

THE YELLOWHAMMER

VOLUME 45, NO. 1 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SPRING 2025

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

FOUNDED 1952



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MEET THE SPEAKER:
DR. LIANNE KOZCUR

*Cover: Yellow-crowned Night Heron at
Wakulla Springs State Park by Bob Reed.*

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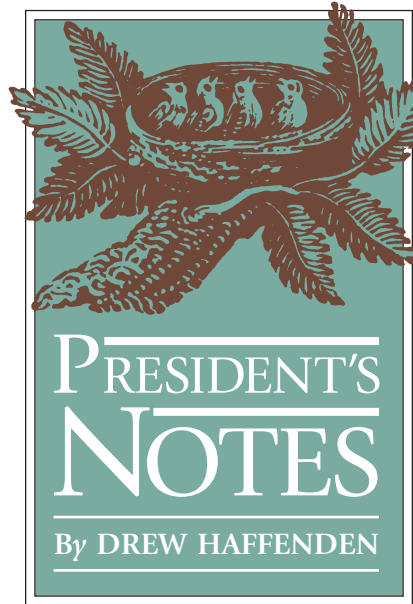
Greg Harber
 Scot Duncan, Eric Soehren

MEETINGS

Patsy Russo

FIRST OF ALL, LET ME SAY HOW difficult it was to make the decision to cancel the AOS winter meeting. I know the last-minute timing caught people off guard, causing some people to be at the hotel with no meeting, others to turn back while driving there, and for most to lose the cost of a night's hotel stay and the boat trip. However, all the information Vice-President Shirley Farrell and I were receiving over a couple of hours of research and discussion Thursday afternoon was that I-10 and other roads from the west, and roads south of Dothan in Alabama, Georgia and Florida were closed or treacherous, and were likely to stay that way through at least Friday night. The weather outlook through Sunday strongly suggested they could remain that way over the weekend. So, the difficult decision to cancel was made. We had to first consider the safety of our members, and especially did not want delays causing them to be driving at night in the icy conditions. Had we delayed then had to cancel Friday, which was extremely likely, payments for both hotel nights would have been taken, rather than just one. Hopefully, like the snow event itself, this will be a one-off event for AOS meetings.

I am very much looking forward to Lianne Kozcur's presentation at the spring meeting banquet on Saturday night. Lianne is a friend whom I have known since she started with Alabama Audubon in 2019. We have worked together on Audubon's coastal programs since then, and I cannot think



of a more dedicated person working to protect our coastal birds, or someone who cares more deeply about them, both from a conservation perspective and for the birds themselves. I'm sure you will both enjoy her talk and learn a lot about our coastal beach birds, current conservation activities and future needs.

This will also be an opportunity to reach out to Dauphin Island residents to inform them just how important the island is for these species, and why it's important to protect them. As you know, there has been considerable debate over foxes, and Mobile County has been dragging its feet a bit on their control. I also think that we may see some pushback this summer when boaters

going to the far west end of the island see areas roped off, "No Dogs" signs, and the Beach Ambassadors actually enforcing this. Boaters have been used to the far west end being their party place for decades, and (illegal) weekend camping area. While nesting protection activity won't interfere with this, we've seen objections just on principle—the area has always been open and uncontrolled, now it's something being "taken away from people." On the island we've seen this with parking fees for beaches. A sort of trial last year using just signs—no roping—asking people to keep out of a large swathe of beach at far west end last July 4 weekend was quite successful, so I don't think it's a big push to make this generally accepted.

See you in April!

A Sanderling on Dauphin Island's west end. (Robin McDonald)



AOS WINTER MEETING, CRAWFORDVILLE, FLORIDA, JANUARY 24-26, 2025

AOS Winter Meeting Report

By BOB REED, VINCE MELESKI, & BARRY FLEMING

EDITOR'S NOTE—I have been in Drew's and Shirley's shoes when it comes to making a difficult call based on available information and concerns about safety and the wellbeing of others. It's a tough thing to do, and I appreciate the difficulty of making such decisions. By the way, I made two of those as a battalion commander; one was correct, and one was not. The AOS leadership made the right decision for the majority of our members. Several early birds braved the elements, skirting the ice and snow to arrive in Crawfordville, Florida, on Thursday, just in time to learn that conditions in other parts of the membership area were too treacherous to allow attendance by many of those registered, and that the meeting was officially cancelled. After a minute of reflection, we all decided that the weekend should continue as planned. Following are individual reports, starting with Bob Reed, followed by Vince Meleski, and Barry Fleming.

PAT AND I ENJOYED DINNER AT WAKULLA LODGE Friday before boarding the boat for the tour of the Wakulla River, observing, up close and personal, White Ibis, Anhingas, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Common Gallinules, Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, and Hooded Mergansers, as well as several Manatees, including a baby, and a few American Alligators. A cooperative Yellow-throated Warbler on the dock was a real treat.

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge is huge—83,000 acres spread across three counties. Bob and Lucy Duncan had thoughtfully shared some helpful details that led us to some very interesting places. I'd always only been to the main part, but their suggestions led us to some of the out-lying areas that proved to be very nice. The refuge rangers and the volunteers all were most accommodating and helpful.

It's difficult to pick out what was most special, but certainly seeing nine Bald Eagles within the space of ten minutes stands out. We searched well into the evening for Short Eared Owls on Bottoms Road (we got skunked), but the Black-crown Night-Herons, and King and Clapper Rails made up for the missed owl, and searching for sparrows at



the helipad (skunked again), were both memorable, if not very productive. The absence of light at the end of Bottoms Road was outstanding, and we observed the Milky Way better than in a long time in our light-saturated world.

We returned by a different route, just for the variety of it, and stopped at Thelma's Kitchen soul food, a truly enjoyable dining experience in Eufaula for dinner Sunday, a tasty end to the weekend.

While it would have been great to see more AOS friends, the slower pace without a meeting to attend was a very nice way to spend a long weekend. —Bob Reed

GREG MEIMAN AND I DROVE DOWN ON THURSDAY FROM Cullman. We had called the Refuge who said they were open and the hotel who said the roads were open and that the power was on. Ten minutes before arriving at the hotel, we received a call from Shirley Farrell saying the meeting was cancelled. We had cleared roads all the way. When we arrived at the motel, they said they had not heard that the meeting was cancelled.

The birding was great for Greg and me, because we took our time and studied the many birds that we do not



OPPOSITE PAGE: Close views of Anhinga and many other birds were enjoyed on the Wakulla Springs boat trips. (Barry Fleming). ABOVE: A Yellow-throated Warbler on the Wakulla Springs dock was a special treat for birders. (Bob Reed)

normally see. We had luck on Saturday when we were by the lighthouse and a lady from Tallahassee asked if we wanted to see the Flamingo. We said, "Of course." We walked west along the shore to the end and set up our scopes. There was the American Flamingo estimated at a mile or so out on a sandbar with some cormorants and gulls. Greg realized he did not have his phone-to-scope adapter, so he took several pictures holding the phone to the scope. On Sunday we did the Wakulla Springs boat tour. It was great with many birds, alligators and Manatees. The best birds for us were a Little Blue Heron and some Horned Grebes in breeding plumage, both from very close up. We also saw Joe Jr., one of the largest gators in the park. —Vince Meleski

WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL AOS FIELD TRIP TO ATTEND, IT WAS A quiet and unhurried Saturday morning at Wakulla Springs Lodge, drinking plenty of coffee and wondering around the historic lodge and grounds with images of Tarzan and creatures from the Black Lagoon in my head. Palm Warblers flicked and Yellow-rumped Warblers ticked. Pileated Woodpeckers cackled and Red-shouldered Hawks

screamed. Egrets, herons and White Ibis decorated the forest surrounding the springs, while abundant Anhingas emerged from the spring water like waving snakes. American Coot, Common Gallinule and Pied-billed Grebe kept in constant dialog producing wild Florida sounds. Groups of Hooded Mergansers fished the dark edges. Above the 100-foot-deep cave pumping 300 million gallons per day of clear water, in the sunshine, twenty-two Manatees, bumping, snuggling, back-rubbing, belly-rubbing and generally loafing, sealed the deal on the pace of the rest of my day.

After lunch, I leisurely drove down to the Lighthouse at St. Marks NWR, stopping to observe spectacles like sixty White Pelicans circling overhead without a care in the world or thirty Dunlin flying by as if on a mission. I enjoyed really great looks at Glossy Ibis while searching for White-faced Ibis. At one point I witnessed hundreds of shorebirds a long way off, as they say, and decided the manatees would advise that I not go there, too much work for this day. At the lighthouse pond, it had warmed up from the heavy snow and freeze from two days prior and Canvasback, Redhead, Northern Shoveler, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Gadwall, American Widgeon and Ruddy Duck were in a lazy mode, showing off from a close range.

Hundreds and hundreds of ducks were out in the gulf waters beyond my scope's ability to clearly see. I could only pick out two-hundred or so Redhead and highly probable numbers of Black Scoter, but letting the mystery be is fine with me. A Sora tip-toed onto the mudflat just as I was leaving.

The next morning, I joined the Wakulla Springs Boat Tour, gifted to me by Hans and Lori Paul. Our guide was an ancient man who steered the boat as smoothly as he spoke. He was a birder, never missing a lecture on a grebe or why White Ibis is the last to leave before a hurricane and the first to arrive back. The birds were up close and personal, at one point coming within a few yards of several Yellow-crowned Night-Herons gawking back at us.

I checked out, ordered a large vanilla malt, at the world's longest marble topped soda fountain bar and basked in the glow of an unexpected but glorious AOS winter meeting weekend all the way home.

All in all, a very pleasant weekend with perfect weather, once we arrived in Florida. —Barry Fleming

AOS WINTER BOARD MEETING, JANUARY 17, 2025

AOS Winter Board Meeting Minutes

By DORIS GERTLER, *Secretary*

HE AOS WINTER BOARD MEETING ON JANUARY 17, 2025, was called to order by President Haffenden via TEAMS. A quorum was not present so the minutes from the last two meetings were not approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Hal Smith reported a bank balance of \$34,984 and money market balance of \$30,025. There are thirty-four registrants for the winter meeting. There is a question if all registrations are being sent to Hal; he will discuss this with Joe Watts. One check for a Dan Holliman recipient remains outstanding. Greg Harber will investigate.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Haffenden had two items to discuss. Attendance at board meetings has not met the number needed for a quorum to conduct business. That number is currently half the board or 12. Drew would like to bring this matter before the board to resolve this issue. We might want to consider having a limited number of voting members? The second issue is that the Bylaws (on the website) have not been reviewed for ten years and it would be worthwhile to review and update.

DAN HOLLIMAN SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

Greg Harber received four grant applications:

- Catherine Shabron—Eco analysis of blackwater swamps;
- Maddie Jackson—Migration ecology and stopover habitat using MOTUS tags;
- Zoe Scott—Monitoring Red-headed Woodpecker nest sites in the Tombigbee River and adjacent private pine forests. Both Mississippi State University and American Bird Conservancy are funding portions of the study; and
- Sarah Patton—Sarah is working with Geoff Hill to determine how diet affects carotenoid precursors. Black

oil sunflower seeds may not contribute greatly to these precursors.

Greg and Eric Soehren reviewed these applications and recommended the last two.

As President, Drew Haffenden authorized the grants as they are time sensitive.

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

President Haffenden stated Eric Soehren sent out *Alabama Birdlife*, Volume 70, Number 1. The next issue is scheduled for March.

EDUCATION

Vice President Shirley Farrell is awaiting a final number for Blue Ribbon schools to prepare the gift baskets.

The current curriculum needs to be updated to meet the new guidelines.

NEW BUSINESS

Lucy Duncan prepared a brochure of birding sites for the winter meeting. It was emailed to the membership.

President Haffenden proposed we consider having a float in the Dauphin Island Mardi Gras parade held in February. It is late to plan for this year but it is a popular event. We could ask DIBS and Alabama Audubon to participate. Fee is \$25 plus the cost of throws. Shirley has a contact for recycled throws which benefits a local group.

Thanks for the Stories

IF YOU HAVE AN ARTICLE, STORY, OR AMUSING INCIDENT about your birding adventures, trips, yard sightings, or just short vignettes that were interesting, different, or entertaining, please send it to the Editor. Electronic versions are preferred, but send them by snail mail or carrier pigeon if you need to. The addresses are on the back cover.

AOS Winter Meeting Compilation List Crawfordville, Florida, January 26-28, 2025

NOTEWORTHY BIRD OF THE WEEKEND WAS AN AMERICAN Flamingo at St. Marks NWR. This compilation records the observations of seven AOS members who braved the difficult weather conditions. Count total was 106 species.

Canada Goose
Blue-winged Teal
Northern Shoveler
Gadwall
American Wigeon
Mallard
Green-winged Teal
Canvasback
Redhead
Ring-necked Duck
Greater Scaup
Lesser Scaup
Bufflehead
Hooded Merganser
Ruddy Duck
Wild Turkey
American Flamingo
Pied-billed Grebe
Horned Grebe
Rock Pigeon
Mourning Dove
King Rail
Clapper Rail
Sora
Common Gallinule
American Coot
Killdeer
Dunlin
Semipalmated Plover
Western Sandpiper
Long-billed Dowitcher
Short-billed Dowitcher
Wilson's Snipe
Lesser Yellowlegs
Laughing Gull
Ring-billed Gull

Foster's Tern
Royal Tern
Common Loon
Wood Stork
Anhinga
Double-crested Cormorant
American White Pelican
Brown Pelican
Little Blue Heron
Tri-colored Heron
Snowy Egret
Yellow-crowned
Night-Heron
Black-crowned
Night-Heron
Green Heron
Great Egret
Western Cattle Egret
Great Blue Heron
Great Blue Heron (white morph)
White Ibis
Glossy Ibis
Black Vulture
Turkey Vulture
Osprey
Northern Harrier
Cooper's Hawk
Bald Eagle
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
Barred Owl
Belted Kingfisher
Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Downy Woodpecker

Pileated Woodpecker
American Kestrel
Merlin
Western Kingbird
Eastern Phoebe
Loggerhead Shrike
Blue Jay
American Crow
Carolina Chickadee
Tufted Titmouse
Tree Swallow
European Starling
Brown Thrasher
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Cedar Waxwing
Brown-headed Nuthatch
Carolina Wren
Gray Catbird
Brown Thrasher
Northern Mockingbird
Eastern Bluebird
American Robin
House Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Swamp Sparrow
Eastern Towhee
Red-winged Blackbird
Boat-tailed Grackle

Black-and-white Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Palm Warbler
Pine Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Northern Cardinal

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



Greg Meiman took this distant cell-phone photo of an American Flamingo at St. Marks NWR, January 27.

IN MEMORIAM

John Sergeant Wise, Jr.

JOHN SERGEANT WISE, JR., AGE 90, PASSED AWAY PEACEFULLY on February 5, 2025, at his Kiptopeke Aviaries Farm in Summerdale, Alabama. He was a retired wildlife biologist and consultant forester. John was a life member of AOS.

According to his obituary, he was one of the original Green Berets, serving in the Korean War. Later, he served as Commander of V.F.W. Post 5850.

He was an alligator biologist in the Everglades and was instrumental in having alligators placed on the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Endangered Species List. He worked in Georgia and Alabama as a consultant wildlife biologist and forester, licensed in both states for more than 30 years. He became renowned for his work in this field and has supported more than 20 conservation organizations during his lifetime.

He spent the last 30 years as an agriculturalist, raising numerous species of exotic pheasants and waterfowl.

In Memoriam

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.

From the Membership Committee

AS BIRDS BEGIN MIGRATING BACK TO BREED IN NORTH America, interest in birding will pick up. It's the perfect time to ask your friends about joining AOS. If you are out birding and see someone else doing the same thing, or who wants to know what you are looking at, you have the perfect opportunity to tell them about the bird or birds, and extend an invitation to join you, and AOS.

Membership is based on the calendar year, so if you have not renewed for 2025, now is the perfect time.

New Members

Angelia Baggett
 Raymond Cavender
 Bailey McKay
 Susan Grantham
 Kathryn Jenkel
 Dennis Bennett
 Kristy Bruner
 Melinda & Claude Crider
 Dr. Deidra Dees
 Rosalie DeGregory
 Kevin Flowers
 Joan S. Forrest
 Abigail Gilbreath
 Mark & Mary Ann Gwin
 Cathy Havard
 Martha Hicks
 L. Winn LeVert
 Andrew Lydeard
 Patrick Madden
 Jennifer Mayfield
 Douglas & Marilyn Miller
 Carla Ostrand
 Lucia Plant
 Nina Prater
 Clare Shannon
 Roy and Melissa Turrentine
 Satchell Watts-Kerr
 Ben Wilson
 Vicky Wilson

AOS Donations

Joan & John L. Dixon Jr.
 Betsy Eagar
 Frank & Shirley Farrell
 Barry Fleming
 Cynthia Freeman

Doris Gertler
 Linda Gunnoe
 Lydia R Johnson
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 Lori Oswald & Hans Paul
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Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuary Donors

John & Margaret Cole
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 Lydia Johnson
 Lara & Brad Knight
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 Gregory Meiman
 Debra Nelson-Gardell
 Tom & Joan Siegwald
 James White

Have You Read a Good Bird Book Lately?

IF YOU HAVE READ A GOOD BIRD BOOK LATELY, PLEASE TELL us about it. It doesn't have to be about birds exclusively, but about conservation, nature in general, or other related topics. I'm not looking for a review, necessarily, but just recommendations of good books you've run across. Let the rest of us know, so we can read them too.

Deadlines for Yellowhammer Submissions

Summer 2025	May 10, 2025
Fall 2025	August 10, 2025
Winter 2025	November 10, 2025

Our Thanks To These AOS Donors

Gulf Breeze Motel

On Beautiful Dauphin Island, Alabama!

FOR MANY YEARS, MIKE TAFRA, OWNER OF THE GULF BREEZE Motel on Dauphin Island, has provided a room for the AOS speaker, spring and fall, free of charge. Thank you, Mr. Tafra and Gulf Breeze, for your continued support of AOS.



IT HAS BECOME THE HABIT OF HAL SMITH, OWNER OF WILD Birds Unlimited in Auburn, Alabama, to provide, at each meeting, a generous check to AOS for the purpose of attracting quality speakers for our meetings. Thank you, Hal Smith, and Wild Birds Unlimited of Auburn, for your continued support of AOS.

Upcoming Meetings

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING—Friday,
 Friday, April 11, 2025, 5:30 p.m. via Zoom

SPRING MEETING—April 18–20, 2025
 Dauphin Island, Alabama

FALL MEETING—October 10–12, 2025
 Dauphin Island, Alabama

WINTER MEETING—January 23–25, 2026
 Location to be determined

AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 18-20, 2025

AOS Spring Meeting Schedule



UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL AOS SPRING Meeting events, except field trips, take place at the Dauphin Island Community Center, 412 Lemoyne Drive. See each field trip for meeting time and place. Dress is casual for the entire meeting.

Important information about parking

Parking at Dauphin Island beaches requires paying a parking fee using the ParkMobile app. At the time of the meeting the cost is \$10 for one calendar day (not 24 hours across days). Cash or credit card payments are not accepted at the beaches. Your vehicle will be booted if a check shows you have not paid. You can download the ParkMobile app from Google Play and iPhone's App Store. Unless you are staying on the island you cannot park along the streets or at the side street parking lots west of where Bienville Boulevard reduces to two lanes.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

5:30pm **AOS Board Meeting** via Zoom

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

America's Amazon—Small boat tour of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta with Ben Raines

There was considerable interest last year in the Ben Raines boat trip to the Mobile-Tensaw Delta (America's Amazon). For those arriving on the coast early or for those who live here, I have arranged for a tour Thursday, April 17. Ben is fully booked other days. Tour is restricted to six people.

This is a five to six-hour small boat exploration of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, an incredibly rich habitat for a wide variety of wildlife, including, of course, birds. Ben Raines is a true expert on this region—from his website: "plants are blooming intensely and the alligators are out and about. The trip covers about 30 miles in all, with most of the time spent creeping around with a silent electric motor in remote nooks and crannies of the Delta. We commonly see Bald Eagles, gators, wild hogs, dozens of species of birds, from tiny

warblers to owls to Swallowtail Kites. I specialize in catching various critters from the water or the swampy shores. We eat plants we find growing everywhere. We'll put a net in the water and see one or two of Alabama's nearly 400 fish species. It's a really fun day."

A couple of years ago I (DH) was lucky enough to see the amazing mating display of huge Alabama Sturgeon, a decidedly prehistoric looking fish. I have been on this trip numerous times and always look forward to my next one. This is a prepaid trip and is limited to just six. Cost is \$160, and we require six people or a surcharge will be applied. We will advise if this will be needed and allow for free cancellation. Departure is 7:30am from Meaher State Park (opposite Five Rivers Center). If you want to go, contact me—andrew@natasp.com or 251-367-2948 to sign up; booking will close April 1.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18

7:00am **Field Trip: Splinter Hill Bog**

Meet at Green Park, next to Ship and Shore at 6:45am for a 7:00am departure. We will car pool where possible due to restricted parking at Splinter Hill. A stop will be made at the Chevron gas station when we turn left off I-65 at Exit 45 for a restroom break and snacks. There is no restroom at the bog. It is an hour and twenty-minute drive from Dauphin Island to the Chevron, then five minutes to Splinter Hill along CR47.

5:00pm **Registration opens:** Dauphin Island Community Center, 412 Lemoyne Drive.

5:30-6:30pm **Social Hour:** Beverages by DIBS, donations welcome. Members photos will be shown—email Drew Haffenden (andrew@natasp.com) for details.

7:00-7:15pm Outings and general meeting news.

7:15-8:15pm **Workshop:** Identifying Plovers with Drew Haffenden.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19**7:00am Field Trip: Around the Island**

Meet at Green Park, next to Ship and Shore. We'll car pool as much as possible. The outing will visit the island hot spots, taking into account bird activity, including the beach, but see field trip below.

7:00am Field Trip: Main Beach/Pelican Island

If there are good numbers of shorebirds, terns, etc. present, we will run a beach bird outing including a hands-on ID pointers taking in the Friday night workshop. If this outing operates it will be announced Friday night and then the Around the Island outing may not include the beach. We will meet at Middle Beach parking lot. See opposite page for parking fee information.

**8:00am Independent Travel:
Fort Morgan Bird Banding**

Alabama Audubon will be concluding their banding at Fort Morgan at noon. Visitors are welcome to watch birds being brought in from the nets, banded and released. Our meeting speaker will be there banding, so say hello. The 8:00am ferry from Dauphin Island will get you there at 8:45, and you can walk across to the banding area, or take your car and drive into the fort (payment required) for additional birding. The 10:15am ferry from Fort Morgan will have you back on the island at 10:45am, in time for lunch. If you stay longer to bird, there are 11:45am and 1:15pm ferry departures.

11:30am Jennie's Famous Lunch: Lunch at the home of Jennie Stowers. Jennie will provide all the food.

5:00pm Registration opens: Dauphin Island Community Center, 412 Lemoyne Drive.

5:30-6:30pm Social Hour: Beverages by DIBS, donations welcome. Members photos will be shown—email Drew Haffenden (andrew@natasp.com) for details.

6:30-7:30pm Banquet and announcements.

7:30-8:30pm Keynote Speaker: Dr. Lianne Kozcur will be talking about the nesting and fledging of Snowy Plovers, American Oystercatchers, Least Terns, and Black Skimmers in Alabama, including on Dauphin Island.

Alabama Audubon staff and volunteers have been monitoring these high priority species over the last seven years and have learned a great deal about their breeding success, the causes of nest failure and other aspects of their life on the beach. This information has directed management efforts aimed at increasing nesting success, particularly for Snowy Plovers. Lianne will talk about some of the challenges and successes of conservation work for these species.

SUNDAY, APRIL 20**7:00am Field trip to Blakely Mud Lakes**

The mud lakes are one of the best shorebird areas near the Alabama coast, and as migration will be in full swing it should be a busy place. Avocets and Black-necked Stilts are regulars, along with a number of other species. Land birds are also plentiful in the bushes, especially if there is a strong migration at the time. There is very limited parking so if you are returning to the island, please carpool. Visitors must have obtained a permit to visit Blakely and have received their pass prior to arrival. This is strictly enforced. To get the free permit go to <https://www.alports.com/birding/>.

12 noon Compilation at the Goat Trees.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND INFORMATION

Accommodations on Dauphin island are limited, so be sure to make reservations early for AOS Meetings.

Websites

www.gulfinfo.com

www.townofdauphinisland.org/where-to-stay

Motels

Gulf Breeze Motel: 251-861-7344 or 1-800-286-0296

Bed and Breakfast

Dauphin Island Harbor House: 251-861-2119

Air BnB has lots of rentals! www.airbnb.com

Rentals

Boardwalk Realty, Inc.: 877-861-3992

Tyson Real Estate: 800-865-8312

ACP Real Estate, Inc.: 866-861-3311

Camping

Dauphin Island Park and Beach Board: 251-861-2742
(fully equipped for both camper and tent camping)

AOS SPRING MEETING, DAUPHIN ISLAND, ALABAMA, APRIL 18-20, 2025

Meet the Speaker: Dr. Lianne Kozcur

Alabama's Breeding Beach Birds

OUR SPEAKER FOR THE SPRING MEETING IS DR. Lianne Kozcur. A native of Massachusetts, Lianne's interest in birds began when she worked at Padre Island National Seashore and got to spend time watching all of the amazing coastal birds in the area. After earning a B.A. in biology from the University of Maine at Farmington, she spent several years working as a field biologist, monitoring Piping Plovers and Least Terns in South Dakota and Black-capped Vireos and

nesting sea turtles in Texas, restoring seabird habitat on California's Santa Barbara Island, and conducting shorebird surveys along the Gulf Coast. In 2013, Lianne earned her master's degree in range and wildlife management from Texas A&M-Kingsville for her studies of American Oystercatcher reproductive success; she then continued at Kingsville, earning a Ph.D. in wildlife science in 2017 for her work on Reddish Egret movement. Lianne has been

Science and Conservation Director at Alabama Audubon since 2019. While her work with Audubon covers much of the state, she is intimately connected with the coast and Dauphin Island through her leadership of the Alabama Coastal Stewardship Program and Bird Banding studies at Fort Morgan and Audubon Sanctuary and beach bird banding in both Baldwin and Mobile Counties.

Dr. Kozcur will speak about Audubon's work with priority breeding beach birds in Alabama, including Dauphin Island—Snowy Plover, Black Skimmer, Willet, Least Tern, American Oystercatcher, and Wilson's Plover (though they have almost certainly been recently extirpated as a breeding bird, with the possibility of one male still trying to breed). She'll also touch on other species—Royal, Sandwich and Caspian Terns.

AOS Spring Meeting keynote speaker Dr. Lianne Kozcur (left) banding a shorebird. (Evan Franklin)



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