

# THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 43, NO. 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUMMER 2023

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

FOUNDED 1952



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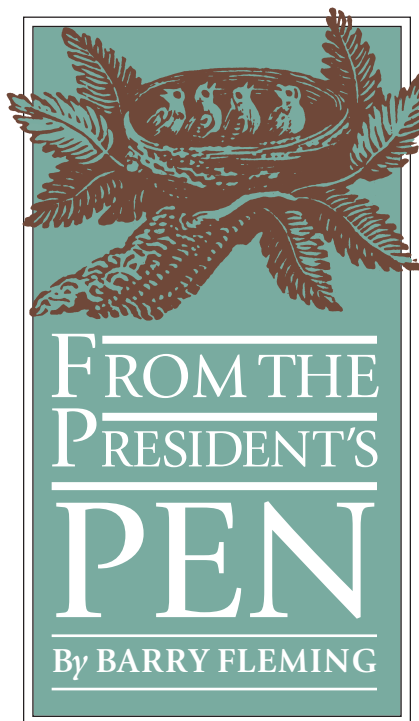
ALABAMA YEAR OF BIRDING HAS certainly gotten off to a big start. Well over one hundred members attended the spring meeting and the number of species observed during meeting weekend, 193, was also big. I suggest we keep up the momentum through the Alabama Year of Birding that lasts until December 2024, by making big contributions to education and conservation, and creating big memories during this time.

An additional blessing was the bountiful numbers of spring birds and how long they remained. Several mini-fallouts happened a week or so before the AOS spring meeting on Dauphin Island, with hundreds of Scarlet Tanagers seen, for example, while the two weeks following the meeting constituted what seemed like the biggest inland migration of passerines in quite a while.

Birders I know in Chattanooga, Knoxville, and Clemson were bemoaning the lack of expected birds during this time, while Alabama was chock-full. There were steady north winds during the last two weeks of April, and some believe this convinced many birds in our state to delay the north-bound call and stay to enjoy the rich biodiversity of Alabama's forests. Rose-breasted Grosbeak numbers statewide were amazing. I heard of many that saw them for the very first time at their feeders, an encounter which can turn one into a lifetime birder.

Many across the state reported that warblers were plentiful, and because they stayed late, many males were singing. I had Tennessee, American Redstart, Cape May, Blackburnian, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Black-throated Green all singing in my yard the first few days of May. Geoff Hill had a singing Mourning Warbler in his yard, while I had a singing Black-throated Blue for three days in my yard. I left it the third day to go see a Hooded Oriole on Dauphin Island, which I found near—guess what?—a singing Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

The southerly winds finally took over, and the birds were released. Everyone north of us did have a good but quick migration season, with Maggie Marsh, Ohio, reporting later and fewer birds than usual. Since The Year of Birding includes



next spring, perhaps the Department of Tourism can arrange another spring migration like this again. In the meantime, I'll be basking in the glow of this one.

A final word on what AOS members are doing to help with Alabama Year of Birding. Several have guided Department of Tourism camera crews to scenic and birdy sites across the state to film commercials intended for potential out-of-state visitors. Several have also had mini documentaries made about them. These will also air out of state. Ken Hare has written an article about AOS for the tourism magazine and others have helped Beth Drake with a state birding magazine. The Alabama Birding Trails program received a big boost from the Department of Tourism. A good summer project would be for you to familiarize yourself with the bird-

ing trail locations in your region. Check the website, [www.alabamabirdingtrails.com](http://www.alabamabirdingtrails.com), where you can represent AOS by becoming a volunteer or an ambassador.

Alabama birding will also be featured in a TV series entitled "Extraordinary Birder with Christian Cooper," which will premiere 17 June on National Geographic Wild channel and Disney+ later in the summer. One entire episode was filmed in Alabama. You may even recognize some of the TV stars as our own AOS members. National Geographic shot the show in hot, late July and still told me they had as much fun in Alabama as any other state they filmed in.

Remember our writing initiative headed up by Ken Hare. The Society's 75th anniversary will be in 2027. That may sound like a long time away, but good writing takes time. So, start to think about stories you may contribute to this milestone. We produced a history of the first 50 years for the fiftieth anniversary, available on the AOS website. What form(s) should the 75th anniversary celebration take? What needs to be covered in the twenty-five years since?

We also need members to produce a variety of types of writing. Larry Gardella recently penned an article on the amazing flock of Shiny Cowbirds that hung around all winter near the coast. I plan to write a piece on the eBird hotspot Wood Duck Nature Preserve in Opelika, which had 31 spe-



cies of warblers last fall, 14 species of ducks this winter and is, according to eBird, fourth largest in numbers of bird species recorded at an inland birding trail site that is not a major national wildlife refuge. We also need cool, short pieces on our social media, and Bob Reed always needs *Yellowhammer* articles. Get with Ken Hare or myself with ideas. They do not need to be about rarities or unusual birds, but can be geared for beginners and casual birders.

A big privilege of mine was to present lifetime achievement awards during the spring meeting to Bob and Lucy Duncan and Linda Reynolds, who just happened to be sitting across the table from each other. Somehow, we kept it a surprise, and after I shared a little story about each, and the meeting began to move on, I noticed Linda reach up her hand and meet Bob's in a high-five celebration above the table, with big smiles all around. Articles about the sustained and substantial contributions to birds and AOS by all three will be in the fall issue of *The Yellowhammer*.

One new AOS member created a very interesting organization this year, the North Alabama Youth Birding Club. Although she doesn't yet have her driver's license and had to miss the banquet because she was attending her first prom, she helped at the banding station on Fort Morgan, met many of our members and birded all the hotspots on the island. Encourage a young birder you know to start a birding club at their own school or area. This one young bold person's idea may just start an Alabama movement of youth birding clubs.

I would like to mention that in my opinion *The Yellowhammer* and *Alabama BirdLife* have never looked better. Thanks to Robin McDonald for design and to Bob Reed and Eric Soehren as editors.

Thanks to Dwight Cooley for a very informative and historical talk about his work with our state's premier national wildlife refuge. Thanks to Betsy Eagar of DIBS for handling the drink table and Patsy Russo for spearheading the banquet and facilities. Shirley Farrell, as always, masterfully coordinated the successful Silent Auction, which garnered \$795, including donations, for education. Once again Jenny Stowers hosted the large, casual outdoor luncheon where birders go to see and be seen, but mainly to see birds from the upstairs porches while enjoying seafood gumbo. Thanks Jenny. There are so many more to thank. It seems members of our society are always there when you need them, like putting up 120 chairs after the keynote speaker's program. Thanks folks!

There are a few things we need help with now. Pat Reed has taken over the responsibilities of interim treasurer, so it would be an easy transition into the job with her help, if your skill sets fit this all-important role. A new chairperson for the Field Trip Committee is needed. You don't have to be an expert field trip leader; you just have to coordinate them. And we will always need people to work with the food and facilities for the meetings.

Let me or Drew Haffenden know if you have interest in one of these "open" positions or perhaps your availability down the road as openings take place. Drew will be gaveled in as president at our fall meeting. He is an international bird guide, assists Alabama Audubon and others with bird research on the island, and has had more pairs of flip-flops stolen from the foot of the Dauphin Island Pier than any other human. You need to get to know Drew if you don't already.

The fall meeting on Dauphin Island will be October 13-15. We know a lot of people became interested in birds during the pandemic, and birding is rising in popularity. As you run into these folks invite them to AOS, and we'll make the Alabama Year of Birding even bigger.

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### *The Yellowhammer is Going All Digital*

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AOS IS CURRENTLY SPENDING OVER \$3,400 ANNUALLY TO print and mail *The Yellowhammer* to the approximately 115 members who still receive a print copy. That's over \$29 per account, while individual dues are only \$25. The AOS Board has made the difficult decision to pull the plug on this expense. That will free up over \$3,400 for conservation, arranging for interesting speakers, and much more.

Beginning with the Spring 2024 issue, *The Yellowhammer*, will be available only in digital form. If you have not been receiving the digital version of *The Yellowhammer* via email as a PDF, it is imperative that we have your valid email address. Please send it to acting treasurer Pat Reed (patreed1987@gmail.com). We will not share your email address. Most email communications are sent out as blind copies so that even other members do not have access to email addresses.

*The Yellowhammer* will be available on the website, [www.aosbirds.org](http://www.aosbirds.org), soon after each meeting. All registration, field trip, and schedule information will continue to be available on the website as soon as it is developed.

AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 21-23, 2023

# Minutes of the AOS Board Meeting

By DORIS GERTLER, *Secretary*

RESIDENT BARRY FLEMING CALLED THE AOS BOARD meeting to order via Zoom on April 14 at 6:00pm. The minutes from the January 20, 2023, meeting were approved as written.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The fall meeting speaker will be Scot Duncan, and the Shelby Center at Sea Lab has been booked.

Articles by Ken Hare (AOS) and Barry Fleming (Tips for Beginning Birdwatchers) will appear in *Tourism* magazine and *Alabama the Beautiful* magazine respectively.

North Alabama Youth Birder's Club was founded by AOS member Ava Lyerly.

Cortney Weatherby, Coastal Outreach Manager for Alabama Audubon, will have a table at our fall meeting.

Ken Hare will be the liaison with Alabama Tourism for Alabama Year of the Bird. There was discussion about asking for grant money. Larry Gardella suggested asking for a general grant rather than for specific items. Ideas: Grants for a new brochure, for putting our contact info on a new bird list or Alabama Tourism brochure, and grants for leading field trips. Annabel Markle suggested we ask if Alabama Tourism has merchandise for this promotion and if we could sell it for a cut.

The Writing Initiative/75th Anniversary/Logo—We should work on a new logo, consider merchandise for the 75th Anniversary and perhaps have merchandise available ahead of time.

Archivist Scot Duncan is stepping down. He has material to be picked up. Larry Gardella moved to have one person serve as both archivist and slide person. It passed unanimously.

AOS Achievement Award—everyone agreed this should be resumed. Nominees were considered for presentation at the fall meeting.

AOS Web Channel—discussion about how to increase content—podcasts, Zoom interviews, recordings? Barry Fleming will ask Curt Burney to discuss with Joe Watts who was involved with this.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The current checking account balance \$28,589.52. CD balance \$29,451.75. With PayPal and petty cash included, total assets are \$58,652.26. No bills for the spring meeting have been paid. The credit card (-0574), which is in Joan Dixon's name, cannot be located. After discussion, Pat Reed will do what is required by the bank to cancel old card and get a new card.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

CENSUSING COMMITTEE—Greg Jackson reported that the Summer Bird Count plans will be announced.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE—Shirley Farrell stated there will be a Flying Wild overnight workshop May 6-7, 2023. She needs two birdhouses as awards for Green Ribbon school winners. Larry Gardella will speak to Dwayne Miller who builds houses for SE Land Trust.

THE YELLOWHAMMER—Bob Reed presented information regarding AOS printing and mailing costs for *The Yellowhammer* and *Alabama BirdLife*. After lengthy discussion, the board voted that after giving notice in the three remaining *Yellowhammers* for 2023, to offer only electronic *Yellowhammers* beginning January 1, 2024, and that *The Yellowhammer* will be made available on the AOS website the week after the meeting addressed in the newsletter, or about a month delay from publication. The printing/ mailing costs discussion about *Alabama BirdLife* was tabled.

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE—Eric Soehren stated that we need to know what the universities (via Ebsco) are doing with the *Alabama BirdLife* hardcopies as this impacts any future discussion of printing. He also suggested we have a more scholarly discussion during the AOS meetings, in addition to the photo presentations. Perhaps the Holliman scholarship recipients could present their findings in person or by Zoom.

AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 21-23, 2023

# AOS Spring Meeting Report

By KEN HARE, ET AL

**I** LEFT ON FRIDAY TO DRIVE TO DAUPHIN ISLAND. MY first stop was at the Splinter Hill Pitcher Plant site, where, as usual, the star was the Bachman's Sparrow. I played a recording briefly and almost immediately got a response from about 30 yards off the trail. I saw it in binoculars but couldn't get a photo because of intervening trees. I stopped playback as soon as I got a response, but the bird continued singing. After a few minutes another joined in from the other side of the trail, but this one was deeper in the pines, and I never saw it. I had a sandwich and fruit for lunch while still listening for birds.

I arrived on DI in time for birding at the airport, Shell Mounds, and Penicault Street area. I checked into Gulf Breeze Motel and parked in back. While walking to my room, I spotted two interesting birds far overhead. By the time I set luggage down and raised bins, one was blocked by trees but the other proved to be a Peregrine Falcon. Once again, an example of why you always need to stay alert for birds when you're on Dauphin Island. At the Friday night social, Harry Dean shared some of his incredible photos of birds in his back yard.

On Saturday, I missed sunrise on the east end of the island by about five minutes, but it was still a great view as the wind pushed waves onto shore. After birding around the island, I decided to try to see if the Whimbrels reported earlier were still at the Leroy Hill Farm north of the interstate. This is not my favorite place to bird. You're standing alongside a busy road, and the two lakes are elevated just enough that the nearest bank blocks the view of the lake nearest you. For me and my bad legs, it was park, set up scope, view, drive 40 yards, repeat. Finally, I saw two Whimbrels fly up from the northernmost lake, which is even more difficult to see from the roadside. I gave up and was leaning against the car putting finishing touches on my list when about 60 Whimbrels flew up, circled a couple of times, and lit in the grass on the far side of the lake. After they landed, I could only see them by standing in the door of my CRV and looking over the roof with my binoculars.

Dwight Cooley and Barry Fleming led the Saturday field trip around the island's hotspots. The large group met high winds at the airport that kept both target sparrow species deep in the grasses, although multiple Marsh Wrens were singing and posing for photographs just above the water line out of the wind. Brown Pelicans and Ospreys seemed to enjoy the high winds, a Tricolored Heron looked a bit like origami trying to fly against it, and most other birds seemed to hunker and wait it out. A real treat was seeing a sitting, preening, breeding-plumage Common Loon up close, which contrasted nicely with one in basic plumage out in the bay.

The Shell Mounds also had winds making birding challenging, but both expected tanagers and orioles with a few warblers were there. Black-bellied Whistling Ducks occasionally flew circles over our heads demonstrating their whistling namesake. The wind was starting to die down at Audubon Sanctuary where a Common Moorhen paddled about, and a Prothonotary Warbler came out into the sunshine in close view to study the mass of people on the little lake pier. A walk around the trails continued to produce additional species of warblers now and then, and we had good looks at both Red-breasted and Blue Grosbeaks.

Lunch at Jenny's porch proved to be both winsome and windy. Visiting with friends is a wonderful way to enjoy gumbo. Looking out from her deck, the reclamation project just past the waterway was very evident. The north wind was so strong that water was actually being pushed up into her yard.

I didn't sleep well the night before so some of the afternoon was spent at the Gulf Breeze napping, with a quick shower as a wake-me-up. Then I spent the hour before sunset at the airport, mostly trying to photograph, with only moderate success, the Seaside Sparrow, Marsh Wrens, Sora, Clapper Rails, Willets, and Greater Yellowlegs I saw there. An interesting detail was the nest of what I believe was a Clapper Rail right next to the road. A bonus came after sunset when I was driving off and noticed a Common Nighthawk darting over the marsh reeds in search of insects.

Dwight Cooley's presentation after the banquet was most interesting; the discussion of the history of Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge was fascinating. While I was familiar with much of the Whooping Crane project, his account of the silly bureaucratic hiatus in the project that led to the presence of Whoopers today at Wheeler NWR was new to me.

Sunday started with more birding around the island. Then, after checking out of the Gulf Breeze (and making reservations for the fall meeting), I made another of my must-do stops—this time at Skinner's Seafood for steamed shrimp. Skinner's is an island treasure, with fresh shrimp steamed or uncooked.

I usually get a cup of Skinner's seafood bisque to eat at a seaside table before heading home, but I had other plans that day. Before heading back to Montgomery, I wanted to try a

new birding site in Bayou La Batre where others recently had been having some great birding. Lightning Point is a reclamation project near the Alabama State Docks and a popular boat launch. A covered observation area with picnic tables overlooks the shore and the reclaimed area, with a few pools to attract birds as well. (Note: Bring your spotting scope. While binoculars are fine for identifying larger birds and those in the closer pools, if you want to identify the smaller birds, you'll need a scope.) There were Whimbrels galore, and lots of other shorebirds—turnstones, dowitchers, Dunlin, and more.

This was one of the most enjoyable spring meetings in several years. The weather, though windy, was very cool and comfortable, and there were birds wherever we went. A total of 193 species was also quite respectable.

### *A Little Bunting Joins March Spring-breakers in Pensacola*

**I**N MARCH, BIRDERS ON THE NORTHERN Gulf Coast were treated to a Little Bunting, a species you would normally need to go birding in Siberia to observe. This little world traveler turned up in a small yard buried in the suburbs of Pensacola—not the spot where you'd expect a vagrant from Siberia to take up residence. Little Buntings are an exceptional rarity anywhere in North America. The species is unprecedented in the eastern half of the continent, but Little Buntings are not a species that is easy to identify. The Pensacola bird was a small brown bird with breast streaking like a Savannah Sparrow and a dull rusty ear patch.

It would have been very easy for even an experienced birder to overlook this bird, but the owner of the yard where it took up March residence noticed differences from the Chipping Sparrows that she had been seeing over the winter. She took a cell phone photo and shared it with the American Birding Association's "What's This Bird" Facebook group. After asking for more photos, members identified the bird as a Little Bunting. The homeowner graciously allowed Jerry and Brenda Callaway to set up limited visitations for other birders, and the Callaways handled communications and spent their days in the yard for almost a month. The presence of the bird was never announced—only a handful of birders from the region were told about the bird and invited to view it.



Visiting the yard to see the bunting was a surreal way to record a mega-rarity. First, if you heard about it, you had to contact the Callaways and request an appointment. By mid-March, birders were being brought to the yard in groups of about 8 or 10 at either 7am or at 10am. You met Jerry and Brenda at your appointment time

and were escorted to the viewing spot. The yard was tiny—a fenced-in little box with no particularly good structure for birds. There was a small feeding station where the bunting was coming to feed, and a few chairs had been set up to one side with views of the feeder. Most birders stood while they awaited the appearance of the avian diva. The bird failed to show for a few appointments, but by and large, everyone who traveled to see this rare little bird of the Palearctic were able to watch it fly in and feed for a few minutes. On March 26, however, the Little Bunting failed to show up, and it was never seen again.

There are very few records of this species in the lower 48 states, and this was the first one east of the Rockies. The Callaways made a video showing the bird's typical visit that you can view at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3\\_2lSudJ\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3_2lSudJ_0)

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The residential lot next door had been allowed to grow up in wild profusion apparently due to the ill health of the homeowner, who died in mid-March. The plan was to immediately clear the yard, possibly in preparation for selling the property. The bunting disappeared shortly after—in response to loss of its roosting territory?

—Larry Gardella and Geoff Hill



## 2023 AOS Spring Meeting Compilation List Coastal Counties, Alabama, April 21–23

**N**OTEWORTHY BIRDS OF THE WEEKEND WERE GREAT BLACK-backed Gull and Glossy Ibis. Count total was 193 species.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck  
Canada Goose  
Blue-winged Teal  
Northern Shoveler  
Mottled Duck  
Green-winged Teal  
White-winged Scoter  
Black Scoter  
Red-breasted Merganser  
Rock Pigeon  
Eurasian Collared-Dove  
*Inca Dove*  
White-winged Dove  
Mourning Dove  
Yellow-billed Cuckoo  
Common Nighthawk  
Chuck-will's-widow  
Chimney Swift  
Ruby-throated Hummingbird  
Clapper Rail  
Sora  
Common Gallinule  
American Coot  
Black-necked Stilt  
American Avocet  
American Oystercatcher  
Black-bellied Plover  
Killdeer  
Semipalmated Plover  
Piping Plover  
Snowy Plover  
Upland Sandpiper  
Whimbrel  
Marbled Godwit  
Ruddy Turnstone  
Sanderling  
Dunlin  
Least Sandpiper  
White-rumped Sandpiper  
Buff-breasted 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  
*Great Black-backed Gull*  
Herring Gull  
Least Tern  
Gull-billed Tern  
Caspian Tern  
Forster's Tern  
Royal Tern  
Sandwich Tern  
Black Skimmer  
Common Loon  
Magnificent Frigatebird  
Anhinga  
Double-crested Cormorant  
American White Pelican  
Brown Pelican  
Great Blue Heron  
Great Egret  
Snowy Egret  
Little Blue Heron  
Tricolored Egret  
Reddish Egret  
Cattle Egret  
Green Heron  
Black-crowned Night-Heron  
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron  
White Ibis  
*Glossy Ibis*  
Black Vulture  
Turkey Vulture  
Osprey  
Swallow-tailed Kite  
Northern Harrier  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Cooper's Hawk  
Bald Eagle  
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  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Northern Flicker  
Pileated Woodpecker  
Merlin

Peregrine Falcon  
Great-crested Flycatcher  
Eastern Kingbird  
Gray Kingbird  
Eastern Wood-Pewee  
Eastern Phoebe  
White-eyed Vireo  
Blue-headed Vireo  
Philadelphia Vireo  
Warbling Vireo  
Red-eyed Vireo  
Loggerhead Shrike  
Blue Jay  
American Crow  
Fish Crow  
Carolina Chickadee  
Tufted Titmouse  
Bank Swallow  
N. Rough-winged Swallow  
Purple Martin  
Barn Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet  
Cedar Waxwing  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
Brown-headed Nuthatch  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Carolina Wren  
House Wren  
Sedge Wren  
Marsh Wren  
Gray Catbird  
Brown Thrasher  
Northern Mockingbird  
European Starling  
Bluebird  
Veery  
Gray-cheeked Thrush  
Swainson's Thrush  
Wood Thrush  
American Robin  
House Sparrow  
House Finch  
Bachman's Sparrow  
Chipping Sparrow  
Field Sparrow  
White-crowned Sparrow  
Seaside Sparrow  
Nelson's Sparrow  
Savannah Sparrow  
Swamp Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
Eastern Towhee  
Bobolink  
Eastern Meadowlark  
Orchard Oriole  
Baltimore Oriole

Red-winged Blackbird  
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  
Tennessee Warbler  
Kentucky Warbler  
Common Yellowthroat  
Hooded Warbler  
American Redstart  
Cape May Warbler  
Northern Parula  
Magnolia Warbler  
Bay-breasted Warbler  
Yellow Warbler  
Blackpoll Warbler  
Black-throated Blue Warbler  
Palm Warbler  
Pine Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler  
Yellow-throated Warbler  
Black-throated Green Warbler  
Summer Tanager  
Scarlet Tanager  
Northern Cardinal  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak  
Blue Grosbeak  
Indigo Bunting  
Painted Bunting

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.



## *In Memoriam*

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### *David Pylant*

FEBRUARY 6, 1949–MAY 4, 2023

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WE ARE SADDENED TO REPORT THE PASSING OF DAVID Pylant in Pine Mountain, Georgia, of heart failure. Many of you knew David as a member of AOS and fellow birder, as well as a good friend. He was born and raised in Cullman, Alabama, furthering his education with degrees from Florence State University and Auburn University. He also served a tour of duty in the US Army in Panama, where he met and married his beautiful wife of 50 years, Berta. David spent much of his career as a Wildlife Biologist and Land Manager, moving with Berta and his young daughter Jennifer to Florida for 12 years, before moving back to Cullman, where he worked as a biology instructor at Wallace State Community College until retiring in 2010. They enjoyed six years of their retirement in Freeport, Florida, eventually moving to Pine Mountain, Georgia (near Callo-way Gardens).

We first met David about 25 years ago, when he started attending some birding trips with the North Alabama Bird-watchers Society. We got along quite well. David was a great companion for birding and nature-oriented activities, and a crackerjack storyteller. Eventually we both joined AOS and got to meet our respective better halves on Dauphin Island, where we all became fast friends. We had some wonderful times down there, birding together, attending the meetings, lodging together a couple of times, and otherwise interacting and getting to know a lot of fine folks in AOS.

Berta and David invited us to visit them in Freeport, Texas, and took us on a birding trip to southeastern Texas. They knew their way around down there and drove us to just about all the hotspots; we must have increased our life lists by at least 40 species. Truly one of the most memorable times we've ever had.

We didn't see them after that until April 2022, when we visited them in Pine Mountain. They were doing well then, making new friends, taking advantage of the beautiful gardens, birding (as usual), and more. They were also closer in

proximity to their daughter and daughter-in-law, which was so important, given their age and health.

David, we are sure going to miss you; you had a great, meaningful life, and we were lucky and grateful to have spent some of it with you. Love to you, Berta and Family.

—Ken and Rufina Ward

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### *Floyd Sherrod*

JANUARY 20, 1937–APRIL 10, 2023

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FLOYD SHERROD, LOVING HUSBAND, FATHER, LAWYER, advocate for the less fortunate, avid birder, kind listener, voracious reader, and deep thinker, passed away suddenly on Monday, April 10, 2023, at the age of 86, having done his part to make the world a little better place.

Floyd is survived by his wife, Elizabeth (Libba); by his five children, Hank (Robyn), Chris, John (Melinda), Richard, and Laura (Josh Wilkinson); by eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Floyd was a gifted thinker and scholar. He was valedictorian of his Decatur High School class of 1954 and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year at Sewanee. He received a Masters from Tufts University and was among the top graduates at the University of Alabama Law School.

After completing his legal education in 1961, he worked in the District of Columbia and Georgia. Floyd returned to Alabama in 1973, first in private practice in Decatur, and, then, in 1978, in Florence, where he would find his life's work as the managing attorney of the Florence office of Legal Services Corporation of Alabama, which provided free legal representation to low-income people. Floyd opened the northwest Alabama office, hired and supervised the staff, and set about making a difference in people's lives. Floyd's work and calling was helping low-income people in much less high-profile ways. He sat with them, listened to them, heard their stories, felt their pain, tried to help them, without judgment, solve problems regarding their benefits, housing, medical care, or whatever the need.

Floyd seriously loved birding. He enjoyed being outdoors observing their behavioral and nesting habits. His hearing

was notoriously deficient, but he did his best, struggling to identify them by their songs. His many travels with Libba over the years usually included a bird-related detour in numerous countries around the world. He shared his interest for birds with those he loved, and, for many of us, time with birds will be time with his spirit.

Floyd was an active AOS board member of the Alabama Ornithological Society, a fine birder and a good friend to many of us. The world is richer because of Floyd and Libba.

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### *Allen Adair Tubbs*

MAY 12, 1946–FEBRUARY 23, 2023

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ALLEN WAS BORN IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, AND GREW up on a small Idaho dairy farm. That experience and encouragement from his vocational agriculture teacher prompted him to go to college and get a biology degree.

He attended the University of Idaho where he earned a B.S. in Ed. Biology and Literature. After serving in the Army Medical Corps, Ambulance Company, 24th Infantry Division at Ft. Riley, Kansas, he was sent to an Air Ambulance Platoon in South Vietnam.

After returning from Vietnam, Allen earned a Master's Degree in Environmental Biology from Kansas State University where he studied lizards. He received his Doctorate of Arts degree from the University of Northern Colorado. His dissertation was on ground squirrels. Allen taught biology at Emporia, Kansas.

He served as Science Department Chair at the Louisiana School of Math and Science where he taught Advanced Placement Biology courses to high school juniors and seniors. While in Louisiana he studied Red-cockaded Woodpeckers in the Kisatchie National Forest.

After moving to Alabama, he became the Executive Director of the Alabama School of Math and Science in Mobile. He also held teaching positions at Springhill College, Mobile University, and the University of South Alabama.

Allen's last teaching position before retiring was at Huntingdon College where he taught some of his favorite classes in Environmental Sciences and Field Biology.

Allen was a past president of AOS and several Audubon Society Chapters. He organized and led for several years the River Region Bird Club. Bob and Pat Reed and many others

spent many happy Saturday mornings with Allen and Priscilla. He had a passion for being in nature sharing his knowledge, especially botany and ornithology.

Allen had already been missed as he struggled with health issues, but the world is a better place because of Allen.

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### *In Memoriam*

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IT IS A SAD FACT THAT OUR MEMBERS DIE. WE WOULD LIKE to honor each one appropriately in *The Yellowhammer*. To do that we must know about the loss, so please notify the editor, treasurer or membership chair if you are aware of the loss of one of our friends.

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### *New Members*

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William Brown • R. B. Ferguson  
 Stephen Hambalek • Ava Lysterly  
 Vince & Bianca Macro  
 Duane Miller • Teri Reese  
 Jeffery & Stacey Reynolds  
 Susan Hope Rouillier • Timothy Ryan  
 Diane Smith • Nancy Smith  
 Garrison & Shawna Starrett • Joe Watts

#### **NEW LIFE MEMBERS**

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R. Lynn Fitzgerald  
 Alison Glascock  
 Paul & Dianna Porter  
 Randy and Kathy White  
 (Gift of Kimberly, Wiley & Billy White)

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### *Honoraria and Acknowledgments*

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#### **AOS DONATIONS**

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William Brown  
 Scot Duncan  
*In honor of the Bachman's Warbler*  
 Wild Birds Unlimited, Opelika

**DIBS DONATIONS**

Sonya Auer • Susan Barrow  
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*Upcoming Meetings***FALL MEETING**—October 13–15, 2023

Dauphin Island, Alabama

**WINTER MEETING**—January 26–28, 2024

Location TBA

**SPRING MEETING**—April 19–21, 2024

Dauphin Island, Alabama

*Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions*

Fall 2023 August 10, 2023

Winter 2023 November 10, 2023

Spring 2024 February 10, 2024

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ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
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TALLASSEE, ALABAMA 36078

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