID numbers and stated she would look into this further. She stated Wilton Caterers will provide the banquet and the Sea Lab has been reserved for October 15-17, 2022. Lodging at Sea Lab was discussed and will be looked into for future meetings.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Drew Haffenden reported DIBS now has every lot in the Steiner block under contract except one. There are a total of 16 other lots that have exhibited interest in selling to DIBS that we hope to close on this year.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Yellowhammer—Bob Reed stated the deadline is August 10 for the fall issue and requested articles.

Alabama Birdlife—Eric Soehren reported the print quality of *Alabama Birdlife* had gone down and after discussions with Bob Reed and Robin McDonald, a change was being made to use the same printer as *The Yellowhammer*, and to use Workshops, Inc. for mailing. He requested material for the next issue.

Education—Shirley Farrell reported there would be a Silent Auction and stated five or six tables would be needed for both Friday and Saturday night. Ken Hare stated he had Alabama paleontology materials, scientific studies and fossils he would donate. The winners will be announced after the speaker Saturday evening and Shelly will be available to receive the money.

Bird Records—Greg Jackson reported that the committee is up to date, however, some records of last year are in the process of being voted on. The official list is 452. He reported that the Censusing Committee is planning a summer bird count in central Alabama which may include Mobile and the Tennessee Valley. Bob Reed requested that he be furnished the name of the new committee member for publishing.

Public Relations—Anne Miller stated she started the website in 2017 and now feels it is time to pass this on. Dee Gertler has agreed to take over as webmaster. Anne reported she and Ken Hare would be training Dee along with the assistance of Joe Watts. She also asked the gifts for Jean Folsom be brought to the Friday evening meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

President Fleming suggested an ad hoc committee to bring in younger members. After discussion President Fleming asked Vice President Haffenden to work with the membership committee and others interested.

President Fleming introduced the idea of supporting the Banding Coalition of the Americas, cofounded by Emma Rhodes. After considerable discussion as to the pros and cons of supporting the coalition vs land acquisition, Ken Hare moved to table the item. Bob Reed seconded and the matter was tabled.

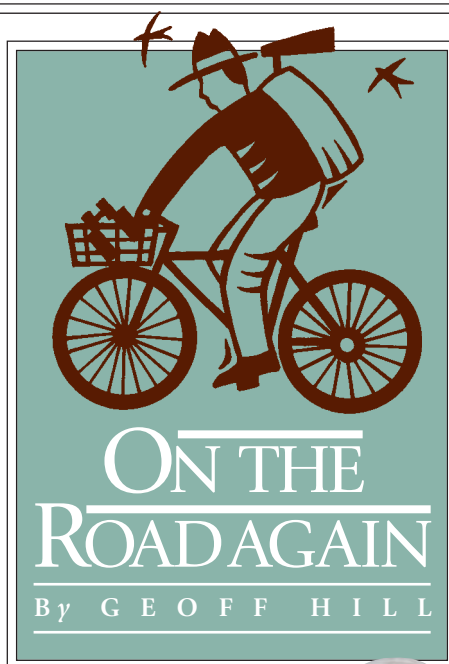
Ken Hare reported on the business-type greeting card he and Julie were going to furnish, stating they would not have these for the spring meeting. As a new logo has not been approved, he will find a good bird photo and have about 500 cards ready for the fall meeting. President Fleming stated the matter of a new logo is tabled for the next meeting.

Gull Frolic 2022

I WAS INVITED TO BE THE KEY-note speaker at the annual Gull Frolic, held at the Winthrop Harbor Yacht Club on the Illinois/Wisconsin border each winter. This invitation came from Amar Ayyash, whom I didn't know and, have to admit, of whom I had not heard before the invitation. Not only had I not heard of Amar, I hadn't heard of the Gull Frolic. The invitation came in July, in the middle of a sweltering Alabama summer, so the thought of a chilly winter bird festival focused on northern gulls was irresistible. Plus, I love traveling for birding and giving talks about my ornithological research, so I enthusiastically accepted.

It was a good decision because the Gull Frolic is a winner.

A less creative but more descriptive name for the Gull Frolic would be the Western Great Lakes Winter Bird Festival. This is a gathering of over 100 birders and bird enthusiasts (I was told 200 attendees pre-Covid) who come to see old friends, hear a guest speaker, sign up for birding excursions near and far for the next year, and above all enjoy a fine diversity of gulls with great experts to help with ID. Amar, as I would learn, is completing a new guide to gull identification to be published by Princeton University Press in 2023, and he is a fantastic mentor for the endless variation in gull plumages. I learned a lot about gull ID during my day at the Frolic.



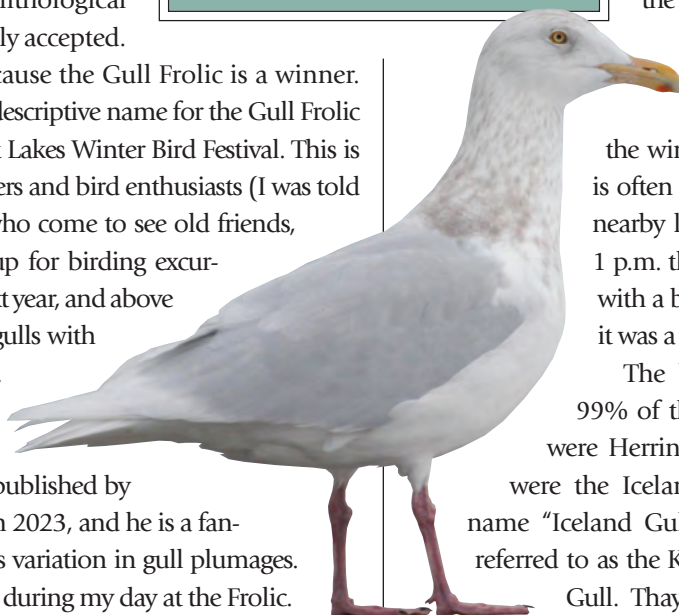
The adventure started on February 19, 2022, when Amar picked me up at my hotel at 6:30 a.m. It was, to put it kindly, a frosty Chicago morning. My illusions of a "chilly" day of gull watching collided with the reality of a thermometer showing 7°F with a stiff wind. The wind-chill was -16°F—a bit beyond the descriptor "chilly" for someone flying in from an Alabama winter. Fortunately, several factors make frigid weather less of a factor at the Gull Frolic than it otherwise might be. First of all, escape is just a few feet away. All of the birding goes on right outside the Yacht Club meeting room so you can just duck inside when the cold gets to be too much. Actually,

the clubhouse has huge windows,

so you can look at gulls and other birds pretty effectively through

the windows. And finally, the best birding is often in the afternoon when gulls leave a nearby landfill and head for the harbor. By 1 p.m. the temp had only risen to 20°F, but with a blazing afternoon sun and less wind, it was a manageable cold.

The birds did not disappoint. About 99% of the gulls in and around the harbor were Herring Gulls, but the stars of the show were the Iceland Gulls. Until very recently, the name "Iceland Gull" only applied to what are now referred to as the Kumlien's Gull subspecies of Iceland Gull. Thayer's Gull, the sister population to



Kumlien's Gull, was considered a different species. In 2017 Kumlien's and Thayer's Gulls were lumped into the single species "Iceland Gull." This lumping has not stopped gull enthusiasts, of which there were many at the Gull Frolic, from parsing each Iceland Gull into correct subspecies. Both Kumlien's Gull and Thayer's Gull always make an appearance at the Gull Frolic, and we had about four Thayer's and three Kumlien's Gulls around at this year's frolic. We had several beautiful adult Thayer's Gulls circling and then swimming right in front of us. We also had a suave first-cycle Kumlien's Gull, uniform in its unique creamy plumage. Early in the morning when I was too cold to focus well, there was a first cycle Thayer's Gull which is much darker than the first cycle Kumlien's. All day there was hope that we might see the other gull of the region with light wing tips—Glaucous Gull. And, on cue, after many festival attendees had gone home, a striking adult Glaucous Gull came dropping in from on high and gave us fantastic looks.

Gulls are the stars of this show, but they are not the only birds in the harbor. About three dozen Common Goldeneyes with Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, a few scaup, and Bufflehead dove in the harbor. As I was setting up for my talk, someone kindly ran in to retrieve me to see a male Harlequin Duck swimming along the rock jetty. In the afternoon, we had a pair of White-winged Scoters diving with the goldeneyes. Almost all of these birds were new for my Illinois list.

For anyone living within a few hours' drive or for anyone living anywhere who wants to work on gull identification, I strongly recommend the Gull Frolic. It is a wonderful gathering of extremely knowledgeable and very friendly and inviting bird enthusiasts.

Charles Glascock

LONGTIME AOS MEMBER CHARLES GLASCOCK DIED PEACEFULLY in his sleep on January 28, 2022, just short of his 89th birthday. He is survived by his two children, Dawn and Drew, four grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

Charles graduated from Phillips High School in Birmingham and Auburn University with a degree in industrial design in 1955. He married Alison Glascock in 1976.

He started his career at Hayes Aircraft where he further developed the skills he would use all his life, airbrushing and drafting. Charles spent the majority of his career at US Steel as

a labor contract administrator, negotiating between management and the union. Following his retirement from US Steel in 1982, he and Alison joined their names to form Chalis Productions, combining Charles's graphic design and airbrush artistry with Alison's writing and editing skills. Amongst many projects, he created murals for the Birmingham Zoo, and of the Atlanta skyline for an Atlanta news program.

Charles was a longtime member of AOS and designed t-shirts for Birmingham Audubon, Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuary, Coastal Birding, and Audubon Mountain Workshop. He designed informative signs for the Dauphin Island Shell Mounds and airport. DIBS will be putting funds from the sixteen donations made in his name towards restoring these signs in recognition of his contributions to birding on the island.

Charles and Alison took two trips to England and on the second went on a tour with Bryan Bland, a noted world ornithologist. On this trip, they saw a Honey Buzzard, which is extremely rare. They also travelled to Florida, Louisiana, Arizona, California, Washington, Maine, and many other states to see the approximately 550 birds on their life lists.

He was also incredibly helpful to Alison in her role as president of the Highland Park Neighborhood Association in Birmingham, assisting her with various graphic projects.

—Alison M. Glascock

Upcoming Meetings

FALL MEETING—October 14–16, 2022

Dauphin Island, Alabama

WINTER MEETING—January 27–29, 2023

Lake Guntersville State Park

SPRING MEETING—April 21–23, 2023

Dauphin Island, Alabama

Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions

Fall 2022

August 10, 2022

Winter 2022

November 10, 2022

Spring 2022

February 10, 2023

AOS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

Your Membership Dues Support the Work of the Alabama Ornithological Society

Please check membership category: ____ New Member ____ Renewing Member

Please check membership category: ____ Student \$10 ____ Individual \$25 ____ Family \$40* ____ Sustaining \$50
____ Life (individual) \$350 ____ Life (family*) \$550 *Number of family members _____

Communicating with our members online saves the earth's resources, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and also saves much-needed funds for AOS. Your digital subscription to *The Yellowhammer* and *Alabama Birdlife* will automatically be sent to the email address listed below. To receive print copies of AOS publications instead, please ____ check here. Mail your completed form and check to:

Shelly Taliaferro, 2300 Fernway Drive, Montgomery, AL 36111

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____ Phone _____

**YOU CAN ALSO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE AT WWW.AOSBIRDS.ORG
PLEASE ADD 3% TO PAYPAL TRANSACTIONS**



ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
88838 TALLASSEE HIGHWAY
TALLASSEE, ALABAMA 36078

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

Federal EIN: 63-1229959

THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 42, NO. 2 • SUMMER 2022

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

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Greg Harber
Geoff Hill
Ken Hare
Larry gardella

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:
Shelly Taliaferro, Treasurer
2300 Fernway Drive,
Montgomery, AL 36111
Email: shellytaliaferro@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>

ALABAMA AUDUBON SOCIETY
<http://www.alaudubon.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.facebook.com/tennesseevalleyaudubon>